JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

LAND AT ROWLES FARM,

WESTON ON THE GREEN, OXFORDHSIRE

AN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

NGR
SP 5345 1653

On behalf of
CgMs ltd

APRIL 2015

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SUMMARY

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of cable trenches for the construction of a solar farm on land at Rowles Farm, Weston on the Green, Oxfordshire. An amount of excavation had already taken place prior to the archaeologist being asked to attend the site. During the remaining excavations in both the East and West fields of the site there were discovered, 18 linear ditch features, three features found in section which may have been pits or linear ditch terminuses and two possible pits which may also have been ditch terminuses. The majority of datable features were dated to the Early Iron age or Early to Mid Iron Age. A ditch towards the SW of the site 47/09 was the only feature associated with Roman finds and the pottery was dated from the 2nd Century onwards. A single sherd of pottery from the Early Bronze Age was recovered from the west field but was not securely stratified or associated with any feature.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site is located in fields south and east of Rowles Farm in the civil parish of Weston on the Green (NGR SP 53450 16530 centred). The site lies at *c*.65m OD. The underlying geology is Peterborough Member – Mudstone, overlain by superficial deposits of Alluvium – clay, silt, sand and gravel. (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html. Accessed 08/04/2015). Limestone Gravel was also noted along the northern boundary of the site (TVAS Aug. 2014).

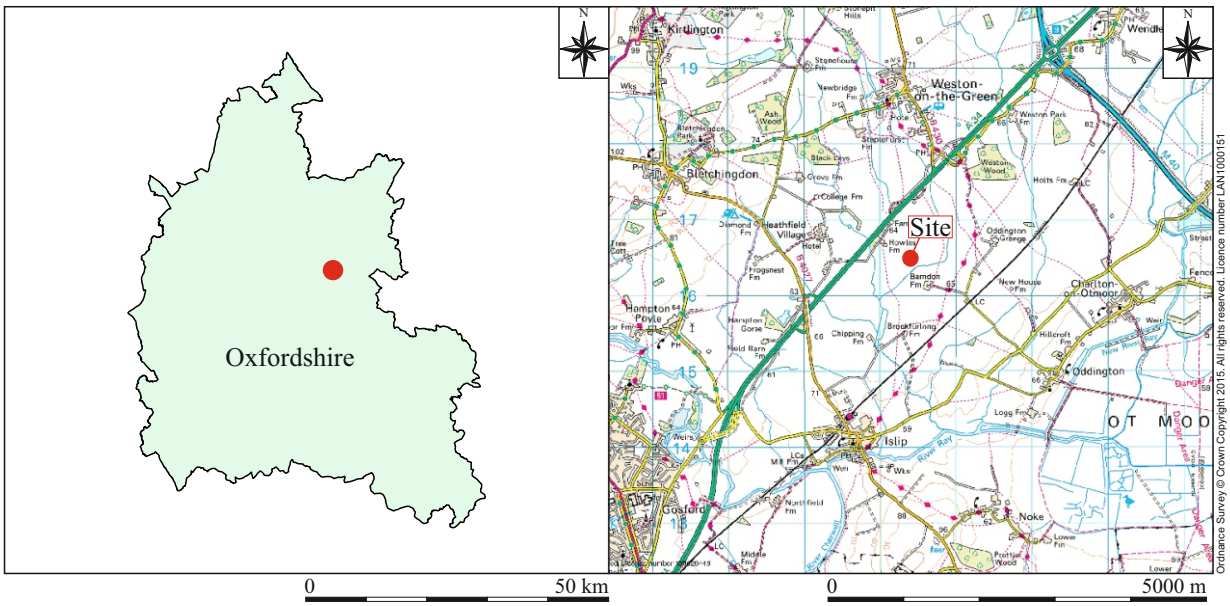
1.2 Planning Background

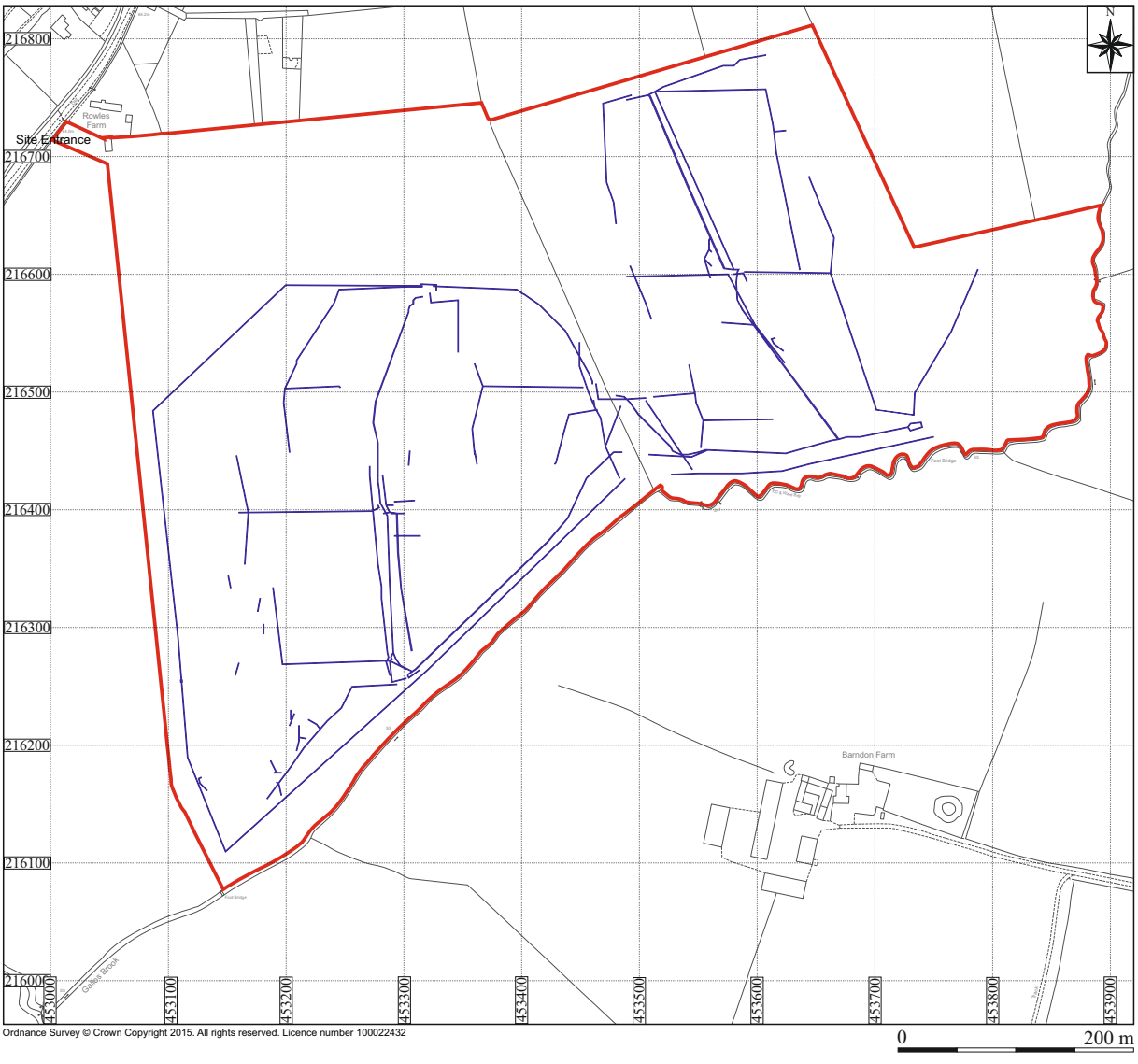
Cherwell District Council granted planning permission (13/01027/F) on appeal (APP/C3105/A/13/2207532) for the construction of a solar photovoltaic farm with on-site equipment rooms and plant, security fencing and landscaping. Due to the archaeological and historical importance of the surrounding area a condition was attached to the permission requiring a watching brief to be maintained during groundworks on the site. This was in line with PPG 16 (the planning policy current at the time) and other Local Planning policies.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The site is located near to the edge of Roman activity with the vexillation fortress and walled town of Alchester *c.*5km NE of the site, the rural sanctuary at Woodeaton to the South and the rural settlement and pottery production site on Otmoor (Dawson 2013, 4). The site lies 4km west of the route of the Roman road 160b which linked Alchester with Dorchester on Thames in the South (Dawson 2013, 4; Margary 1955, 149).

