Land at Barges Close, Litton Cheney, Dorset.

Archaeological Field Evaluation in Support of a Planning Application

context one
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD

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Archaeological Field Evaluation in Support of a Planning Application

for

CG Fry & Sons Ltd

by

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Front cover image: View of the Site from the south. © Context One Archaeological Services 2015

Contents

Illustrations

Tables

Plates

Appendices

Non-technical summary

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Barges Close, Litton Cheney, Dorset (the 'Site') over four days between 22 and 28 October 2015. The project was commissioned and funded by CG Fry & Son Ltd.

The evaluation was requested by the Local Planning Authority (West Dorset District Council (WDDC)) on the advice of Mr Steve Wallis (Senior Archaeologist, Dorset County Council) in support of a possible planning application for the development of two new dwellings.

An Archaeological Heritage Statement was first prepared by COAS and the Site was considered to be in an area of high archaeological potential. The evaluation comprised four trenches positioned to target the footprints of the proposed residential development and sample areas outside these more generally.

Three of the trenches produced archaeological evidence, in the form of pits and postholes in Trench 1, and two ditches in both Trenches 2 and 3. These features yielded a small assemblage of pottery sherds, flint, ceramic building material and animal bone. The remaining Trench 4 was archaeologically sterile. The flint dated to the Early/Middle Neolithic, Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age and later Bronze Age/Iron Age periods, whilst the pottery dated to the Middle-Late Iron Age, Romano-British and medieval periods. The archaeological features and deposits investigated therefore relate to prehistoric and Romano-British periods, and are indicative of domestic and/or agricultural activity on the Site over a number of phases of occupation. Given previous understanding of the distribution of heritage assets in the immediate area, activity of medieval date might have been expected. There are also Romano-British findspots nearby. However, prehistoric settlement or land use had not been anticipated, and the presence of substantial and well preserved cut features, which represent more than one phase of occupation, adds to the corpus of known occupation during the later prehistoric period in the Bride Valley.

The evaluation has shown that archaeological features and deposits survive at a depth of c. 0.25m below the current ground surface and would be affected by construction of the proposed dwellings. Given the density of archaeological deposits identified during this evaluation, it is likely that further archaeological features and deposits would be encountered across the Site, particularly in the northern half.

1. Introduction

1.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Barges Close, Litton Cheney, Dorset (the 'Site') over four days between 22 and 28 October 2015. The results of the investigation will support a possible planning application for the proposed development of two new dwellings (West Dorset District Council reference: WD/D/15/001674). The project was commissioned by and funded by CG Fry & Sons Ltd.

1.2 The level and scope of archaeological works were required by the Local Planning Authority (West Dorset District Council (WDDC)) and advised by Mr Steve Wallis (Senior Archaeologist, Dorset County Council) in order to inform an outline planning application for the erection of two detached dwellings each with a garage, to be accessed from Barges Close. Medieval contour strip lynchets are present on the hillsides to the north of the Site, and a number of archaeological finds have also been recorded in the vicinity of the Site.

A Heritage Statement on the potential impact of development works on the Site was compiled by COAS in September 2015 (Prestidge 2015). The report concluded that:

> *"An area of Roman occupation has also been identified to the west of the Site, raising the possibility that further earlier remains may be extant below the medieval agricultural levels. The apparent lack of development since the medieval period also raises the likelihood for any such earlier features remaining undisturbed, although it is possible that some truncation may have been caused by ploughing...*
>
> *...The proposed development would require the excavation of footings, as well as the installation of services and any associated landscaping for gardens and driveways. This would almost certainly impact on any archaeological remains preserved below the present ground level. Although the footprint of the development covers a relatively small percentage of the whole Site area, the unavoidable damage caused by the movement of plant and materials also has the potential to impact on any features that may be located close to the surface."*

Given the recorded archaeological and historical data for the environs, it was considered that archaeological features/deposits could be present on the Site, and that these could be damaged or destroyed by development. 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 an archaeological field evaluation involving trial trenching.

1.3 The request for the archaeological work follows advice given by Central Government as set out in paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012).

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; field evaluation through trial trenching; post-excavation work and report production; and project data archiving. The WSI was approved by Mr Steve Wallis (Senior Archaeologist, Dorset County Council) on 15 October 2015 prior to the commencement of any Site works.

2. Site location, topography and geology

2.1 The Site (centred on NGR SY 55452 90731) covered 0.34 hectares and was located on the north-eastern extent of the village of Litton Cheney, *c.* 13km to the east of Dorchester (**Figure 1**).The Site is bordered to the east by the residential developments of Barges Close and Coombes Close, and to the south by the gardens of a large residential property. To the west of the Site there are further residential developments, whilst there is enclosed pasture adjacent to the Site to the north. The Site sits at a height of *c.* 90m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at the northern end, sloping down to *c.* 75 aOD at the southern end.

2.2 The underlying geology is Sandsfoot formation mudstone, sandstone and limestone with drift geology of clay silt sand and gravel head (British Geological Survey 2015). The Site is characterised by slowly

permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base rich loamy and clayey soils (National Soil Resources Institute 2015).

3. Methodology

Archaeological methodology

3.1 The programme of 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 1985, rev. 2012; 1990, rev. 2008; 1994, rev. 2001). Current Health and Safety legislation and guidelines were followed on Site.

3.2 The evaluation strategy initially comprised *c*. 60m of trenching, divided down into four trenches measuring 1.6m wide. Trenches 1 and 3 would measure 20m in length while Trenches 2 and 4 would measure 10m in length, equating to *c*. 2.5% sample of the Site. Trenches 1 and 3 were positioned over the footprints of the two proposed dwellings. Trenches 2 and 4 were placed to offer a wider sample coverage for the Site. In the event, Trench 3 was expanded into a 'T' shape at the eastern end to clarify the extent of archaeological features (**Figure 1**).

3.3 A tracked machine fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless grading bucket was used to remove topsoil/ploughsoil and continued in horizontal spits until archaeological features or natural geology was encountered, whichever was first.

