Swing Swang Lane
Basingstoke, Hampshire

Archaeological Excavation Report

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by the Redrow Homes Limited to undertake an archaeological strip map and record excavation on land located at Swing Swang Lane, Basingstoke, Hampshire, centred on National Grid Reference 465598 152802. The works were undertaken in support of a planning application for residential development, and followed geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation of the site.

The excavation comprised of two separate areas, targeted on archaeological remains observed in previous investigations and covered an area totalling 1,000m^2.

This report sets out the results of the excavation, which is the final stage of recommended archaeological works in association with the planning application. The investigation confirmed the presence of background prehistoric activity on the site observed during earlier archaeological works. This included a boundary ditch containing Romano-British pottery and worked flint, and a small pit and tree throw containing worked flint. A substantial sized undated pit was also investigated and the function of this feature remains unclear. The only evidence of Civil war period activity on the site came from a single artefact, one lead shot suitable for a large pistol, recovered from the topsoil during the investigations.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Redrow Homes Ltd, for commissioning the archaeological mitigation works, in particular Mike Dodds, Simon Jane and Jason Shakespeare. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful for the advice of David Hopkins, County Archaeologist for Hampshire County Council, who monitored the project for Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

Swing Swang Lane, Basingstoke, Hampshire

Archaeological Excavation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project and planning background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Redrow Homes Limited ('the client'), to undertake an archaeological Strip, Map and Record (SMR) excavation, on two targeted areas of a 4.8 hectare parcel of land at Swing Swang Lane, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG24 7AN, hereafter referred to as the 'Site'.

1.1.2 Previous archaeological investigations included geophysical survey (Wessex Archaeology 2020a) and trial trench evaluation of the site (Wessex Archaeology 2020b).

1.1.3 The first SMR measured 20 m by 20 m in area and surrounded previous evaluation Trench 22. The second, measured 20 m by 30 m and surrounded former evaluation Trench 24. The SMR excavations covered an area totalling 1000 m^2. An additional 500 m^2 contingency area was also proposed, and some of this contingency was utilised to allow for full investigation of a large pit. The site is centred on NGR 465598 152802 (**Figure 1**).

1.1.4 The archaeological mitigation is for a proposed development comprising provision for up to 100 residential dwellings with associated infrastructure, open green spaces and two access points along Basing Road. Construction will involve ground reduction and levelling, as well as foundation trenching to at least 1.5 m below current ground level. Basement levels could be between two and three metres below current ground level. Terracing for construction is also likely to have substantial impact on surviving archaeology.

1.1.5 A planning application (17/02846/OUT) submitted to Local Planning Authority (LPA) Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council by Hampshire County Council (HCC), was granted on 14/03/2019, subject to conditions. The following conditions relate to archaeological mitigation works:

Condition 21 *No development shall commence on site until a programme of archaeological mitigation (if required) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The programme of archaeological mitigation shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.*

Reason: To mitigate the effect of the works associated with the development upon any heritage assets and to ensure that information regarding these heritage assets is preserved by record for future generations in accordance with Policy EM11 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011-2029. Details are required prior to the commencement of works in the absence of being provided to accompany the planning submission and given the early stage at which archaeological mitigation will be required.

1.1.6 The SMR excavation was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI), which detailed the aims, methodologies and standards to be employed, for both the fieldwork and the post-excavation work (Wessex Archaeology 2020c). The County

Archaeologist for Hampshire County Council (CA for HCC) approved the WSI, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), prior to fieldwork commencing. The excavation was undertaken between the 2nd and 9th September 2020 and was the final stage in a programme of archaeological works.

1.2 Scope of the report

1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the provisional results of the excavation, and the preceding evaluation, and to assess the potential of the results to address the research aims outlined in the WSI, and includes recommendations for dissemination of the archaeological results via publication and the curation of the archive.

1.3 Location, topography and geology

1.3.1 The excavation area was located on a roughly triangular shaped parcel of land to the west of Swing Swang Lane, Basingstoke, Hampshire (**Figure 1**). It is currently presented as an open grass field with mature trees along the boundaries.

1.3.2 The northern boundary is demarcated by the Basingstoke to London railway line, with an industrial estate to the north of that, and modern housing estates to the north-east and west of the proposed development area. Swing Swang Lane forms the eastern boundary and Basing Road forms the southern boundary with the floodplain of the River Lodden immediately south of that.

1.3.3 Existing ground levels slope from a highest point of 87 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the north-west corner down to 78 m aOD along the south-east boundary.

1.3.4 The underlying geology is mapped as chalk of the Seaford Chalk Formation with no recorded superficial deposits, although alluvium is recorded as present to the immediate south of the proposed development area (British Geological Survey online viewer).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background was assessed in a Heritage Statement by Hampshire Estates and Development Services (HEDS 2019), which considered the recorded historic environment resource within a 500 m study area of the proposed development. It was also concerned with addressing sub-sections b and c of Policy SS3.1 – Swing Swang Lane, Basingstoke, which specifically applies to the proposed development area. A summary of the results is presented below, with relevant entry numbers from the Hampshire Archaeology Historic Building Record (AHBR). Additional sources of information are referenced, as appropriate.

2.2 Previous works related to the development

Cowdreys Down (1978–1981)

2.2.1 Excavation of chalk downland between 240 and 370 m north-east of the Site, now covered by modern housing. Excavation uncovered funerary and settlement evidence ranging from the early Bronze Age to the Late Iron Age, where individual burials were also recorded. Romano-British settlement and burials, along with early medieval settlement remains were also present on the Site (2500 BC – AD 1066).

