

Key to Symbols

- Article 4 Red Line Boundary
- 4km Buffer
- Article 4 Red Line Boundary

Other Developments

- Beaver Road (19/01597/AS)
- Cheesemans Green (16/00125/AS)
- Conningbrook Park (19/00025/AS)
- Court Lodge (18/01822/AS)
- Newtown Works (19/01476/AS)
- Park Farm (18/00625/AS)
- Pentland Homes and Jarvis Homes (15/00856/AS)
- Stour Park Development (14/0906/AS)
- Ashford Waterbrook Development (18/00098/AS)
- Ashford Waterbrook Inland Border Facility
- Ashford Waterbrook Inland Border Facility Excluded Areas

Document References

Data obtained from Ashford Borough Council  
<https://planning.ashford.gov.uk/Planning/Default.aspx>  
[Accessed 04/11/2021]

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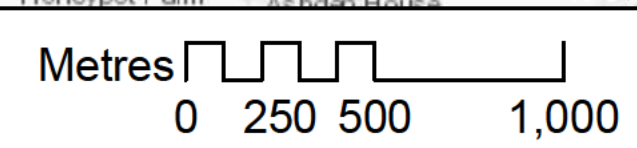
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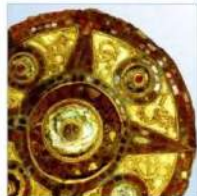
# LAND ON THE NORTH SIDE OF HIGHFIELD LANE, SEVINGTON, KENT: A POST-EXCAVATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

National Grid Reference: 603950 140346

AOC Project No: 34280

Site Code: SPS20

Date: May 2022



**AOC**  
Archaeology  
Group

ARCHAEOLOGY

| HERITAGE

| CONSERVATION

# Land on the north side of Highfield Lane, Sevington, Kent: Post-Excavation Assessment Report

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|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
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| National Grid Reference (NGR): | 603950 140346  |
| AOC Project No:                | 32480  |
| Prepared by:                   |  |
| Illustration by:               |  |
| Date of Fieldwork:             | August–December 2020                                   |
| Date of Report:                | May 2022   |

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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## NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

*This report provides a summary of archaeological works commissioned by Mott MacDonald undertaken in advance of redevelopment between August and December 2020 (NGR 603950 140346).*

*This document summarises the stratigraphic sequence of archaeological remains, and describes the assessment of finds from the site, discussing the results in relation to their archaeological and historical context. The principal objective of this report is to present the results, refine the research objectives of the project in light of the findings, and assess the potential of the archive to address these research objectives.*

*The results indicate the presence of Late Bronze Age to Early / Middle Iron Age and Late Iron Age to Early Roman farmland and settlement activity within the confines of the site. This included a road, a trackway, two associated inhumations, field boundaries, enclosures and possible structures including three roundhouses. Early to Middle Saxon activity, perhaps pertaining to the 6th century, took the form of a small inhumation cemetery of 11 individuals in the eastern part of the site. One individual, a young to middle-aged adult male, was buried with a spear, a knife and an unusual buckle. Late Saxon or earlier activity also occurred in the eastern part of the site in the form of a field boundary, a collection of pits or postholes, two fence lines and six probable corn drying kilns, which could alternatively pertain to the Roman period. A possible post-built structure with the same dimensions as a Late Saxon long hall was also present but is poorly dated and not well understood. Medieval to early post-medieval activity was nucleated in the south-west corner of the site, closer to the current village of Sevington, thus suggesting a change of settlement focus between the Late Saxon and later medieval periods. Farmland boundary ditches that may date to the 17th to 19th centuries were also present.*

*The finds collected from the site included prehistoric and Roman pottery, post-Roman pottery, ceramic building materials (CBM), post-Roman glass, fired clay, clay tobacco pipe, metals, a single coin, worked and burnt flint, worked leather, worked wood and slag and industrial residues. Ecofacts included diatoms, ostracods, pollen, macroplants, charcoal, cremated bone of uncertain origin, animal bone and human bone.*

*The prehistoric to Late Saxon results are deemed to be regionally significant, while the medieval to post-medieval remains are of local importance. In light of these results, it is recommended that they are disseminated either as a journal article or special paper amounting to c. 30,000 words or as an AOC monograph.*

*An OASIS form has been completed (aocarcha1-507058) and an electronic copy of all reports will be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS). The site archive will be prepared in accordance with local and national guidance.*



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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Mott MacDonald to carry out a programme of archaeological works in advance of the construction of a lorry park that may be followed by a mixed-use development. The archaeological works comprised a trial trenching evaluation and a strip, map and sample investigation. This report provides details of the methodology deployed on site and the results of the investigation. It goes on to succinctly contextualise these results and provide an assessment of their potential and significance, as well as recommendations for further work.

### Site Background

- 1.2 The proposed development site ('the site') is located on the north side of Highfield Lane, Sevington, in Ashford Borough Council in Kent, covering an area of 49 ha (NGR 603950 140346; Figure 1). The majority of the site was previously in arable agricultural use, with two small fields in the north-western area in use as pasture. The field adjoining Bridge Cottage in the south of the site was also in use as pasture. Highfield Lane runs through the south-western corner of the site and partially bounds it on the eastern and southern extents. The M20 motorway runs north-west to south-east to the north of the site and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link rail link partially bounds the site to the South. The A2070 runs to the west of the Site.

### Planning Background

- 1.3 The archaeological works were undertaken and designed in accordance with current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines (detailed in full in Section 5).
- 1.4 The local planning authority is Kent County Council (KCC) and archaeological advice to the council is currently provided by the Senior Archaeological Officer to KCC, Wendy Rogers.
- 1.5 A historic environment desk-based assessment (HEDBA) was prepared in support of the planning application (Waterman 2014). This set out the legislative and planning background and provided a detailed baseline and an assessment of the impacts of the proposed development. A programme of archaeological trial trenching was previously carried out in 2012, covering the majority of the development area (CgMs / Wessex 2012; Section 3.6-3.9).
- 1.6 The scheme was granted planning permission (Ref: 14/00906/AS), which included Conditions 30 and 31 relating to the archaeological mitigation work (note that this document addresses conditions 30B and 31 only; 30A relates to the Royal Observer Corps underground post, which was subject to an independent study). The relevant conditions relating to the archaeological works presented in this document are as follows:
- Condition 30: No development shall take place until-

*(B) The applicant (or the applicant's agents or successors in title) has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work other than the matter identified in (A) above in accordance with a plan covering the site, a written specification and timetable which has previously been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest – including the Royal Observer Corps underground post - are properly examined and recorded across the site.*

- Condition 31:

*Within 3 months of the completion of the approved archaeological works a report containing details of the final archaeological recording work and the archaeological work report from the appointed archaeological contractor shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded across the site. Elements of the condition relating to the Royal Observer Corps underground post, namely Part (A) of Condition 30, are covered in a separate document.*

## **2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

- 2.1 The site is relatively flat, with the centre at a height of c. 55m OD, rising slightly towards the south-east to a maximum level of c. 61m OD. A slight ridge also existed across the northern side of the site on a north-east–south-west orientation with the ground falling gradually away towards the north and west to a minimum level of c. 50.5m OD to the north and c. 49.5m OD to the west (Plate 1).
- 2.2 The East Stour River flows c. 1.10km to the south-west of the site and the Old Mill Stream flows c. 90m to the north. Beyond the site boundary, the ground slopes marginally downwards in the direction of these watercourses to the north, west and south-west. This slight topographic difference was sufficient to largely mitigate the historic risk of flooding, thus encouraging human activity that perhaps included settlement on and in the vicinity of the site. The proximity of the site to the abundant resources that a marshy area could provide, coupled with the nearby presence of waterways that were perhaps navigable in antiquity, would have further increased the desirability of the area to past populations.
- 2.3 The British Geological Survey indicates that the geology of the area of the site is mixed. The bedrock geology across much of the site is Hythe Formation, comprising sandstone and limestone, sedimentary bedrock that formed approximately 112 to 125 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period when the local environment was dominated by shallow seas. Atherfield Clay Formation was also present in the southern part of the site. This is also a sedimentary bedrock formed during the Cretaceous Period (WSP 2019a; 2019b; UKRI 2021; BGS 2022).
- 2.4 The bedrock geology was predicted to be overlain by a sequence of alluvial clays, silts, sands and gravels that were deposited up to 2 million years ago during the Quaternary Period by a migrating river system associated with the East Stour and its tributaries (WSP 2019a; 2019b, UKRI 2021; BGS 2022).





Plate 1: This image shows the ridge that ran across the northern edge of the site in a north-east–south-west direction. Photograph looks towards the east over Area 3, Area 4 and Area 9.

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The following paragraphs collate existing archaeological evidence relating to previous works both on and in the vicinity of the site. The information is primarily sourced from the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the trial trenching evaluation and the subsequent strip, map and sample exercise (WSP 2019a; 2019b), as well as a HEDBA (Waterman 2014). The conclusions presented in those documents are augmented here with supplementary desk-based research, which focuses upon periods relevant to the archaeological sequence outlined in Section 6 of this report.

#### Prehistoric (c.500,000 BC – AD 43)

- 3.2 The site lies within an area in which prehistoric activity ranging in date from the Neolithic through to the Late Iron Age (LIA) has been previously identified. Extensive remains of prehistoric settlement have been uncovered to the south of the site, while an evaluation undertaken in 2012 on the site itself proved that prehistoric remains underlie the area. At the time of the evaluation, it was hypothesized that this was limited to agricultural activity in the form of a later prehistoric field system, situated in the north-western portion of the site (CgMs / Wessex 2012). The distribution of these remains led to the conclusion that the potential for prehistoric activity within the confines of the site was moderate towards the north-west and low across all other areas.

#### Roman (AD 43 – AD 410)

- 3.3 According to the *Rural Settlement of Roman Britain* (Allen *et al* 2016), the site is situated just under 3km to the west of a small roadside settlement at Kingsnorth. In addition to evidence for settlement, an associated cemetery was also uncovered close to Kingsnorth (*ibid.*). This settlement activity appears to have been centered on a cross-roads that was formed by two thoroughfares. The first of these roads connected Kingsnorth with Canterbury (*Duroverno*) and

Reculver (*Regulbium*) to the north-east and the Weald to the south-west, where this road formed a 'T' junction with another thoroughfare that ran from Watling Street (in the vicinity of Gillingham) to the north, at least as far as the outskirts of Hastings to the south (*ibid.*). The second road that ran through Kingsnorth also connected with the aforementioned Watling Street to Hastings road just south of Maidstone, running onwards from there in a south-easterly direction to Lympne (*Portus Lemanis*), before curving around the coastline to Folkstone and Dover (*Dubris*). During the Roman period, the area in which the site sat was therefore well connected not only with *Britannia*'s road network but also beyond thanks to direct links with at least three significant Roman ports.

- 3.4 The *Rural Settlement of Roman Britain* (Allen *et al* 2016) also suggests that a Roman-period field system was situated just over 1km to the south-east of the site in the vicinity of what is now Mersham. A farmstead and an associated field system were also situated just under 2km to the south in the vicinity of Cheeseman's Green. The latter was positioned adjacent to the extrapolated route of the aforementioned Watling Street to Lympne road and could have formed part of the hinterland of a villa, uncovered close by at Bridgefield. Also situated on the same Roman road, this time to the north-west of Kingsnorth (c.3km to the south-west of the site) was a Roman farmstead and an associated shrine.
- 3.5 In the immediate vicinity of the site and within its confines, no evidence of Roman activity was previously identified prior to the commencement of this study. This led to the conclusion that the archaeological potential for the Roman period on the site was low (Waterman 2014).

#### **Early Historic (AD410 – 1066)**

- 3.6 The etymology of the nearby settlement of Sevington suggests that it possesses Anglo-Saxon roots. The name translates into modern English as 'the town or settlement of Sægifu', a woman's name of Anglo-Saxon origin that itself means 'gift of the sea' (Ekwall 1966).
- 3.7 Sevington was first recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086 as *Seivetone*, by which time it had become the property of Hugh de Montfort. The settlement was reasonably developed by that time, possessing both a church and a mill, which in turn suggests that its origins almost certainly lie in the pre-Norman period (Domesday Book Online, n.d.). In apparent support of this, it has been claimed that the earliest known incarnation of the church of St Mary's, around which the village of Sevington presumably grew, possessed a 9<sup>th</sup>-century watchtower (St. Mary's Sevington, n.d.); however, to the knowledge of the author the veracity or otherwise of this structure has not yet been confirmed through archaeological observation.
- 3.8 Despite being situated close to a probable settlement with origins in the Late Saxon period or earlier, previous archaeological work undertaken on the site itself suggested that it possessed low potential for early to late Saxon remains (Waterman 2014).

#### **Medieval (1066–c.1480) and Post-Medieval (c.1480–1900)**

- 3.9 Nearby Sevington existed as a small village throughout these periods. Its historic core was presumably centered around the parish church of St Mary's, the earliest surviving portions of which date back to the 12th century (Historic England n.d.).
- 3.10 The area in which the site sat was generally characterized by agricultural land during the medieval and post-medieval periods. Evidence of medieval activity was found in the south and



south-western portions of the site during the 2012 evaluation. The site was therefore judged as having moderate potential for archaeological remains of medieval and post-medieval date.

#### **Modern (AD post 1900)**

- 3.11 The surrounding landscape has evolved gradually with a slow increase in housing in the surrounding villages, the construction of the railway line to the south, the A20 (now M20) to the north and the A2070 to the west.
- 3.12 The Royal Observer Corps underground monitoring post, constructed in 1961 and abandoned in 1968, is marked as being within the Site, but following further research and the site visit, it appears that the HER data is inaccurate and that the post lies in the field east of Highfield Lane which is still within the site boundary. Further information on the post is detailed in an Archaeological Note, produced by WSP.

#### **Previous Archaeological Investigations**

- 3.13 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to undertake a site walkover survey, metal detecting survey and archaeological field evaluation over a majority of the development site (CgMs / Wessex 2012).
- 3.14 An archaeological evaluation was then commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd, also in 2012 (CgMs / Wessex 2012). This comprised the mechanical excavation of 101 trenches measuring 30m by 2m, comprising a 2% sample of the area of proposed development. Only a small number of the trenches contained archaeological remains and the majority of those features appeared to be small scale undated field boundaries, drainage ditches or discrete features. Trench 145 contained the densest collection of archaeological features observed on the site. The presence of a mortared ragstone wall alongside two other features represented possible structures, perhaps associated with a medieval occupation site. The majority of the finds recovered dated to the 12th-14th century.
- 3.15 Together the walkover survey and the subsequent evaluation suggested a low level of archaeological activity across the majority of the site, with the exception of the aforementioned zone of medieval activity in the southern part of the site.

## **4 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 4.1 A trial trenching evaluation was undertaken as part of this phase of work, which supplemented the previous phase of evaluation undertaken in 2012 (CgMs / Wessex 2012). The aim of the supplementary archaeological evaluation was to clarify the presence, nature, date and extent of any archaeological remains that might be present within areas of impact that had not been previously evaluated. As such, this phase of evaluation targeted areas that were inaccessible during the 2012 phase of work (CgMs / Wessex 2012).
- 4.2 The objective of trial trench evaluation as defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) is to 'determine and report on, as far as is reasonably possible, the nature of the archaeological resource within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices' (CIfA, 2020a: 4).
- 4.3 This is further explained as "limited programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts and their research potential, within a specified area or site on land, in an inter-tidal

zone or underwater. If such archaeological remains are present, field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, reports on them and enables an assessment of their significance in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.” (ClfA 2020a: 4).

4.4 In accord with requirements stipulated by Kent County Council the objectives of the evaluation were:

- To ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit, character, date, significance and condition of any archaeological remains on site;
- To establish the extent to which previous development and/or other processes have affected
- To identify archaeological deposits at the site
- To establish the likely impact on archaeological deposits of the proposed development.

4.5 The following research objectives were formulated after the results of the previous archaeological evaluation (CGMS / Wessex 2012) and the supplementary trial trenching exercise were taken into consideration and are as follows.

- Does the untruncated surface of natural gravels/clay and/or brickearth subsoil survive?
- What is the nature of the natural topography and does it concatenate with the results of the evaluation in the corresponding areas? How does this affect the archaeological resource?
- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity *in situ*? Is there any redeposited evidence for prehistoric activity? If so, can this be linked in anyway with sites nearby?
- What is the nature, extent, survival, date, and significance of the Romano-British remains? Can the nature and extent of the features found during the evaluation be fully understood? How does the evidence modify or enhance our understanding of Romano-British development and occupation?
- Can specific socio-economic activities be identified in the archaeological record? This might include further evidence of land management indicated by the evaluation.
- Is there evidence for the development of occupation past the Romano-British period into the early-medieval period?
- What is the nature of the post-medieval field boundaries and can these tie into features identified on maps of the area?
- What is the nature of the natural topography and underlying geology and how might this have influenced the location of the site?



## 5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 This section of the report describes the methodologies used for the supplementary trial trenching investigation and the strip, map and sample investigation. These are outlined in full in the Written Schemes of Investigation for the site (WSP 2019a; 2019b) and are summarised in the paragraphs that follow.

### **Trial Trenching Investigation**

- 5.2 The supplementary archaeological evaluation consisted of 26 trial trenches measuring 1.80m by 30.00m, representing a c. 3% sample of the area that was inaccessible during the 2012 evaluation (CgMs / Wessex 2012) (Figure 2). For further details on the strategy for placing these trenches the reader should refer to WSP 2019a.
- 5.3 All trenches were opened initially by a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket, under supervision of the archaeological fieldwork subcontractor (Site Supervisor). Following initial exposure of archaeological horizons, investigation was carried out by hand, including cleaning, examination, sampling and recording.
- 5.4 In order to obtain sufficient information on the likely nature, date, extent, survival and significance of any potential archaeological features and deposits identified, these were sample excavated by hand. It was not the objective of the evaluation to archaeologically excavate features in their entirety as this would form part of a future mitigation strategy for preservation by record.
- 5.5 The following sampling strategy was carried out:
- Linear features were hand excavated to achieve a minimum 10% sample along their length with a minimum width of 1.0m.
  - The termini of any linear features were 100% hand excavated.
  - Pits were 50% hand excavated as a minimum.
  - Significant solid or bonded structural remains, building slots or postholes were preserved intact, even if fills were sampled.
  - Isolated postholes and complex features such as hearths were 100% hand excavated.

### **Strip, Map and Sample Investigation**

- 5.6 The strip, map and sample area corresponded with the former locations of evaluation Trenches 25, 32, 52, 73, 145, 104, 105 and 106, which were excavated during the 2012 evaluation (Wessex / CGMS 2012) (Figure 2).
- 5.7 Machine stripping of the proposed archaeological investigation area was carried out under archaeological direction by a 360° tracked excavator fitted with an appropriate toothless ditching bucket (Plate 2). Undifferentiated topsoil overburden of recent origin was removed to the upper-most level of any identified archaeological features, or the natural geology, whichever was encountered first. Following monitoring of the preliminary stripping, archaeological excavation and recording within the area commenced under supervision by a fully qualified Archaeological Project Officer/Supervisor.
- 5.8 A pre-excavation site-plan was produced for an initial archaeological strategy meeting attended by the LPA archaeological advisor, Wendy Rogers. The site plan was used to guide the

recording and sampling strategy, which was flexible and accommodated changes as the fieldwork proceeded.

- 5.9 Where archaeological horizons were encountered, subsequent excavations were undertaken by hand. All excavated sections were drawn at a scale deemed appropriate for the task, usually 1:10 or 1: 20. All plans and sections were located to the Ordnance Survey (OS) grid and Ordnance Datum (OD) heights were established for all strata and features through the use of the Global Positioning System (GPS).
- 5.10 Archaeological features were sample excavated in accord with the methodology as set out in the WSI (WSP 2019b).



*Plate 2: Overview of Area 5 under machine excavation. Photograph faces south. Scales 2m and 1m.*

### **Recording Methodology**

- 5.11 Written records were produced using either *pro-forma* context or trench record sheets and by the single context planning method and will be compatible with those published by the Museum of London (MoLAS 1994). A record of the full sequence of all archaeological remains as revealed in the evaluation was made. Plans and sections of features were drawn at an appropriate scale of 1:10 or 1:20, with sections drawn at 1:10. A full photographic record was maintained and indexed using digital Single Lens Reflex (SLR) cameras. Registers will be kept of all photographs, levels, plans, sections, finds and samples taken in the field.
- 5.12 Identified archaeological finds and artefacts were carefully recovered by hand and bagged or boxed according to the type of artefact (i.e. pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), bone, worked flint, metal) archaeological context from which they came, with a label indicating the site code, find type and context reference number). Particularly notable artefacts were recorded as a 'registered' find, and recorded three dimensionally with Ordnance Datum levels.
- 5.13 Initial conservation and storage followed *First Aid for Finds* (Leigh *et al.* 1998) and the ClfA 'Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials' (ClfA 2020b).
- 5.14 All pottery, bone and worked flint was washed and then marked in accordance with the project archive repository guidelines. The finds identification and specialist work was undertaken by

the relevant finds specialists agreed with the LPA Archaeological Advisor to assess the date range of the assemblage with particular reference to pottery use relevant county or region-specific type series for identification and dating, where available.

5.15 This post-excavation assessment report provides a stratigraphic summary of the archaeological mitigation carried out. It has been designed in accordance with the Written Schemes of Investigation (WSP 2018; 2019a; 2019b), current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:

- ADS (2011) *Guides to Good Practice*,  
<http://guides.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/g2gp/Main>.
- Historic England (2015a) *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE project Managers' Guide*.
- Historic England (2015b) *Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork*.
- Historic England (2015c) *Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2021) *Code of Conduct*.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2020a) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Field Evaluation*.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2020b) *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2020c) *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*.
- Museum of London (1994) *Archaeological Site Manual*.
- National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2019; updated 2021)
- RESCUE & ICON (2001) *First Aid for Finds*.
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (1983) *Conservation Guidelines No.2*.
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (1990) *Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice*.
- Society of Museum Archaeologists (1993) *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections: Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*.
- Brown, D.H. (2011) *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (Second Edition).

5.16 The research aims outlined prior to excavation (Section 4, above) are discussed with reference to the results of archaeological works (Section 6, below). Quantification of resources needed to fulfil the project design and discussion of the revised research objectives is presented in Section 9.



## Terminology and Definitions

- 5.17 In this report, cuts and structural remains are shown in square brackets '[000]' and fills and layers are shown in rounded brackets '(000)'. Where context numbers from the evaluation trenches are revisited, both are presented.
- 5.18 The site sequence is arranged by chronological period, with each period being numbered sequentially from earliest to latest. Period numbering is unique to the site. A full stratigraphic diagram using the Harris Matrix recording system has been compiled (see Appendix 15.4).
- 5.19 Where possible, chronological periods have been separated into phases (e.g. Period 2: Phase 1, Period 2, Phase 2, abbreviated herein to Period 2.1, Period 2.2 etc), each of which represents a distinct episode of land-use. It should be noted, however, that this formative phasing may change at the publication stage should additional evidence come to light.
- 5.20 Within each phase, contexts have been collated into related groups of cuts and fills, identified by a unique group number. Deposits within a group concord with a specific construction, use or disuse episode within the life of a landscape feature. Groups have also been used to collate layers that represent a specific depositional episode or deposit formation event that took place on the site.
- 5.21 The height at which features were encountered is demonstrated on the section drawings on Figures 6, 13, 14, 23–25, 29, 33–37, 40 and 43.
- 5.22 Possible evidence of structured deposition was noted on the site pertaining variously to the Iron Age, Roman and Saxon periods. Structured deposition is defined herein in accord with Darvill (2008) as 'patterning in the way that artefacts are found when uncovered through excavation which allows the suggestion that behavioural regularities underlie the way in which they were put into the ground in the first place'. In all cases, further work is required at the publication stage to verify whether these potential structured deposits as flagged within Section 6 genuinely fit within that definition through comparative inter-site study at regional level or higher.

## 6 RESULTS

- 6.1 This section of the report presents the results of the excavation. The occupation of the site spans nine archaeological periods. As set out below, where necessary these have been divided into different phases of archaeologically recognisable activity:
- Period 1: Natural
  - Period 2.1: Prehistoric / Late Bronze Age (LBA) to Middle Iron Age (MIA) Activity
  - Period 2.2: Subsequent Early Iron Age (EIA) to MIA Activity
  - Period 2.3: Latest EIA to MIA Activity
  - Period 3.1: Late Iron Age (LIA) to Early Roman Activity (1st to 2nd century AD)
  - Period 3.2: Subsequent LIA to Early Roman Activity (mid-1st to 2nd century AD)
  - Period 4: Early to Middle Saxon Activity (5th to 8th century AD)
  - Period 5.1: Late Saxon to Saxo-Norman or Earlier Activity (9th to 11th century AD)
  - Period 5.2: Subsequent Late Saxon to Saxo-Norman Activity (9th to 11th century AD)
  - Period 6: Medieval to Early Post-Medieval Activity (11th to 17th century)

- Period 7: Mid- to Late Post-Medieval Activity (17th to 19th century)
- Period 8: Pre-modern Activity (Prehistoric to Post-Medieval)
- Period 9: Late Post-Medieval to Modern Activity (19th to 21st-century)

6.2 Area 1 transpired to be archaeologically sterile and will not be reported upon further herein. The remaining areas produced archaeological evidence, including the trial trench area (Area 11), however the latter did not produce sufficient evidence to warrant further investigation.

### **Period 1: Natural**

#### *Areas 2 to 12*

#### *Superficial deposits of alluvial silts and clays:*

*Group 1: (2002) / (3002) / (4002) / (5002) / (6002) / (7002) / (9003) / (10003) / (11003) / (12003)*

- 6.3 A thin layer of mid yellowish brown silty clay overlying heavily fragmented limestone was identified at the base of the archaeological sequence across the bulk of the excavation area, termed Group 1 herein. It is presumed to represent the upper reaches of the natural geology. The top of the natural was observed at a maximum height of 60.95m OD in the northern end of Area 10, close to the eastern edge of the site. It sloped gently downwards towards the north, east and south-west to a height of 54.03m OD in Area 4, 54.77m OD in Area 3 and 52.65m OD in Area 12. From there the topography sloped downwards in a steeper fashion to a minimum level of 49.86m OD in Area 8 to the west and 49.86m OD in Area 2 to the north, thus forming a north-east-south-west orientated ridge.
- 6.4 The presentation of the deposit in terms of its topography approximated that of the extant landscape. This demonstrates that, with the probable exception of plough damage and plough soil formation in the relatively recent past, the site has neither suffered significant horizontal truncation (for example terracing) nor been subject to any significant ground raising activity by natural or anthropic means. As such, the ground conditions on site would appear to have remained relatively stable since the upper reaches of Group 1 amassed during the Quaternary period.
- 6.5 The lack of any identifiable alluvium of Holocene date above this geological unit supports the notion that the site sat on a relatively elevated platform close to but beyond the edge of the floodplain of the East Stour and its tributaries. This relatively dry area would therefore have been suitable for a range of activities throughout the Holocene period, including settlement and farming, while simultaneously being situated close to the rich resources of the marsh. An additional boon to the desirability of the site for settlement may have been provided by the transport options that were perhaps afforded by nearby rivers, were they navigable in antiquity (in particular the Old Mill Stream, c. 90m to the north, a tributary of the East Stour).

### **Period 2.1: Prehistoric / Late Bronze Age (LBA) to Middle Iron Age (MIA)**

- 6.6 Collections of Late Bronze Age (LBA) to Middle Iron Age (MIA) features were identified in four distinct areas during the strip, map and sample exercises, namely Areas 2, 7, 9 and 10 (Figure 2), as were a number of pits from which flints of a more general prehistoric date were recovered. These are discussed in the paragraphs that follow by excavation area followed by feature type and context group.

## Area 2

### A collection of pits and / or natural features

*Group 168: [2016], (2015), [2022], (2021), [2026], (2025); [2028], (2027); Figure 3*

- 6.7 Five possible prehistoric sub-circular to ovoid features were unearthed in Area 2 about which little can be gleaned. These features, collated here as Group 168, ranged in size and shape from the smallest, which were no more than 0.36m in diameter and 0.07m in depth, through to the largest, which were up to 3.80m in length, 1.40m in width and up to 0.44m deep. The fills of the features were visually similar, closely resembling redeposited natural. A small quantity of prehistoric worked flint was retrieved from them, which suggests that they may have been infilled during the prehistoric period, perhaps through natural silting rather than deliberate dumping given the fine-grained nature of their fills and the spartan nature of the artefact assemblages retrieved from them. It is possible that some of the smaller features represent natural undulations, perhaps caused by burrowing or rooting activity for example, while the larger features, namely [2028] (Figure 6, Section 163.5) and [2026], could represent deliberately dug pits of uncertain function or larger natural features, such as tree boles.

### A large, shallow pit

*Group 169: [2020], (2019); Figure 3; Figure 6, Section 164.1*

- 6.8 A large sub-rectangular to sub-ovoid pit was unearthed in the north-east corner of Area 2. This large, shallow pit possessed rounded corners and was 3.80m long, 1.40m wide and up to 0.28m deep. It possessed a sharp break of slope at the top and bottom and a largely flat base, which together suggests that it represents a man-made feature rather than a natural undulation. The feature was infilled with a single fine-grained fill from which eight worked flints were recovered, all of which showed traces of surface re-cortication. The assemblage included a flake fragment, blade fragments, spalls and one thinning flake fragment. These artefacts could have amassed within this feature when it was in use were it to represent a working hollow in which flint knapping took place. Alternatively, these scant remains could have been dumped into the pit after it fell out of use, or washed in through natural processes.
- 6.9 The function of this shallow pit remains uncertain, one possibility being that it represents a possible working hollow of prehistoric origin. Given the scant nature of the evidence, this interpretation remains speculative, however.

## Area 7

### A large shallow pit

*Group 63: [7055] / [7067]; (7054) / (7066); [7069], (7068); [7071], (7070); Figure 18*

- 6.10 A large, sub-rectangular sunken feature with diffuse, somewhat ragged edges was observed in the southern third of Area 7. The pit was 8.70m long and up to 7.30m wide with a depth of 0.24m. Two adjacent circular features, [7071] and [7069], appeared to have been dug into the base of the pit. They were poorly preserved, being no more than 0.14m deep, and were up to 0.37m in diameter. They were approximately central to the southern end of the pit and it is not unreasonable to suppose that they represent postholes. If so, similar postholes may have been



present in the northern part of the feature, beyond the excavated sample. If this interpretation is correct then it is possible that the posts upheld some sort of canopy. One posthole may perhaps have replaced the other, thus suggesting possible evidence of a repair. If so, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Group 63 could together represent a working hollow or storage area that was given some protection from the elements by a canopy that was repaired on at least one occasion.

- 6.11 After the feature fell out of use, a single fill amassed within it. A small quantity of prehistoric worked flint, including five spalls and one flake fragment, was recovered from this deposit, as were 10 fragments of pottery, currently dated to the LBA. A single, carbonised cereal caryopsis was also present, as were five fragments of animal bone and a tooth (not identifiable to genus level). It is possible that the diffuse edges of this feature developed while the pit was open, perhaps due to slumping as a result of weathering. Consequently, it seems more probable that some or all of this material accumulated gradually after the pit fell out of use as a result of the deliberate dumping of a component of domestic waste, as well as natural in-washing and edge collapse.

#### *A rectangular post-built structure*

*Group 65: construction: [7065], (7064); [7061], (7041); [7039], (7038); [7060], (7059); Figure 18*

- 6.12 Four postholes were identified to the immediate east of the possible working hollow. Their spacing and similar morphologies suggest that they were associated with one another, and as such they are discussed together here as Group 65. The probable postholes were between 0.12m and 0.34m in diameter and were up to 0.25m deep. Postholes [7065], [7060] and [7061] were aligned north-west–south-east, while posthole [7039] was set at a right-angle to that row of features, in line with [7065]. Each contained a single fill from which 29 sherds of pottery, variously pertaining to the earlier IA and the EIA to EIA / MIA transition, were collectively recovered. Six fragments of daub of prehistoric to medieval date and a small quantity of prehistoric worked flint was also present. It is possible that the pottery was packed around the structural uprights that these postholes presumably once contained in order to support them. Two burnt cereal caryopses were also collectively recovered from this group of features, which probably represent accidental inclusions.
- 6.13 If the location of a possible associated robber cut ([7063], discussed subsequently) is taken into consideration, then the minimum dimensions of the post-built structure that these features appear to have formed was 4.75m north-west–south-east by 3.48m north-east–south-west. The dating evidence suggests that the feature was built during the EIA / MIA transition period, however its function remains uncertain. Plausible interpretations include a small animal pen or two adjoining fence lines. A rectangular building also cannot be entirely ruled out, however domestic structures pertaining to this period throughout Britain were more usually circular (Cunliffe 1991, 242–6). That said, non-domestic rectangular buildings, in particular four and six-post structures, did exist in south-east England and are often interpreted as granaries (*ibid.*, 246). This group of four postholes could therefore represent the only surviving elements of a rectangular structure of this nature. That said, few cereal remains were found in association with this feature, although this could be a product of post-depositional decay.

Group 66: disuse and robbing: [7063], (7062), (7042); [7053], (7052); Figure 18

- 6.14 Postholes [7060], [7061] and [7065] were horizontally truncated by a larger pit, [7063]. A second large pit [7053] was also situated 0.92m to the south-east, which appeared to be aligned with the main run of postholes discussed above (namely [7065], [7060] and [7061]). The two pits in this group were between 1.40m and 2.50m long and between 1.32m and 2.20m wide, with depths that ranged between 0.29m and 0.36m. It is possible that they were dug to remove timbers associated with the rectangular structure formed by Group 65 either in full or in part after it fell out of use.
- 6.15 Pit [7063] was then infilled with two deposits of clayey silt, while pit [7053] was infilled with a single deposit of similar material, from which a somewhat contradictory array of dating evidence was recovered. The primary and secondary fills of [7063] together yielded eight fragments of earlier IA pottery and 16 fragments of a more diagnostic fabric pertaining to the EIA to EIA / MIA transition as well as a small quantity of prehistoric worked flint. In addition to this, 28 fragments of CBM were also present pertaining to the period 1450–1700. These fragments are presumed to represent contamination from a stratigraphically later pit that truncated this feature (see Group 188, Period 6, below). In addition to a large assemblage of late medieval to early post-medieval CBM, a large quantity of earlier dating evidence was recovered from that stratigraphically later pit. This included 412 sherds of EIA to MIA pottery and prehistoric worked flint that included seven flakes, three blades, nine spalls, one core and a spherical hammerstone. A copper alloy bronze pin was also present. It is probable that this material more probably derives from [7063], having been incorporated in the later feature as the result of an excavation error. The amount of pottery is interesting and could represent a structured deposit, although further research would be required to demonstrate this. For an involved discussion of Iron Age structured deposition and rubbish disposal in pits see Hill 1996 (*passim*).
- 6.16 Pit [7053] was securely dated to this period through the discovery of 166 fragments of pottery dating to the EIA to EIA / MIA transition. Also present was a small quantity of worked flint, 7.3g of charcoal derived from *Alnus glutinosa* L. (alder), *Maloideae/sorbus* sp. (apple, pear, hawthorn or rowan), *Prunus* sp. (cherry) and *Quercus* sp. (oak), three carbonized fragments of *Corylus avellana* L. (hazelnut), and 16 carbonized cereal caryopses, including *Avena* sp. (oat), *Hordeum* (sp.), and *Hordeum vulgare* L. (six-row hulled barley). The presence of such a large amount of pottery accompanied by burnt debris in the fill of this feature is interesting and further research designed to establish whether this represents generic rubbish disposal or structured deposition would again be worthwhile (see Hill 1996 *passim*).
- 6.17 In summary, these two large pits may represent robbing activity that took place after the rectangular post-built structure under discussion here fell out of use. The dating evidence suggests that this occurred at a later point during the EIA / MIA transition period. The robber cuts were then deliberately infilled with a large assemblage of pottery and burnt material that either represents domestic waste or an example of ‘structured deposition’ involving a large quantity of pottery. One possibility is that the pottery and burnt material represent a ‘closing deposit’ to mark the end of this building’s existence, however further research would be required to better explore this possibility.