3.4 In the absence of archaeological features and deposits, a representative section of the trench was recorded to define the sequence of deposits 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 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 in digital format. Stratigraphic relationships were recorded using a "Harris-Winchester matrix" diagram. Soil colours were logged using a Munsell soil colour chart. The location, extent and altitude of archaeological features and deposits were mapped relative to the National Grid and Ordnance Datum. A digital photographic record was made of individual features as well as working shots to illustrate the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

3.6 Artefacts collected from archaeological features/deposits were bagged using a combination of site code and context numbers. All finds from the Site were retained for processing in preparation for further analysis and archiving. Specialist reports of the artefact assemblage were compiled using both descriptive and tabular formats (see **section 5**.).

3.7 Upon completion of the evaluation, all trenches were backfilled by machine and compacted.

4. Results

4.1 The evaluation was predominantly carried out during a spell of dry weather. None of the trenches encountered rising groundwater.

4.2 In the text, context numbers appear in standard brackets, e.g. (1002) and feature cuts appear as square brackets, e.g. [1001], the first number relating to the trench number.

4.3 **Soil Sequence and geology**

The topsoil ((100) (200) (300) (400)) measured 0.25m deep and comprised dark greyish brown silt with occasional chalk and flint inclusions. In Trenches 1, 2 and 3 this directly overlay the chalk natural ((101) (201) (301)). In Trench 4 the topsoil overlay a subsoil of light greyish brown silt clay with frequent chalk *c*. 0.50m deep ((401)), over chalk natural ((402)). Given the down-slope location of Trench 4, this likely represents a colluvial deposit, but was devoid of archaeological finds.

