Land South of Tull Way, Thatcham, West Berkshire

Post-excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned Bloor Homes to undertake archaeological mitigation works comprising a strip, map and sample excavation and eight evaluation trenches on a parcel of land covering 4.4 hectares centred on NGR 450186 167837 (SU 5010 6820), at land south of Tull Way, Thatcham, Newbury, West Berkshire, RG18 3BX.

The work was carried out as a condition of outline planning permission, granted by West Berkshire Council (16/00625/OUTMAJ) for the erection of 75 dwellings, associated access and public space. The overall development area comprises 4.4 ha. The planning condition was approved, after appeal, in June 2017. The approval was subject to an archaeological condition, **Condition 13**, which states:

> *No development shall take place until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall incorporate and be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.*

A reserved matters application was also made (18/00307RESMAJ) and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) was produced (Wessex Archaeology 2018) and, approved by West Berkshire Council before the commencement of mitigation.

Eight additional evaluation trenches and the south-eastern excavation area contained no archaeological artefacts or significant features. The south-western and northern excavation areas both contained pits and ditches which predominantly dated to the early Romano-British period. The ditches were all likely to be field boundaries, with the possibility that some of them were flanking ditches for trackways. The pits were predominantly small refuse pits. Artefacts have been found dating from the Mesolithic to the post-medieval periods, but apart from those dating to the early Romano-British period these are all considered to either be residual, or date features from later periods. The environmental evidence predominantly consisted of evidence for domestic plant processing in the Romano-British period, with one sample possibly containing post-Roman material.

The archaeological features, artefacts and environmental evidence were all of potentially local and regional importance as they could improve our understanding of Romano-British field systems, pottery production and crop processing.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Bloor Homes for commissioning the archaeological mitigation works, in particular Adam Goddard and Stuart Benfield. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful for the advice of Sarah Orr Acting Archaeological Officer, who monitored the project for West Berkshire Council

The fieldwork was directed by Benjamin Cullen, with the assistance of Matthew Kendall, Cordelia Laycock, Alin Fuior, Marion Plumer, Marijane Porter, Robbie Trevelyan and Matthew Whelan. The samples were processed by Sam Rogerson, Liz Foulston and Jenny Giddins. The flots were sorted by Nicki Mulhall and assessed by Inés López-Dóriga. The environmental section of this report was written by Sam Rogerson, Nicki Mulhall and Inés López-Dóriga. The finds were analysed by Amy Thorp and Phil Harding. This report was written by Benjamin Cullen and Steve Beach and, reviewed by Simon Woodiwiss. The project was managed by Simon Woodiwiss on behalf of Wessex Archaeology.

TULL WAY, THATCHAM, WEST BERKSHIRE

Post-excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project and planning background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Bloor Homes (the Client) to undertake archaeological mitigation works comprising a strip, map and sample excavation and eight evaluation trenches (additional to those already undertaken during an earlier evaluation) on a parcel of land covering 4.4 ha centred on NGR 450186 167837 (SU 5010 6820), at land south of Tull Way, Thatcham, Newbury, West Berkshire, RG18 3BX (**Figure 1**).

1.1.1 The work was carried out as a condition of outline planning permission, granted by West Berkshire Council (16/00625/OUTMAJ) for the erection of 75 dwellings, associated access and public space. The overall development area comprises 4.4 ha. The planning condition was approved, after appeal, in June 2017. The approval was subject to an archaeological condition, **Condition 13**, which states:

No development shall take place until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall incorporate and be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

1.1.2 A reserved matters application was also made (18/00307RESMAJ) and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) was produced (Wessex Archaeology 2018), submitted and approved by West Berkshire Council before the commencement of mitigation.

1.1.3 Initially, Alex Godden, the former Archaeological Planning Officer, had advised the Local Planning Authority, that the site contained *in situ* archaeological features and deposits of a potentially high significance, which was based on the previous archaeological evaluation (TVAS 2012) undertaken as part of the planning application in 2012.

1.1.4 The evaluation and excavation were the final stages in a programme of archaeological works, which had included an archaeological desk-based assessment, assessment (TVAS 2011), an initial sample trench evaluation (TVAS 2012) and an updated desk-based assessment (CgMs 2016), which identified two areas of archaeological potential (**Figure 1**). As the initial evaluation trenches in this area had flooded (TVAS 2012) making it impossible to determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains within this area, the excavation programme included additional evaluation trenches to address this issue.

1.1.5 The excavation was undertaken in accordance with a WSI, which detailed the aims, methodologies and standards to be employed, for both the fieldwork and the post-excavation work (Wessex Archaeology 2018). Sarah Orr (Acting Archaeological Officer and advisor to the Local Planning Authority, West Berkshire Council) approved the WSI, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), prior to fieldwork commencing. The excavation was undertaken between 19th March and 4th May 2018.

1.2 Scope of the report

1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the provisional results of the excavation and evaluation, to assess the potential of the results to address the research aims outlined in the WSI. Where appropriate, to recommend a programme of further analysis work, and outline the resources needed, to achieve the aims (including the revised research aims arising from this assessment), leading to dissemination of the archaeological results via publication and the curation of the archive.

1.3 Location, topography and geology

1.3.1 The site is currently agricultural land, located on the north-west edge of Thatcham, and to the east of Newbury, in West Berkshire. It is bounded to the west by Tull Way and Henwick Lane and by Bowling Green Road to the east. Henwick Lane playing fields lie to the south with residential areas to the north and east **(Figure 1)**.

1.3.2 Existing ground levels slope from *c*.95 m aOD in the north-west down to 89 m aOD in the south-east.

1.3.3 The solid geology of the area consists of Reading Beds (clay and sand; British Geological Survey online viewer).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 A detailed archaeological and historical background is contained in three desk-based assessments (DBA; Chadwick 2003, TVAS 2011 and CgMs 2016) and for the purposes of this report a brief summary has been presented below.

2.2 Previous works related to the development

2.2.1 An archaeological sample trench evaluation was carried out to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development (TVAS 2012).

2.2.2 A total of 50 trenches, each approximately 25 m in length and forming an approximately 5% sample by area, were excavated throughout the site, which identified, in total, 31 linear features and 3 discrete pits and postholes with finds suggesting a Late Iron Age/early Romano-British date, with some assigned to the medieval period (TVAS 2012 and CgMs 2016).

2.2.3 The TVAS evaluation concluded that the features, which were largely located within the northern half of the site, most likely represented enclosures and paddocks which may be associated with a settlement, but the main focus of occupation was potentially outside the limits of the site (TVAS 2012). Poor weather conditions during the evaluation, however, did lead to the flooding of trenches, particularly within the southern block and prevented establishing the presence or absence of significant archaeological deposits for a significant area.

2.3 Archaeological and historical context

Prehistoric

2.3.1 There is little prehistoric archaeology represented within a 500 m radius of the site. A Late Bronze Age settlement is recorded on the eastern side of Thatcham. Further afield,

significant Mesolithic sites were excavated at the sewage works and gravel pits at Lower Way, and some Palaeolithic finds have also been identified (WBCAS 2008a).

Romano-British

2.3.2 The Thatcham suburban area appears to have been a considerable focus for Roman activity. The course of Ermin Street ran through this zone although its route has not been fully established.

2.3.3 A sizeable late Roman roadside settlement was located at Thatcham Newtown in the 1920–30s, and some elements of it such as wells and ditches have been excavated. The exact extent of the settlement and what happened to it into the early medieval period is unclear (WBCAS 2008a). It is considered unlikely that this particular settlement extended into the site to the north of the road (TVAS 2011). The main focus of Roman settlement being on the road and not extending far to the north, has been supported by the absence of settlement remains established by both the earlier evaluation (TVAS 2012) and the additional trenches forming a part of the present project, for the southern portion of the development site. Settlement was, however, identified for the higher ground in the northern part of the site (TVAS 2012), the focus of the current project. The evaluation suggested that this settlement was likely to be mainly of 1st century date and consisting of features associated with "enclosures and paddocks around a farming settlement". The presence of a droveway was suggested and the absence of pits and postholes, more indicative of occupation was noted (TVAS 2012, 8). With the advantage of hindsight (drawn from the results of the present project) it would seem appropriate to draw attention especially to the four HER records relating to indistinct double-ditched linear cropmarks (HER records MWB2197–2200) in the immediate vicinity, and the results of fieldwalking just to the north-east of the development site which included burnt flint, Roman and medieval pottery (HER records EWB518, 524–6, and MWB16368) as identified in the desk-based assessment (TVAS 2011, appendix 1).

2.3.4 Probable Iron Age and Roman activity was found during a watching brief at Cold Ash Farm (WBCAS 2008b), but it is unclear what the nature of activity was.

2.3.5 Archaeological investigation was undertaken between 2000 to 2002 at the Newbury Community Hospital, which is located approximately 1 km to the south-west of the site. A programme of archaeological evaluation, excavation and watching brief by Oxford Archaeology (OAU 2000, 2001 and 2002a and b) documented field systems and a small number of discrete features, including at least two cremation burials, dating to the early Romano-British period.

Saxon

2.3.6 None of the Historic Environment Record (HER) entries within 500 m of the site related to the Saxon period (TVAS 2011).

2.3.7 Although there were no Saxon period HER entries within 500 m of the site, there are early documentary records for Thatcham from the late 10th century (VCH 1923) and Thatcham is recorded within the Domesday Book (AD 1086) as a large settlement of 47 households (TVAS 2011, 8).

Medieval-post-medieval

2.3.8 A deserted medieval village at Henwick could potentially have extended into the site. Small areas of ridge and furrow (earthworks created by medieval or early post-medieval ploughing) survive along the valley (TVAS 2011).

2.3.9 Thatcham remained a small town well into the middle of the 20th century, but since then rapidly expanded on all sides of the town's historic core. Although some growth took place prior to this (with developments of detached houses constructed along the A4 Bath Road and Northfield Road), the major expansion of Thatcham started in the early 1960s.

Summary

2.3.10 The most recent DBA (CgMs 2016) concluded that

> *Based on current evidence, including the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken in 2012…..non-designated archaeological evidence dating to the late Iron Age/early Roman and medieval periods is present within the northern part of the study site. In addition, there is a high potential for the study site to contain further previously unidentified archaeological evidence from the late Iron Age/early Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods'….. Any later evidence is likely to comprise features related to agricultural activity and land division (field boundaries depicted on historic mapping, trackways and furrows). Such evidence is unlikely to be of more than local significance, particularly given the level of plough truncation seen in the evaluation works'.*

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Aims

3.1.1 The general aims of the excavation, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2018) and in compliance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological excavation* (CIfA 2014b) were:

- To examine the archaeological resource within a given area or site within a framework of defined research objectives;
- To seek a better understanding of the resource;
- To compile a lasting record of the resource; and
- To analyse and interpret the results of the excavation and disseminate them.

3.2 Research objectives

3.2.1 In order to achieve the above aims, the general objectives of the fieldwork were:

- To determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified area.
- To establish, within the constraints of the evaluation, the extent, character, date, condition and quality of any surviving archaeological remains and to inform the final agreed scope of subsequent mitigation.

- To establish, within the constraints of the mitigation works, the extent, character, date, condition, quality and significance of any surviving archaeological remains.
- To place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance.
- To make available information about the archaeological resource within the site by reporting on the results of the fieldwork.