### A four-post structure

*Group 67: [7051], (7050); [7049], (7048); [7045], (7044); [7047], (7046); Figure 18*

- 6.18 A group of four postholes were uncovered in the southern end of Area 7. These circular features were between 0.23m and 0.36m in diameter, with depths that ranged between 0.12m and 0.14m. Together, they appeared to form a four post structure with a sub-square footprint that was 3.05m north-east–south-west by 2.54m north-west–south-east. The postholes were each infilled with a single deposit that together yielded one sherd of earlier IA pottery and a small quantity of prehistoric worked flint. This could be taken to suggest that this feature represents an earlier Iron Age four post structure, perhaps a granary. Again, however, no environmental evidence was retrieved that could more conclusively demonstrate this formative interpretation.

### A deposit of cremated bone

*Group 185: [7037], (7036); Figure 17*

- 6.19 A small circular pit was unearthed in the centre of Area 7, close to the eastern limit of the excavation. The feature was 0.38m in diameter and just 0.05m deep. It was infilled with a single deposit of burnt material that yielded two sherds of EIA pottery and 35.49g of highly fragmented burnt bone that included at least two tooth fragments, one of which was unburnt and belonged to an animal that has not as yet been identified to genus or species level. Further work is required to determine whether any bone within the sample is of human origin. It has been phased within Period 2 herein due to the presence of the two sherds of EIA pottery.
- 6.20 A caveat regarding the possible date of this cremation is necessary. The pit's location within the footprint of a later post-built structure, which could perhaps represent the poorly preserved remains of a Late Saxon long hall, is noteworthy (see Period 5.1, below). The construction and demolition of Anglo-Saxon buildings of most types was sometimes accompanied by structured deposition, as exemplified by the discovery of deliberately placed (structured) deposits of animal bone (particularly skulls and long bones of animals) within the foundations of high-status buildings and sunken featured buildings (as at Yeavinger, Cowdery's Down and Brandon, to name but a few of many examples). What is more, cremated animal and human bone was indeed used as a closing deposit within a Mid-Saxon sunken featured building (SFB) at Friars Oak in West Sussex (Hamerow 2012, 111), thus demonstrating that such material was deemed suitable for this purpose. Were the two sherds of prehistoric pottery recovered from this pit either residual or misidentified (due to frequent commonalities in form and fabric between certain forms of Saxon and Iron Age pottery), then this alternative interpretation could hold true. Further work, perhaps in the form of radiocarbon dating, is therefore recommended in order to determine whether this feature genuinely represents an EIA cremation or a later Saxon feature.



## Area 9

### A collection of pits or postholes

*Group 53: [9044], (9043); [9046], (9045); [9048], (9047); [9050], (9049); [9052], (9051); [9054], (9053); [9056], (9055); [9058], (9057); [9060], (9059); [9062], (9061); [9064], (9063); [9066], (9065); [9068], (9067); Figure 28; Figure 29, Section 153.3, 153.5, 153.7, 153.9, 153.11*

- 6.21 Thirteen circular to ovoid pits or postholes were discovered in the south-western end of Area 9, termed Group 53 herein. The features varied in size, being between 0.15m and 0.95m in diameter with depths that ranged from 0.11m to 0.38m. The pits or postholes appeared to form at least three approximate rows that trended north–south and three rows that trended east–west that together covered an area that was at least 5.95m north–south by at least 5.57m east–west.
- 6.22 A total of 178 sherds of Iron Age pottery was collectively recovered from this group that included 149 sherds of EIA to EIA / MIA date and a lesser quantity of possible MIA to LIA date (28 sherds from two discrete features, [9052] and [9062]). Taken together, the overlapping date ranges obtained from this group of features could be taken either to suggest that they were created gradually from the EIA into the MIA period, with [9052] and [9062] representing the latest additions to the group. Equally, however, the evidence could instead indicate that the pits were all dug at the same time or at a similar time, most probably during the earlier part of the MIA (the only date range within which all of the dating evidence collectively falls). The latter interpretation is favoured here because the features appeared to be roughly aligned with one another, thus suggesting that the approximate whereabouts of the earlier pits or postholes were known to those responsible for creating the later ones.
- 6.23 In addition to pottery, eight carbonized cereal caryopses were collectively recovered from four pits within this group ([9046], [9052], [9050] and [9064]). Remains that could be identified to either species or genus level included *Hordeum* sp. (barley), *Hordeum vulgare* L. (six-row hulled barley), *Hordeum var nudum* L. (naked barley) and *Triticum aestivum* L. (bread / club wheat). One small fragment of animal bone was also recovered from [9071]. The small quantities of ecofacts retrieved from these features is more suggestive of accidental rather than deliberate inclusion within their fills.
- 6.24 The purpose(s) of this collection of pits or postholes is not well understood at present. Their organised arrangement could be taken to suggest that they represent the remains of a post-built structure or adjoining post-built structures, for example a series of animal pens of earlier MIA date. Alternatively, the large assemblage of Iron Age pottery that was recovered from them could instead indicate that some or all of them were deliberately dug to receive the pottery as a form of structured deposition. Further work would be necessary to explore these alternative theories through inter-site analysis at the publication stage.

### A large shallow pit

*Group 54: [9072], (9070); Figure 28; Figure 29, Section 151.3*

- 6.25 A large sub-ovoid feature, Group 54, was excavated to the immediate north of the pits or postholes of Group 53. It has been grouped separately here on morphological grounds due to

the fact that it was substantially larger in size than the Group 53 features, being 1.77m long, 1.08m wide and 0.30m deep. Its purpose is uncertain, with potential functions including a working hollow or a rubbish pit.

- 6.26 The feature contained a single silty fill from which 25 sherds of earlier IA pottery were recovered, as were four pieces of prehistoric worked flint. Ecofacts present included a cattle bone and 15 carbonized cereal caryopses including *Avena sp.* (oat), *Hordeum sp.* (barley), *Hordeum vulgare* L. (six-row hulled barley), *Triticum aestivum* L. (bread / club wheat) and single burnt fragments the weed species *Fallopia convolvulus* L. (black bindweed) and *Galeopsis sp.* (hemp nettles). Taken together, this suggests that the feature was either dug as a rubbish pit or was alternatively reused as such, having been infilled with material that included a component of domestic waste.

#### Area 10

##### A putative roundhouse

Group 162: [10108], (10107); [10106], (10105); [10104], (10103); [10110], (10109), [10007], (10006); [10009], (10008); Figure 30

- 6.27 A group of six circular features were recognised towards the eastern side of the central portion of Area 10, which probably represent postholes. They were between 0.56m and 0.21m in diameter, surviving up to a maximum depth of 0.16m. The postholes formed an approximate circle in plan with a diameter of c. 5.73m and were fairly regularly spaced, generally being between 1.48m and 1.88m apart. Two larger gaps did exist that were up to c. 3.52m apart, however this is presumed to have been induced by the presence of a later ditch that may well have truncated two postholes that would otherwise have formed part of this group. Each contained a single fill that may represent a combination of the degraded remains of the posts that they once contained and the backfill that surrounded them. Ten small fragments of daub were recovered from these fills, which may represent accidental inclusions that were incorporated during construction.
- 6.28 The size of the circular structure that this group of features appeared to form is typical of an Iron Age roundhouse. Such structures commonly consisted of nothing more than circular collection of postholes of this nature (Cunliffe 1991, 242). The structure is not well dated, however, given the range of prehistoric dating evidence recovered from elsewhere on the site, it more probably pertains to the earlier part of the Iron Age period. This assertion is also supported by the fact that the roundhouse appears to pre-date a ditch that fell out of use during the EIA to MIA transition period (Group 70, discussed subsequently).

##### A large, shallow pit

Group 178: [10011], (10010); Figure 30

- 6.29 A large, circular feature with a diameter of 1.23m and a depth of 0.25m was observed in the central portion of Area 10 within the footprint of the putative roundhouse. It is not clear whether it was internal to the northern part of the roundhouse or whether it represents an unrelated feature that pertains to an earlier or later phase of prehistoric activity on the site. Either option

is possible, as pits internal to roundhouses, often interpreted as storage pits, have been noted elsewhere in southern and south-central Britain (Cunliffe 1991, 246).

- 6.30 After the pit fell out of use it was infilled with a single silty deposit that resembled redeposited natural, from which no finds were retrieved. It was, however, truncated by an EIA to MIA enclosure ditch pertaining to Period 2.2, which it must pre-date.

### **Period 2.2: Subsequent Early Iron Age (EIA) to MIA Activity**

- 6.31 After the aforementioned roundhouse and pit fell out of use, a later phase of archaeologically recognizable activity occurred during the later EIA or early MIA (Period 2.2). This activity changed the nature of land use in Area 10.

#### **Area 10**

##### A boundary ditch

*Group 70: [10101] / [10095] / [10154] / [10210] / [10098], (10153), (10209), (10100), (10094), (10097), (10099), (10093), (10096); Figure 30; Figure 40, Section 231.1*

- 6.32 The western portion of a probable rectangular enclosure formed by a single continuous ditch was uncovered in the central portion of Area 10 (Plate 3). Five slots were excavated through the feature, which have been grouped together here as Group 70. The slots demonstrated that the ditch was between 1.28m and 1m wide, surviving to a depth of up to 0.57m. The dimensions of the visible portion of the enclosure were 31.7m north-east–south-west by over 7.08m north-west–south-east, continuing beyond the limit of the excavation to the east. Settlement patterns elsewhere in south-east England suggest that this landscape feature more probably enclosed one or more roundhouses, situated further east beyond the limit of excavation within Area 10 (Cunliffe 1991, 213–246). This interpretation is further supported by the probable presence of earlier IA settlement in this approximate area, as demonstrated by the aforementioned roundhouse. Alternative functions are possible, however, such as a field boundary associated with a stock enclosure (*ibid.*).
- 6.33 After the enclosure fell out of use, the five excavated ditch slots were infilled with between one and two fills. Slots [10154] and [10210] were infilled in their entirety with single deposits (10153) and (10209), while the remaining slots were infilled with silt rich primary fills (10094) / (10097) / (10100), which were between 0.23m and 0.26m thick, and clayey silt secondary fills (10093) / (10096) / (10099). Together, these deposits yielded a pottery assemblage of 43 sherds that variously dated either to the earlier IA or the EIA to MIA transition period. Taken together, this suggests that this boundary ditch represents an earlier IA feature that more probably fell out of use during the EIA to MIA transition.



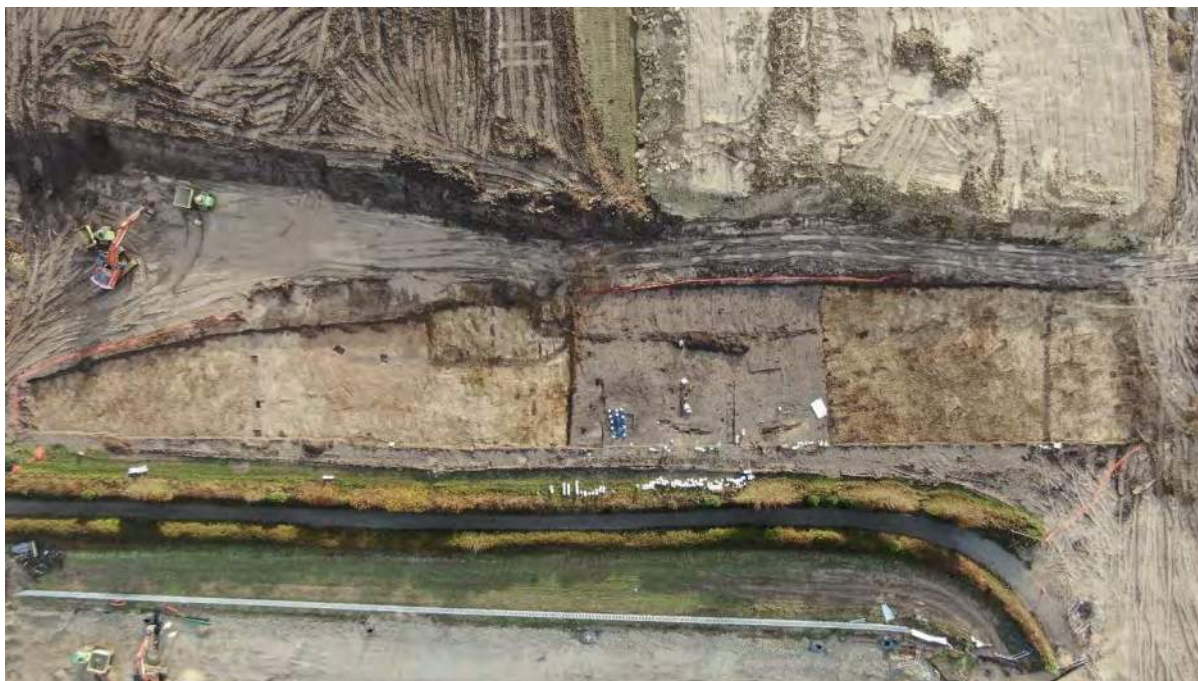


Plate 3: Overview of Area 10. Photograph faces south-east. The rectangular enclosure (Group 70) can be seen in the left side of the image, continuing beyond the limit of excavation to the south-east.

### Period 2.3: Latest EIA to MIA Activity

- 6.34 After the rectangular enclosure had fallen out of use, a third archaeologically identifiable episode of land use occurred within the confines of Area 10 during the EIA to MIA period (Period 2.3).

#### Area 10

#### A large pit or tree bole

Group 179: [10005], (10004); Figure 30

- 6.35 A large ovoid feature, [10005], truncated the backfill of the north-west corner of the rectangular enclosure. It was 1.45m long, 1m wide and up to 0.36m deep and contained a single fill from which 17 sherds of earlier IA pottery were recovered. The feature was interpreted on site as a tree bole, however its relatively straight sides and gently concave base does not preclude a man-made origin, while the presence of 17 sherds of pottery suggests that a component of domestic waste may have been dumped within the feature in order to close it. The purpose of the pit remains uncertain.

### Period 3.1: Late Iron Age (LIA) to Early Roman Activity (1st to 2nd Century AD)

- 6.36 Collections of LIA to Early Roman features were identified in seven areas during the strip, map and sample exercises, namely Areas 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12. These are discussed in the paragraphs that follow by excavation area followed by feature type and context group.

## Area 2

### A north–south trackway or droveway

*Group 6: [2010] / [2012] / [2014], (2009) / (2011) / (2013) and Group 7: [2004] / [2006] / [2008] / [2018]; (2003) / (2005) / (2007) / (2017); Figure 3; Figure 6, Section 163.1, 164.1*

- 6.37 Two parallel ditches orientated north–south were uncovered in the eastern part of Area 2, collated here as Group 6 (the western ditch) and Group 7 (the eastern ditch). The ditches were similarly sized, the western example being up to 0.56m wide and up to 0.23m deep, the eastern example being up to 0.69m wide and up to 0.28m deep. The ditches bounded an area that was 4.42m wide and in excess of 24.6m in length, continuing beyond the northern and southern limits of Area 2. These linear features may therefore represent roadside ditches that flanked a droveway or trackway.
- 6.38 Three and four slots were excavated through Group 6 and 7 respectively (seven in total), which together demonstrated that both the eastern and western ditches were infilled with a single silty deposit along their entire lengths. The fills of the eastern ditch (Group 7) produced 27 sherds of pottery pertaining to the period AD 10–70 and a small quantity of prehistoric worked flint, thus suggesting that this droveway or trackway more probably represents a LIA to early Roman feature that fell out of use and was probably infilled during the 1st century AD, most probably prior to AD 70. The fills of the western ditch (Group 6) produced two fragments of CBM pertaining to the period 1450–1700, which may be residual in this context, and a small quantity of prehistoric worked flint.

## Area 3

### Two large, shallow pits

*Group 8: [3012], (3011); Figure 4; Figure 6, Section 17.1*

- 6.39 A large sub-rectangular pit, [3012], was identified in the north-west corner of Area 3, the long axis of which was orientated north–south (Plate 4; Plate 5). The feature was 3.75m long, just over 3.1m wide (it is presumed to continue fractionally beyond the western limit of Area 3) and up to 0.95m deep. The pit possessed steep sides with a sharp break of slope at the top and bottom and a flat base, which suggests that it represents a man-made feature. The purpose of the pit is uncertain. Possible functions include but are not limited to a large storage pit, some sort of working hollow or even the poorly preserved remnants of a building with a sunken floor.
- 6.40 The feature was infilled with a single fine grained silty deposit from which 11 pottery sherds pertaining to the period 50 BC to AD 70 were retrieved along with some prehistoric worked flints. This suggests that this feature fell out of use and was infilled during the LIA to Early Roman period at some point after 50 BC, perhaps before AD 70.



*Plate 4: Large pit [3012] (Group 8). Photograph faces south-west. Scales 1m.*



*Plate 5: Large pit [3012] (Group 8) after full excavation. Photograph looks west. Scales 2m and 1m.*

*Group 9: [3014], (3013); Figure 4; Figure 6, Sections 1.3 and 3.3*

- 6.41 A second, morphologically similar sub-rectangular pit, [3014], was identified in the approximate centre of Area 3 that was 4.76m long, 3.55m wide and up to 0.87m deep (Plate 6; Plate 7). Like pit [3012] (Group 8, discussed above), its long axis was also approximately aligned north–south. Given its similarity to pit [3012], it is reasonable to suspect that it fulfilled a similar function.
- 6.42 The pit was infilled with a single silty deposit from which 27 sherds of LIA to Early Roman pottery pertaining to the period AD 10–70 were recovered. This suggests that [3014] fell out of use at a similar time to [3012] most probably at some point during the first century post-AD 10 and perhaps prior to AD 70.





*Plate 6: Large pit [3014] (Group 9). Photograph faces east. Scales 2m and 1m*



*Plate 7: Area 3 under excavation, including pits [3014], [3012] and [3018]. Photograph looks north-north-east*

## **Area 6**

### **A large shallow pit**

*Construction Group 10: [6084]; [6113], (6112), [6111], (6110); Figure 8; Figure 6: Section 26.4*

- 6.43 Another large shallow pit pertaining to this phase of activity was uncovered in Area 6, [6084] (Group 10). This feature was also broadly sub-rectangular; however, in this case the edges were highly irregular, perhaps due to edge collapse and weathering. The maximum dimensions of the pit were 7.36m north-west–south-east by 6.47m north-east–south-west and the single slot that was excavated through it suggested that it was up to 0.23m deep. Again the purpose of this feature is uncertain, however it may have fulfilled a similar function to [3012] (Group 8) and [3014] (Group 9) in Area 3 (discussed above).

*Disuse Group 11: (6083); Figure 6: Section 26.4*

- 6.44 The pit was infilled with a single deposit, (6083) (Group 11), from which 56 sherds of pottery pertaining to the period AD 50–100 were recovered. This suggests that it may have fallen out of use and been infilled during the Early Roman period, most probably during the latter half of the 1st century. Although the presence of the large pottery assemblage suggests that a component of domestic waste or even a structured deposit infilled this feature at least in part, the diffuse nature of the edges does suggest that erosion may have taken place prior to or during infilling. This in turn indicates that the pit was either left open for a period of time before it was infilled, or that it was infilled gradually.

*A large shallow pit*

*Group 12: [6102], (6101); Figure 9*

- 6.45 A fourth large, sub-rectangular pit, again with highly irregular edges, was uncovered close to the south-western limit of excavation within Area 6, [6102] (Group 12; Plate 8). The feature was fractionally smaller than [6084] (Group 10) to the north, being up to 5.2m long and up to 3.53m wide, surviving to a depth of just 0.04m. As before, the purpose of the feature is uncertain, however it may have fulfilled a similar function to the other large, shallow pits under discussion here. The irregular edges could again be a result of erosion through weathering, were the pit left open for a period of time in antiquity, but in this case this morphology could alternatively be a product of severe post-depositional truncation, for example via modern ploughing. This could have left only the deepest portions of the base of the feature behind, thus distorting the overall footprint.
- 6.46 The feature was infilled with a single silty deposit that was archaeologically sterile. It is nevertheless discussed here due to its similarity to the other large shallow pits that were uncovered in Areas 3 and 6, all of which appear to represent LIA to Early Roman features.



*Plate 8: Pit [6102] (Group 12). Photograph looks south. Scale 4m.*

*A north-west–south-east road: overview*

- 6.47 Evidence for a probable north-west–south-east thoroughfare running through the southern side of Area 6 was uncovered (Plates 9 and 10). As set out in the paragraphs that follow, the



evidence included post pits associated with fences that may have flanked the road, a series of later roadside ditches positioned either side of the thoroughfare and remnants the road surface itself. The road continued beyond the limits of Area 6 to the west and east, continuing through and beyond Area 9 to the east (discussed subsequently). In summary, the evidence presented in the paragraphs that follow together suggest that the thoroughfare may initially have been flanked by a fence line that was later replaced by an evolving sequence of roadside ditches.



*Plate 9: Overview of the road. Photograph looks west across Area 6.*



*Plate 10: Overview of the road. Photograph looks north across Area 6.*



*A fence line flanking the southern side of the road*

*Group 174: [6029], (6027), (6028); [6046], (6045); [6069], (6068); Figure 9; Figure 10; Figure 12, Section 30.2*

- 6.48 Three similarly sized pits were observed running along the northern side of the road. Given the fact that these features appeared to flank the southern side of an area that later came to be bounded by probable roadside ditches, they have been interpreted here as the poorly preserved remnants of a fence line that perhaps originally defined this trackway. If so, more pits presumably existed that have subsequently been lost to truncation, either through the creation of later ditches in antiquity, modern ploughing or a combination of the two. This is supported by the shallow depth of two of these features, [6046] and [6029], which were 0.07m and 0.26m deep respectively. Pit [6069] was somewhat better preserved, being 0.45m deep, however it too would presumably originally have been deeper than this. In contrast to their shallow depths, the pits were considerably sized in plan, being between 1.20m and 2.10m in diameter, thus suggesting that they were more probably dug to remove the fence posts after they fell out of use rather than as construction cuts for the posts themselves.
- 6.49 The pits were infilled with between one and two silty fills that cumulatively yielded nine sherds of LIA to Roman pottery that included seven more diagnostic sherds pertaining to the period 50 BC–AD 70. Taken together, this evidence suggests that this putative fence line fell out of use and was robbed during the LIA or Early Roman period.

*A possible fence line flanking the northern side of the road*

*Group 175: [6065], (6064); [6075], (6073), (6074); [6077], (6076); Figure 9; Figure 10; Figure 12, Sections 25.1, 32.1 and 34.3*

- 6.50 Two large sub-ovoid pits were present on the opposing side of the road, [6065] and [6075], which were up to 0.80m in diameter with depths of 0.17m and 0.20m respectively. A small circular feature, [6077], was noted in the base of [6075], which possessed a diameter of 0.31m and a depth of 0.23m. The clay-rich fill, (6076), could therefore perhaps represent the highly degraded remains of a post that was driven into the base of [6075] while it was still open. As such, these features have been interpreted here as post pits.
- 6.51 The pits were then presumably infilled with between one and two deposits of silty material that perhaps secured the posts in place. No artefacts or ecofacts were recovered from the fill of [6075] nor [6077], while [6065] produced four fragments of CBM dating to the period 1450–1700. This could be taken to suggest that these post pits are post-medieval in date, however their position at the base of the stratigraphic sequence, below an LIA to Early Roman roadside ditch (see Group 32, below), strongly suggests that these artefacts are intrusive in this context.
- 6.52 Taken together, the evidence suggests that these two shallow pits represent the poorly preserved remnants of an early fence line that flanked the northern side of the road. They may have acted as a counterpart to the southern fence represented by possible robber cuts [6029], [6046] and [6069] (Group 174, above). If so, it can be concluded that the first archaeologically recognizable incarnation of this road was approximately 3.4m in width.

*Earliest roadside ditches flanking the southern side of the road*

*Group 21: [6012]; [6014] / [6019] / [6044] / [6048] / [6087] / [6122] / [6038] / [6042] / [6032] / [6033] / [6067]; (6011) / (6013) / (6018) / (6043) / (6047) / (6086) / (6121) / (6037) / (6041) / (6030) / (6031) / (6066), Figure 9; Figure 10; Figure 12, Sections 19.4, 24.1, 30.2, 39.1; Group 22: [6141] / [6191]; (6140) / (6190); Figure 10; Figure 14, Section 154.1*

- 6.53 Within the confines of Area 9, the earliest archaeologically recognizable ditches that flanked the southern side of this probable road took the form of two linear features that are no doubt related: [6012] to the north-west and [6014] / [6044] / [6019] / [6087] / [6033] / [6122] / [6048] / [6038] / [6042] / [6067] to the south-east, collated here as Group 21. One slot was dug through the former, which demonstrated that it was 0.48m wide, surviving to a depth of just 0.08m, while the ten slots that were dug through the latter demonstrated that it possessed variable dimensions that more probably represent differential levels of survival rather than being indicative of the feature's original morphology. Towards the west, the ditch was just 0.35m wide and 0.09m deep, becoming gradually better preserved towards the east where it survived to a maximum width of 1.40m and a maximum depth of 0.45m.
- 6.54 The most easterly ditch fragment in this group truncated features associated with the robbing of a possible fence line (see Group 175, above), thus demonstrating that the robbing activity occurred before the ditch was constructed. It is possible that these two events were related, the posts having been removed to make way for the ditch.
- 6.55 Towards the western corner of Area 6 the south-eastern and north-western 'termini' of these two ditches either defined a 2.31m wide opening that permitted access and egress from the road to the area to the south, or else they originally formed one continuous feature, part of which was subsequently lost to post-depositional horizontal truncation (modern ploughing) in that location. As set out above, the poor preservation of the ditches in this area of the site strongly supports the latter interpretation.
- 6.56 The south-western end of the ditch was obscured by a gravel spread associated with a later incarnation of the road that was not removed during the strip, map and sample exercise. It seems likely, however that a 0.98m wide, 0.20m deep ditch [6141] / [6191] (Group 22) uncovered after the partial removal of the spread further towards the east represents a continuation of Group 21 beyond the gravel surface to the south-east. As such, it can be concluded that this ditch probably originally ran continuously for a distance in excess of 117.8m in antiquity.
- 6.57 After this probable roadside ditch fell out of use, it was infilled with a single fill along its entire length. These fills of Group 21 cumulatively yielded two sherds of pottery, perhaps of a general Iron Age date, while the fills of Group 22 yielded one sherd of Early Roman pottery pertaining to the period AD 50–100 and a Roman bow brooch, RF1 from slot [6141], which appeared to have been broken through being twisted. This slot also yielded the pin from a bow brooch, which could pertain to the LIA, Roman or early medieval periods.
- 6.58 The infilling of the ditch is therefore not well dated. However, in combination with dating evidence retrieved from the stratigraphically earlier robber cuts (see Group 175, above), it is suggested that this feature more probably fell out of use and was infilled during the Early Roman period, perhaps after AD 50 but before AD 70–100. That said, a fractionally earlier date of

infilling during the latter part of the LIA period cannot be entirely ruled out if the single sherd of Early Roman pottery is intrusive.

Second phase of southern roadside ditch construction (recutting of Group 21)

*Group 24: [6004] / [6006], (6003) / (6005); Figure 9; Figure 12, Sections 14.1 and 15.2*

- 6.59 After ditch slot [6012] (part of Group 21) had been infilled, the north-western end of the feature was recut as [6004] / [6006] (Group 24). This incarnation of the ditch was up to 1.12m wide and up to 0.25m deep. It survived for a length in excess of 7.51m, continuing beyond the western limit of Area 6. It may also have originally continued further towards the south-east, but if so it did not appear to survive in that location.
- 6.60 The ditch was subsequently infilled with a single silty fill that proved to be archaeologically sterile. Nevertheless, this infilling event is presumed to fall within this period due to the fact that the ditch almost certainly represents a later incarnation of [6012], which was more securely dated to this phase of activity on the site.

*Group 25: [6040], (6039); Figure 9; Figure 10; Figure 12, Section 24.1*

- 6.61 After ditch slot [6038] (also part of Group 21) was infilled, it was truncated by a long, narrow gully, [6040], which trended east–west but exhibited a gentle curve in plan. The feature was 4.24m long, 0.39m wide and 0.19m deep, appearing to lense out towards the east and west. Its purpose remains unclear, one possibility being that it represents the remnants of a wheel rut that formed after Group 21 fell out of use and was infilled. If so, the road must have remained in use for a period of time after the archaeologically visible southern roadside ditches discussed above were lost from the landscape.

Two or three phases of ditch construction along the northern side of the road

*Group 26: [6143] / [6182] / [6180], (6142) / (6181) / (6179); [6060] / [6097] / [6106] / [6108], (6059) / (6096) / (6105) / (6107); [6021] / [6072] / [6008]; (6020) / (6007); Figure 9; Figure 10 Figure 12, Sections 36.1 and 34.3; Group 38: (6151); Figure 13, Section 41.1*

- 6.62 Three shallow ditch fragments were identified, collated here as Group 26, which were aligned with one another. They are presumed to represent the poorly preserved remnants of what was once a single continuous ditch that flanked the northern side of the road under discussion here. Such an interpretation is made more plausible by the shallow depth of the surviving fragments of ditch that ranged between 0.08m and 0.36m. Additionally, the features gradually lensed out towards their edges, where they were presumably lost to post-depositional horizontal truncation induced by modern ploughing.
- 6.63 After this ditch fell out of use, each of the 10 excavated slots were infilled with a single silty deposit from which five sherds of pottery were retrieved, including one sherd of possible IA pottery and four sherds of pottery pertaining to the period 50 BC–AD 70. This suggests that the ditch was lost from the landscape at some point during the LIA to Roman transition, after 50 BC, perhaps prior to AD 70.
- 6.64 A gently mounded layer was recorded in section to the immediate north of the roadside ditch described above, (6151) (Group 38), which broadened from a feather edge along its northern



and southern flanks to a maximum thickness of 0.23m in the approximate center of the deposit. This layer of silty clay resembled redeposited natural and extended northwards for a distance of 2.10m from the northern edge of the ditch. It has therefore been interpreted here as the remnants of upcast from the digging of this roadside ditch. No artefacts were recovered from the layer, however it is presumed to be contemporary with the construction of Group 26 (see above).

*Group 29: [6058] / [6063] / [6082] / [6089], (6057) / (6062) / (6081) / (6088) / (6194); [6187], (6186); [6195] / [6187], (6194) / (6186); Figure 10; Figure 12, Sections 25.3, 27.1 and 34.1; Figure 14, Section 150.2, 154.1*

- 6.65 Three fragments of another probable ditch that once flanked the northern side of the thoroughfare were encountered towards the south-eastern end of the stretch of road under discussion here, collated here as Group 29. This feature again exhibited variable levels of preservation being between 0.55m and 0.70m wide and being between 0.06m and 0.50m deep, with each fragment gradually lensing out. Together, the fragments survived for a total length of 45.4m, continuing beyond the limit of excavation to the south-east. Again, this incarnation of the northern roadside ditch probably originally continued further towards the north-west but did not survive in that location.
- 6.66 When the ditch fell out of use it was infilled with a single deposit that collectively yielded a small quantity of residual prehistoric worked flint and four small fragments of CBM pertaining to the period 1450–1700, which are presumed to be residual in this context.
- 6.67 Due the location of this roadside ditch c. 1.38m to the south of a separate incarnation of this landscape feature (see Group 26, discussed above), it is unlikely that the two ditches were extant at the same time. Which of the two came first cannot, however, be determined from the available evidence due to a lack of dating evidence and relevant stratigraphic relationships. The feature did, however, truncate post pit [6065] (part of Group 175, see above), which suggests that the fence line of which [6065] is presumed to have formed a part had fallen out of use by the time that this ditch was dug.

*Group 32: [6050] / [6052], (6049) / (6051); [6035] / [6026] / [6056] / [6024] / [6017] / [6010], (6034) / (6025) / (6055) / (6009), (6016), (6023), (6022), (6015); Figure 9; Figure 10; Figure 12, Sections 18.3 and 27.3*

- 6.68 Further towards the north-west, another section of ditch was noted in the form of one longer fragment, [6035] / [6026] / [6056] / [6024] / [6017] / [6010], and another shorter fragment [6050] / [6052] that were almost certainly originally conjoined, collated here as Group 32 (Plate 11). These two adjacent ditch segments were together over 51.5m long, up to 0.90m wide and up to 0.43m deep, lensing out towards the south-east and continuing beyond the limit of the excavation to the north-west. It is also possible, though it cannot be definitively proven, that these features represent a continuation of Group 29 (discussed above).
- 6.69 After this probable roadside ditch fell out of use, it was infilled with between one and two deposits of silty clay from which eight sherds of pottery were collectively recovered. These fragments possessed mixed date ranges that included two possible residual sherds of LBA/EIA pottery, five sherds spanning the period 50 BC to AD 410 and one more diagnostic sherd that

was manufactured between AD 50–200. It therefore seems likely that this feature fell out of use and was infilled during the LIA to Roman transition period, perhaps after AD 50.



Plate 11: Ditch slot [6024] (Group 32). Photograph looks west. Scale 1m.