In the field beyond the western border of the site and 559m WSW from the centre of the site, there is an Iron Age and Roman cropmark complex (HER 13901). These cropmarks also appear to extend to the east into the area of the site.





Key Site boundary Monitored cable trenches

Figure 1: Site location

There is an undated cropmark complex 867m SW of the centre of the site (HER 9403) and an undated curvilinear enclosure 634m south of the centre of the site (HER 15974). A circular enclosure is recorded 1km SSE of the centre of site (HER 17439). A possible D-shaped enclosure believed to be Iron Age is noted towards the south of the west field from aerial photographic evidence (Dawson 2013, 5 & plate 6).

A medieval assemblage with limited Roman activity is recorded 1.17km SE of the centre of the site (HER 16901). The material was recovered during unsystematic field walking. The finds are associated an arrowhead of Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age date (Fox6449).

The medieval site of Otley Grange and moat is 947m west of the centre of the site (HER 1133). This is the site of a Cistercian House founded in 1138 (Dawson 2013, 5).

An archaeological evaluation recorded pits and ditches located along the northern edge of the western field (Taylor 2014). Roman pottery was recovered from a pit cut into a ditch discovered towards the NW of the field. Between *c.*60m and *c.*70m east of these features two more ditches and a gully were identified. One of these features was not excavated, one was undated and one contained Roman pottery. Further east there was an undated pit. In the North East area of this field several Roman features were identified which included three Roman pits, a Roman ditch and a gulley terminus. There was also one gully terminus that was Roman or later, two pits that were not excavated, and an undated post hole. Further South towards the centre of the western field a ditch and gully terminus were indentified and Iron Age pottery and animal bone were recovered from their fills. Two more ditches were recorded at the south and towards the SE of the field which contained animal bone but no dateable finds. No features were identified in the eastern field although the extent of the evaluation was limited.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks for the construction of the Solar farm This will involve examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks, including the monitoring of the excavation of foundations for on-site equipment rooms and plant, monitoring of on-site landscaping and

In particular:

- To constantly monitor the excavation of the trenching for cabling.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Oxford Archaeological Service the archaeological advisors to the District Council. Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate and possible.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (1994).

3.2 Methodology

An archaeologist was to be present on site during the course of any groundwork that had the potential to reveal or disturb archaeological remains.

Any archaeological deposits and features revealed were to be cleaned by hand and recorded in plan before being excavated and recorded at an appropriate level. Any archaeological features or other remains i.e. concentrations of artefacts, were to be recorded by written, drawn and photographic record. Where archaeological features were exposed during any ground reduction but otherwise would remain unaffected they were recorded only by plan and written description. Where remains would be impacted on then they would be sample excavated. Any variation to this was to be agreed with the County Archaeological Services, on behalf of the local planning authority. All artefacts would be collected and retained except for concentrations of building material where a representative sample will be kept.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was also produced.

4 RESULTS (Figures 2-7)

4.1 Summary of work excavated outside of Watching Brief conditions (Figures 2-3)

On arrival to site it was found that a proportion of the planned excavations had already been carried out prior to a request for an archaeologist to observe the works. This included a site access road and compound on the north side of the west field.

In both the east and the west fields, a fence had been erected around the perimeter of the site and shallow drainage trenches had been dug beyond this fence. In both fields the frames for the solar panels had already been piled into the ground and all the pads for the inverter stations had been excavated to a depth of 0.6m or more and filled with stone hardcore. In the east field all the cable trenches had been excavated. Those that

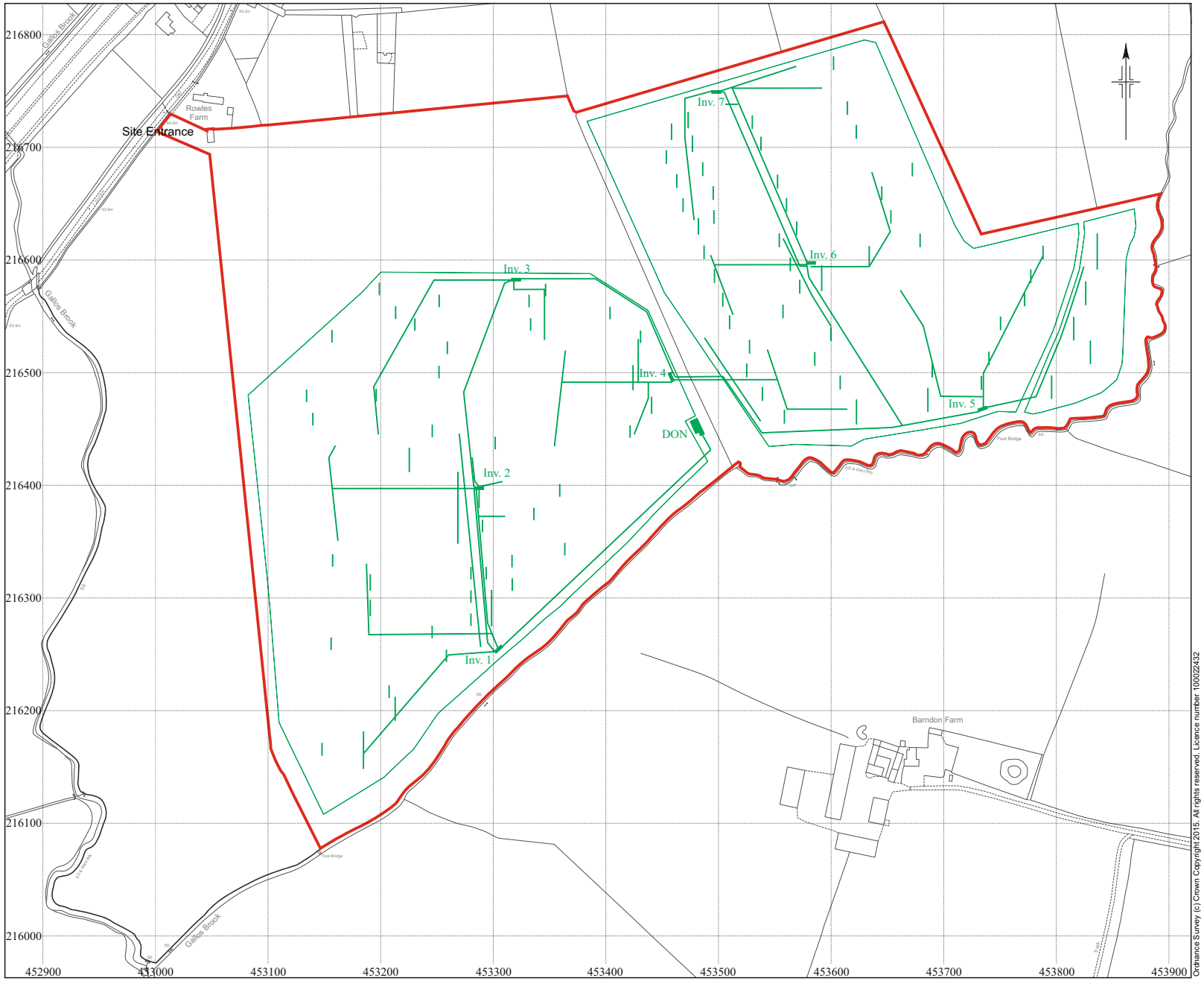


Figure 2: Proposed cable trenches and inverter stations

had not been backfilled entirely had been filled with sand and cables had been laid in them (Fig. 2). During the laying of the sand and cables it was evident that the sections had been smeared and they were covered with sand (plate 1). The majority of link trenches in the east field had also been dug and backfilled in advance. In the west field, link trenches had been excavated and backfilled prior to an archaeologist being present (compare planned excavations on Fig. 2 with observed excavations on Fig. 3).