3.3 Site-specific objectives

3.3.1 Following consideration of the archaeological potential of the site (Chadwick 2003 and TVAS 2012) and existing research priorities as raised in the West Berkshire Council Archaeology Services' Historic Environment Character Zone information for Shaw-Thatcham Open Field and Thatcham Suburban Area zones, the principal questions to be examined were as follows.

- Is there any surviving evidence of early to later prehistoric exploitation or settlement within this landscape?
- Although the site is situated to the north of the projected Roman road, is there any evidence for associated features and links between Thatcham Newtown and the earlier Roman evidence at the Community Hospital site?
- What is the extent, date, use and settlement association of the Roman field systems known to exist within the site?
- What evidence exists for post-Roman activity which may be linked to Henwick?
- Is there evidence of settlement continuity from the prehistoric period to the current day?

4 METHODS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methods set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2018) and in general compliance with the standards outlined in CIfA guidance (CIfA 2014a, 2014b). The methods employed are summarised below.

4.1.2 There were three archaeological elements of works that were applied, as illustrated in **Figure 1,** which were proposed following submission (November 2017) and approval of the final planning application.

- The first element of the works was additional evaluation within the previously flooded southern part of the site. The evaluation comprised the excavation of eight 30 m evaluation trenches (**Figure 1**, additional trenches are indicated in blue).
- The second element of the works comprised strip, map and record excavation of two areas within the northern half of the site (Figure 1) and an agreed mitigation area within the southern part; though in the event the latter was not considered appropriate.
- The third element of the works was to be an archaeological watching brief which would have monitored the stripping of an access road from the south-western corner to the central part of the Site (**Figure 1**). On completion of the additional evaluation first phase the Acting Archaeological Officer was asked to review the necessity for this element of the works. It was determined at this time that this element of works was unnecessary.

4.2 Fieldwork methods

General

4.2.1 The additional evaluation of eight trenches (Trenches 51–58), each measuring 30 m by 2 m; were set out using a GPS, with positions shown in **Figure 1**. The excavation areas were also set out using a GPS, in the same position as that proposed in the WSI (**Figure 1**). The topsoil/overburden was removed in level spits using a 360º excavator equipped with a toothless bucket, under the constant supervision of the monitoring archaeologist. Machine excavation proceeded in level spits until the archaeological horizon or the natural geology was exposed.

4.2.2 The excavation was divided into two areas, the northern area covered 0.4 ha and the southern was meant to extend over 0.6 ha. As a result of the sparsity of archaeology found within the southern area, excavation stopped before the full area was stripped (agreed with the Acting Archaeological Officer). The southern area ended up as an eastern area measuring 0.13 ha and a western area measuring 0.28 ha (**Figure 1**).

4.2.3 Before excavation began, both the evaluation and excavation areas were walked over and visually inspected to identify, where possible, the location of any below/above-ground services. All trial trench locations and excavation areas were scanned before and during excavation with a Cable Avoidance Tool in order to verify the absence of any live underground services.

4.2.4 Where necessary, the surfaces of archaeological deposits were cleaned by hand to aid visual definition. A sample of archaeological features and deposits identified was hand-excavated, sufficient to address the aims of the excavation. A sample of natural features such as tree-throw holes were also investigated, until their confident identification without excavation was established.

4.2.5 Spoil derived from both machine stripping and hand-excavated archaeological features was visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval. A metal detector was also used. Where found, artefacts were collected and bagged by context. All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, although those from features of modern date (19th century or later) were recorded on site and not retained.

Recording

4.2.6 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system. A complete drawn record of excavated features and deposits was made including both plans and sections drawn to appropriate scales (generally 1:20 or 1:50 for plans and 1:10 for sections) and tied to the Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD; Newlyn) heights of all principal features were calculated, and levels added to plans and section drawings.

4.2.7 A Leica GNSS connected to Leica's SmartNet service surveyed the location of archaeological features. All survey data is recorded in OS National Grid coordinates and heights above OD, as defined by OSGM15 and OSTN15, with a three-dimensional accuracy of at least 50 mm.

4.2.8 A full photographic record was made using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images have been subject to managed quality control and curation processes, which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and will ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

4.3 Artefactual and environmental strategies

General

4.3.1 Appropriate strategies for the recovery, processing and assessment of artefacts and environmental samples were in line with those detailed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2018). The treatment of artefacts and environmental remains was in general accordance with: *Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014c) and *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (English Heritage 2011).

4.4 Monitoring

4.4.1 Sarah Orr (Acting Archaeological Officer and advisor to West Berkshire Council), on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), monitored the works. Any variations to the WSI, if required to better address the project aims, were agreed in advance with both the client and Sarah Orr.

5 STRATIGRAPHIC RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

Summary of archaeological features and deposits

5.1.1 The eight evaluation trenches did not contain any significant archaeological deposits (**Figure 1**).

5.1.2 The south-eastern excavation area also contained no significant archaeological deposits (**Figure 1**).

5.1.3 The northern excavation area (**Figures 1 and 2**) contained; 14 ditches, 20 pits, 6 postholes and 2 possible cremations. These features all dated to either the late Iron Age/early Romano-British period or were undated. Most of the ditches ran roughly NNE–SSW, with a few running roughly at right angles to these. The pits were randomly distributed over the area with concentrations in the north-western and south-eastern parts. The postholes were found roughly centrally within the excavation area. The two possible cremations were both found within the upper fill of a ditch towards the north-western corner of this area. There were also a few land drains.

5.1.4 The south-western excavation area (**Figures 1 and 3**) contained 7 ditches, 3 postholes and 3 pits. These also all dated to the early Romano-British period or were undated. The ditches ran mainly NNW–SSE with others running roughly ENE–WSW. The postholes were found in the southern part of this excavation area. The pits were found in the northern and eastern parts of the excavation area. The majority of the archaeological features within this area were found within the northern part.

5.1.5 In the following summary of results the evaluation will be considered first, then by each excavation area. Within the excavation areas the results will be discussed by phase.

5.1.6 While many of the feature fills were very similar, in most cases stratigraphic relationships were relatively easy to determine. The continuations of ditches were much harder to see as often the fills were very similar to the natural, or what was very obvious on stripping baked hard or was washed away and covered by silt when it rained.

Methods of stratigraphic assessment and quantity of data

5.1.7 All hand written and drawn records from the excavation (**Table 1**) have been collated, checked for consistency and stratigraphic relationships. Key data has been transcribed into an Access database for assessment, which can be updated during any further analysis. The excavation has been preliminary phased using stratigraphic relationships and the spot dating from artefacts, particularly pottery.

Table 1 Quantification of excavation records

Type	Quantity
Context records	235
Context registers	9
Group records	16
Trial Trench records	8
Graphics (A4 and A3)	67
Graphics registers	4
Environmental sample registers	1
Environmental sample records	10
Object registers	1
Digital photographs	319

5.2 Soil sequence and natural deposits

5.2.1 Within the excavation areas, the stratigraphic sequence consisted of a topsoil, comprising a mid-brown sandy clay loam with moderate small flint pebbles and a maximum depth of 0.27 m; overlying a natural geology, consisting of a brownish yellow sandy clay with moderate sub-rounded flint pebbles and cobbles (**Plate 1**). Along the south-western edge of the northern excavation area the natural geology turned into more of a light grey sand. In places across the northern part of site, the concentration of flint pebbles and cobbles was such that the natural geology was almost a gravel.

5.3 Evaluation results

5.3.1 Eight evaluation trenches were excavated between 19th and 20th March 2018. Four of these trenches did not contain any features and the other four contained only land drains (**Figure 1** and **Appendix 2**). As several of these land drains were ceramic, they are unlikely to pre-date the mid-19th century.

5.3.2 The stratigraphic sequence within the trenches was a topsoil of mid grey to dark grey brown sandy silt with a depth ranging from 0.18 to 0.29 m and an average depth of 0.24 m. This topsoil contained moderate sub-rounded flint pebbles. The topsoil directly overlies the natural geology which varied from light yellow to mid yellow brown and varied in consistency from sand to silty sand and sandy clay (**Plate 2**).

5.3.3 Trench 55 partly flooded because of rising groundwater, evaluation Trench 52 flooded after recording due to snow melting and water running down the hill across site. Trench 58 was located at the lowest point of the site and flooded immediately on opening due to a combination of snow melt and groundwater (**Plate 3**). In the light of the experience from the earlier evaluation trenches (TVAS 2012) especial care was taken to examine and record exposed surfaces before the trenches filled with water.

5.3.4 The evaluation results confirmed the results of TVAS's 2012 evaluation, showing that the archaeological potential was concentrated within the northern area and that this southern part of the development site had a relative paucity of archaeological remains.

5.4 South-eastern excavation area

5.4.1 No significant archaeological features, artefacts or ecofacts were revealed within this area. This implies that ditches running in this direction found within the northern excavation area either, terminate or, change direction before reaching this area. The gullies identified by TVAS in their evaluation (TVAS 2012) were also not revealed. This is possibly due to their shallow depth and may also have been a result of the wet weather when stripping was undertaken.

5.5 South-western excavation area

Romano-British

5.5.1 The significant archaeological features within this area of site are predominantly located in the northern part of the excavation area (**Figures 1 and 3**).

5.5.2 Ditch 7016 ran roughly WSW–ENE for approximately 9.70 m and continued beyond the limit of excavation along the eastern edge of this excavation area. At its widest point this ditch was 0.60 m wide and 0.15 m deep with concave shallowly sloping sides and a flat base (**Plate 4**). This ditch is likely to have been a field boundary or a drainage ditch. It was tentatively dated to the Romano-British period based upon the recovery of one abraded sherd of pottery. This ditch was roughly perpendicular to ditch 7015 and it is likely that they form part of the same enclosure or drainage system.

5.5.3 Ditch 6207 was located in the north-eastern corner of this excavation area. It ran south-east to north-west from the eastern edge of the excavation area for approximately 5.70 m before it petered out rather than terminating. It had a U-shaped base and concave shallowly sloping sides with a width of 0.49 m and a depth of 0.12 m. The ditch contained three sherds of abraded Romano pottery which can be used to tentatively date it. The fact that it was on a very different alignment to the other ditches in this excavation area suggested that this was part of a different phase of enclosure or drainage system to the other ditches.

5.5.4 Pit 6219 was about 0.15 m south of ditch 7016 in the north-eastern part of this excavation area. The pit was sub-circular in plan with a flat base and concave shallowly sloping sides (**Plate 5**). This pit contained a large number of sherds of Roman pottery which have been used to date it confidently to the Romano-British period. This may have been a refuse pit. Its close proximity to ditch 7016 was possibly indicative of contemporaneity.

Undated and natural features

5.5.5 Ditch 7015 ran roughly NNW–SSE and was roughly perpendicular to ditch 7016, in the northern part of this excavation area. It was approximately 20.5 m long, 0.66 m wide and 0.14 m deep. The fact that it was so close to ditch 7016 implies that it formed part of the same field system as ditch 7016.

5.5.6 Ditch 6229 was on a very similar alignment to ditch 7015 and may have been part of an earlier field system that has been replaced by ditch 7015. Ditch 6229 was roughly 40 m long, 0.58 m wide and 0.19 m deep, with a flat base and concave shallowly sloping sides. The potential relationship between these ditches was investigated but could not be determined due to the similarity of the fills.