Stratigraphically later phases of ditch construction and road use along the northern side of the road

*Group 31: Construction: [6193] / [6119] / [6185]; [6126] / [6104] / [6145]; (6150); Figure 12, Section 36.1; Figure 13, Section 41.1; Figure 14, Section 154.1; Group 30: Disuse: (6192) / (6125) / (6103) / (6144) / (6118) / (6184); Figure 10*

- 6.70 Towards the south-eastern end of the exposed section of the road, a stratigraphically later incarnation of the northern roadside ditch was observed in the form of two associated ditch fragments, [6193] / [6119] / [6185] and [6126] / [6104]. They no doubt originally formed one continuous feature and are thus collated here as Group 31. The ditch was up to 1.6m wide and up to 0.40m deep. It survived for a length in excess of 29.8m, continuing beyond the limit of the excavation to the south-east and having been horizontally truncated, presumably by later ploughing, to the north-west.
- 6.71 The ditch partially truncated the fills of earlier roadside ditch fragments [6060] / [6097] / [6106] / [6108] and [6143] / [6182] / [6180] (both part of Group 26) and [6195] / [6187] (part of Group 29), which had evidently fallen out of use and been infilled before this later feature was dug. It not clear whether this feature pre-dates or post-dates Group 32, however.
- 6.72 A 1.6m wide deposit of silty clay, (6150), was recorded in section to the immediate north of the ditch, which proved to be up to 0.26m thick and 1.60m wide. It possessed a somewhat domed appearance, growing thicker towards the middle of its total width and lensing out towards the edges. This deposit may therefore represent upcast from the digging of the ditch.
- 6.73 After the ditch fell out of use it was infilled with a single silty fill (Group 30) from which six sherds of pottery pertaining to the period AD 10–100 were collectively retrieved. This suggests that this feature may have fallen out of use during the 1st century AD, probably after AD 10.

*Group 173: [6130], (6129); Figure 9*

- 6.74 A small elongated ovoid feature, [6130] (Group 173) appeared to truncate the fill of [6052] (Group 32). It survived for a length of 0.94m and was up to 0.40m wide with a depth of just 0.12m. The function of the feature is uncertain. It could possibly form the only archaeologically visible remnant of a later incarnation of roadside ditch [6052] (Group 32) or could alternatively represent the unrelated remains of a wheel rut associated with the use of the road that formed after [6052] had been infilled. The feature was contained a single silty deposit that proved to be archaeologically sterile.

*Stratigraphically latest phases of ditch construction and road use along the northern side of the road*

*Group 34: [6147], (6146); Figure 10; Figure 13, Section 41.1*

- 6.75 After roadside ditch [6145] (part of Group 31) was infilled, it was partially truncated by a narrow ovoid feature, [6147] (Group 34). This feature was over 1.04m long, up to 1.02m wide and up to 0.31m deep. It appears to represent the poorly preserved remnants of a later recut to [6145], the bulk of which either did not survive or was not recognisable archaeologically due to similarities between the fill of the recut and the infill of the earlier ditch.
- 6.76 The possible recut was infilled with a single deposit that proved to be archaeologically sterile.

*A metaled road surface*

*Group 35: (6189) / (6183); Figure 10*

- 6.77 A compact layer of pebbles was identified within the footprint of this roadway near the eastern limit of excavation in Area 6. The formed a sub-rectangular shape in plan that was over 13.3m long, continuing beyond the eastern limit of the excavation, up to 4.43m wide and 0.05m deep. It seems probable that this gravel spread represents the remnants of the road surface. It must, however, represent a later incarnation of the road as the spread sealed the infill of several roadside ditches, including [6147] (part of Group 34, one of the latest additions to the northern complex of roadside ditches).
- 6.78 One sherd of pottery was incorporated within the gravel spread, which was too small and undiagnostic to be assigned to a period.

*Group 36: [6149], (6148), (6188); Figure 10; Figure 13, Section 41.1; Figure 14, Section 154.1*

- 6.79 One of the latest modifications to the road resulted in the creation of a shallow 'cut', [6149], in the center of the south-western end of the feature. The 'cut' was 7.13m long as seen and 4.48m wide and could represent an area of erosion within the surface of the road, perhaps induced by traction along its surface. The hollow was infilled with a basal silty fill (6148), which yielded a hobnail, one iron nail (RF 1) of uncertain date, and an upper sandy silty fill, (6188) from which 58 sherds of pottery pertaining to the period AD 50–100 were recovered. It is therefore possible that this material subsequently amassed in the hollow through the dumping of domestic waste.

Two associated inhumations

*Group 27: [6100], Sk 6099, (6098), Figure 9; Figure 15; Group 28: [6093], Sk 6091, (6093), Figure 10; Figure 15*

- 6.80 Two sub-rectangular grave cuts were identified close to the center of Area 6. The features were orientated north-east–south-west and were 7.18m apart. The graves were approximately aligned with the extrapolated extent of the northern complex of roadside ditches discussed above, however the ditches themselves did not survive in proximity to the burials, thus making it hard to definitively ascertain whether these graves were dug into one of the roadside ditches when it was open, or whether they were situated immediately adjacent to the ditch.
- 6.81 The most north-westerly of the two, Group 27, consisted of grave cut [6100], which was 2.05m long and 0.70m deep, surviving to a depth of 0.20m. It contained the partial remains of a single mature adult male, Sk 6099, buried in a supine position unaccompanied by grave goods (Plate 12). In life this individual had dental calculus (mineralised plaque) and joint disease of the thoracic, lumbar and cervical vertebrae. Given the shallow nature of the grave, it seems likely that the missing skeletal elements, including the head, were lost to horizontal truncation in the form of modern ploughing. Three sherds of pottery pertaining to the period 50 BC–AD 410 were present in the backfill of the grave, which probably represent accidental inclusions. A 51mm long slender lead rod of uncertain age and function was also present.
- 6.82 The more south-easterly grave, Group 28, consisted of grave cut [6093], which was 2.05m long, up to 0.70m wide and 0.20m deep. It contained the remains of a second adult male, Sk 6091, that was again laid out in a supine position, this time with the left leg slightly bent (Plate 13). The burial may have been intentionally accompanied by a small, slender lead rod of uncertain function, retrieved from an environmental sample, although the rod could alternatively represent an accidental inclusion. In life, the individual had dental caries and calculus formation as well as joint disease of the left hand, right elbow and lumbar and thoracic vertebrae. The vertebrae of this individual also provided evidence of Schmorl's Nodes, which can be induced when the spine is put under pressure through excessive lifting or bending. A possible healed fracture or myositis ossifications was identified on the left fibula. The grave was infilled with a single deposit that yielded one small fragment of pottery pertaining to the period AD 1225–1325. This is presumed to be intrusive in this context.
- 6.83 The presence of LIA to Roman pottery in the backfill of grave [6100], coupled with the fact that both graves appeared to respect the orientation of the LIA to Early Roman road, suggests that they represent LIA to Early Roman inhumations. Their burial context also concords with this interpretation, as contemporary extra-cemetery burials within or in close proximity to ditches have been found elsewhere in south-east Britain and beyond, including at Ewell in Surrey, West Thurrock, Essex, and as far afield as Nash on the Gwent levels in Wales to name but a few of many examples (Haslam and Haslam, 2021; Andrews 2009, 13–14; Meddens and Beasley 2001). In accord with Cunliffe (1991, 505), it is therefore suggested that this represents a minority burial rite that was nevertheless reasonably common practice, particularly in southern Britain, during the LIA and Roman periods.





*Plate 12: Sk 6099 (Group 27). Photograph faces west. Scale 2m and 1m.*



*Plate 13: Sk 6093 (Group 28). Photograph looks east. Scale 0.5m.*

## **Area 7**

### **An animal burial**

*Group 177: [7057], (7056); Figure 17*

- 6.84 A sub-circular pit, [7057], was uncovered close to the western limit of excavation in the central section of Area 7 (Plate 14). It was 0.87m in diameter, surviving to a depth of 0.06m. The near complete carcass of a sheep / goat was found within the feature. In association were two fragments of pottery pertaining to the early Roman period (AD 50–100), hence its inclusion in

this phase, which probably represent accidental inclusions within the backfill. Due to the small quantity of finds recovered, the possibility that these pottery sherds are residual in this context cannot be entirely ruled out, however.

- 6.85 Regardless of the age of the feature, the presence of the sheep carcass could simply represent the disposal of the corpse of a diseased farm animal in a convenient context below ground. However, should the feature be Roman in date, an alternative interpretation also exists. The carcass could represent the continuation of a prehistoric belief system into the Roman period, in which valuable objects, human remains and near-complete animal carcasses were sometimes interred in pits. Hill (1996 *passim*) and Cunliffe (1991) provide a plethora of Iron Age examples of such practices, while Woodward and Woodward (2004) chart the continuation of this and other forms of structured deposition into the Roman period with an emphasis on urban contexts. Recent developer funded work suggests such practices continued into the Early Roman period on rural sites in south-central and south-eastern Britain that are more comparable with the site under investigation here. An example from Kent can be found at Stone Castle near Dartford, where a crouched inhumation and a Roman brooch were variously recovered from pits dating to the LIA to Roman transition period (Haslam 2004; Haslam forthcoming). That said, the isolated nature of this burial could preclude this. These alternative possibilities should be further investigated at the publication stage.



Plate 14: Animal burial [7057] (Group 177). Photograph looks west. Scale 0.5m

## Area 9

### Continuation of the road: northern roadside ditches

Group 200: [9036], (9035); Figure 28; Figure 29, Section 145.1

- 6.86 The north-west–south-east road that was identified in Area 6 continued eastwards into Area 9 and beyond, as evidenced by two sets of roadside ditches. The most northerly of these, [9036], was 0.70m wide and 0.40m deep, continuing beyond the edges of the excavation to the east and west. The location and orientation of the feature suggests that it could represent either a continuation of roadside ditch [6143] / [6182] / [6180] (part of Group 29) or later roadside ditch [6185] (part of Group 31) in Area 6 to the west.

- 6.87 After the feature fell out of use, it was infilled with two silty deposits that yielded no finds.

*Group 23: [9038], (9037); Figure 28; Figure 29, Section 145.1*

- 6.88 Another possible roadside ditch, [9038] (Group 23), was identified 3.18m to the south of ditch [9036]. It was 0.60m wide, over 1.14m long, continuing beyond the edges of the excavation to the east and west, and up to 0.20m deep. It is possible that ditch [9038] represents a different phase of activity to [9036] along the northern side of the road given that it approximately aligns with [6187] (Group 29, see above) in Area 6 to the west.
- 6.89 The ditch contained one silty fill from which 23 sherds of pottery dating to the period AD 50–100 were recovered. The presence of this larger assemblage of Roman pottery provides the strongest evidence that this road either represents an Early Roman rather than an LIA feature, or that it continued in use into the Early Roman period.

#### *Continuation of the southern roadside ditches*

*Group 51: [9040], (9039); Figure 28; Figure 29, Section 145.1*

- 6.90 A probable ditch flanking the southern side of the road was identified in the form of [9040]. This section of ditch was 1m wide and 0.30m deep, continuing beyond the edges of the excavation to the north and south. Its location and orientation suggests that it may represent a continuation of [6191] (Group 22), which itself represents a continuation of Group 21 (see above).

#### *A continuation of the road surface*

*Group 50: (9073) / (9042); Figure 29, Section 145.1*

- 6.91 Between ditches [9040] and [9038], an area of hard standing was identified in the form of (9073) / (9042) (Group 50), recorded in section. This was 0.05m thick and was formed by a compact layer of pebble and cobble sized flint that had been laid to form a flat surface. It almost certainly represents a continuation of road surface (6189) / (6183) (Group 35) in Area 6.
- 6.92 Once the evidence relating to the probable road that was identified in Areas 6 and 9 is collated, it can be stated that it was over 142.2m long. Archaeologically visible incarnations of the road span the period from the LIA to Roman transition through to the end of the 1st century AD. Initially, it may have been flanked by fence lines that perhaps delineated adjacent field boundaries rather than the road itself, while later incarnations of the feature were flanked by ditches. The nature of the earlier road surfaces remains unknown, however the latest archaeologically visible incarnation of the thoroughfare was capped by a compact surface of gravel. The earliest incarnation of the road, delineated by the fence lines, was 3.4m wide. After the posts were replaced by ditches, the road appears to have been enlarged to a maximum possible width of 8.17m, before again decreasing to a probable minimum width of 3.24m. With the exception of the initial width of 3.4m, it should be noted that subsequent dimensions given here represent the maximum and minimum possible widths rather than absolute dimensions. This is because the stratigraphic and dating evidence was insufficient to accurately determine which of the northern and southern ditches were simultaneously extant. That said, the stratigraphic evidence that is available generally suggests that, after expansion, the feature narrowed over time.

## Area 10

### Boundary ditches

*Group 69: [10088] / [10081], (10087) / (10080); Figure 30; Figure 40, Section 215.2*

- 6.93 A south-west–north-east ditch was identified towards the northern end of Area 10. The feature possessed a butt end towards the south-west and appeared to merge with or be truncated by a probable associated boundary (discussed subsequently) to the north-east. The feature was 4.26m long, up to 0.65m wide and survived to a depth that did not exceed 0.13m. It probably represents the poorly preserved remnants of a field boundary.
- 6.94 A single clay-rich fill had amassed in the base of the feature from which two small scraps of pottery were retrieved that were too fragmentary and undiagnostic to be assigned to an archaeological period; also present was a small amount of possible flake hammerscale (<0.1g). Although the ditch is therefore undated through artefactual evidence, its spatial association with a later feature (see Group 68, below) suggests that it may pertain to the LIA to Early Roman period. The presence of hammerscale could indicate industrial activity in the vicinity of the feature during this period.

*Group 68: [10091] / [10086] / [10083], (10090), (10085), (10082), (10089), (10084); Figure 30; Figure 40, Section 215.2*

- 6.95 A second ditch, [10091] / [10086] / [10083] (Group 68) ran at a right angle to [10088] / [10081] (Group 69). The ditch was over 14.3m long, extending beyond the limit of the excavation to the north-west and south-east. It was up to 0.90m wide and up to 0.62m deep. It most probably represents a boundary ditch, perhaps within farmland.
- 6.96 The feature was infilled with between one and two deposits of clayey silt from which 14 sherds of pottery were recovered, the latest of which (11 sherds) pertained to the period AD 50–410. This suggests that the ditch fell out of use and was infilled during the Roman period. Two modern nails were also present, which are presumed to be intrusive.

## Area 12

### A large rectangular enclosure

- 6.97 A repeatedly recut ditch delineated three sides of a large rectangular enclosure in Area 12. As demonstrated in the paragraphs that follow, the enclosure was recut on several occasions during the LIA to Early Roman period.
- 6.98 The earlier incarnations of the ditches that defined this enclosure presumably originally extended for a length of 26m from the southern corner of Area 12 in a north-westerly direction before turning at a right angle and continuing towards the north-east for a further distance of 53.2m. They then turned again at an approximate right-angle and continued in a south-easterly direction up to and beyond the eastern limit of the excavation. As shown on Figures 41 and 42, the enclosure therefore possessed internal dimensions of c.51.8m south-west–north-east by over 35.7m north-west–south-east. As set out below, not all of the earlier recuts were identifiable along the entire perimeter of the enclosure, presumably due to truncation by later incarnations of the feature



*Group 105: earliest archaeologically visible ditch: [12087], (12086); Figure 42; Figure 43, Section 173.2*

- 6.99 The earliest archaeologically visible enclosure ditch, [12087] (Group 105), survived towards the western side of the enclosure, being visible within one excavated slot only. It was infilled with a single deposit from which six sherds of LIA to Roman pottery were recovered, including five diagnostic sherds pertaining to the period AD 50–100. This suggests that the earliest archaeologically visible iteration of this landscape feature was infilled during the latter part of the 1st-century, post-AD 50.

*Group 106: recut 1: [12085], (12084); Figure 42; Figure 43, Section 173.2*

- 6.100 The western side of the enclosure was then recut as [12085]. This recut was 0.94m wide and 0.31m deep and had been infilled with a single deposit that did not yield any finds.

*Group 104: recut 2: [12090] / [12136] / [12185] / [12205] / [12211] / [12224] / [12280] / [12208], (12184) / (12204) / (12223) / (12248) / (12279), (12089), (12135), (12206), (12210), (12088), (12134), (12206) (12207), (12209); Figure 41; Figure 42; Figure 43, Sections 173.2, 173.4, 181.1 and 201.1a*

- 6.101 The entirety of the enclosure was then recut as ditch [1290] / [12136] / [12185] / [12205] / [12211] / [12224] / [12280] (Group 104), that was up to 1.60m wide and up to 1m deep. It was infilled with between one and two deposits of silty clay that together produced 20 sherds of 1st-century pottery, 12 of which post-dated AD 50. This suggests that this incarnation of the enclosure was infilled during the Early Roman period, prior to AD 100.

*Group 107: recut 3: [12254], (12253); Figure 41*

- 6.102 An episode of maintenance of the enclosure ditch can be recognised through the discovery of recut [12254], visible within one slot along the northern edge of the enclosure. The recut was 1.4m wide and up to 0.8m deep.

#### Enlargement of the enclosure

*Recut 4: Group 108: [12161] / [12252] / [12133] / [12278] / [12222], (12158), (12250), (12251), (12220), (12227), (12219), (12160), (12132), (12221), (12221), (12129), (12131), (12159), (12130); Figure 41; Figure 42; Figure 43, Section 181.1*

- 6.103 The western and northern portions of the enclosure were later recut as ditch [12161] / [12252] / [12133] / [12278] / [12222] (Group 108), that was up to 2.2m wide and up to 1.07m deep. The creation of this ditch significantly modified the shape of the enclosure since the eastern return was not recut at this time. Instead, the northern boundary of the feature was extended further towards the north-east. The new section of ditch kinked slightly northwards before continuing in a north-easterly direction for a distance in excess of 17.6m. Henceforth, the internal dimensions of the enclosure were enlarged so that they were in excess of 68.6m south-west–north-east, continuing beyond the limit of the excavation to the north-east, by over 35.7m north-west–south-east, continuing beyond the limit of excavation to the south-east.
- 6.104 The ditch was infilled with two deposits of clayey silt, from which 95 sherds of LIA to Roman pottery were collectively recovered, including 87 fragments pertaining to the period AD 50–100,

seven of which more probably post-date AD 70. Taken together, this suggests that this incarnation of the enclosure fell out of use and was infilled towards the end of the 1st century AD.

- 6.105 That said, it should be noted that the uppermost fill of slot [12161], a 0.19m thick deposit of silt, yielded a mixed assemblage of pottery that, in addition to a small quantity of Roman finds, included 40 fragments of late medieval material pertaining to the period 1425–1525. The presence of this medieval pottery in what would otherwise appear to be a Romano-British feature is worthy of some explanation. The assemblage cannot simply be dismissed as intrusive owing to its size, however the isolated nature of this medieval evidence in one slot only could indicate an excavation or recording error. For example, the material could herald from the poorly preserved remnants of a later pit or agricultural furrow that was indistinct and not recognized during excavation. Alternatively, upper fill (12158) could have amassed in the upper reaches of this ditch during a much later period if the earlier fills suffered post-depositional subsidence.

*Western Extension: Group 118: [12229], (12218), (12225), (12215); Figure 42; Figure 43, Sections 201.1a and 201.1b*

- 6.106 A stratigraphically later ditch, interpreted here as a westerly extension to the earlier enclosure, was then created, [12229] (Group 118). The feature was up to 1.4m wide and up to 0.21m deep and extended westwards from the western corner of the original enclosure for a distance in excess of 11.3m. It is therefore possible that a second enclosure henceforth adjoined the original to the west, thus transforming this landscape feature into a complex of at least two conjoined enclosures rather than a single entity.
- 6.107 After it fell out of use, three silty fills amassed within this ditch from which no finds were retrieved.

*Western Extension Recut 1: Group 109: [12218], (12217), (12216), (12226); Figure 42; Figure 43, Sections 201.1a and 201.1b*

- 6.108 The western extension was then recut as ditch [12218] (Group 109), which was up to 1.65m wide and up to 0.49m deep. After it fell out of use, three deposits of clayey silt amassed within it from which four pottery sherds pertaining to the period AD 50–100 were retrieved. This again suggests that this enclosure complex had fallen out of use by the end of the 1st century AD.

#### *A small square enclosure*

*Group 103: [12233] / [12262] / [12237] / [12240] / [12274]; (12261), (12273), (12239), (12236), (12232), (12238), (12235), (12231); Figure 41; Figure 40, Section 204.3*

- 6.109 Abutting this enclosure complex to the north was another, smaller enclosure that that was again defined by a ditch, [12233] / [12262] / [12237] / [12240] / [12274] (Group 103). The ditch was up to 0.79m deep and up to 0.45m deep and defined a sub-square area with internal dimensions of 14.9m north-west–south-east by 14.3 south-west–north-east. The function of this small enclosure is uncertain, one possibility being that it represents a small animal corral. A possible entranceway may have existed in the southern corner of the feature that was formed by the southern butt end of this enclosure ditch (Group 103) and the northern side of the large rectangular enclosure discussed above (Group 109).

- 6.110 A stratigraphic relationship between this small sub-square enclosure and the larger enclosure to the south unfortunately could not be deduced due to truncation by a modern land drain, however the two were aligned with each other and appeared to form part of the same organised landscape, thus suggesting they are contemporary.
- 6.111 After this enclosure fell out of use it was infilled with one fill in slots [12262] and [12274] and two fills in the remaining three slots that collectively produced 18 sherds of pottery spanning the period 50 BC–AD 410. Three of these were more diagnostic, having been produced between AD 50 and AD 100. As with the adjacent larger enclosure to the immediate south, it therefore seems possible that this landscape feature fell out of use and was infilled during the latter part of the 1st century AD.

Occupation debris / subsoil

*Group 2: (12004) / (12225) / (12215); Figure 43, Section 164.1*

- 6.112 A humic rich layer of clayey silt, (12004), was found at the base of the sequence in the southern corner of Area 12, where it was recorded in section only. The deposit was up to 0.08m thick and produced over 100 sherds of Roman pottery pertaining to the period AD 50–100. This suggests that it may represent a dump of domestic waste from a nearby settled area that was deposited during the early Roman period.

The eastern ring ditch

*Group 111: [12128] / [12048] / [12031] / [12191] / [12201] / [12183] / [12048]; (12021) / (12064) / (12137) / (12154) / (12175) / (12202) / (12047): Figure 42; Figure 43, Sections 164.1 and 178.5*

- 6.113 Situated within the large rectangular enclosure was a poorly preserved curvilinear feature that was up to 0.57m wide and no more than 0.17m deep [12128] / [12048] / [12031] / [12191] / [12201] / [12183] (Group 111). It continued beyond the limit of excavation to the south and appeared to lens out towards the north, presumably as a result of plough damage. The feature can, however, be extrapolated to form a circle with a diameter c. 11.6m and it can therefore be confidently interpreted as a ring ditch. The feature could represent an animal pen, however its dimensions do fall within the range expected for LIA to Early Roman roundhouses in southern England (Cunliffe 1991, 242–6). Such features are usually either delineated by a ring of posts, a circular gully or a combination of these two building techniques (*ibid.*). In this instance, the gully could represent either a foundation trench for roundhouse posts or a drainage channel dug around the dwelling to keep the living space dry (*ibid.*). If this interpretation holds true, it is possible that the large rectangular enclosure, within which the ring ditch sat, bounded an area of occupation.
- 6.114 The ring ditch was infilled with a single silty deposit from which 130 fragments of LIA to Roman pottery were recovered, the date ranges of which collectively suggested that the feature was infilled between AD 50 and AD 100. This suggests that this prehistoric building form continued in use into the Early Roman period within the confines of this site.

*The western ring ditch*

*Group 113: [12155] / [12138] / [12010] / [12176] / [12065] / [12022] / [12203]; (12154) / (12137) / (12009) / (12202) / (12175) / (12064) / (12021) / (12200); Figure 42; Figure 43, Sections 179.5 and 196.2*

- 6.115 The eastern ring ditch described above (see Group 111) sat adjacent to a smaller ring ditch to the west, defined by ditch [12155] / [12138] / [12010] / [12176] / [12065] / [12022] (Group 113). This ditch had been truncated or recut by a later ditch to the south (discussed subsequently), lensed out towards the north-east and was obscured or truncated by a later deposit to the north-west. It could nevertheless be extrapolated to form a circle in plan with an internal diameter of 7.7m. The feature could represent an animal pen; however its dimensions do again fall within the range expected of LIA to Early Roman roundhouses in southern England (Cunliffe 1991, 242–6). Consequently, it more probably represents a circular foundation trench or a drainage gully surrounding such a feature.
- 6.116 The ring ditch was infilled with a single silty deposit that collectively yielded 71 fragments of Roman pottery, the most diagnostic sherds of which suggested the ditch was infilled between AD 50–100, more probably after AD 70. This again suggests that roundhouses continued to be used into the Early Roman period on this site and that the two roundhouses under discussion here fell out of use at a similar time during the latter part of the 1st century AD.

*Boundary ditches associated with the ring ditch complex*

*Group 114: [12012] / [12142] / [12020] / [12153] / [12006] / [12120], (12011) / (12141) / (12019) / (12153) / (12005) / (12007) / (12119) Figure 42; Figure 43, Section 155.1 and Group 115: [12029] / [12067] / [12018] / [12122], (12018) / (12066) / (12017) / (12121); Figure 42; Figure 43, Section 157.3*

- 6.117 The western ring ditch appeared to be partially surrounded by a complex of external ditches in the form of [12012] / [12142] / [12020] / [12153] / [12006] / [12120] (Group 114) to the immediate south of the western ring ditch and [12029] / [12067] / [12018] / [12122] (Group 115) to the east of the western ring ditch. The former arced gently from east to west over a distance of 12.6m, before being truncated by a pit (Group 187, discussed subsequently). The latter ran north-eastwards from that same robber cut for a distance in excess of 5.29m before being truncated by a later feature. The ditches were up to 0.45m wide and up to 0.35m deep.
- 6.118 The stratigraphy encountered suggested that these ditches partially truncated and therefore replaced the western ring ditch, yet curiously they also appeared to approximately respect the whereabouts of the putative structure that the western ring ditch perhaps once defined. It is therefore not unreasonable to suppose that they surrounded a later incarnation of that landscape feature that was not visible archaeologically. Their purpose is uncertain, one possibility being that they acted as a supplementary property boundary that surrounded this area of possible settlement.
- 6.119 After these ditches fell out of use, they were infilled with between one and two deposits of silty clay that together yielded 145 fragments of 1st-century pottery. A total of 133 sherds of that assemblage pertained to the period AD 50–100, while the majority of that sub-set of material was more probably manufactured after AD 70. This strongly suggests that this small enclosure



fell out of use and was infilled towards the end of the 1st century AD. Also present was 12.9g of unclassified iron slag, the presence of which suggests that industrial activity may have taken place in the vicinity. Together the slag and pottery suggest that this ditch was infilled, at least in part, with a mixture of domestic and industrial waste when it fell out of use as a land boundary.

A large pit or robber cut

Group 187: [12016] / [12057], (12015) / (12056), (12055) / (12014), (12054) / (12013); Figure 42

- 6.120 A large, circular pit, [12016] / [12057] (Group 187), truncated the western corner of the small enclosure that surrounded the western ring ditch. It was up to 2.05m in diameter and was 0.73m deep.
- 6.121 After the feature fell out of use it was infilled with three deposits of clayey silt from which a large assemblage of Early Roman pottery was recovered amounting to more than 300 sherds. Within the context of this site, a relatively large charcoal assemblage was also recovered from environmental samples taken from each of the three fills that amounted to a total of 25.9g of material. Species present included *Prunus* sp. (cherry), *Corylus avellana* L. (hazel) and *Quercus* sp. (oak), with the assemblage being dominated by the latter. Animal bone recovered from these fills included small quantities of pig, sheep and cattle, which showed evidence of waterlogging.
- 6.122 The function of the pit is uncertain, however several possibilities are suggested here. The first and least probable of these is that the feature could represent a shallow well. It was clearly dug to a sufficient depth to reach the water table, hence the recovery of waterlogged ecofacts from its fills. That said, were it left open for any length of time, a lining would be expected to shore up the sides. This was not observed thus reducing the likelihood of this possibility. Perhaps a more plausible explanation is that the pit either represents a robber cut for the removal of a fence post that was perhaps associated with the aforementioned enclosure or alternatively a small quarry pit. On other contemporary sites in south-east and south-central Britain, quarry pits both large and small appear to have been intentionally dug through infilled boundaries, many of which were subsequently infilled with structured deposits. An exploration of the possible motives behind this practice lies beyond the scope of this document, suffice to note that such a pattern has been recognised elsewhere, for example West Thurrock in Kent, Ewell in Surrey and Viabes Farm, Oakridge and Old Kempshott Lane in Hampshire (see Andrews *et al* 2011, 47; Haslam and Haslam 2021; Oliver *et al* 1992, 70–1; Millett and Russell 1984, 54; Haslam 2012, 104).
- 6.123 This raises the possibility that the fills of this pit represent structured deposits. This suggestion is due to the presence of an unusually large assemblage of Roman pottery amounting to 361 sherds, all of which were tightly dated to the period AD 50–100, more probably post-AD 70. As set out previously, a late prehistoric tradition of interring valuable objects, including metal items, human skeletal remains, near-complete animal carcasses and large pottery assemblages (often of deliberately smashed vessels) in pits existed in southern Britain (Hill 1996 *passim*; Cunliffe 1991). This persisted into the Roman period, when such deposits sometimes appear to have been made to mark the beginning or the end of the ‘lives’ of landscape features, in particular buildings, boundaries, wells and quarries (Woodward and Woodward 2004; Haslam

and Haslam 2021; Woodward and Woodward 2004; Beasley 2006; Ross 1968). As such, further research is required to determine whether the contents of this pit, including the nature of the infill and the entire suite of finds present within it, fits within previously identified patterns of Early Roman structured deposition or rubbish disposal prior to publication. The large pottery assemblages recovered from the associated ditches may also be of relevance here and should be reassessed with this possibility in mind.

### Period 3.2: Subsequent LIA to Early Roman Activity (mid-1st to 2nd Century AD)

- 6.124 A different phase of Early Roman activity may be archaeologically recognisable within the confines of Area 12. In summary, this activity was represented by a series of morphologically similar linear or 'L' shaped gullies and posthole groups that were generally aligned with each other or were arranged at approximate right-angles to each other, variously on a north-east–south-west or a north-west–south-east alignment. A layer was also present in the south-east corner of the area, that may represent an occupation deposit. As justified in the paragraphs that follow, these features are phased together here, variously owing to their similar alignments, the nature of the dating evidence recovered from them, their similar sizes and appearances and their relatively close proximities to one another. Together this suggests that they may have fulfilled similar functions and that they were perhaps extant either at the same time or at similar times. Possible functions include a collection of poorly preserved ditched enclosures, for example animal pens, or a series of poorly preserved rectangular buildings.
- 6.125 At least one of these features (see Group 119, below) could not have existed at the same time as the eastern roundhouses (see Group 111, above) since it extended into the footprint of that structure, hence the inclusion of these features in this separate sub-period. The reasons why this sub-period more probably represents a later rather than an earlier phase of Early Roman activity is justified in the paragraphs that follow, however none of the evidence presented definitively precludes an inversion of this formative phasing.

#### Area 12

##### A small enclosure or a clay and timber building?

*Group 119: Gully [12157] / [12170] / [12246] / [12244], (12243) / (12156) / (12169) / (12245); Postholes [12181] (12179), (12180); [12242], (12241); Figure 42*

- 6.126 An 'L'-shaped gully with near-vertical sides and a flat base was recorded in the south-central section of Area 12, [12157] / [12170] / [12246] / [12244] (Group 119). It possessed a rectangular to 'U' shaped profile in section and was up to 0.34m wide. The long-axis of the gully was orientated north-west–south-east and was 9.57m in length with a gently curved return towards the southern end that ran south-westwards for a further distance of 2.37m before lensing out. The feature was infilled with a single silty deposit from which three sherds of pottery pertaining to the period AD 10–100 were retrieved.
- 6.127 The feature could represent the partial remains of a rectangular enclosure, for example an animal pen, of Early Roman date. Alternatively and perhaps more probably, however, it could represent the poorly preserved remains of a beam slot associated with an earthfast Roman building. The dimensions of the feature are indeed in keeping with those that would be expected of a rural Romano-British clay and timber building, similar in nature to 'strip' buildings encountered in urban contexts throughout *Britannia*, which are typically long and narrow

(Perring 2002). What is more, beam slots tend to be relatively slender with relatively rectangular profiles and regular widths (*ibid.*), similar in nature to the gully in question here. If this feature does represent a building, then no trace of the western and northern walls survived archaeologically.

- 6.128 The degraded remains of two potentially associated posts, variously recorded in the field as a posthole and post pipe, may also have formed part of this landscape feature. Posthole [12181] was aligned with the southern return of the gully or beam slot, thus suggesting the presence of a structure that may have been c. 5.77m wide or more. Another posthole, [12242], appeared to augment the northern end of the gully or beam slot. Clay and timber buildings pertaining to this period were often constructed through the use of an array of building techniques that included earthfast posts and beam slots arranged at approximate right angles (*ibid.*).
- 6.129 As set out above, this structure cannot have been extant at the same time as the eastern roundhouse as the extrapolated footprints of the two overlap. If it does represent the poorly preserved remnants of a clay and timber building, it more probably represents a later phase of Early Roman activity on this site. This is because this rectangular building form is exclusively Roman, whereas the roundhouse form is more typical of the Iron Age in this part of *Britannia* (*ibid.*). A caveat must be included here as it has been widely demonstrated that roundhouses continued to be used during the Roman period, particularly in rural contexts (*ibid.*). That said, a reversion to that dwelling type after embracing more Romanized forms of architecture seems less probable.

*Group 201: [12272] / [12270] / [12268], (12267) / (12269) / (12271); Figure 42*

- 6.130 A morphologically similar feature to Group 119, [12272] / [12270] / [12268] (Group 201), was uncovered 0.7m to the east. It survived for a length of 4.41m and was up to 0.24m wide and 0.18m deep. It is possible that the feature represents an earlier or later incarnation of the ditch or beam slot previously described. Alternatively, if Group 201 and 119 were extant at the same time, they could together have formed a narrow corridor were this structure to represent a building.
- 6.131 The gully was infilled with a single silty deposit that yielded six sherds of LIA to Early Roman pottery, which may represent accidental inclusions within the fill of the feature.

*Group 202: [12264] / [12258] / [12256], (12255) / (12257) / (12263); Postholes [12260], (12259); Figure 42*

- 6.132 Situated between the northern ends of Groups 119 and 202 was a third morphologically similar gully, [12264] / [12258] / [12256] (Group 202), that extended northwards for a further distance of 5.83m. The feature was up to 0.34m wide and up to 0.26m deep. It contained a single fill that produced 13 sherds of pottery pertaining to the period AD 50–100 and 149.8g of unclassified iron slag. At least one post, [12260], was driven into the base of the gully. It is possible that this feature again represents an earlier or later iteration of the building or animal pen in question here. The presence of the pottery and slag suggests that it was infilled with a component of domestic and industrial waste when it fell out of use.

