THE LIMES, CARMARTHEN: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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THE LIMES, CARMARTHEN: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

Persimmon Homes are in the process of submitting a planning application for proposed residential development at a site known as The Limes, which is located to the west of Carmarthen near Traveller's Rest (centred on NGR 3873 1947). The site is currently used as agricultural land.

Following pre-planning advice an archaeological desk-based assessment of the site area was prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to provide information on the likely archaeological potential of the site. The report indicated that the projected line of a Roman road from the Roman town of Carmarthen (Moridunum) crosses the centre of this area of proposed development. The report also highlighted the possibility of several sites of modern date being present within the development area, including an early 20th century golf course, a temporary military camp of 1909 and a pre-WW2 civilian aerodrome.

Following the desk-based assessment, further advice indicated that an archaeological evaluation would be requested by the archaeological advisors to the planning authority pre-determination of any planning application. Asbri Planning, on behalf of their clients Persimmon Homes, commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to undertake an archaeological evaluation of the site area to assess the potential impacts of the proposed development on the archaeological resource. The evaluation comprised a combination of geophysical survey and excavated evaluation trenches; this fieldwork was undertaken in June 2012.

The geophysical survey, undertaken using a gradiometer (magnetometer), covered an area of c.1.6 hectares across the centre of the site. This revealed the remains of three, possibly ditched, circular anomalies at the eastern end of the site, typical of Bronze Age barrows (burial mounds). Two possible sub-rectangular features were also shown in the centre of the site suggestive of structural remains of unknown date. A double-ditched linear feature was revealed across the southern end of the site, and the line of a post-medieval field boundary was also shown to the west. Several other possible archaeological or geological features were also suggested within the area surveyed. The presence of the Roman road was not indicated.

The evaluation comprised a series of 1.6m wide trenches, totalling c.270m in length, positioned largely to test potential features highlighted by the geophysical survey and examine an un-surveyed area to the east.

The trial trenches identified an archaeologically significant area of late Neolithic activity (indicated by a collection of late-Neolithic pottery) underlying possible late Neolithic or Bronze Age barrows within the eastern side of the proposed development site. This activity appears largely confined to an area of c.70m by 40m on higher ground at the eastern end of the site, however no clear boundaries to this activity could be established, and archaeology of this age could be rather ephemeral on the ground.

The sub-rectangular features identified on the geophysical survey were identified, but their provenance remains uncertain, they could represent naturally occurring deposits. The double-ditched feature was identified as a likely post-medieval field boundary. The presence of the field boundary to the west and a modern linear feature were also proved. These three features are of limited archaeological interest.

A series of other possible features and differing readings identified on the geophysical survey were shown to represent changes in the naturally occurring gravel subsoil deposits across the site.

No evidence for the route of a Roman road was encountered within the area investigated by trial trench. It is likely that further archaeological excavations will be needed at the site in advance of the proposed residential development to preserve the identified archaeological remains through record.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

1.1.1 Asbri Planning on behalf of Persimmon Homes commissioned Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services to undertake an archaeological evaluation of a proposed residential development at The Limes, Carmarthen (centred on NGR SN 3873 1947; Figure 1).

1.1.2 The proposed development site lies within agricultural land a short distance to the west of Carmarthen. A desk-based assessment of the site has previously been undertaken (Ratty 2012). This has identified the presence of several potential sites of archaeological interest within the proposed development area, the main potential identified as being a Roman road leading west from Carmarthen, its route projected through the centre of the development area.

1.1.3 The proposed development is in pre-planning stages, but it is understood that an archaeological evaluation would be requested by the archaeological advisors to the planning authority pre-determination of any planning application for the development.

1.2 Scope of the Project

1.2.1 The evaluation comprises a combination of geophysical survey, using a gradiometer, followed by targeted trial trenching. The geophysical survey covered an area of approximately 1.6 hectares across the centre of the site.

1.2.2 Trial trenches were machine excavated across the site area to target geophysical anomalies revealed by the survey and also to test blank or non-surveyed areas. The trial trenches totalled *c.*270m in length, with each trench being *c.*1.6m wide. This was followed by post excavation work and reporting

1.2.3 The evaluation has been designed to provide information on the character, extent, date, state of preservation and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the site area, in order that an assessment of the impact from the development proposals on any remains can be determined.

1.3 Report Outline

1.3.1 This report describes the location of the site along with its archaeological background, summarises the potential impacts of the proposed development before providing a summary and discussion of the geophysical survey results and the archaeological evaluation and its results.

1.4 Abbreviations

1.4.1 Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record[1] (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Levels will be expressed as above Ordnance Datum (OD).

[1] Held and managed by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, The Shire Hall, Llandeilo.

1.5 Illustrations

1.5.1 Photographic images are to be found at the back of the report. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.

1.6 Timeline

1.6.1 The following table illustrates the approximate dates for the archaeological periods discussed in this report:

PERIOD	APPROXIMATE DATE
PALAEOLITHIC	*c.*120,000 BC – *c.*10,000 BC
MESOLITHIC	*c.*10,000 BC – *c.*4400 BC
NEOLITHIC	*c.*4400 BC – *c.*2300 BC
BRONZE AGE	*c.*2300 BC – *c.*700 BC
IRON AGE	*c.*700 BC – *c.*43 AD
ROMAN	*c.*43 AD – *c.*410 AD
EARLY MEDIEVAL	*c.*410 AD - *c.*1086
MEDIEVAL	*c.*1086 - *c.*1536
POST MEDIEVAL	*c.*1536 – *c.*1750
MODERN	*c.*1900 onwards

Table 1: Archaeological and historical timeline

2 THE SITE

2.1 Location

2.1.1 The proposed development site is located at NGR SN 3873 1947 within agricultural land a short distance to the west of Carmarthen. The site currently comprises a large agricultural field, regularly ploughed, to the north of the A40.

2.1.2 The proposed development site is roughly 3.67 hectares in size and is bounded by a trackway and agricultural land on its northern side whilst to the south lies the junction between the A40 and B4132. On the west lies further agricultural land and a former cattle breeding centre. To the east the boundary is formed by the Allt Ioan residential development.

2.1.3 The agricultural landscape is one of large enclosed fields with dispersed farmsteads. The residential development to the east is a relatively recent development.

2.1.4 Physically the landscape undulates. The field occupies a slightly raised area, dropping down to the north with the northern corner of the field currently waterlogged. There is a local deep gully towards the southeast corner. The land then drops away slightly to the east and the south, remaining fairly level to the west.

2.1.5 Underlying geology comprises mudstones of the Tetragraptus Beds, overlaid by glacio-fluvial sands and gravels.

Figure 1: Location map based on the Ordnance Survey.

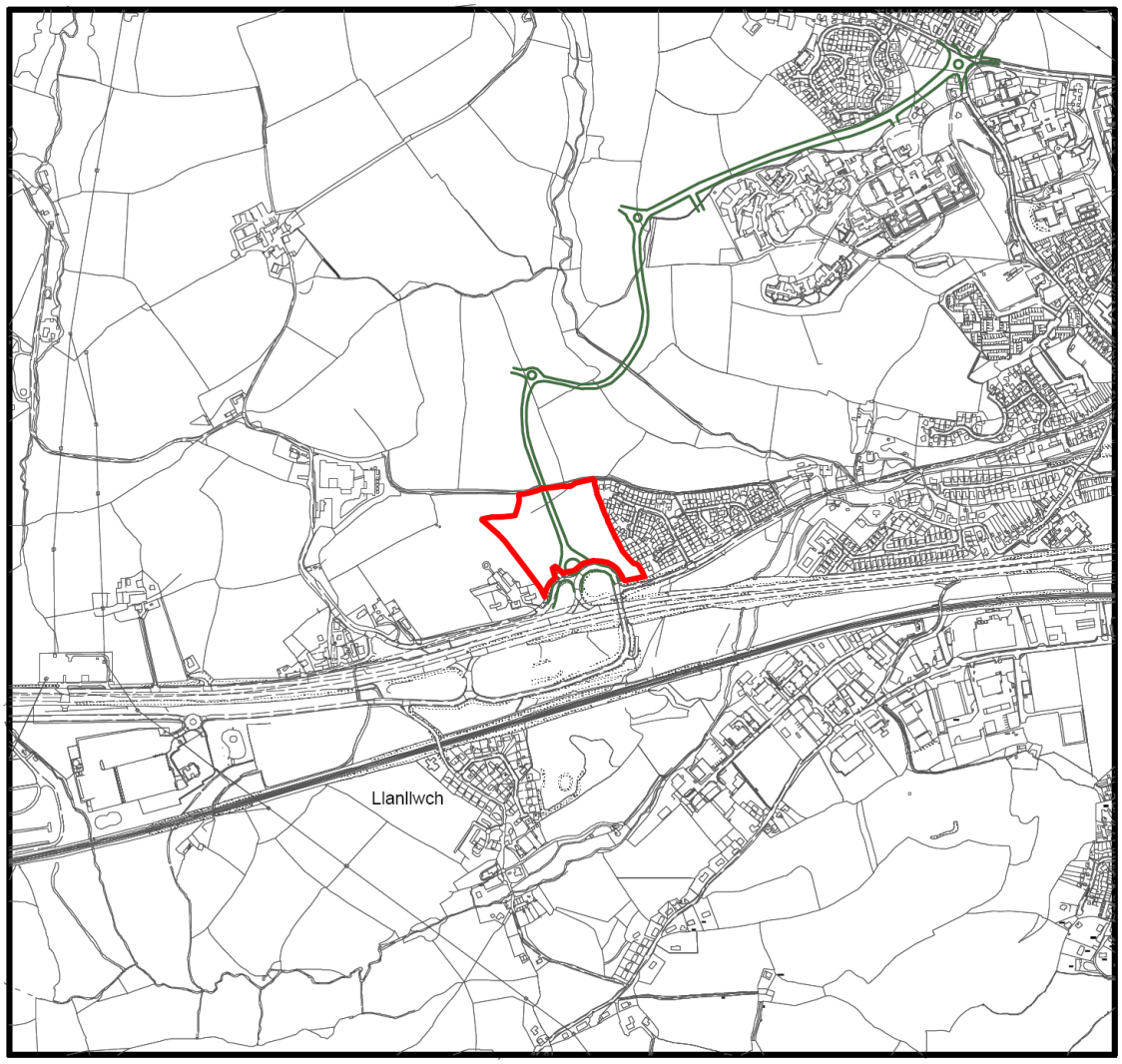


Figure 2: Proposed Development Site Boundary (red) in relation to proposed Carmarthen Western Link Road (dark green) (Information supplied by Asbri Planning, map based on Ordnance Survey data)

2.2 Archaeological Background.

2.2.1 A detailed Desk-based Assessment has been undertaken of the site (Ratty 2012). In summary the archaeological desk-based assessment indicated the high probability that the Roman road leading west from Carmarthen ran directly through the centre of the proposed development area (Via Julia Montana, PRN 3419). The route is believed to run under Lammas Street/Picton Terrace as it runs west from Carmarthen, and is then visible again to the south of Maes-y-Prior farm, *c.*1.5km to the west of the site. The road can be followed using cropmarks, earthwork and LiDAR evidence running as far as Wiston in Pembrokeshire. Carmarthen itself was a Roman fort and town (Moridunum) and as the road lies relatively close to this settlement there was also the potential for associated roadside activity, including settlement, within the proposed development site.

2.2.2 Several medieval sites were recorded within a 1km radius of the site of proposed development, including Trebersed moated enclosure (PRN 2147; NGR SN 3830 1996) which lies *c.*630m northwest. It is likely that this site forms part of the former Trebersed Grange owned by the Augustinian Canons of St John's Priory of Carmarthen who were granted the lands in the mid 13th century (Cowley, 1977, 275). Other medieval sites in the vicinity include farmsteads such as Clynsyw (PRN 24977) and Manor Farm (PRN 25083), as well as the village of Llanllwch to the south. None of these medieval sites are known to extend into the proposed development area.

2.2.3 Historic map sources indicate this site has been undeveloped agricultural land since at least the early 19th century, and the field enclosures were probably well established by that time. The field boundaries surrounding the proposed development area have remained relatively stable, although one internal field boundary to the west was removed in the early 20th century (Figure 3), and road schemes to the south have changed the southern boundary and encroached up to 80m into the original field.

2.2.2 The Desk-based Assessment identified several sites of a modern date that may have been present within the development area or in close vicinity. These consist of a golf course that was located in the area between 1913 and 1914, a temporary military camp in 1909 and a pre-World War II civilian aerodrome.

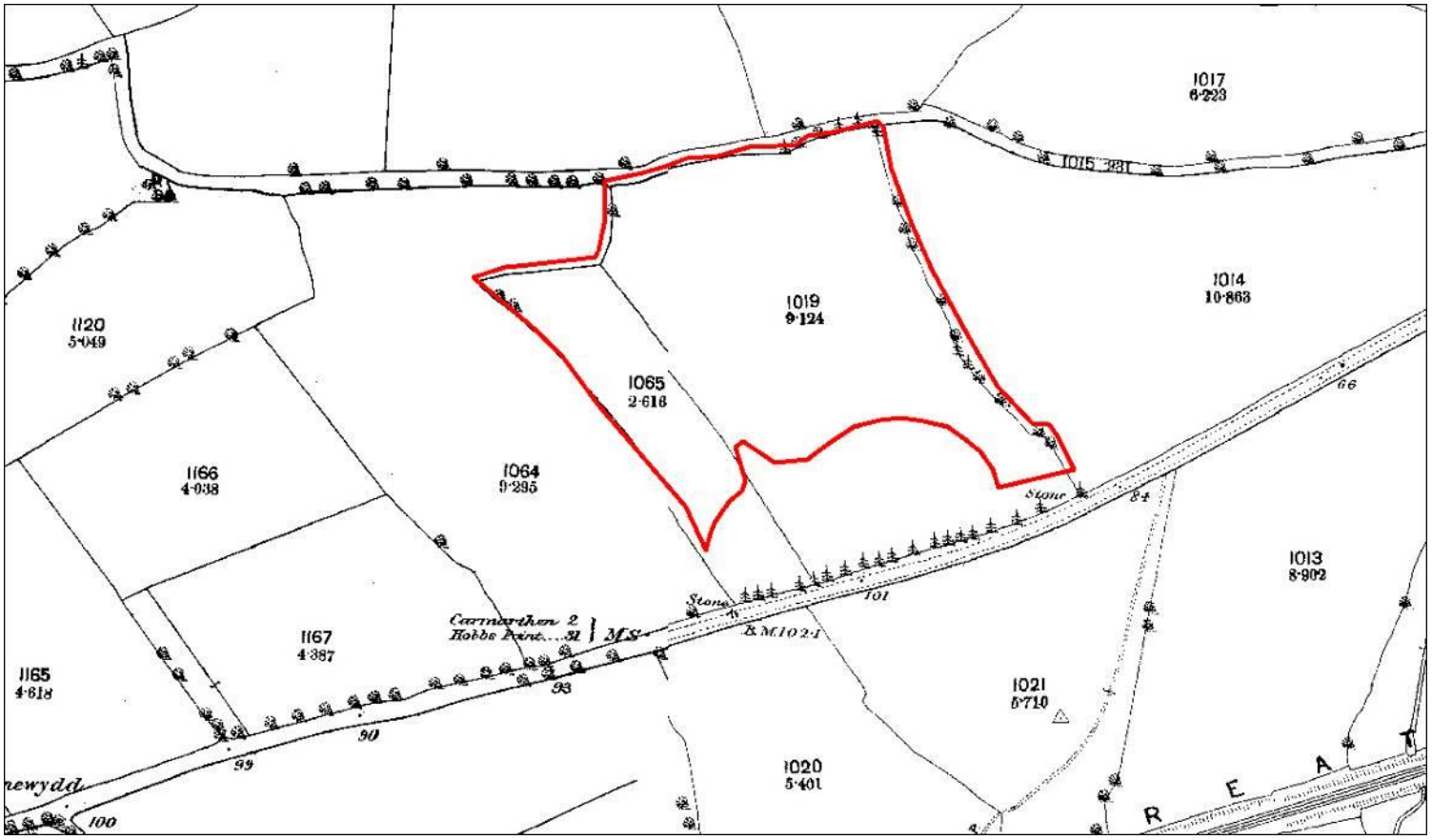


Figure 3: An extract from the 1890 1st edition 1;2500 Ordnance Survey map.
The location of the proposed development site is shown in red.
The map shows a former field boundary on its western side, now removed.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The proposed scheme of evaluation included the preparation of a written scheme of investigation (WSI) and a desk-based assessment element, carried out prior to the evaluation excavation. The evaluation fieldwork comprised a combination of geophysical survey, using a gradiometer, followed by targeted trial trenching. An initial WSI was prepared and approved prior to the geophysical survey, supplemented by a second WSI prior to the trial trench stage, which used the results of the geophysical survey to target anomalies.

3.2 The geophysical survey was undertaken using a Bartington Grad601-2 dual sensor fluxgate gradiometer, which detects slight variations in the earth's magnetic field. Such variations can be caused by the presence of archaeological features, including from cut ditches, hearths, walls etc. Readings were taken at a medium resolution on traverses 0.5m wide and every 0.25m within a 20m x 20m grid across the centre of the site. In total an area of *c.*1.6ha was surveyed. Full details of the methodology were included within the initial WSI. Survey results were then minimally processed, removing very high readings caused by metal fragments in the topsoil ('despiked') and plotted (Figures 4 to 6).