5.5.7 Ditch 7014 ran roughly NNW–SSE and was roughly parallel to ditch 6229, with approximately 6 m between these ditches. Ditch 7014 was 46.00 m long, 0.67 m wide and 0.24 m deep. It is likely that ditch 7014 and ditch 6229 were broadly contemporary and form part of the same phase of field or drainage systems. These ditches may have formed the boundary of a trackway.

5.5.8 Ditches 6221 and 6231 ran roughly WSW–ENE and were roughly parallel to ditch 7016. They were located in the southern part of this area of site. While in close proximity to each other, these ditches did not obviously cross, and there is a chance that they mark the same boundary. Ditch 6221 is 10.70 m long, 0.48 m wide and 0.21 m deep, with a flat base and moderately sloping concave sides. It contained one medieval or post-medieval fragment of peg-hole roof tile, which was possibly residual. Ditch 6231 was 11.00 m long, 0.57 m wide and 0.28 m deep with a flat base and stepped, moderately sloping sides. These ditches probably formed part of a field boundary or drainage system.

5.5.9 Pit 6210 was in the vicinity of ditches 7015 and 7016. It was shallow, sub-oval in plan with a flat base and near vertical sides. It contained no readily datable artefacts, but did contain burnt material.

5.5.10 Possible pit or small tree throw 6217 was located to the south of ditch 7104. It was oval in plan, with a flat base and shallowly sloping stepped sides. It contained one sherd of medieval pottery, which was considered likely to be residual.

5.5.11 Postholes 6223, 6225 and 6227 form a rough line in the southern part of this area. They were all sub-circular in plan with stepped, steeply sloping sides and variable base shapes. These postholes contained no datable artefacts and may have formed part of a fence.

5.5.12 Two land drains were identified in this excavation area, running roughly ENE–WSW. While these were not excavated, it was likely that they contained ceramic pipes and as such were unlikely to pre-date the mid-19th century.

5.6 Northern excavation area

5.6.1 The archaeological features within this area of site are shown in detail in **Figure 2**. Archaeological features were distributed across the whole area with concentrations in the northern part of this excavation area. Most of the features dated to the Romano-British period, with a small number that cannot be securely allocated a date.

Romano-British

5.6.2 This area of site was dominated by a series of ditches, which appeared to be forming field boundaries. At least three phases of field boundaries have been identified by stratigraphic relationships between ditches. The majority of the pits and postholes within this excavation area also dated to the Romano-British period.

5.6.3 Ditch 7008 was located towards the south-western edge of the excavation area. It ran WNW–ESE for approximately 20 m and was 1.80 m wide and a maximum of 0.59 m deep. Its profile varied in the two slots dug through it. This ditch was dated to the early Roman period based on the artefacts found within. It was likely that this ditch formed part of a field boundary system extending outside of the excavated area. This ditch was also the earliest ditch stratigraphically. It is truncated by ditch 7009 (**Plate 6**) which ran perpendicular to this ditch in an NNE–SSW direction.

5.6.4 Ditch 7009 ran across this excavation area for approximately 40 m, its width, depth and profile differed along its length. At the northern end, this ditch did not terminate, but rather it petered out, suggesting a degree of later truncation. This ditch contained no datable finds but was dated to the Romano-British period because of its stratigraphic relationships with ditches 7008 and 7010 and pit 6102 (**Figure 2**). This ditch may have been dug as a small internal subdivision in a field or may be part of a drainage system. This ditch ran parallel to ditches 7012 and 7013, approximately 6 m and 15 m further to the north-west.

5.6.5 Ditch 7012 ran NNE–SSW across the north-western part of this excavation area for 47.50 m. It was a much more substantial ditch than 7009 as it averaged 1.30 m wide and 0.55 m deep. Its profile tended to have a concave base and concave, moderately sloping sides, although there were some minor variations to this profile along its length. This ditch was probably part of a Romano-British field system and contained substantial amounts of pottery to support this dating. Like ditch 7009, ditch 7012 was also cut by ditch 7010.

5.6.6 Ditch 7013 ran NNE–SSW across the north-western part of this excavation area for approximately 40m. Whilst more substantial than ditch 7009, this ditch was slightly smaller than ditch 7012, averaging 0.98 m wide and 0.35 m deep. Its profile varied in the shape of the sides, but its base was consistently recorded as being flat. This ditch was tentatively dated to the Romano-British period as it contained only three sherds of Roman pottery.

5.6.7 This group of three NNE–SSW aligned ditches (7009, 7012 and 7013; **Figure 2**) was found within a very confined area and it seemed unlikely that these would all have been part of the same field system as the cultivatable area between them was very small. It is possible that ditches 7012 and 7013 were flanking ditches for a trackway. There is also the possibility that these represented successive phases of boundaries with the ditches having been dug in a different place each time. There is also the possibility that ditches 7012 and 7013 represent field boundaries and would have originally had a hedgerow between them. These ditches and others have similar alignments to field boundaries showing of a Thatcham tithe map (1840) which may be indicative of continuity of elements of the Romano-British landscape in to later periods.

5.6.8 Ditch 7010 ran in a slight curve from WNW–ENE at its terminus. This ditch contained Roman pottery and cut through ditches 7009 and 7012, its terminus was located at the ENE end, but was not identified at its WNW end. This may have been a result of the presence of hollow 6107 masking the terminus or it may be the case that this feature continued further in this direction and had been truncated by later farming activity. This ditch ran for 28 m, with an average width of 0.93 m and average depth of 0.31 m. This ditch was probably part of a field boundary system and may represent later sub-division of the system formed by ditches 7009, 7012 and 7013. The environmental evidence from the excavated terminus (**Plate 7**) of this ditch contained material that indicated a possible post-Roman date and may suggest that this field system persisted into the post-Roman period.

5.6.9 Ditch 7011 ran roughly north-east to south-west and was located in the northernmost part of the site. It was a wide shallow ditch, running for approximately 10.50 m, with a maximum width of 2.20 m and a maximum depth of 0.43 m. This ditch appeared to terminate before it interacted with either ditches 7010 or 7012, making it impossible to determine its relationship to these ditches stratigraphically. This ditch contained some Roman pottery and it was likely that this ditch formed part of a field boundary system, although its different alignment suggested that it was not part of the same system as ditch 7012.

5.6.10 Gully 7001 ran roughly north-east to south-west and was located at the south-eastern end of the excavation area. It ran for approximately 9 m and was a maximum of 0.58 m wide and 02.3 m deep. It was truncated at its southern end by an evaluation trench. This gully was probably part of a drainage system as it appears to be too insubstantial to be part of a field system.

5.6.11 Ditch 7002 ran roughly SSE to NNW, then turned to run south-east to north-west. It ran for approximately 46 m with a maximum width of 0.80 m and a maximum depth of 0.37 m. The profile of this ditch varied along its length and this was probably a result of the variations in natural substrate that this ditch travelled through. At its north-western end, it was impossible

to tell the relationship between this ditch and ditch 7005. This was partly due to ditch 7003 cutting through both of these ditches and this may mean that ditches 7002 and 7005 are actually continuations of each other. This ditch contained Roman pottery and was probably part of a field system. The change in direction of the ditch may mean that this was part of an enclosure.

5.6.12 Ditch 7005 (**Plate 8**) ran south-east to north-west for approximately 8 m and had a maximum width of 1.18 m and a maximum depth of 0.44 m. This ditch had a varying profile, which may have been a result of the fact that one of the slots dug through it was part of the terminus. This ditch was probably part of a field system.

5.6.13 Ditch 7003 ran NNE–SSW and cut through ditches 7002 and 7005 at its SSE terminus. It rans for approximately 13 m, with a maximum width of 1.20 m and a maximum depth of 0.63 m. This ditch contained large quantities of Roman pottery. The angle of this ditch and the fact that it cuts two earlier ditches suggests that the field systems represented were of at least two phases and that this ditch represented a later field system.

5.6.14 Ditch 7004 ran NNE–SSW and was roughly parallel to ditch 7003, approximately 6m to the south-east (**Figure 2**). This ditch was 10 m long and it ran beyond the north-eastern edge of excavation. It was a maximum of 0.96 m wide and a maximum of 0.29 m deep. The relationship between this ditch and ditch 7005 could not be determined as pit 6142 had been dug through the point where these two ditches would intersect. Pit 6142 was oval in plan, shallow and contained no datable material. This ditch was tentatively dated to the Romano-British period based on one sherd of pottery. It was likely that this ditch was part of the same field system as ditch 7003, although their proximity may imply that one was a replacement for the other.

5.6.15 Gully 7006 ran north-west to south-east across the centre of this excavation area. It extended parallel to ditch 7005 and cut across the terminus of ditch 7007. This gully ran for 27.80 m and like many of the other ditches in this area, it did not seem to terminate, rather it gradually faded out. It was a maximum of 0.79 m wide and 0.36 m deep, although it was generally much shallower, this depth was recorded where it went over the terminus of ditch 7007. This gully contained a few sherds of Roman pottery and is presumably part of a field system or may be for drainage.

5.6.16 Ditch 7007 ran roughly north-east to south-west for 24.50 m from its terminus until it reached the south-western edge of the excavation area. This ditch was an average of 1.02 m wide and 0.70 m deep. In slot 6128 (**Plate 9**) this ditch was much wider than elsewhere which may be a result of overcutting or may imply that this ditch was dug in segments. This ditch contained a large number of sherds of Roman pottery and was likely to have been a field boundary. I substantial size suggests that it must have been quite an important boundary. There is a possibility that this ditch and ditch 7003 were opposing termini of an enclosure forming an entrance, despite the difference in the size and phasing of these ditches.

5.6.17 Structure 7017 was located roughly in the centre of this excavation area. It consisted of four shallow postholes which were arranged in a square arrangement with a side length of 2.40 m. One of the postholes contained two sherds of pottery of either Iron Age or Roman date. The form of these postholes are usually interpreted as their being granary structures and of Iron Age date.

5.6.18 Hollow 6107 was located in the north-western part of this excavation area, immediately adjacent to ditches 7010 and 7012 and it contained a large amount of early Roman pottery. This feature was not particularly clear, was irregular in shape and had very diffuse

boundaries. It may have been a naturally occurring hollow that was used to dispose of refuse. The significant number of conjoining sherds and largest feature pottery assemblage from the entire site (see Section 6.2.3 below), however, suggest that deposition had not been subject to much post-depositional movement.

5.6.19 Gully 6026 was located towards the north-eastern edge of this excavation area. It ran north-west to south-east for approximately 4.50 m. It was tentatively dated to the Romano-British period on the basis of two sherds of pottery. Like many of the other shallow linear features on this site, this feature did not seem to terminate, rather it faded out beyond both ends of the excavated slot. It was likely that this gully was dug for drainage.

5.6.20 There were a total of five discrete features which can be dated to the early Romano-British period on the basis of their finds. In the case of 6018 and 6070, these were both layers of slightly different soils that may just be depressions in the natural where archaeological artefacts have worked their way in through bioturbation or may have been dragged in by later ploughing.

5.6.21 The remaining three early Romano-British pits (6063, 6145 and 6156) were widely distributed across this excavation area. They varied greatly in size, width and depth. All of them contained a large amount of early Roman pottery.

5.6.22 Pit 6063 was found adjacent to ditch 7009 and it was unclear if they were contemporary. It was also part of a small cluster of four pits (6043, 6050 and 6095). These pits were all substantially smaller than pit 6063 and of these, only pit 6043 (**Plate 10**) could be dated and this contained a substantial amount of Roman pottery. It was likely that this group of pits was for the disposal of rubbish.