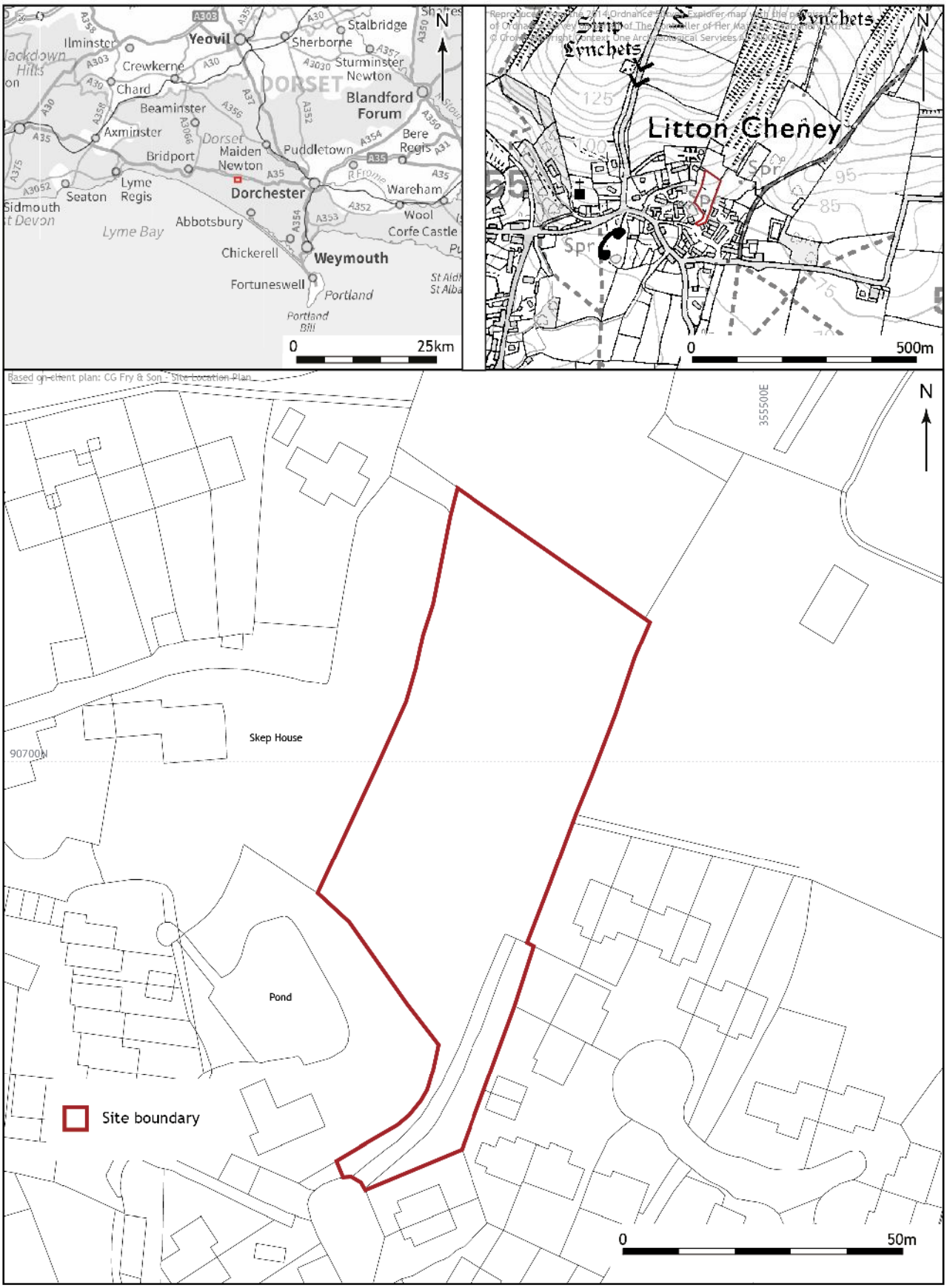

Figure 1. Site location

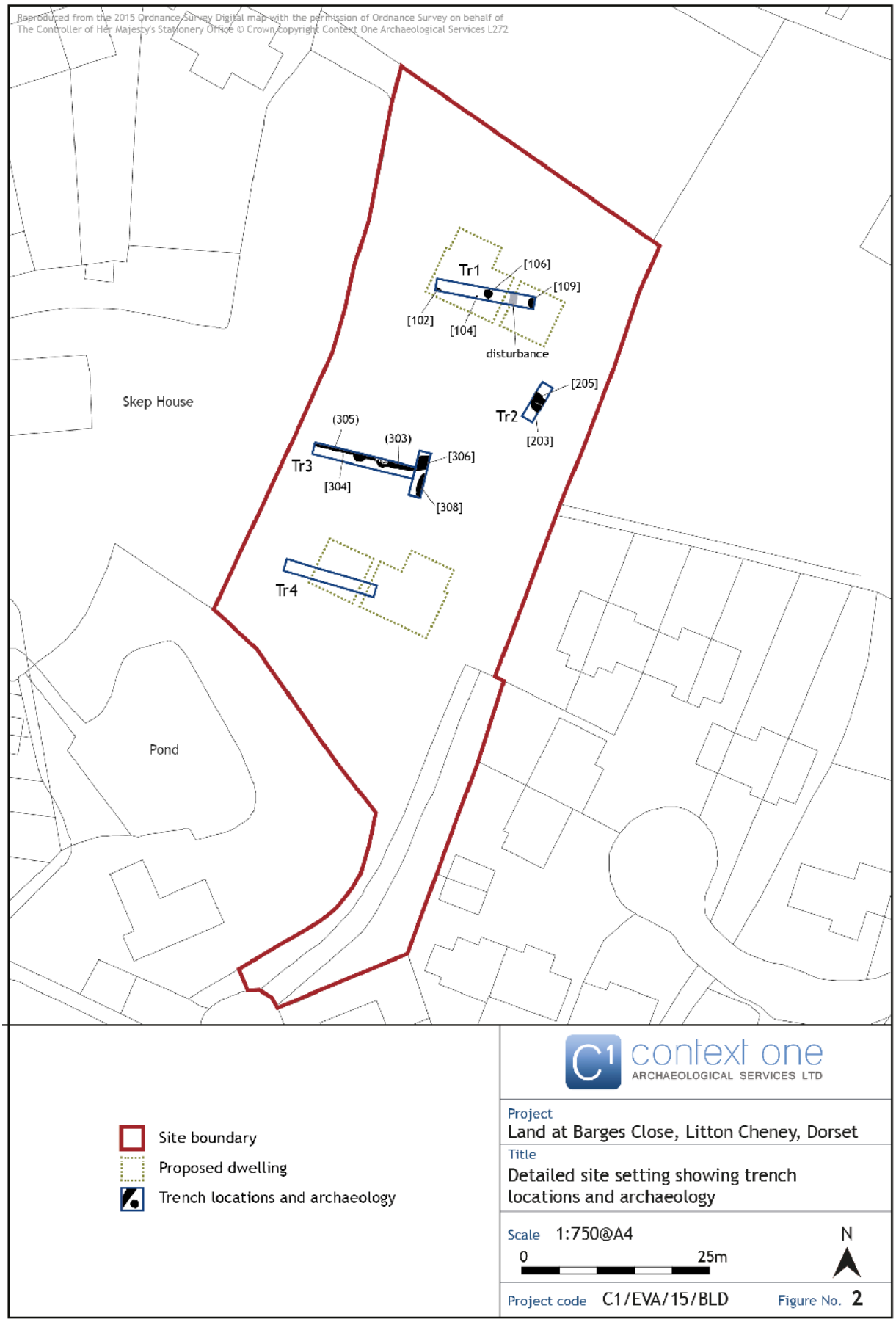

Figure 2. Location of trenches and archaeological features

Archaeological features and deposits

4.4 A total of nine features were identified during the evaluation and all within Trenches 1, 2 and 3 (**Plates 1, 2 & 3**). Trench 4 was found to be archaeologically sterile (**Plate 4**). All of the features were sealed directly beneath the topsoil and cut the underlying natural deposits.

Tr No.	Cut No.	Context No's & Description	Depth below modern ground surface	Figure & Plate Refs	Finds
1	[102]	(103). Part of a feature in the SW corner of the trench, full plan not seen and unexcavated. Filled with light greyish brown silt with chalk inclusions.	0.25m	Plate 1; Figure 2	NA
1	[104]	(105). Possible small posthole measuring 0.20m in diameter. Unexcavated but filled with mid greyish brown silt with chalk inclusions	0.25m	Plate 1; Figure 2	NA
1	[106]	(107) & (108). Sub-circular shallow pit with irregular concave sides and flat base. Measured 0.96m diameter & 0.18m deep. The main fill (107), a dark brown ashy silt with charcoal flecks and heat affected (red) shelly limestone, is abutted by (108) on the irregular southern side, and comprised the same material but with evident root disturbance.	0.25m	Plate 1; Plate 5; Figure 2 & 3.	Pottery, flint & animal bone
1	[109]	(110) (111) (112) (113). A sub circular pit measuring 0.87m diameter & 0.65m deep, with steep vertical sides and concave base. The primary fill (113) filled 0.35m of the pit relatively evenly. This was succeeded by a secondary fill (112), with a slump of material from the south side (111) and final upper fill (110).	0.25m	Plate 1; Plate 6; Figure 2 & 3.	Pottery & animal bone
2	[203]	(204). Pit or ditch terminal. Rounded south end but elongated in plan, potentially the end of a ditch aligned E-W measuring 1.38m wide & 0.69m deep. Steep sided cut with sloping concave base. Single fill (204) a light greyish brown silt clay with abundant chalk fragments, larger to the north side, apparently slumping of up cast.	0.25m	Plate 2; Plate 7; Figure 2 & 3	NA
2	[205]	(206). Ditch aligned E-W across the trench, measuring 0.97m wide & 0.27m deep with concave sides and base. The single fill (206) was a light greyish brown/light yellowish brown silt clay with abundant chalk fragments and occasional flint.	0.25m	Plate 2; Plate 7; Figure 2 & 3.	Pottery & flint
3	[304]	(305). E-W linear cut measuring 1.60m wide & 0.50m deep with moderate to steep stepped concave sides and base. The single fill (305) comprised mid greyish brown silt clay with frequent chalk and occasional flint.	0.28m	Plate 3; Plate 8; Figure 2 & 3.	Pottery, flint & animal bone
3	[306]	(307). Wide linear crossing centre aligned E-W measuring 1.85m wide & 0.85m deep, although the base was not reached, with moderate to steep sloping sides. A single fill (307) comprised mid-greyish brown silt clay with abundant chalk and occasional flint.	0.23m	Plate 3; Plate 8; Figure 2 & 3.	Flint
3	[308]	(309). An irregular feature measuring at least 3.20m wide, but full extent not seen. Unexcavated but fill (309) comprised a light greyish brown silt clay.	0.23m	Figure 2 & 3.	NA