3.3 The next stage of the evaluation was the excavation of trial trenches across the site area to target geophysical anomalies revealed by the survey and also to test blank or non-surveyed areas. In total 10 trial trenches were excavated, each *c.*1.6m wide and totalling *c.*270m in length (Figure 6).

3.4 The trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision using a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat bladed bucket.

3.5 All non-archaeologically significant overburden was removed, in this case comprising plough-disturbed soils, and the trenches were excavated down onto archaeological levels of significance or undisturbed subsoils.

3.6 Following machine excavation, the trenches were hand cleaned and a selection of features excavated to an appropriate standard to elucidate the character, distribution and extent of the archaeological remains.

3.7 All deposits were recorded by archaeological context record sheet, scale drawing, photography and site notebooks. All individual deposits were numbered using the open-ended numbering system in accordance with Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services' Recording Manual[2]. Trench plans and sections were recorded by means of measured sketches, scale drawings and accurate surveying using an EDM. A photographic record was maintained using digital cameras.

3.8 Trench locations were accurately surveyed using an EDM, related to Ordnance Datum and existing boundaries.

3.9 Archaeological layers were, in the main, left undisturbed once identified, but some archaeologically significant artefacts were recovered, consisting mainly of pottery fragments. These finds will be temporarily stored by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services in stable conditions prior to deposition with the archive to Carmarthen Museum.

[2]PT Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services use the Recording Manual developed by English Heritage Centre for Archaeology. A copy will be available for inspection if required.

4 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY RESULTS (Figures 4 & 5)

4.1 The geophysical survey covered an area of approximately 1.6ha across the centre of the proposed development site, see Figure 4. The survey extended from the edge of an area of low-lying marshy ground against the northern boundary, across the centre of the field and the projected line of the Roman road, to the southern boundary. The low-lying marshy ground was not suitable for geophysical survey. Metal fences to the south meant that surveying could not be undertaken close to these field boundaries. A telegraph pole and transformer stands in the middle of the site area with overhead cables running roughly north to south.

4.2 Overall the survey produced interesting results. One linear feature (Figure 5; No.1), running roughly north to south on the western side of the area, corresponds with a field boundary shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (Figure 3) of the area (1890), but which is not shown on the 1838 Tithe Map or 1904 Ordnance Survey map. A second linear feature (Figure 5; No.2) crossing the southern part of the field running approximately east-northeast to west-southwest is visible as a pair of parallel features suggesting a former hedge bank (field boundary). This boundary is not shown on any earlier cartographic sources. Potentially, as the feature is so straight, it was thought that it could represent a service trench (with plastic or ceramic pipe, as a metal pipe would give very strong geophysical readings).

4.3 Of most interest on the survey are three circular anomalies visible as ring ditches noted on the eastern side of the site area (Figure 5; No.3). These range in size from *c.*4m to 9m in diameter. These are of archaeological origin, although it was not possible to date the features through geophysical survey alone. They had the appearance of being small Bronze Age round barrows (ring ditches surrounding burial mounds), with the largest and most easterly feature having a central pit which could conceivably represent a burial.

4.4 Further possible sub-circular features (Figure 5; No.4) are present in the central part of the site area. One of these has an indication of a slight ditch with a raised bank around. The other is shown on the survey as a bank.

4.6 Two sub-rectangular features (Figure 5; No.5) are also present in the central part of the site area. These could be the remains of rectangular structures, surviving as beam slots or a drainage ditch around their perimeter. The date of such features could be speculated as being from the Roman period through to the post-medieval period. Other features showing in the site area may be geological in origin.

4.7 The survey produced no results indicative of the Roman road.

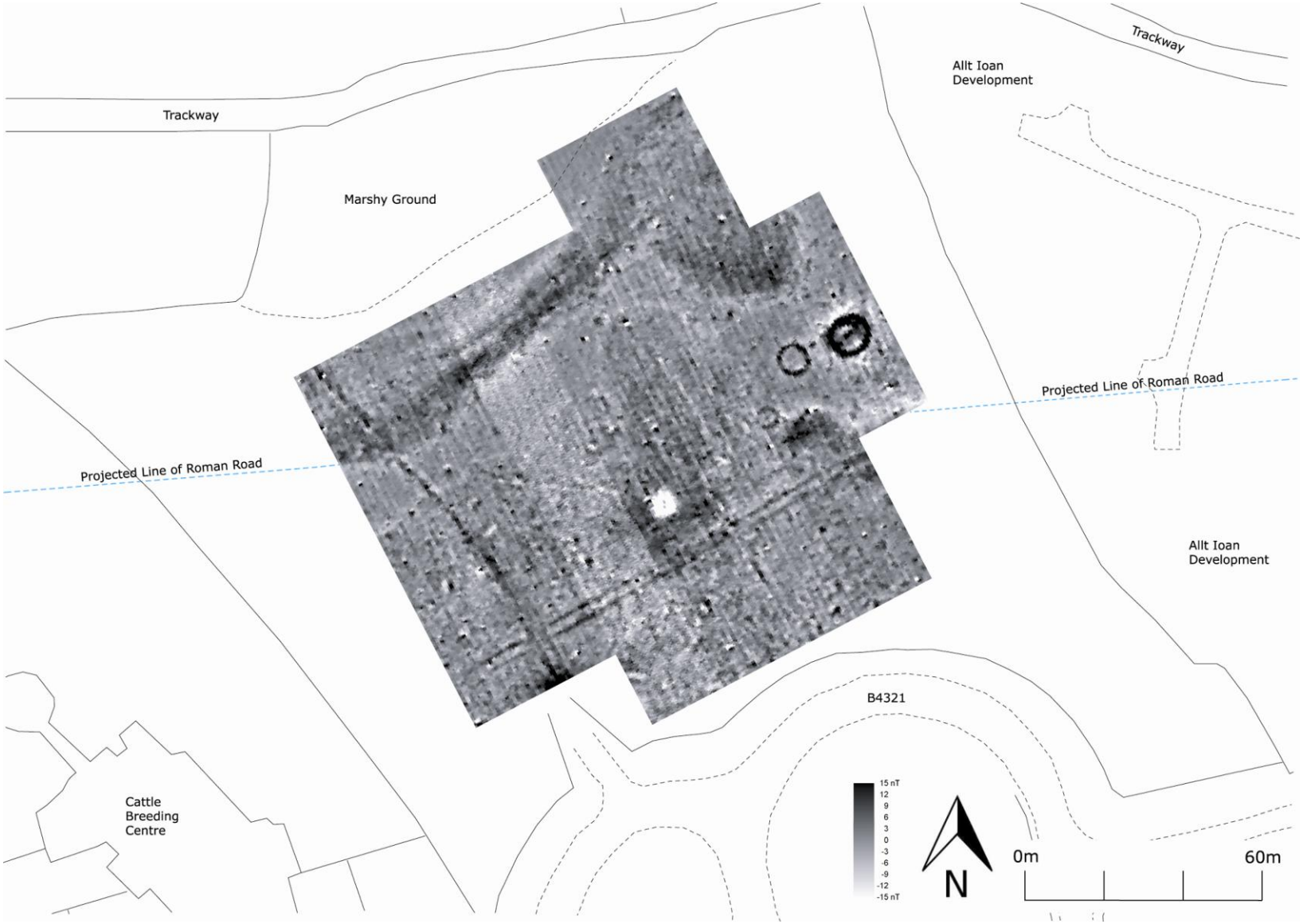


Figure 4: Geophysical survey results, presented as a grey-scale plot, 'clipped' to a range from 10nT to -10nt, and 'despiked'.

Figure 5: Initial interpretation of some of the main features identified on the geophysical survey results. Red depicts magnetically positive responses (often relating to cut features), blue magnetically negative responses.
The numbers refer to section 4 within the main report.

Figure 6: Trench locations, shown in red and labelled, overlaid on the geophysical survey results and within the proposed development site, outlined in green.

5 RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION

5.1 Trench 1 (Figures 7, 8, 9 & 10)

5.1.1 Trench 1 was L-shaped and measured in total 58m long, by 1.6m wide. The longer part of the L-shaped trench measured 37.3m in length and was aligned ENE–WSW, with a further 20.7m aligned NNW-SSE at the western end. The trench was located to target the three circular anomalies (ring ditches) identified on the geophysical survey (Figure 5; No.3) as possible prehistoric barrows.

5.1.2 All three ring ditches were identified in the excavation, typically at depths of around 0.2m below current ground levels. Each circular anomaly was separated from the others by an area of undisturbed subsoil with any archaeological deposits that may have connected these monuments truncated by more recent ploughing. The features will initially be described individually, starting with the largest and most archaeologically complex ring ditch at the eastern end of the trench.

Easternmost ring ditch

5.1.3 The geophysical survey indicated that this anomaly was defined by a circular ditch, which appeared to be the largest and most well-defined of the three. The geophysical survey also suggested the possibility of discrete features within the ring ditch. Trench 1 was positioned through the centre of the ring ditch exposing two sections through it. The easternmost section of this ditch 118 measured 1.54m wide, and crossed the trench running NW-SE. There was a suggestion that its outer, eastern edge was disturbed by a later cut, but this could not be well-defined within the confines of the evaluation trench. The ditch was filled by a mid dark-brown silty-clay loam (119), with a lighter band (120) along its western edge. This section of the ditch was not excavated.

5.1.4 The westernmost section of the ring ditch cut 116 (Photos 5 - 7) was also clearly visible, making the internal width of the ring 8m (and externally 11m). This section of ditch was excavated and measured 1.25m wide and 0.9m deep with smooth, moderate to steep sides down on to a narrow flat base. The ditch contained several fills, the lowest of which (128) was a primary fill of yellow-brown sandy-loam that appears to represent slumping of the subsoils through which the ditch was originally cut. Above this was a fill of silty loam with traces of charcoal within it (127), overlaid by a deposit of slumped material (126) from the side of the ditch. The upper fill (117) consisted of a mid brown silty loam similar to the fill of ditch cut 118. No finds were recovered from any of these infilling deposits.

5.1.5 Remnants of what has been interpreted as possible central mound material was revealed within the area defined by the two ditches (Photos 1, 2 & 6). This consisted of a stony deposit (108) overlying a silty clay loam (137). Deposit 108 consisted of a noticeably stony layer, with medium to large sub-rounded stones set in a dark brown silty clay loam, at most 0.2m thick. The underlying deposit 137 consisted of a mid-brown sandy-clay loam up to 0.12m thick. No finds were recovered from either deposit. Both deposits appear to have slumped down at a later period to cover the surrounding ditches, seen as deposit 138 overlying ditch 118, and deposit 136 overlying ditch 116.

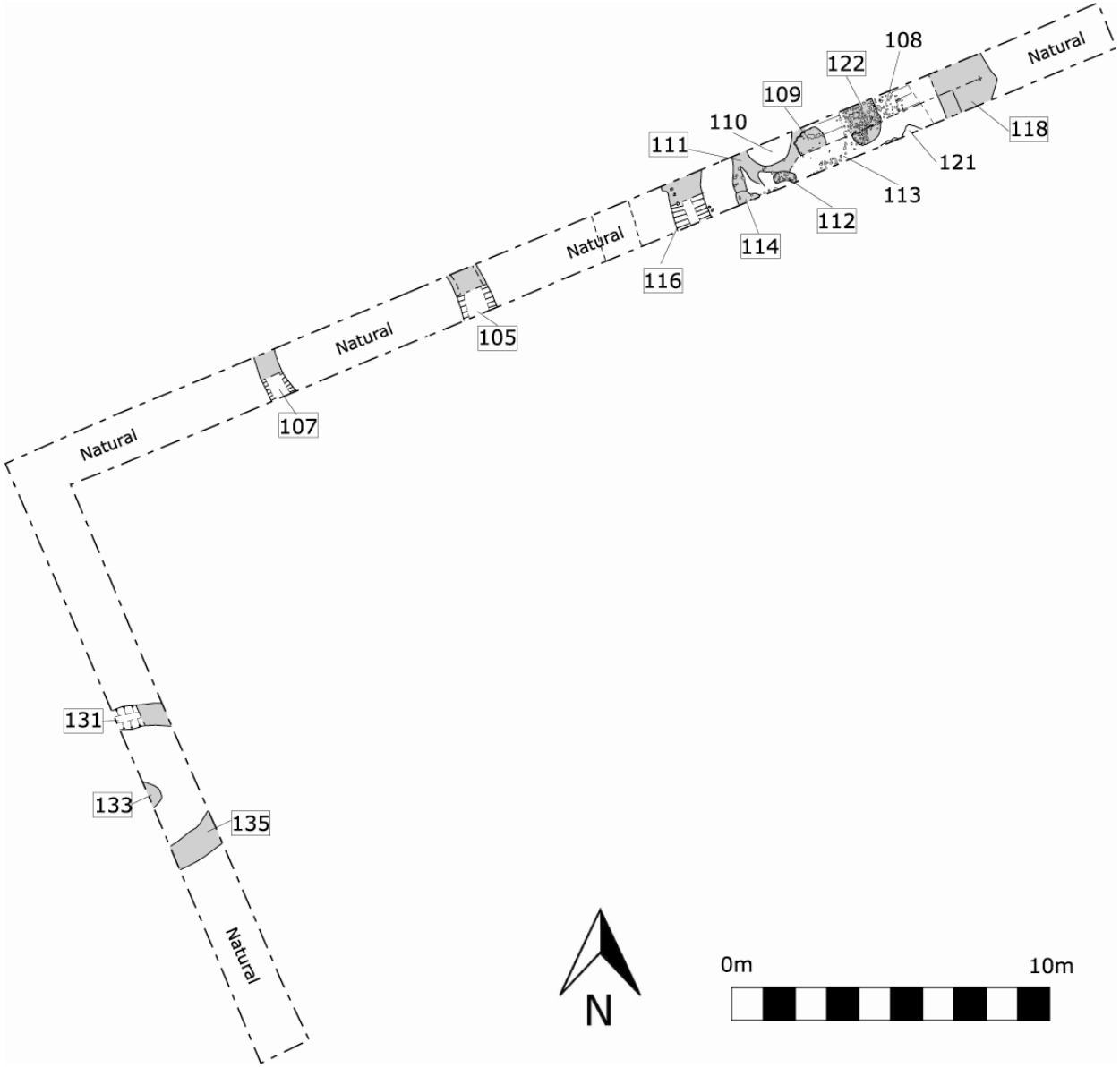


Figure 7: Plan of Trench 1

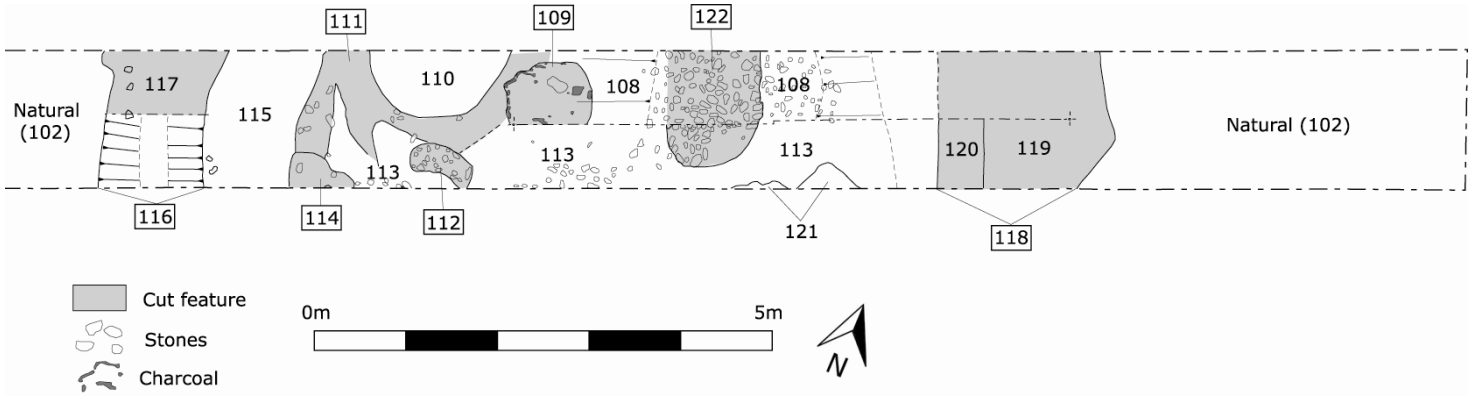
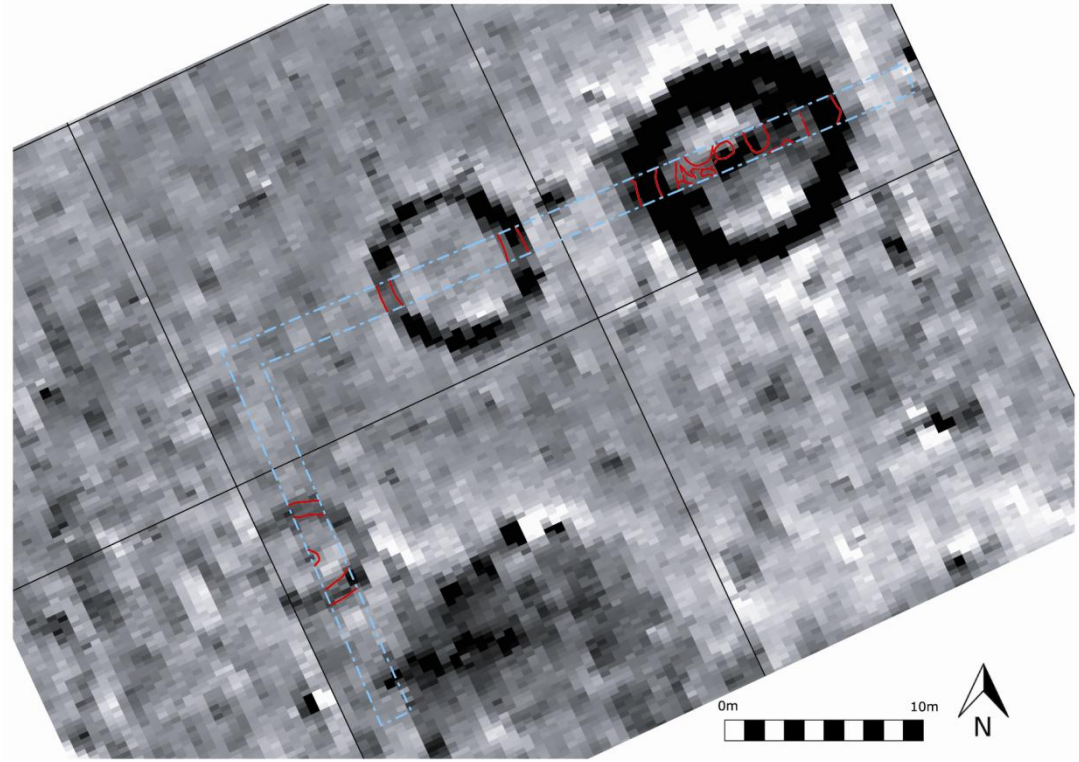