Hampshire Clinic (1997)

2.2.2 Thames Valley Archaeological Services (TVAS) carried out an evaluation comprising seven trial trenches on the Hampshire Clinic Site (located 195 m west of the proposed development area) in late 1997, prior to the construction of a modern housing estate. No archaeological features or deposits were recorded, although it was reported that the majority of the Site had been extensively disturbed by previous developments (TVAS 1997).

Geophysical Survey (2019)

2.2.3 Wessex Archaeology conducted a detailed gradiometer survey covering 2ha of the proposed development area (Wessex Archaeology 2020a). The survey demonstrated the presence of anomalies of potential archaeological interest.

2.2.4 The anomalies identified as being of archaeological origin are two curvilinear anomalies (4000 on **Figure 1**), a north-west to south-east linear (4001 on **Figure 1**) and numerous pitlike features. One of the curvilinear features was interpreted as tentative based on the survey results. Nevertheless, a central anomaly inside it could represent a ploughed out Bronze Age round barrow or an Iron Age round house with a central pit. Given that evidence for similar features have been located during excavations nearby, it was considered tentative but possible. The eastern half of the field presented the best archaeological potential while the west of the field, bisected by a modern service (4003 on **Figure 1**), showed more evidence for modern disturbance, though this may mask the presence of anomalies of archaeological interest.

Archaeological Evaluation (2020)

2.2.5 In January 2020 Wessex Archaeology carried out an evaluation of 28 trial trenches (Wessex Archaeology 2020b), targeting the potential archaeology identified in the detailed gradiometer survey. Six of the trenches contained archaeological features and deposits, indicating archaeological remains present across the site.

2.2.6 A possible medieval lynchet was identified in Trench 7, while Trench 10 contained a terminus of a possible gully which was undated, and a single pit and a ditch were encountered in Trench 12, both of which were undated.

2.2.7 The main concentrations of archaeology were located within Trenches 22 and 24 and comprised of three pits, a gully, a posthole, and a ditch located in Trench 22, which continued into Trench 19. A small quantity of pottery and flint recovered from these features indicated a broad Bronze Age date.

2.3 Archaeological and historical context

Palaeolithic (970,000—9500 BC)

2.3.1 Although no finds from this period have been made within the Site or the wider study area (of the Heritage Statement) find spots of individual handaxes have been made to the south and west. It is assumed that the river valleys served as major transit routes.

Mesolithic and Neolithic (8500—2200 BC)

2.3.2 No finds from either period have been made within the Site or the wider study area, although stray finds of Mesolithic date have been found on the south terrace of the River Lodden and Neolithic finds outside the study area suggest that the terraces on either side of the River Lodden were favoured areas for activity.

Bronze Age (2200—700 BC)

2.3.3 The earliest evidence of settlement within the study area comes from Cowdreys Down to the north-east of the Site. The ploughed-out remains of five round barrows, surviving as ring ditches, were recorded. Three ring ditches were dated to the Early Bronze Age (2200– 1600 BC) (55778-80), and two to the Late Bronze Age (1100-700 BC) (55781-2). A secondary burial also dated to the Early Bronze Age was recovered from ring ditch 55778. The remains of a hut circle (55783) dating to the Late Bronze Age were recorded as well as a circular post-built structure (55784) of similar date, which was located to the north of the former barrows along with a complex of intercutting pits recorded as shallow quarries (55785). Stray finds of pottery and animal bone were recovered from all contexts.

Iron Age (700 BC—AD 43)

2.3.4 Old Basing, 120 m to the south-east of the study area, is an Iron Age Hillfort at its inception, along with Oliver's Battery sited 1 km to the north-east. The Cowdreys Down excavations found settlement continued into this period with a Late Iron Age (100 BC – AD 43) enclosure ditch (55786) harbouring two pits, and thought to contain further settlement evidences, which were not explored due to time constraints. Late Iron Age field system ditches (55787) were recorded along with shallow pits interpreted as quarry hollows, and an infant burial (55789).

Romano-British (AD 43—410)

2.3.5 The excavation at Cowdreys Down saw a continuation of settlement types into the Romano-British period with an enclosure (55790) containing a probable settlement site enclosing an area of 55 by 75 m. The northern corner of the enclosure contained an adult and an infant burial, while a large number of post holes were also excavated which failed to provide either dating evidence or resolve into identifiable patterns. A pit complex (55792) within the enclosure was interpreted as quarrying. Associated field boundary ditches were also noted to the east of the enclosure (55791).

Anglo-Saxon (AD 410—1066)

2.3.6 At Cowdreys Down a number of timber-framed buildings (55796 and 55799), along with a sunken-floored building, a further timber-framed building and a pit (55805) are ascribed to this period. A second settlement at Riverdene (Hall-Torrance and Weaver 2003), 410 m to the south-west of the study area, is sited on similar topography to Cowdreys Down with both being located on high ground overlooking the Lodden Valley.

2.3.7 The village of Old Basing, located c. 100 m east of the study area, was founded in the 8th century.

Medieval (AD 1066—1500)

2.3.8 Although no medieval archaeological assets have been recorded within the proposed development area or the wider study area, two medieval castles were built, at Basing to the immediate south-east of the Site and at Oliver's Castle to the north-east.