*A second small enclosure or a clay and timber building?*

*Group 102: [12082] / [12080] / [12076] / [12078], (12081) / (12079) / (12075) / (12077); Figure 41; Figure 43, Section 157.7*

- 6.133 A very similar 'L' shaped gully was observed c.15m to the north on the opposite site of the large rectangular enclosure. The long-axis of the feature was orientated north-east-south-west, covering a distance of 13.2m. A return was situated towards the northern end that ran north-westwards for a further distance of 2.42m before lensing out. The single silty fill of the gully produced 15 sherds of pottery pertaining to the period 50BC–AD410. For reasons outlined previously, this feature may therefore represent the poorly preserved remains of another small rectangular enclosure or, more probably, a clay and timber building.

*A boundary ditch or a robber cut for a ground beam?*

*Group 112: [12069] / [12034] / [12037] / [12061], (12068), (12033), (12032), (12036), (12035), (12060), (12059), (12058); Figure 43, Section 183.1*

- 6.134 To the west of the building or small enclosure, a fourth gully was observed, [12069] / [12034] / [12037] / [12061]. It was 10.7m long, up to 0.6m wide and up to 0.27m deep with a 'U' shaped profile. The feature was orientated at an approximate right-angle to the long-axis of the building or small enclosure previously discussed, being aligned north-east-south-west, parallel with the large rectangular enclosure described in Period 3.1. This further supports the notion that the enclosure was retained into this sub-period.
- 6.135 The function of the feature is unclear. Possibilities include but are not limited to a boundary ditch associated with a small sub-pen or a robber cut for a beamslot.
- 6.136 Four slots were dug through the gully, which demonstrated that it had been infilled with between one and three fills that together produced 15 sherds of LIA to Roman pottery pertaining to the period 50 BC–AD 410 and a large assemblage of charcoal.

*Remnants of a post-built structure?*

*Group 190: [12043], (12042); [12039], (12038); [12046], (12045), (12044); [12063], (12062); [12041], (12040); Figure 41; Figure 43, Section 164.3*

- 6.137 A cluster of four circular pits or postholes were noted c. 2.6m to the south of the aforementioned gully, collated here as Group 190. The pits were variably sized, being between 0.60m and 0.26m in diameter, with depths that ranged between 0.15m and 0.27m. One example, [12043], contained the remnants of a post pipe in the form of [12041].
- 6.138 Three of the features, [12063], [12039] and [12043], formed a 6.12m long row that was aligned with gully [12069] / [12034] / [12037] / [12061] (Group 112) to the north, while the fourth, [12046], was offset from the central post at a right angle. Their silty fills collectively yielded an assemblage of 26 sherds of LIA to Roman pottery pertaining to the period AD 50–410. The purpose(s) of the features are uncertain, however their regular arrangement does suggest a structural function that could include a rectangular building. An association with gully [12069] / [12034] / [12037] / [12061] (Group 112) should not be ruled out.



*Group 120: [12178] / [12197] / [12195], (12194) / (12196) / (12177); Figure 41*

- 6.139 Situated to the south of the postholes was a short gully remnant, the long-axis of which was again aligned north-east–south-west. The gully survived for a distance of 2.51m and possessed a width of 0.45m and a depth of 0.24m. The fill of the feature produced one fragment of daub and two sherds of pottery pertaining to the LIA to Roman period (50BC–AD 410).
- 6.140 The purpose of the feature is uncertain. Potential functions include but are not limited to the poorly preserved vestiges of a small enclosure or animal pen, the remnants of a beamslot or the remains of a robber cut for the removal of a ground beam.

*Two pits or post pits*

*Group 189: [12053], (12052), (12051); [12193], (12192); Figure 42*

- 6.141 Two circular pits or post pits were noted in the center of Area 12. The features were variably sized, possessing diameters that ranged between 0.96m in the case of [12053] and 0.54m in the case of the [12193]. The depth of the pits respectively ranged between 0.54m and 0.58m. They were infilled with between one and two silty deposits that together yielded an assemblage of 40 sherds of LIA to Early Roman pottery, 39 of which pertained to the period AD 50–100. This suggests that the features were infilled during the latter half of the 1st century AD.
- 6.142 The function(s) of these pits remain unknown. Given their proximity to the post-built structures described above it is possible that they represent the poorly preserved vestiges of similar features (i.e. post pits), however this cannot be proven from the available evidence.

*An occupation deposit / dump of domestic waste*

*Group 122: (12230) / (12073) / (12023) / (12050) / (12074); Figure 42*

- 6.143 An amorphous spread of material was identified in the southern part of Area 12 that appeared to seal the remains of the western ring ditch. The spread was up to 15.1m north–south by up to 8.93m east–west, with a maximum depth of 0.17m. Collectively recovered from the five slots that were dug through the deposit was a large assemblage of more than 1000 sherds of Roman pottery pertaining to the period AD 50–100, more probably post-dating AD 70, 10 fragments of daub, two iron nails, 7.5g of vitrified ceramic and 710.8g of unclassified iron slag. Taken together, this suggests that this layer represents a dump of domestic and industrial waste from a nearby settled area. The large quantity of pottery recovered is interesting and further work should be undertaken to determine whether any evidence of structured deposition can be found within the layer, or whether it represents generic rubbish disposal.

**Period 4: Early to Middle Saxon activity (5th to 8th Century AD)**

- 6.144 Early to Middle Saxon activity was limited to Area 6. Here, a small, unenclosed cemetery was discovered, in which 11 individuals were interred.

*Area 6*

*An inhumation cemetery*

- 6.145 A collection of 11 graves were discovered in the southern part of Area 6. Without exception, the graves contained inhumations that had been buried in supine positions. Nine were aligned

north-west–south-east, while two, [6203] and [6200], trended east–west. Overall the graves did not form a coherent pattern, but did express some elements of organisation. For example, none of the features intercut and they were fairly evenly spaced. The central cluster of five graves were between 0.7m and 1.04m apart. Four of these, [6166], [6157], [6172], and [6160] formed a relatively organised row that was orientated north-east–south-west. The outlying graves to the north and south were between 2.93m and 4.71m apart, while the three most southerly graves, [6206], [6203], [6200] also formed an approximate row that was similarly orientated north-east–south-west. Together, this small cemetery appears to have possessed a long, narrow footprint that extended across an area with a total length of c. 34.5m and a total width of c. 11.4m.

*Group 39: [6178], Sk 6176, (6177); Figure 11; Figure 16*

- 6.146 Grave [6178] was the most northerly of the Early to Middle Saxon graves that were uncovered on the site. It was 2m long, 0.67m wide and survived to a depth of 0.67. Interred within the grave were the remains of a middle-aged to mature adult, Sk 6176. The dentition of this individual exhibited evidence of dental calculus, caries and ante-mortem tooth loss. Joint disease of the lumbar vertebrae was also noted.
- 6.147 The grave was infilled with a single deposit of clayey silt from which seven residual sherds of pottery pertaining to the period 50 BC–AD 410 were recovered. These no doubt represent accidental inclusions within the fill of the feature.

*Group 40: [6175], Sk 6173, (6175); Figure 11; Figure 16*

- 6.148 Situated c. 2.28m to the south-west and offset by c.2.04m to the east was a second sub-rectangular grave, [6175]. The feature was 2.84m long and 1.13m wide, surviving to a depth of 0.18m. Within the cut were the remains of a mature male, Sk 6173. In life, this individual suffered from several dental problems that included dental caries and dental calculus, as well as joint disease of the left hip, right elbow and cervical vertebrae. Evidence of a healed fracture to the right ulna was also present.
- 6.149 After this individual had been lain within this grave, it was infilled with a single deposit of silty clay that produced nine sherds of pottery pertaining to the period AD 50–100. These artefacts must represent accidental, residual inclusions in this context.

*Group 41: [6160], Sk 6159, (6160); Figure 11; Figure 15*

- 6.150 Positioned c.3.03m further towards the south-east was a relatively small grave, [6160]. The feature was 1.8m long and 0.60m wide, surviving to a depth of just 0.07m. It contained the skeleton of a middle-aged adult of indeterminate sex (Plate 15). The individual had dental caries and dental calculus in life and also suffered from joint disease of the right foot and lumbar vertebrae. Evidence of Schmorl's Nodes (a common spinal disorder that can sometimes result in inflammation) were also noted; this can be an indicator of back strain induced by excessive bending or lifting. Grave goods included a small ceramic bead (RF2), found adjacent to the right wrist.
- 6.151 The grave was infilled with a single deposit from which one small fragment of pottery pertaining to the period 1225–1350 was recovered, which must be intrusive in this context.



*Plate 15: SK 6159 (Group 41). Photograph looks north-west. Scale 2m*

*Group 42: [6172], Sk 6171, (6170); Figure 11; Figure 16*

- 6.152 Situated 1.02m further towards the south-west was a fourth grave, [6172], that was 1.80m long, 0.56m wide and 0.20m deep. This grave contained Sk 6171, a middle adult female (Plate 16). The grave was infilled with a single silty deposit that produced one sherd of pottery pertaining to the period 50 BC–AD 410, which must be residual in this context. The pottery no doubt represents an accidental inclusion within the fill of the grave.



*Plate 16: Sk 6171 (Group 42). Photograph looks north-west. Scale 2m.*

*Group 43: [6163], Sk 6162, (6163); Figure 11; Figure 15*

- 6.153 Positioned 0.98m further towards the south-east was a fifth grave, [6163]. The feature was 2.36m long, 0.86m wide and no more than 0.14m deep. Buried within it was a mature adult female, Sk 6162 (Plate 17). The dentition indicated calculus, periodontal disease, caries and ante-mortem tooth loss in life. The individual had joint disease of the left femur, left calcaneus

and the lumbar and thoracic vertebrae, which were also affected by ankylosis (stiffening caused by bone fusion). Evidence of Schmorl's Nodes was also noted.

- 6.154 The grave was infilled with a single silty deposit from which one fragment of prehistoric to medieval daub was retrieved, which no doubt represents an accidental inclusion within the grave.



*Plate 17: Sk 6162 (Group 43). Photograph looks north-west. Scale 2m.*

*Group 44: [6157], Sk 6156, (6155); Figure 11; Figure 15*

- 6.155 Approximately 0.59m to the south-west was another grave, [6157]. The feature was 1.90m long, 0.80m wide and 0.15m deep. It contained the remains of a late middle-aged adult female, Sk 6156 (Plate 18). The dentition of this individual demonstrated that they suffered from calculus and periodontal disease in life. Joint disease was also evident in the thoracic and lumbar vertebrae, while Schmorl's Nodes were also present. A possible Colle's fracture to the right radius was also present, a type of fracture that commonly occurs after a fall onto an outstretched hand.
- 6.156 The grave was infilled with a single silty deposit from which a small quantity of prehistoric worked flint was recovered, which must be residual in this context.





*Plate 18: Sk 6156 (Group 44). photograph looks north-west. Scale 2m.*

*Group 45: [6166], Sk 6165, (6164); Figure 11; Figure 15*

- 6.157 Situated 0.89m further towards the south-west was a seventh grave, [6166]. The feature was 2.04m long, 0.52m wide and 0.39m deep. Interred within it were the remains of a mature male, Sk 6165 (Plate 19). Severe dental calculus (mineralised plaque) characterised the dentition of this individual, who was also afflicted by a dental abscess and ante-mortem tooth loss. Joint disease of the right elbow and extensive joint disease of the vertebral column were also noted.
- 6.158 The grave was infilled with a single silty deposit that did not contain any artefacts or ecofacts.



*Plate 19: Sk 6165 (Group 45). Photograph looks north-west. Scale 2m.*

*Group 46: [6169], Sk 6167, (6168); Figure 11; Figure 15*

- 6.159 Located a further 5.4m to the south was an eighth grave, [6169]. The feature was 2.5m long, 1.15m wide and 0.10m deep. Contained within the feature was the remains of a young to middle-aged adult male, Sk 6167 (Plate 20). Severe dental calculus (mineralised plaque)

characterised the dentition of this individual, while they appear to also have been afflicted by osteoarthritis of the left wrist.

- 6.160 The burial was accompanied by an incomplete iron knife with an asymmetrical blade, RF4, a possible iron spear, RF3, a copper alloy buckle, RF9, as well as an unidentified composite object, perhaps of copper alloy and wood, RF6 (Plates 21–23).
- 6.161 The form and proportions of the spear suggest that it is a Swanton Type D2 due to the proportion of the surviving socket length (see Appendix B, Registered Finds, below). This type of weapon generally pertains to the 6<sup>th</sup> century and its distribution is concentrated in Kent and along the Thames. Although of British origin, it is commonly associated with Frankish-style pottery, which may provide a clue as to the cultural affiliations of the individual interred in this grave. The presence of this artefact suggests that this burial could date to the earlier part of the Saxon period, perhaps as early as the 6<sup>th</sup> century, although it is also possible that the spear could have been curated for a period of time before it was buried in this context.
- 6.162 The buckle is 'D' shaped with an elaborate shield on pin. The buckle plate is produced from a sheet of copper-alloy folded around the pin bar. It tapers from the buckle to the tip where it is perforated to hold two circular rivets. There are two triangular openwork sections at the tip of the plate. The buckle plate is decorated with multiple ring and dot motifs, the reverse is undecorated. No clear British parallel for the distinctive plate is known. This combined with the shield on pin suggests the buckle is a continental type. It is advised that strontium isotope analysis is undertaken on this individual.
- 6.163 Also found within this grave were two additional objects of uncertain form and function, RF 5 and RF 6, which appear to consist of mineralised wood. Within RF 6 is a fragment of curved copper-alloy sheet, which may represent a circular band that was wrapped around the object. It is possible that these nodules of wood represent the fragmentary remains of the spear shaft, although further specialist work is required in order to better determine form and function.
- 6.164 The grave was infilled with a single deposit from which four sherds of pottery pertaining to the LIA to Roman period and 800 BC–50 BC were retrieved. Again, these finds must represent accidental, residual inclusions within the backfill of the grave.



*Plate 20: Sk 6167 (Group 46). Photograph looks west. Scale 2m.*



*Plate 21: Detail of the spearhead RF3 in situ, found in association with Sk 6167 (Group 46). Photograph looks north. Scale 0.5m.*



*Plate 22: Cu alloy buckle RF9 (foreground) with Fe alloy knife behind, RF4, found in association with Sk 6167 (Group 46). Photograph looks north. Scale 0.5m.*





*Plate 23: Unidentified composite object, perhaps of copper alloy and wood RF6 found in association with Sk 6167 (Group 46). Photograph looks west. Scale 0.5m.*

*Group 47: [6200], Sk 6198, (6199); Figure 11; Figure 16*

- 6.165 Situated 4.77m further towards the south-west was a ninth grave, [6200], which was 1.97m long, 0.67m wide and 0.13m deep. It contained the remains of an adolescent of indeterminate sex, Sk 6198. Dental calculus was noted on the teeth of this individual.
- 6.166 The feature was infilled with a single silty deposit from which one residual fragment of possible Iron Age pottery was retrieved, along with a small quantity of residual worked flint and a single pyrite nodule. Three fragments of CBM pertaining to the period 1450–1700 were also present, which must be intrusive in this context. A possible metal musket ball was also found, which must represent another intrusive artefact.

*Group 48: [6203], Sk 6201, (6202); Figure 11; Figure 16*

- 6.167 A further 3.3m towards the south-west, another grave was present, [6203]. This feature was 1.93m long, 0.63m wide and 0.15m deep. The skeleton of a middle-aged adult of indeterminate sex was present within the grave. The individual had dental carries and calculus. They were buried with an incomplete iron knife (RF 16) that was found next to the left hand along the left femur. This could perhaps indicate that the individual was left-handed.
- 6.168 The grave was infilled with a single deposit of silty material, from which four sherds of LIA to Roman pottery were recovered, along with five small fragments of earlier ceramic pertaining to the period 800 BC–50 BC. An undiagnostic glass shatter sherd was also present, as were three pieces of residual prehistoric worked flint. These artefacts no doubt represent accidental inclusions within the fill of the grave.



*Group 49: [6206], Sk 6204, (6205); Figure 11; Figure 16*

- 6.169 The eleventh and most southerly grave in this group consisted of [6206]. The feature was 1.71m long, 0.49m wide and 0.15m deep. It contained the remains of a mature individual of indeterminate sex. The dentition of this individual exhibited evidence of dental caries and calculus. Evidence of porotic hyperostosis (the development of spongy tissue around the cranial vault) was also noted, which can result from anemia induced by an iron-deficient diet.
- 6.170 The silty fill of the feature produced 15 sherds of pottery pertaining to the periods AD 50–100 and 800–50 BC, which must represent accidental, residual inclusions within the backfill of the grave.

#### **Period 5.1: Late Saxon to Saxo-Norman (9th to 11th Century AD) or Earlier Activity**

- 6.171 A collection of features that variously yielded small quantities of Late Saxon to Saxo-Norman pottery or possessed morphologies suggestive of landscape features pertaining to this period were identified in two areas during the strip, map and sample exercise, namely adjacent Areas 7 and 10. A single outlying boundary ditch was also noted in Area 11. This therefore suggests the potential presence of a concentration of early medieval activity towards the south-eastern corner of the site. That said, unless otherwise stated, the dating evidence recovered from these features was generally small in quantity, and as such they are, for the most part, not securely phased at present. In most cases, earlier date ranges should not be discounted, particularly the prehistoric and Roman periods. This is evaluated on a group by group basis in the paragraphs that follow.

#### **Area 10**

*Group 88: [10020] / [10048] / [10112] / [10162]; (10047) / (10111) / (10161), (10021), (10022); Figure 32; Figure 40, Sections 215.1 and 232.1*

- 6.172 A ditch was uncovered in the southern end of Area 10, [10020] / [10048] / [10112] / [10162] (Group 88), that was orientated north-west–south-east. It was up to 1.65m wide, up to 0.46m deep and over 20.5m long, continuing beyond the limits of the excavation to the north-west and south-east.
- 6.173 After the feature fell out of use, two silty clay fills amassed within slot [10020], while a single fill was recorded in the remaining slots. Seven sherds of pottery, including three early medieval sherds, were collectively retrieved from these deposits, as was RF 126, an oval buckle of uncertain date, RF 128, a knife consisting of a complete blade and an incomplete tang, RF 125, an iron reaping hook, 2413.3g of tapped slag, 591.7g of unclassified slag amalgam, 782.1g of unclassified iron slag, 204.8g of runned slag and a plano-convex cake of slag (372.5g). Residual Iron Age pottery was also present, alongside three sherds pertaining to the period AD 850–1000. In addition, a fragment of daub, a nail of uncertain date and a Roman to early post-medieval stone spindle whorl were recovered from the fills of the ditch.
- 6.174 Taken together, this evidence suggests that this ditch was infilled with material that included a component of domestic waste and a larger component of industrial debris after it fell out of use as a land boundary, perhaps during the Late Saxon period. The presence of the reaping hook is noteworthy given that the area to the immediate south may have been set aside for crop processing during this period (see Kilns or Ovens 1 to 6, below).

*Kiln or Oven 1: Structure [10113] / [10027]*

- 6.175 A 2.95m long, 1.3m wide structure was uncovered in the western side of the central section of Area 10, Structure [10113] / [10027] (Figure 31). The feature was sub-ovoid in plan, being slightly 'waisted' (narrowing fractionally towards the center) and surviving to a depth of up to 0.30m. The feature was not well dated, however its apparent association with similar features in the immediate area that yielded Late Saxon dating evidence suggests that it may pertain to that period. The stratigraphy as recorded tentatively suggests that it was rebuilt at least once, although further research is required to verify the possibility and feasibility of this.
- 6.176 The feature was excavated in eight quadrants (Figure 33, Plan 240) however the fills of these quadrants have been equated in the paragraphs that follow on the grounds that the sediments and finds recovered from them were very similar in nature and frequency. A significant assemblage of charcoal and a great deal of fired clay was retrieved from the various fills, amounting to over 119kg in total, that appeared to have been made from a silty, yet very slightly sandy alluvial source. The temperature to which the clay was heated did not vitrify any components of the fragments, indicating no temperatures in excess of around 750–800 degrees, more likely in the 650–750 range (see Appendix B, Fired Clay; this was the case for all fired clay recovered from this and the other five kilns identified on the site). The material is therefore interpreted as deriving from a kiln, though one that was used for lower rather than higher temperature processes. Wattle impressions in some fragments of clay suggest that the kiln possessed a wattle and daub superstructure, which presumably sat over pit [10013] / [10027], later collapsing into the feature. As justified in the paragraphs that follow, the feature may represent a corn drying kiln.

*Group 71: initial construction: [10140] / [10133] / [10134] / [10135]; (10139); Figure 31; Figure 33, Plan 240*

- 6.177 The initial construction of the feature involved the excavation of an ovoid cut into the underlying natural silty clay. The cut was orientated north-west–south-east and was up to 1.12m wide at the western end, narrowing to 0.95m towards the eastern end. As shown in Section 235.2b (Figure 33), the longitudinal profile was somewhat uneven, possessing a distinct step at the southern end. Here the construction cut sloped gently downwards in a northerly direction over a distance of c.0.85m to a depth of c.0.15m before rising fractionally. It then sloped downwards more steeply to a depth of c.0.30m over a further distance of c.0.20m. The remainder of the feature then flattened off, before the far northern side rose again, exhibiting a gentle, concave profile with a gradual break of slope towards the base and a sharp break of slope at the top (235.2a, Figure 33). Cross-sections recorded at regular intervals through the width of the feature also generally possessed stepped profiles, in which the northern and southern sides sloped steeply downwards, exhibiting a concave to straight profile. The edges then flattened off before sloping downwards again and culminating in a sharp break of slope at the base. This profile is most clearly demonstrated by Section 239.2 (Figure 33). The base itself was generally concave (Sections 239.1, 239.3, 235.1a, 235.1b, Figure 33) but in places trended towards a flatter profile (Sections 239.2, Figure 33).
- 6.178 During excavation it was suggested that the stoke pit of the kiln is represented by the somewhat deeper, somewhat wider western end of the feature, while the flue could be represented by the somewhat shallower, narrower eastern end. This is speculative, however, as further research

is required to better understand the morphology and function of the feature. Why it appeared to be stepped is also uncertain at this stage and again further research is required to better understand this.

- 6.179 A thin, discontinuous deposit of clay, (10139), appeared to have been applied to the sides and perhaps the base of the feature (Section 239.2, Figure 33). The clay was pinkish in colour, presumably due to the effects of heat, and it was no more than 0.3m thick. It was interpreted as the remains of a poorly preserved clay lining during excavation, which may be correct, however, it could alternatively represent a layer of heat-affected natural surrounding the feature, rather than being part of the kiln itself. That said, the deposit was sampled and yielded less than 10 grains of *Avena* sp. (oat caryopses) but more than 100 grains of *Triticum aestivum* L. (bread / club wheat caryopses). This large quantity of cereal grain suggests two things: that this feature perhaps functioned as a corn dryer and that this deposit formed part of the kiln itself rather than representing heat-affected natural.

*Group 72: first disuse? (10138); Figure 33, Section 239.2 and 239.3*

- 6.180 The first evidence of disuse was found in fill (10138), which yielded a very large quantity of fired clay and a single pottery fragment that is thought to represent a post-Roman pottery sherd, although the sherd was not closely dated. The fired clay no doubt derives from the demolition of the superstructure, which appears to have collapsed into the feature, while the sherd probably represents an accidental inclusion. This deposit infilled the south-east corner of the feature and was up to 0.30m thick. Its contents are discussed in detail in Appendix B: Fired Clay (below).
- 6.181 Samples taken from this fill yielded an assemblage of 74 cereal grains, including *Avena* sp. (oat), *Hordeum var nudum* L. (naked barley), *Triticum aestivum* L. (bread / club wheat) and *Triticum spelta* sp. (spelt). These grains may have amassed during the life of the feature, later becoming incorporated within this demolition debris. Their presence further supports the corn dryer interpretation.

*Group 73: reconstruction and reuse? (10137), (10136) / (10132); Figure 33, Section 239.2 and 239.3*

- 6.182 It is possible that this kiln was then recut and reconstructed, during which a second clay lining was smoothed across the sides. Evidence for this event is provided by Section 239.2, which appears to show clay lining (10136) stratigraphically above demolition layer (10138) (Group 72, discussed above). The clay lining was up to 0.05m thick and again exhibited signs of heat affectation due to its pink hue. This deposit again yielded over 100 cereal grains that included a small quantity of *Avena* sp. (oat) and a far larger quantity of *Triticum aestivum* L. (bread / club wheat), thus suggesting continued use as a corn dryer.

*Group 74: final disuse and subsequent collapse? (10131), (10130); Figure 33, Plan 240*

- 6.183 The final episode in the life of this feature again involved the accumulation of a probable demolition deposit within it. This contained very frequent burnt clay fragments, which no doubt derived from the collapsed superstructure of the kiln. Also present were over 130 grains of *Avena* sp. and over 300 grains of *Triticum aestivum* L. (bread / club wheat), which again are

presumed to have accumulated while this feature was still in use. An incomplete modern nail shank was also recovered, presumed to be intrusive in this context.

Kiln or Oven 2: Structure [10259]

*Group 75: construction and use or disuse [10259], (10258), (10257), (10256), (10255); Figure 31*

- 6.184 A second ovoid feature was situated just over 3m to the south. It was also aligned north-west–south-east and was up to 3.47m long, up to 1.48m wide and up to 0.80m deep. The feature possessed concave sides with sharp breaks of slope at the top, curving gradually downwards to form a rounded, concave base. It was similar in size and shape to other features interpreted as corn drying kilns in this area of the site, but notably did not produce cereal grains. The feature was infilled six distinct deposits, described here in stratigraphic order from oldest to youngest.
- 6.185 The primary fill of the feature, (10258), was 0.08m to 0.25m thick. It consisted of a dark, clayey silty from which no finds were recovered. If this feature does represent a kiln, it is possible that this material amassed within it while it was still standing, either during its final firings or subsequently through natural silting during early stages of abandonment. The lack of any detectable ash, charcoal, grain or industrial residue within the layer suggests the latter.
- 6.186 The primary fill was sealed by a compact, reddish, clay-rich secondary fill, (10257), which was up to 0.10m thick. It appeared to be largely composed of burnt clay fragments (not sampled in this instance). This material could represent the collapsed superstructure of the kiln or could alternatively form part of an *in situ* fired clay lining. Its position in the stratigraphic sequence above primary fill (10258) is more suggestive of the latter.
- 6.187 The possible lining was sealed by silty clay tertiary fill (10256) that was up to 0.08m deep. It was light blueish-white in colour, resembling ash. This was sealed by a dark clayey silty layer of charcoal-rich material, (10255), which again resembled ash. It is therefore possible that these fills either derive from a final firing of this possible kiln, or else were produced within a nearby kiln before being raked out and dumped in this disused feature.

*Group 203: disuse (10254), (10253)*

- 6.188 Quinary fill (10254) consisted of a compact layer of yellowish to light brown silty clay, again rich in fired clay fragments (not sampled). The deposit was 0.35m to 0.40m thick and may represent the collapsed superstructure of this kiln.
- 6.189 Sealing this probable demolition deposit was an uppermost fill of mid-greyish brown silty clay, (10254). It was up to 0.25m thick and may either have been dumped within this feature to level it, or else amassed gradually via natural silting after this possible kiln was abandoned.

Kiln or Oven 3: Structure [10246] / [10261]

*Group 76: construction and use? [10246], (10245), (10244); Figure 34, Section 264.1; Figure 35, Section 262.1*

- 6.190 A third ovoid pit, Structure [10246] / [10261], was situated to c.3.59m the east of Kiln 1 (Structure [10113]) and c.5.14m to the north of Kiln 2 (Structure [10259]). The feature was more compact than the other putative kilns under discussion here, being 2.37m long, 1.56m wide and up to



0.40m deep. It possessed concave, gently sloping sides and a flat base (Figure 34, Section 264.1). The feature was infilled with three deposits, discussed below from oldest to youngest.

- 6.191 Primary fill (10245) consisted of a 0.10m thick compact deposit of reddish clay, again interpreted here either as the remnants of a fired clay lining or the collapsed remnants of a superstructure. One small fragment of possible post-Roman pottery was recovered, which may represent an accidental inclusion.

*Group 78: use and / or disuse? (10244); (10243)*

- 6.192 Sealing the fired clay was secondary fill (10244), a distinctive light grey deposit of ashy material, within which occasional small pieces of a chalk-like substance were observed. A total of 81 cereal grains were recovered from a sample of this deposit that included *Avena* sp. (oat), *Hordeum vulgare* L. (six-row hulled barley), *Triticum aestivum* L. (bread / club wheat). Also present were six garden peas (*Pisum sativum*) and a fragment of probable post-Roman pottery. It is possible that this 0.15m thick fill amassed when the kiln was in use or could alternatively have been dumped within the feature after it fell out of use. Assuming that the deposit formed *in situ*, its contents suggests that this feature may again have functioned as a corn dryer.
- 6.193 The uppermost fill of this pit, (10243), was composed of a mid-brownish silty clay. It is possible that this 0.15m thick deposit was either dumped into the top of this feature to level it, or that it amassed in the upper reaches of the feature through natural silting after it was abandoned.

*Kiln or Oven 4: Structure [10030]*

- 6.194 A long, thin pit was discovered to the south-west, which was orientated north-east–south-west at an approximate right-angle to the three smaller kilns discussed thus far. The feature was 7.69m long, having been truncated by a later pit to the south-west, up to 2.25m wide and up to 0.80m deep.
- 6.195 This feature was excavated in eight quadrants, however for clarity and brevity the fills from those quadrants have been collated and are discussed in groups in the paragraphs that follow. This is due to the apparent identical natures of the collated fills in terms of their composition, the finds that were recovered from them and their relative positions in the stratigraphic sequence.

*Group 83: construction and use: [10223], (10225) / (10229) / (10226) / (10235) / (10224) / (10219) / (10236) / (10227) / (10202) / (10203) / (10204) / (10189) / (10183) / (10076) / (10220); Figure 31; Figure 36, Plans 250*

- 6.196 The kiln was lined with fired clay that in this case was up to 0.30m thick. Of particular note was context (10225), which appeared to be composed of mud bricks. These bricks, though in poor condition, could be measured at 60x30cm, corresponding in size to the Roman 'bipedalis' type, which when unfired themselves, were used for *opus latericium* masonry (Plates 24 and 25). Unfortunately, these bricks were too fragile to be recovered complete and as such, interpretation is based upon on-site recording and photography (Plate 25). In contrast to this possible Roman date of inception for this feature, the latest dating evidence recovered from these fills took the form of three sherds of pottery that pertained to the Late Saxon period (AD 850–1050), although notably four small scraps of Roman or prehistoric pottery were retrieved from environmental samples taken from these contexts.

- 6.197 Further uncertainty regarding dating is introduced by the fact that Roman corn dryers are more commonly 'T' shaped in plan (Goodchild 2012), a morphology that does not appear to fit with the features under discussion here. Similarly, Mid- to Late-Saxon corn dryers and malting ovens are often 'L' shaped (Hamerow 2012), however, a morphologically identical ovoid example that mirrors the ovens under discussion here, replete with a burnt clay lining and a collapsed clay superstructure, was unearthed in the Kentish region at Ebbsfleet. This was dated to the Mid- to Late Saxon period (Andrews *et al* 2011). Nevertheless, a Roman date of inception for the corn dryers on this site should not be discounted at this stage as the evidence is unclear. Further comparative analysis with Roman and post-Roman corn drying kilns is therefore required prior to publication.

*Group 82: disuse: (10175), (10206), (10205), (10218), (10217), (10177), (10178), (10176), (10121), (10075), (10074), (10057), (10056), (10055)*

- 6.198 The feature contained a mass of fills that have been collated here as Group 82. They produced a large quantity of fired clay that amounted to almost 8.5kg of material that is presumed to derive from the collapsed lining, walls and roof of the structure. The contents of these fills are detailed in Appendix B (fired clay). In brief, the recorded remnants of the collapsed kiln elements, as recorded stratigraphically from earliest to latest, suggest that the ceiling/roof of the structure fell first, after which the walls folded inwards thus burying the roof collapse material. As with the other two thermal installations that were sampled, only one fabric of fired clay was identified, which in all cases appeared to derive from the same alluvial source. Numerous fragments were characterised by the impression of a woven network of withies, which must have provided the above-ground frame upon which the daub was applied. Present within these fills were over 100 cereal grains and a single sherd of probable post-Roman pottery of uncertain date.

*Group 84: closing deposit? [10222], (10216), (10228), (10211)*

- 6.199 The southern end of the feature was truncated by a large circular pit, [10222]. The feature was up to 3.6m in diameter and up to 0.50m deep. It had been infilled with three deposits, the first of which, (10216), consisted of a silty grey fill that was 0.15m thick. Sitting on top of this was a large, somewhat irregular burnt stone, (10228), that could represent an anvil. This in turn was sealed by two more deposits of silty clay, (10211) and (10221), that infilled the pit in its entirety. The lowest of these produced 8.7g of unclassified iron slag that appeared to have been dumped within this feature, while the uppermost produced five sherds of pottery pertaining to the period AD 800–1050 along with 13 pieces of prehistoric to medieval daub. The function of the anvil stone remains uncertain in this context as it would appear to have been redeposited here rather than being in its primary context. Consequently, it could represent an example of structured deposition, perhaps a closing deposit to mark the end of the life of the kiln, however further work would be required to ascertain this.
- 6.200 The presence of the slag could be taken to suggest that the kiln played a role in iron working, however this is deemed unlikely for several reasons. First, the slag was retrieved from a fill that amassed in the kiln after it fell out of use rather than accumulating during its active use. Secondly, the temperature (650–750 degrees) to which the clay lining of the kiln was exposed to is not thought to have been high enough to melt iron (1535 degrees) nor copper (1084.62 degrees) (periodic-table.org 2019). Thirdly, the quantity of slag recovered is considered smaller

than would normally be expected for a production site. As such, the corn dryer interpretation is preferred.



*Plate 24: Overview of the central and north-eastern portions of Kiln [10030]. Photograph looks north-west.*



*Plate 25: Kiln [10030] (Group 83) under excavation showing the clay lining in detail. Photograph looks south.*

#### Kiln or Oven 5: Structure [10029]

- 6.201 A fifth possible oven was uncovered to the north-east, [10029] (Plates 26 and 27). The feature was 8.4m long and up to 1.56m wide to the north-east, tapering to a width of 0.9m to the south-west. It survived to a maximum depth of 0.80m. The sides of the feature were somewhat irregular but were generally gently sloping and concave (Figure 36, Sections 256.1, 256.2). The northern end of the feature also possessed a step in the base that led down to a deeper chamber (Figure 36, Plan 258.3).