5.6.23 Possible pit 6145 was in the south-eastern part of the northern excavation area. It was located between ditches 7002 and 7007. The only other features within this part of site were postholes 6122 and 6124 approximately 1.50 m to the south-east and pit 6158 10 m to the SSE. These features all contained small amounts of Roman pottery as opposed to pit 6145 which contained a relatively large assemblage of earlier Roman pottery.

5.6.24 Possible pit 6156 was in the north-western part of this excavation area and was cut into the top of ditch 7012. The pit contained a large amount of Roman pottery. Like pit 6151, 1 m to the NNE, this pit was initially interpreted as a cremation grave due to the presence of large amounts of charcoal and burnt bone, but specialist identification confirmed that this was burnt animal bone, and this feature could then be identified as refuse pit. The stratigraphic evidence indicated that ditch 7012 had been backfilled before this pit 6156 was dug.

5.6.25 Pit 6151 (adjacent to pit 6156) was of a very similar size and shape to pit 6156. Again, it was initially interpreted as a cremation grave, but turned out to be a Roman pit cut into the upper fills ditch 7012. Pit 6151 contained significantly less pottery than pit 6156.

5.6.26 Burnt animal bone was also found within pit 6145 and ditch 6149.

5.6.27 There was a possibility that pits 6151 and 6156 were not cut features at all, but discrete dumps of burnt material into a partially infilled ditch. This possibility would help to explain the vast amounts of pottery found nearby on the top of ditch 6049.

5.6.28 Pit 6020 was located just to the east of the intersection between ditches 7006 and 7007. It was a relatively small and shallow pit that had been cut through by a land drain. This pit contained a large amount of charcoal and burnt flint, but only a few sherds of Roman pottery.

5.6.29 Pit 6038 was located towards the north-eastern edge of this excavation area and had a shallow irregular shape. It contained a few sherds of Roman pottery.

5.6.30 Pit 6041 was located towards the northern corner of site, to the east of ditch 7011. It was a small shallow pit that contained a few sherds of Roman pottery. Approximately 1 m to the east of pit 6041, pit 6082 cuts an earlier pit 6084. Both of these pits were shallow and oval in plan and contain a few sherds of Roman pottery. This small cluster of pits were probably rubbish pits.

5.6.31 Pit 6086 was located in the northern part of this excavation area, approximately 2 m south of pit 6038. This was a large sub-circular pit which contained a reasonable amount of Roman pottery and a large assemblage of charred plant remains. It was probably used as a rubbish pit and may be indicative of nearby settlement.

5.6.32 Pit 6102 was a small, shallow oval pit located towards the southern edge of the northern excavation area. It was truncated by ditch 7009. The pit contained Roman pottery.

5.6.33 Pit 6140 was located near the intersection between ditches 7004 and 7005. It was sub-circular in plan, with concave moderately sloping sides and a flat base. It contained six sherds of Roman pottery which help to date the other features around this area which it cuts. Pit 6154 was located approximately 2 m to the north-west of pit 6140. It was a large shallow irregular oval shaped pit that could be also interpreted as a pond. It contained a large amount of Roman pottery and cut through a spread of material. This area of site was difficult to strip and it is possible that this feature was actually a natural hollow where finds have been ploughed in from nearby features.

Undated features

5.6.34 There was a total of four undated features within this excavation area. Of these, pits 6050, 6095 and 6142 have been looked at earlier in relation to nearby Roman features. Pit 6092 was a large, shallow oval feature located near the intersection of ditches 7010 and 7012. It unfortunately had no relationships with these features and thus cannot be dated. There was also the possibility that this actually a tree-throw.

5.6.35 There was a total of three land drains found within this excavation area. They were all on different alignments which suggests that there were multiple phases of land drains.

6 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Approximately 52 kg of finds was recovered, dating from the Mesolithic to the post-medieval with the main focus on the Romano-British period. The finds have been quantified by material type (Table 2) and scanned to assess their nature, condition and potential date range.

Table 2 Summary of finds by material type

Material type	No.	Wt. (g)
Pottery	2,143	24,340
Romano-British	2,123	24,259
Medieval	2	18
Post-medieval	1	13
Uncertain	17	50
Burnt flint	1,899	10,607
Flint	21	262
Fired clay	175	1,051
Ceramic building material	25	2,011
Stone	4	13,861
Animal bone	147	31

6.2 Pottery

6.2.1 The pottery assemblage (2,143 sherds; 24,340 g) provided the primary dating evidence for the site. It ranges in date from the Romano-British to the post-medieval, but with an almost exclusive focus on the former (Table 2). Sherds from each context were subdivided into broad ware groups (e.g. flint-tempered ware) or known fabric types (e.g. South Gaulish samian) and quantified by the number and weight of pieces. A breakdown of the assemblage by both chronological period and ware is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Breakdown of pottery by chronology and ware type

Period	Ware	No.	Wt. (g)	MSW (g)
Romano-British	Baetican (early) amphorae 1	11	430	
	Gaulish amphorae 1	6	104	
	South Gaulish samian	1	12	
	Flint-tempered	1,231	15,945	
	Greyware	585	4,620	
	Sand and flint-tempered ware	120	945	
	Grog-tempered ware	44	937	
	Grog and sand tempered ware	42	844	
	Grog and flint-tempered ware	40	265	
	Oxidised ware	43	157	
	Sub-total	*2,123*	*24,259*	*11.4*
Medieval	Kennet valley ware	1	11	
	Medieval sandy ware	1	7	
	Sub-total	*2*	*18*	*9.0*
Post-medieval	Post-medieval redware	1	13	
Unknown	Glauconitic sand and flint-tempered	9	30	
	Flint-tempered	3	7	
	Sand and flint-tempered ware	3	11	
	Grog and flint-tempered ware	2	2	
	Sub-total	*17*	*50*	*2.9*
Overall total		**2,142**	**24,327**	**23.3**

6.2.2 The condition of the assemblage is very variable. The Romano-British pottery has a mean sherd weight (MSW; of 11.4 g (Table 3), which is only just within the 'normal' range (10–20 g) for Romano-British sites in central Southern England. Despite this low average weight, key groups contain vessels with relatively large conjoining sherds. This fragmentation is likely to result from post-deposition factors, there was no evidence of any deliberate deposition of vessels. Post-depositional abrasion of fabrics was frequently noticeable, with a high proportion of sherds stripped of their original surfaces (particularly the exterior). In some instances, this has hampered dating with very abraded examples given broader, more tentative chronological ranges.

Romano-British

6.2.3 In total, 68 contexts from 44 features contained Romano-British sherds. Twelve of these features contained more than 50 sherds, amounting to 77% of the Roman assemblage. The largest concentration was retrieved from hollow 6107. This group includes a significant number of conjoining sherds giving partial profiles for at least six vessels. The condition of the pottery from pits 6063 and 6082, as well as ditch 7012, was notable for the same reason. Sherd links have also been established between the groups retrieved from pit 6082 and ditch 7012.

6.2.4 A concentration on locally produced wares is very evident. Less than 1% of the sherds from this period are accounted for by imported products, and regionally sourced fabrics are absent (except for the Alice Holt industries, see below). The imports consist of amphorae and a single body sherd from a mid/late 1st century AD South Gaulish samian (a form 15/17 platter). Southern Spanish olive oil amphorae are the most common type (pits 6082 and 6043). Three conjoining sherds recovered from pit 6082 comprise a rim and neck (with one handle stub surviving). The remaining amphorae sherds (ditch 6088) are from the base of a Gauloise type, used to carry wine. Both amphora types were imported into Britain from the 1st into the mid-3rd centuries AD (Peacock and Williams 1986, 136, 143). However, the Spanish vessels are made from the early variant of the fabric (Tomber and Dore 1998, 84) which ceased to be imported around the third quarter of the 2nd century AD.

6.2.5 The local coarsewares are overwhelmingly dominated by Silchester-type flint-tempered fabrics (58% of the Romano-British sherds) dating from the latest pre-conquest period to the end of the 1st century AD (Charles 1979). Small quantities of sand and flint-tempered wares (see Table 3) are also likely to be part of the same traditions. These wares are well paralleled not only at Silchester (Timby 2000, 239–44; Charles 1979) but also in other assemblages across West Berkshire (e.g. Jones forthcoming; Seager Smith 2016, 71–2; Mepham 1997, 54; Mepham 1993, 111–2). The wares generally form a small component of the assemblage, although at Spencers Wood they formed almost one third of the Romano-British sherd count. The frequency of flint-tempered wares in the Tull Way assemblage does appear unusually high. The repertoire of forms in these flint-tempered wares is mainly limited to everted or slightly everted rim jars or jar/bowls. Other forms include a bead rim bowl with high shoulder, a small jar or beaker, a straight sided dish and a platter. Two body sherds with regularly spaced pre-firing perforations (hollow way 6107) probably derive from a strainer or colander.

6.2.6 Greywares too formed a significant component (28% of Romano-British sherds) of the local coarsewares. The fabrics are very varied, and likely to be from small-scale local production centres as well as the Alice Holt kilns on the Surrey/Hampshire border (Lyne 2012; Lyne and Jefferies 1979). Utilitarian vessel forms dominate the greywares, with a concentration on jars; these include both everted rim and bead rim types, with the latter occurring more frequently than in the flint-tempered fabrics. Confirmation of further early Roman material is evident among the remaining forms, with an imitation form 24/25 cup (ditch 6066) and three

examples of Gallo-Belgic style platters (hollow way 6107 and ditch 6128). Alice Holt products are confined to jar forms, except for a flagon (Lyne and Jefferies 1979, 32, fig 20, 8.3) contained within pit 6145.

6.2.7 The remaining local fabrics are limited to small quantities (see Table 3). A high proportion of the grog-tempered ware body sherds are thick-walled, potentially from vessels such as storage jars. The oxidised wares comprise the usual range of white/buff/orange firing fabrics; mostly sandy but with some notably micaceous variants. Diagnostic sherds are sparse and frequently broken above the shoulder junction. A key exception to this is two grog-tempered ware bead rim jars (hollow way 6107 and ditch 6111) that have full profiles. An early Roman emphasis is evident from a slightly everted rim beaker (ditch 6128) and bifid rim flagons (pit 6145) as well as a carinated platter (hollow way 6107).

6.2.8 The range of wares from this assemblage is paralleled by other sites in the West Berkshire region (e.g. Jones forthcoming; Seager Smith 2016, Mepham 1997; Mepham 1993). As already discussed, however, it is the proportions of these wares that is vastly different (resulting from the dominance of flint-tempered wares). A concentration on early Roman material is also apparent throughout the assemblage, with little evidence for later Roman activity.

6.2.9 Evidence of adaption/reuse of vessels is apparent in the assemblage. The underside of a Southern Spanish amphora neck sherd (see above) appears to have been deliberately cut, suggesting the body of the vessel was reused. Examples of amphorae being re-purposed are well-documented including for burials (e.g. Barber and Bowsher 2000, 121; Crummy *et al* 1993, 265;) and even as urinals (Carreras Monfort 1994, 139). Adaptation of vessels is prominent among the flint-tempered wares; five vessels have either partial or complete post-firing perforations. Four are bases with the remains of a single hole drilled in the centre (ditches 6118 and 6149), whilst the fifth is a semi-complete jar with multiple holes in the base (ditch 6024). One of the bases from ditch 6149 has a large central perforation as well as two holes (with possible traces of third) in the side of the vessel. Vessels with a hole or holes at the mid-girth were noted frequently in examination of the Silchester Collection at Reading Museum (Fulford and Timby 2001). It is argued that, rather than ritual connotations, these vessels continued to be functional (with mundane uses) in most instances (Ibid, 297).