4.5 The features encountered in Trench 1 comprised two pits ([106] and [109]) with slightly different character, [109] being more substantial with more complex fills (**Plate 6**), whilst [106] was shallow and showed evidence of root disturbance (**Plate 5**). Two other features were observed but not excavated, a possible post hole [104], and an undetermined feature in the SW corner of the trench [102]. The excavated features produced pottery, flint and animal bone. Middle-Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from the upper fill of pit [109], along with Late Iron Age/Romano-British material, which also came from pit [106]. The fill of this pit also produced likely residual Neolithic flint.

4.6 Trench 2 contained what are probably two ditches, both on an E-W alignment, crossing the trench. Cut [203], a steep side flat bottomed feature terminated within the trench, and is best explained as end of a ditch, rather than a pit. This was cut by [205], along its length on the same alignment (**Plate 7**). The earlier feature [203] did not provide any dateable material whilst [205] produced Middle-Late Iron Age

pottery and later Bronze Age or Iron Age flint. Both of these ditches probably date to the later prehistoric period, and represent two phases of use.

4.7 Trench 3 also contained two linear features on an east-west alignment, on the break in the slope, running the length of the trench. The trench was extended into a 'T' shape at the eastern end in order to understand the extent of the archaeological features. Contexts (302) and (303) overlay part of feature [304] (**Figure 3**) and may comprise either spread from the upper fill, or material deposited above it. Layer (303) produced animal bone and pottery of Romano-British and medieval date, suggesting that this material may have accumulated within the hollow of the feature from downslope movement.

4.8 Feature [304] was cut into the fill of an earlier ditch [306] (**Plate 8; Figure 3**), on its western side. The main fill of [304], context (305), appears to have entered the cut from upslope. The finds included pottery, flint and animal bone. This ditch lies broadly on the alignment of a field boundary shown on historical maps as early as 1812 (Prestidge 2015). An Early/Middle Neolithic flake is residual although the dates of the pottery span the entire Roman period.

4.9 The earlier feature [306] was a substantial ditch with sloping sides, which reached *c*. 0.85m deep, although the base was not reached as it could not be fully excavated. It only had one fill, which produced flint of Neolithic and Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date. This ditch appears to represent the earliest phase of activity on the Site, and had largely filled before being recut, implying that it may have predated feature [304] by some time. A large irregular feature [308] was observed in the extension to Trench 3 but not excavated. Its fill (309) comprised a light greyish brown silt clay

Plate 1. Trench 1 (from W; 2 x 1m scales)

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

Plate 3. Trench 3 (from W; 2 x 1m scales)

Plate 4. Trench 4 (from S; 2 x 1m scales)

Plate 5. Section through feature [106] Trench 1 (from W; 1m scale)

Plate 6. Section through feature [109] Trench 1 (from E; 1m scale)

Plate 7. Section cut features [203] & [205], Trench 2 (from E; 1 and 0.5m scales)

Plate 8. Section through cut features [304] & [306] Trench 3 (from E; 1 x 0.5m scales)

5. The finds

5.1 All finds recovered from the evaluation were washed and, where necessary, will be marked with an accession number issued by Dorset County Museum. The finds were separated into artefact types and quantified by context number, quantity and weight in grams. Any bulk finds such as post-medieval and modern brick, tile and slate were noted but not collected. The finds are discussed separately below and, where appropriate, presented as tabular data. A request will be made to the Site owner to transfer the title of all finds to the above Museum.

5.2 A small assemblage of finds were identified during the evaluation. Each element of the assemblage is discussed separately below and presented as tabular data with, where appropriate, weight in grams.

Pottery, by Rachel Hall

5.3 A total of 67 sherds weighing 498g, were recovered from five contexts from the evaluation (see **Table 1**). The assemblage ranges in date from the Middle to Late Iron Age through to the medieval period. The sherds are all in an abraded condition ranging from fair to poor with an average sherd size of 7.43g.

Middle/Late Iron Age

5.4 A small number of calcareous tempered sherds were recovered. These sherds are all handmade with medium size walls and variable firing. A plain rim sherd from a rounded bowl and a small number of conjoining sherds were recovered from pit [109]. These sherds also have an internal residue. A further abraded body sherd in a similar fabric was also recovered from ditch [205].

5.5 A small assemblage was identified as Late Iron Age/ Early Romano-British in date due to their form and fabric. The fabrics are all sandy and the decorative trait of burnishing was used on many body sherds in this group. They were recovered from pits [106], [109] and footing trench [304]. With the exception of a base sherd and two plain everted rim sherds they are all abraded body sherds. The plain nature of the small group, handmade with sandwich firing and distinctive decorative burnishing dates the group to the Late Iron Age/ Early Romano-British period.

Romano-British

5.6 A total of 24 of Black Burnished ware was recovered from pit [106] and footing trench [304]. With some conjoining sherds, these are all burnished and some have incised lattice decoration. A small number of greyware and grog tempered body sherds were also recorded. Dating to the later Romano-British period, two sherds of New forest indented beaker were recovered from the upper layer of trench [304] and a single body sherd, possibly Rhenish imported ware, was identified from the primary layer in trench [304].