*Group 79: construction and use: [10119], (10234) / (10171) / (10174) / (10124) / (10123) / (10120) / (10122) / (10141); Figure 31*

- 6.202 The primary fill of the feature consisted of a reddish clay that was up to 0.15m thick, (10234) / (10171) / (10174) / (10124) / (10123) / (10120) / (10122) / (10141) (Figure 36, Plan 250). This deposit may represent an *in situ* clay lining (see Appendix B, Fired Clay, below). The pinkish red colour of the clay suggests that it was heat affected.

*Group 80: disuse: (10199); (10237) / (10207) / (10208); (10197) / (10194) / (10172) / (10114) / (10115) / (10116) / (10196) / (10169)*

- 6.203 The secondary fills of the feature, collated here as Group 80, produced a very large assemblage of material that could derive from the collapsed superstructure of a kiln (Plate 26). This is discussed in detail in Appendix B (see Fired Clay, below) but is summarized here. The earliest of these fills, (10199), included a component of lime mortar, while the overlying fills contained large quantities of fired clay. The fired clay is again thought to have been exposed to temperatures in the 650–750-degree range (see Appendix B, Fired Clay). Included within these fills were over 100 cereal grains that included *Triticum aestivum* L. (bread / club wheat), *Avena* sp. (oat), *Triticum spelta* sp. (spelt) and *Triticum/secale* sp. (wheat / rye) and 0.5g of runned slag, which is thought likely to be intrusive for the reasons set out above (see Group 84). Micromorphological samples taken through these fills confirmed the suspicion that they formed through dumping and / or collapse rather than *in situ* burning.

*Group 204: (10173) / (10170) / (10118) / (10117) / (10054)*

- 6.204 A kubiena tin sample straddled the (10114) (Group 80) and the (10117) (Group 204) boundary. A distinct horizon was observed between Group 80 and Group 204, thus suggesting the presence of two distinct infilling events. The somewhat heterogeneous fills collated here as Group 204 contained a lesser amount of fired clay and may have amassed from rapid back-filling on top of the collapsed structure, while the fired clay fragments may represent remnants of the superstructure that were incorporated in the later backfill. Witty impressions were again noted in fired clay fragment (10170), thus suggesting that, like Kiln 1 (see above), the superstructure of this kiln was partially composed of wattle and daub. Also present were more than 50 cereal grains that included *Hordeum vulgare* L. (six-row hulled barley), *Hordeum distichon* L. (two-row barley), *Hordeum var nudum* L. (naked barley), *Triticum aestivum* L. (bread / club wheat), *Avena* sp. (oat), *Triticum spelta* sp. (spelt) and *Triticum/secale* sp. (wheat / rye). Taken together, the evidence presented here suggests that this feature represents the collapsed remains of a corn drying kiln. This is again suggested by micromorphological samples, which suggested dumping or collapse rather than *in situ* burning.

*Group 110: closing deposit: [10214], (10233), (10231), (10232), (10213), (10215), (10212)*

- 6.205 The south-western end of the feature may have been truncated by a pit [10213] (not illustrated) or could alternatively have been infilled in a different way to the rest of the feature. It contained a silty grey fill (10233) that was just 0.05m deep. Three associated animal bone groups (ABGs), the near-complete skeletons of two pigs, at least one of which was peri-natal, were lain on top of this and recorded as (10231) and (10232). A single sherd of EIA-EIA/MIA transition pottery was found in association with these burials, which must be residual in this context. Sealing the animal burials was a 0.39m deep tertiary fill, (10213), which yielded a complete penannular



buckle or brooch, <RF 126>, of Roman to early medieval date. The plain terminals could also suggest that the object is a simple iron loop which has been slightly bent. Also present were 25 fragments of daub, that may have been redeposited in this context from the kiln. A third pig, (10215), was then placed on top of that deposit. The uppermost fill of the pit, (10212), infilled the remainder of the feature. Included in the fill were four sherds of Late Saxon pottery, the presence of which may date the infilling of this pit to the period AD 850–1050, and 1.3g of unclassified iron slag, which again is presumed to have been imported from elsewhere.

- 6.206 It is distinctly possible that this pit was dug to mark the end of the life of the kiln. It may contain evidence of structured deposition in the form of the ABGs and perhaps the penannular buckle or brooch fragment. While such traditions are well known during the prehistoric period, there is a growing body of evidence that suggests such practices continued into the Saxon period, well beyond the adoption of Christianity (Hamerow 2012). Further comparative research is required to demonstrate this.



*Plate 26: Kiln [10029] (Group 83) under excavation. Photograph looks north-east. Scales 2m, 1m.*



*Plate 27: Detail of the collapsed clay superstructure within the south-western quadrant of Kiln [10029]. Photograph looks east. Scale 2m.*

Kiln or Oven 6: Structure [10032]

*Group 180: [10032], (10031); Figure 31*

- 6.207 An elongated, sub-ovoid feature with somewhat irregular sides and a flat base was situated to the north of this collection of probable kilns on an identical alignment to [10027] (i.e. Kiln 1, Groups 71–72). The feature was 2.16m long and up to 0.82m wide. It was poorly preserved, surviving for a depth of no more than 0.07m.
- 6.208 The feature contained a single fill, described as a dark grey brown clayey silt that appeared to be rich in charcoal fragments. This was not verified through environmental sampling, although a large assemblage of cereal grain was recovered that was dominated by bread / club wheat. A total of 43 fragments of prehistoric to medieval daub were also present, which probably represent the collapsed remnants of the structure that this feature once housed.
- 6.209 Taken together, this evidence suggests that this feature represents the very poorly preserved remains of yet another partially demolished oven, the bulk of which was presumably lost to post-depositional processes such as ploughing. The long, slender shape of the feature is reminiscent of other post-Roman corn dryers, an interpretation that is supported by the presence of cereal grains.

A possible fence?

*Group 81: [10059], (10058); [10061], (10060); [10063], (10062); [10065], (10064); [10067], (10066); [10069], (10068); [10071], (10070); [10073], (10072); Figure 31*

- 6.210 A collection of eight small circular features were revealed between Kiln 4 to the north and Kiln 5 to the south, collated here as Group 81. They were between 0.40m and 0.17m in diameter and 0.08m and 0.22m in depth and are interpreted here as a collection of postholes and driven stakes. They formed an approximate row that was at least 8.09m long that trended north-west–south-east. As such they are presumed to represent the poorly preserved remnants of a fence. That said, the features were not perfectly aligned. This could perhaps signify that this possible fence was rebuilt on two or more occasions on slightly differing alignments. The fence may have formed a division between two kilns within this industrial area.

A second probable fence

*Group 163: [10034], (10033); [10036], (10035); [10038], (10037); [10040], (10039); [10042], (10041); [10044], (10043); [10046], (10045); Figure 31*

- 6.211 A group of seven closely spaced circular features were identified towards the north in Area 10, interpreted herein as postholes. They were between 0.51m and 0.30m in diameter, surviving to variable depths that ranged between 0.15m and 0.38m. The postholes were generally spaced between 0.14m and 0.32m apart, however the most south-easterly feature, [10034], was positioned somewhat further away, being 0.9m from the nearest equivalent feature, [10036]. This wider spacing may perhaps have been induced by the loss of one or more postholes to post-depositional processes such as modern ploughing. Together, the postholes would have formed a single row of wooden uprights that was orientated north-west–south-east, covering a distance of at least 4.81m.

- 6.212 The posthole fills together contained 10 small scraps of pottery that may be of EIA origin, however this date was uncertain owing to the size of the sherds. Also present was a significant quantity of daub of prehistoric to medieval date, amounting to 251 fragments. It is therefore possible that the daub fragments represent construction or even demolition debris from the nearby kilns that was incorporated within the fills of these postholes either accidentally or as post packing.
- 6.213 Taken together, this evidence suggests that these posts represent the remains of a north-west–south-east orientated fence. Their close spacing is interesting and could indicate the presence of a more solid structure, for example a wattle or wood-panelled fence. The large assemblage of daub is relevant to this discussion as it could perhaps indicate that they were associated with a wattle and daub structure. That said, as set out above, it is perhaps more probable that this material heralded from one of the kilns, which made copious use of daub. Although the specific function of the fence is uncertain, one possibility, given its linear yet relatively solid nature, is a wind break or screen that perhaps defined an external work area. The latter interpretation may be more probable as the prevailing wind direction in south-east England is west to east, thus making this north-west–south-east aligned structure less effective as a windbreak than a north–south orientated fence would have been.

*A collection of pits or post-built structures*

*Group 87: [10018], (10019); [10025], (10026); [10166], (10165); [10168], (10167); [10186], (10185); [10188], (10187); [10191], (10190); [10193], (10192); Figure 32*

- 6.214 A collection of eight circular features that may represent pits or postholes were uncovered in the southern end of Area 10 to the north of a probable contemporary boundary ditch [10020] / [10048] / [10112] / [10162] (Group 88, see above). The features were variably sized, being between 0.82m and 0.30m in diameter and 0.07m and 0.34m in depth. They were infilled with between one and two deposits of silty material that collectively yielded an assemblage of 23 fragments of pottery, most of which pertained to the Iron Age, however four sherds of Late Saxon pottery were also present, thus suggesting that these apparently related features may pertain to that later period. Pit [10018] also yielded 64.9g of tapped slag, pit [10167] produced 13.4g of unclassified iron slag and 28.4g of Iron Age grey, pit [10180] produced 6g of runned slag and 4.9g of unclassified iron slag, pit [10185] yielded 1.9g of unclassified iron slag and pit [10188] contained 0.6g of runned slag. The presence of this material suggests that these features were infilled with a component of industrial waste. This in turn suggests that metalworking may have taken place in the vicinity of these features during this period.
- 6.215 Two clear north-west–south-east rows were formed by [10168] / [10166] and [10193] / [10186] / [10182], while a third may be represented by [10191] / [10180]. At least two rows trending north-east–south-west were additionally formed by [10182] / [10180] / [10188] and [10168] / [10193] / [10191], while a third row may be represented by [10166] / [10186]. Together, these features therefore appear to have formed a rough grid pattern that covered a total area of 15.2m north-east–south-west by 16.6m north-east–south-west. This suggests, but does not definitively prove, that they represent the remains of a post-built structure or a collection of adjacent post-built structures such as timber buildings or animal corrals.

## Area 7

### A probable building and a possible hearth

Group 61: [7033], (7032); [7029], (7028); [7027], (7026); [7017], (7016), [7021], (7020); [7019], (7018); [7007], (7006); [7023], (7022); [7005] (7004); [7003], (7058); [7013], (7012); [7011], (7010); [7015], (7014); Figure 17; Group 186: [7009], (7008); Group 62: (7034), [7035]; Figure 17

- 6.216 A collection of 13 small, circular features were uncovered in the south-western end of Area 9, collated here as Group 61. They were between 0.21m and 0.45m in diameter and were no more than 0.20m deep. In plan they appeared to form a sub-rectangular structure, the long-axis of which was orientated north-east–south-west, and as such they have been interpreted as postholes. The friable, silty fills that they contained ranged in colour from mid yellowish grey to a dark reddish brown. These deposits may represent a combination of the degraded remains of posts that decayed *in situ* and the backfill that was deposited around them.
- 6.217 The postholes were not securely dated through artefactual evidence. A small quantity of pottery was collectively recovered from Group 61 in the form of six small sherds that at this stage have been dated to the earlier part of the Iron Age period. Three fragments of daub of probable prehistoric to medieval date were also recovered, as was a small quantity of prehistoric worked flint. This small collection of artefacts could therefore date the construction of the postholes to a far earlier period than the evidence presented here otherwise suggests, but as set out in the paragraphs that follow, the morphology of this putative building has little in common with Iron Age structures in this part of Britain. Instead, it closely resembles the expected footprint of a well-known Late Saxon building type, namely a long hall. The structure was also positioned near a well-dated zone of Early medieval activity on the site that was centered around the kilns (situated c. 28m to the south-east of this possible long hall). It should also be noted that on occasion it can be hard to differentiate between certain forms of Iron Age and Saxon pottery (for example see Beverton 2012, 11) and as such it may be prudent to take the context of discovery of the pottery from this feature into consideration should further work be undertaken on the assemblage at the publication stage.
- 6.218 Four postholes within Group 61 were aligned with a larger sub-circular pit, [7009] (Group 186), that was up to 1.24m wide and up to 0.46m deep (Plate 28). This larger pit could represent a robber cut for the removal of a post that was dug after this putative structure fell out of use or alternatively a post pit. The fill of the pit was found to contain residual Roman pottery and a small quantity of building material post-dating 1450 that is presumed to be intrusive in this context. That said, the possibility that Group 186 belongs to a later period of activity on the site cannot be entirely ruled out at this stage.





*Plate 28: Post pit or robber cut [7009] (Group 186). Photograph faces east. Scale 0.5m.*

- 6.219 Pit [7009] and postholes [7011], [7013], [7003] and [7017] (listed here from the south-west to the north-east) formed a row of features that trended north-east–south-west but also exhibited a gentle bow towards the west in plan. These features have been interpreted as the surviving remnants of the outer, western side of a poorly preserved long hall. Excavated examples of such buildings possess a strikingly similar footprint, being wider towards the middle, while tapering gently towards each end. As noted by Hamerow, emphasis appears to have been placed on standardizing the dimensions of such buildings, which are typically between 23m and 25m in length (Hamerow 2012, 48, fig. 2.9). The structure under discussion here falls within this bracket in terms of its length, which amounts to c.23.2m.
- 6.220 A row of postholes were arranged at a right-angle to the outer wall, formed by [7023], [7007], and [7019], which could have formed an internal dividing wall within this building. Postholes [7029] and [7031] could represent another internal division towards the northern end of the structure. If this interpretation is correct, then the hall would have been divided into three rooms, the internal dimensions of which were as follows:
- North-east room: c. 3.58m x 3.80m or more
  - Central room: c. 10.1m by 4.30m or more
  - South-west room: c. 9.2m by 3.62m or more
- 6.221 Some long halls appear to have been characterised by one large room, however others were divided in a similar way to this, for example at Sulgrave, Goltho and Bicester where between two and four unequally sized rooms were noted (Hamerow 2012, 48; Hamerow 2011, fig. 97).
- 6.222 The construction technique used to build this putative long hall, that of posts set into individual postholes, was used throughout the Late Saxon period. That said, other construction techniques, such as sill beams and construction trenches into which posts were driven, were more normative for most of that period (Hamerow 2011, 131). The use of posts without construction trenches was more dominant during the Middle Saxon period before regaining popularity in the 11th century as the Late Saxon period drew to a close (Hamerow 2011, 131). It should be remembered, however, that in this case the poor preservation of the structure means that any associated construction trenches into which the posts were perhaps originally

driven may not have survived, thus limiting the extent to which the structure can be dated through analysis of the construction methods used.

- 6.223 Solitary posthole [7015] (Plate 29) was offset to the west of the external wall of the building by a distance of c.1.90m. The purpose of this feature is uncertain, one possibility being that it represents the only surviving element of an associated external structure, for example a fence. A precedent for a Saxon hall that was augmented by such an external feature can be found in Building A1 at Cowdery's Down (Hamerow 2011, 137, fig. 9.6).



Plate 29: Posthole [7015] (Group 61). Photograph faces east. Scale 0.5m.

- 6.224 The remaining postholes appeared to be internal to this putative long hall but did not appear to form any obvious alignments. Examples of such isolated features within long halls exist elsewhere, for example at Sulgrave and Bicester (Hamerow 2012, 48). They are usually interpreted as representing the remains of internal fixtures, such as supports for benches (*ibid.*).
- 6.225 A sub-circular feature with a maximum width of 0.73m and a maximum depth of 0.12m (Group 62) was observed towards the northern end of what has been interpreted here as the central room of the hall. Notably, the fill of the feature contained very frequent angular inclusions of ragstone, which could represent the remnants of a masonry lining. The function of this enigmatic pit remains uncertain, however one possibility is that it represents the poorly preserved base of a hearth. Although no obvious signs of burning survived, other examples of hearths demonstrate that they sometimes sat above a crude lining of masonry, for example at West Stow, where recycled Roman CBM was used for the purpose (Hamerow 2012, 43). Despite an assumption by scholars that long halls almost certainly contained substantial hearths, they rarely survive, presumably due to the loss of occupation surfaces to ploughing and weathering (Hamerow 2012, 43). This alone could explain the lack of any apparent burning in this case.
- 6.226 Aberrations exist, however the normative position of a hearth within a long hall was central to the width of the building, though not necessarily the length (Hamerow 2012, 43). Consequently, if Group 62 does represent a hearth, then it provides a frame of reference from which the full dimensions of the building can be extrapolated. A width of c. 5m is suggested towards the north-eastern and south-western ends of the building, broadening to c. 5.48m towards the center. This again falls within the anticipated and somewhat *pro forma* dimensions of a Late Saxon

long hall, which tend to vary between 5m and 6m in width, broadening slightly towards the center (Hamerow 2012, 48, fig. 2.9).

- 6.227 Further work is required to confirm, refute or modify the formative conclusions that are presented in the paragraphs above, including further consideration of other earthfast structures pertaining to different periods, in particular (give the nature of the scant dating evidence retrieved from Group 61) the earlier part of the Iron Age as well as the Late Saxon period.
- 6.228 As set out in Period 2 (above) a cremation at present dated to the LIA (Period 2.1) could alternatively represent a foundation deposit associated with this putative hall. Carbon dating of that feature could help to not only resolve its age and function but also, were it to pertain to the Saxon period, could be used to support the 'hall' hypothesis presented here.

#### *Area 11*

##### *A boundary ditch*

*Group 100: [11033], (11031), (11032), (11033); Figure 39*

- 6.229 A probable farmland boundary ditch was uncovered in Trench 24 towards the southern corner of Area 11. The feature was 1.2m wide, continuing beyond the edges of the evaluation trench to the north-east and south-west. The feature had been infilled with three silty deposits that yielded 15 sherds of Middle Saxon pottery and two sherds of Late Saxon pottery pertaining to the period AD 850–1050. This suggests that this boundary may represent a Saxon feature that perhaps fell out of use and was infilled during the Late Saxon period.

#### **Period 5.2: Subsequent Late Saxon to Saxo-Norman Activity (9th to 11th Century AD)**

##### *Miscellaneous pitting or the poorly preserved remnants of a wooden structure*

*Group 90: [10145], (10144); [10147], (10146); [10149], (10148); [10158], (10157); [10160], (10159); [10164], (10163); Figure 32*

- 6.230 A collection of four pits or postholes and a gully remnant were uncovered in the southern part of Area 10, collated here as Group 90. Included in this group was pit or posthole [10160], which truncated the infill of boundary ditch [10020] / [10048] / [10112] / [10162] (Group 88, Period 5.1, see above). This suggests that this land boundary had fallen out of use by the time this collection of potentially related features was created, hence their inclusion in this later sub-period.
- 6.231 The pits or postholes, [10160], [10164], [10145] and [10147], were roughly circular with similar diameters that ranged between 0.80m and 0.72m and similar depths that varied between 0.20m and 0.10m. The potentially associated gully was up to 0.42m wide and up to 0.16m deep. It was interpreted on site as representing the remnants of a possible beam slot for an earthfast building, an interpretation that is made more plausible by the fact that it approximately aligns with posthole [10164] to the south-east and posthole [10145] to the northwest. Posthole [10160] was also situated at an approximate right angle to this collection of features, in line with [10164] to the south-west. Together these features are presumed to represent the poorly preserved remains of a timber structure. Posthole [10147] could either form part of this same structure or could instead represent an unrelated feature to the south-west.

- 6.232 The fills of this collection of features collectively yielded five sherds of Late Saxon pottery dating to the period AD 850–1050, as well as a lesser quantity of Iron Age to Roman material, presumed to be residual in these contexts. Taken together, this evidence suggests that this possible timber structure was built during that time period. Pits or postholes [10145], [10147], [10157], [10160] and [10163] also respectively produced 94.6g, 7.3g, 24.4g, 308.8g and 1045.7g of slag, including hammerscale, runned slag, tapped slag and slag spheres, thus suggesting that these features were infilled with a component of metalworking waste, presumably produced nearby during this period.

#### Two possible stakeholes

*Group 91: [10152], (10151); [10156], (10155); Figure 32*

- 6.233 Two small stakeholes appeared to be internal to the possible timber structure defined by Group 90 (see above), collated here as Group 91. It is therefore possible that they may be associated with that structure, however this potential association is uncertain. No dating evidence was recovered from the stakeholes.

### **Period 6: Medieval to Early Post-Medieval Activity (11th to 17th Century)**

- 6.234 A concentration of activity broadly dated to the later medieval period to the early post-medieval period (11th to 17th century) was identified in Area 8 in the south-west corner of the site, while lesser amounts of activity pertaining to this period were noted in Areas 4, 7 and 10. The bulk of this evidence appears to be indicative of pastoral or agricultural land use during this period, while some features noted in Area 8 could represent peripheral settlement activity in the form of rubbish pitting and perhaps outbuildings. The focus of activity on the site therefore appears to have migrated westwards between the Late Saxon and the later medieval period, closer to the historic nucleus of the existing village of Sevington.

#### Area 4

#### A field boundary

*Group 19: construction and use: [4009] / [4024] / [4026]; [4032], (4031); [4028], (4027); Figure 5; Figure 6, Section 12.3*

- 6.235 A ditch orientated north-east–south-west crossed the central portion of Area 4, extending beyond the edges of the excavation to the north and south, [4009] / [4024] / [4026]; [4032] (Group 19; Plates 30 and 31). The feature was over 28.2m long, up to 0.60m wide and up to 0.53m deep. It appears to represent a field boundary.
- 6.236 The ditch may have been augmented by one or more fence lines, as suggested by the presented of probable postholes [4032] to the west of the northern end of the ditch and [4028] (Figure 6, Section 12.3; Plate 31) to the east of the central section of the feature. If so, little of trace of these fences have survived.





*Plate 30: Ditch slot [4009] (Group 19); photograph faces north; scale 1m*



*Plate 31: Ditch [4026] and associated posthole [4028] (Group 19). Photograph faces north. Scale 1m.*

*Group 164: disuse: (4007) / (4008) / (4023) / (4025)*

- 6.237 After this boundary fell out of use it was infilled with between one and two silty fills that cumulatively produced five fragments of CBM pertaining to the period 1450–1700 AD. This suggests that the boundary fell out of use between the late medieval and early post-medieval periods.

#### *Area 7*

#### *An isolated pit*

*Group 188: [7043], (7040); not illustrated*

- 6.238 An isolated rubbish pit [7043] (Group 188) appeared to partially truncate an earlier feature, [7063] (see Group 188, Period 2.1, above) in the central section of Area 7. The circular pit possessed a diameter of 2.5m and a depth of 0.40m and had been infilled with a single deposit

of silty clay that yielded 72 fragments of CBM pertaining to the period 1450–1700 and a large assemblage of charcoal that was presumably dumped within the feature.

- 6.239 That said, the dating evidence from this feature was unusually mixed, given that it also yielded a very large quantity of pottery pertaining to the EIA to MIA transition (412 sherds in total), as well as an assemblage of prehistoric worked flint that included seven flakes, three blades, nine spalls, one core and a spherical hammerstone. A copper alloy bronze pin was also present, that may represent the shaft of a hair pin or the pin from a bow brooch. It is possible that this material heralds from the underlying feature [7063], having been incorporated in this later pit as the result of an excavation error. Burnt residue was identified on a sherd of pottery from the pit, which could be put forward for carbon dating.

## Area 10

### An area of hard standing

*Group 85: (10142) / (10143) / (10015) / (10051) / (10142) / (10053), Group 86: (10012) / (10013) / (10014) / (10017) / (10050) / (10049) / (10052) and Group 77: (10251) / (10239) / (10128) / (10126); not illustrated*

- 6.240 After the Late Saxon corn drying kilns in Area 10 had fallen out of use and been demolished, a rubble rich layer was lain across them, collated here as Groups 77, 85 and 86 (recorded in section only). This fragmentary layer was up to 0.30m thick and may have originally covered an area that was up to c. 20m long and up to c. 15m wide. It was composed of compacted CBM from which 168 fragments of brick and tile and 155 fragments of daub were sampled, some of which possessed wattle impressions, thus suggesting the daub derived from a wattle and daub structure. While some daub could have come from the demolished kilns, the brick and tile fragments suggest a later date of formation pertaining to the period 1450–1700. Also present within the layer were 44 nails, at least two of which were hobnails, three holdfasts (used to join two pieces of wood together; RF 59, RF 60 and one bulk find), a complete medieval iron hammer head, RF 23, an incomplete snaffle bit, RF 39, an incomplete bow brooch of probable LIA to early Roman date, RF 24, a copper-alloy early-medieval strap end, RF 158, which stylistically dates to c. AD 750-1100 and RF 86, an incomplete buckle that was missing its pin. The pin may be represented by RF 173 that was also recovered from this context. Also present was an iron folding knife with a bone handle, RF 33, three near-complete knives, RF 40, RF 63 and RF 174, two complete Manning Type 19 knives, RF 28 and RF 79, a clamp / hinge pivot, two mounts, RF 42 and RF 75, and two binding strips RF 26 and RF 24. As many as 48 metal object of uncertain function were recovered from that included iron loops <RF 154>, fragments of iron sheet metal (RF 83, RF 159, RF 146), hooks (RF 62, RF 84 and RF 89) and a possible strike a light, RF 77. A total of 781.6g of tapped slag, 485.1g of unclassified iron slag, a plano-convex cake of slag (330.9g) and 8g of fuel-ash slag were also present.
- 6.241 The layer is thought to represent an area of late medieval or early post-medieval hard standing. It may also have functioned as a levelling layer, as Group 77 appeared to infill a series of shallow depressions or gullies in the vicinity of former Kiln 4.
- 6.242 The presence of this surface demonstrates that the former location of the Late Saxon corn dryers continued to be set aside from the surrounding farmland for a different purpose during this period. Exactly what the area was used for at this time remains uncertain, however

whatever tasks were undertaken here evidently benefited from the presence of a more consolidated ground surface. This could be taken to suggest that a relatively high level of traction took place in this part of Area 10 during that period, for example through the back-and-forth movement of people, farm animals or carts, an assertion that is perhaps supported by the discovery of the snaffle bit. The presence of so many discarded tools and metal fastenings in this layer (six knives, a hammer head, the clam / hinge pivot, four holdfasts, 44 nails and 48 metal objects of uncertain function) and the iron slag also points towards an external work area of some description, however these objects need to be better dated in order to determine whether they pertain to this or an earlier period. A continued role in crop processing is one of numerous possible functions for this area that is suggested here owing to the nature of land use in this area of the site during the earlier part of the medieval period. An association with carpentry and perhaps other cottage industries including smithing is also distinctly possible, given the presence of the nails, holdfasts, mounds, binding strips, the hammer, the pivot, the strike a light and the metal slag.

## Area 8

### Soil formation

*Group 165: (8016); Group 147: (8153) / (8002); Figure 24, Section 113.2*

- 6.243 A humic rich layer of silty clay was noted at the base of the sequence in Area 8, through which numerous late medieval to early post-medieval features were cut. The layer contained one residual sherd of pottery dated to the period 1250–1350 and 26 sherds of later pottery pertaining to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. A small quantity of residual worked flint was also present. The layer may therefore represent an episode of soil formation dating to the late medieval period.

### Mid-11th to mid-14th century pitting activity

*Group 183: [8015], (8014); [8029], (8026), (8027); [8031], (8030); [8036], (8035), (8034); [8055], (8091); [8092], (8103); [8105], (8104); [8135], (8134), (8135); [8146], (8145); [8159], (8158); [8162] / [8122], (8161), (8121), (8160); [8078], (8084); Figure 19–21; Figure 23, Section 63.3*

- 6.244 The possible soil horizon was truncated by a collection of 12 pits, collated here as Group 183. These circular to sub-ovoid features were variably sized, ranging in length from 2.06m to 0.55m, in width from 1.35m to 0.20m and in depth from 0.12m to 0.70m. They each contained between one and two fills, some of which were dark in colour and rich in clay (e.g. [8087] Plate 32), thus suggesting they perhaps amassed, at least in part, through natural silting in a wet environment. Others appeared lighter with sandier fills less suggestive of silting (e.g. [8015], Plate 34) Late medieval pottery was either recovered from these pits, or else they possessed stratigraphic relationships with later ditches that suggest they pertain to the earlier part of this period. The pit with the earliest possible date of infilling, [8105], contained pottery dating to 1050–1150, while the latest dated example, elongated pit [8162] / [8122], contained pottery dated to the period 1225–1325. The remaining features contained material that fell within these two extremes.
- 6.245 Taken together, this evidence suggests that this collection of features was created gradually over a time period that spanned the mid-11th century through to the early 14<sup>th</sup>-century. Given the range of sizes and shapes of the pits under discussion here, coupled with the range of dating evidence recovered, it seems probable that they were dug for a variety of purposes.

Although specific functions cannot be proven from the available evidence, such miscellaneous pitting activity tends to be found around the peripheries of settled areas pertaining to this period and can be related to small-scale quarrying, rubbish pitting and small-scale industry (Haslam and Shepherd, forthcoming). Noteworthy finds recovered included five small pieces of leather trimming waste and 20.8g of vitrified ceramic from primary fill (8161) of pit [8162], which probably represents manufacturing waste from nearby industries.



*Plate 32: Section through pit [8078] (Group 183). Photograph looks south. Scale 2m.*

#### Mid-12th–13th-century ditches

##### *Group 128 [8172], (8171); Figure 20*

- 6.246 A ditch orientated north-west–south-east was uncovered in the north-eastern side of Area 8, [8172] (Group 128). The feature was over 8.79m long, continuing beyond the limit of the excavation to the south-east and terminating in a butt end to the north-west. It was up to 1.33m wide and up to 0.72m deep and probably formed a farmland boundary ditch. The feature was infilled with a single deposit from which five sherds of pottery dating to the period AD 1150–1250 were recovered, along with a single iron nail, a gilded strap end of uncertain date, RF 87, and four wooden plank fragments. This suggests that this ditch was lost from the landscape between the mid-12th and mid-13th centuries, when it was infilled with material that included dumped domestic waste.

##### *Group 123: [8025] / [8023], (8022), (8024); Figure 20*

- 6.247 One of the stratigraphically earliest ditches noted in the north-western part of Area 8 survived for a length of 4.37m and was composed of two ditch fragments, [8025] and [8023] (Group 123), that no doubt once formed part of the same feature. The surviving portion of the ditch was approximately orientated east–west, while the eastern end of kinked towards the north before being truncated in full by a later recut (Group 177, discussed subsequently).
- 6.248 The ditch was infilled with a single deposit from which 76 fragments of pottery dating to the periods 1225–1325 and 1250–1300 were retrieved. Taken together, this evidence suggests that this feature fell out of use and was infilled between AD 1250 and the end of the 13th century.



*Group 124: [8086] / [8118] / [8120] / [8126], (8085) / (8117) / (8119) / (8125); Figure 19*

- 6.249 A curvilinear ditch was uncovered in the north-western side of Area 8, [8086] / [8118] / [8120] / [8126] (Group 124). It was 17.3m long as seen and was up to 0.56m wide and up to 0.26m deep. The feature trended east–west but arced gently northwards towards the center before bending back towards the south. Its eastern end was truncated by a later ditch, as was the central portion of the feature, while the far western end continued beyond the limit of the excavation. The ditch was infilled with a single deposit from which 44 sherds of medieval pottery were recovered that variously pertained to the periods AD 1100–1175, 1150–1250 and 1200–1275. Taken together, the overlapping date ranges of this large pottery assemblage suggest that the ditch more probably fell out of use during the earlier part of the 13th century. That said, 10 small pieces of CBM dating to the period 1450–1700 were also present. This could suggest a later date of infilling, however it seems more probable that they are residual in this context.

*Mid- to late 13th century ditches*

*Group 125: [8169] / [8077] / [8114] / [8133] / [8094] / [8107] / [8090] / [8109] / [8082], (8076) / (8081) / (8089) / (8093) / (8106) / (8108) / (8113) / (8132) / (8168); Figure 20*

- 6.250 A sinuous ditch orientated roughly north–south ran down the central section of Area 8, [8169] / [8077] / [8114] / [8133] / [8094] / [8107] / [8090] / [8109] / [8082] (Group 125; Plate 33). The feature was 46.4m long, up to 1.90m wide and up to 0.62m deep and had been infilled with a single deposit from which 22 fragments of later medieval pottery were recovered, the latest of which pertained to the period 1200–1275. Four small fragments of CBM dated to 1450–1700 were also present, which are probably intrusive, as was a small quantity of residual worked flint. It must also have been created after an earlier 13th-century ditch was infilled (Group 124, see above), which it truncated, thus suggesting it perhaps pertains to the mid- to late 13th century. This date range is further refined by the fact that this feature was itself truncated by a probable mid-13th to mid-14th-century feature, thus strongly suggesting a mid- to late 13th century date of infilling. Also present within the ditch was a component of dumped, worked wood, including the remains of four planks, one stake tip and a fragment of wood with a single facet down one face.



*Plate 33: Ditch slot [8082] (Group 125). Photograph faces north. Scale 2m.*

Mid- 13th to mid-14th-century ditch

*Group 116: [8019] / [8065] / [8067] / [8144] / [8151] / [8167], (8018) / (8064) / (8066) / (8143) / (8149) / (8150) / (8166); Figure 19*

- 6.251 A long, thin ditch ran across the north-central portion of Area 8, [8019] / [8065] / [8067] / [8144] / [8151] / [8167] (Group 116). It was orientated north-east–south-west and was over 32.8m long as seen, continuing beyond the limits of the excavation to the east and west. The feature was up to 1m wide and up to 0.25m deep and had been infilled with a single deposit from which 152 sherds of pottery spot-dated to the period AD 1225–1350 were recovered, as was one intrusive fragment of CBM pertaining to the period AD 1450–1700 and an iron blade, interpreted as a probable cleaver. The feature also truncated a mid-13<sup>th</sup>-century ditch (see Group 125, above), which it must post-date. Taken together, this evidence cumulatively suggests that this ditch was infilled during the late 13th century or the first half of the 14th century.