Due to the obstruction caused by the solar panel frames being constructed ahead of the excavations many of the trenches did not follow the routes as detailed on the plans and this made locating the excavations difficult (compare Figs. 2 & 3). During the period when archaeologists were present on the site some excavation continued to take place without being watched. This occurred whilst archaeologists were observing excavation elsewhere on the site, or because they had not been told that excavations were taking place, or because they had been informed that excavations were not taking place at all. The following is a record of the observance of excavations and is limited to those excavations that the archaeologist had been informed of or which had been identified whilst on site.

Part of the above is explained by the tight timetable the contractor was working to in order that the switch-on deadline was met.

4.2 **Archaeological watching brief** (Figure 3)

In order to deal with the rest of excavations it was decided to number all the trenches that were on the available plan. Cable trenches 1 and 11 on the far east side and far west side of the east field had been excavated and backfilled. All the other cable trenches 2-10 had been excavated and laid with sand and cables and archaeology was not visible in these trenches (Fig. 3). A number of link trenches were excavated and watched but the majority were dug and backfilled without supervision (Figs. 2 and 3).

All cuts were numbered by trench number and then context number *e.g.* 10/02. All deposits and fills were numbered with brackets *e.g.* (10/01). The following results are a record of the archaeology discovered and associated deposits.

4.3 **Trench 20** (Figures 3 and 4)

In Trench 20 the lowest layer was a solid layer of blue grey clay with brown smearing that was identified as a natural alluvial layer (20/03). Deposited above this was a solid layer of grey brown mixed clay with frequent fine gravel inclusions (20/07). This layer was 0.4m thick and may have been the same as (20/03). Above this layer was mid orange brown, coarse, gravelly and sandy loam (20/06). This layer was between 0.15m and 0.4m thick and was similar to soil layers identified across the site below the ploughsoil. Cutting this layer was ditch 20/04 (fig 4, plan 20, section 20.1; plate 2). The ditch was 1.76m wide greater than 1m in length and survived to a depth of 0.86m. It was cut in a SW to NE direction and contained two fills. The lowest fill was a 0.7m thick, solid mid brown clay with grey smears and rare gravel (20/05). Deposited above this was a 0.2m thick layer of firm mid-brown clay loam with rare small stone (20/02). Overlying this layer was a 0.3m thick layer of mid grey brown silty clay loam (20/01). This was a ploughsoil layer which had slumped into the trench at this point.

Figure 3: Site plan

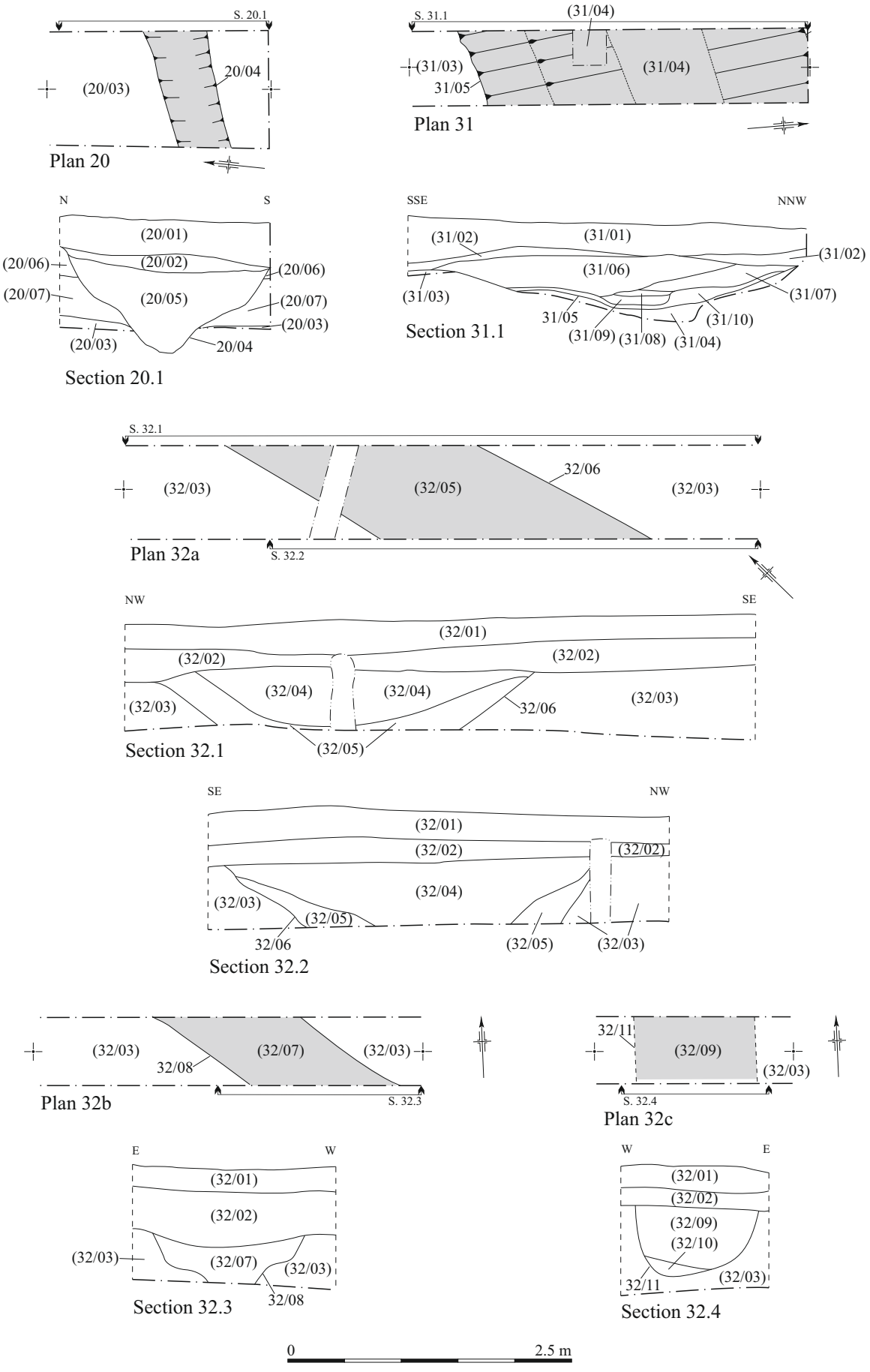


Figure 4: Trenches 20, 31 and 32 - plans and sections

4.4 **Trench 24** (Figure 3)

The lowest layer in Trench 24 was an orange and grey sandy clay alluvium (24/04). Deposited above this was 0.15m thick layer of mottled red and grey sandy clay (24/03). Clinging to the edge of the section at this point was a small fragment of early prehistoric pottery that was characteristic of the early Bronze Age. The stratigraphic provenance of the pottery sherd was not secure so it was identified as unstratified. Its approximate location was SP 53283 16303. Above context (24/03) was a 0.35m thick layer of mid-brown, sandy clay loam ((24/02) and above this was a 0.4m thick layer of mid grey brown clay loam ploughsoil (24/01). No other archaeological finds or features were recovered from this trench.