Post-medieval (AD 1500—1800)

2.3.9 Basing House, built on the site of an Iron Age hillfort and its incorporated medieval castle in 1531, is located on the south-east edge of the study area and the curtilage of the Scheduled Monument (1001961) established around it extends into the study area itself. The Site, being proximate to the medieval core of Old Basing, is likely to have formed part of the open field systems encircling the village and it is considered unlikely that any structures were built here during this period.

2.3.10 An aerial photograph held by HCC (run8e111) shows the Site to be crossed by a number of linear features. Re-assessment of interpretation suggests they are more likely to be post-medieval or modern field drainage ditches than previously considered ploughed-out remains of lynchets from a medieval field system (36049).

2.3.11 The Dovecote at Basing House (2470), which is a Grade II* Listed Building located 375 m to the south-east of the Site, and a retaining wall on the south-south-west side of an earthen bank adjoining the bothy at Basing House (52540), located 400 m to the south-east of the Site both date from the 16th century.

2.3.12 Between 1643 and 1645 Basing House was besieged by Parliamentary Forces as part of the English Civil war (1642-51). It is possible that some of the Site was occupied by besieging forces at that time and there was a potential for stray finds from this period to be found on the Site. Such finds include structural remains, such elements as camps, batteries and/or trenches of the besieging forces, as the Site is located on elevated land potentially overlooking Basing House.

Modern (AD 1800—present)

2.3.13 The medieval open field, in which the Site is located, was enclosed at the beginning of the 19th century and the construction of the railway in the 1840s created the triangular shaped plot of land present today.

2.3.14 Between 1835 and 1836 Basingstoke Workhouse (55362) was built to the immediate west of the Site by Samuel Kempthorne to accommodate 400 people. An infirmary for the elderly (55363) was built 120 m north-west of the Workhouse in 1879. Three Grade II Listed Buildings are located within the village of Old Basing and situated in the south-east corner of the study area, which also relate to this period (2591, 2593 and 2594).

2.3.15 The Site continued to be farmed as an enclosed field throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries. The Workhouse was re-developed as a hospital (now known as the Hampshire Clinic), whilst the Workhouse Infirmary site was re-developed for modern housing in the late 1990s (Cowdrey Heights).

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Aims

3.1.1 The general aims of the excavation, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2020c) and in compliance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation* (CIfA 2014a), were to:

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

3.2 Research objectives

3.2.1 Following consideration of the archaeological potential of the site the research objectives of the excavation are to:

- determine the date, nature and extent of Bronze Age activity in the area surrounding Trench 22; and
- determine the date, extent and character of the archaeological features in the surrounding area of Trench 24, and if possible, to establish the date of the previously undated features through association.

4 FIELDWORK METHODS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methods set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2020c) and in general compliance with the standards outlined in CIfA guidance (CIfA 2014a). The post-excavation assessment and reporting followed advice issued by the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO 2015). The methods employed are summarised below.

4.1.2 The excavation comprised the excavation, investigation and recording of two areas totalling just over 1,000 m² (**Figure 1**), one 20 m by 20 m area (Area 29) surrounding evaluation Trench 22, the second area (Area 30) 20 m by 30 m surrounding evaluation Trench 24.

4.2 Fieldwork methods

General

4.2.1 The excavation areas were set out using a Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS), in the same position as that proposed in the WSI (**Figure1**). Trench 29 was extended slightly to uncover the full extent of a feature. The topsoil/overburden was removed in level spits using a 360º excavator equipped with a toothless bucket, under the constant supervision and instruction of the monitoring archaeologist. Machine excavation proceeded in level spits until the archaeological horizon or the natural geology was exposed.

4.2.2 Where necessary, the surfaces of archaeological deposits were cleaned by hand. A sample of archaeological features and deposits was hand-excavated, sufficient to address the aims of the excavation. A sample of natural features, such as tree-throw holes, were also investigated.

4.2.3 Spoil derived from machine stripping and hand-excavated archaeological features was visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval. A metal detector was also used. Artefacts were collected and bagged by context. All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained.

Recording

4.2.4 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system. A complete record of excavated features and deposits was made, including 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.

4.2.5 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 (Newlyn), as defined by OSTN15 and OSGM15, with a three-dimensional accuracy of at least 50 mm.

4.2.6 A full photographic record was made using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 16 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 Finds and environmental strategies

General

4.3.1 Strategies for the recovery, processing and assessment of finds and environmental samples were in line with those detailed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2020c). The treatment of artefacts and environmental remains was in general accordance with: *Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b) 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 The CA for HCC monitored the works on behalf of the LPA. Any variations to the WSI, if required to better address the project aims, were agreed in advance with the client and the CA for HCC.

5 STRATIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

5.1 Introduction

Summary of archaeological features and deposits

5.1.1 A small number of features were discovered during excavation these were a single ditch, two pits, and four tree-throw holes. Three of these features had been identified during the evaluation stage of the works.

Methods of stratigraphic assessment and quantity of data

5.1.2 All digital and drawn records from the excavation have been collated, checked for consistency and stratigraphic relationships. Key data has been transcribed into a database, which can be updated during any further analysis. Preliminary phasing of archaeological features and deposits was principally undertaken using stratigraphic relationships and the spot dating from artefacts, particularly pottery.