Later mid-13th to mid-14-century ditch

*Group 117: [8021] / [8011] / [8033] / [8069] / [8008], (8020) / (8010) / (8032) / (8068) / (8007); Figure 19; Figure 20*

- 6.252 The ditch discussed above (Group 116) was truncated by [8021] / [8011] / [8033] / [8069] / [8008] (Group 117; Plate 34), a northeast–southwest ditch that also truncated or recut ditch [8023] (Group 123, above). The ditch survived for a length of 21.6m, lensing out to the north and south. It was up to 0.86m wide and up to 0.75m deep and contained a single fill from which 368 sherds of pottery of medieval date were recovered, the latest of which dated to the period AD 1250–1350. This again suggests that this ditch fell out of use during the latter part of the 13<sup>th</sup> century or the earlier part of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, but at a later point to Group 116 (see above). Also present was a large charcoal assemblage and 143.6g of unclassified iron slag, the presence of which suggests industrial activity in the vicinity of the feature during this period. The presence of the slag, pottery and charcoal also together suggest that the ditch was infilled with material that included a component of industrial and domestic waste when it fell out of use as a land boundary.



*Plate 34: Ditch slot [8021] (Group 117) and pit [8015] (Group 183)*

Mid-14th century or later ditches

*Group 142: [8049] / [8131] / [8005] / [8013]; (8048) / (8130) / (8004) / (8012); Figure 19*

- 6.253 A stratigraphically early north-west–south-east orientated ditch was uncovered in the north-east corner of Area 8, [8049] / [8131] / [8005] / [8013] (Plate 35). The feature was 18.6m long as seen, continuing beyond the limit of excavation to the south-east and lensing out to the north-west. It was up to 0.5m wide and 0.60m deep and had been infilled with a single deposit from which four sherds of medieval pottery were recovered, variously pertaining to the periods AD 1225–1350 and 1125–1225, as were five pieces of CBM dating to the period 1450–1700. This suggests that this feature may have fallen out of use during the late medieval or early post-medieval period, post-1450.



*Plate 35: Ditch [8013] (Group 142). Photograph faces south-east. Scale 2m.*

*Group 141: [8129] / [8051], (8050) / (8128); Group 126: [8083] / [8088], (8123) / (8074); Figure 19*

- 6.254 Ditch [8049] / [8131] / [8005] / [8013] appears to have been recut as [8129] / [8051] (Group 141). The recut was up to 0.65m wide and up to 0.22m deep and had been truncated to the north-west by a later feature. It appeared to continue on the opposite side of that later truncation for a further 4.43m as [8083] / [8088] (Group 126) before lensing out to the north-west.
- 6.255 The southern part of the feature was infilled with a single deposit from which two probable residual sherds of pottery dating to the period 1200–1325 were recovered, as were four sherds of CBM dating to the period 1450–1700. The north-western section (Group 126) yielded one sherd of probable residual pottery dated to 1200–1325. Taken together, this dating evidence suggests that this feature fell out of use during the later medieval or early post-medieval period, probably after 1450.

Mid- to late 14th-century marsh

*Group 130: [8042], (8041); Figure 19*

- 6.256 A deposit of peat was found in the northern corner of Area 8 that appeared to have amassed within a sub-rectangular depression that continued beyond the edge of the excavation to the

north. The deposit was 2.5m long and 0.45m wide as seen, with a thickness of 0.56m. Two exploratory slots were excavated through it. A large assemblage of pottery was recovered from the layer that possessed a mixed date range spanning the 13th–17th centuries. This was refined by radiocarbon dating, which suggested that the deposit amassed during the 14th century, more probably between 1327–1384calAD. A total of 35 fragments of willow were also recovered from the deposit, which may represent twigs from a nearby tree that made their way into this peat-like layer through natural processes.

- 6.257 A monolith sample was taken through this deposit that was subjected to pollen, diatom and ostracod analysis. The latter were too poorly preserved to yield good results however, an acceptable pollen profile was created. It was found to be broadly homogenous, with no local pollen assemblage zones specified, suggesting an overall stable environment over the period of sediment accumulation (c. 1327-1384calAD). Overall, the assemblage demonstrated the former presence of a local environment dominated by herbaceous taxa, whereby herbs comprised up to 87% of the total pollen values. Ferns were identified in small quantities within the lower part of the profile, up to 22% (0.21-0.22m). Trees and shrubs were present in small quantities, with a maximum presence (40%) within the upper profile due to a peak in willow (*Salix*) pollen.
- 6.258 On site vegetation throughout the period of deposition probably included willow (*Salix*). Accompanying willow were species of marsh herbs from fen ground flora, including sedges (*Cyperaceae*), grasses (*Poaceae*), hemlock water dropwort (*Oenanthe* sp.), meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), and greater burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*). Though poorly preserved, the ostracods that were present suggested a landscape studded by freshwater streams and ponds. Taken together, this suggests the presence of willow carr on this site at a local level during the 14th century. A noteworthy discovery was that cannabis type pollen was found throughout the sequence, with a particular concentration in the upper sequence. This suggests that *Cannabis sativa* and / or hops (*Humulus lupulus*) were perhaps cultivated locally, perhaps for rope making and brewing respectively. The pollen assemblage also suggested that the wider environment was dominated by farmland characterised by a mixed agricultural economy. Relatively few trees appear to have studded that open landscape.

#### Ditches of mid-15th–16th-century date

Group 134: [8165] / [8057] / [8096] / [8157] / [8071] / [8112] / [8080] / [8116] / [8053], (8072) / (8056) / (8095) / (8156) / (8070) / (8164) / (8111) / (8163) / (8079) / (8115) / (8052); Figure 19–20 and Group 143: [8176] / [8180] / [8190] / [8192] / [8196], (8175) / (8179) / (8189) / (8191) / (8195); Figure 20–21

- 6.259 A long, curvilinear ditch was identified in the northern part of Area 8, [8165] / [8057] / [8096] / [8157] / [8071] / [8112] / [8080] / [8116] / [8053] (Group 134). It ran from the western limit of excavation in a westerly direction for a distance of 12.2m, before kinking gradually southwards over a further distance of 11.6m. From there it continued in a south-westerly direction for a distance of 29.8m before being truncated by a complex of later east–west ditches. It then appeared to continue on the opposite side of that complex of ditches for a further 50.3m as [8176] / [8180] / [8190] / [8192] / [8196] (Group 143). The feature was up to 2m wide and up to 1.10m deep.



- 6.260 The northern part of the ditch (Group 134) contained between one and two fills from which 36 fragments of pottery were retrieved, the latest of which dated to the 14th–16th century. Four fragments of CBM were also present pertaining to the period 1450–1700, as were five iron nails, two clay tobacco pipe stems and trace amounts of charcoal (less than 0.1g). The southern part of the ditch (Group 143) contained eight sherds of medieval pottery, the latest of which pertained to the period 1425–1525. A large assemblage of cereal grains dominated by bread / club wheat were also recovered from the fills of this feature. Taken together, this suggests that this boundary fell out of use between c. 1450 and the 16th century and was infilled with material that included a component of deliberately dumped domestic waste.

*Group 135: [8098], (8097), not illustrated*

- 6.261 Ditch [8073] / [8165] / [8057] / [8096] / [8157] / [8071] / [8112] / [8080] / [8116] / [8053] (Group 134) was subsequently partially recut as [8098]. This recut was recognized in one slot only (recorded in section 81.2). It was up to 1.10m wide and up to 0.30m deep and had been infilled with a single deposit from which no finds were recovered.

*Group 136: [8140] / [8155] / [8142] / [8100], (8139) / (8154) / (8099) / (8141) and Group 144: [8194] / [8178] / [8206], (8193) / (8205), (8181), (8177); Figure 23, Section 109.1*

- 6.262 The boundary was recut for the third and final time as [8140] / [8155] / [8142] / [8100] (Group 136) to the north and [8194] / [8178] / [8206] (Group 144) to the south. This incarnation of the feature was up to 0.50m wide and 0.25m deep and was infilled with a single silty deposit that yielded one sherd of residual pottery pertaining to the period 1050–1150, seven sherds of CBM dating to 1450–1700 and 17 nails of uncertain date.

#### *A mid-15th to 16th-century post-built structure?*

*Group 158: [8183], (8182); [8185], (8184); [8188], (8187); driven stakes (8203); Figure 20; Figure 24, Section 113.2*

- 6.263 A collection of three postholes and six stakeholes were identified in the southern part of Area 8, collated here as Group 158. The former possessed diameters of 0.55m to 0.70m and depths up to 0.55m, while the latter possessed diameters of up to 0.18m and depths up to 0.35m. They together appear to have roughly delineated a rectangular area that was 14.7m north-west–south-east by c. 7.05m north-east–south-west. This area straddled an earlier ditch (see Group 134, above), thus suggesting that this feature had fallen out of use and been infilled by the time that these postholes and stakeholes were created.

#### *A conglomeration of intercutting east–west ditches of mid-15th to 17th-century date*

- 6.264 A series of intercutting east–west ditches, some of which appeared to have been revetted with wattle work, were uncovered in the central portion of Area 8 (Figure 20). It is reasonable to presume that these features represent successive incarnations of the same landscape feature and that they therefore fulfilled similar functions. Four slots were excavated through this conglomeration of features and the deposits were variously recorded in detail in plan and / or section.
- 6.265 The results of this exercise are described in the paragraphs that follow. It is important to note, however, that due to similarities in the nature of certain fills and layer (8153) (Group 147), some

inconsistencies exist in the stratigraphic narrative as recorded between and sometimes within slots. These are highlighted in the ensuing narrative. The phasing presented below will also need to be revised and re-grouped during the analysis phase in order to better correlate the relationships between ditches and layers that ran between excavated slots.

*Ditches recorded in the western slot: Section 117.1 (Figure 20; Figure 25)*

*Group 156: [8262], (8259), (8260), (8261); Plan 116, Figure 22; Figure 25, Section 117.1*

- 6.266 Ditch [8262] ran through the northern half of the western slot. It was 3.10m wide and up to 1.14m deep (Plan 116, Figure 22). It was infilled with three clay-rich fills from which 15 sherds of pottery pertaining to the period 1500–1550 were recovered, along with 34 sherds of CBM dating to the period 1450–1700. Also present were two iron nails, a fragment of 15th to 17th-century window glass and a similarly dated glass shatter sherd. Taken together, this suggests that this ditch was infilled during the early post-medieval period after 1500. It may be the same as Group 155 in the central slot (discussed subsequently), however this is called into question by the fact that the contents of that feature were more suggestive of a 17th-century date of infilling.

*A probable fence line: Group 206: [8258], (8257), (8256); Figure 22, Plan 116; Section 117.1*

- 6.267 The next phase of activity within this slot appears to have involved the creation of a wooden fence, [8258] (Group 206). The construction cut for the fence was 0.36m wide and 0.32m deep. It was recorded as having been dug through the fills of ditch [8262] (Group 156). The fence itself was composed of one poorly preserved plank, only a few fragments of which survived. After the fence has been instated, the construction cut was infilled with a single deposit of dark brown clay that yielded two fragments of pottery, the latest of which dated to the period 1400–1525. This, coupled with the position of the feature in the stratigraphic sequence, suggests that it represents an early to mid-post-medieval land boundary. The fence is probably the same as Group 207 in the central slot (see below).

*A soil horizon and dump layer: Group 147: (8153); Figure 25, Section 117.1*

- 6.268 A layer, recorded as subsoil, was noted across this general area in multiple slots. Here the layer was up to 0.4m thick. The formation of the layer appears to be well dated, as it produced 94 sherds of pottery pertaining to the period 1425–1525. Also recovered were 25 pieces of CBM dating to the period 1450–1700, seven metal objects and one lead fragment. This suggests that this layer formed, at least in part, through the dumping of domestic waste during the earlier part of the post-medieval period. Its dark, humic-rich appearance does however suggest that subsequent pedogenesis may have taken place. The layer sealed the ditches previously discussed.

*Group 145: [8252], (8251); Plan 116, Figure 22; Figure 25, Section 117.1*

- 6.269 An east–west ditch was recorded in the southern part of the western slot, [8252] (Group 145) that appeared to truncate the post-medieval subsoil. It was 2m wide and up to 0.66m deep and had been infilled with a single deposit that yielded 452 sherds of pottery pertaining to the period AD 1350–1400 and 66 fragments of CBM, the latest of which were manufactured between 1450 and 1700. An iron pin that may represent a clothes pin of 14th-century or later date was also

present, SF 148, as were 16 nails. Taken together, this suggests that this feature was infilled with a deposit of domestic waste during the earlier part of the post-medieval period.

*Group 148: [8255], (8254), (8253); Plan 116, Figure 22; Figure 25, Section 117.1*

- 6.270 Ditch [8252] (see Group 145, above) was then recut as [8255]. This incarnation of the feature was up to 1.2m wide and over 1m long with a maximum depth of 0.40m. The feature was infilled with two silty clay deposits that together yielded 35 sherds of pottery, the latest of which dated to the period 1450–1550, and 18 fragments of CBM manufactured between 1450 and 1700. Also present was a post-medieval black glass bead that may be dress related and several glass shatter sherds that were not closely datable. Taken together, this evidence suggests that this feature fell out of use and was infilled during the earlier part of the post-medieval period. This feature may be the same as Group 154 in the central slot (discussed subsequently).

*Ditches and a fence line recorded in the central slot: (Figure 20; Figure 25; Section 119)*

*A 17th-century ditch? Group 155: [8250], (8254), (8249), (8248), (8247), (8246); Plan 116, Figure 22; Figure 25; Section 119*

- 6.271 A large ditch was noted at the base of the sequence in the northern side of the central slot, [8250] (Group 155). It was up to 2.49m wide and up to 1.02m deep with concave sides and a flattish base. After the feature fell out of use it was infilled with four deposits of silty clay and clayey silt that together produced five sherds of pottery, the latest of which dated to the period 1525–1600, 103 fragments of CBM dating to the period AD 1450–1700, one fragment of clay pipe pertaining to the period 1660–1680 and the remains of a wooden shovel or spade, RF 7. Also present were eight sherds of 15th to 17th-century glass, including window glass and vessel fragments, a leather shoe vamp that could be 19th century but could alternatively have been manufactured during an earlier period, the tip of a possible wooden stake, four wooden planks, at least six coopered stave fragments and notably the remains of a wooden bowl, RF 183. Taken together, this evidence suggests that this feature fell out of use during the mid-post-medieval period, perhaps during the later 16th or 17th century. It appears to have been infilled with a component of dumped domestic waste. The survival of the organic objects also demonstrates that this context must have been wet at the time of their deposition, remaining so into the modern era, and as such it may represent a drainage ditch. It may be the same as Group 156 in the northern slot (see above), however the dating evidence recovered could alternatively indicate that it represents a later recut or an entirely different feature.

*A later ditch or a continuation of [8250]? Group 154: [8242], (8241); Figure 22; Plan 118; Figure 25, Section 119*

- 6.272 The southern side of underlying ditch [8250] may then have been truncated by yet another ditch, [8242]. That said, the relationship between the lowest fill of [8242] and ditch [8250] could not be conclusively determined, while fill (8246) of [8250] appeared to seal fill (8241) of [8242]. It is therefore possible that [8242] and [8250] instead represent a single ditch (see Section 119, Figure 25).
- 6.273 This section of ditch was up to 2.60m wide and was infilled with a single clay-rich fill that yielded 231 sherds of pottery pertaining to the period 1525–1600. Also present were 55 pieces of CBM dating to the period 1450–1500, one metal spur, RF 10, one metal object and three sherds of

15th to 17th-century window glass. Taken together, this strongly suggests that this ditch fell out of use and was infilled during the earlier part of the post-medieval period.

- 6.274 This ditch is thought to be the same as [8250], however it should be noted that it could alternatively form a continuation of Group 148 in the western slot (see above). Further stratigraphic and spatial analysis is required to determine which of these possibilities is correct.

*A probable fence line: Group 207: [8245], (8243), (8244); Figure 22, Plan 102*

- 6.275 A wooden fence, (8243) (Group 206) was then erected within the confines of this slot. The construction cut for the fence was 0.35m wide and 0.30m deep. It was recorded as having been dug through the fills of ditch [8250] (Group 155). The fence itself was composed of several overlapping, poorly preserved planks that crossed the slot from east to west. After the fence has been instated, the construction cut was infilled with a single deposit of dark brown clay from which 49 fragments of CBM pertaining to the period 1450–1700 were recovered. This, coupled with the position of the feature in the stratigraphic sequence, suggests that it represents an early to mid-post-medieval land boundary. The fence probably represents a continuation of Group 206 in the northern slot (see above).

*A soil horizon and dump layer: Group 147: (8153); Figure 25, Section 119.1*

- 6.276 A soil horizon and dump layer then appeared to form across this area of the site, (8153), that sealed the earlier features. This layer has been described previously so will not be detailed again here, suffice to note that in this instance the layer was up to 0.45m thick.

*Group 205: [8240], (8239), (8264); Figure 25, Section 119.1*

- 6.277 Ditch [8242] (Group 154) was then recut as [8240], a 2.66m wide, 0.72m deep feature that was infilled with two clay-rich deposits that produced no dating evidence. As shown in Section 119 (Figure 25), stratigraphic inconsistencies characterized the relationship between this feature and subsoil / dump layer (8153). This is resolved if the 'subsoil layer' as recorded between lower fill (8264) and upper fill (8239) instead represents a secondary fill of this ditch that looked visually similar to (8153).

*The north-eastern slot: Figure 22, Plan 102 (north side) Section 112.1*

*Group 151: [8209], (8208), (8207), (8204), (8236); Figure 22, Plan 102, northern half; Figure 23, Sections 112.1 and 112.2*

- 6.278 A stratigraphically early pit or ditch terminus was found at the base of the sequence in the north-eastern slot, [8209] (Group 151). The feature occupied the western corner of the slot and was over 4.5m long and 3.5m wide as seen, with a depth in excess of 1.4m. Its size suggests that it may have been dug to quarry the underlying geology, for example for building stone. This interpretation is speculative, however, as the feature is not well understood.
- 6.279 The pit or ditch terminus was infilled with four silty fills that collectively yielded ten sherds of pottery pertaining to the period 1425–1550 and 48 fragments of CBM manufactured between 1450 and 1700. Also present was one sherd of 15th to 17th-century window glass and four wooden plank fragments. In addition to this, the organic-rich lower fill of this feature was radiocarbon dated to the period 1423–1459 cal AD, while the upper fill was radiocarbon dated



- to the period 1457-1631 cal AD. Taken together, this array of dating evidence suggests that this feature began to infill during the 1450s, before being infilled in its entirety prior to 1631AD.
- 6.280 A column sample taken through this backfill sequence was studied for pollen, ostracods and diatoms. This enabled the production of a pollen profile (described subsequently), the lower reaches of which were augmented by data supplied by ostracod analysis. Diatoms and ostracods were only preserved in the lower reaches of the sequence.
- 6.281 The lowest part of the sequence of (8208) / (8207), termed Zone 1 herein, suggested the presence of a generally open landscape with possible on-site or local cultivation and processing of cannabis (*Cannabis sativum*) or possibly hop (*Humulus*) species, in the vicinity of small areas of grassland, sedge fenland, possible willow woodland and damp, disturbed ground characterised by ditches. The lower deposits dating to the period 1423–1459 cal AD were dominated by grass (*Poaceae*) species at around 45%, which declined to c. 20% by the end of this first pollen zone. This decline was accompanied by a significant increase in the presence of cannabis-type pollen from 15% to almost 60%. Tree pollen was found in low quantities, though a peak of *Corylus avellana* (hazel)-type pollen was identified at the base of the zone at 20%. Ostracod and diatom analysis suggested that a range of freshwater environments, most likely streams and ponds fed by springs, studded the landscape at this time.
- 6.282 The upper sequence of (8208) / (8207), termed Zone 2 herein, was characterised by a steady dominance of grasses at around 40% of the assemblages. As in Zone 1, tree and shrub pollen was identified in small quantities. The herb assemblage appeared to diversify, however, and cereal type pollen was recorded throughout with a small peak to 4%. Evidence of a marsh-like environment nearby was also observed within this assemblage.
- 6.283 Pollen retrieved from upper fills (8207) / (8204) was less well preserved but suggested the continuation of a similar environmental regime represented by a single pollen zone up to c.1457-1631 cal AD. General trends in the assemblage included a dominance of *Poaceae* (grass) pollen between 30%-80%. Herb pollen was most prevalent, with *Lactucoideae* (dandelion) declining through the sequence from 35% to 5% towards the top. There is a general paucity of tree and shrub pollen, with *Salix* (willow) the only species recorded throughout (2-5%). The pollen accumulated from both on-site vegetation and via other factors of pollen transport such as airborne or fluvial modes from the wider environment.
- 6.284 Moving into the upper sequence from (8207) to (8204), the pollen assemblage suggested the on-site landscape continued to be characterised by open grassland with areas of slow flowing or standing water, as evidenced by the presence of small numbers of sedges (*Cyperaceae*) and bulrush/ bur reed (*Typha angustifolia/Spaganium*). This may indicate areas of herb fen, which may also be the origin of some of the grass pollen within the assemblage. Unidentified trilete spores were also present, which may have derived from a pre-Quaternary source, or perhaps were part of the onsite vegetation. Their presence in association with dandelion types (*Lactuoideae*) at initial values of 35% may suggest the spores to be present due to differential preservation or reworking of older sediments. Diatom analysis suggests that the local environment became somewhat drier at this time.
- 6.285 The wider environment again appears to have consisted of a mixed farming economy incorporating both pastoral and arable practices. Cereal type pollen is present throughout at relatively low levels, with arable weed types also identified within the assemblage, suggesting

arable farming within the wider landscape. Diversity of herbs increases toward the end of the sequence, with the emergence of Cannabis or hop-type pollen, possibly suggesting its cultivation in the wider landscape. Tree and shrub pollen is present only in very small numbers, most likely derived from long distance transportation. This suggests trees were growing only in small numbers in the wider landscape.

- 6.286 In summary, this sequence identifies a transition from a local environment dominated by a mosaic of grassland, willow (*Salix*) woodland, and sedge fen, toward one of grasses, cultivated cereals, fewer trees and shrubs, and reduced amount of wet ground.

*The south-eastern slot: Figure 22, Plan 102 (south side)*

*Group 149: [8226], (8225), (8224); (8227) [8228]; (8229) [8230]; (8231) [8232]; Figure 22, Plan 102, south side; Figure 24, Section 113.2*

- 6.287 A ditch orientated east–west, [8226], was identified at the base of the sequence in the south-eastern slot, that was 2m wide and up to 0.30m deep. It may represent a construction trench for a wooden fence line, represented in this instance by a minimum of three posts, [8228], [8230] and [8232] (Figure 22, Plan 102, south side). These were driven into the base of the ditch in a straight east–west line. They were infilled with bluish grey clay that could represent the degraded remnants of the posts. Dumped around these posts in the base of the ditch was a 0.39m thick deposit composed of roughly hewn, angular cobble to small boulder-sized ragstone fragments, (8225), that did not appear to be held together with any bonding material. The blocks therefore appear to have been dumped into the ditch, perhaps to shore up the fence posts that were driven into its base, thus effectively functioning as post packing. The remainder of the ditch was then infilled with silty clay from which 11 pottery sherds pertaining to the period 1425–1525 were retrieved, as were three fragments of CBM pertaining to the period 1450–1700.

*Group 150: [8223], (8222); Figure 22, Plan 102; Figure 24, Section 113.1*

- 6.288 After the fence fell out of use, this boundary was truncated by large, somewhat irregularly shaped pit or ditch [8223] (Group 150). The feature was 4.30m long, over 2m wide as seen and over 0.75m deep. It is possible that it may represent the corner of an industrial feature such as a quarry pit, perhaps dug to remove the underlying geology, for example for building stone. This is speculative, however, and the purpose of the pit remains uncertain.
- 6.289 What can be said is that the feature appears to have been infilled with a component of domestic waste when it fell out of use, which suggests that it was reused as a rubbish pit. This included 56 sherds of pottery pertaining to the period 1425–1524 and 19 sherds of CBM dating to the period 1450–1700.

*Group 146: [8263], (8201), (8200), (8237), (8199); Figure 22, Plan 102; Section 113.1*

- 6.290 Truncating the infill of the pit or ditch was gully [8263], which was over 4m long from east to west as seen and up to 0.60m wide. The feature appeared to be a construction cut for a wooden fence, the surviving remnants of which consisted of a series of overlapping planks, (8201) / (8202). After the fence has been instated, the gully was infilled with a silty deposit from which four pottery sherds pertaining to the period 1225–1325 were recovered, which may be residual in this context. The fence line may be the same as Group 207 in the central slot and Group 206

in the northern slot, although further stratigraphic and spatial analysis is required in order to demonstrate this.

*Group 152: [8221], (2220), (8218); Figure 24, Section 113.1*

- 6.291 After the fence fell out of use, it was truncated by another large pit or ditch [8221] (Group 152), recorded in section only. This feature was 1.30m wide and up to 0.66m deep and contained a single fill that did not produced any datable finds.

*Group 208: [8219], (8218); Figure 24, Sections 113.1 and 113.2*

- 6.292 The pit or ditch was then truncated by ditch [8219] (Group 208), recorded in section only. This was up to 1.20m deep and up to 0.40m wide. It was infilled with a single deposit that yielded five sherds of pottery pertaining to the period 1400–1500.

*Group 153: [8235] / [8197]; Figure 22, Plan 102; Figure 24, Section 114.1*

- 6.293 A large pit or ditch terminus was recorded towards the southern end of the central slot, [8235] / [8197] (Group 153). It was just under 4m wide and over 1.5m long as seen, with a depth of 0.39m. The purpose of the feature is uncertain.
- 6.294 After the feature fell out of use it was infilled with 14 sherds of pottery dated to the period AD 1425–1525 and 16 sherds of post-medieval CBM dating to the period 1450–1700. This suggests that feature was perhaps infilled with a component of domestic waste, thus suggesting it was reused, at least in part, as a rubbish pit.

#### *Area 11*

##### *A field boundary*

*Group 92: [11026], (11025); [11024], (11023); Figure 38; Figure 40, Section 123.3*

- 6.295 A ditch was uncovered in the northern part of Area 11 within Trench 3, [11026]. The ditch was orientated north-east–south-west and was 0.40m wide, surviving to a depth of just 0.08m. The feature was infilled with a deposit of silty clay, (11025), from which 15.9g of unclassified iron slag was recovered. This suggests that the feature was infilled, at least in part, with a component of industrial waste after it fell out of use as a land boundary.
- 6.296 The ditch was, however, aligned with another ditch fragment in Trench 13, c. 80m to the south-east, [11024]. This feature was better preserved, being up to 1m wide and up to 0.20m deep. It was infilled with a single silty deposit, (11023), which yielded three fragments of earlier IA pottery and six fragments of CBM pertaining to the period AD 1450–1700.
- 6.297 The alignments and positions of these two features strongly suggest that they form part of the same ditch. The evidence obtained from the most southerly excavated sample suggests that they functioned as a field boundary of late medieval to early post-medieval date that fell out of use and was infilled between AD 1450 and 1700.

#### **Period 7: Mid- to Late Post-Medieval activity (17th to 19th Century)**

- 6.298 A small amount of activity dating to the mid- to late post-medieval period (17th to 19th century) was noted within the confines of the site in Areas 7 and 8 only. The evidence is limited to a

farmland boundary ditches in Area 7 and linear stone-built features that could represent external wall foundations in Area 8.

#### *Area 7*

##### *Boundary ditches*

*Group 58: [9007], (9004), (9005), (9006); Figure 26*

- 6.299 A 7m long stretch of ditch was exposed in the northern end of Area 9 that was orientated north-west–south-east. The feature continued beyond the limits of the excavation to the north-west and the south-east. It was 2m wide and up to 0.70m deep and had been infilled with three distinct silty deposits, all of which were archaeologically sterile. The location and orientation of the ditch suggests that it was associated with Group 57 (discussed subsequently), hence its inclusion in this period.

*Group 57: [9013] / [9017] / [9019] / [9025] / [9027] / [9029] / [9031]; (9012), (9016), (9018), (9024), (9026), (9028), (9030); Figure 27; Figure 29, Sections 133.1 and 134.1*

- 6.300 A ditch orientated north-east–south-west was observed in the central portion of Area 9. The ditch extended from the eastern limit of excavation for a total distance of 122.3m, before being truncated by a modern boundary ditch. It is presumed to terminate in that location as it did not continue beyond the modern field boundary. It is therefore possible that the modern boundary replaced an earlier counterpart that was contemporary with the ditch under discussion here.
- 6.301 If [9007] (see Group 58, above) represents a return of this ditch, it can be concluded that it bounded a field that was over 20.2m south-east–north-west, extending beyond the limit of excavation to the north-west, by 176.2m north-east–south-west.
- 6.302 After the ditch fell out of use it was infilled with a single silty deposit from which a wide range of dating evidence was recovered. Fifteen sherds of Iron Age and Roman pottery were present, presumed to be residual in this context, as were five sherds of post-medieval pottery, the latest of which post-dated 1780.

#### *Area 8*

##### *Stone wall foundations or field drains*

*Group 170: (8037), (8038); Figure 19*

- 6.303 The base of a linear ragstone wall foundation composed of one course of roughly hewn boulder to cobble-sized blocks was uncovered in the northern corner of Area 8, (8037) (Plate 36). The feature was over 6.5m long, up to 0.30m wide and up to 0.30m deep and was orientated north-east–south-west. A similar stone-built feature, (8038), was identified 4.35m to the south-east on an identical orientation. This survived for a length of 3.79m and was up to 0.40m wide and 0.40m deep.

*Group 140: (8009); Figure 19, Figure 20*

- 6.304 A third, similar stone feature, (8009), was uncovered further towards the south, which was again orientated north-east–south-west. It was up to 14.5m long and up to 0.45m wide, with a depth of up to 0.12m. Found in association were 10 sherds of pottery pertaining to the period AD



1175–1250, however the position of the feature in the stratigraphic sequence, truncating earlier medieval and post-medieval ditches to the south-west and north-east, demonstrates that it more probably pertains to this later period. Worthy of note is the fact that, as shown on Figure 19, this feature could easily be misinterpreted as being earlier than the ditches to the north-east. However, this spatial association is misleading as the primary archive makes clear that it instead represents a stratigraphically later feature that sat above the edge of the intersection of the ditches.

*Group (8039); Figure 19*

- 6.305 A fourth stone feature, (8039), was recorded 11.4m to the south-east, which was again orientated north-east–south-west. It survived for a length of 28m and was up to 0.30m wide and 0.25m deep. No finds were found in association with the feature, however it truncated four medieval to early post-medieval ditches, thus suggesting that it belong in this period.

*Group 138: (8040); Figure 19, Figure 20*

- 6.306 Situated 0.89m to the east was a fifth stone feature, (8040). This somewhat sinuous feature trended east–west but exhibited a gentle curve in plan. It was 20.5m long as seen, up to 0.30m wide and up to 0.15m deep. Again, it truncated earlier medieval and post-medieval ditches, thus suggesting it may pertain to this period.
- 6.307 The purposes of these five stone features remains unclear. They could together represent fragments of buildings or could alternatively have formed external boundary walls, however their long, thin lengths are perhaps most suggestive of early examples of stone-lined field drains.



*Plate 36: Wall (8037) (Group 170) in Area 8. Photograph looks south. Scale 2m.*

**Period 8: Pre-modern Activity (Prehistoric to Post-Medieval)**

- 6.308 Archaeological activity that pre-dated the modern plough soil but could not be assigned to a specific archaeological period was uncovered in Areas 3 to 6, 9 and 11.

### Area 3

#### Undated pits or natural features

*Group 170: [3004], (3003); [3006], (3005); [3008], (3007); [3010], (3009); [3016], (3015); [3018], (3017); Figure 4; Figure 6, Section 7.1; Plate 37, Plate 38*

- 6.309 A collection of six pits were recorded in Area 3 that were between 0.56m and 2m in width, 3.20m and 0.74m in length and 0.14m and 0.56m in depth. They were each infilled with a single deposit that resembled redeposited natural. These features are undated and may either represent a collection of man-made pits, natural undulations or a combination of the two.



*Plate 37: Pit [3004] (Group 170). Photograph looks west. Scale 0.5m*



*Plate 38: Large pit [3018] (Group 170). Photograph faces west. Scale 2m*

#### Area 4

##### A north-east–south-west aligned road

Group 13: [4022] / [4011] / [4004]; (4021) / (4010) / (4003); Figure 5

- 6.310 A ditch orientated north-east–south-west crossed the western half of Area 4 (Plates 39 and 40). It was over 31.6m long as seen, up to 0.85m wide and up to 0.33m deep. The feature contained a single fill that produced no datable finds.



Plate 39: Ditch slot [4022] (Group 13). Photograph looks south-west. Scale 0.5m.

Group 14: [4019] / [4015] / [4017] / [4013], (4018) / (4014) / (4016) / (4012); Figure 5

- 6.311 Running parallel with Group 13 was a second, similarly sized ditch, however this example did not survive to the north, presumably due to the damaging effects of ploughing. It was again infilled with a single deposit that contained no datable finds.
- 6.312 Together the ditches bounded a linear parcel of land that was 4.15m wide and over 31.6m long (Plate 40). It therefore seems probable that this long, narrow tract of land represents a driveway or trackway.
- 6.313 This landscape feature is currently undated. Efforts should therefore be made at the publication stage to determine whether it pertains to the post-medieval period through a map regression exercise.





*Plate 40: The trackway bounded by [4022] / [4011] / [4004] (Group 13) and [4019] / [4015] / [4017] / [4013] (Group 14) crossing the western third of Area 4. Photograph looks north.*

#### Miscellaneous pitting activity

*Group 172: [4934], (4033); [4036], (4035); [4038], (4037)*

- 6.314 A collection of small, shallow, undated circular to ovoid features were uncovered in Area 4 that were between 0.76m and 0.08m in diameter and up to 0.12m in depth. None produced any datable finds. They no doubt represent a disparate collection of pits, postholes and stakeholes of uncertain date and function. The features are do not appear to be directly related to one another as they expressed no clear spatial patterning in plan.

#### Area 5

##### An inhumation

*Group 17: [5008], (5006), (5007); Figure 7; Figure 15*

- 6.315 An irregular cut was noted in the central section of Area 5, [5008], that appeared to have suffered severe horizontal truncation, most probably by ploughing. The feature contained human bone in the form of a pair of articulated feet. Little can be said about this inhumation suffice to say that what remained of the grave cut was orientated north-west–south-east. The presence of this individual in a non-cemetery context is more suggestive of a prehistoric, Roman or even an Early to Mid-Saxon date (Cunliffe 1991; Taylor 2008; Reynolds 2009), however a lack of dating evidence means that the burial cannot be assigned to a specific period. This could be resolved were carbon dating considered prior to publication.



## Area 6

*Group 20: [6132], (6131); [6134], (6133); (6135), (6137), (6138), (6139), (6136); Figure 8*

- 6.316 A collection of seven potentially related pits or post pits were identified in the northern corner of Area 6 (Plate 41). The features were between 0.22m and 0.89m in diameter and were up to 0.17m deep. They produced no datable finds, while their functions remain uncertain.