Post-Roman

Medieval pottery was limited to just two sherds. A single rim sherd (11 g) from a Kennet valley ware jar (12th–14th century AD) was retrieved from hollow way 6115. The second was a small sherd of medieval sandy ware (7 g) from layer 6217 comparable to Ashampstead type (Mepham and Heaton 1995), dating to the late 12th to 13th century AD. A single sherd (13 g) of post-medieval redware, with glaze on the interior surface, was recovered from layer 6001.

6.3 Fired clay

6.3.1 Fired clay was recovered from 15 contexts in 14 features, but only 3 of these contained more than 100 g (pit 6041, ditch 6075 and ditch 6128). The majority are small, featureless and abraded fragments of uncertain date and origin, occurring in contexts of Romano-British date. The fabrics are predominantly oxidised and slightly sandy (often poorly wedged); some also have sparse flint inclusions. Several pieces have flattish surfaces suggesting they derive from the linings of ovens, kilns or hearths. One fragment from ditch 6128 (early Roman date) has been heavily vitrified.

6.3.2 Fragments of probable triangular objects were found in ditches 6006 and 6025 as well as pit 6041. Perforated triangular objects are a well-known form, common in Iron Age contexts across the whole of southern Britain and remaining current well into the 2nd century AD (Wild 2002, 10). Traditionally, they have been interpreted as loomweights used in textile weaving but it is now considered more likely they were bricks associated with ovens, hearths and/or kilns, perhaps used as linings or pedestals (Lowther 1935; Poole 1995 and 2015).

6.4 Ceramic building material (CBM)

6.4.1 A small assemblage was recovered from ten features; most pieces are relatively small weighing less than 100 g each. Fragments of definite or probable Romano-British date were retrieved from four deposits. Most are featureless, with the exceptions of an *imbrex* fragment from hollow way 6115 and a piece of brick (in a sandy fabric with iron oxides and a few clay pellets) from ditch 6128.

6.4.2 Pieces of medieval or post-medieval peg hole roof tiles (10–14 mm thick where measurable) were found in pit 6020, hollow way 6107, ditch 6118, layer 6175 and gully 6221. In the case of gully 6221 the peg hole roof tile fragment was the only dating evidence present. However, the remaining four features all contained pottery of Romano-British date. A large fragment from a post-medieval or modern brick (unfrogged), in an iron rich sandy fabric with clay pellets, was also recovered from ditch 6118. Featureless abraded scraps of uncertain date were also found in pit 6043 and gully 6207, both of which also contain pottery of Romano-British date.

6.5 Stone

6.5.1 A single fragment (461 g) from an Upper Greensand quern, with a pecked grinding surface, came from pond 6154. Pottery from the same feature is of Romano-British date. The only known production centre of querns in this stone type are the Lodsworth quarries in West Sussex (Peacock 1987). Further examples are known of from other sites in West Berkshire (e.g. Barnes *et al* 1997, 45–7).

6.5.2 A large piece (8.4 kg) of heavily rooted, naturally weathered and abraded sarsen was retrieved from ditch 6167. Two further pieces of stone (5 kg), retrieved from pit 6037, were recorded on site and discarded. None of these pieces showed any obvious signs of working or utilisation.

6.6 Animal bone

6.6.1 A total of 147 fragments (or 31 g) of animal bone came from three pits (6145, 6151 and 6156) and a ditch (6149) of early Romano-British date. The fragments are calcined having been burnt at a high temperature and most are small splinters that do not retain any diagnostic features to aid identification to species or skeletal element. Consequently, only five fragments are identifiable to species, four sheep/goat bones (humerus, carpal, phalanx and rib) from pit 6151, and the proximal end of a dog metacarpal from pit 6156.

6.7 Burnt flint

6.7.1 A total of 10.6 kg unworked flint was recovered from 26 features, with a wide distribution across the site. The material type is intrinsically undatable but is frequently associated with prehistoric activity. In this instance, however, activity from this period is absent and the largest concentrations (pit 6020 (913 g), ditches 6024 (5332 g), 6113 (560 g) and 6164 (718 g)) are from features of Romano-British date.

6.8 Worked flint

6.8.1 A small assemblage of worked flints, comprising 21 pieces from 11 contexts, was collected during the fieldwork. This total included seven chips (microdebitage) and two broken miscellaneous fragments (debitage). All flints showed no significant post-depositional edge damage and were unpatinated.

6.8.2 Raw material comprised good quality flint that was apparently obtained from local gravel. The assemblage was of insufficient quantity to contain significant information, nevertheless the inclusion of a blade/let from ditch 6113 (6114) and topsoil 6000, with a retouched blade from ditch 6066 (6068) indicate Mesolithic or Early Neolithic activity. This is not surprising given the well documented Mesolithic occupation of the Kennet valley; however it is gratifying to recover archaeological evidence of these periods across the broader landscape.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Sixteen bulk sediment samples were taken from a range of features of Romano-British chronology such as pits, ditches, cremation related deposits and natural features (**Table 4**). These were processed for the recovery and assessment of the environmental evidence. The bulk samples break down into the following feature type groups:

Table 4 Sample provenance summary

Feature type	No of bulk samples	Volume (litres)
Cremation related deposit	4	42.0
Ditches	4	144.0
Pits	8	117.5
Totals	**16**	**303.5**

7.2 Aims and methods

7.2.1 The purpose of this assessment is to determine the potential of the environmental remains preserved at the site to address project aims and to provide data valuable for wider research frameworks.

Macrofossils

7.2.2 The size of the bulk sediment samples varied between 4.5 and 40 litres, and on average was around 19 litres. The samples were processed by standard flotation methods on a Syraf-type flotation tank; the flot retained on a 0.25 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 5.6 or 4 mm and 1 mm fractions. The coarse fractions (>5.6 or 4 mm) were sorted by eye and discarded. The flots were scanned using a stereo incident light microscopy (Leica MS5 microscope) at magnifications of up to x40 for the identification of environmental remains. Different bioturbation indicators were considered, including the percentage of roots, the abundance of modern seeds and the presence of mycorrhizal fungi sclerotia (e.g. *Cenococcum geophilum*) and animal remains, such as earthworm eggs and insects, which would not be preserved unless anoxic conditions prevailed on site. The preservation and nature of the charred plant and wood charcoal remains, as well as the presence/absence of other environmental remains such as terrestrial and aquatic molluscs, animal bone and insects (in cases of anoxic conditions for their preservation), was recorded. Preliminary identifications of dominant or important taxa are noted below, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997) for wild plants, and traditional nomenclature, as provided by Zohary and Hopf

(2000, Tables 3, page 28 and 5, page 65), for cereals. Abundance of remains is qualitatively quantified (A*** = exceptional, A** = 100+, A* = 30-99, A = >10, B = 9-5, C = <5) as an estimation of the minimum number of individuals and not the number of remains per taxa.

7.3 Results

Macrofossils

7.3.1 The flots from the bulk sediment samples were of varying quantities (**Appendix 1, Table 6**). There were varying numbers of roots and modern seeds that may be indicative of some stratigraphic movement and the possibility of contamination by later intrusive elements. Charred material was generally poorly preserved although two samples well-preserved material. Wood charcoal was noted in generally varying quantities, with two samples containing fairly large amounts. The wood charcoal was mainly from mature wood, although six samples also contained roundwood. Much of the charcoal was iron stained. One sample contained shells of terrestrial molluscs. No other environmental evidence was preserved in the bulk sediment samples.

7.3.2 Most of the bulk sediment samples contained very little material, these samples were generally dominated by the charred remains of Triticeae (cereals), including *Triticum* sp. (wheat), also *Hordeum vulgare* (barley), Poaceae (grasses) and tentatively identified *Bromus* sp. (brome). Two of these samples contained fragments of wheat chaff (a glume base and rachis segment). Another poorly preserved assemblage contained *Triticum aestivum/turgidum* (naked wheat) and *Avena* cf. *sativa* (large-seeded oat).

7.3.3 Two samples, (2002, from pit 6085 and 2004, from ditch 6113), contained rich assemblages of both cultivated and wild seeds. One of these samples (2002) was dominated by charred grains of *Triticum spelta* (spelt wheat), some grains still in their spikelets and a large amount of chaff (glume bases and spikelet forks). It also contained *Hordeum vulgare* (barley) grains, *Avena sativa* (oat) large-seeded grains and floret base and Triticeae rachis segments. Wild seeds in this sample included the charred remains of *Bromus* sp. (brome, many of these seeds had sprouted), Cyperaceae (sedges), *Persicaria* sp. (knotweed), *Spergula arvensis* (corn spurry), Poaceae (grasses) roots and the seedhead from an Asteraceae (daisy family).

7.3.4 The other rich sample (2004) was dominated by the charred grains of *Triticum aestivum/turgidum* (naked wheat) and rachis internodes, *Avena sativa* (oat) grains and a lemma base. It also contained *Secale cereale* (rye) grains and rachis segments, one grain of *Hordeum vulgare* (barley) and Triticeae culm nodes. Wild seeds include *Lolium/Festuca* (rye grass/fescue), Vicieae (vetches), *Plantago lanceolata* (ribwort plantain), a capsule fragment of *Linum usitatissimum* (flax), Asteraceae (daisy family, including *Centaurea* sp. (knapweed)), Polygonaceae (buckwheats), Cyperaceae (sedges), Maloideae (apple subfamily) seeds and fruit fragment, *Agrostemma githago* (corncockle), *Quercus* sp. cotyledons (oak acorns), and some seeds and a seed head of indeterminate taxa.

7.4 Discussion

7.4.1 Although many of the samples had little charred plant remains (other than wood), two of them (2002, from pit 6085 and 2004, from ditch 6113) had a rich amount of archaeobotanical evidence which warrants further analysis. These samples are rich in a cereal grain and chaff from a diversity of crop species, and also wild plant seeds, which probably acted as weeds and can therefore provide information on past agricultural conditions and the cultivated environment of the site.

7.4.2 The assemblages are generally consistent with domestic plant processing activities carried out in Roman times, being dominated by hulled wheats and particularly spelt. There is however one sample (2004, from deposit 6114 in ditch 6113) rich in other crops, such as rye and naked wheat, which become widespread in southern Britain only in post-Roman times, although there are some problematic cases of possible early cultivation (see Campbell 2016). Since these crop items have been found in large numbers in a deposit with a small amount of pottery (5 sherds) attributed to the Roman period, the intrusive character of the charred plant assemblage is unlikely and could be either representative of the early cultivation of these crops or, more likely, of the existence of post-Roman activity on site, where Roman pottery was either present as residual or was reused. Radiocarbon dating on plant remains from this deposit (2004) would provide more information on this issue.

7.4.3 The wood charcoal evidence, generally retrieved in more abundance, could offer a complementary view on plant exploitation practices on site.

8 STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

8.1 Stratigraphic potential

Excavation areas

8.1.1 The results of the archaeological excavation revealed features (ditches and pits) relating to the early Romano-British period. These features are predominantly related to agricultural activity (field boundaries), structures (a granary, Group 7017) and, trackways. The relatively high densities of artefacts in the north-western corner of the site also indicate occupation, though no evidence of domestic buildings was identified.