4.5 **Trench 31** (Figures 3 and 4)

Trench 31 was a shallow link trench. The trench was 0.45m deep and 0.7m wide. The lowest layer in the trench was a solid light yellow sandy clay which was interpreted as the natural alluvial layer (31/03). This layer was cut by a linear ditch with shallow undulating sides 31/05 (Fig. 4, plan 31, section 31.1; plate 3). It was a 3.3m wide by 0.8m deep. It was cut in a WSW-ENE direction and was greater than 0.7m in length. It was not clear if the lowest layer in the section of the ditch was a fill or an overcut layer of natural (31/04). Layer (31/04) was greater than 0.15 thick and was a firm, mottled brown grey clay. The lowest definite fill of ditch 31/05 was a 0.15m thick layer of dark grey and black silty clay (31/10). It had an oily texture with frequent burning and contained pottery dated to the Early Iron Age. Deposited above this fill layer was a 0.08m thick layer of light orange, silty sandy clay with charcoal smearing (31/09). This was overlaid by a 0.07m deep layer of firm, mid grey and black mottled silty clay loam with moderate charcoal flecking (31/08). Deposited above this on the north edge of the ditch was a firm mid to light orange silty clay with rare small angular flint inclusions (31/07). Above this layer was a deposit of friable mid dark grey silty loam (31/06). This was the uppermost fill and included frequent charcoal flecking, a moderate inclusion of angular and sub-angular small stone. The fill also contained animal bone fragments, burnt stone and rare fragments of daub. Above this layer was a 0.08m thick layer of light yellow grey clay loam which was visible throughout the trench (31/02). The highest visible layer was a 0.4m layer of mid brown silty loam topsoil (31/01).

4.6 **Trench 32** (Figures 3 and 4)

Trench 32 was a high voltage trench (HV) that was c.1m wide and 0.9m to 1.10m deep. The lowest layer excavated was a firm, light orange natural clay (32/03). This was cut by a linear ditch that was *c.*1.4m wide, greater than 1.6m in length, greater than 0.56m deep and orientated N-S, 32/06 (Fig. 4, plan 32a, sections 32.1 & 32.2; plate 4). The lowest fill of the ditch was a wet, oily sandy clay layer that was mid to light grey in colour with light orange brown patches and a fine gritty inclusion (32/05). Above this layer was a 0.5m thick layer of soft dark grey to black sandy clay, with an oily texture (32/04). It had a fine gritty inclusion and contained fragments of animal bone, burnt sandy stone and red clay specks. This layer was the uppermost surviving fill of the ditch and it was overlain by a mid to light grey brown sandy clay loam (32/02). This layer was 0.2m thick and had a lumpy appearance suggesting it had been turned by the plough. This layer was cut by a field drain that

also cut the fills to the ditch below. Deposited above this was a 0.3m thick mid-grey brown silty clay loam topsoil (32/01).

Further east along Trench 32, another linear ditch was identified in section, 32/08 (Fig. 4, plan 32b section 32.3; plate 5). This had undulating sides, was 0.9m wide and was greater than 0.4m deep. It was cut in a NW-SE direction and only a single fill was identified. The fill was a light sandy grey clay with occasional charcoal (32/07). It contained a fragment of pottery which may have been from the Middle Iron Age and a fragment of fired clay.

Still further to the east another possible linear ditch was identified 32/11 (Fig. 4, plan 32c, section 32.4). It was however only identified and recorded in the north section and it is possible that it may have been the terminus of a ditch or a pit. The lowest fill identified in 32/11 was 0.1m thick layer of firm, dark brown, silty clay (32/10). Above this was an upper fill of mid orange and grey silty clay that was 0.54m thick (32/09). No finds were recovered from either fill.

Towards the eastern end of Trench 32 the trench was cut with a larger bucket to a width of 1.3m wide and to a depth of 1.1m deep. The proximity of the spoil to the edge of the trench and the falling of clay boulders into the trench made satisfactory recording of this end of the trench difficult. The lowest layer identified was a mid yellow and grey clay (32/12). At around 40m west from the east end of Trench 32, a buried soil horizon was evident (32/13). The layer was approximately 0.2m thick. It was dark brown silty clay with a mixture of red and brown clay and it had frequent stone and gritty inclusions. There were some undulations in the lower horizon of the deposit which may have been furrows. Above this layer was of mid yellow brown clay loam that was 0.3 to 0.4m thick (32/14) and above this a topsoil layer of mid-grey brown silty clay loam that was 0.3m thick (32/15).

4.7 **Trench 34** (Figures 3 and 5)

Trench 34 was 1.3m wide and around 1m deep, a H.V trench. The lowest layer recorded was a coarse sandy gravel with patches of light grey clay and this was identified as a natural alluvial layer (34/03) and several linear features were cut into this layer. The southernmost feature was ditch 34/11 (Fig. 5 plan 34b, section 34.2, plate 6). This was a linear ditch with irregular sides. It was between 0.7m and 1m wide, was deeper than 1m and looked to be cut in a SE-NW direction. The lower fill was a firm light grey silty clay and a single piece of Iron Age pottery which may have been middle Iron Age was retrieved from this fill (34/10). The fill extended beyond the lower limit of excavation and was excavated to a depth of 0.4m. Above was a 0.55m thick layer of black silty clay with charcoal flecks (34/09). The fill contained pottery, bone, a fragment of quern stone and fragments of fired clay which may have formed a triangular weight. Further north from this feature were two parallel ditches cut in a SE-NW direction. Ditch 34/05 was the southernmost of the two ditches (Fig. 5 plan 34 a, section 34.1). It was 0.9m wide and had a depth greater than 0.5m. There was a single fill that was a firm light brown grey silty clay (34/04). Running parallel to this ditch and 1.3m north of it was ditch 34/08 (Fig. 5, plan 34 a, section 34.1). The ditch was 1.1m wide and 0.46m deep. It was recorded as having two fills although the upper fill appeared to be the fill of a re-cut. The lowest fill was greater than 0.5 thick and was a firm light brownish grey silty clay (34/07). This layer was cut by the re-cutting of the ditch, 34/12. This was filled by a fill of mid grey silty clay with Fig 5