Figure 8: Detail plan of features at the eastern end of Trench 1, and superimposed on geophysical survey plot below



5.1.6 A linear or possible sub-rectangular feature (122) appears to have cut through the mound material (108 & 137), which was then backfilled with large stones (Photo 3). This was located just to the east of the centre of the possible mound material, and was at most 0.8m wide. The cut extends beyond the northern section of the trench, but its southern limits may have been defined within the trench. This feature was only partially excavated, with a small 0.3m deep section removed, along with the possible mound material, to examine underlying deposits against the south side of the trench. This demonstrated that the stony backfill was greater in depth than stony layer 108 through which it was cut. This cut feature appears to correspond to a small discrete area of magnetically negative responses identified in the geophysical survey.

5.1.7 A sub-circular area of darker charcoal-rich soil (109) was visible amongst stony deposit 108, as the stones thinned out on its western side (Photo 4). It was not established whether this represented a dump of material or the fill of a cut feature and although no clear western or northern edge was defined, the eastern edge did appear to be defined by irregular lines of charcoal. This spread of charcoal-rich material may correspond to a discrete area of magnetically negative responses identified on the geophysical survey results. A similar charcoal rich deposit (114) was also recorded nearby, against the southern section of the trench. This deposit also had ill-defined edges, but appeared to be the fill of a cut feature. It was not possible to establish stratigraphically where the feature was cut from, although it clearly cut through layers 113 and 115 (see below) and appears also to cut feature 111 (see below).

5.1.8 A later cut (129) was also recorded to the west cutting into the western ditch 116. This feature was only identified in the southern section of the trench, and consisted of a U-shaped cut 0.6m wide and 0.34m deep with a single fill (125). This appears to have cut through deposit 136, the presumed slump material from the central mound that sealed the western ditch 116. It is therefore a significantly later feature than ditch 116 although its western edge does appear to respect the western edge of ditch 116. The fill, a dark-brown silty-loam, gives little indication as to its original function.

5.1.9 The removal of some of the presumed central mound material (108 & 137) revealed a series of deposits and possible cut features that appear to predate the construction of the mound (Photo 6). The mound material overlay a layer (113) of compact mid-brown silty-clay that contained fragments of charcoal. To the east this layer appears to have been cut by, or is overlain by an area of stones within a mid-brown silty-loam (121), some of the stones appeared burnt. To the west a similar fill or layer of small stones, some of which also appeared burnt, was recorded. The stones were sitting in a brown silty-clay loam soil (112). This was spread over a small sub-circular area 0.7m by 0.3m in size. Adjacent to this was an amorphous area of charcoal-rich silty-clay (113).

5.1.10 Towards the western end of the area defined by ditches 118 and 116 were a series of irregular curvilinear features filled with a compact light-grey silty-clay (111) (Photo 6). The full extent and definition of these features was not established within the confines of the evaluation trench but they may represent a series of gullies. Several small fragments of late Neolithic Grooved Ware pottery (T. Darvill, pers. comm.) were recovered from this deposit.

5.1.11 A semi-circular area of dark orange silty-clays (110) to the north of 111 may represent a patch of naturally occurring subsoils (Photo 6). A band of very compact pale yellow-orange silty-clay (115) was also revealed to the west of 111, cut by the western ditch 116. Although similar to natural subsoils it is noticeably lighter than the subsoil visible to the west of ditch 116, and appears to contain the occasional small fragment of charcoal.

5.1.12 ***Central ring ditch*** (Figures 7, 8 & 10)

A gap of 6.4m separates the outer edge of ditch 116 to the eastern outer edge of the central ring ditch (105). Within this gap plough-disturbed deposits (100 & 101) directly overlie undisturbed naturally-occurring subsoil deposits. There is thus no direct relationship between the eastern or central ring ditches. The geophysical survey did not indicate the presence of any features within the area defined by the ring ditch.

5.5.13 The eastern side of the exposed ring ditch (105) was partially excavated (Photo 8). It measured 1.2m wide, 0.67m deep, with moderate to steep sides and a wide concave base, differing in profile to the cut of ditch 116. It contained two fills, the lower (104) being a stony mid orange-brown sandy-silt, overlain by a dark brown clayey-silt (103). Neither deposit contained any finds.

5.5.14 The western side of the ring ditch (107) was also partially excavated (Photo 9). It measured 1.06m wide, 0.35m deep with moderate to steep slightly concave sides on to a wide flat base. This made the internal width of this ring ditch 6m, externally 7.7m. This ditch segment was filled with a mid orange-brown sandy-silt (106), very similar to the eastern ditch segment, topped by a deposit of loose stony material (124). Neither fill produced any finds.

5.5.15 On the internal (eastern) side of ditch 107 was a thin layer, up to 0.16m thick, of small to large pebbles within a loose clayey-silty-sand (123), containing the occasional fragment of charcoal. This deposit was spread over *c.*3m westwards from the edge of ditch 107. This may represent remnants of internal mound material, as it had similarities to the gravelly subsoil through which ditch 107 was cut. This may indicate that this deposit originated as the up-cast from the original excavation of the ditch. The stony nature of the upper fill (124) of the ditch also suggests that this fill represents slumping of 123 (mound material) back into the top of the ditch.

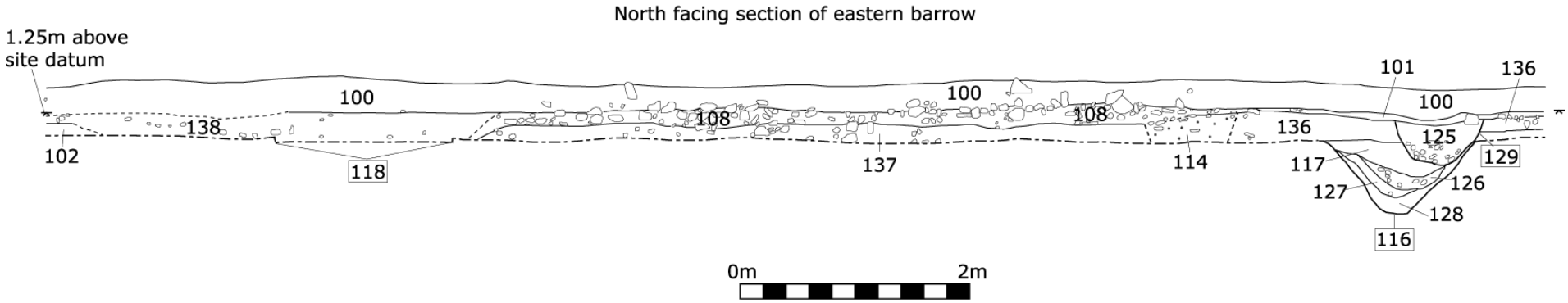


Figure 9: Section of the eastern barrow within Trench 1

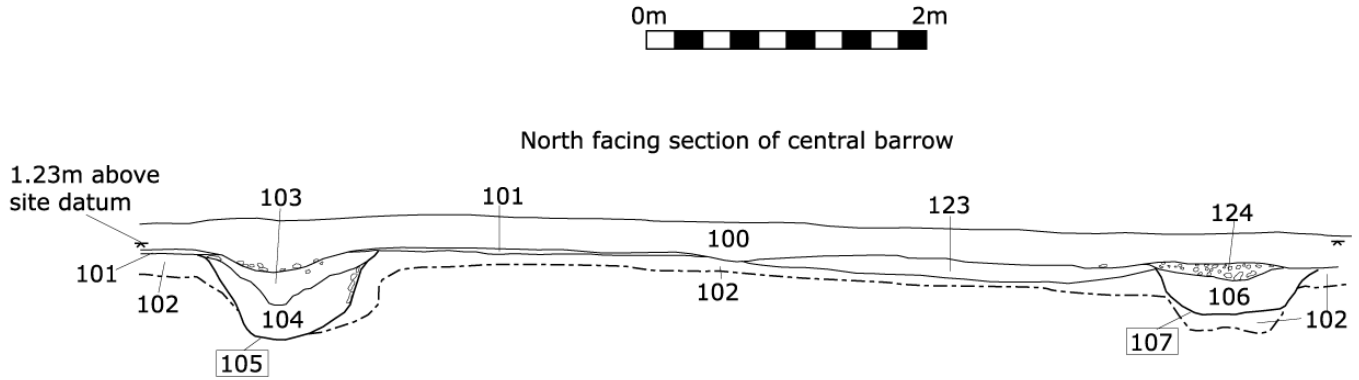


Figure 10: Section of the central barrow within Trench 1

Western ring ditch (Figures 7 & 8)

5.5.16 Located 10.1m to the southwest of the central ring ditch lay the smallest of the three circular anomalies. The geophysical survey indicated a the full circuit of the ring ditch, although the readings were less distinct than the other two. The survey also suggested a discrete feature placed centrally within the ring ditch. Nothing of archaeological note was recorded with Trench 1 between this and the central circular anomaly.

5.5.17 The ditches of this ring were cut through an area of more mixed sandy-clays and gravels, making the ditches less well-defined. A section of the northern ditch segment (131) was excavated (Photo 10). This segment was 0.8m wide and 0.31m deep with gradual straight sides and a shallow concave base. It contained a single fill (130) of mid orange-brown clayey-silt, no finds were recovered.

5.5.18 The southern ditch segment (135) was unexcavated, but was of a similar width (0.82m) and contained a very similar infilling material (134). This made the internal diameter of the ring ditch 4m and 5.5m externally.

5.5.19 Located roughly centrally within the limits as defined by ditches 131 and 135 was a sub-circular pit (133) protruding 0.29m out from the western section of the Trench (Photo 11). This pit was 0.86m across and contained a charcoal-rich fill of grey-brown clayey-silt. This feature was not excavated, but it corresponds closely to the central discrete feature depicted on the geophysical survey.

5.5.20 No other features of archaeological interest were noted within the surrounding subsoil around this ring ditch.

5.2 Trench 2 (Figures 11 & 12)

5.2.1 Trench 2 measured 11.9m long and 1.6m wide, aligned north-south (Photo 12). It was located to test presumed geological anomalies identified on the geophysical survey.

5.2.2 The ploughsoil (200), which was fairly consistent across the site, comprised a mid brown silty-loam generally between 0.2 and 0.25m thick. Underlying this was a deposit representing the base of the plough-disturbed soils (201), up to 0.3m thick, comprising mainly of intermixed subsoil deposits.

5.2.3 No archaeological features were identified within this trench, but variations in the natural subsoil deposits did appear to correspond to differences in the magnetic readings identified during the geophysical survey. Orange-brown silty-sandy clays (202 & 203) extended *c.*8.5m up the trench from the northern end, which corresponds to an area of magnetically positive responses, represented by a darker area on the survey results. A glacio-fluvial gravel deposit was revealed at the southern end of the trench (204). This consisted of sandy-clay gravel, varying in colour from grey to orange-brown, with sub-rounded stone. This deposit appeared fairly consistently in patches across the entire site.

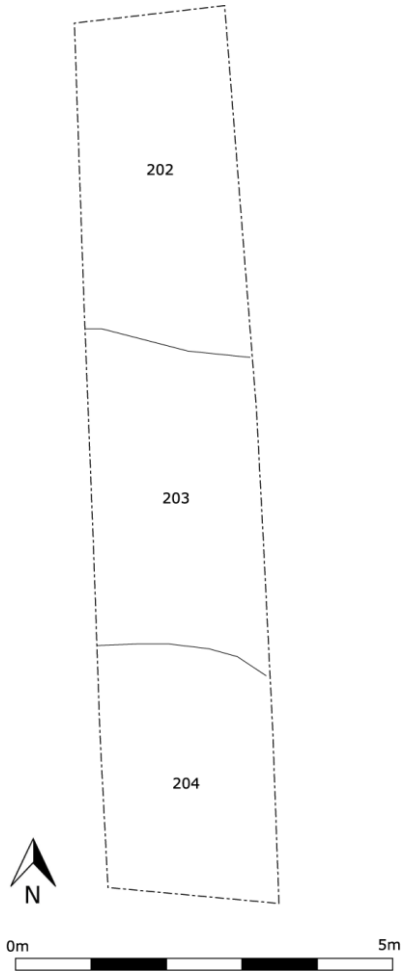


Figure 11 (left): Plan of Trench 2

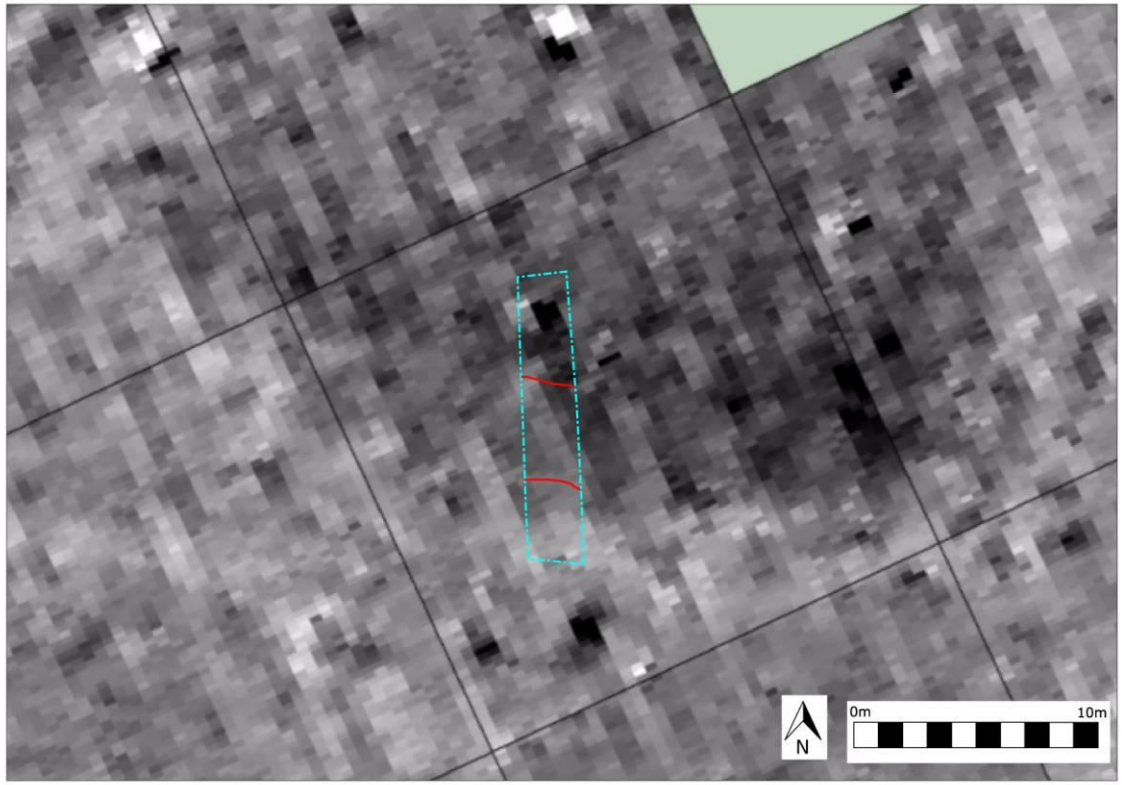


Figure 12 (right): Trench 2 (in blue) with its archaeological features (in red) overlaid on the geophysical survey results

5.3 **Trench 3** (Figures 13 & 14)

5.3.1 Trench 3 measured 39.2m long and 1.6m wide, aligned NW-SE (Photos 13 & 14). It was located to test possible circular features identified on the geophysical survey (Figure 5; No.4) and the double-ditched feature (Figure 5; No. 2) that ran across the southern end of the surveyed area.