5.2 Soil sequence and natural deposits

5.2.1 The soil sequence and natural deposits across both areas were generally consistent and comprised dark greyish brown silty clay loam topsoil 0.27 m thick overlying natural chalk. Across the south-eastern quarter of Area 29 a layer of mid greyish brown silty clay alluvial deposit was recorded measuring up to 0.33 m thick. The natural comprised greyish white chalk with rare flint nodules. The upper part of the chalk was broken and weathered; periglacial stripes, predominantly aligned north-east to south-west, were noted across both areas.

5.3 Area 29

5.3.1 The features in Area 29 were concentrated in the southern part of the area. These features comprised two pits and two tree-throw holes.

5.3.2 Pit 2904 was sub-oval in shape with moderate, concave sides and a concave base; this pit measured 0.80 m long, 0.54 m wide and 0.20 m deep and contained burnt and worked flint indicative of a prehistoric date (**Plate 1)**.

5.3.3 A substantial pit 2911 (**Figure 2)** was uncovered along the western edge of the area, which was subsequently extended to uncover the full extent of the feature. It measured 10 m long and 6.5 m wide. The depth was recorded as 1.02 m. The irregular shaped pit had steep edge on the east side, and the west side appeared to be stepped with a flat base. The primary fill (2912) comprised a loose mid greyish brown silty clay with chalk inclusions 0.38 m thick covering the base, this was overlain by a 0.84 m thick homogenous mid greyish brown silty clay secondary fill (2913), which was tightly compacted, but there was no anthropogenic material (**Plates 2 and 3, Section 1**). The function and date of the pit remains unclear, it is possible though, that it is the result of chalk extraction, the irregular shape of the pit may be indicative that this feature may comprise of more than one pit, with the uppermost fill being contemporaneous, no discernible intercutting was noted during the excavation.

5.3.4 Tree-throw hole 2909 was a large irregular shaped feature with irregular sides and an undulating irregular base, it measured 3 m by 2.6 m and was up to 0.20 m deep and was stratigraphically earlier than the alluvial deposit. A small part of this feature was uncovered in evaluation trench 22 and recorded as pits 2204 and 2206. Two fragments of struck flint and a single sherd of probable Middle to Late Bronze Age were recovered during the evaluation phase, but no further secure dating was obtained in the excavation phase. The lack of finds and the feature's irregularity suggest that this is either a tree-throw hole or similar type of naturally created hollow (**Plates 4 and 5**).

5.4 Area 30

5.4.1 Two slots (3003 and 3006) were excavated through the north-west – south-east oriented ditch 3009. This ditch initially indicated as geophysical anomaly 4001, then recorded in the evaluation phase as Ditch 1903 and Ditch 2410. The ditch was approximately 1.10 m wide and 0.30 m deep and had moderate, straight sides and a concave base. The ditch contained two clear episodes of infilling, the primary fill comprised a light greyish brown silty clay up to 0.09 m thick, this was overlain by a secondary fill comprising a mid-greyish brown silty clay. Finds were only recovered from slot 3006 (**Figure 2**) (see section 6.2.1 and 6.3.2).

5.4.2 Two irregular shaped tree-throw holes were noted but not excavated in the southern portion of Area 30. Both of these irregular sub-oval shaped features measured approximately 2.45 m diameter. No artefacts were visible on the surface of either feature.

6 FINDS EVIDENCE

Grace Jones and Phil Harding (flint)

6.1.1 A small quantity of finds was recovered during the excavation and preceding evaluation (Table 1). The assemblage is of Neolithic to medieval date. The finds have been cleaned (except for the lead object) and quantified by material type in each context. This report details finds from the excavation phase but also provides an overview of the previously recovered material. The level of recording for the pottery accords with the 'basic record', aimed at rapidly characterising an assemblage, and providing a comparative dataset (Barclay *et al* 2016, section 2.4.5).

Table 1 Quantification of finds

Material	Evaluation		Excavation		Total	
	Number	*Weight (g)*	*Number*	*Weight (g)*	*Number*	*Weight (g)*
Pottery	3	14	26	94	29	108
Flint	31	N/A	32	N/A	64	N/A
Burnt flint	7	153	39	422	46	575
Lead			1	13	1	13
Animal bone	14	69			14	69

6.2 Pottery

6.2.1 A group of 26 sherds (94 g) of Romano-British pottery was recovered from ditch 3009 within ditch slot 3006. All are in a sandy greyware fabric, and likely to derive from a single vessel – a necked, cordoned jar with round shoulder and everted rim, of late 1st to early 2nd century AD date. The rim measures 120 mm in diameter; 50% survives. The form and fabric suggest this is a product of the Alice Holt industry, located in the Wey Valley on the Surrey-Hampshire border (Lyne and Jefferies 1979, class 1).

6.2.2 Pottery recovered during the preceding evaluation comprises a flint-tempered body sherd of probable Middle to Late Bronze Age date from tree throw 2909; a small abraded body sherd in a glauconitic sandy fabric of later prehistoric date, from ditch 3009, and one sherd of Surrey-Hampshire border white ware with green glaze, of 16th to 17th century date, from topsoil 1801.

6.3 Flint

6.3.1 The excavation phase of fieldwork produced 32 pieces of worked flint; this is in addition to 31 pieces recovered during the preceding evaluation phase (Table 2). A summary quantification of the assemblage from both phases of work is presented in the table below; details of the material from the evaluation has been previously reported (Wessex Archaeology 2020b). Both phases of work are dominated by waste flakes; with one core and one core fragment, and no retouched pieces.