Medieval

5.7 Two further sherds were identified as medieval in date, on fabric alone. The abraded body sherds are sandy with variable firing and a mixed sand and flint harder fired fabric. These were recovered from the upper layer of Trench [304]. No diagnostic traits were present and no further information can be gained.

Further work

5.8 No other work is necessary on this assemblage. A small amount of pottery would be worthy of being illustrated, if the Site were published, the Middle/ Late Iron Age rounded bowl rim and conjoining sherds(110; 206) and New Forest Indented Beaker (303).

Ceramic Building Material (CBM) and Fired Clay, by Rachel Hall

5.9 A small amount of other material was also recovered (see **Tables 2 & 3**). Two tile fragments were recovered from Trench [304] and topsoil layer (400). A single undiagnostic sherd of Fired clay was also recovered Trench [304]. No further work is required.

Flint, by Richard Tabor

5.10 A total of 45 pieces of flint weighing 448.5g were collected (**Table 4**). They were spread over four evaluation trenches. The overall percentage of identifiable tools within the assemblage is 22.2%.

5.11 All pieces were recorded according to their surface condition, broadly, the extent to which the colour of the non-cortex raw material was visible when held up to a light. Individual pieces were rated '1' if

fresh-looking, '2' if surfaces were cloudy but the colour still discernible and '3' if either due to the extent of re-cortication or burning the original colour could not be ascertained. The results are summarized in **Table 5**. 50% of the material was in optimal condition and the colours of most of those categorized as '2' were readily perceptible. Evidence for exposure to heat occurred on 17.8% of pieces. The material was predominantly of sepia and occasionally of amber colouring. There were single pieces of struck chert and a ball of exclusively cortex. All of twelve complete flakes were categorised according to their breadth:length ratios and this was broken down to show their distribution across stratified contexts (**Table 6**). Flakes with measurable butt widths were treated in similar fashion (**Table 7**).

Technology

5.12 The complete flakes show that squat products are predominant with 41.7% having a breadth equal to or greater than the height and a further 33.3% have breadths only slightly less than the heights. Typically squat flakes are associated with broad butts but in this case 41.2% of the assemblage total of 17 examples fell within the fairly narrow range of between 1mm and 3mm breadth and a further 17.6% were of less than 1mm breadth. Only 41.2% of butts were 4mm or greater in width. No butts displayed evidence for core preparation in the form of abrasion. The overall assemblage was dominated by butts which retained at least traces of cortex (70.6%) suggesting that initial preparation of nodule fragments may have taken place. The flint from ditch fill (305) was dominated by irregular corticated lumps which have been removed from nodules rather than prepared cores.

5.13 Over 50% of the flint from the Romano-British pit fill (106) was heat-affected; the material was similar in character, small and generally lacking in evidence for flaking. It is possible that it was deliberately exposed to fire to be broken up. Crushed burnt flint occurs as an inclusion in ceramics but is also sometimes a by-product of industrial processes.

5.14 Retouch occurred on 13 pieces, representing a fairly high incidence of 28.9% of the assemblage. It included coarse denticulation and the removal of spalls but was in general produced by well-executed pressure flaking from the ventral side. Re-cortication on the butt of one flake indicated that it derived from a re-used core.

5.15 A single heavily re-corticated complete flake/blade from the basal part of (305) is the only piece with distinctively Early to Middle Neolithic traits, having a length:breadth ratio of 2.2:1. A group of three large flakes from (206) are likely to date from the later Bronze Age or Iron Age. One had wear along an edge consistent with use as a cutting tool; a chert flake had coarse denticulation along most of one edge; and local retouch on one side of the distal end of the third flake had a created a narrow scraping edge.

Tools

5.16 Tools were restricted to nine scrapers and a single piercer. The latter, from (107), comprised a proximal point formed by the removal of spalls from either side of the butt. The butt appeared to have been narrow, consistent with a Neolithic date. Two combined concave scraper/piercers were present. An example from the topsoil context (400) had been formed by direct retouch (executed from the ventral face) along the full extent of a blunt distal end of a heavily corticated flake. Two spalls on one side of the distal end of a primary flake from the ditch fill (307) formed a point whilst very local abrupt retouch on the other side formed a hollow scraping edge or notch. An extensively corticated secondary flake from the same context had abrupt retouch at the distal end and steep local unilateral retouch. A heavily re-corticated flake from (400) had been blunted by near abrupt retouch at the distal end and sharpened along one side and towards the proximal end by long, invasive cortical flake removal. An entirely re-corticated sub-rounded flake with distal retouch falls into the button or thumbnail scraper category hence is likely to be of Late Neolithic/Early bronze Age date, as are side and/or distal end scrapers from (305) and (307). The abrupt distal retouching of two other scrapers from those contexts would allow an earlier Neolithic date.

Assessment of the assemblage

5.17 There are significantly different characteristics within this small assemblage. The bashed lumps and the burnt flints which dominate the material from Romano-British ditch fills (107) and (305) may be of that period. They show no characteristics of waste from flint tool production. Although few in number, the large flakes from the undated ditch fill (206) point to unspecialised tool production characteristic of the Later Bronze Age and even the Iron Age (Young and Humphrey 1999, 232-3; Harding 1991). Some

of the material in (305) is clearly residual, notably a possibly earlier Neolithic flake but also two scrapers likely to be of Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. Scrapers from the stratigraphically lower ditch fill (307) are broadly contemporary as is some of the unstratified material from topsoil contexts (300) and (400) for all of which analogies can be found from Phase 3 at Maiden Castle (Edmonds and Bellamy 1991).

5.18 *Bibliography*

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Animal bone, by Clare Randall (COAS)

5.19 The small but relatively well preserved animal bone assemblage came from two of the four evaluation trenches excavated and all dates from the Roman period.

Methods

5.20 Each bone fragment was identified where possible to element and species, and here this was not possible Large Mammal (e.g. cattle sized), Medium Mammal (e.g. sheep sized) and Unidentified mammal categories. All data were recorded in an Access relational database. Identification was carried out using comparative collections and with reference to Hillson (1992; 2005) and Schmid (1972) for domestic mammals, and Yalden (2003) for small mammals. Zones were recorded where possible for each anatomical element using the Maltby/Hambleton method (n.d.).