5.3.2 Two parallel linear features were identified towards the southern end of the trench (Photo 15). These appeared to correspond to the double-ditched feature as identified on the geophysical survey.

5.3.3 Both the southernmost linear feature (304) and the northernmost linear feature (306) were filled by very similar deposits of mid grey-brown clayey silt (303 & 305). Neither feature was excavated and the definitions of these linear features were difficult to distinguish from the underlying subsoil, however the southernmost was the wider feature at *c*.1.55m wide, the northernmost being 0.98m wide. The linear features lay 1.5m apart, with a deposit of dark orange-brown clayey-silt (307) lying in between that may represent remnants of a former bank. The layout and dimensions of these features suggest they represent the remnants of field boundary ditches running alongside a central hedgebank.

5.3.4 In general the subsoil deposits within the southern half of the trench consisted of typical fluvial gravels (302). Towards the northern end of the trench this gave way, or was covered by, fine orange-brown sandy-silty-clays (301, Photo 14). The possible circular features identified by the geophysical survey were located towards the northern end of the trench, within these sandy-silty-clays, but these were not identified during the excavation. A series of small animals burrows were identified within these subsoils. The nature of these deposits would suggest cut archaeological features should have been readily visible had they been present.

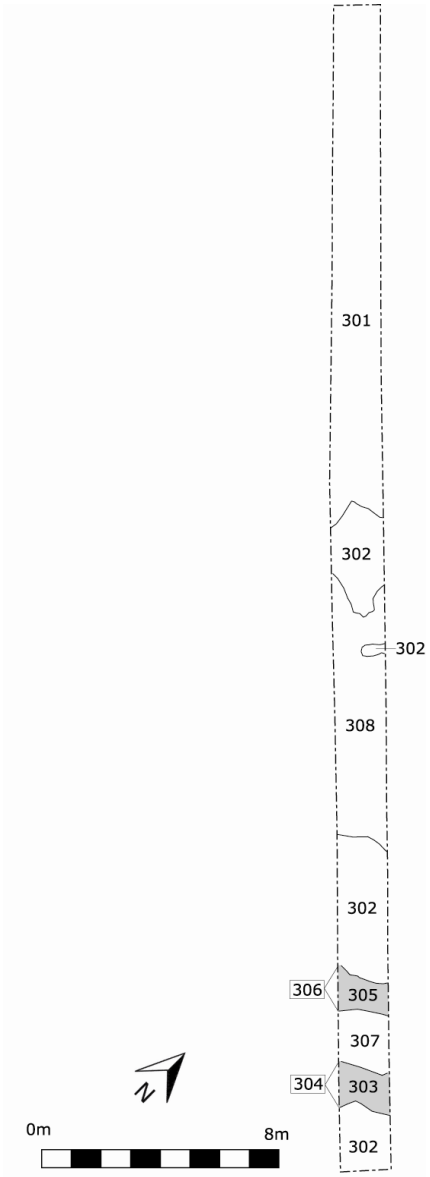


Figure 13 (left): Plan of Trench 3

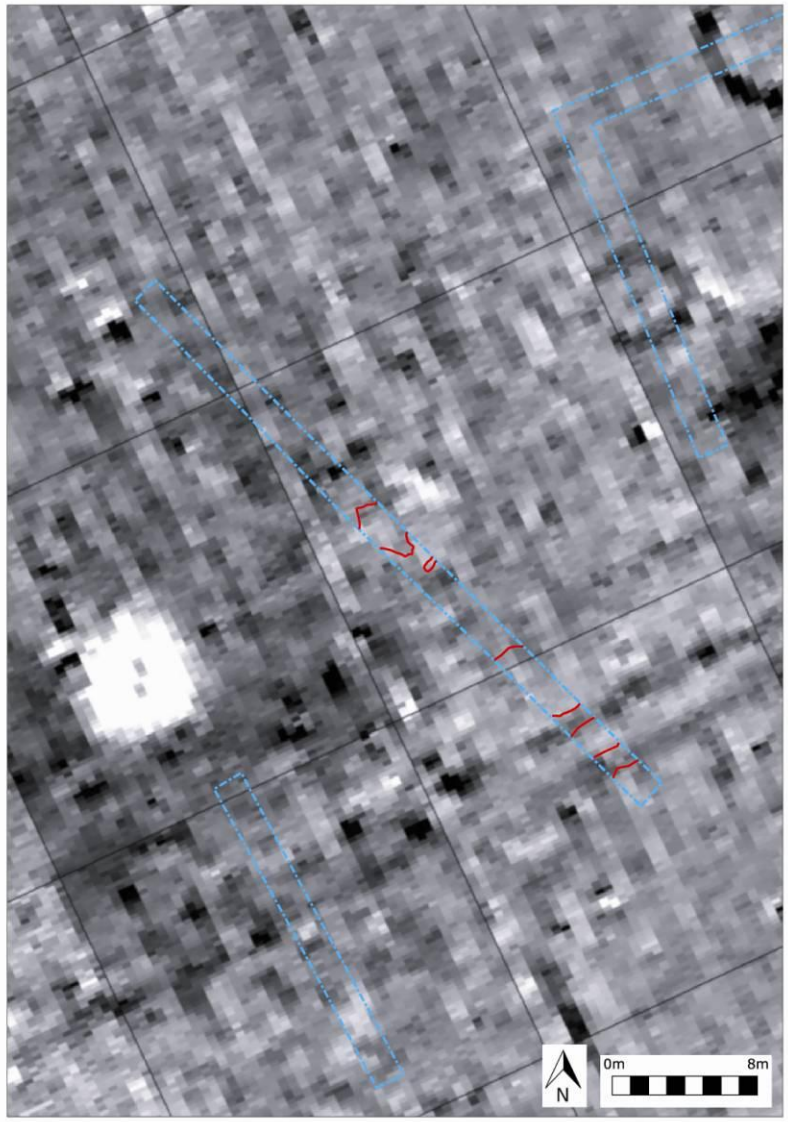


Figure 14 (right): Trench 3 (in blue) with its archaeological features (in red) overlaid on the geophysical survey results

5.4 Trench 4 (Figures 15 & 16)

5.4.1 Trench 4 measured 18.9m long and 1.6m wide, aligned NNW-SSE (Photo 16). It was positioned to investigate the double-ditched feature and a possible linear feature identified on the geophysical survey at the southern end of the surveyed area (Figure 5; Nos 1 & 2).

5.4.2 A series of interchanging subsoil deposits were recorded throughout the trench, but no features of archaeological interest were noted. Towards the northern end of the trench a wide band of softer finer gravels (402) was recorded, roughly 2.5m wide. These deposits appeared natural in origin, but it was through this deposit that the double-ditched feature was supposed to cross. The ditch could not be identified within this deposit, neither in plan nor in section.

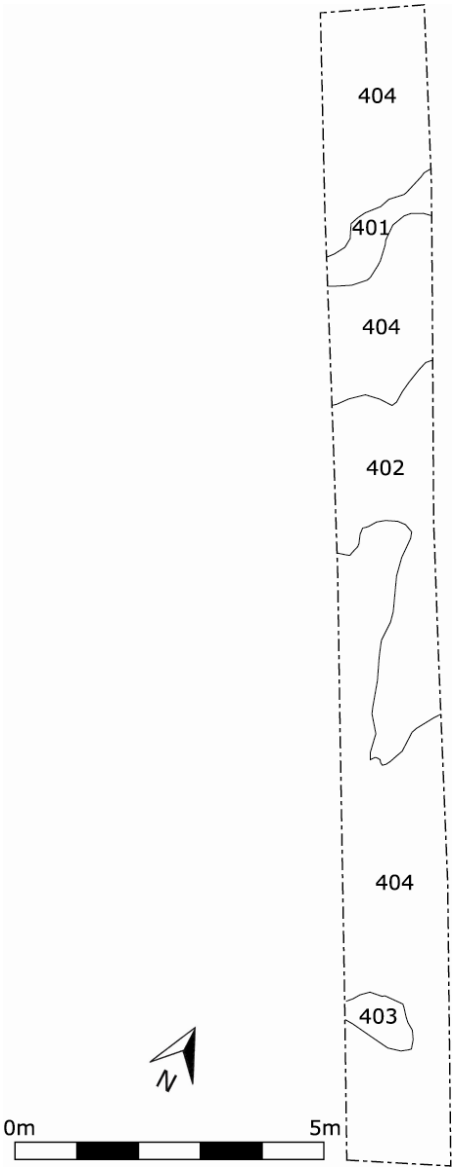


Figure 15 (left): Plan of Trench 4

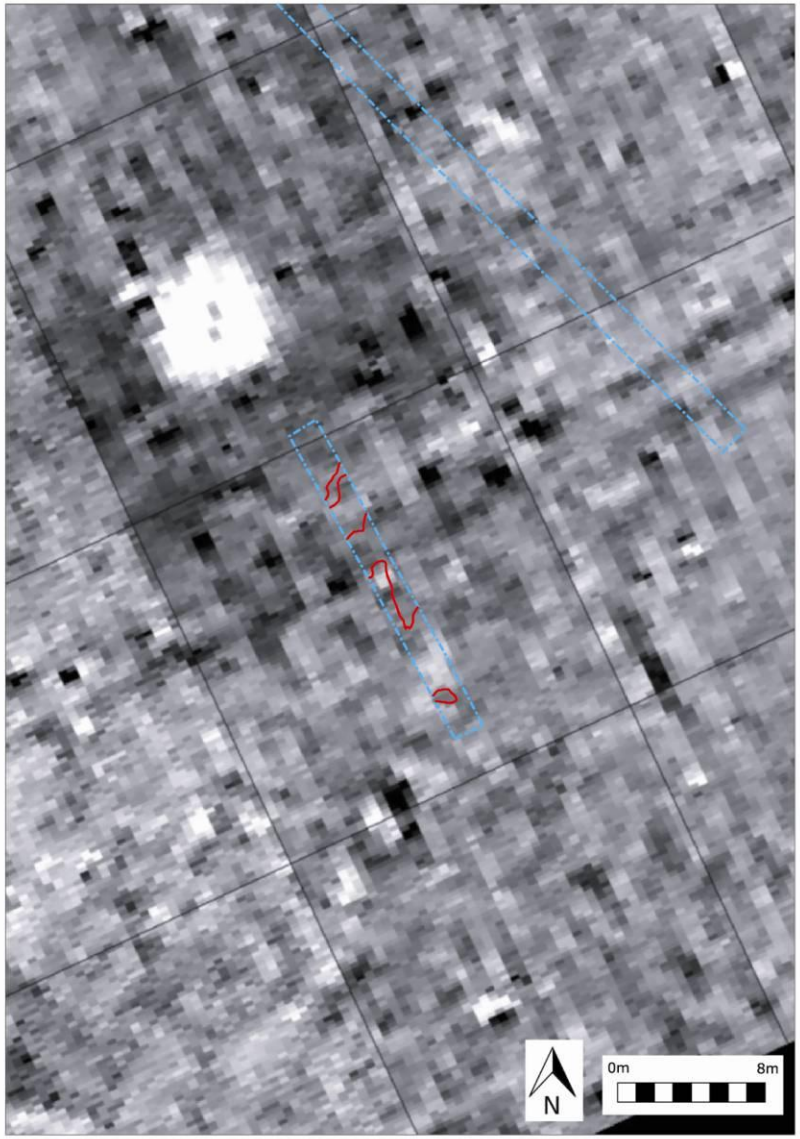


Figure 16 (right): Trench 4 (in blue) with its archaeological features (in red) overlaid on the geophysical survey results

5.5 Trench 5 (Figures 17 & 18)

5.5.1 Trench 5 measured 20.6m by 1.6m, orientated NNW-SSE (Photo 17). It was positioned to investigate two possible rectangular features identified on the geophysical survey in the centre of the site (Figure 5, No.5).

5.5.2 Several possible archaeological features were initially identified, although on excavation many appeared to be of natural origin.

5.5.3 Towards the northern end of the trench a roughly linear feature (502) was revealed (Photos 18 & 19) aligned SW-NE initially identified by its orange-brown sandy-clay fill (501) within the gravelly subsoil (512). A section 0.7m was excavated against the eastern section of the trench. This revealed a semi-circular feature against the section edge, with moderate to steep sides, 0.4m wide, 0.17m deep onto a concave base. This may represent part of a posthole or pit, however, adjacent to it, the cut of the linear feature 502 became very irregular, forming another hollow 0.32m long, 0.2m wide and 0.15m deep with indistinct edges in places. The linear feature continued west with irregular northern and southern edges. Both excavated hollows were filled with the same material (501), which contained no finds, charcoal or evidence of human activity. The irregular nature of much of this feature would suggest it may have natural origins although it does appear to align with one edge of the northern rectilinear feature identified on the geophysical survey results.

5.5.4 Further down the trench was a sub-circular feature (504) projecting 0.15m in from the eastern trench edge, measuring 0.6m in width. This was filled with a similar orange-brown material (503) and again on excavation the cut proved to have very irregular sides and base, 0.17m deep. There was again no evidence of human activity, suggesting natural origins for the feature. This feature did again appear to align with the edge of the southern rectilinear feature identified on the geophysical survey results.

5.5.5 Adjacent to 504 and only revealed in the eastern Trench section, was a very shallow, but more regularly cut feature (506). This was 0.74m wide, 0.1m deep, with shallow sides and a flat base. It was visible at a depth of 0.3m. The full extent was not identified during the opening of the trench, but no continuation was visible in the western section of the trench.

5.5.6 Towards the southern end of the trench a sub-rectangular feature with rounded corners (509) was identified, emerging 0.38m from the western section (Photo 20). Once again excavation showed this feature to have irregular sides, generally shallow to moderately sloping down at most 0.13m on to a very irregular base. The single fill (508), very similar in colour and composition to the fills of 501 and 504, contained no evidence of human activity. This feature also appears to align with one edge of the southern rectilinear feature as identified on the geophysical survey results.

5.5.7 Adjacent to feature 509 a small circular feature (511) was identified but not excavated (Photo 20). It measured 0.15m by 0.13m with a fill of compact mid orange-brown sandy clay.

5.5.8 The gravelly subsoil (512) was apparent throughout the trench, underlying the plough-disturbed layers which were 0.3m thick.