*Plate 41: Pits or post pits [6132], [6134], [6135], [6136], [6137], [6138] (Group 20). Photo looks south-west. Scale 1m.*

*Group 187: [7025], (7024); Figure 17*

- 6.317 A curvilinear feature was identified in the north-central portion of Area 7, continuing beyond the eastern limit of the excavation. It was up to 1.24m long and over 1m wide with a depth of up to 0.46m. This feature contained a single fill that yielded no datable finds. It may represent a tree throw, an irregular pit or a ditch terminus.

## Area 9

*Group 60: [9023], (9022); Figure 27*

- 6.318 A similar feature to Group 187 was unearthed in the central portion of Area 9, which was up to 0.96m long and up to 1m wide. This irregularly shaped feature may represent a natural undulation or a tree throw. No finds were recovered from the feature.

## Area 11

*Undated ditches in Area 11*

- 6.319 Undated ditches orientated north-east–south-west were uncovered in Area 11. These included [11020] in Trench 9 (Figure 38) and [11017] in Trench 19 (Figure 39). Also present were a series of ditches orientated north-west–south-east. These included [11022] in Trench 18, [11005] in Trench 20 and ditches [11028] and [11030] in Trench 23 and [11015] and [11012] in Trench 25. They were between 0.30m and 1m in width and were up to 0.45m deep. Little more can be said of these features suffice to note that they most probably represent field boundary ditches of uncertain date.

### Period 9: Late Post-Medieval to Modern Activity (19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> Century)

- 6.320 The entire site was sealed by a layer of modern subsoil (Group 3), found to be between 0.25m and 0.50m thick. A number of notable finds were recovered from this layer, including a single probable barbarous radiate <RF13> (AD 275–285), a copper alloy finger ring from (9034), two hobnails, 71.7g of tapped slag and a fragment of clay tobacco pipe (AD 1680–1710).
- 6.321 This was in turn sealed by a layer of topsoil (Group 4), found to be 0.17m and 0.70m thick. These deposits no doubt represent an agricultural plough soil that was active throughout the late-post-medieval and modern periods, prior to the site's development.
- 6.322 These deposits were truncated by several modern ditches and field drains of no archaeological value. These features are not described in any detail here. Instead, those that were awarded context numbers during the excavation are listed below for ease of reference:
- Ditch [2024] in Area 2 (Figure 3)
  - Field drain [9033] / [9015] and field boundary ditch [12172] / [12174] in Area 9 (Figure 27; Figure 29, Section 144.1)

## 7 QUANTIFICATION OF THE ARCHIVE

- 7.1 All finds have been washed, catalogued and are stored appropriately in archive boxes/environmentally controlled conditions. Assessment of the finds and environmental samples has been undertaken in accordance with the guidelines laid down in MoRPHE (Historic England 2015a). Completed reports have been reproduced in full in Appendix B.
- 7.2 Finds from the site comprise prehistoric and Roman pottery, Late Saxon to post-medieval pottery, bulk and registered metal finds, CBM, clay tobacco pipe (CTP), fired clay, worked flint, leather, post-Roman glass and slag.
- 7.3 Ecofacts from the site include animal bone, wood and macroplant remains. Geoarchaeological data relating to diatoms, pollen and micromorphology also forms part of the archive. Of 413 processed bulk samples taken for environmental assessment, 266 produced charcoal and 174 produced macroplant remains. Cereal remains were recovered from 174 of these samples.
- 7.4 Additionally, six kubiena samples were removed from within kiln [10029], which together sampled the lower two fills of the kiln for micromorphology. A total of 18 sub-samples were also taken from three column samples, which were assessed for pollen, ostracods and diatoms. One column sample targeted the fills of a pond feature, [8042], which was also subject to carbon dating, while two sampled the fills of ditch terminus [8209].
- 7.5 The site records have been completed and checked (see Table 1). A context register has been completed (Appendix A) and a draft stratigraphic matrix has been compiled for the site. Contexts have been placed into preliminary phases using stratigraphic information and provisional dating. Illustrations have been constructed to accompany the results showing the location of the features. Assessment of the finds has been undertaken (Appendix B). The photographic archive has been checked and will be reassessed prior to deposition.
- 7.6 There are currently no repositories in Kent collecting archaeological archives.

| Archive                              | Quantification |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Context Checklist                    | 35             |
| Context Record Sheets                | 1116           |
| Finds                                | 15648          |
| Environmental Sample List            | 21             |
| Environmental Samples Taken          | 497            |
| Primary Drawing Register             | 39             |
| Registered Finds List                | 8              |
| Plan and Section Sheets (Permatrace) | 222            |
| Photographic Record Sheet            | 100            |
| Digital Photographs (JPEG)           | 1222           |

Table 1: Quantification of the archive

## 8 FINDS ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 All of the finds have been washed and catalogued as appropriate. The finds have been assessed by specialists in accordance with current guidance (ClfA 2020b). All finds have been examined for this report. They comprise pottery, animal bone, metal objects, glass, clay tobacco pipe, ceramic building material, marine shell and environmental samples. Table 2 presents the frequencies of each find type, excluding marine shell and archaeobotanical remains. Full specialist assessments are presented as Appendix B.

| Find Type                     | Count          |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Animal Bone                   | 2372           |
| Burnt flint                   | 132            |
| CBM                           | 1175           |
| Charcoal                      | 624.8g         |
| CTP                           | 4              |
| Fired Clay                    | 6986           |
| Human remains                 | 14 individuals |
| Industrial Residue            | 10.4kg         |
| Leather                       | 6              |
| Lithics                       | 456            |
| Macroplant                    | 4580           |
| Metal assemblage              | 265            |
| Numismatic assemblage         | 1              |
| Post-Roman Glass              | 50             |
| Post-Roman pottery            | 2417           |
| Prehistoric and Roman pottery | 4109           |
| Stone spindle whorl           | 1              |
| Worked wood                   | 207            |

Table 2: A breakdown of the finds recovered excluding marine shell and archaeobotanical remains

### Prehistoric and Roman Pottery

- 8.1 A large assemblage of prehistoric and Roman pottery was recovered from the site, totalling 4109 sherds, weighing 34.58 kg. The pottery belongs predominantly to two discrete phases: the Early Iron Age and Late Iron Age/early Roman period, but could span a longer period, including Middle Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age, Middle/Late Iron Age and mid/late Roman date. The Late Iron Age/early Roman assemblage was mostly found in Area 12. Smaller

quantities of similar material was recovered in Areas 2, 3, 6, 7, 8 and 10. Two very large groups were recorded: over 600 sherds from occupation deposit (12073) and over 300 sherds from three fills of pit [12057], the latter containing a higher proportion of fine/table wares than the assemblage as a whole. A large group of over 100 sherds was also present in deposit 12004. A number of moderate sized groups of c. 30-100 sherds were also recovered from other deposits, pits and ditches.

### **Post-Roman Pottery**

- 8.2 The archaeological work at the site recovered 2417 sherds of post-Roman pottery, weighing 33,048g, from 119 individually numbered contexts. These totals include 355 sherds (1009g) from 67 different environmental residues – the remainder being recovered by hand collection on site. An estimated 1033 different vessels are represented in the assemblage.

### **Post-Roman Glass**

- 8.3 Fifty sherds of post-Roman glass were recovered from the site. The assemblage comprises a complete and intact medicinal bottle (12002) which makes up the majority of the assemblage by weight (Mass: 400.5g), a dark olive green drinks bottle fragment (8043) (Mass: 60.3g), a tiny black glass bead (RT 150a), (Mass: <0.1g), a partial drinking glass foot (8000b) (Mass: 9.8g), 10 window glass fragments (Mass: 28.8g), a non-classifiable bottle neck and finish fragment (8000a) (Mass: 15.1g), 10 non-classifiable vessel fragments (Mass: 4.1g), and 25 tiny non-diagnostic shatter sherds (Mass: 0.1g). A small quantity of tiny fragments of natural quartzite (Mass: 0.8g) was also submitted amongst the retent glass assemblage (not included in the assessment / archive).

### **Ceramic Building Materials**

- 8.4 Excavations recovered a total of 1175 fragments (92.131kg) of ceramic building material (CBM); entirely of post-medieval date, potentially spanning the Tudor period to the 18th century and generally in a moderately fragmented condition; as well as 1070 fragments (9117g) of daub that is highly fragmented (with a friable nature) and may be contemporary, if not related to preceding prehistoric to medieval activity. The CBM includes a low number of bricks that could feasibly have been produced from the mid-15th century onwards, but although they generally occur separately from the pre-dominant brick, it is more likely that both types represent contemporary activity in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Similarly the peg tile may have currency into the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but is likely contemporary with the bricks. The only substantive groups of both peg tile and brick were contained in ditches, including field boundaries and drainage ditches, which is also true of the daub, except for a very high concentration recorded as a spread that may have been associated with a structure.

### **Clay Tobacco Pipe Assemblage**

- 8.5 A very small assemblage of 4 (37g) clay tobacco pipe fragments were recovered by hand during archaeological investigations at Stour Park. Two clay tobacco pipe bowls were recovered from site, dating from the mid-17th to the late-18th century. The earliest bowl (14g) identified is likely an AO9 type (c.1680-1710) from topsoil context (8001). The second bowl (17g), recovered from the primary fill (8249) of a ditch (8250) is likely an AO6 type dating to c. 1660-1680. One fragment of stem (3g) and one fragment of a mouthpiece (3g) were recovered from context (8043).



### **Metal Assemblage**

- 8.6 A total of 265 metal objects were identified. 125 of these were iron nails and nail fragments (see Appendix II), whilst 140 were other types of objects made from iron, copper alloy and lead (see Appendix I). The whole assemblage weighed 4009g with nails accounting for 741g of this weight.
- 8.7 A total of 11 objects within the assemblage are made from copper alloy, weighing 29.9g. These objects include a buckle, two brooches, two strap ends and a possible finger ring. Stylistically, the identifiable copper-alloy objects are consistent with a Late Iron Age, Roman or early-medieval date, some finds present more refined dates within this range.
- 8.8 A total of 246 objects within the assemblage are made from iron alloy, weighing 3,573g. These objects include a spearhead from burial [6169], knives and cleavers, a buckle, holdfasts and nails. Ironwork generally is functional and therefore many objects remain in consistent form throughout the Roman, early-medieval and medieval period.
- 8.9 The lead assemblage from the site consists of 5 objects, weighing a total of 223.58g. These consist of two pieces of folded lead including <RF 45>, a piece of rolled lead sheet, fragments of lead sheet <RF 141> and a slender possible lead rod recovered from sample 510 of burial [6100]. Generally, the objects are undiagnostic and dates cannot be assigned based on stylistic features. The slender rod recovered from burial [6100] measures 51mm in length, 0.2mm in diameter and weighs 0.01 grams. At present it remains undiagnostic.

### **Numismatic Assemblage**

- 8.10 A single probable barbarous radiate <RF13> was found on the site, recorded from (9034) in Area 9.

### **Stone Spindle Whorl**

- 8.11 Three fragments from a single stone spindle whorl were recovered from fill (10047) of ditch [10048]. The artefact could be Roman to early post-medieval in date.

### **Fired Clay**

- 8.12 Fragments of fired clay totalling more than 130kg were recovered from Area 10 and comprises the fired clay debris resulting from the destruction of three thermal installations. These structures/features, [10027], [10029] and [10030] were used for some form of thermal process, though not one requiring high temperatures. Two types of structure are present, with [10027] having a completely different shape to [10029] and [10030]. Despite this, the fired clay material is largely identical in terms of fabric.

### **Lithics and Burnt Flint**

- 8.13 A total of 456 struck flints were recovered from 146 separate contexts. The assemblage is summarised by artefact type in Table B11 and is set out in full by context order in Table B12. This makes clear that only four contexts achieved double figures while no fewer than 58 produced only a single piece. The most productive single context was 7052, the fill of pit 7053, which produced 34 flints, although 26 of these comprised spalls <10mm in size. Next came context (7040), the fill of pit [7043], with 21 pieces, of which nine comprised spalls.

- 8.14 Small quantities of burnt flint were recovered from 25 contexts across the site, all from wet sieving. No single context produced more than 38g of material and most produced less than 10g.

#### **Leather**

- 8.15 Six pieces of leather were recovered from the site. A small amount of waste leather was present in the primary fill (8161) of pit 8162. The waste leather comprised five small pieces of narrow trimming. The vamp from a leather shoe of welted construction was also found in the primary fill (8249) of ditch [8250]

#### **Slag and Industrial Residues**

- 8.16 The vitrified material assemblage is dominated by ironworking waste (mass: 9.5kg), which is largely made up of slags indicative of iron smelting, and includes large quantities of dense, grey tapped slags (mass: 3.6kg). Some possible evidence for smithing was also identified in the form of two plano-convex cake fragments (mass: 703.4g) although these may be smelting related, as well as a concentration of flake hammerscale and slag spheres retrieved along with small fragments of unclassified iron slag and runned slags (mass: 1.0kg) from a single pit deposit. Other materials retrieved include unclassified iron slags and runned slags which are diagnostic of metalworking though not indicative of a particular metalworking process, and small amounts of vitrified ceramic and fuel-ash slags, including one fragment identified as Iron Age Grey. This material represents the remains of both smelting and smithing activities though no definitive *in situ* evidence for metalworking was identified. The activity is predominantly focused around the Late Saxon kilns within Area 10.

#### **Human Remains**

- 8.17 A total of 14 inhumations and one cremation were recovered from the site. This included 11 Saxon inhumations in a small cemetery, two probable extra-cemetery Roman inhumations adjacent to a Roman road within Area 6 and a partial undated inhumation consisting of just the feet in Area 5. The assemblage included six males, three females, three adults of indeterminate sex and one nonadult between the ages of 15 to 18 years of age at time of death. All adults were identified as either middle (26-45 yrs) or mature (46+ yrs). Evidence for degenerative joint disease, osteoarthritis, dental enamel hypoplasia, healed fractures and dental pathology including calculus, antemortem tooth-loss, caries and abscess were observed in the assemblage.

#### **Animal Bone**

- 8.18 A total of 2372 hand-collected animal bones and teeth were recovered from 128 contexts spanning the prehistoric to post-medieval periods. Of these 525 fragments could be identified to taxon. There were no obvious deposits of primary butchery, skin-processing or craft-working waste, and it is likely that the assemblage consists of a mixture of processing and consumption refuse. Two associated bone groups were recovered, which imply primary contexts subject to little post-depositional disturbance, a sheep / goat skeleton (7057) from [7056] and contexts (10231) and (10232) contained the remains of at least three pigs, one of which was perinatal.

#### **Worked Wood**

- 8.19 A total of 207 fragments of worked wood were recovered from the site that included fragments of oak, willow, cherry, maple, birch and ash. The bulk of the assemblage consisted of unworked

roundwood, often with bark still attached. A mixture of species was present, mostly willow (*Salix* sp.) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) but also cherry (*Prunus* sp.), birch (*Betula* sp.) and maple (*Acer campestre*). Some of the contexts also contained small fragments of radially-split oak planking, usually very decayed and consequently displaying no woodworking evidence. There were occasional pieces of worked wood, such as the trimmed roundwood from [8106] and [8248] which could represent small stake tips. Included in the worked wood assemblage were registered finds SF 184 (plank), SF 191, SF 186, SF 187, SF 188, SF 192 (staves), SF 185 (plank), SF 189, SF 193 (plank offcuts), SF 190 (stake) and SF 183, a wooden bowl.

### Macroplant and Charcoal

- 8.20 A total of 413 washover samples were collected from a series of burials, cremation pits, enclosure ditches, pits, ditches, gullies, kilns, pits, postholes and subsoil. These archaeological features derived from a multi-phase site in use from the prehistoric to the post-medieval period.
- 8.21 A minimum of 4580 carbonised macroplant were assessed from 178 samples collected from 145 contexts. The assemblage was composed of cereals, nuts, fruits, vegetables, woodland remains and weeds. Cereal caryopses formed the largest component of the plant assemblage with chaff, nuts, fruits, vegetables, woodland finds and weeds only a minor inclusion. Preservation of the macroplant remains ranged from mostly poor to adequate with a smaller number recorded as good to excellent.
- 8.22 Charcoal fragments (624.8g) suitable for analysis were recovered from 266 samples collected from 244 contexts. Only those contexts which had 4.0g more of charcoal were selected for further study at this stage of the assessment. A total of 410 fragments (426.2g) were identified to species from 41 samples from 39 contexts. The remaining fragments (198.6g) were scattered among the other 225 samples in small quantities and these were not identified. The species were alder (*Alnus glutinosa* L), birch (*Betula* sp), hazel (*Corylus avellana* L), ash (*Fraxinus* sp), apple/pear/hawthorn/rowan (*Maloideae/sorbus* sp), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa* L), cherry (*Prunus* sp), oak (*Quercus* sp), willow (*Salix* sp) and elm (*Ulmus* sp). Preservation of the fragments ranged from poor to good. Those described as poor were noticeably vitrified and abraded.

### Palaeoenvironmental

- 8.23 Palaeoenvironmental assessment was carried out on three monolith samples (four tins in total were taken of which only three were deemed suitable for palaeoenvironmental analysis). Assessment of the subsamples included the investigation of diatoms, ostracods, and pollen. A possible pond feature, [8042], with one fill (8041) was also sampled, <Tin 2>. Feature [8209] represents a ditch terminus with five recorded fills, the lower three of which were sampled within tins <3> and <4>. Throughout the sequence, 12 subsamples for palaeoenvironmental assessment and 2 radiocarbon dating samples have been taken. Diatom and ostracod preservation was found to be very poor, however pollen was moderately well preserved.

## 9 CONCLUSIONS

### Summary of Results

#### *Period 1: Natural*

- 9.1 Natural clay and fragmented limestone were identified across the entire site (Group 1). These deposits are presumed to represent the upper reaches of the natural superficial geology, namely alluvial silts and clays, laid down by the East Stour and its tributaries during the Quaternary period, and the upper reaches of the underlying bedrock, the Hythe formation of limestone and sandstone. The lack of any Holocene alluvium above this within the confines of the site suggests that it remained dry for much of that period. It was therefore suitable for a range of activities including settlement and farming, while simultaneously being situated close to the rich resources of the marsh of the East Stour and its tributaries.
- 9.2 The topography of the natural ground included a ridge that ran across the northern and western sides of the site on a north-east–south-west orientation with the ground falling away to the north and west. This topography appears to have influenced the alignments of features of all periods across the site, which generally either ran approximately parallel with the ridge or at a right-angle to it.

#### *Periods 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3: Late Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age Activity*

- 9.3 Late Bronze Age to Early / Middle Iron Age activity in the form of pits (Groups 168, 169, 63, 54, 178), small pits or postholes (Group 53), two possible post-built structures (Groups 65 and 67), a cremation (Group 185) and a possible roundhouse (Group 162) were variously uncovered in Areas 2, 7, 9 and 10. Activity pertaining to this period therefore appears to have been biased towards the eastern fringe of the site (Areas 7, 9 and 10), with a small amount of activity in the northern corner (Area 2).
- 9.4 This was followed by a second phase of archaeological activity, recognized in Area 10 only. The earlier roundhouse (Group 162) was replaced by a rectangular enclosure (Group 70). The enclosure continued beyond the western limit of the excavation and could either bound a settled area or an agricultural or pastoral field.
- 9.5 The last archaeologically recognisable phase of activity pertaining to this period again occurred in Area 10, where a large pit was dug through the backfilled enclosure (Group 179).

#### *Periods 3.1 and 3.2: Late Iron Age (LIA) to Early Roman Activity (1st to 2nd Century AD)*

- 9.6 Late Iron Age to Early Roman features were identified in seven areas during the strip, map and sample exercises, namely Areas 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12, with the greatest concentration of activity being in the eastern half of the site. Several land uses were identified during this period.
- 9.7 Roads and trackways were represented by a north–south trackway or driveway that was flanked by ditches (Groups 6 and 7) and an east–west road, replete with a metal surface (Group 35). The latter was initially flanked by fence lines (Groups 174 and 175) and later by ditches that were maintained through repeated recutting throughout this period (Groups 21, 24, 25, 26, 29, 32, 31, 173, 34).
- 9.8 Two inhumations were buried immediately beside the northern flanking ditches of the east–west road (Groups 27, 28), while an animal burial was also found in an apparently isolated location (Group 177). The latter could represent an example of structured deposition but, given



its isolated nature and the lack of any associated artefacts, it more probably represents the burial of a diseased animal in farmland.

- 9.9 Boundary ditches and enclosures were encountered that variously delineated areas of settlement or farmland (Groups 69, 103 and 105), with one enclosure being maintained through recutting on at least three occasions (Groups 106, 104, 107) before being enlarged (Group 108) and recut for the final time (Group 118).
- 9.10 Evidence of settlement in the south-east corner of the site was demonstrated by the presence of two ring ditches that may represent roundhouses (Groups 111 and 113) and an associated boundary ditch (Groups 114 and 115). Pitting activity also took place throughout this period (Groups 8, 9, 10, 12).
- 9.11 A second phase of Roman activity was recognized in Area 12. The features took the form of a series of narrow gullies that either represent beam slots for clay and timber buildings or poorly preserved boundary ditches surrounding small pen-like enclosures (Groups 119, 201, 202, 102, 112). A post-built structure was also identified (Group 190), along with pitting activity (Group 189), as was a dump layer of probable domestic waste (Group 122).

*Period 4: Early to Middle Saxon Activity (5th to 8th Century AD)*

- 9.12 Early to Middle Saxon activity, perhaps pertaining to the 6th century, was uncovered in Area 6. This took the form of a small inhumation cemetery of 11 individuals (Groups 39–49), that could perhaps represent an extended family group or the occupants of a small settlement (Williams 2011). Grave goods accompanied a young to middle-aged adult male (a spear, a knife and an unusual buckle) that may be able to provide valuable information regarding the cultural affinities of the group as a whole as well as the status and perhaps the identity in the individual with which they were buried (Welch 2011). Further analysis of the grave goods may also enable the cemetery to be better dated.

*Periods 5.1 and 5.2: Late Saxon to Saxo-Norman Activity (9th to 11th Century AD) or Earlier*

- 9.13 Activity pertaining to the Late Saxon period or earlier was uncovered in Areas 7 and 10 along the eastern periphery of the site, the only outlying feature being a probable field boundary ditch in Area 11 (Group 100).
- 9.14 Activity in Areas 7 and 10 took the form of a boundary ditch (Group 88), two fence lines (Group 81) and six probable corn drying kilns, which could alternatively pertain to the Roman period but did collectively yield a small quantity of Late Saxon dating evidence (Kilns 1–6). The morphology of the kilns also appeared to more closely resemble Mid- to Late Saxon corn dryers than their Roman equivalents, although further research is required to confirm this. When the kilns fell out of use, possible closing deposits (potentially structured deposits) including three ABGs and a possible quern stone, were placed in pits that were dug through Kilns 4 and 5. These deposits may have been placed within the pits to mark the end of the lives of the kilns, however further research is necessary to determine whether any analogues for this exist on contemporary sites elsewhere. A collection of pits or post-built structures were also found to the south of the corn dryers that could also represent Late Saxon features (Group 87).
- 9.15 A possible post-built structure with the same dimensions as a Late Saxon long hall was uncovered in Area 7. While this could represent a high-status Late Saxon building, no dating evidence pertaining to this period was recovered from the feature. Further work is therefore

required to better understand the nature of this poorly dated and rather poorly preserved earthfast structure. The long hall interpretation is favoured here, but it is important to stress that the evidence amassed thus far is not conclusive. In particular, the lack of Late Saxon dating evidence is problematic. Further work is therefore required to confirm, refute or modify this hypothesis.

- 9.16 A cremation, currently phased herein to the Late Iron Age (Period 2.1), could alternatively represent a foundation deposit associated with this hall. Carbon dating of the cremated bone could help to not only resolve its age but also, were it to pertain to the Saxon period, could be used to support the 'hall' hypothesis presented here.

*Period 6: Medieval to Early Post-Medieval Activity (11th to 17th Centuries)*

- 9.17 Medieval to early post-medieval activity was nucleated in Area 8 in the south-west corner of the site, with outlying activity in the form of farmland boundary ditches (Groups 19, 164) and pitting activity (Group 188) in Areas 4 and 7. A noteworthy discovery was also made in Area 10 in the form of a roughly made rubble surface that perhaps delineated an external work area (Groups 85, 86, 77).
- 9.18 Land use within Area 8 appeared to consist of a dense array of field or property boundaries that were repeatedly recut and realigned between the 12th and 17th centuries. These frequent changes in land use will need to be sub-phased prior to publication as the stratigraphy encountered demonstrated that many of the groups detailed here cannot have been simultaneously extant.
- 9.19 In summary, pitting activity was noted (Groups 165, 147, 185), the bulk of which appeared to date between the 11th and 14th centuries. Ditches and other boundaries in the form of wooden fence lines ranged in date from the mid-12th century to the 17th century.
- 9.20 Over seven sub-phases of activity pertaining to this period was deduced from the stratigraphy encountered coupled with the finds retrieved:
- mid-12th to mid-13th-century (Group 128, 123, 124)
  - mid- to late 13th century (Group 125)
  - mid-13th to mid-14th century (Group 116)
  - later mid-13th to the mid-14th century (Group 117)
  - mid-14th century or later (Groups 142, 141)
  - mid-15th–16th century (Groups 134, 143, 135, 136, 158)
  - mid-15th to 17th century (Groups 156, 206, 147, 145, 148, 155, 154, 207, 147, 205, 151, 149, 150, 146, 152, 208, 153,
- 9.21 This sub-phasing has not been formerly applied herein as it is incomplete but will need to be applied fully prior to publication. The further stratigraphic analysis that is required to sub-phase this period relates to how the mid-15th to 17th-century ditches should be grouped and sub-phased. This will be undertaken during the analysis phase.
- 9.22 This relative intensity of medieval to early post-medieval activity in Area 8 strongly suggests that the focus of settlement shifted westwards during the 10th and 11th centuries, towards the historic core of the extant village of Sevington.

- 9.23 Palaeoenvironmental evidence recovered from two features (Groups 130, 151) suggested that this area of the site was characterised by willow carr within a wider, open landscape of pastoral and agricultural fields during the earlier part of this period (14th century). Hops and / or hemp were perhaps grown more locally, presumably for use in the beer and / or rope production industries. While the wider environment continued to be characterised by farmland into the later part of this period, at a local level it became somewhat drier as it transitioned from a mosaic of grassland, willow (*Salix*) woodland, and sedge fen, towards one of grasses, cultivated cereals, fewer trees and shrubs, and a reduced amount of wet ground.

*Period 7: Mid- to Late Post-Medieval Activity (17th to 19th Century)*

- 9.24 Two farmland boundary ditches that may date to the 17th to 19th centuries were uncovered in Area 7 (Groups 57, 58). Stone foundations or field drains were noted in Area 8. No other activity pertaining to this period was identified on the site.

*Period 8: Pre-modern Activity (Prehistoric to Post-Medieval)*

- 9.25 Archaeological activity that pre-dated the modern plough soil but could not be assigned to a specific archaeological period was uncovered in Areas 3 to 6, 9 and 11. Features encountered included pits, postholes or natural features (Groups 170, 172, 20, 187, 60) in Areas 3, 4, 6 and 9, a probable north-east–south-west aligned road or trackway in Area 4 (Groups 13 and 14), a partial inhumation in Area 5 (Group 17) and eight probable farmland boundary ditches in Area 11.

*Period 9: Late Post-Medieval to Modern Activity (19th to 21st-Century)*

- 9.26 The entire site was overlain by modern subsoil (Group 3) and topsoil (Group 4). These deposits were truncated by modern field boundaries and land drains of little archaeological significance.

**Realisation of the Research Aims**

- 9.27 The archaeological strip, map and sample exercise successfully addressed the following general research aims:
- To ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit, character, date, significance and condition of any archaeological remains on site;
  - To identify archaeological deposits at the site

As detailed above and summarised below, archaeological remains were found across the entire site, the only exception being Area 1. The extent, nature, character, date and quality of archaeological features encountered is described in detail in Section 6 and their dimensions are provided in Appendix A. A summary of the extent, nature, character, condition, date and quality of artefacts and ecofacts that were recovered during the excavation is provided in Section 8 and detailed in Appendix B, while the palaeoenvironmental results are summarised in Section 9.

- To establish the extent to which previous development and/or other processes have affected
- To establish the likely impact on archaeological deposits of the proposed development.

Other than small, localized impacts by modern field drains and boundary ditches, no vertical intrusions of modern origin significantly impacted upon the archaeological resource across the

site. That said, a degree of horizontal truncation has undoubtedly occurred in the recent past as a result of 20th-century ploughing. The scale of the damage is hard to accurately quantify, however the shallow nature of most (though not all) of the features suggests that a moderate to severe degree of horizontal truncation has been induced by ploughing across the entire site in the recent past.

9.28 The following specific research objectives were also addressed:

- Does the untruncated surface of natural gravels/clay and/or brickearth subsoil survive?
- What is the nature of the natural topography and does it concatenate with the results of the evaluation in the corresponding areas? How does this affect the archaeological resource?

Natural alluvial clay pertaining to the Quaternary period was identified across the entire site. The topography of the natural ground included a ridge that ran across the northern side of the site on a north-east–south-west orientation with the ground falling away to the north. This influenced the alignments of features of all periods across the site, which generally either ran parallel or at a right-angle to the ridge.

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity *in situ*? Is there any redeposited evidence for prehistoric activity? If so, can this be linked in anyway with sites nearby?

Residual flint artefacts suggest low-level visitations by mobile bands of hunter-gatherers during the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods (see Appendix B, The Lithics, below).

The first *in situ* evidence of prehistoric activity pertains to the Late Bronze Age to Early / Middle Iron Age. This consisted of pitting activity, boundary ditches, two post-built structures, a cremation and a possible roundhouse in Areas 2, 7, 9 and 10. Together this evidence suggests that small-scale settlement and farming took place within the confines of the site during the Late Bronze Age to the Early / Middle Iron Age. After a possible period of abandonment, settlement and farming appears to have resumed during the Late Iron Age to Roman transition.

- What is the nature, extent, survival, date, and significance of the Romano-British remains? Can the nature and extent of the features found during the evaluation be fully understood? How does the evidence modify or enhance our understanding of Romano-British development and occupation?

Late Iron Age to Early Roman features were identified in Areas 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12, with the greatest concentration of activity being in the eastern half of the site. The remains were moderately well preserved but had been subjected to horizontal truncation via ploughing. The remains are reasonably well understood, although further work is required to contextualise them at a regional level. Land uses included a north–south trackway or driveway, an east–west road, two roadside inhumations, an isolated animal burial in probable farmland, boundary ditches and enclosures variously delineating areas of settlement and farmland and settlement activity in the form of two probable roundhouses and pitting activity. It is possible that a collection of clay and timber buildings were also present on the site, however these features could alternatively represent small pen-like enclosures. The settlement appears to have been abandoned as the Early Roman period drew to a close, perhaps during the early 2nd century. This evidence will certainly enhance our understanding of Romano-British development and occupation at a local level and could perhaps contribute to the growing corpus of evidence relating to Roman



settlement and farming at a more regional level. The evidence is thus deemed to be of local to regional significance.

- Can specific socio-economic activities be identified in the archaeological record? This might include further evidence of land management indicated by the evaluation.

In addition to evidence of Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age and Late Iron Age to Roman settlement, socio-economic activities identified on the site include farmland management features (i.e. field boundaries) pertaining to all periods. This may include boundary ditches and fence lines separating both agricultural and pastoral fields. Evidence of agrarian activity (i.e. crop processing) was also demonstrated by the discovery of six corn dryers that could be Roman but appear to more closely resemble Mid- to Late Saxon features.

- Is there evidence for the development of occupation past the Romano-British period into the early-medieval period?

An earthfast structure was discovered in the south-east portion of the site (Area 7) that possessed dimensions that were identical to those of a Late Saxon long hall. It is therefore possible that this structure represents the poorly preserved remnants of such a structure that in turn could indicate a nucleus of Late Saxon activity towards the western side of the site. The feature was poorly dated, however, and as such this remains speculative.

- 9.29 No direct evidence of settlement pertaining to later periods was found within the confines of the site. However the relatively high intensity of medieval to early post-medieval peripheral settlement activity in Area 8 in the form of pits and ditches strongly suggests that the focus of settlement shifted westwards during the 10th and 11th centuries, towards the historic core of the extant village of Sevington.

- What is the nature of the post-medieval field boundaries and can these tie into features identified on maps of the area?

Only one field boundary pertaining to Period 7 (17th to 19th century) was found during the strip, map and sample exercise. During this period maps grew in detail and accuracy thus enabling this research aim to be realistically addressed for this phase. The ditch was not found on any 19th or 20th century maps of the area consulted thus far, however further cartographic analysis will be undertaken prior to publication.

- What is the nature of the natural topography and underlying geology and how might this have influenced the location of the site?

Natural alluvial clay was identified across the entire site. This was lain down by the East Stour and its tributaries during the Quaternary period. The lack of Holocene alluvium above this within the confines of the site suggests that it remained dry. It was therefore suitable for a range of activities including settlement and farming, while simultaneously being situated close to the rich resources of the marsh of the East Stour and its tributaries.

### **Statement of Significance**

- 9.30 The discovery of Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age (Period 2) and Late Iron Age to Roman (Period 3) archaeology within the confines of the site is of local to regional significance. It has the potential to add to the existing corpus of evidence regarding Late Bronze Age to Roman activity at a local level, but may also contribute to regional overviews relating to patterns of

settlement, changes in material culture and perhaps cultural affinities in east Kent. The data may add to existing syntheses, such as those presented by Cunliffe (1991) and Hamilton (2007). The Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age (Period 2) archaeology may be particularly influential in this regard (see prehistoric and Roman pottery, this section, below).