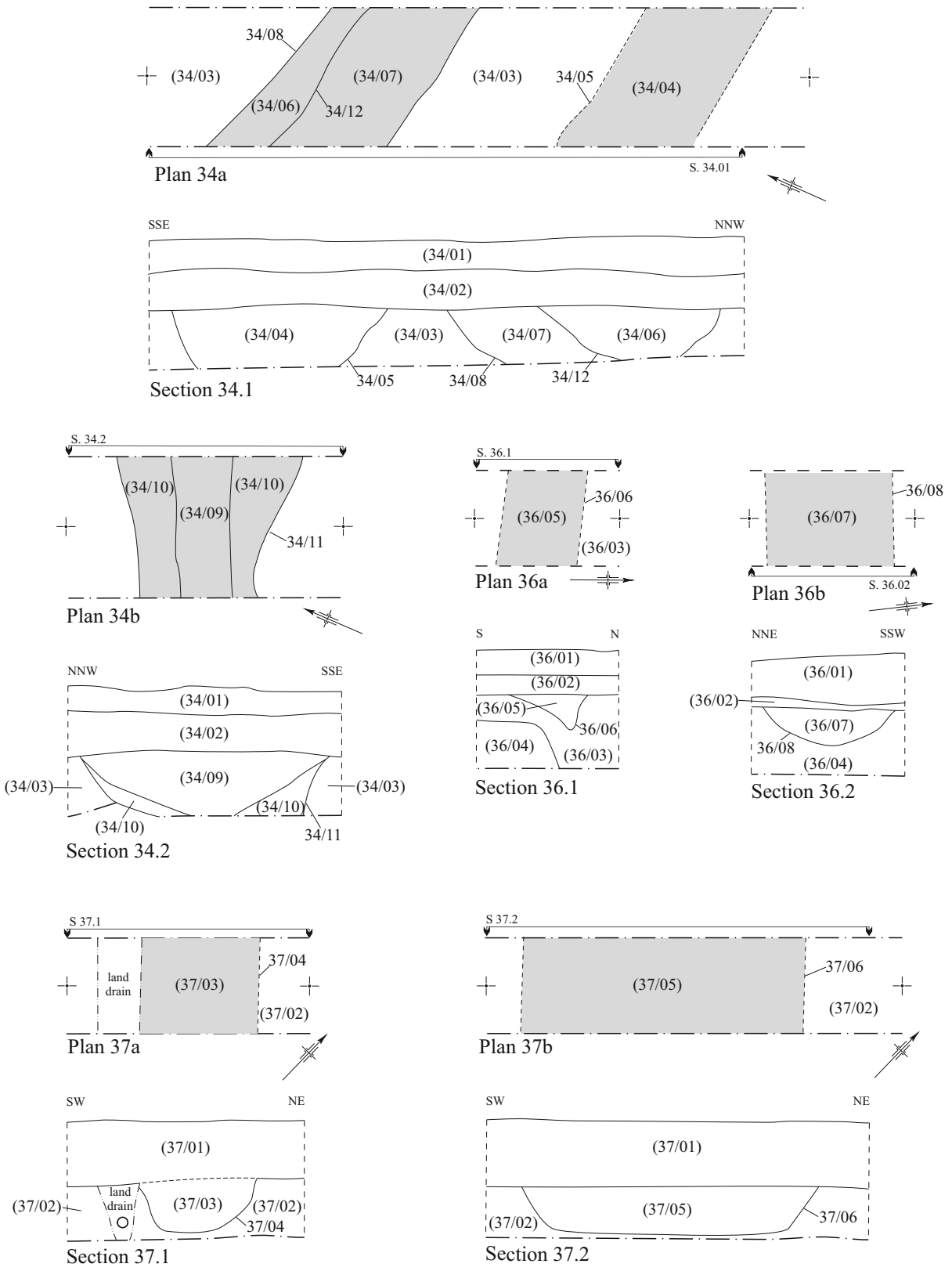


Figure 5: Trenches 34, 36 & 37 - plans and sections

occasional charcoal flecks (34/06). Deposited above all the upper fills was a 0.4m deep layer of mid brown silty clay loam (34/02) and above this a 0.3m layer of mid grey brown topsoil (34/01).

4.8 Trench 36 (Figure 5)

Trench 36 was a H.V. trench that was 1m deep and between 0.8 and 1m wide. The lowest layer in the north of the trench was a grey clay (36/04) that was overlain by a layer of 0.62m layer of coarse orange sand and gravel (36/03). Both layers were identified as natural. A ditch cut was located in Trench 36 towards the north end of the trench, 36/06 (Fig. 5, plan 36a, section 36.1). It was a linear ditch with irregular shaped sides and was 0.3m deep. It contained a single fill of firm, grey sandy clay (36/05) and was cut in a NE-SW direction. Deposited above the fill was a layer of mid brown clay loam (36/02) and above this a topsoil layer of mid grey brown clay loam (36/01). Further south a cut feature was found in section, 36/08 (Fig. 5, plan 36b, section 36.2; Plate 7). It was a 0.3m deep feature that was 1.1m wide in section. It was not visible in the west section and so may have been a ditch terminus or a pit. It was filled by a firm, light grey silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks (36/07). A single fragment of pottery was recovered that was identified as early Iron Age.

4.9 Trench 37 (figure 5)

Trench 37 was 1.3m wide narrowing to 0.8m and was 1m deep; an H.V cable trench. The lowest layer recorded at the west end of the trench was a 0.6m thick layer of orange brown sandy clay loam (37/02). Above this was a 0.6m layer of recently churned, mid-grey clay loam (37/01). Towards the east end of the trench the stratigraphy was slightly clearer and the lower horizon of (37/01) was identified as a 0.2m thick layer of mid to dark brown loamy soil (37/09) overlying (37/02). The lowest layer at this end of the trench was a mixed orange and grey natural clay layer (37/10). Cutting layer (37/02) at the west end of the trench was a linear ditch cut in a SE-NW direction, 37/08 (plate 8). Ground conditions prevented full recording of the feature but it was approximately 0.8m wide and 0.5m deep and was filled by a light grey brown clay loam (37/07). Further to the east two more linear ditches were found cutting (37/02). Ditch 37/04 was cut in a NW-SE direction and was recorded with a depth of 0.44m and a width of 1m (Fig. 5, plan 37a, section 37.1). It was filled by a single fill of grey brown sandy clay loam (37/03). Further east, Ditch 37/06 was also cut NW-SE. It was 0.46m deep and 2.5m wide and was filled by a mid-grey brown clay loam (37/05) (Fig. 5, plan 37b, section 37.2).

4.10 Trench 45 (Figures 3 and 6)

The lowest layer was a mid brownish yellow natural clay (45/03). This layer was cut by a linear ditch orientated SE-NW, 45/05 (Fig. 6, plan 45, section 45.1). The ditch was greater than 0.4 deep and was approximately 1.5m wide. It was filled by a soft mid-grey silty clay, with occasional charcoal flecks (45/05). Deposited above this layer was a light brown, silty clay loam subsoil (45/02) and above this mid grey brown silty clay loam topsoil (45/01).