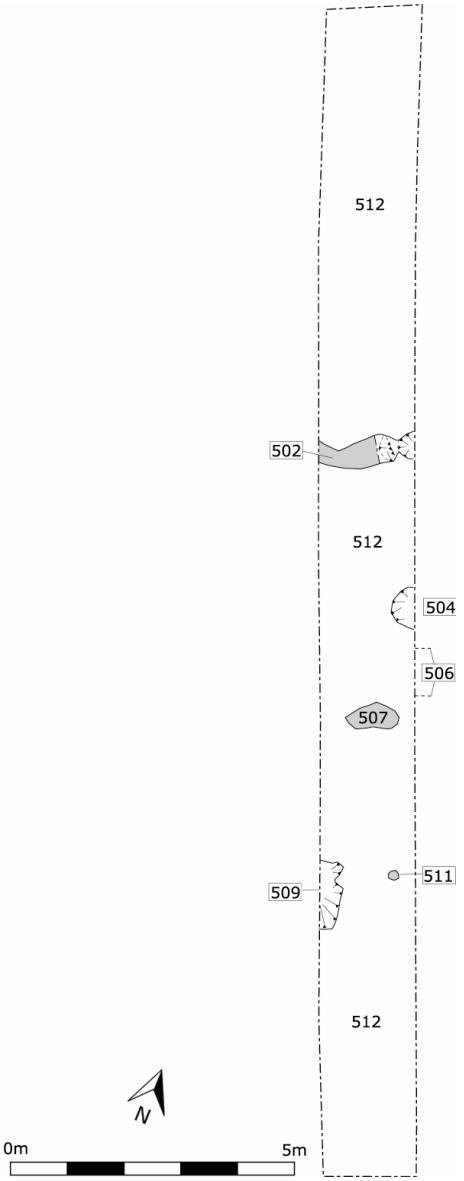


Figure 17 (left): Plan of Trench 5

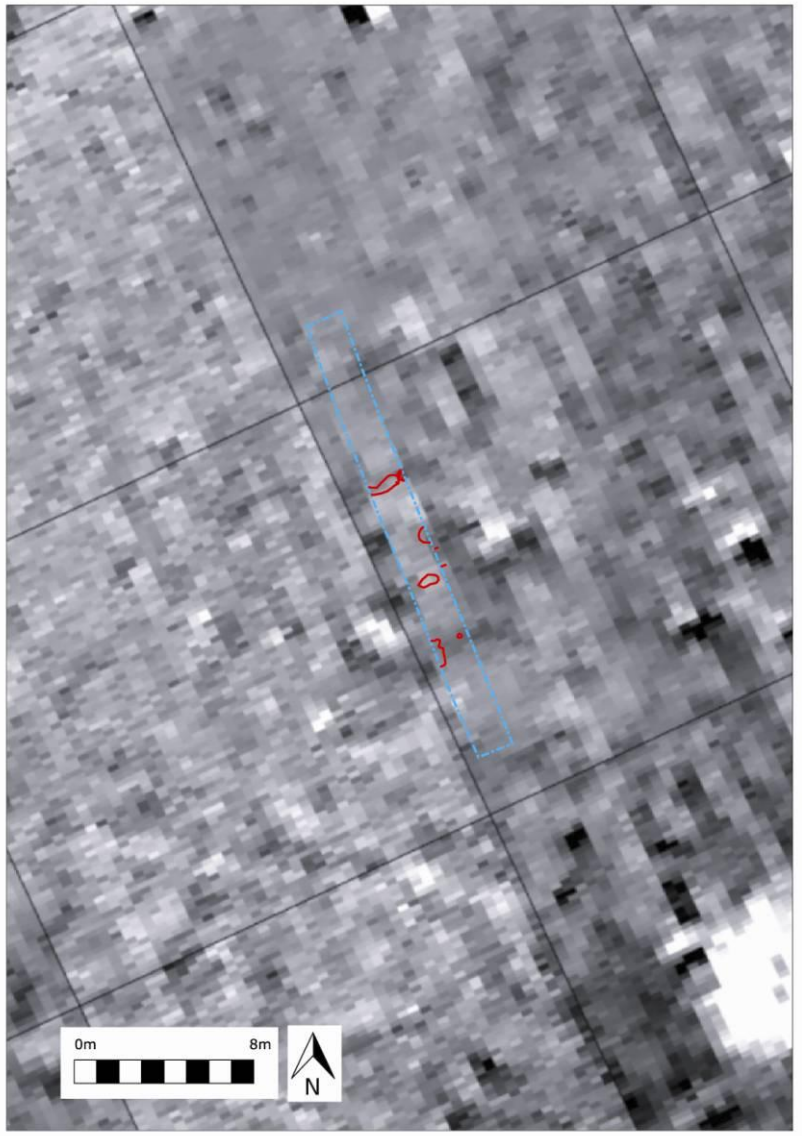


Figure 18 (right): Trench 5 (in blue) with its archaeological features (in red) overlaid on the geophysical survey results

5.6 **Trench 6** (Figures 19 & 20)

5.6.1 Trench 6 measured 45m long, 1.6m wide, orientated NNW-SSE (photo 21). Originally it was to measure 25m long and was positioned to investigate differing bands of magnetic readings identified on the geophysical survey, believed to be of natural origin. The trench was subsequently extended southwards to encompass the brow of the hill and investigate a linear feature also identified on the geophysical survey.

5.6.2 The northern end of the trench was cut through low-lying ground adjacent to a large waterlogged area along the northern edge of the field. Consistent with this, there was a greater depth (0.35m) of ploughsoil (600 & 601) in this area, presumably the result of hill wash accumulation and deeper ploughing as a result of softer ground. The underlying subsoil deposits across much of the lower slopes and low-lying ground consisted of mid orange-brown sandy-clays (602). These deposits appear to correspond to the generally more magnetically positive readings (represented by darker bands) visible on the geophysical survey results. This is consistent to similar findings in Trench 2. Adjacent to the waterlogged area this subsoil deposit took on a greener hue and overlay dark-grey wetland clays (603). On the upper slopes the orange-brown subsoils gave way to underlying gravels (604) and the ploughsoil thinned out to 0.2m in depth.

5.6.3 The only feature revealed within this long trench was a narrow linear feature at the southern end (Photo 22), consistent with a linear feature identified on the geophysical survey results. This linear feature (606) had straight edges, measured 0.32m wide and ran in a WNW-ESE direction. It contained a mottled grey silty-clay loam. This feature was visible under the upper plough soil (600), but cutting through the deeper plough-disturbed deposits (601). This indicates it is likely to be a modern feature, the regularity of the edges and the width of the feature suggesting it was machine cut. As it headed in the direction of an electricity pole (although the geophysical results suggested it did not carry an electric current) it was deemed unnecessary and unsafe to excavate further.

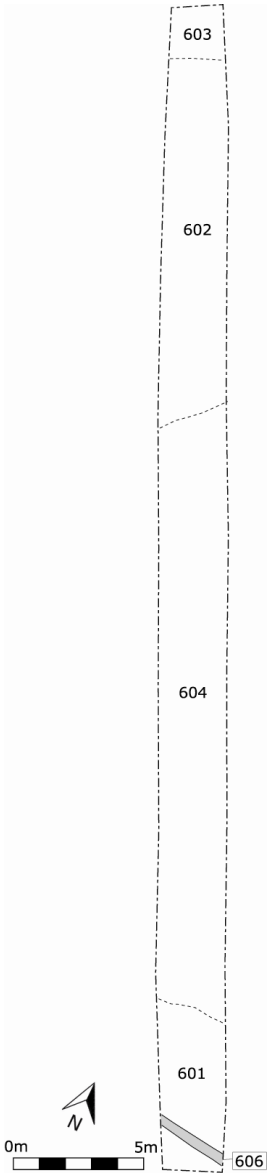


Figure 19 (left): Plan of Trench 6

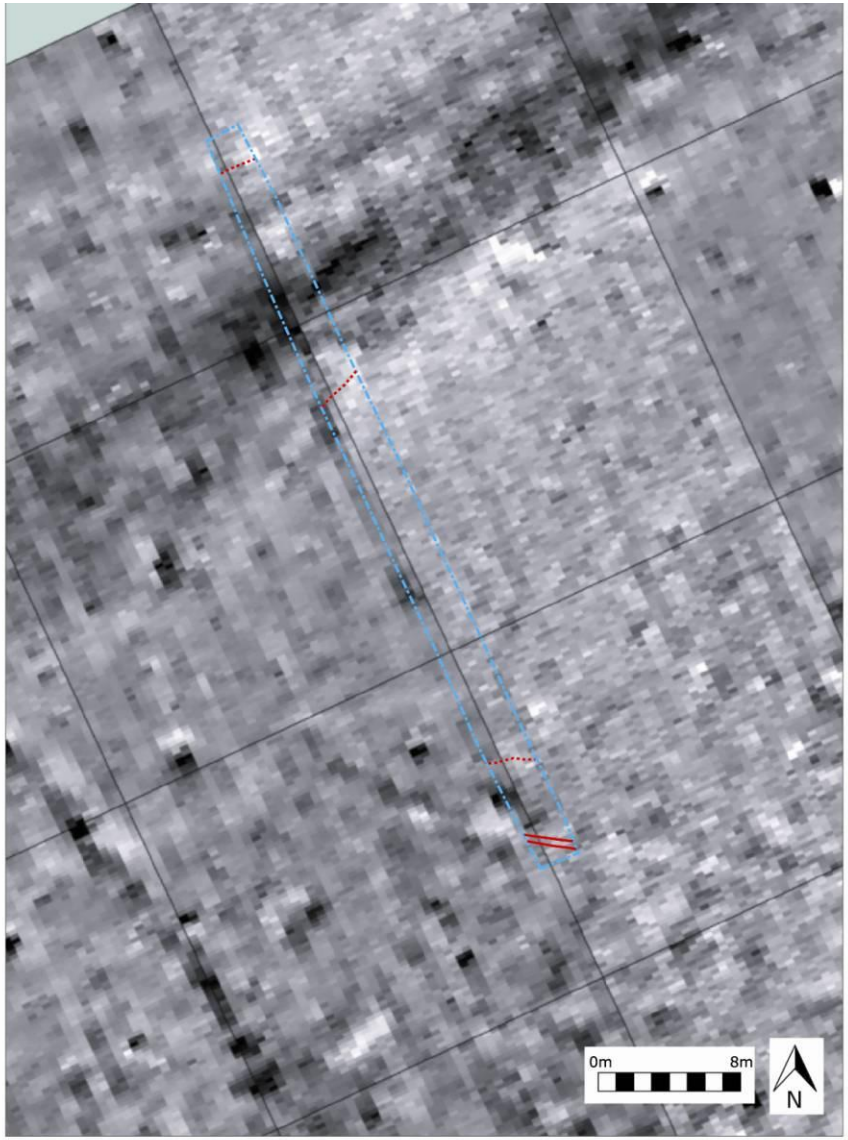


Figure 20 (right): Trench 6 (in blue) with its archaeological features (in red) overlaid on the geophysical survey results

5.7 **Trench 7** (Figures 21 & 22)

5.7.1 Trench 7 measured 10.6m long, 1.6m wide, orientated WSW-ENE. This trench was positioned to investigate a linear feature identified on the geophysical survey (Figure 5; No.1) which seemed to correspond to a field boundary visible on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1890 (Figure 3).

5.7.2 The geophysical survey indicated a single linear feature, which was also identified within the trench as linear feature 705 (Photo 23). This was a shallow ditch with concave sides and base, 0.6m wide and 0.1m deep. It contained a single fill (704) of light grey-brown clayey-silt. One piece of pottery was recovered from this fill, as yet undated but seemingly of a general post-medieval date.

5.7.3 Some 2.8m to the west a second parallel ditch (703) was identified on the same orientation. This ditch was unexcavated, but was narrower at 0.4m wide, with an orange-brown fill (702). This ditch was not identified on the geophysical survey, but it presumably represents part of the same field boundary, typically with ditches on either side of a central hedgebank. No remnants of a central hedgebank were identified.

5.7.4 There was a noticeable change in the subsoil deposits on either side of this field boundary. To the west, and in between the two ditches, the subsoil beneath the modern plough-disturbed deposits consisted of typical glacio-fluvial gravels (706). To the east of the boundary the subsoil consisted of orange-brown silty-clays (707), seeming to overlie deeper gravel deposits. This may be an indication of deeper ploughing immediately to the east of the field boundary.

5.7.5 A short distance to the east of the eastern boundary a small sub-circular feature (709) was revealed against the northern trench section. It protruded 0.35m into the trench and was 0.5m wide. It contained a fill (708) that was very similar in colour and texture to the fill of the adjacent ditch (704) which may suggest the two features are related. This feature was unexcavated but may represent a posthole associated with the late post-medieval field boundary.

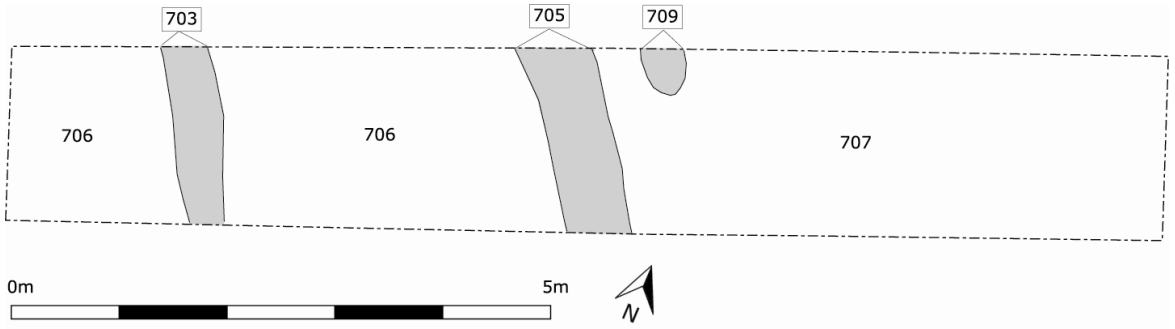


Figure 21 (top): Plan of Trench 7

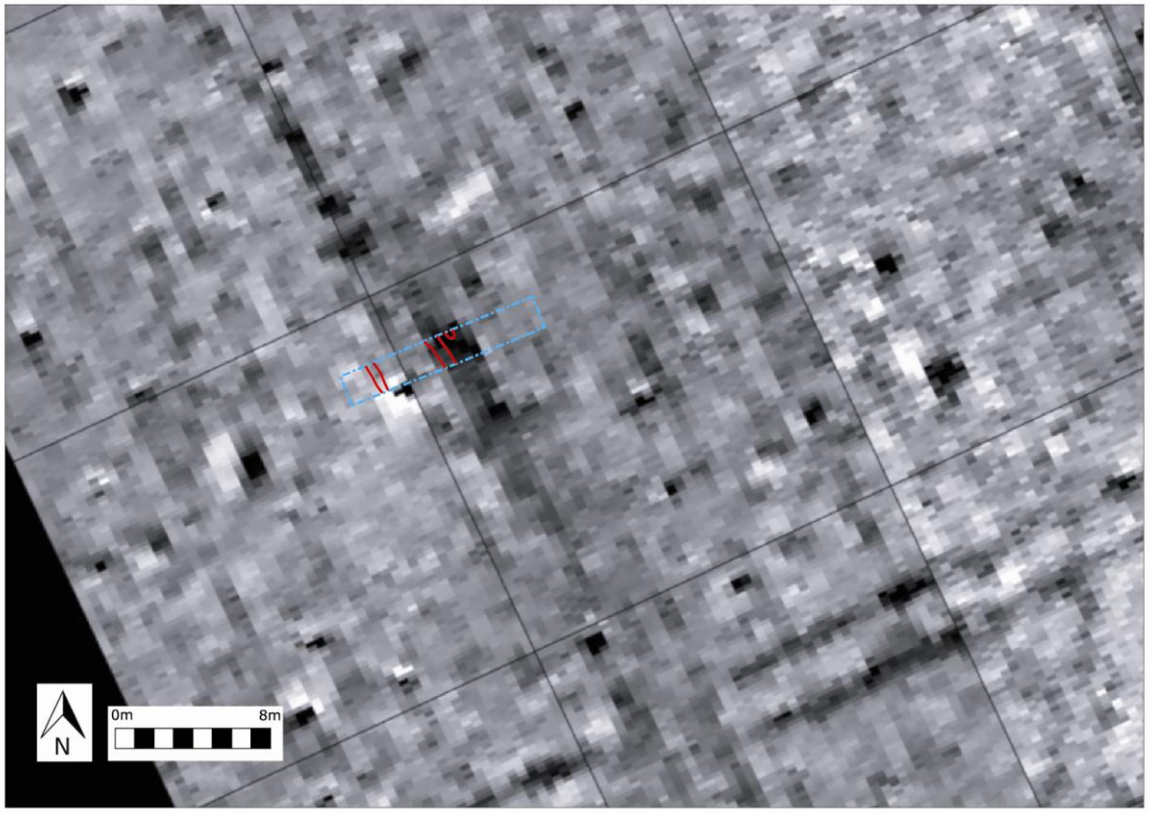


Figure 22 (bottom): Trench 7 (in blue) with its archaeological features (in red) overlaid on the geophysical survey results

5.8 Trench 8 (Figures 23 & 24)

5.8.1 Trench 8 measures 10m long by 1.6m wide, orientated NNW-SSE (Photo 24). It was positioned to examine the double-ditched feature that ran across the southern part of the surveyed area (Figure 5; No.2), in an area where the geophysical results for this feature were particularly strong.

5.8.2 Two linear features were identified consistent with the readings suggested by the geophysical survey results (Photo 25). The northernmost linear feature (803) was part excavated (Photo 26). It measured 0.8m wide and 0.21m deep, orientated WSW-ENE. It had gently sloping concave sides with a concave base. It contained a single fill (802) of grey-brown clayey-silts. No finds were recovered from the fill. but it did appear to contain fragments of coal which may be indicative of a general later post-medieval date.

5.8.3 There was a gap of 2.1m between the two ditches. The southernmost (805) was unexcavated, but appeared slightly smaller, 0.55m wide but with a similar mid grey-brown clayey-silt fill.

5.8.4 Close to the eastern section of Trench 8 the northernmost ditch (803) cut through an earlier feature of uncertain origins (810, Photo 26). Only a 0.6m section of this feature was revealed within the trench, measuring 0.7m in width and 0.35m deep with curvilinear sides and a pointed western end. The steep northern edge was irregular, the southern edge appeared more regular although it had been largely truncated by the later ditch 803. The base was narrow and concave. It contained a single fill (809) of orange-brown silty-clay containing no finds or evidence of human origin. It remains uncertain as to whether this feature is of natural or human origin.

5.8.5 An irregular linear feature with a pointed end (807) extended 1.8m from the southern section of the Trench. It measured at most 0.35m wide and contained a compact brown-orange silty-clay fill (806). The irregular nature of the sides of this feature and a lack of evidence within the fill of human activity suggests this feature is likely to have natural origins.