6.3.2 This phase of fieldwork produced 27 pieces from Roman ditch 3009 and five pieces from tree throw 2909. These low densities are relatively uninformative, especially the collection from the ditch. The collections contain no small flaking debris to indicate that they represent dumped flaking waste which may be contemporary with the use of the ditch. It is can be safely concluded that individual artefacts were derived from the surrounding land surface and predate the use of the ditch.

6.3.3 The small collection from tree throw 2909 has more potential as an indicator of early prehistoric activity, however, like the material from the ditch, the totals are small. The presence of two blades, one probably from a prepared blade core may provide the most compelling indication of human presence in the Early or Middle Neolithic.

Table 2 Quantification of worked flint by feature

Feature	Evaluation	Excavation	Total
Ditch 1206	1		1
Ditch 3009	28	27	55
Tree throw 2909	1	5	6
Topsoil 2701	1		1
Total	**31**	**32**	**63**

6.3.4 Burnt flint (153 g) was recorded from ditches 3003 (132 g) and 3009 (260 g), pit 2904 (20 g) and tree throw 2909 (163 g). This material type is intrinsically undatable but is frequently associated with prehistoric activity.

6.4 Metal

6.4.1 A single metal object was recovered – a round lead shot, from topsoil 2901. It is almost spherical, with diameter ranging from 12.74 to 13.65 mm (0.502-0.537 in); it weighs 13 g (200.6 grains; 35 shot to the pound). The sprue-scar has a sloping facet, suggesting it was knife-cut; the mould seam is visible. There are no obvious signs of damage or deformation. The measurements of the shot fall within the range of large pistol (Harding 2012, 34, chart 5 and appendix H).

6.5 Animal bone

6.5.1 No animal bone was recovered from features identified during the excavation. Fourteen poorly preserved fragments found during the evaluation include a fragment of cattle-sized long bone shaft from ditch 1206 and a cattle radius shaft from ditch 1903.

6.6 Potential and recommendations

6.6.1 The finds assemblage has been recorded in sufficient detail and no further work is warranted, however the information presented here could be adapted for inclusion in a publication report, if required.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

Acknowledgements

The sample was processed by Jenny Giddins and the flot sorted by Nicki Mulhall. This report was written by Inés López-Dóriga, with contributions from Samantha Rogerson and Nicki Mulhall.

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 A bulk sediment sample was taken from a tree throw and was processed for the recovery and assessment of the environmental evidence.

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. The nature of this assessment follows recommendations set up by Historic England (Campbell et al. 2011).

7.2.2 The sample was 10 litres in volume and processed by standard flotation methods on a Siraf-type flotation tank; the flot retained on a 0.25 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 4 mm and 1 mm fractions. The coarse fractions (>4 mm) were sorted by eye and discarded. The environmental material extracted from the residues was added to the flots. The fine residue fractions and the flot was 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 burrowing snails (*Cecilioides acicula*), or 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 of other environmental remains such as terrestrial and aquatic molluscs and animal bone was recorded. Mollusc nomenclature follows Anderson (2005).

7.3 Results

7.3.1 The flot from the bulk sediment sample was small (Appendix 1). There were moderate numbers of roots, modern seeds and the burrowing snail *Cecilioides acicula* that may be indicative of some stratigraphic movement and the possibility of contamination by later intrusive elements. Environmental evidence comprised only a very small amount of mature wood charcoal and moderate numbers of terrestrial molluscs.

7.4 Discussion

7.4.1 The rarity of environmental evidence from the sample suggests no plant resource exploitation activities took place in the vicinity of the sampled feature and the terrestrial molluscs were not accumulated in sufficient numbers to be representative of the environment.

7.5 Further potential

7.5.1 The assemblages recovered so far have little potential and require no further analysis. This may be a result from the small sample size, since small volumes of sediment may fail to concentrate any plant remains at all when their density is low.

7.5.2 Recommended for discard after the analysis has been completed.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1.1 The archaeological excavation confirmed the results of the evaluation, with a small number of features being recorded in both areas.

8.1.2 The north-west to south-east aligned ditch recorded as geophysical anomaly 4001, and observed during the evaluation in trenches 19 and 24 (1903 and 2410 respectively) yielded 26 pieces of Romano-British pottery, likely to derive from a single vessel and dating to late 1st to early 2nd century AD. This ditch may be Romano-British in origin and may form part of the field boundary system recorded at Cowdreys Down. However, the alignment of this ditch is parallel to Swing Swang Lane and may indicate an earlier division of the field with the finds purely residual within the vicinity having spread from the Romano-British occupation at Cowdreys Down. The paucity of the finds recovered from this ditch suggests that the occupation recorded at Cowdreys Down did not spread as far as this site, however the land may have been utilised as part of the agricultural system supporting the settlement.

8.1.3 The two pits in Area 29 had very different characteristics. Large pit 2911 may be part of a group of intercutting pits, although this pit had no obvious form, function or dating. It is possible this pit is modern and it could be a chalk extraction pit. Consideration that this pit may relate to the Civil war period was raised during the investigations, however the lack of artefacts dating to this period that were recovered from the Site in general, and the absence of evidence of any revetment in the pit sides, or trample on the base, suggest this was not a 'occupied' feature dated to the Civil war period. The only evidence of Civil war period activity on the Site came a single lead shot, suitable for a large pistol, found within the topsoil within Area 29.

8.1.4 Smaller pit 2904 is probably prehistoric, however there was no clear function to this pit or obvious relationship between this pit and any of the other features found.