8.1.2 The tight chronological focus of the archaeological features means that this site has the potential to inform us further about Romano-British activity in the vicinity of Thatcham and the wider West Berkshire area, largely though comparison with other archaeological sites in the vicinity.

8.1.3 In terms of the site-specific objectives raised in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2018) these are addressed below.

8.1.4 This site represents earlier Romano-British activity which may well be contemporary with the activity at the Community Hospital site (*c* 750 m to the south-west of the Site; OAU 2002a and b). There are similarities in the presence of trackways and rectilinear field and enclosure patterns with a small number of phases on slightly different alignments. The absence of any late Romano-British activity on this site means that it cannot be linked to the Thatcham Newtown site, although it is possible that a settlement at Tull Way could be a predecessor to the later activity at the Community Hospital which moved closer to the Roman road.

8.1.5 There is a clear increase in density of Roman period activity towards the north-west corner of the site and this coincides with a general and gradual rise in height in this direction. It is by no means certain that the poor drainage of the area experienced during fieldwork in the wetter periods of the year would be indicative of historic hydrology but it is tempting to explain the fall-off of density of archaeological activity to the lower areas to the south as due to historically poor ground conditions. It is also interesting to note that the attenuation features of the proposed development are focused in the southernmost part of the site. It seems likely that the archaeological “site” and the main area of occupation, extends outside of the development area to the north and or west. There are two more recent developments that would have impacted on archaeological deposits if this is the case. The first is the

modern residential development just to the north-east on the other side of the unregistered footpath that forms the northern boundary of the development site, which is not known to have been investigated archaeologically. The second is the construction of Tull Way, which was subject to evaluation with Trenches 3 and 4 closest to the Tull Way site and for which no significant result was identified (see Mortimer 1999, 2 and fig 2). If the negative results for these trenches is indicative of the absence of this being a former settlement area, the boundaries of an early Romano-British occupation area can be suggested (**Figure 1**), defined within the excavated area in its southern sector by the greater density of features and artefacts, interpolated through the open space designed into the development in the south-western sector, to a perimeter for the remaining sectors defined by breaks on slope for the slight cutting of Tull Way, and an apparent reduction of ground level seen on the edge of the existing woodland for the residential development to the north.

8.1.6 There is evidence to show that the higher parts for the site have been subject to deflation from historic ground levels through the gradual movement down slope of soils, though the slope gradients are not great. This evidence is the shallowest top- and subsoils were in the north-west corner (data derived from evaluation TVAS 2012, appendix 1).

8.1.7 No features dating to earlier archaeological periods were identified. The limited amount of Mesolithic and Neolithic flint is almost certainly residual and the absence of contemporary features means that these cannot be used to show a presence on this site during these periods. Though there was no evidence for later prehistoric activity or settlement identified within this landscape. There is the possibility that some of the field systems identified in this excavation date to the prehistoric period, but this cannot be verified due to the absence of non-Roman artefacts.

8.1.8 Only a few fragments of later (medieval and post-medieval) pottery and CBM were recovered. There is no evidence for activity which can be linked to the Henwick deserted medieval village. Apart from a few sherds of pottery and fragments of CBM there is no evidence for any significant medieval activity until the installation of ceramic land drains which presumably is mid-19th century or later.

Evaluation trenches

8.1.9 The results of the archaeological evaluation have no potential for informing further research. This is unsurprising due to the evaluation being focussed on more generic aims (determining presence of absence of significant deposits for instance), but evaluations can occasionally encounter particular features or circumstances of preservation that would indicate a research theme that would be relevant.

8.2 Finds potential

Pottery

8.2.1 The pottery assemblage is of local interest and provides further evidence for trading and ceramic influences in the region. A chronological structure for the site has been established through the spot dating of contexts, with a concentration on Romano-British activity apparent. Activity appears to have been most intense during the early Roman period, probably running through to the late 2nd/early 3rd century AD. Evidence for late Romano-British occupation is, however, absent from the assemblage. The potential of the Romano-British pottery is limited by the low number of large feature groups, and as it is likely that only part of this occupation area has been excavated any future work will build on the information provided in this instance.

Other finds

8.2.2 The small quantities of other material types (fired clay, ceramic building material, stone, animal bone, burnt flint and worked flint) have limited potential to provide further information beyond that already recorded. This restricted range of material culture however does add to the overall picture of domestic activity on the site.

Recommendations and proposed methodologies for analysis

Pottery

8.2.3 The Romano-British assemblage is sufficiently large to warrant further analysis. It is recommended that the largest feature groups (more than 50 sherds) are subjected to detailed fabric and form analysis in line with national guidelines (PCRG, SGRP, MPRG 2016). This will enable detailed comparisons with other assemblages from the surrounding region. For the remainder of the assemblage, the publication report will also consider the results of the data collected for this assessment. Provision should be made for the illustration of up to 20 vessels.

Other finds

8.2.4 No further analysis is proposed for the other material types. However, a summary of the assessment findings should be adapted and incorporated into the publication text.

8.3 Environmental potential

8.3.1 A number of samples have provided environmental evidence with potential for further analysis, which will be outlined below. The remainder of the samples have little potential at this stage and require no further analyses, but they should be deposited with the archive and their assessment results should be included in the prospective reports and publications.

Charred plant remains

8.3.2 The detailed analysis of two of the charred plant samples has the potential to provide information on the nature of the settlement, the local environment, local agricultural practices and crop husbandry techniques and their evolution over time. For this aim, it is essential that these samples are radiocarbon dated. The samples proposed for plant remains analysis are indicated with a “P” in the analysis column in **Table 6**. All identifiable charred plant macrofossils will be extracted from the <5.6/4 residues and the flot, which may be subsampled with the aid of a riffle box in the case of very rich assemblages. The analysis will involve the full quantification (Antolín et al. 2016) and taphonomic assessment of the charred plant assemblages.

Scientific dating

8.3.3 One short-lived radiocarbon sample of charred plant remains (1 rye grain or 1 naked wheat grain) from sample 2004 are recommended for submission to the 14CHRONO Centre, Queen’s University, Belfast. This will enable to assess the consistency of the deposit, and the possible early cultivation of these crops or the existence of post-Roman activity on the site. The dates will be calculated using the IntCal13 calibration curve (Reimer et al. 2013) and the computer program OxCal (v4.2.3) (Bronk Ramsey and Lee 2013) and cited at 95% confidence.

8.4 Summary of potential

8.4.1 The results of the archaeological excavation have the potential to increase knowledge of early Romano-British field systems in the local area, which may then lead to better understanding of the development of Romano-British field systems and settlement patterns across a wider region.

8.4.2 The Romano-British pottery has the potential to inform about trading and ceramic influences in the local area. The regional research framework (Hey and Hind 2014, 182) contains clauses relating to pottery of which - *12.11.5 Collect the evidence of localised pottery manufacture and publish the pottery associated with the kilns with appropriate description/characterisation of fabrics* - is the most relevant. While there were no kilns on this site, the pottery found has the potential to provide further information about the manufacture of pottery in this region.

8.4.3 The environmental evidence has potential to provide information on the nature of the settlement, the local environment, local agricultural practices and crop husbandry techniques and their evolution over time. This is likely to be mainly of local importance, with the possibility that some of this is of regional importance.

9 UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN

9.1 Summary of recommendations for analysis

9.1.1 The results of this excavation are likely to be of local and potentially regional importance. It is recommended that the results are published in an article in the Berkshire Archaeology Journal, considering this site in its wider context.

9.1.2 It is recommended that the Romano-British pottery is subjected to further analysis of form and fabric to enable its comparison to other assemblages from the surrounding region. This may include the illustration of up to 20 vessels.

9.1.3 It is recommended that charred plant remains, and charcoal are subject to further analysis including two radiocarbon dates to better inform the dating of the use of certain crops and to better inform us about agricultural practices and crop husbandry during the Romano-British period, as recommended in the *Solent-Thames Research Framework* (Hey and Hind 2014, pp 157, sections 12.4.3-5).

9.2 Updated project aims

9.2.1 Several of the original project aims have been fulfilled by this excavation and require further analysis to enhance this. The updated project aims are:

- Given the early Romano-British date of the field systems on this site, are there any links between these features and the nearby Roman sites at Thatcham Newtown and the earlier Roman evidence at the Community Hospital site?
- As the Romano-British field systems on this site appear to be on the periphery of a settlement, is there any evidence in the surrounding area of where this settlement could be?
- Does the environmental and stratigraphic evidence provide any evidence for an increase in diversified and managed farming practices during the early Romano-British period?
- Does the environmental evidence provide evidence for early cultivation of rye and naked wheat? If so, what does this tell us about cultivation in the vicinity and region?
- Can the Roman pottery be traced to any local kilns or help with producing type series for the wares found?

9.6.3 The Post-Excavation Manager will be assisted by the Senior Research Manager, who will help to ensure that the report meets internal quality standards as defined in Wessex Archaeology's guidelines.

10 STORAGE AND CURATION

10.1 Museum

10.1.1 The archive resulting from the excavation is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury. West Berkshire Museum has agreed in principle to accept the archive on completion of the project, under the accession code NEBYM:2018.10. Deposition of any finds with the museum will only be carried out with the full written agreement of the landowner to transfer title of all finds to the museum.

10.2 Preparation of the archive

10.2.1 The archive, which includes paper records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by West Berkshire Museum and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; CIfA 2014d; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

10.2.2 All archive elements are marked with the **accession code**, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:

- 7 cardboard boxes (6 NBY, 1 unboxed) or airtight plastic boxes of artefacts and ecofacts, ordered by material type (plus samples - there are 18 samples).
- 3 files/document cases of paper records and A3/A4 graphics.

10.3 Conservation

10.3.1 No immediate conservation requirements were noted in the field. During assessment, none of the finds were identified of being of unstable material types or as being in an unstable condition. No further conservation treatment is considered necessary.

10.4 Selection policy

10.4.1 Wessex Archaeology follows national guidelines on selection and retention (SMA 1993; Brown 2011, section 4). In accordance with these, and any specific guidance prepared by the museum, a process of selection and retention will be followed so that only those artefacts or ecofacts that are considered to have potential for future study will be retained. The selection policy will be agreed with the museum, and is fully documented in the project archive. In this instance, fired clay (with the exception of one piece), ceramic building material, unworked stone and burnt, unworked flint has already been discarded following quantification.

10.5 Security copy

10.5.1 In line with current best practice (eg, Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

10.6 OASIS

10.6.1 An OASIS online record (http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main) has been initiated, with key fields and a .pdf version of the final report submitted. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service ArchSearch catalogue.

11 COPYRIGHT

11.1 Archive and report copyright

11.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act* 1988 with all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations* 2003. In some instances, certain regional museums may require absolute transfer of copyright, rather than a licence; this should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

11.1.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research or development control within the planning process.