5.8.6 These features were all cut into typical gravel subsoil (808) visible throughout the trench.

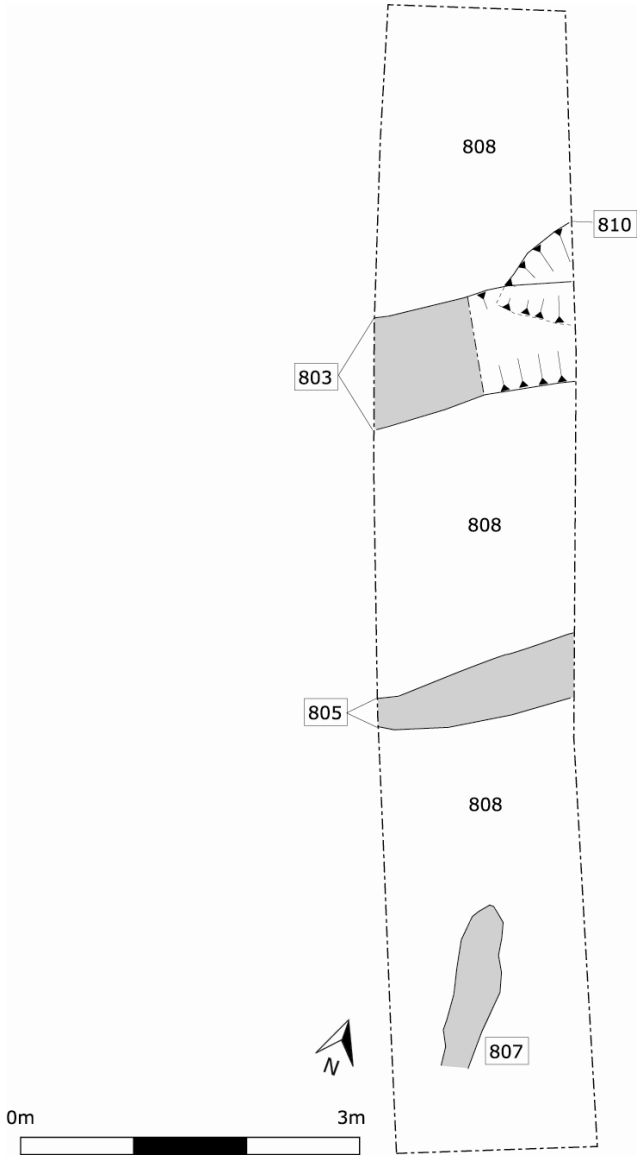


Figure 23 (left): Plan of Trench 8

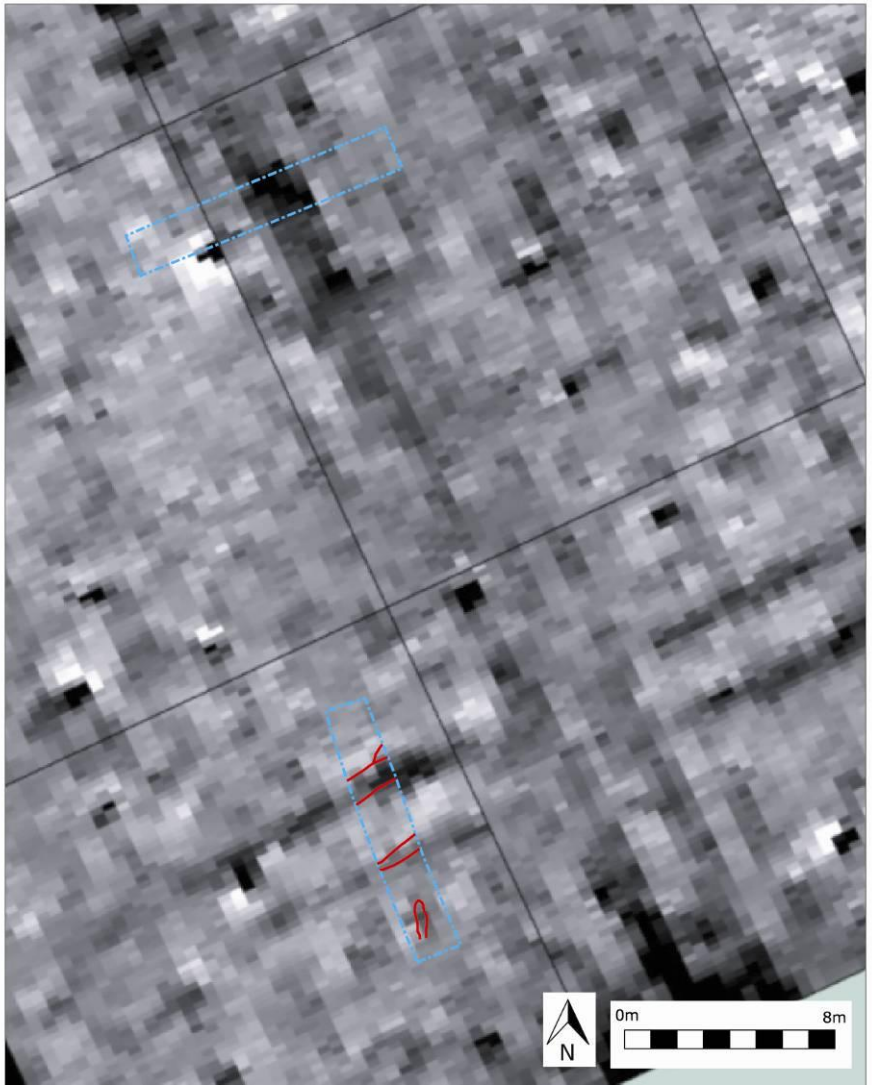


Figure 24 (right): Trench 8 (in blue) with its archaeological features (in red) overlaid on the geophysical survey results

5.9 Trench 9 (Figures 25 & 26)

5.9.1 Trench 9 measured 11.7m long, 1.6m wide, orientated north-south. The trench was positioned to investigate a possible curvilinear feature identified on the geophysical survey results.

5.9.2 The curvilinear feature appeared to correspond to a change in the naturally occurring subsoils revealed within the trench. The southern *c.*7.5m of the trench consisted of fine orange-brown silty sandy clays (902), which gave way to fluvio-glacial gravels (903) at the northern end of the trench. Nothing of archaeological interest was noted within the trench.

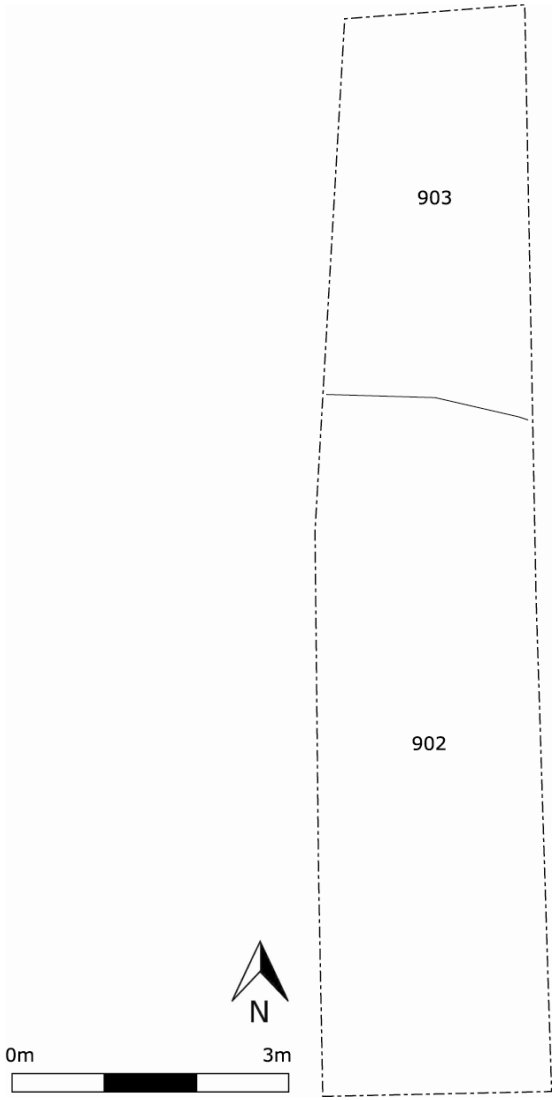


Figure 25 (left): Plan of Trench 9

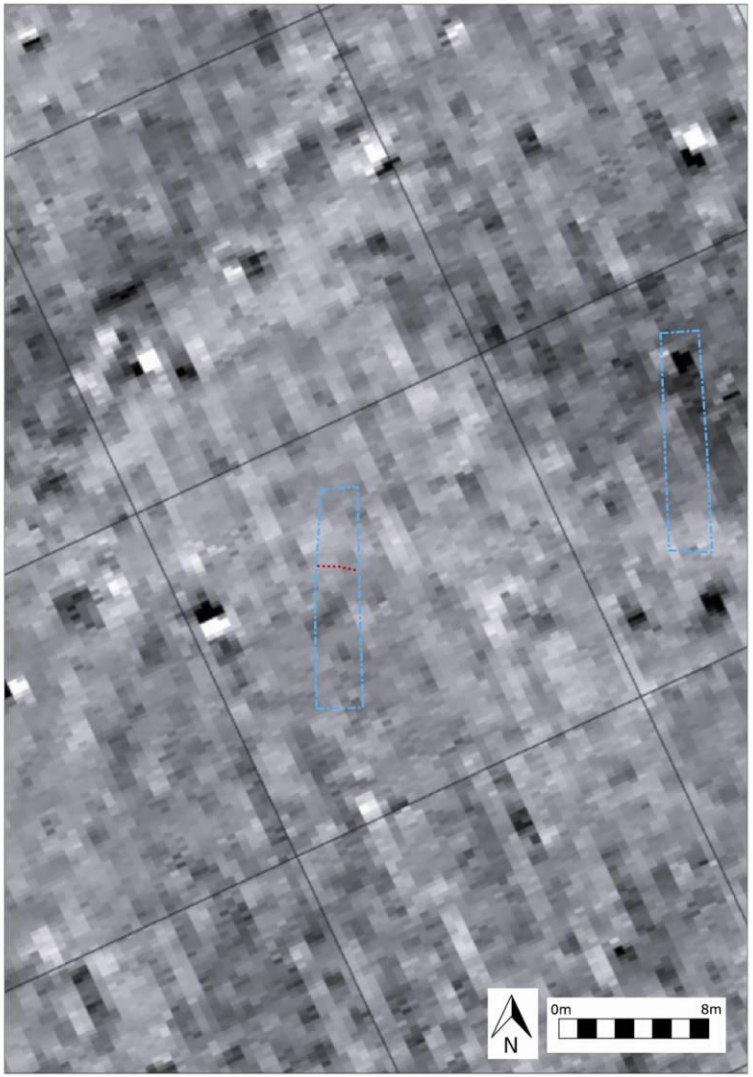


Figure 26 (right): Trench 9 (in blue) with its archaeological features (in red) overlaid on the geophysical survey results

5.10 Trench 10 (Figures 27, 28 & 29)

5.10.1 Trench 10 measured 43m long, 1.6m wide and was orientated NNW-SSE (Photo 27). It was positioned in an area beyond the limits of the geophysical survey, but located on the topographically raised area on which the ring ditches were located. The trench was aimed to test the possibility that more potential barrow sites may exist in this area.

5.10.2 Roughly midway along the trench, in line with the two larger ring ditches identified within adjacent Trench 1, was an area roughly 3.2m wide of mixed archaeological deposits between a large area of natural gravels to the north and a band of natural gravels (1006) to the south (Photo 30). A sondage 2.4m by at most 0.64m was excavated through these mixed deposits. This revealed a large number of individual contexts at most 0.29m deep lying on top of an undulating natural gravel surface (Photos 28, 29 & 30).

5.10.3 These deposits appeared to sit within a scoop or hollow (1003) *c.*2.8m wide, and protruding 1.08m into the trench, cut into the natural gravels and mainly contained within a curvilinear band of light grey-brown clay-silt (1004). This band (1004) was 0.32m wide, with a colour and composition reminiscent of leached out clays.

5.10.4 The lower deposits within this scoop or hollow consist largely of a mid brown sandy-silty clay mixed with gravels (1018) up to 0.24m thick. This deposit contained the occasional fragment of charcoal and pieces of pottery. It appeared to fill the base of the possible scoop (1003), and may have been used as a levelling deposit. A similar deposit (1019) lies on the edge of the scoop, possibly filling a gap in the line of the curvilinear feature 1004 or lying outside it. A series of layers then overlie these deposits (1016 & 1017) of varying thickness, some containing charcoal and pottery fragments. The upper layers filling the scoop consist of mid brown and orange-brown silty-clays (1002, 1014 & 1015) containing some large fragments of pottery (Photo 31) and the occasional charcoal fleck.

5.10.5 This series of deposits suggest possible occupation activity and levelling layers within a sub-circular scoop or occupation hollow, with many of the later deposits contained within a curvilinear band that may represent the remains of an earth and clay wall. The pottery fragments within these deposits have all been identified as late Neolithic Grooved Ware pottery (T. Darvill, pers. comm.).

5.10.6 Curvilinear feature 1004 is itself contained within a curving band of mid brown silty-clay (1005 & 1069), clearly distinguished from the natural gravels to the south (1006).

5.10.7 These deposits are bounded on the north side by a natural band of large gravels 0.9m wide. This is then cut by a linear feature (1011) running roughly east-west across the trench, with a possible slight curve. This possible ditch was unexcavated, but was 1m wide and contained compact mid-brown silty-clay (1010). No further archaeological features were noted within the Trench to the north of this possible ditch.

5.10.8 Just over 1m to the south of deposit 1005 was an arcing band of brown silty clay (1007), 1m wide. This deposit was not excavated, but it may represent a curving ditch or gully although this is uncertain.

5.10.9 To the south of this lies an area containing fine natural gravels and pea grit, subdivided by irregular bands of siltier material. A shallow ditch (1009) lies 4.9m to the south of 1007, crossing the trench roughly east-west. This ditch was part excavated, demonstrating it was 0.87m wide

and 0.25m deep with a shallow v-shaped profile. It contained a single fill (1008) of mid-brown silty clay, no finds were recovered.

5.10.10 No other features of archaeological interest were recorded within Trench 10.

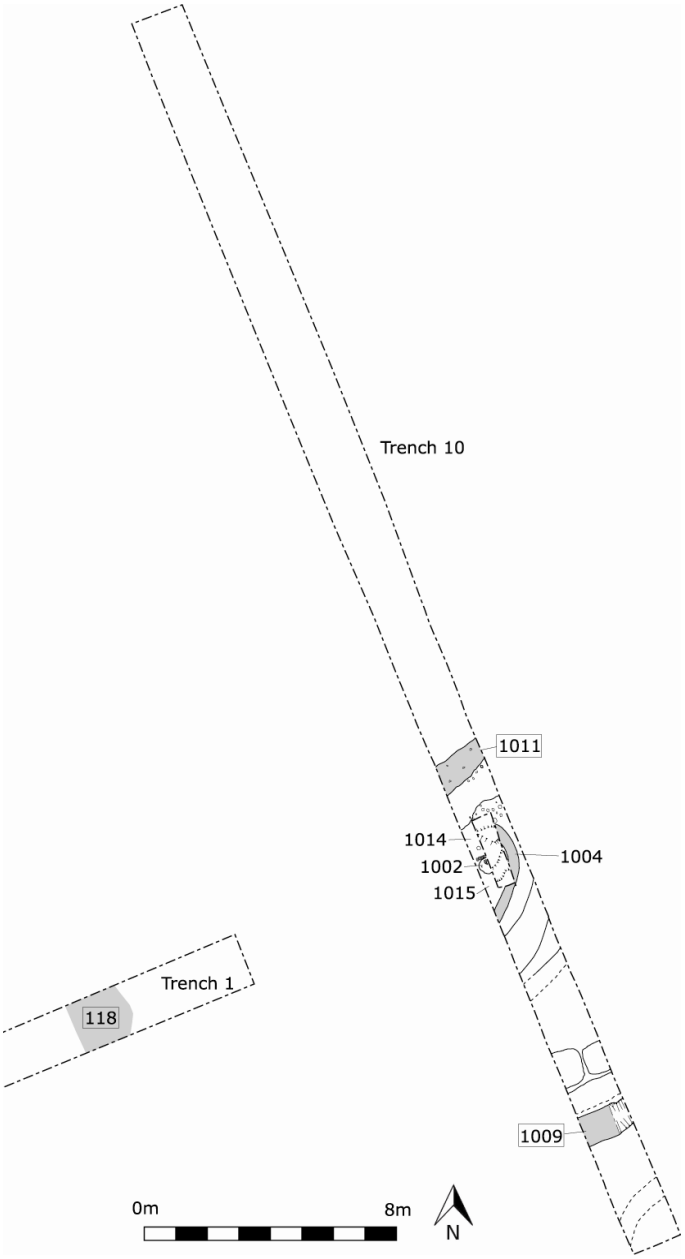


Figure 27: Plan of Trench 10, with the eastern end of Trench 1 included to show location of eastern barrow.

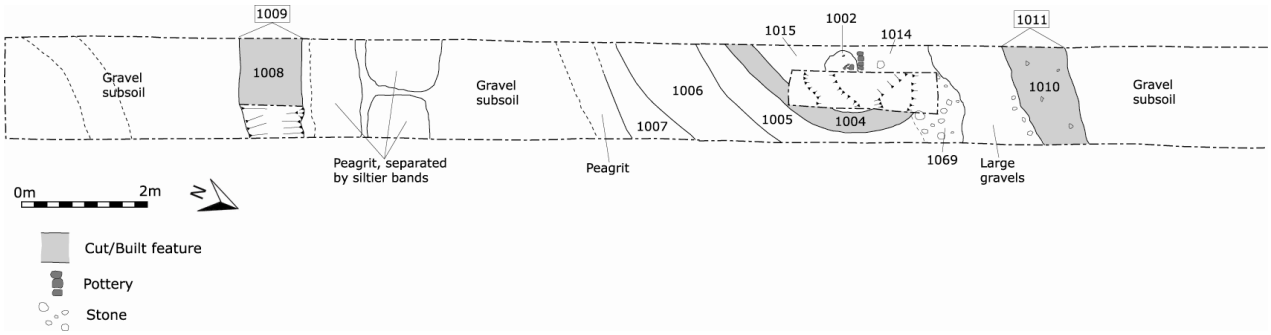


Figure 28: Detail plan of features recorded in Trench 10.