8.1.5 Although the evaluation identified and recorded two intercutting Iron Age pits in trench 24 no further pits were identified during the excavation of Area 30.

8.1.6 Four tree-throw holes were identified and two were excavated. Of these tree-throw hole 2906 contained an interesting ashy fill. Residual finds were also recovered from this fill demonstrating further evidence of pre-historic activity in the area.

9 CONCLUSION

9.1 Summary

9.1.1 The archaeological excavation successfully demonstrated that, although evidence for pre-historic activity exists within the Site boundary, this appears to be confined to isolated pits and small pit clusters. None of these features are concentrated enough to imply occupation, nor have any other indications of occupation, such as post-holes or ring gullies been identified.

9.1.2 The geophysical survey appears to have been successful in identifying the most obvious feature on the site, Ditch 3009, and although the alluvial deposit may have potentially masked some features, the remaining archaeological features are generally small discrete features, such as the isolated pits in trench 24 and area 29, or irregular shaped tree-throw holes.

9.1.3 The most intriguing feature excavated was pit 2911. The exact form and dating of this pit is unclear, its function may be either a chalk extraction pit .

9.1.4 Despite the Site's proximity to Basing House on elevated ground, and the potential for Civil war period activity on the Site, the only evidence from this period recovered was a single unstratified find, a lead shot, acquired from the topsoil within Area 29. The paucity of artefacts and archaeological features from this period thus suggest that the Site under investigation was not a centre of activity during the Civil war.

9.2 Proposals for publication

9.2.1 Wessex Archaeology will submit a short report of the evidence for inclusion in the summaries to Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society on the results of the investigations.

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. Hampshire Cultural Trust has agreed in principle to accept the archive on completion of the project, under the accession code A2019.97. 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 Hampshire Cultural Trust, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; CIfA 2014c; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

10.2.2 All archive elements are marked with the **accession code A2019.97**, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:

- 1 cardboard boxes or airtight plastic boxes of artefacts and ecofacts, ordered by material type
- 2 files/document cases of paper records and A3/A4 graphics

10.3 Selection policy

10.3.1 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 fully documented in the project archive.

10.4 Security copy

10.4.1 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.

10.5 OASIS

10.5.1 An OASIS (online access to the index of archaeological investigations) record (http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main) has been initiated, with key fields completed (Appendix 2). A .pdf version of the final report will be submitted following approval by the CA for HCC on behalf of the LPA. 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 (ADS) 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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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Environmental Data

Table 1: Assessment of the environmental evidence/macrofossils/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)	Other
2909	2910	0	1	10	20	30%, A, *Ceciliodes acicula* (A*)	-	-	-	-	-	0.25	moll-t (A*)

Key: Scale of abundance: A*** = exceptional, A** = 100+, A* = 30-99, A = 30-10, B = 9-5, C = <5; Bioturbation proxies: Roots (%), Uncharred seeds (scale of abundance), Moll-t = terrestrial molluscs.

Appendix 2 OASIS record

OASIS ID: wessexar1-405607

Project details

Project name	Swing Swang Lane Basingstoke
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by the Redrow Homes Limited to undertake an archaeological strip map and record excavation on land located at Swing Swang Lane, Basingstoke, Hampshire, centred on National Grid Reference 465598 152802. The works were undertaken in support of a planning application for residential development, and followed geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation of the site. The excavation comprised of two separate areas, targeted on archaeological remains observed in previous investigations and covered an area totalling 1,000m2. This report sets out the results of the excavation, which is the final stage of recommended archaeological works in association with the planning application. The investigation confirmed the presence of background prehistoric activity on the site observed during earlier archaeological works. This included a boundary ditch containing Romano-British pottery and worked flint, and a small pit and tree throw containing worked flint. A substantial sized undated pit was also investigated and the function of this feature remains unclear. The only evidence of Civil war period activity on the site came from a single artefact, one lead shot suitable for a large pistol, recovered from the topsoil during the investigations.
Project dates	Start: 02-09-2020 End: 09-09-2020
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	225902 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	DITCH Roman
Monument type	PIT Late Prehistoric
Monument type	PIT Uncertain
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	WORKED FLINT Late Prehistoric
Significant Finds	LEAD SHOT Uncertain
Investigation type	"'Open-area excavation"'
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	HAMPSHIRE BASINGSTOKE AND DEANE OLD BASING Swing Swang Lane Basingstoke
Postcode	RG24 7AN

Study area	1000 Square metres
Site coordinates	SU 465600 152800 50.934536427315 -1.33733016377 50 56 04 N 001 20 14 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 75m Max: 85m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	with advice from County Archaeologist
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Ruth Panes
Project supervisor	Piotr Orczewski
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Redrow Homes