5.21 Where available cattle, sheep/goat, and pig tooth wear was assessed using Grant (1982), and Payne (1973, 1982). Hambleton (1999) and Halstead (1985) were also used in assigning categories. Bone porosity was recorded for all fragments, and each fragment examined for fusion information. Fusion was recorded for each fragment and assigned to age ranges (Silver 1969). The percentage of the element present was estimated and recorded to the nearest 10% for all identified fragments. Each fragment was also examined for pathological changes, breakage patterns, gnawing and weathering indicators. Burnt bone was recorded by colour (buff, brown, grey, black and calcined). The condition of all fragments was assessed on a five-point scale through poor, poor-average, average, average-good and good. Pathological changes were noted and metrical data recorded in accordance with von den Driesch (1976).

Results

5.22 The assemblage comprised a total of 55 fragments of disarticulated and co-mingled animal bone from a total of six contexts, although four fragments were from two topsoil contexts. The material all came from contexts which formed during the Roman period.

Preservation and taphonomy

5.23 The condition of the bone was poor-average to average-good and highly fragmented. No associated bone groups were noted. In total 42% of the material was identified to species, which is fairly typical of assemblages of this type and period. Of these six examples (26%) comprised loose teeth, which is to be expected given the fragmented nature of the assemblage. Five porous fragments were noted, and two fragments were measurable. A number of helical breaks and a single example of butchery were noted which will have contributed to the degree of fragmentation in this assemblage.

Seven fragments (13% of the total assemblage) demonstrated taphonomic changes, which included gnawing, weathering and burnt material. The examples of canid gnawing attests to the presence of dogs on the Site, despite the lack of identified dog bone.

The Romano-British assemblage

5.24 A total of 51 fragments were recovered from contexts which apparently formed during the Romano-British period, pit contexts (107) and (110) (cuts [106] and [109] and ditch fills (303) and (305) in cut [304] (**Table 8**).The material is generally fragmentary and almost half of the identified mammal bone comprised loose teeth. The quantities of bone in the postholes and deposits are too small to enable consideration of preservation or distribution differences between the pit and ditch. The species identified were cattle, and sheep/goat, with a single example positively identified as sheep. Cattle and sheep-sized mammal fragments were also present. Sheep/goat were most abundant with 17 fragments, with a minimum number of two individuals (MNI), compared to five fragments for cattle, although this also produced a MNI of two (**Table 9**). The proportions of species cannot be commented on due to the small numbers although sheep/goat might be expected to be most abundant during this period on a rural Site.

5.25 A range of elements were represented, including head and limb bone and axial elements amongst the sheep-sized animals. The presence of a number of porous fragments indicates a good level of preservation, even where in one case the element had been gnawed. This attests to the presence of dogs on the Site, even though no dog bone was identified. However, many of the elements are the more robust ones and combined with the number of loose teeth indicates that the distribution of elements may relate to the fragmentation of the assemblage and other taphonomic factors, rather than reflecting processing and disposal practice.

5.26 The cattle elements present were all from skeletally mature individuals, with a humerus fused both proximally and distally representing an animal of at least 42-48 months of age, and a very worn single mandibular molar (**Table 10**). There were no examples of porous bone. Both adult and juvenile sheep/goat bone present. A single mandible gave a Mandible Wear Score of 1, Payne Stage A (**Table 11**). There were two further fragments of neonatal bone. The sheep/goat bone from mature individuals included a fused proximal radius, fused distal humerus and fused distal calcaneus indicating animals of at least 10 months, 10 months and 30-36 months respectively. Several loose teeth were also from the permanent dentition and worn. A single example of butchery was noted on a cattle horn core (**Table 12**), evidently related to disarticulation or removal of the horn. There were also ten examples of deliberate breakage of the bone were noted with cattle, sheep/goat and sheep-sized elements involved which may be indicative of processing (**Table 13**). Six fragments had taphonomic changes noted, two gnawed and four burned (**Table 14**). Two measurements were taken (**Table 15**), but no pathological changes were noted.

Comment

5.27 This small assemblage is largely typical of the later Iron Age and Romano-British period in that it reflects the importance of livestock species. It is also clear that the material has derived from processing and consumption waste. Whilst the evidence of butchery is limited (and unsurprising in such a small assemblage) there is other evidence of processing. There is also evidence that sheep/goat were being bred and reared close to the Site.

5.28 The material has provided a range of data including ageing, metrical, processing and taphonomic information. No further work is required on this assemblage, but it is to be expected that should further features be explored on this Site, further faunal material will be encountered of a quality suitable for analysis.