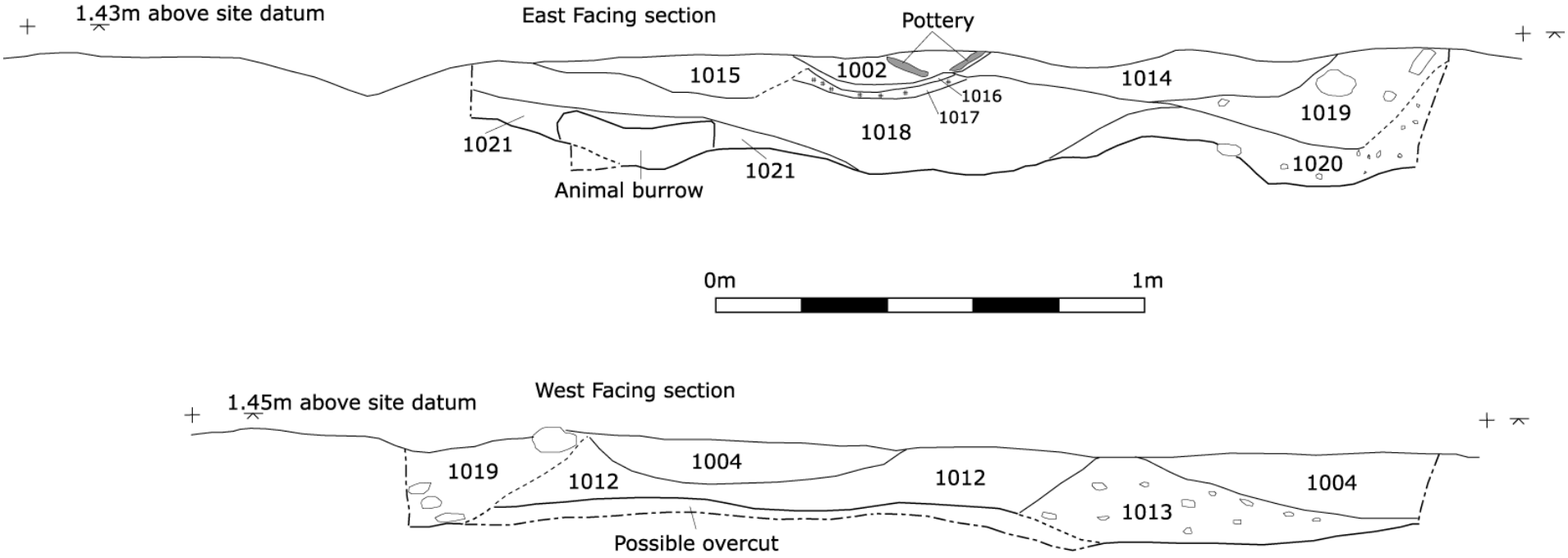


Figure 29: Sections from sondage through deposits within Trench 10

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 A variety of archaeological features were recorded across the site, but of primary interest was an area of Neolithic activity and potential round barrows at the eastern end of the site. A discrete area of possible rectilinear features lay in the centre of the site. The remaining features identified, consisting mainly of post-medieval field boundaries and geological features are of limited archaeological interest.

Neolithic activity

6.2 The site produced numerous sherds of Neolithic Grooved Ware pottery, which is a relatively rare find, especially in Southwest Wales. A catalogue of Neolithic collections in the National Museums and Galleries of Wales (Burrow 2003) records only one site within Southwest Wales that has produced this pottery (Llanilar in Ceredigion). Although a few other fragments of pottery have since come to light in this region, this is clearly one of the best collections of Grooved Ware pottery found in this part of Wales.

6.3 Grooved ware pottery is typical of the later Neolithic period, from around 2800 BC until *c.*2400 BC (Burrow 2003;99). The function of this particular type of pottery is often debated, it has been suggested that the amount of decoration on the pottery was connected to status (Laing 2003;25), and that it may have served a role in ritual activities (Burrow 2003;99-101). This style of pottery has been found on henge sites in southern England and ritual sites in Ireland. There is a suggestion that it was ritually deposited in pits on several sites in Wales, such as Upper Ninepence (Powys), Capel Eithin (Anglesey) and Hendre (Flintshire), although it has also been recovered from domestic contexts, such as at Trelystan in Powys (*ibid*).

6.4 The exact nature and extent of Neolithic activity at this site cannot be fully ascertained from the evaluation trenches, more widespread excavation would be required. The pottery however did come from discrete features and deposits at the eastern end of the site within Trench 1 and 10. Within Trench 1 pottery was recovered from curvilinear feature 111. This feature was only revealed on the removal of the later barrow-mound material, which also revealed other similar deposits such as 121, 112, 113 and possibly 115. This suggests there may be relatively extensive remains of late Neolithic activity preserved underneath the later barrow material.

6.5 Within Trench 10 the late Neolithic pottery came from a series of deposits that appeared to be contained within a curvilinear band of light coloured clays (1004). It is possible this curvilinear band represents the leached-out remnants of an earth or clay wall, or footings for a wall. This may indicate internal deposits are either build-up or deliberate levelling deposits within an earth or clay-walled building. These deposits, including the possible wall, all appear to lie within a curvilinear hollow within the natural gravels, which again could be evidence of a settlement hollow worn out of the loose gravels through regular activity or deliberately cut into the gravels and floor surfaces laid down.

6.6 It is not clear from the excavated evidence what the function of this Neolithic activity is. It may represent general settlement as the site is well placed on a natural rise with the Tawelan brook a short distance to the northeast, and another stream a short distance to the south. The Tywi river also lies only *c.*1.7km to the east. Given the possible ritual function

of the pottery and the later establishment of barrows on the site, it may even suggest the later Neolithic activity also has a ritualistic function.

Round Barrows

6.7 The three ring ditches at the eastern end of the site, so clearly depicted on the geophysical survey results, are typical of round barrows – ritual sites often containing burials and usually typical of the Bronze Age. Barrow sites are known to vary greatly in size, with the smallest being just a couple of metres across and the largest over 50m across. These probable barrows, measured 5.5m, 7.7m and 11m in diameter (measuring to the outer edge of the ring ditches), and fit comfortably within this range albeit slightly smaller than the average.

6.8 Barrows are known to date throughout the Bronze Age, but are generally far more typical of the early Bronze Age (*c.*2150 BC to 1500 BC). Increasingly however barrows are also known from the later Neolithic period and are indicative of a general shift in ritual and funerary practices from communal burial in megalithic tombs, characteristic of the earlier Neolithic period, to these more individual burials underneath mounds of earth or stone. The primary burial tends to be placed fairly centrally, and can be either inhumations or cremations, and secondary burials dug into or around the mound are not uncommon. The presence of barrows overlying late Neolithic activity could suggest these barrows are also late Neolithic in origin, especially given the lack of any Bronze Age pottery from the site, although further excavation would be needed to clarify this.

6.9 The evaluation clearly shows that each of these three potential barrows is surrounded by a continuous ring ditch. There are slight differences in the ditches of the eastern barrow, compared to the central and western barrow, which may indicate they were constructed at slightly different times.

6.10 Remnants of central mound material may survive in the smaller western and central barrows, but the central mound material is most clearly preserved in the larger eastern barrow, consisting of layers of silty-clay loam and stone.

6.11 The geophysical survey suggested the possibility of central features within the eastern and western barrows. In both cases corresponding features were revealed that consisted of charcoal-rich deposits and they may represent the fills of central cremation burials (deposit 109 within the eastern barrow, and deposit 132 in the western barrow). Other charcoal-rich deposits have clearly been cut through once the mound was added (deposits 114 and 122 and cut 129 in the eastern barrow) and may therefore represent later burial or ritual activity on the site, although as none of these features were excavated at this stage of works their date and function cannot be definitively established.

6.12 A strip of *c.*21m remained un-surveyed along the eastern edge of the site during the geophysical survey, so there remains the potential for further barrows sites in this area. The lack of archaeological deposits in the northern half of Trench 10 suggests barrows sites are unlikely in that area, but linear ditches 1009, 1011 and possibly 1007 may represent evidence of further barrows and the possibility of more archaeological deposits to the southeast. Beyond the site area to the east, the land, although now heavily developed, begins to fall away suggesting it is unlikely that any further barrows extended into that area. There is also the possibility that the land to the east was terraced before the existing housing estate was

constructed. If any further barrows had been present in this area, they will have been removed.

6.13 No dating evidence was obtained from any of the barrow deposits or later intercutting features, but their presence may suggest continued ritual use of the site for a considerable period of time. This is perhaps best demonstrated by feature 129 which was clearly cut once the barrow ditches had become in-filled and the central mound had slumped over the top of it, but also manages to respect the original line of the ditch.

6.14 There were suggestions on the geophysical survey results of some large circular anomalies to the west. These were investigated within Trench 3. This identified a large silty area, but no evidence of any circular anomalies, it is likely these anomalies were the result of natural changes in the subsoil deposits.

6.15 Based on the current evidence from the geophysical survey and evaluation trenches the extent of this late Neolithic activity and barrows appears to be confined mainly to an amorphous area of *c.*70m (E-W) by 40m (N-S) at the eastern end of the site. This is defined by a small topographic raised plateau within the field.

Rectilinear Features

6.16 Two possible rectilinear features that may represent structural remains were identified on the geophysical survey in the centre of the proposed development site, both of which were investigated in Trench 5. Features were identified within the trench that appeared to correspond to most of the readings from the geophysical survey, however, where excavated the results proved inconclusive. In all features that related to the geophysical survey results the irregular profiles, lack of finds, charcoal or archaeological deposits appeared indicative of natural origins. The regularity of the geophysical survey anomalies was far more indicative of human origin.

Field Boundaries

6.17 The geophysical survey identified two linear features that on initial interpretation appeared to represent field boundaries. This was confirmed by the evaluation.

6.18 Running roughly NNW – SSE towards the western end of the site, a dark linear feature followed the line of a removed field boundary that was visible on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1890. Although only shown on the geophysical survey as a single ditch, where it was revealed in Trench 7, it demonstrated that this was a double-ditched boundary, typical of hedgebanks with ditches running along either side.

6.19 Running WSE – ENE across the southern part of the site was a very straight linear feature, reminiscent of hedgebanks, but not shown as a boundary on any available historic map sources. This was revealed in both Trench 3 and Trench 8, as two ditches. No finds were recovered from the ditch fills, however the presence of small fragments of coal may indicate a later post-medieval date, when coal tended to be more prevalent in the general landscape. The size of the ditches and spacing also strongly suggests they do represent remnants of a hedgebank, in a style typical of the post-medieval period.

Geological features

6.20 Large bands of both magnetically positive and negative readings were identified on the geophysical survey, mainly across the falling slopes and lower ground along the northern edge of the site. Excavation in Trenches 2, 6 and 9 confirmed that these bands related to changes in the underlying natural subsoil deposits. The darker bands appeared to relate to an orange-brown sandy-clay that appears prevalent on the lower slopes, but also appears in smaller areas throughout the site. The generally more mottled magnetic readings seen throughout the site appears to represent areas where the underlying fluvio-glacial gravels are visible immediately below the plough-disturbed layers.

Modern Features

6.22 The ploughsoil appeared consistently across the site at a depth varying between 0.2m and 0.3m, at its thinnest on the brow the hillslopes, and its thickest on the softer wetter ground along the northern boundary. In places the plough has clearly disturbed deeper deposits, up to 0.5m deep in places.

6.23 A linear feature identified on the geophysical survey running NW – SE through the western half of the site proved to be a modern service or drainage trench.

Finds

6.24 The late Neolithic pottery recovered from the site is clearly of importance and interest, see above (section 6.2). Two fragments of struck flint flakes were also recovered from contexts containing late Neolithic pottery (1017 and 1014). A further four pieces of flint were recovered from topsoil deposits across the site (001 & 600), one of which showed signs of working. No further Prehistoric pottery was recovered from any deposits outside of Trenches 1 and 10.

6.25 The remaining pottery and glass recovered from the ploughsoil appears to come from a relatively wide date-range. The glass appears mostly 18th and 19th century in origin, the pottery (which has not yet been analysed closely) appears on initial examination to date to a very broad post-medieval period, including possible late medieval fragments. The majority of this material is likely to have originated through manuring of the land as no obvious features were identified that could explain their origin otherwise. The pottery was distributed evenly throughout the ploughsoil, with no obvious concentrations.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 The archaeological evaluation, combining the geophysics survey with excavated evaluation trenches, has identified an archaeological significant area of late Neolithic and possible Bronze Age activity within the eastern side of the proposed development site. This activity appears largely confined to an area of *c.*70m (E-W) by 40m (N-S) on higher ground at the eastern end of the site, however no clear boundaries to this activity could be established within the confines of the evaluation. More extensive archaeological investigations would be required in this area should the site be put forward for development. The remains are of regional archaeological significance, as opposed to being of national importance and worthy of preservation. Although it is preferable to leave archaeological remains preserved *in-situ* where possible, it is unlikely with the current development proposals that this would be possible. The archaeological remains would be best dealt with through a programme of open area excavation to preserve the archaeological remains through record. Following excavation detailed analysis and reporting of the results would be needed and an archive prepared. Following this all archaeological constraints would have been removed and the site area would be free for development (on archaeological grounds).

7.2 A series of uncertain rectilinear features were identified within the centre of the site, concentrated around Trench 5. If proved to be archaeological these features could be of some significance which would warrant further investigation, although their provenance is debateable.

7.3 No other features of archaeological significance were identified within the investigated areas. There is the potential for further archaeological remains to be located beyond the area investigated, such as in the southeast corner and along the western boundary. Such areas may require an archaeological presence during any groundwork associated with proposed development.

7.4 No evidence for the route of a Roman road was encountered within the area investigated.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1: Stony mound material (108) in eastern barrow, Trench 1. Looking SSE, 1m scale.

Photo 2: View of stony mound material 108 within eastern barrow, overlying deposit 137. Trench 1, looking east.

Photo 3: Feature 122 within the stony mound material of the eastern barrow. Trench 1, looking NNW. 1m scale.

Photo 4: Feature/deposit 109 within Trench 1. Looking SSE.

Photo 5: Pre-excavation shot of the western segment of the eastern barrow ditch (116), Trench 1. Looking SSE, 1m scale.

Photo 6: Oblique shot across ditch 116 with curvilinear deposit 111 beyond. The scale is lying on deposit 110. Unexcavated mound material 108 at the top of the picture. Trench 1, looking NE, 1m scale.

Photo 7: North-facing section through eastern barrow ditch 116, Trench 1. 1m scale.

Photo 8: North-facing section of central barrow ditch 105, Trench 1, 1m scale.

Photo 9: Western segment of central barrow ditch (107), Trench 1. Looking SSE. 1m & 0.5m scales.

Photo 10: Part-excavated northern segment of the western barrow ditch (131). Trench 1, looking WSW. 1m & 0.5m scales.

Photo 11: Charcoal-rich fill (132) of central pit (133) of the western barrow. Trench 1, looking SSW. 1m scale.

Photo 12: General shot of Trench 2, looking NE. 1m scales.

Photo 13: General shot of Trench 3, looking NW. 1m scales

Photo 14: General shot of Trench 3 looking SE. Extensive deposit 301 visible in the foreground. 1m scales.

Photo 15: Pre-excavation shot of parallel ditches 304 and 306 at the southern end of Trench 3, looking SE. 1m scales.

Photo 16: General shot of Trench 4, looking NNW.

Photo 17: General shot of Trench 5, looking NNW. 1m scales.

Photo 18: Pre-excavation shot of feature 502. Trench 5, looking ENE. 1m & 0.5m scales.

Photo 19: Part-excavated feature 502, looking NNW. 0.5m scale.

Photo 20: Pre-excavation shot of feature 509 (on left partly in strong shadow) and 511 (between small scale and east section). Trench 5, looking NNW. 1m & 0.5m scales.

Photo 21: General shot of Trench 6, looking SSE. 1m scales.

Photo 22: Modern service ditch 606 within Trench 6, looking ESE.
1m & 0.5m scales.

Photo 23: Part-excavated field boundary ditch 706 within Trench 7, looking NNW. 1m & 0.5m scales.

Photo 24: General shot if Trench 8, looking NNW. 1m scales

Photo 25: Pre-excavation shot of parallel ditches 803 and 805 within Trench 8, looking NNW. 1m scales.

Photo 26: West facing section of ditch 803 cutting through feature 810 (with the orange fill). Trench 8. 1m & 0.5m scales.

Photo 27: General shot of Trench 10, looking NNW. 1m scales.