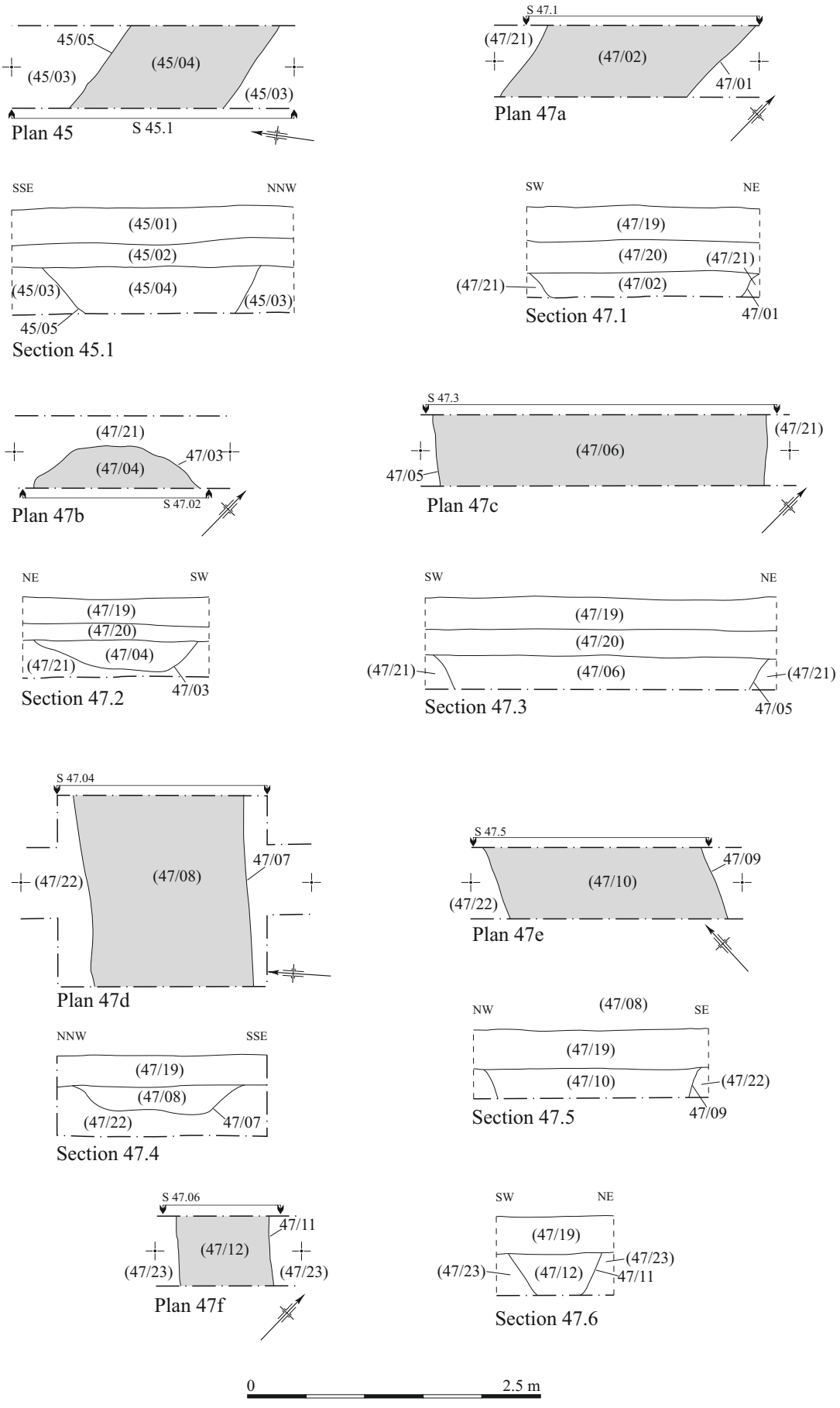


Figure 6: Trenches 45 and 47 - plans and sections

4.11 **Trench 47** (Figures 3, 6 &7)

Trench 47 was CCTV cable trench which was cut round the perimeter of the west field (fig 3). The lowest layer recorded to the south was a natural orange grey, sandy clay (47/21). Above this was along the south section of Trench 47 a mid brown clay loam subsoil layer (47/20) was recorded and above this a mid-grey brown, clay loam topsoil (47/19). Towards the SE the stratigraphy showed the topsoil (47/19) sitting above a light orange sandy gravel (47/22) and at the north side the west field a slightly sandier orange and grey clay was recorded as the natural soil horizon (47/23). Several cut features were identified in Trench 47, all recorded as being cut through the natural soil horizons (47/21-23). Toward the SE corner of the field a linear ditch was identified, 47/01(Fig. 6, plan 47a, figure 47.1). It was cut in a N-S direction and was1.4m wide, greater than 0.5m long and more than 0.2m deep. It was filled with a compact grey silty clay (47/02).

Further to the SW, part of rounded feature was identified, 47/03 (fig 6, plan 47b, section 47.2). This feature may have been a pit or the terminus of a linear ditch. The revealed dimensions of the feature were 1.4m by greater than 0.4m and it had a depth of 0.26m that was recorded as cutting the natural soil horizon (47/21). The feature had a single fill of dark grey, silty clay (47/04).

Another possible linear ditch 47/05 was orientated NW-SE (Fig. 6, plan 47c, section 47.3). The feature was not clear and it may have been several intercutting features.
The width of the feature was 2.9 wide and more than 0.3m deep. In plan it appeared to line up with 37/06 which was 2.5m wide. It was filled by a dark grey silty clay (47/06).

In the SW corner of the west field a linear ditch was identified orientated WSW-ENE, 47/07 (Fig. 6, plan 47d, section 47.4). The ditch was 1.4m wide with convex sides and a length greater than 1.8m. It was 0.25 deep and was cut into the natural orange sandy gravel. The fill was a brown sandy silty clay with frequent gravel inclusions (47/08).

Also in the SW corner of the site a ditch with finds dating to the Roman period, 47/09 was discovered (Fig. 6, plan 47e, section 47.5; plate 9). The ditch was 1.9m wide and greater than 0.6m long with a depth of more than 0.4m. It was orientated SW-NE and was filled dark grey, silty sandy soil with rare charcoal flecks (47/10). The fill was only excavated down to the lower limit of the excavation and contained worked limestone blocks, pottery, bone, two fragments of imbrex tile, and an iron nail.

In the north of the west field four ditches were identified. Ditch 47/11 was 0.8m wide and greater than 0.6m in length (Fig. 6, plan 47f, section 47.6. It was orientated NW to SE and had a depth of dark blue grey, silty clay with orange mottles (47/12). Ditch 47/13 was 2m wide, was greater than 0.6m in length, had straight sides and was greater than 0.3m deep (Fig. 7, plan 47g, section 47.7) It was filled by a dark grey blue orange mottled silty clay (47/14); neither of these ditches contained any finds.

Further east of these ditches two more linear ditches were identified. Ditch 47/15 was orientated NW-SE, was 0.8m wide with a length greater than 0.7m and was greater than 0.35m in depth (Fig. 7, plan 47h, section 47.8; plate 10). It was filled by a dark brown grey, silty clay which contained animal bone and three fragments of Iron Age pottery (47/16).