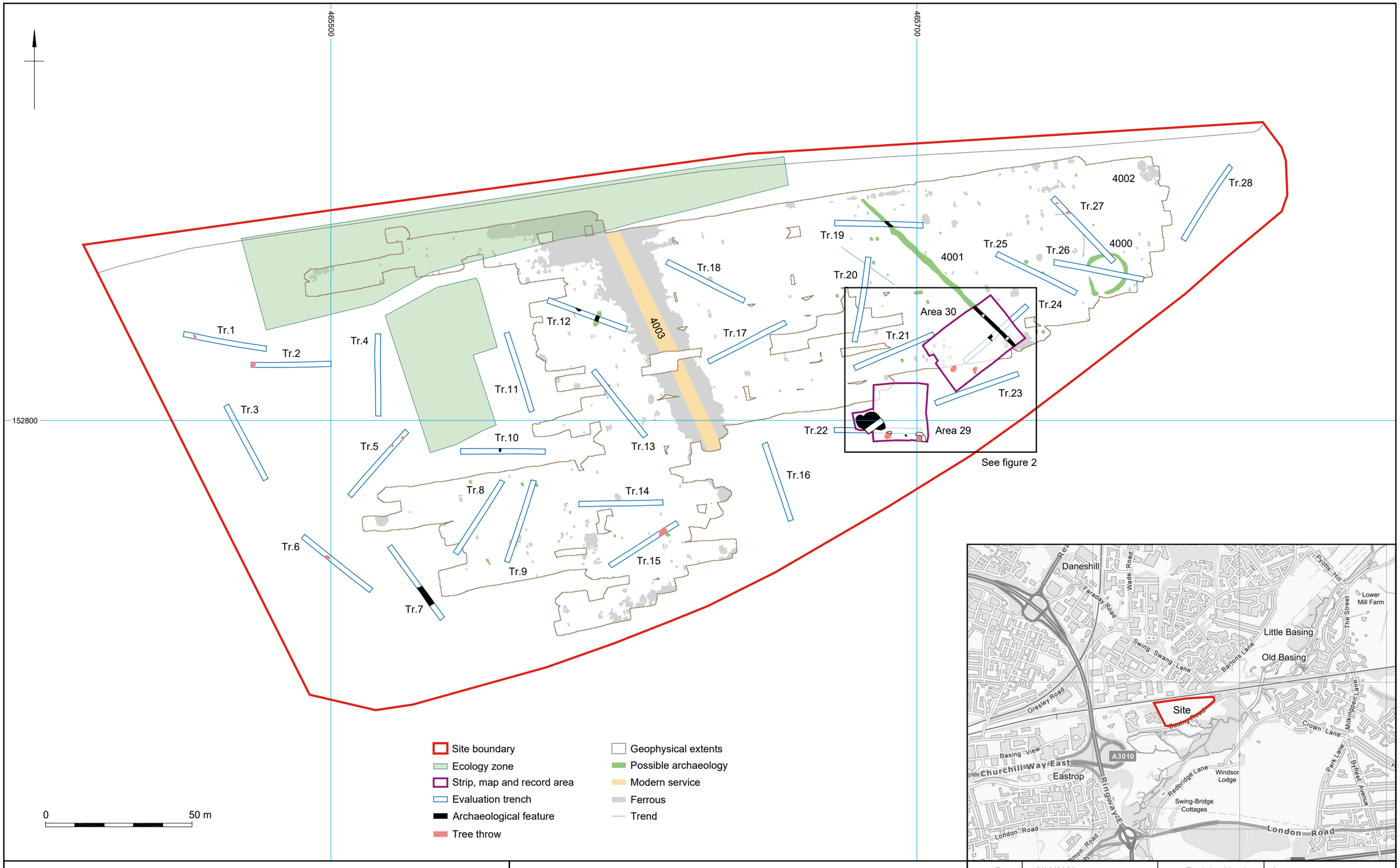
Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Hampshire Cultural Trust
Physical Archive ID	225902
Physical Contents	"Ceramics","Metal","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Hampshire Cultural Trust
Digital Archive ID	225902
Digital Media available	"Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Hampshire Cultural Trust
Paper Archive ID	225902
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Notebook - Excavation"," Research"," General Notes","Report","Section","Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Swing Swang Lane Archaeological Excavation Report
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Wessex Archaeology

Other bibliographic details	225902.03
Date	2020
Issuer or publisher	Wessex Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Salisbury
Description	A4 bound client report
URL	http://www.oasis.ac.uk