11.2 Third party data copyright

11.2.1 This document and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (eg, Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Wessex Archaeology are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of *the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act* 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of such material

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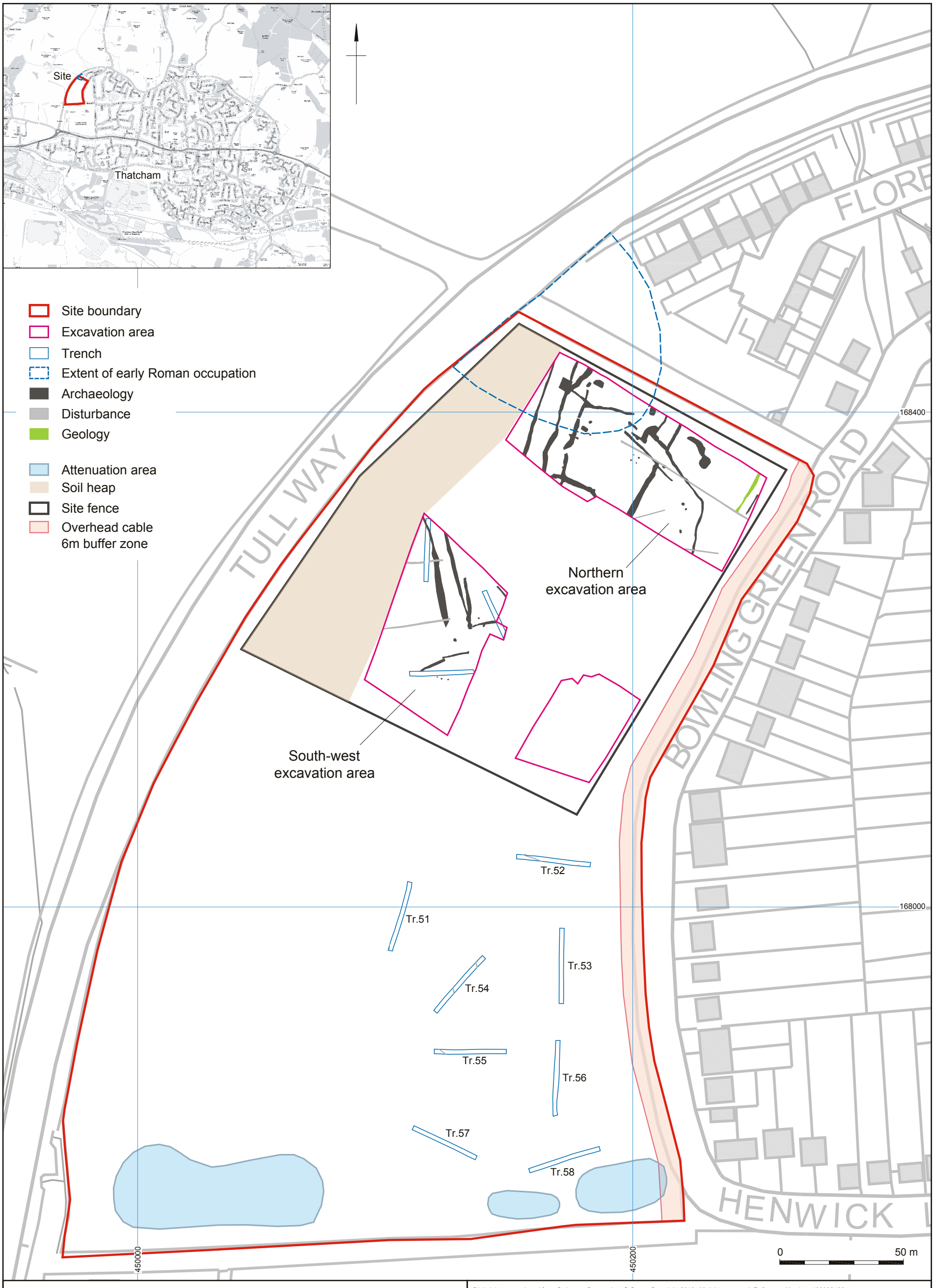

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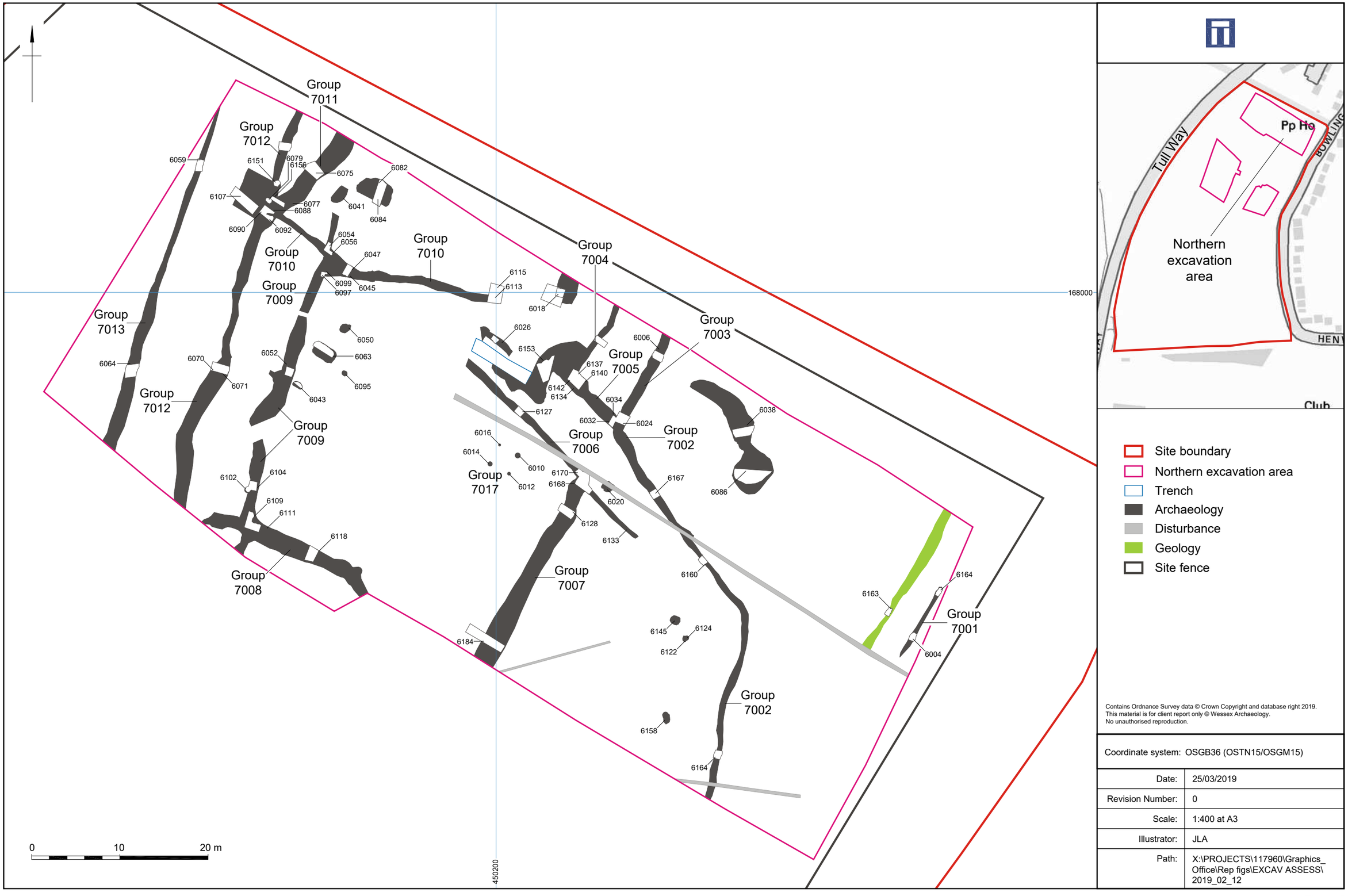
Site location plan showing excavation area and trench locations

Figure 1



- Site boundary
- Northern excavation area
- Trench
- Archaeology
- Disturbance
- Geology
- Site fence

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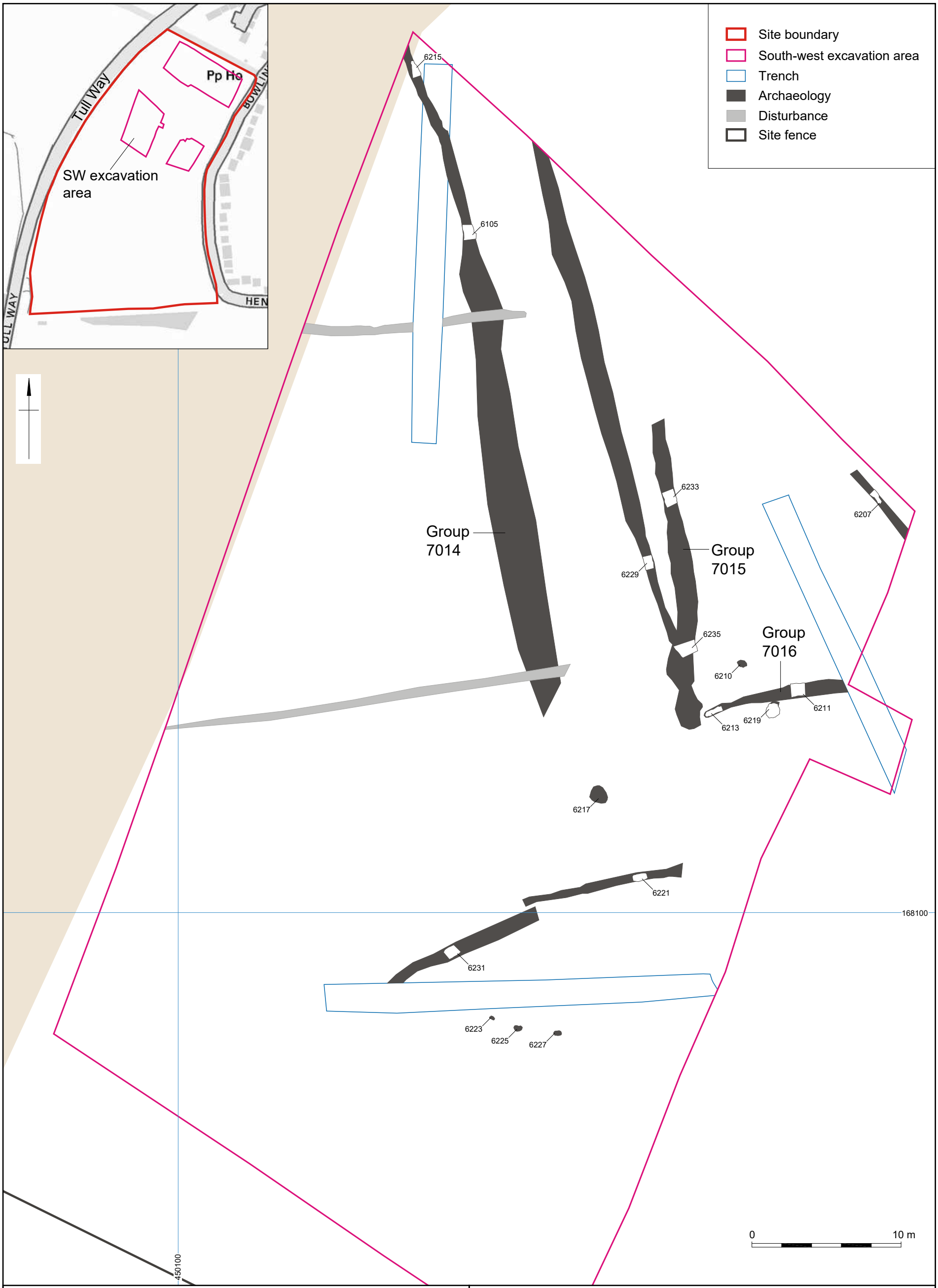
Northern excavation area

Figure 2



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South-west excavation area

Figure 3

Plate 1: West facing representative section of the northern excavation area. 1 m scale.