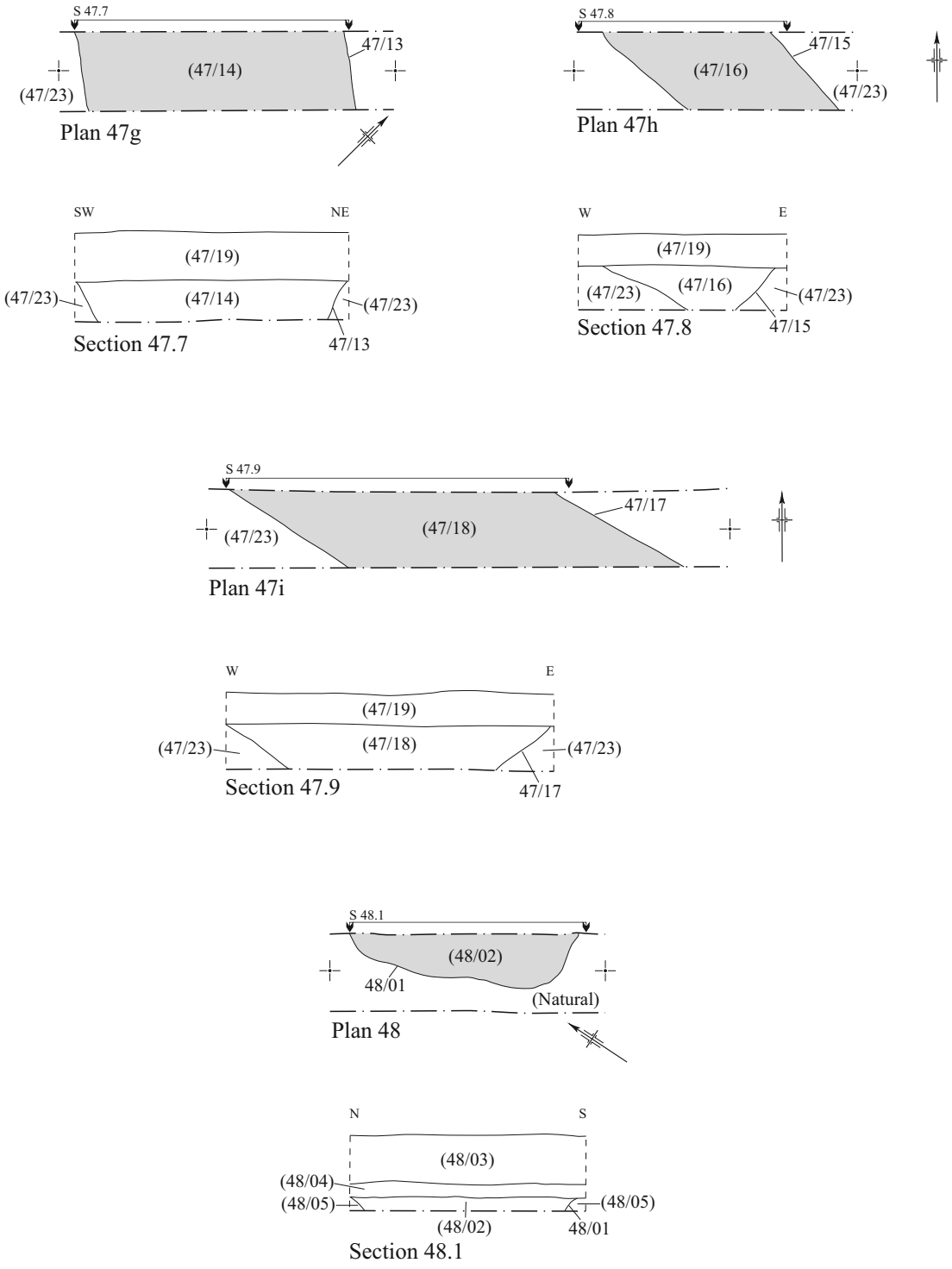


Figure 7: Trenches 47 and 48 - plans and sections

Further east of this feature another ditch was identified that was also cut in a NW-SE orientation 47/17 (Fig. 7, plan 47i, section 47.9). The ditch was 1.2m wide, was greater than 0.7m in length and greater than 0.35m in depth. The ditch had straight sloping sides and was filled by a dark grey silty clay with orange mottles and charcoal flecks. The ditch fill contained two pieces of pottery dating to the Iron Age. The alignment of the ditch appeared to match a ditch identified during the evaluation (Taylor, A. Aug 2014. p5). This was recorded as ditch 10 in evaluation Trench 13. It was 1m wide and contained three fills, the lower two containing Iron Age pottery.

4.12 Trench 48 (Figures 3 and 7)

Further excavations took place in the east field and one further cut feature was indentified in Trench 48, 48/01 (fig 7, plan 48, section 48.1). The feature was cut into the natural orange sandy clay (48/05) The feature was recorded as sub oval with dimensions of 1.6m by greater than 0.5m, the feature was not fully excavated but the fill was identified as a blue grey, silty clay with orange mottle (48/02). The fill contained animal bone and contained 34 fragments of pottery which were dated to the Early Iron Age. Overlying the fill was a 0.1m layer of mid brown sandy clay loam which was identified as a sub-plough layer (48/04) and above this a 0.4m layer of mid grey brown, clay loam topsoil.

5 FINDS

5.1 Pottery *by Jane Timby*

A small group of 67 sherds of pottery weighing 2825 g dating to the Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman periods was recovered. This was accompanied by a two pieces of ceramic building material and five fragments of fired clay.

Pottery was recovered from nine excavated contexts with an additional three sherds from unstratified collection recovered from the west field.

Overall the assemblage is in moderately poor condition reflected in an overall average sherd size of 4.2 g.

For the purposes of the assessment the assemblage was scanned to assess the likely chronology and quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context. The resulting data can be found in Table 1.

Early Prehistoric Pottery

A single grog-tempered body sherd was recovered from unstratified collection from Trench 24. The use of the grog temper and the firing pattern with an oxidised exterior and black core / interior is characteristic of the early Bronze Age.

Later prehistoric Pottery

Most of the recovered assemblage, some 59 sherds, is likely to date to the later prehistoric period. Many of the fabrics are calcareous in nature with various grades of

fossil shell or limestone and fossil shell (LISH); sandy with sparse limestone (SALI) and fine sandy (SAND: one sherd only).

There are very few featured pieces but sherds that can be highlighted include an unstratified rim with deep finger-tipped depressions on the upper surface, a globular bodied jar/bowl from 47/18 and a carinated bodysherd from cxt 48/02.

Context 48/02 produced most of the assemblage, some 90 sherds from probably just two vessels. One vessel comprising 15 bodysherds and one base has a very vesicular porous fabric. The other, comprising 18 sherds has two slightly everted rimsherds and a flat base. One sherd shows a body or shoulder carination.

The later prehistoric assemblage is quite small but certain elements point to a date in the early Iron Age, for example the finger-tipped u/s rim. It is not possible to tell with such a small group whether it represents a single phase of activity or whether there is also a middle Iron Age component and if so whether there is a continuum between the two. The vessel from 47/18 might appear to be more typical of the middle Iron Age and the presence of sandy fabrics with sparse lime as found in contexts 34/09, 34/10 and 32/07 is a trend which also becomes more common in the middle Iron Age.

Roman Pottery

A total seven sherds in the group are dated to the Roman period. The only stratified material is six sherds from cxt 47/10. One sherd is unstratified and was found in the NW area of the Western field.

The sherds are all fine sandy grey or orange sandy wares probably products of the Oxfordshire industry and not closely datable other than likely to date from the 2nd century AD on.

Potential and further work

This is quite a very small group of poorly preserved material which has very little further potential as it stands. If further work is undertaken at the site the chronological range may be a little clearer.

5.2 Ceramic building material (CBM) and fired clay *by Jane Timby*

A single moderately large fragment of Roman roofing tile from an *imbrex* and a small fragment came from cxt 47/10, associated with the Roman pottery (Table 1).

Five fragments of fired clay were recovered from 34/09 (Table 1). One fragment had a flat surface. The low fired nature of the interior might suggest these fragments come from a triangular weight / brick. They are associated with later prehistoric pottery.

Cxt	**BA**	**Iron Age**			**Roman**	**Tot No**	**Tot Wt**	**Date**	**CBM**		**FC**	
Fabric		LISH	SALI	SAND					No	Wt	No	Wt
31/10	0	6	0	0	0	6	4	EIA	0	0	0	0
32/07	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	E/MIA	0	0	0	0
34/09	0	1	8	0	0	9	52	E/MIA	0	0	5	19
34/10	0	0	1	0	0	1	7	E/MIA	0	0	0	0
36/07	0	1	0	0	0	1	6	EIA	0	0	0	0
47/10	0	1	0	0	6	7	26	IA/Ro	2	194	0	0
47/16	0	2	0	1	0	3	8	EIA	0	0	0	0
47/18	0	2	0	0	0	2	63	IA	0	0	0	0
48/02	0	34	0	0	0	34	90	EIA	0	0	0	0
Tr 24 u/s	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	EBA	0	0	0	0
u/s	0	1	0	0	1	2	21	EIA/Ro	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	**1**	**48**	**10**	**1**	**7**	**67**	**282**		**2**	**194**	**5**	**19**

Table 1. Pottery, Ceramic Building Material and Fired clay.

5.3 The Quern Stone *by Stephen Yeates*

Typologies for British quern stones of the later prehistoric period were established by Curwen (1937, 133-151; 1941, 15-32), and are still considered relevant today (Peacock 2013, 59, 64). The categorisation of rotary querns covered five types known as Wessex, Sussex, Hunsbury, puddingstone and flat beehive. The names are derived from regional tradition, type sites, appearance and even stone type. The types of stone used include Millstone Grit from Derbyshire, Pen Pits from Wiltshire, Spilsby Sandstone from Lincolnshire, Old Red Sandstone from the near the Severn Estuary in Gwent and South Gloucestershire, Puddingstone from Hertfordshire, and Lower Greensand from Lodsworth in Sussex, Folkstone in Kent, and more locally at Culham in Oxfordshire (north of the Thames this is often called Woburn Sandstone).

All of the types of rotary quern have a central shaft for a spindle, and all posses a larger tapering shaft above to input the grain. This stone fragment shows components of both of these features but there is insufficient amount of the stone surviving to be able to categorise the stone any further than a millstone of rotary type.