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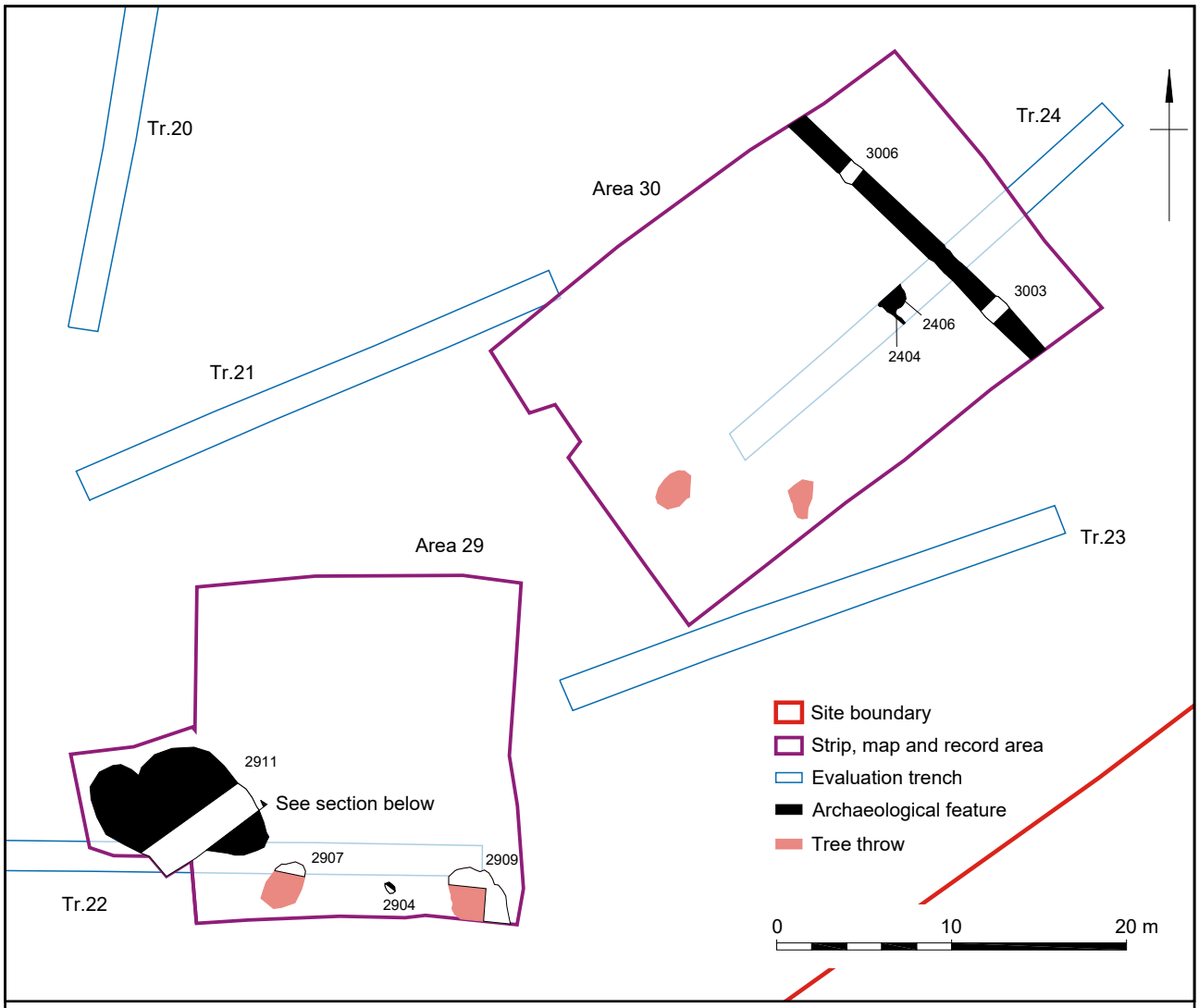
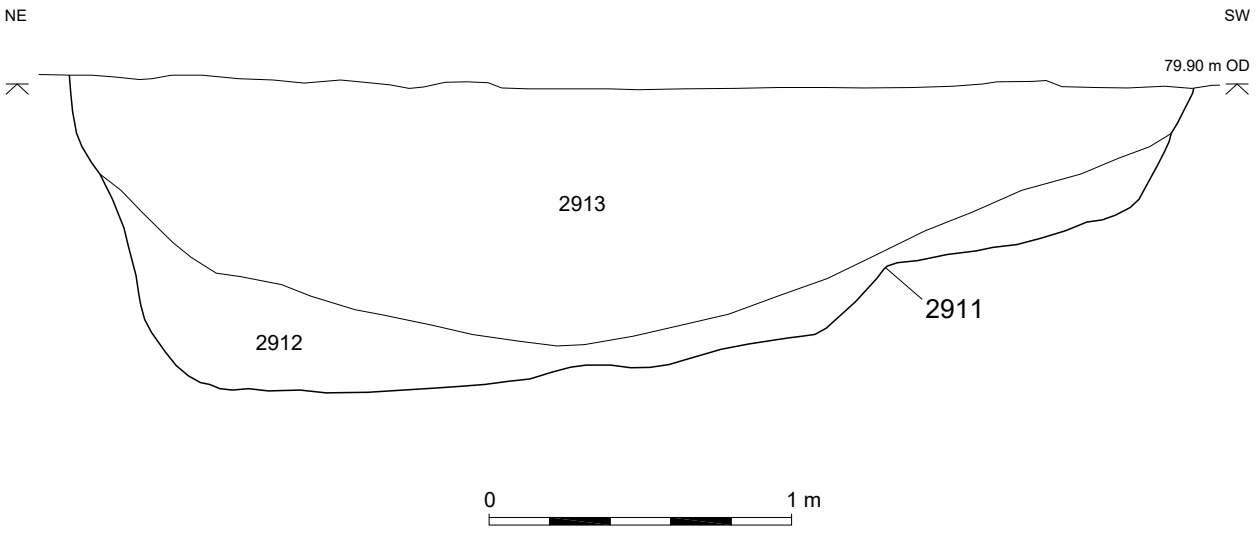
Site plan with geophysical survey results, excavated trenches and Strip, map and record areas.

Figure 1





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Detail of excavated areas and section of pit 2911

Figure 2

Plate 1: Section of pit 2904, view from south-west. Scale is 0.5 m.

Plate 2: Section of pit 2911, view from north-west. Scale is 2 m.

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Plate 3: General view of pit 2911, view from north-west. Scale is 2 m.

Plate 4: Section of feature 2909, view from the north. Scale is 1 m.

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Scale:	Not to scale	Illustrator:	RG
Path:	X:\PROJECTS\225902\Graphics_Office\Report_figs\excavation\2020_09_15\225902_Plates.ai		

Plate 5: Post excavation view of feature 2909, view from north-east. Scale is 1 m.

Plate 6: Section of ditch 3009, view from south-east. Scale is 0.5 m.

Date:	15/09/2020	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	Not to scale	Illustrator:	RG
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