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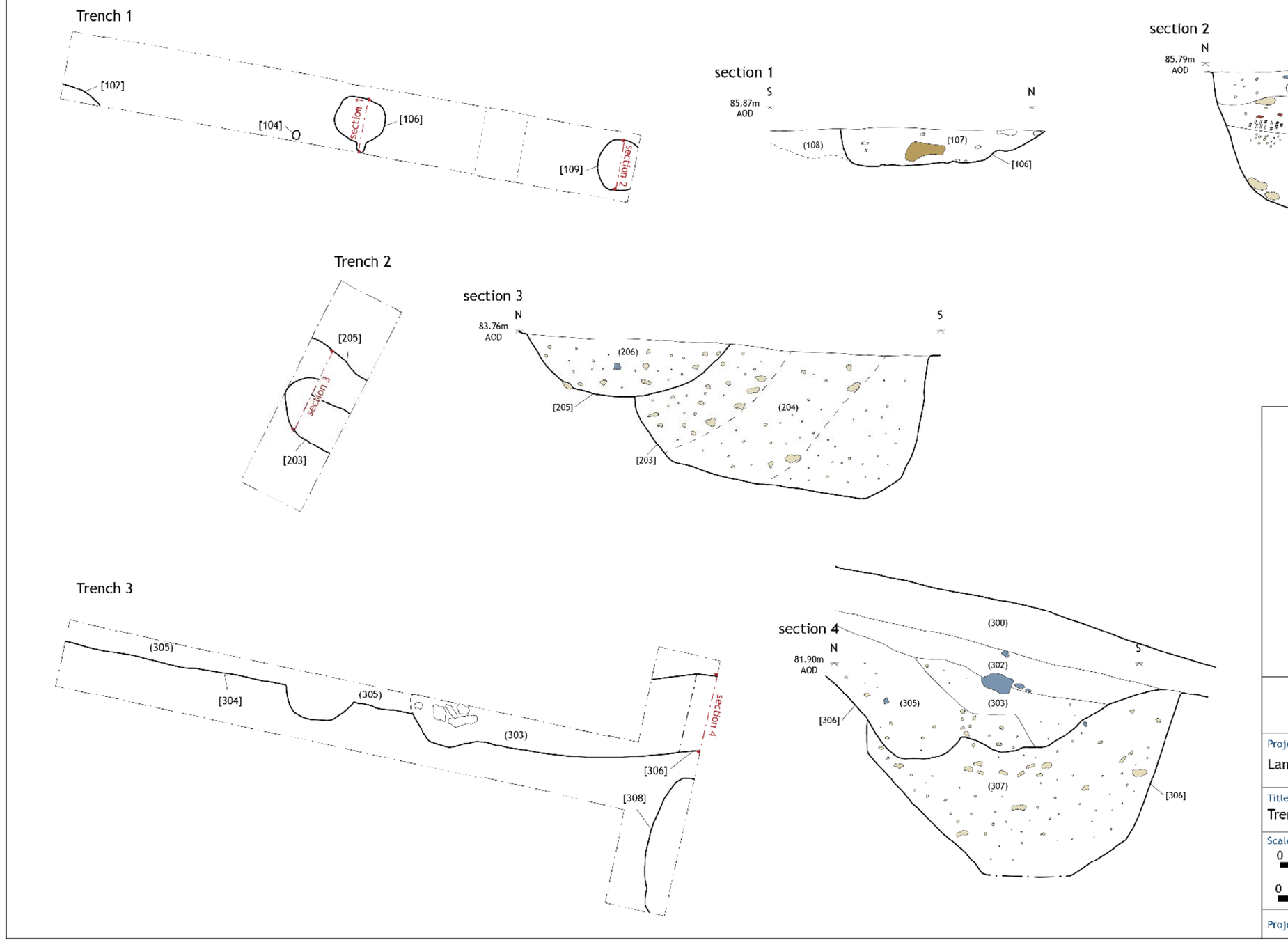

Figure 3. Plans and sections

Other finds, by Clare Randall

5.30 One piece of iron (weight 18g) 47mm long and 9mm wide, with a square section, appears to be a piece of modern steel bar, and was recovered from topsoil context (400). A piece of heavily abraded green glazed post-medieval earthen ware jar (weight 26g) was recovered from context (300).

6. Discussion

6.1 Three of the four evaluation trenches, on the plateau and upper slope, contained archaeological features and deposits. These comprised pits and postholes of probable Roman date on the level ground at the north end of the Site in Trench 1. There was evidence of later prehistoric activity in the area from apparently redeposited Middle/Late Iron Age pottery in pit [109]. Two phases of ditches running east-west in Trench 2 are of likely later prehistoric date, representing two separate periods of use. Two further linear features, also run east-west in Trench 3. Here a substantial ditch [306] is also likely to be prehistoric in date, and may represent one of the earliest uses of the Site, with Neolithic and Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age flint recovered. This feature had largely filled up before being recut on the upslope side on a similar alignment by a linear [306] dating to the Romano-British period. The upper fill of [306] appears to have accumulated from material derived from upslope, and included both Romano-British and medieval pottery.

6.2 The number of flint artefacts, spanning from the Earlier Neolithic to the Bronze Age/Iron Age indicate a long chronological span in the use of the Site, even where these are obviously out of secure context or redeposited in later features. The pits and postholes on the level northern part of the Site probably relate to settlement. The prehistoric and later ditches defined either areas of settlement or associated field systems. The area surrounding the Site contains a large number of medieval features, and a number of findspots of Romano-British material are also known. However, prehistoric activity has previously not been identified in the immediate vicinity. The nature of the features and chronological span indicates that there is high potential for further well preserved archaeological features and deposits on other parts of the Site. This could add to an understanding of the later prehistoric land use and settlement in the area.

6.3 The archaeological features appear from this sample to be densely placed within the Site. The surfaces of the archaeological features were located at minimum depths of 0.25m (Trenches 1, 2 &3) below the modern ground surface. It should therefore be anticipated that the surfaces of any potential further features would be impacted by foundation groundworks for the proposed residential development. The areas directly affected by the current suggested location of the two dwellings to be constructed have both produced a number of archaeological features, and it is clear that other areas also have well preserved archaeology.

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	8	Paper
Context summary	1	Paper
Context sheets	5	Paper
Graphics register	1	Paper
Levels Register	1	Paper
Photographic register	1	Paper
Drawings	3	Permatrace
Digital images	42	.JPG
Animal bone report	1	paper

Faunal dataset	1	.xls

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 deposited with Dorset County Museum. The finds will be temporarily stored at the offices of Context One. It is anticipated that these will be combined with any additional artefacts/ecofacts recovered from any further phases of archaeological mitigation works and either deposited as a single assemblage with Dorset County Museum, subject to their agreement and prevailing deposition guidelines, or returned to the landowner.