5.4 Animal Bone *by Simona Denis*

During the excavation a total of 69 animal bone fragments were recovered from seven different contexts, representing almost exclusively the fill of ditches with the exception of a single possible small pit 48/01. The assemblage has the expected range of animals present, as the entirety of identifiable bones belongs to cattle, sheep/goat and pig species; part of the collection (13 examples, or 18%) remains unidentified due

Context	Genus	No. of Items	Weight (gr)	Type	Comments
31/06	Ovine	4	18	Tibia	2 with distal ephiphysis
	?Ovine	11	27	Unidentified long bones	Fragments too small for identification
		1	11	?Radius-Ulna	
		1	4	?Radius	With ?proximal ephiphysis
	?Suine	1	2	Phalanx	
32/04	Unidentified	2	4	Unidentified long bones	Fragments too small for identification
	Ovine	1	3	Ulna	With distal ephiphysis
		1	25	Tibia	Diaphysis fragment
		1	39	Scapula	Body fragment
34/09	Unidentified	6	20	Unidentified	Fragments too small for identification
	Ovine	1	5	?Tibia	Diaphysis fragment
	Ovine	1	5	Tibia	With ?proximal ephiphysis
	?Ovine	1	4	Rib	Shaft fragment
	Suine	1	37	Ulna	?Juvenile with proximal and distal ephyphises
		3	89	Molar	
		1	4	Premolar	
		2	14	Canine	
		1	2	Incisor	
	?Suine	1	23	Innominate	?Juvenile
47/02	Ovine	1	44	Radius-Ulna	Olecranon fragment
		1	5	Tibia	Distal metaphysis fragment
	Bovine	1	243	Radius-Ulna	Diaphysis fragment
47/10	Bovine	1	30	Molar	
		1	32	Radius-Ulna	Unfused ephiphysis
	Ovine	2	27	Tibia	
		1	7	Humerus	With distal ephiphysis
		1	9	Innominate	
		1	42	Radius-Ulna	
	?Ovine	1	3	Phalanx	
		1	2	Rib	
47/16	Ovine	1	316	Mandible	With 2 complete molars. ?butchering mark
		1	7	Humerus	With distal ephiphysis
		1	23	Femur	With distal ephiphysis
		1	21	Scapula	Medial border fragment
	?Ovine	1	9	Unidentified long bones	Diaphysis fragment
	?Suine	1	80	?Femur	Diaphysis fragment
	Unidentified	1	3	Unidentified long bone	Complete
		1	11	Rib	Shaft fragment
	?Bovine	1	20	?Rib	?Shaft fragment
48/02	Suine	1	<2	Molar	Juvenile crown fragment
		1	7	Molar	Juvenile root fragment
		1	4	Premolar	Juvenile
		1	6	Mandible	Juvenile
	Unidentified	3	<2	Unidentified	Fragments too small for identification

Table 2. Animal Bone

to the small size of the fragments. These main domestic mammals are proved to be common in the area during the Iron Age (Mulville 2005). The main particularity of the assemblage is the unusual small amount of cow bones recovered.

The most represented species is goat/sheep with 37 identified fragments, composing 53% of the assemblage. The only bone in the collection with possible butchering marks is a sheep/goat mandible fragment, complete with two molars, found in the Early Iron Age ditch fill (47/16).

21.7% of the bones recovered were identified as pig. Over a half of the examples are loose teeth: these are particularly durable elements, surviving when the other bones have disintegrated (Mulville 2005). Most of the suine bones recovered belonged to juvenile individuals, as pigs were usually butchered at a young age as their primary use was meat production (Allen 2006, Holmes 2007).

Cattle are generally more represented during the Iron Age. The collection from Rowles Farm includes only three fragments positively identified as cow, with the addition of one possible cow rib, and represents only 5.7% of the total.

5.5 Metalwork *by* *Simona Denis*

A single, fairly preserved iron nail was recovered from context 47/10), fill of a ditch. The object is a general-purpose, hand-wrought, square tapered nail with irregularly beaten shank a rose head, measuring 48 mm in length and weighting 6 gr.

Hand-forged nails were produced with the same techniques for centuries and in a large variety of sizes, the square section being the easiest shape to make by hammering a piece of heated iron. The example from Rowles Farm can tentatively be dated to the Roman period based on the dating of the associated finds rather than on its characteristics.

6 DISCUSSION

The majority of datable features identified during the excavations were identified as linear ditch features, most of which were dated by the finds to the Iron Age. A total of five ditches were identified in the east field and two of these were dated from the early to the middle Iron Age, 32/08 & 34/11. Another feature identified in section may have been a ditch terminus but may also have been a pit, 32/11. No finds were recovered from two ditches towards the North of that field, 34/05 & 34/08 and no datable finds were recovered from 32/06 in the SW of the field, though it did contain animal bone and burnt material. There was one pit or possibly a ditch terminus, 48/01 that had 34 pieces of Early Iron Age pottery deposited in it. In the west field there were 13 linear ditches, one possible linear ditch, and one feature found in section that may have been a pit or a ditch terminus. There was also one feature which may either have been a pit or a ditch terminus. Three features contained material dated to the early Iron Age, 31/05, 36/08 and 47/15, and one contained material more broadly dated to the Iron Age, 47/17. The extent of these features is unknown but they probably represent boundaries or part of an Iron Age field system. The assemblage may point to a date for these features in the Early Iron Age but it is questioned if there is a Middle Iron Age phase, and if so, if there is continuity between the two (see

Pottery Report 5.2). The presence of the quern stone, produced from stone foreign to the area, would suggest some form of trade or contact with a wider region.

Towards the SW corner of the site a linear ditch of Roman date was identified that possibly had some form of stone lining , 47/09. As well as Roman pottery dated to the second century the fill contained an imbrex roof tile. The ditch aligns quite closely with crop marks in the area which appear to be associated with a large rectilinear feature. These appear to be associated with sub circular features and a possible D shaped enclosure on its eastern edge. This feature probably forms part of a complex of features extending to the west of boundary and associated with a feature identified as (HER 13901).

The results of both the evaluation (TVAS 2014) and this investigation have enabled an understanding of the type of archaeology in the area. It appears that there was a farmstead present in the Iron Age. The dating of the ditch in the SW corner of the site indicates that at least some of the cropmarks just beyond this site are Roman in date and that a tiled building was present.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents
The archive consists of the following:

Paper record	Physical record
The project brief	Finds
Written scheme of investigation	
The project report	
The primary site record	

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the Oxfordshire Museum Resource Centre under accession number OXCMS: 2015.56.

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Plate 1. Trench 5. West view

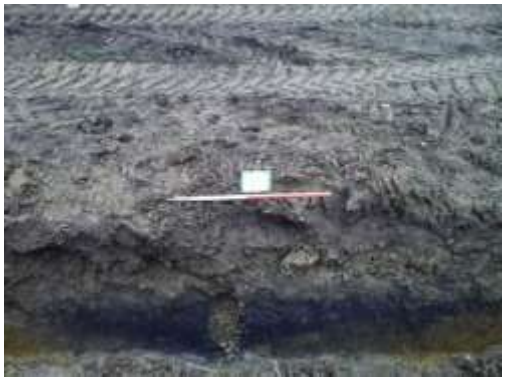

Plate 4. Ditch 32/06 NE view

Plate 6. Ditch 34/11, ENE view.

Plate 2. Ditch 20/04. East View

Plate 3. Ditch 31/05, West view

Plate 5. Ditch 32/08, South view

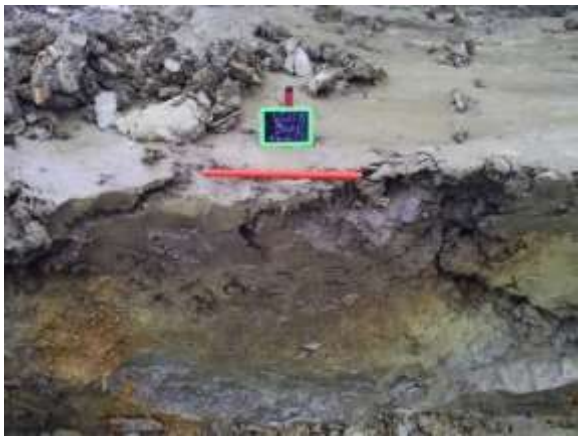

Plate 7. Feature 36/08, ESE view.

Plate 8. Ditch 37/08, NW view

Plate 9. Ditch 47/09

Plate 10. Ditch 47/15, East view