Plate 2: North-east facing representative section of trench 53. 1 m scale.

Date:	12/02/2019	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	Not to scale	Illustrator:	JLA
Path:	X:\PROJECTS\117960\Graphics_Office\Rep figs\EXCAV ASSESS\2019_02_12\117960_EXCAV ASSESS_plates.ai		

Plate 3: View of trench 58 from the north-east.
1 m and 2 m scales.

Plate 4: East facing section of ditch 6211. 50 cm scale.

Date:	12/02/2019	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	Not to scale	Illustrator:	JLA
Path:	X:\PROJECTS\117960\Graphics_Office\Rep figs\EXCAV ASSESS\2019_02_12\117960_EXCAV ASSESS_plates.ai		

Plate 5: West-south-west facing section of pit 6219. 50 cm scale.

Plate 6: Oblique shot of ditches 6109 and 6111. 1 m scale.

Date:	12/02/2019	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	Not to scale	Illustrator:	JLA
Path:	X:\PROJECTS\117960\Graphics_Office\Rep figs\EXCAV ASSESS\2019_02_12\117960_EXCAV ASSESS_plates.ai		

Plate 7: North facing section of ditch 6113. 1 m and 20 cm scales.

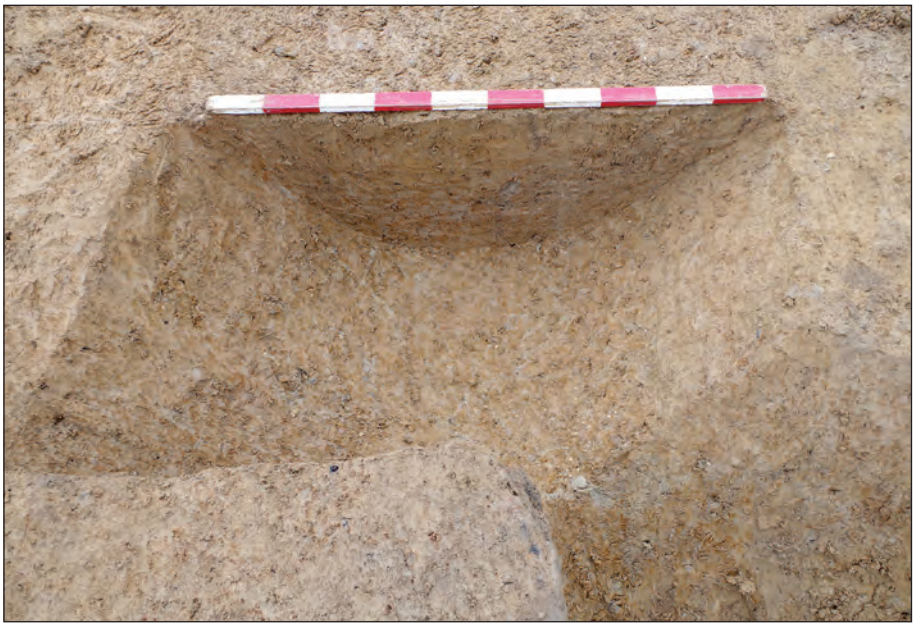

Plate 8: East facing section of ditch 6032. 1 m scale.

Date:	12/02/2019	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	Not to scale	Illustrator:	JLA
Path:	X:\PROJECTS\117960\Graphics_Office\Rep figs\EXCAV ASSESS\2019_02_12\117960_EXCAV ASSESS_plates.ai		

Plate 9: North-east facing section of ditch 6128. 1 m scale.

Plate 10: North-east facing section of pit 6043. 1 m scale.

Date:	12/02/2019	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	Not to scale	Illustrator:	JLA
Path:	X:\PROJECTS\117960\Graphics_Office\Rep figs\EXCAV ASSESS\2019_02_12\117960_EXCAV ASSESS_plates.ai		

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Environmental Data

Table 6 Assessment of the charred plant remains and charcoal

Feature	Context	Group	Sample	Vol (l)	Flot (ml)	Bioturbation proxies	Grain	Chaff	Cereal Notes	Charred Other	Charred Other Notes	Charcoal > 2mm (ml)	Charcoal	Other	Analysis	Comments (Preservation)
6156	6157		2012	8	60	5%, C, I	C	C	*Triticum* sp. grains and glume base	C	Poaceae	25	Mature + roundwood, some iron coating	-		Poor
6156	6157		2013	16	50	25%, B, E, I	C	-	*Triticum* cf. *aestivum/turgidum*, *Hordeum vulgare*, *Avena* cf. *sativa*	-	-	10	Mature, some iron coating	-		Heterogenous
6156	6157		2014	10	50	15%, B, E, I	C	-	*Triticum* sp.	C	Poaceae	15	Mature, some iron coating	-		Poor
6156	6157		2015	8	35	20%, B	C	C	*Triticum* sp. grain and rachis segment fragment	C	Poaceae	10	Mature, some iron coating			Poor
6024	6025	7003	2001	34	250	<1%, E	A		*Triticum* sp., *Hordeum vulgare,* Triticeae	C	cf. *Bromus* sp.	150	Mature + roundwood, some iron coating	-		Poor
6113	6114	7010	2004	38	750	<1%, C, E	A***	A**	*Triticum aestivum/turgidum grains* (A***), rachis internodes (B) and *Triticum* sp. glume base (C), *Secale cereale* grains (A) and rachis segments (A), *Avena sativa* grains (A**) and lemma base (C), *Hordeum vulgare*	A*	*Lolium/Festuca*, *Corylus avellana,* Vicieae, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Linum usitatissimum* capsule frag, Asteraceae (inc. *Centaurea* sp.), Polygonaceae,	250	Mature + roundwood, some iron coating	-	P, C14 (1x)	Heterogenous, some iron coating

Feature	Context	Group	Sample	Vol (l)	Flot (ml)	Bioturbation proxies	Grain	Chaff	Cereal Notes	Charred Other	Charred Other Notes	Charcoal > 2mm (ml)	Charcoal	Other	Analysis	Comments (Preservation)
									grain (C), Triticeae culm nodes		Cyperaceae, Maloideae seeds and fruit fragment, *Agrostemma githago*, *Quercus* sp. cotyledons, indet. seeds and seedhead					
6149	6150	7012	2016	40	60	60%, C, E	C	-	*Hordeum vulgare*	-	-	10	Mature			Poor
6164	6165	7002	2017	32	60	60%, C, E	C	-	*Hordeum vulgare*, Triticeae	-	-	30	Mature + roundwood, some iron coating			Poor
6020	6021		2000	30	160	10%, B, E, I	B	-	*Triticum* sp., *Hordeum vulgare*, Triticeae	C	cf. *Bromus* sp.	70	Mature, some iron coating	Moll-t		Poor
6086	6087		2002	40	250	10%, C, E	A***	A**	*Triticum spelta* grains (A***) (some still in spikelets) and chaff (A**) (glume bases and spikelet forks), *Hordeum vulgare* grains (B), Triticeae rachis segments, *Avena sativa* floret base and grains	A*	Poaceae (*Bromus* sp., many sprouted), Cyperaceae, *Persicaria* sp., *Spergula arvensis*, Poaceae root, Asteracea seedhead	50	Mature + roundwood, some iron coating	-	P	Generally good, some iron coating
6102	6101		2003	20	500	<1%, C, E	-	-	-	-	-	400	Mature, some iron coating	-		
6145	6146		2005	7	12	10%, C	-	-	-	-	-	1	Mature	-		-
6151	6152		2007	4.5	35	1%, C	C	-	*Triticum* sp.	-	-	15	Mature	-		Poor
6151	6152		2008	4.5	50	1%, C	-	-	-	-	-	20	Mature	-		-
6151	6152		2009	7	60	2%, C, I	C	-	Triticeae	-	-	30	Mature	-		Poor
6151	6152		2010	4.5	50	5%, C	C	-	*Hordeum vulgare*	-	-	20	Mature + roundwood	-		Poor

Key: A*** = exceptional, A** = 100+, A* = 30-99, A = >10, B = 9-5, C = <5; Bioturbation proxies: Roots (%), Uncharred seeds (scale of abundance), F = mycorrhyzal fungi sclerotia, E = earthworm eggs, I = insects; Analysis: C = charcoal, P = plant, M = molluscs, C14 = radiocarbon

Appendix 2: Trench Summaries

NGR coordinates and OD heights taken at centre of each trench; depth bgl = below ground level

Trench 51	***30 m x 2 m***	**NGR 450106 168196**	***89.1 m OD***
Context	***Interpretation***	***Description***	***Depth bgl (m)***
5101	topsoil	Loose mid grey silty sand with moderate small pebbles, occasional fine rooting and cbm fragments.	0.00–0.34
5102	Natural	Pale yellow sand	0.34→

Trench 52	***30 m x 2 m***	**NGR 450168 168219**	***89.5 m OD***
Context	***Interpretation***	***Description***	***Depth bgl (m)***
5201	topsoil	mid grey silty clay with common small and medium stones and occasional fine rooting	0.00–0.53
5202	Natural	brownish yellow clay	0.53→

Trench 53	***30 m x 2 m***	**NGR 450171 168176**	***88.9 m OD***
Context	***Interpretation***	***Description***	***Depth bgl (m)***
5301	topsoil	mid grey sandy silt with sparse small stones, occasional cbm fragments and rooting	0.00–0.45
5302	Natural	yellowish brown sand	0.45→

Trench 54	***30 m x 2 m***	**NGR 450130 168169**	***88.4 m OD***
Context	***Interpretation***	***Description***	***Depth bgl (m)***
5401	topsoil	mid grey sandy silt with common small and medium stones, occasional cbm and fine rooting	0.00–0.35
5402	Natural	yellowish brown sandy clay with occasional chalk flecks	0.35→

Trench 55	***30 m x 2 m***	**NGR 450099 168207**	***87.9 m OD***
Context	***Interpretation***	***Description***	***Depth bgl (m)***
5501	topsoil	dark grey brown silty sand with occasional lithic clasts (flint)	0.00–0.17
5502	Natural	mid light yellow brown silty sand	0.17→

Trench 56	***30 m x 2 m***	**NGR 450169 168131**	***87.7 m OD***
Context	***Interpretation***	***Description***	***Depth bgl (m)***
5601	topsoil	dark grey brown silty sand with occasional lithic clasts (flint)	0.00–0.26
5602	Natural	mid-light yellow brown silty sand	0.26→

Trench 57	***30 m x 2 m***	**NGR 450124 168105**	***87.7 m OD***
Context	***Interpretation***	***Description***	***Depth bgl (m)***
5701	topsoil	dark grey brown silty sand with occasional lithic clasts (flint)	0.00–0.35
5702	Natural	mid-light yellow brown silty sand	0.35→

Trench 58	***30 m x 2 m***	**NGR 450173 168098**	***86.8 m OD***
Context	***Interpretation***	***Description***	***Depth bgl (m)***
5801	topsoil	light brown sandy loam with occasional small pebbles and small sub-angular flint <0.02m, sparse fine rooting, clear boundary, friable	0.00–0.22
5802	Natural	mid yellow sandy clay with occasional medium sub-rounded flint <0.04m and small pebbles <0.02m	0.22→

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