7.4 Copies of this report will be deposited with the client/agent and included as part of the Dorset 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. Pottery and CBM

Context	Fabric	Date	Number	Weight (g)
106	1	BBW	ERB	4
106	1	Sandy	LIRB	5
110	1	Calcareous	MIA/LIA	5
110	1	Sandy	LIRB	3
206	2	Calcareous	MIA/LIA	1
303	3	Sandy	Med	1
303	3	Flint and sand	Med	1
303	3	New Forest Ware	LRB	2
303	3	Grog-tempered ware	LRB	1
303	3	Sandy	RB	5
305	3	Sandy	LIRB	5
305	3	BBW	ERB	20
305	3	Greywares	RB	13
305	3	? Rhenish Import	LRB	1
TOTAL			67	498

Table 1: Pottery by Context, Trench, Fabric, Date, Number and Weight (g).

Context	Trench	Fabric	Date	Number	Weight (g)
305	3	grog tempered	RB	2	64
400	4	sandy	RB	1	15
Total				3	79

Table 2: CBM by Context, Trench, Fabric, Number and Weight (g)

Context	Trench	Fabric	Date	Number	Weight (g)
303	3	undiagnostic		1	7
TOTAL				1	7

Table 3: Fired Clay by Context, Trench, Fabric, Number and Weight (g)

Appendix 2. Flint

	107		206		300		305		307		400		Total	
All material	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Primary	0						2	12.5	2	22.2			4	8.9
Secondary	5	45.5	2	66.7			13	81.3	7	77.8	3	100	30	66.7
Tertiary	6	54.5	1	33.3	3	100	1	6.3					11	24.4
Flakes	8	72.7	2		2	66.7	7	43.8	6	66.7	1	33.3	26	57.8
Scrapers	1	9.1			1	33.3	2	12.5	2	22.2	2	66.7	9	20
Points	1	9.1											1	2.2
Other	1	9.1					5	31.3	1	11.1			7	15.6
Nodule frag							2	12.5					2	4.4
Total	11		3		3		16		9		3		45	
Mean weight	1		24.3		5.3		7.1		12.3		21.7		10	

Table 4. Summary of the flint assemblage by context

Condition	1	%	2	%	3	%	Burnt	%	Total
107	5	45.5	1	9.1	5	45.5	(6)	54.5	11
206	2	66.7	1	33.3	0	0	(0)	0	3
305	6	40.0	6	40.0	3	20	(1)	6.3	15
307	6	66.7	3	33.3	0	0	0	0	9
Total	19	50.0	11	28.9	8	21.1	(7)	17.9	38

Table 5. Condition of the flint material

	107		206		305		307		All contexts	
Ratio	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1:1.8 to 2.4					1	25.0			1	8.3
1:1.5 to 1:1.7	1	50.0			1	25.0			2	16.7
1:1.1 to 1:1.4	1	50.0					1	25.0	4	33.3
1:0.7 to 1:1					2	50.0	1	75.0	5	41.7
Total	2		0		4		2		12	

Table 6. Classified breadth:length ratios of complete flakes

	107		206		305		307		All contexts	
Butt width	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
<1mm					1	20.0	2	40.0	3	17.6
1mm to 3mm	1	50.0			3	60.0	1	20.0	7	41.2
4mm to 6mm			1	100			1	20.0	2	11.8
>7mm	1	50.0			1	20.0	1	20.0	5	29.4
Total	2		1		5		5		17	

Table 7. Classified butt widths

Appendix 3. Animal bone

Table 8: Species representation, NISP and MNI, by context.

	Topsoil		Pit [109] RB	Pit [106] RB	Linear cut [304] RB		Total
Species	(300)	(400)	(110)	(107)	(303)	(305)	
Cattle	-	-	2	1	-	2	5
Sheep/Goat	-	1	6	4	2	5	18
Main total	*0*	*1*	*8*	*5*	*2*	*7*	*23*
Large mammal	1	-	-	-	-	1	2
Medium mammal	2	-	11	4	1	2	20
Unidentified mammal	-	-	2	3	1	4	10
Unidentified total	*3*	*0*	*13*	*7*	*2*	*7*	*33*
Total	*3*	*1*	*21*	*12*	*4*	*14*	*55*

Table 8: Species representation, NISP and MNI, by context.

	Cattle	Sheep/goat	Pig	Horse	Dog	Total
Horncore	1					1
Cranium		1				1
Maxilla						
Mandible		+1				1
Atlas						
Axis						
Cervical Vertebra						
Thoracic Vertebra						
Lumbar Vertebra						
Sacrum						
Ribs						
Innominate						
Scapula						
Humerus	2	1				3
Radius		2+1				3
Ulna		1				1
Carpal						
Metacarpal		+1				1
Femur		2				2
Tibia		1				1
Fibula						
Patella						
Calcaneus		1				1
Tarsal						
Astragalus						
Metatarsal		1				1
Phalanges						
Loose teeth	1	5				6

Table 9: Element representation (NISP) for domesticates, all contexts

Period/Phase	Toothwear Scores	MWS	Halstead	Age Range
RB	M1 = m	-	-	-

Table 10: Toothwear for cattle

Period/Phase	Toothwear Scores	MWS	Payne	Age Range
RB	Dp4 E;C	1	A	Neonatal
RB	M1 =g	-	-	-
RB	M1=g	-	-	-
RB	M2=f	-	-	-
RB	M2=f	-	-	-

Table 11: Toothwear for sheep/goat, Grant (1982).

Period	Species	Element	Cut type	No of cuts	Direction*	Comment
RB	Cattle	Horn	Heavy cut/chop	2	--- and /	Disarticulation

Table 12: Butchery. *with bone in anatomical position.

Species	Total
Cattle	1
Sheep/Goat	4
Large Mam	-
Medium Mam	4
Unidentified	1
Total	10

Table 13: Fragmentation, helical and longitudinal breaks.

Period	Total fragments	Gnawed	Weathered	Burnt
RB	21	1	-	2
RB	30	1	-	2

Table 14: Summary of gnawed and burnt fragments.

Period	Species	Element	Measurements (mm)
RB	Cattle	Humerus	Bd 78.6; BT 75.2; HT 52.4
RB	Sheep/goat	Radius	Bp 26.6; Bpf 24.4; Dp13

Table 15: Metrical information in mm.