Photo 28: West-facing view of the sondage through various deposits onto the irregular gravel base within Trench 10, see Figure 29. 1m & 0.5m scales.

Photo 29: East-facing view of the sondage within Trench 10. 1m & 0.5m scales.

Photo 30: General view of deposits containing late-Neolithic pottery within Trench 10, looking NNW. 1m & 0.5m scales.

Photo 31: Fragments of late-Neolithic grooved ware pottery within deposit 1002. Trench 10, scale in 0.1m segments.

Photo 32: General shot across the site, looking NE. The area containing the Neolithic activity and barrow sites lies just in front of the trees to the right of the telegraph pole.

Photo 33: General shot looking east across site, showing the raised ground between the trees and the telegraph pole containing the Neolithic activity and the barrows, with falling ground to the north (left).

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

Context Number	Description	Measurements
100	Topsoil (Plough-soil) Dark brown clay-silty-loam	0.38m thick
101	Natural subsoil Friable, mid orange-brown, clay-silt.	0.09m thick
102	Gravel Subsoil Friable, mid grey-brown, sandy-silt Frequent, small-medium (occasionally large) sub-rounded stone	
103	Fill of 105 Friable, dark brown, clay-silt Occasional, small sub-angular/rounded stone	0.25m thick
104	Fill of 105 Friable, mid orange-brown, sandy-silt Frequent, small-medium, sub-rounded stone.	0.42m thick
105	Central Barrow ditch Curvilinear, orientated N-S Moderately sloping sides, irregular base.	1.60m long 1.38 wide 0.67m deep
106	Fill of 107 Friable, mid orange-brown, sandy-silt Moderate, small-medium, sub-rounded stone	1.6m long 0.98m wide 0.5m thick
107	Central Barrow ditch Curvilinear, orientated N-S Moderately sloping sides, irregular base.	1.6m long 0.98m wide 0.5m deep
108	Layer (eastern barrow mound material) Friable, mid dark brown, silty-clay loam Moderate large stones. Frequent medium stones	
109	Deposit (possible fill of an unnumbered cut) Friable, dark brown, silty-clay loam Occasional charcoal fragments	
110	Deposit Friable, mid/dark orange, silty-clay loam Occasional small stones	
111	Deposit (possible fill of an unnumbered cut) Compact, light/mid grey, silty clay Frequent, medium stones Occasional charcoal fleck Neolithic pottery	0.37m thick,
112	Deposit (possible fill of an unnumbered cut) Compact, mid brown, silty-clay loam 70-80%, medium – small stone (some burnt)	
113	Deposit (presumed layer) Compact, mid brown, silty-clay Occasional, small-medium stone Frequent charcoal flecks	
114	Deposit (possible fill of an unnumbered cut) Friable, dark brown, silty-clay loam Frequent charcoal flecks	
115	Layer Compact, light yellow-orange, silty-clay Moderate, small-medium stone Very rare charcoal flecks	
116	Eastern Barrow ditch Linear Moderate to step straight sides, narrow flat base	1.25m wide 0.9m deep
117	Fill of 116 Friable, mid brown, silty loam	

	Moderate, small, stone	
118	Eastern Barrow ditch cut Linear	
119	Fill of 118 Friable, mid/dark brown, silty-clay loam Moderate, medium-large stone	
120	Fill of 118 Friable, mid brown, silty clay loam	
121	Deposit (possible layer) Friable, mid brown, sandy-clay oam 30% medium stone (some burnt)	
122	Deposit (possible fill of an unnumbered cut) Compact 80%, large stones	
123	Layer (central barrow mound material) Loose/friable, mid brown, clay-sandy-silt Moderate, small-large, sub-rounded pebbles Rare charcoal flecks	2.8m long 0.16m thick
124	Fill of 107 Loose/friable, mid brown, clayey silty-sand Moderate, small-large , sub-rounded pebbles	0.15m thick
125	Fill of 129 Friable, mid/dark brown, silty loam Frequent, medium stones	
126	Fill of 116 Friable, light brown, sandy loam Moderate, medium, stones	
127	Fill of 116 Friable, light brown, silty loam Moderate, small-medium, stone Occasional charcoal fragment	
128	Primary Fill of 116 Friable, mid yellow-brown, sandy loam Moderate small stones	
129	Possible ditch U-shaped profile	0.6m wide 0.34m deep
130	Fill of 131 Compact, mid orange-brown, clay-silt Occasional, small, sub-rounded stone	1.6m long 0.8m wide 0.31m thick
131	Western Barrow ditch Curvilinear, orientated E-W Gradual straight sides, shallow concave base	1.6m long 0.8m wide 0.31m deep
132	Fill of 133 Compact, mid grey-brown, clay-silt Moderate charcoal flecks Occasional, small, sub-rounded stone	0.86m long 0.29m wide
133	Possible pit (Western Barrow) Sub-circular	0.86m long 0.29m wide
134	Fill of 135 Compact, mid orange-brown, clay-silt Moderate, small-medium, sub-rounded stone	1.6m long 0.82m wide
135	Western Barrow ditch Curvilinear, orientated E-W	1.6m long 0.82m wide
136	Layer Friable, mid brown, sandy-clay loam Occasional, small-medium, stone	
137	Layer Friable, mid brown, sandy-clay loam Moderate, small-medium, stone	
138	Layer Friable, mid brown, silty-clay loam Moderate large stones.	

Trench 2

Context Number	Description	Measurements
200	Topsoil (Plough-soil) Friable, mid brown, silty-loam Moderate/Frequent, medium-large, sub-rounded stone	0.2m thick
201	Layer (plough-disturbed subsoil) Friable, mid orange-brown, silty-clay Frequent, medium, sub-rounded stone	0.3m thick
202	Layer – natural subsoil Friable, mid brown, silty-clay Moderate, small-medium, sub-angular stone	4m long
203	Layer – natural subsoil Friable, mid orange-brown, sandy-clay Frequent, medium, sub-angular/rounded stone	4.5m long
204	Layer – natural subsoil Loose, mid orange-brown, sandy-clay gravel	2.5m long

Trench 3

Context Number	Description	Measurements
300	Topsoil (Plough-soil) Friable, dark brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-angular/rounded stone Post medieval pottery and glass	0.4m thick
301	Layer - natural subsoil Friable, mid orange-brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-rounded stone	0.18m thick
302	Layer – natural subsoil Friable, mid grey-brown, sandy-silt Frequent, small-medium, sub-rounded stone	
303	Fill of 304 Friable, mid grey-brown, clayey-silt Moderate, small – medium, sub-rounded stone	1.6m long 0.68m wide
304	Field boundary ditch Linear, straight sides, orientated E-W	1.6m long 0.68m wide
305	Fill of 306 Friable, mid grey-brown, clayey-silt Moderate, small – medium, sub-rounded stone	1.6m long 0.98m wide
306	Field boundary ditch Linear, straight sides, orientated E-W	1.6m long 0.98m wide
307	Layer - possible hedgebank remnants Compact, dark orange-brown, silty-clay Moderate, medium – large, sub-angular stone	
308	Layer – natural subsoil Friable, mid orange-brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-rounded stone	

Trench 4

Context Number	Description	Measurements
400	Topsoil (Plough-soil) Friable, dark brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-angular/rounded stone Post medieval pottery and glass	0.3m thick
401	Layer - natural subsoil Moderate, mid orange-brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-rounded stone	
402	Layer – natural subsoil Loose, mid grey, fine pea-grit gravel	
403	Layer - natural subsoil Moderate, mid orange-brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-rounded stone	
404	Layer – natural subsoil Loose, mid orange-brown, sandy-clay gravel	

Trench 5

Context Number	Description	Measurements
500	Topsoil (Plough-soil) Friable, dark brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-angular/rounded stone Post medieval pottery and glass	0.3m thick
501	Fill of 502 Friable, mid orange-brown, sandy-clay Frequent small-medium, sub-angular stone	1.6m long 0.45m wide 0.17m thick
502	Cut – possible linear feature Linear, irregular sides, orientated E – W Irregular sides and base, but includes sub-circular concave sided and base segment at E end	1.6m long 0.45m wide 0.17m deep
503	Fill of 504 Friable, mid orange-brown, sandy-clay Frequent small-medium, sub-angular stone	0.6m long 0.15m wide 0.17m thick
504	Cut Sub-circular, irregular sides, gentle break of slope onto irregular base.	0.6m long 0.15m wide 0.17m deep
505	Fill of 506 Friable, mid orange-grey, sandy-clay Frequent small-medium, sub-angular stone	0.74m wide 0.1m thick
506	Cut Shallow concave sides, imperceptible break of slope onto flat base	0.74m wide 0.1m deep
507	Layer – natural subsoil Friable, light grey, fine sandy-gravel	1m long 0.4m wide
508	Fill of 509 Friable, mid orange-brown, silty-sandy-clay Moderate small-medium, sub-angular stone	1.18m long 0.35m wide 0.13m thick
509	Cut Sub-rectangular with rounded corners. Irregular sides with gentle to moderate slope. Imperceptible break of slope onto irregular base	1.18m long 0.35m wide 0.13m deep
510	Fill of 511 Compact, mid orange-brown, sandy-clay Frequent, small, sub-angular stone	0.15m long 0.12m wide
511	Cut Sub-circular	0.15m long 0.12m wide
512	Layer – natural subsoil Loose, mid orange-brown, sandy-clay gravel	

Trench 6

Context Number	Description	Measurements
600	Topsoil (Plough-soil) Friable, dark brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-angular/rounded stone Post medieval pottery and glass	0.3m thick
601	Layer (plough-disturbed subsoil) Friable, mid orange-brown, silty-clay Frequent, medium, sub-rounded stone	0.25m thick
602	Layer – natural subsoil Friable, mid orange-brown, sandy-clay Frequent, medium – large, sub-rounded stone	16m long
603	Layer – natural subsoil (wetland clays) Compact, dark grey, sandy-clay Occasional, small – large, sub-rounded stone	1.9m long
604	Layer – natural subsoil Loose, mid grey, sandy-gravel	
605	Fill of 606 Friable, light grey (mottled), silty-clay loam Occasional, medium, sub-angular stone	1.7m long 0.32m wide
606	Ditch – modern services Linear, straight sides, orientated WNW - ESE	1.7m long 0.32m wide

Trench 7

Context Number	Description	Measurements
700	Topsoil (Plough-soil) Friable, dark brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-angular/rounded stone Post medieval pottery and glass	0.25m thick
701	Layer (plough-disturbed subsoil) Friable, mid orange-brown, silty-clay Frequent, medium, sub-rounded stone	0.18m thick
702	Fill of 703 Friable, mid orange-brown, silty-clay Moderate, medium, sub angular/rounded stone	1.5m long 0.4m wide
703	Ditch – former field boundary Linear, straight sides, orientated NNW-SSE	1.5m long 0.4m wide
704	Fill of 705 Friable, light grey-brown, clayey-silt Moderate, medium – large, sub-angular stone 1 sherd of post-med pottery	1.55m long 0.6m wide 0.1m thick
705	Ditch – former field boundary Linear, straight sides, orientated NNW-SSE Smooth, shallow, concave sides. Imperceptible break of slope on to concave base	1.55m long 0.6m wide 0.1m deep
706	Layer – natural subsoil Loose, mid grey, sandy-gravel	
707	Layer – natural subsoil Friable, mid orange-brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-rounded stone	4.6m long
708	Fill of 709 Friable, light grey-brown, silty-clay Moderate, medium, sub-angular stone	0.35m long 0.5m wide
709	Possible posthole Semi-circular	0.35m long 0.5m wide

Trench 8

Context Number	Description	Measurements
800	Topsoil (Plough-soil) Friable, dark brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-angular/rounded stone Post medieval pottery and glass	0.25m thick
801	Layer (plough-disturbed subsoil) Friable, mid orange-brown, silty-clay Frequent, medium, sub-rounded stone	0.12m thick
802	Fill of 803 Friable, mid grey-brown, clayey-silt Moderate, medium, sub-rounded stone Occasional, small, charcoal/coal fragment	1.55m long 0.8m wide 0.21m thick
803	Ditch – former field boundary Linear, straight sides, orientated WSW-ENE Gentle concave sides, imperceptible break of slope onto concave base.	1.55m long 0.8m wide 0.21m deep
804	Fill of 805 Friable, mid grey-brown, clayey-silt Moderate, medium, sub-rounded stone	1.55m long 0.55m wide
805	Ditch – former field boundary Linear, straight sides, orientated WSW-ENE	1.55m long 0.55m wide
806	Fill of 807 Compact, mid brown-orange, silty-clay Moderate, medium-large, sub-rounded stone	1.8m long 0.35m wide
807	Cut – natural feature? Linear, irregular sides, pointed end, orientated S-N	1.8m long 0.35m wide
808	Layer – natural subsoil Loose, mid grey, sandy-gravel	
809	Fill of 810 Compact, mid orange-brown, silty-clay Moderate, large, sub-rounded stone	
810	Cut Irregular, pointed W end Sharp break of slope at top, steep to vertical irregular north side, truncated south side. Gradual break of slope onto concave base	

Trench 9

Context Number	Description	Measurements
900	Topsoil (Plough-soil) Friable, dark brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-angular/rounded stone Post medieval pottery and glass	0.25m thick
901	Layer (plough-disturbed subsoil) Friable, mid orange-brown, silty-clay Frequent, medium, sub-rounded stone	0.12m thick
902	Layer – natural subsoil Moderate, mid orange-brown, clayey-silt Occasional, small, sub-rounded stone	
903	Layer – subsoil Loose, mid grey, sandy-gravel	

Trench 10

Context Number	Description	Measurements
1000	Topsoil (Plough-soil) Friable, mid brown, silty-sand clay Occasional, small-medium, stone Possible Post medieval pottery sherd	0.15m thick
1001	Layer (plough-disturbed) Friable, mid brown, silty-sand clay Frequent, small – medium, stones (occasional larger stones)	
1002	Upper fill of 1003 Friable, mid brown, sandy-silty clay Occasional, small – medium, stone Occasional charcoal flecks Late Neolithic grooved ware pottery	0.7m long 0.5m wide 0.09m thick
1003	Cut of ?scoop Unknown shape in plan, irregular base	
1004	Curvilinear band, possible earth/clay wall remains within 1003 Compact, light grey-brown, clay-silt Occasional, medium, pebbles Rare, charcoal flecks	3m long 0.55m wide 0.15m thick
1005	Layer around outside of 1004 Compact, mid brown, silty-clay Occasional, small – medium pebbles	2m long 0.5m wide
1006	Layer – natural subsoil Compact, mid grey-brown, silty-clay pea grit and gravels	2m long 1.2m wide
1007	Layer Compact, mid brown, silty-clay Moderate, small – medium, pebbles	2m long 1m wide
1008	Fill of 1009 Compact, mid brown, silty-clay Occasional, small – medium, pebbles & stone	1.8m long 0.87m wide 0.25m thick
1009	Ditch Linear, orientated E – W Roughly V-shaped	1.8m long 0.87m wide 0.25m deep
1010	Fill of 1011 Compact, mid brown, silty-clay Moderate, medium, pebbles	1.8m long 1m wide
1011	Ditch Linear, possible curve, orientated E – W	1.8m long 1m wide
1012	Layer, on inside of 1004, possible fill of 1003 Compact, mid orange-brown, silty-clay Occasional, small – medium, pebbles	0.14m thick
1013	Layer, possible fill of 1003 Friable, mid brown, silty-clay 30% small – medium, pebbles	1m long 0.2m thick
1014	Layer, on inside of 1004, possible fill of 1003 Compact, mid brown, silty-clay Occasional, small-medium, pebbles Late Neolithic grooved ware pottery	0.8m long 0.3m wide 0.12m thick
1015	Layer, on inside of 1004, possible fill of 1003 Friable, mid orange-brown, silty-clay Occasional, small, pebbles Late Neolithic grooved ware pottery	1m long 0.65m wide 0.1m thick
1016	Layer, on inside of 1004, possible fill of 1003 Friable, mid brown-yellow, silty-clay with fine gravels	0.4m wide 0.1m thick
1017	Layer, on inside of 1004, possible fill of 1003 Friable, dark grey-brown, silty clay Abundant charcoal flecks	1m long 0.5m wide 0.1m thick

	Late Neolithic grooved ware pottery, flint flake	
1018	Layer, possible fill of 1003 Friable, mid brown, sandy-silty clay 30% small gravels and pea grit Occasional charcoal fleck Late Neolithic grooved ware pottery	1.6m long 0.5m wide 0.24m thick
1019	Layer, possible fill of 1003 Compact, mid brown, sandy-silt clay 30-40% large pebbles and quartz	c.0.6m long 0.6m wide 0.27m thick
1020	Layer Loose, mid grey-brown, sandy silt clay 50% pea-grits an small gravel	0.9m wide 0.25m thick
1021	Layer – possible natural subsoil Compact, mid brown, silty-clay Occasional, small – medium, pebbles	0.9m wide 0.1m thick

THE LIMES, CARMARTHEN: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION 2012

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Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan /
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Llofnod / Signature  Dyddiad / Date 9/7/2012

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith /
This report has been checked and approved by: **JAMES MEEK**

ar ran Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf. /
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Swydd / Position: **HEAD OF FIELD SERVICES**

Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date

Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report

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