- 9.31 The discovery of a small Early to Middle Saxon cemetery on the site (Period 4) and Late Saxon or earlier (Period 5) evidence that could include six corn drying kilns and perhaps a long hall, may be of regional importance as some or all of these discoveries will contribute to regional-level patterns of Saxon settlement activity, changes in material culture and cultural affinities in Kent as collated, for example, by Hamerow (2012), amongst others. While already represented in East Kent, archaeology pertaining to these periods is nevertheless a relatively uncommon find when compared with earlier and later periods of activity, thus elevating the significance of these discoveries.
- 9.32 The presence of the Middle Saxon inhumations, the corn dryers and the 'long hall' deserve particular mention. In the case of the former, in addition to providing biographical information through osteoarchaeological analysis, the presence of grave goods, perhaps in combination with strontium isotope analysis, has the potential to reveal a great deal of new information regarding mobility, cultural affiliations and the social status of the Middle Saxon occupants of the Sevington area (Williams 2011; Welch 2011), all of which again has the potential to be of regional significance. Similarly, the corn dryers represent a rare and regionally significant discovery. Detailed analysis of these features has the potential to improve current understanding of this technology, regardless of whether they represent Late Saxon or earlier thermal installations. If the earthfast structure does represent a long hall, it would also be a relatively rare discovery of a high-status building that would be of regional significance. This interpretation is tentative, however, and as such the significance of this feature may decrease were that interpretation to change in the wake of further research.
- 9.33 The medieval to post-medieval (Periods 6 and 7) remains that were uncovered are thought to represent farmland features and peripheral settlement features. They are of local significance as they inform upon the nature of land use during those periods in the hinterland of the village of Sevington.
- 9.34 The undated (Period 8) and late post-medieval (Period 9) deposits and features are of negligible archaeological significance as they are unable to further current knowledge of the evolving nature of land use in the vicinity of the site.

#### *Prehistoric and Roman Pottery*

- 9.35 The prehistoric assemblage is of moderately large size, however the presence of at least a few large diagnostic stratified pit groups of Early Iron Age date is of some regional significance, since diagnostic ceramics of this period have so far been lacking in the Ashford area. Of particular note is the fact that the Early Iron Age assemblage is dominated by grog-tempered fabrics. Grog-tempering has previously been identified in several Early or Early/Middle Iron Age assemblages in coastal east Kent, including Saltwood Tunnel (Jones 2006) and the Aerodrome and Canterbury Road sites at Hawkinge (Hamilton & Seager Thomas in prep a and b). This tempering tradition is quite atypical in contemporary assemblages elsewhere in Kent and the South East and possibly suggests strong localised ceramic links to areas of France and the Low Countries. Having said this, the current assemblage does not necessarily appear as

influenced by continental forms or decorative traditions as other coastal assemblages: it lacks elements such as fine pedestal base jars or the common use of rustication, for example. As such, this assemblage is unusual for the area, with potential to contribute to knowledge of Early Iron Age pottery traditions in Kent at regional level.

- 9.36 The Late Iron Age/early Roman assemblage is much larger in size and also contains some larger stratified groups. It is clearly of local significance and worthy of publication; however, its significance is slightly limited by the fact that several other Late Iron Age/Roman assemblages have been published from the area (e.g. Thompson 2013; Lyne 2008; Powell 2013) and many others are available in grey literature format (e.g. Lyne 2000; Brown 2006; Booth 2011, Rayner 2021). It also seems to conform fairly closely to the range of fabrics and forms expected in this period for a lower status rural assemblage.

#### *Post-Roman Pottery*

- 9.37 The Early/Mid Saxon assemblage is of interest as it is the earliest post-Roman material recovered. However, although the material needs to be mentioned in the final report the sherds themselves have no potential for further analysis and are of local significance.
- 9.38 The Late Saxon assemblage is considered more important as this period has not been well represented in the Ashford area previously and it not only demonstrates a specific area of activity at this time but also provides a small insight into the fabrics in use. This assemblage could therefore be seen as regionally significant.
- 9.39 The Early Medieval assemblage is considered to be of local to regional interest for the period pre-dating the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century. The assemblage contains new fabrics not previously seen in the immediate area as well as highlighting the Canterbury source for much of this early material. Additionally, it can help to establish the probable start date for the field lay-out and full-time settlement of the land.
- 9.40 The pottery from the latter part of the Early Medieval period is of local interest as, despite demonstrating the chronological narrative of the current site, similar material is well known from other sites in and around Ashford.
- 9.41 This position is similar for the High Medieval assemblage which is somewhat repetitive and unremarkable compared with other assemblages unearthed nearby.
- 9.42 The Late Medieval material is considered to have more potential for detailed work and could be considered to be of local to regional significance. Despite the period being well represented locally, the current assemblage includes a notable quantity of material that falls between c. 1350 and 1450, a period often not represented in assemblages due to the massive reduction in population following the plague. As such some of the current groups have the potential to help our understanding of the fabrics in use at this time and the transition between the High and 'later' Late Medieval periods ceramically. The early and late post-medieval assemblages are two small and scattered to warrant any further detailed analysis though their presence should be noted in the final report in order to help understand the nature of land-use and close by occupation at this time.

#### *Ceramic Building Material*

- 9.43 The CBM assemblage relates well to several themes identified as having research potential within the region, including the potential transition and change in building materials from the

medieval to post-medieval periods, the types of structure of non-extant farms and domestic rural or estate buildings (Barber 2013, 7, 9, 12-13), and the local production of handmade brick and tile (Barber 2013, 40-1). Similarly, the distribution may inform on the construction of a post-built structure that may be datable by associated pottery or artefacts to a period more specific than prehistoric to medieval. However, the deposition and/or re-deposition of brick and tile in ditches and field boundaries, and the resultant modest level of fragmentation may present a significant constraint on the level of potential analyses that can be applied to this assemblage, which is deemed to be of local significance.

#### *Metals*

- 9.44 The metal assemblage is significant at both local and regional level. At the site / local level the quantity of tools must be emphasised, particularly the proportion of knives which requires further investigation. This offers insights into the activities that occurred at the site which can be considered in combination with other archaeological evidence.
- 9.45 At a regional level, the material recovered from the Anglo-Saxon burials suggests those interred might not be local and were of potentially high status. This is an important avenue to explore and further consideration on the material in combination with scientific analysis could be of particular importance.

#### *Spindle Whorl*

- 9.46 A stone spindle whorl was recovered from this site, that may be of Roman to early post-medieval date. Further specialist analysis may refine this dating. The whorl is deemed to be of significance at local / site level, providing information on activities that occurred on or in the vicinity of the site and also as dating evidence.

#### *Lithics and Burnt Flint*

- 9.47 The struck flint and burnt unworked lithic assemblages are small and widely scattered across a large area. Most pieces appear to be residual within features of later Roman to medieval date. As such the assemblages are considered to be of local significance.

#### *Slag and Industrial Residues*

- 9.48 The slag and industrial residue assemblage is deemed to be of archaeological significance to a site-specific and local level, with the potential to provide information on the types of activities taking place on site and to add to the existing corpus of knowledge of local metalworking practices potentially during the Romano-British and / or Late Saxon periods.

#### *Human Remains*

- 9.49 The assemblage from the site is of local and regional significance. It possesses high potential for the recovery of detailed osteological information. While the number of inhumations is relatively small, the data which can be obtained from these individuals offers the unique potential to recreate a detailed picture of life and death in Roman and Anglo-Saxon Kent.

#### *Post-Roman Glass, Clay Tobacco Pipe and Leather*

- 9.50 The post-Roman glass and clay tobacco pipe assemblages are small and are considered to be of limited archaeological significance beyond dating evidence at a site-specific level. The leather is of little intrinsic value as it cannot contribute to site dating.



### *Animal Bone*

- 9.51 The animal bone assemblage needs to be reassessed in light of the revised phasing presented in Section 6 (above) by contextual units / groups / land uses. As a minimum, the medieval assemblage is worth further consideration on a site level, although this will be restricted to the potential diet and status of inhabitants, as there is not enough mortality data to consider the animal economy. If phasing can be refined it is possible that the large sample dated to the prehistoric/ medieval period may be useful either to increase the data available for the medieval assemblage, or to add a further dimension to understanding of the diet and nature of the prehistoric settlement.
- 9.52 High fragmentation and broad phasing means that the assemblage has little significance on a regional or national level, though will be useful to better understand the story of those living on the site in the past at a site / local level. There is not enough data to add significantly to the specific project aims, with the possible exception of identifying specific socio-economic activities in the archaeological record.

### *Worked Wood*

- 9.53 The worked wood assemblage from the site comprises broken vessels and woodworking offcuts. The artefacts can inform on activities and land uses that may have characterised the site in the past. They may also facilitate the dating of the site, particularly if suitable pieces of oak are subjected to dendrochronology. As such the assemblage is of local significance.

### *Macroplant and Charcoal*

- 9.54 Both the macroplant and charcoal assemblages have the potential to answer important research questions concerning the exploitation of both cultivated and wild plant resources on the site from the prehistoric to the late medieval period. They are therefore of local significance.

### *Soils and Sediments*

- 9.55 The Kubiena samples that were taken through the kilns have the potential to yield results that may inform upon the ways in which the kiln structures were used, collapsed and were subsequently infilled. This will provide local-level information regarding the life histories of the kilns, however the rare nature of such features in Kent elevates the importance of this information. Consequently, this evidence is deemed to be of local to regional significance.

## **10 UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN**

- 10.1 Recommended further work on this project includes the following. Further stratigraphic and spatial analysis is recommended on Area 8 features pertaining to Period 6 (medieval to early post-medieval). This period needs to be formerly sub-phased prior to publication, while some contexts may need to be re-grouped in order to better equate those that were recorded in the deeper slots. Isotope analysis may be undertaken on some of the Saxon skeletons to assess mobility, including the individual buried with grave goods (Group 27). Carbon 14 dating of some key contexts is also recommended. These may include but is not necessarily limited to the following:
- The possible Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age cremation (Group 185) to establish whether it has been phased correctly or whether it could alternatively relate to a possible Late Saxon earthfast structure tentatively identified herein as a long hall.

- The partial inhumation (Group 17), which is currently undated.
- The burnt residue on the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age pottery sherd from Group 188 to help refine the existing pottery chronology for the East Kent area.
- Cereal grains from Kilns 1, 4 and 5 to better determine whether these thermal installations are Roman or Saxon in date.
- An Early to Middle Saxon individual to better date this group of inhumations.

10.2 The research questions to be addressed during further work are as follows:

- To fully integrate the results of the excavation with any subsequent phases of work to the east of the current site.
- To fully integrate the stratigraphic narrative with all finds and ecofact data, particularly animal bone and palaeoenvironmental data.
- To better contextualise the results at local and regional level through desk-based research of settlement and land use patterns, settlement hierarchy, material culture and cultural affinities. The prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and medieval periods will be the main focus of this research given their relatively elevated significance in relation to the other remains that were encountered. Depending upon the focus of the publication, this research could be expanded to include a map regression exercise to better understand the longevity and function of a later post-medieval field boundary and some undated farmland features, for example the undated trackway.
- To consider through desk-based research and full integration of the stratigraphy and finds data whether any structured deposits are present on the site.
- To further research Roman and post-Roman corn drying kilns in order to better understand the forms, ages and functions of the six kilns that were unearthed on the site.
- To further research the earthfast structure (Group 61) that was tentatively interpreted here as a long hall in order to confirm, refute or modify that conclusion. Any new data (for example absolute dating) should be taken into consideration.
- To disseminate findings through publication.

10.3 Recommendations for the further analysis and research of several of the finds assemblages from the archaeological investigation have been made:

#### *Prehistoric and Roman Pottery*

- Further reading and comparison with Kentish assemblages is required to explore the significance of Early Iron Age grog-tempering at Stour Park. This has the potential to contribute to the following research aim from the South-East Research Framework (Champion 2011, 50): 'the external connections of the region require further analysis, especially connections with other areas of southern and eastern England and across the Channel with France, Belgium and the Netherlands'.
- The scientific dating framework for Iron Age pottery in Kent is limited. Consequently, radiocarbon dating of key EIA pottery groups from this site is recommended. A single internal burnt residue is available on a pottery sherd from the largest EIA group from fill (7040) of pit [7043]. It is proposed that this should be radiocarbon dated and that the

potential for dating of any other organic material such as animal bone, charcoal or other charred plant remains from contexts containing large diagnostic Early Iron Age pottery assemblages should also be considered.

- Comparative analysis between this and other assemblages from coastal south-east Kent and possible continental influences should be considered in terms of similarities and differences.
- Any updated stratigraphic phasing should be integrated into the pottery dataset and phased quantification tables and overviews of pottery by phase should be produced. This should be integrated with any updated stratigraphic data (grouping etc) and pottery distributions should be considered at group / land use level. Some illustrations may also be required.

#### *Post-Roman Pottery*

- It is proposed that a publication report on the post-Roman pottery will be produced for publication. This will give an overview of the overall assemblage (largely drawn from the current assessment) but will include the results of more detailed analysis on the Late Saxon, Early and Late Medieval assemblages. The best groups will be tabulated to demonstrate the changing fabrics through time and up to 30 vessels will be illustrated. Parallels will be sort from similar sites in the area against which to compare the fabrics and forms through time.

#### *Clay Building Materials*

- No further recording is required for this assemblage but specific research questions do need to be considered. For example, do the traits of the wall brick and peg tile allow them to be associated or paralleled with any local/regional kilns, workshops, structures or assemblages? Does spatial analysis allow for any focal points of deposition to be identified, that may be associated with structures on or close to the site?

#### *Fired Clay*

- Targeted re-examination of a representational sample of the fired clay fragments with textile impressions (from context 10113) by a textile specialist may help to provide a closer identification of the type of fabric used and its date.
- Research into published Roman and Medieval roadside settlements in Kent and the surrounding counties is recommended to determine if any parallels for structures [10029] and [10030] can be identified.
- The contexts associated with fired clay should be cross-referenced with ecofact assessment data from the contexts related to structures [10027], [10029] and [10030], particularly 'primary' floor levels, where possible. This may help to determine the function of these structures.
- Cross reference contexts associated with fired clay with artefact assessment data from the contexts related to structures [10027], [10029] and [10030], particularly 'primary' floor levels (rather than backfill). This may help to determine a) the function of these structures and b) the chronology of their construction, use and abandonment.
- The date of these structures remains uncertain, but may date to the Late Saxon period. Several approaches could be taken to try to refine this. Is there sufficient *in situ*

carbonised organics from primary floor levels within all three structures ([10027], [10029] and [10030]) to allow for C14 dating of each? Can any similar structures from Kent or the southeast more generally be identified to help refine the function/date?

- Presuming that the site will go to publication, a suite of photographs and hand-drawn illustrations detailing fragments with waxy and textile impressions from [10027] and [10029] would be essential. Appendix A includes specific samples which are considered good candidates for illustration from which a representational sample should be extracted. An artist's impression of the structures may also be valuable as an aid to visualization.

### *Metals*

- It is recommended that further research is conducted on this assemblage and that the assemblage is recorded in greater detail. Particularly focus should be made on the ironwork after it has undergone cleaning and conservation. The metal should also be better contextualised in light of the dating evidence and osteological evidence. These elements need to be considered and the typologies of the metal artefacts might need to be amended depending on date.
- It is recommended that objects which are unidentified such as <RF 5> and <RF 6> require further assessment by a relevant specialist and conservation. Subsequently analysis can be undertaken considering the relevant reports and grave plans.
- For objects whose dates and types can be refined, further comparative research should, again, be used to refine these dates and types. Objects that have been identified as particular candidates for this work include the continental buckle, spearhead, knife blades; spade sheath, hammerhead and the other tools. However, other objects in the assemblage will also benefit from this work.
- Focused research should be undertaken on the artefacts found in association with the Anglo-Saxon burials. Detailed typological analysis should be undertaken on the spearhead, buckle, and knives from the burials as well as a consideration of the two composite objects. In combination with specialist reports and scientific analysis this can be used to determine more about the individuals interred at the site and whether there are similarities between these burials and those from other sites in the wider environs.
- A consideration as to the high proportion of tools should be undertaken. Detailed typological assessment is required and then comparison with other sites within the wider region, potentially utilising the Roman Rural Settlement project.
- In addition to the further research recommended above, it is also recommended that a number of the objects from the assemblage are illustrated. Recommendations for illustration include <RF 1> and <RF 24> the Roman brooches, <RF 9> and <RF 126> buckles, <RF 158> strap ends, <RF 3> spear, the knives, <RF 125> reaping hook, <RF 7> spade, <RF 23> hammerhead, <RF 10> spur and <RF 77> strike a light?
- Given that the buckle that accompanied Sk 6167 could be continental, strontium isotope analysis of this individual is recommended to investigate mobility.



#### *Stone Spindle Whorl*

- A small finds specialist should be engaged to confirm the lithology and seek parallels for the type that will confirm the likely Roman origin.

#### *Worked Flint*

- Diagnostic pieces of worked flint, such as the microlith, possible microburin, arrowhead fragments, scrapers, flake/blade knives, hammerstones, re-corticated crested piece and thinning flakes, should be illustrated within any forthcoming publication. No other work is recommended on the assemblage

#### *Slag and Industrial Residue*

- Further specialist analysis is required which should include greater integration with contextual units and distribution patterns associated with the materials from Area 10, along with research into local site parallels. This should be followed by the production of a report which incorporates the results of the distribution analysis and parallels.

#### *Human Remains*

- It is recommended that all inhumations (n=13) along with the possible cremation (n=1) undergo full osteological analysis to determine the MNI represented in the Stour Park skeletal assemblage, provide full demographic details including age-at-death and biological sex, identify, record and provide differential diagnosis of pathology and trauma and provide a full discussion on spatial distribution and grave goods, comparing with other known sites. The report should also provide contextual analysis of the population as a whole, including demography, stature, pathology and trauma, providing a clear picture of the bioarchaeological landscape for the region

#### *Animal Bone*

- Further work is recommended on animal bone assemblages from well-dated contexts. As a minimum this will require full recording of the assemblage to answer the following basic research questions. What was the meat diet of those living at the site in the past? Quantification of taxa and anatomical elements can be used to imply the role of livestock and wild animals in the diet. What was the socio-economic status of those living at the site? Evidence for redistribution of carcass parts can be useful to imply the mode of production e.g. self-sufficient, consumer or producer.

#### *Worked Wood*

- The items of oak were assessed for their dendrochronological potential. The only viable candidate is plank SF184 from [8249], which retains an estimated 150 growth-rings. However, it has been trimmed of all its outermost rings so analysis would provide at most a *terminus post quem* for felling and use.
- The following items should be illustrated: SF183; the bowl; SF191; the complete stave; SF185; the re-used plank; SF184; the plank with dowel *in situ*

#### *Macroplant and Charcoal*

- If ecofacts are needed for radiocarbon dating, then the cereal caryopses, hazelnuts and charcoal are suitable. If charcoal is selected for dating, oak should be avoided as it is

a slow growing species which can prove unreliable. Further work on this assemblage should consider:

- What cereal crops were cultivated, which species if any was more economically important and whether this changed over an archaeologically recognised time period should be considered. Are the crops representative of a processing, consumer or mixed economy.
- Is there surviving evidence of deliberate spatial deposition of plant remains within specific deposits and locations within the excavated area.
- Is there evidence for the exploitation and economic role of wild plants for use as food, fuel and building material within this site and did this change.
- What information can be gathered from the weed assemblage concerning the surrounding landscape.
- What wood species were collected for use on site as fuel and which for building. Is there evidence that exploitation of wood species changed over time.
- What information can be gathered from the ecofact assemblage concerning on site-activities.
- How do the results from Stour Park compare to other sites of a similar date in this region of England.

#### *Soils and Sediments*

- Further work on the soil and sediment samples taken for micromorphological analysis should be undertaken to consider:
- What site formation processes were responsible for the kiln infilling
- How do the lower and upper kiln infills differ and is this a reflection of differing depositional environments?
- Do post-depositional alterations to the infilled eposist tell us anything about wider environmental conditions at this site?
- What can the inclusions in the lower fill tell us about the material used to construct the kiln and materials that may have been burned within it?
- What can the conclusions in the upper fill tell us about wider domestic activity on this site?
- How do the kiln infills compare with other examples of Roman kilns studied micromorphologically?

- 10.4 No further work is recommended on the post-Roman glass, clay tobacco pipe, coin, burnt flint and leather assemblages from the site. However, the assessments of this material will be referred to in further research and considered in the context of the full site assemblage from both phases of work.
- 10.5 Further documentary research will be carried out in order to place the site into its regional context and compare its features and finds with those from other sites.
- 10.6 The results merit further research, illustration and dissemination. A narrative of the site results will be integrated with documentary research and published as an AOC monograph or journal

article in a suitable local journal such as *Archaeologia Cantiana*. This will include details plans of the site along with illustrations and photographs of a sample of finds from the site

- 10.7 No depositories in Kent are currently accepting archive.
- 10.8 The further work to be undertaken is set out in the Table of Recommendations (see Table below). Justifications for the analyses recommended can be found in Sections 6, 9 and 10 (above) and Appendix B (below). The following is based upon the premise that the site will be published as a journal article and may be subject to change should this be published as an AOC monograph.

| Task                                     | Description  | Resource        | Days        |
|--|--|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>General</b>                           |  |                 |             |
| 1  | Desk-based / documentary research                    | RHaslam         | 15          |
| 2  | Further stratigraphic analysis relating to Area 8    | RHaslam         | 3           |
| 3  | Fully integrating digital, drawn and contextual data | RHaslam         | 2           |
| <b>Analysis</b>                          |  |                 |             |
| 4  | Roman and prehistoric pottery                        | AD              | 9           |
| 5  | Post-Roman pottery                                   | LB              | 7.5         |
| 6  | CBM  | AP              | 3           |
| 7  | Fired clay   | OM              | 9           |
| 8  | Metal  | RHenry          | 17          |
| 9  | Stone spindle whorl                                  | To be confirmed | 1           |
| 10                                       | Lithics  | JC              | 1           |
| 11                                       | Slag and industrial residues                         | AM              | 3.5         |
| 12                                       | Animal bone  | MH              | 45          |
| 13                                       | Human remains  | AJ / MT         | 14          |
| 14                                       | Worked wood  | AC & GD         | 3           |
| 14                                       | Dendrochronology of SF 184                           |                 | Fixed price |
| 15                                       | Conservation of SF 183, SF 191, SF 185, SF 184       | GE              | Fixed price |
| 16                                       | Macroplant and charcoal                              | JR              | 11          |
| 18                                       | Soils and sediments                                  | LR              | 5           |
| 19                                       | Pollen analysis(8208) of ditch feature [8209]        |                 | Fixed price |
| 20                                       | Isotope analysis on Sk 6167                          |                 | Fixed price |
| 21                                       | Carbon 14 dating of up to six key contexts           |                 | Fixed price |
| <b>Report, Publication and Archiving</b> |  |                 |             |
| 22                                       | Liaison with specialists                             | RHaslam         | 1           |

| Task | Description  | Resource        | Days        |
|------|--|-----------------|-------------|
| 23   | Integrating specialist reports   | RHaslam         | 4           |
| 24   | Liaison with illustrator   | RHaslam         | 3           |
| 25   | Completion of illustrations and photographs for publication                        | To be confirmed | 12          |
| 26   | Preparation of the publication text  | RHaslam         | 15          |
| 27   | Editing and review of the publication text   | MM / HS         | 4           |
| 28   | Proof reading and liaison with journal editor                                      | RHaslam         | 4           |
| 29   | Amendments arising from external editor's comments to publication text and figures | RHaslam         | 4           |
| 30   | Project management and quality assurance overall                                   | MM/HS           | 2           |
| 31   | Page costs   |                 | Fixed price |
| 32   | Archiving and materials  |                 | Fixed price |
| 33   | Deposition   |                 | Fixed price |

*Table 7: Table of Recommendations*



## 11 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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LAND ON THE NORTH SIDE OF HIGHFIELD LANE, SEVINGTON, KENT:  
A POST-EXCAVATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

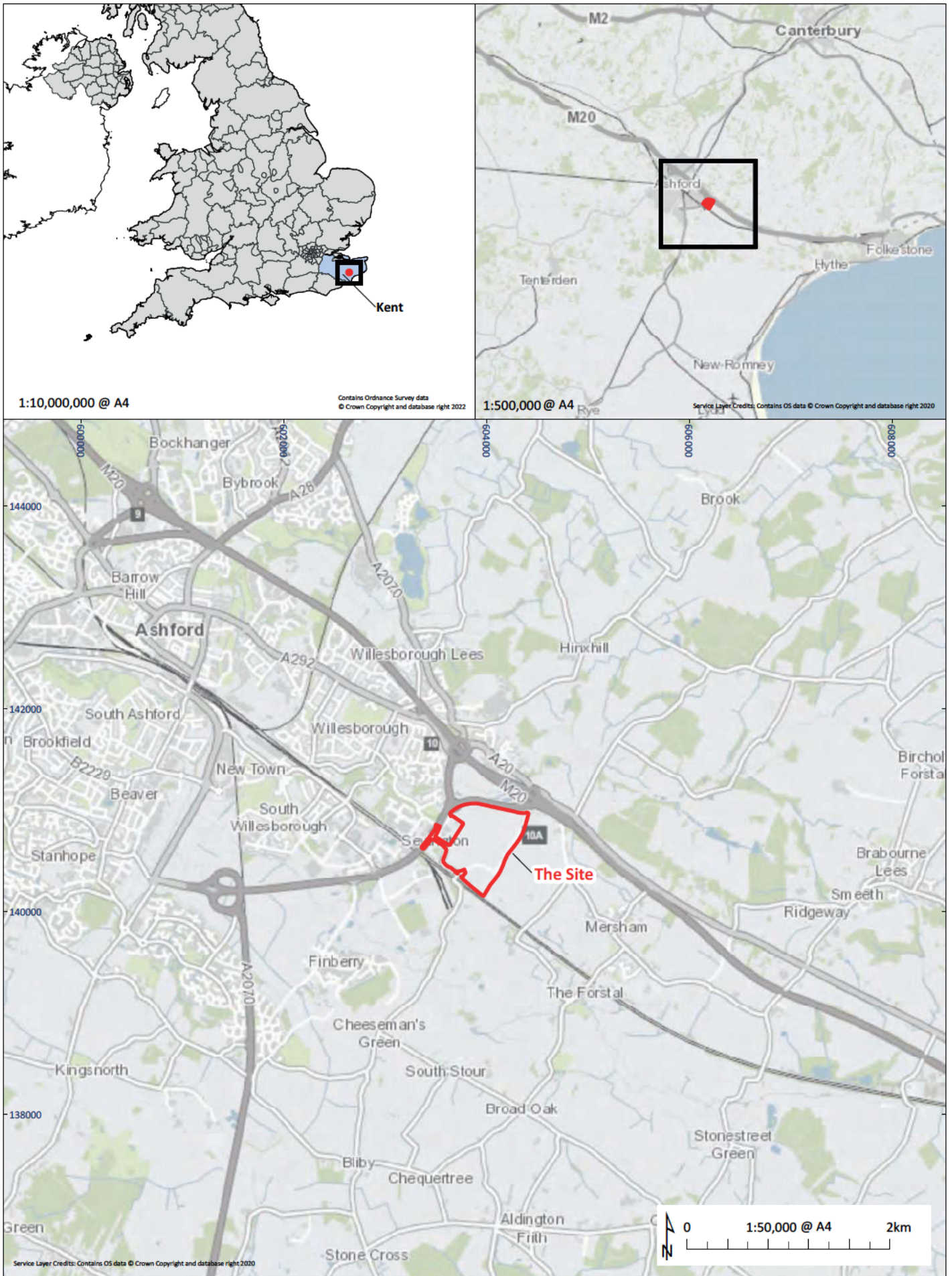


Figure 1: Site Location

03/34280/PXA/01/01



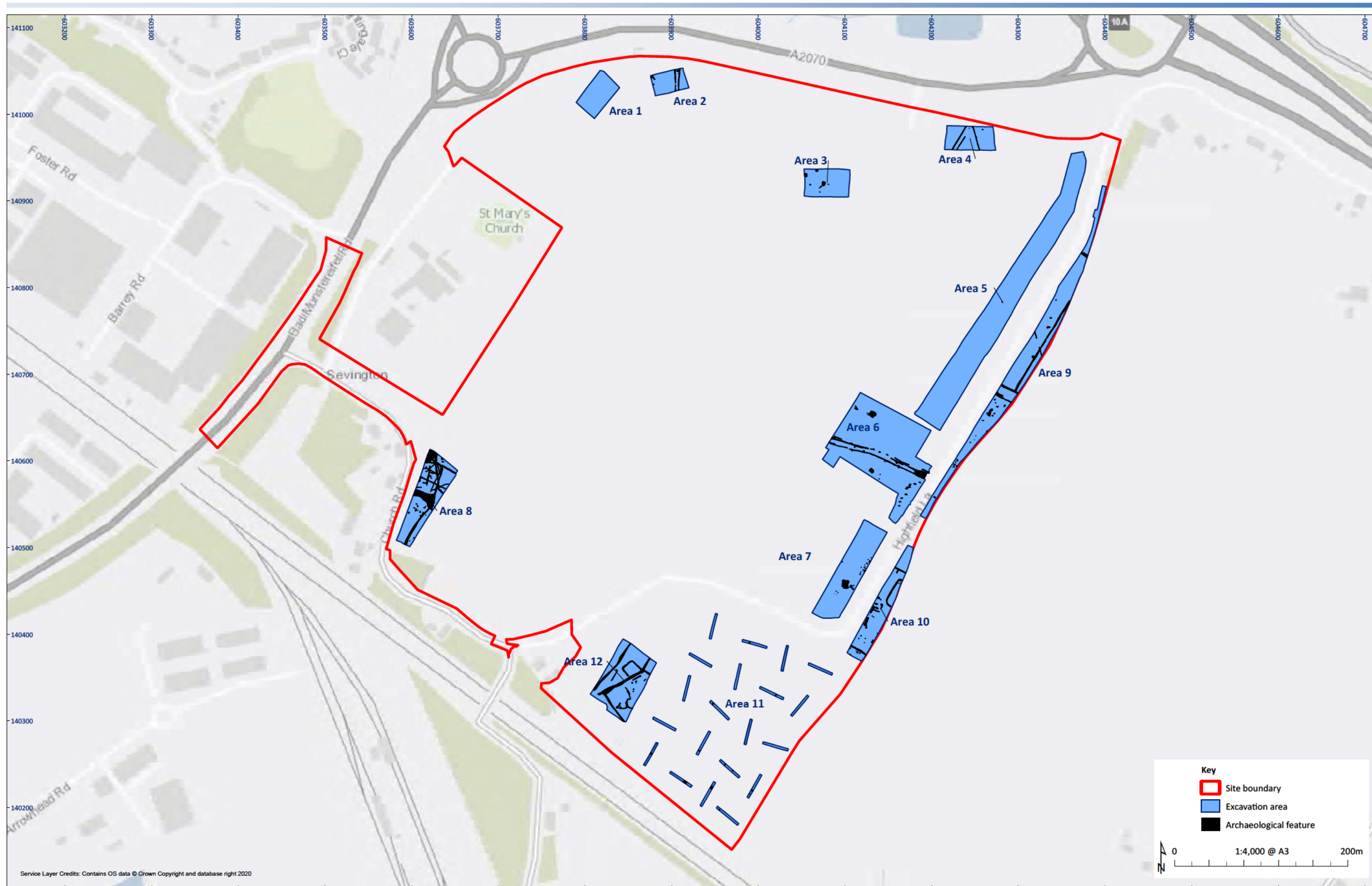
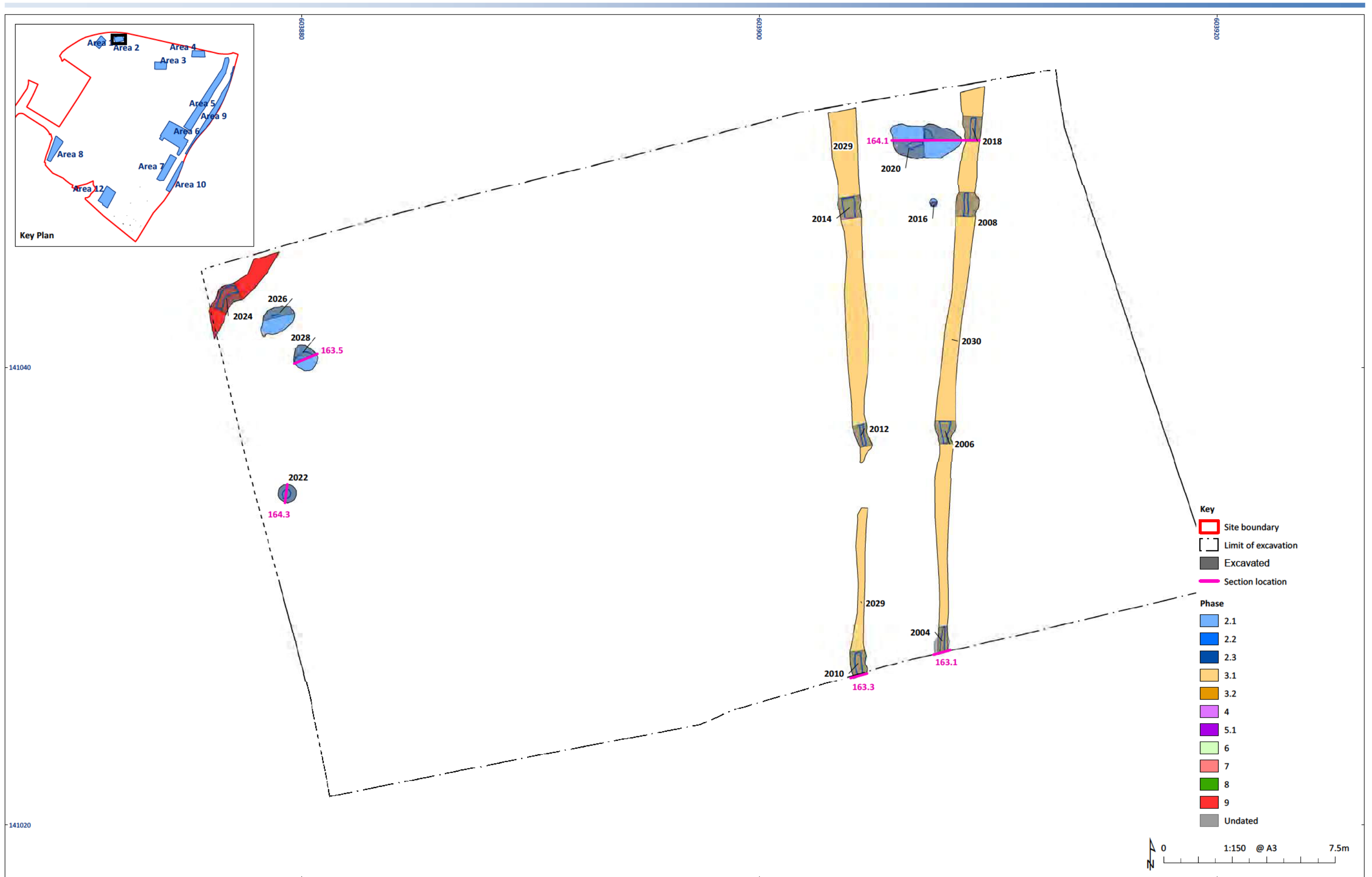


Figure 2: Detailed Site Location

03/34280/PXA/02/01



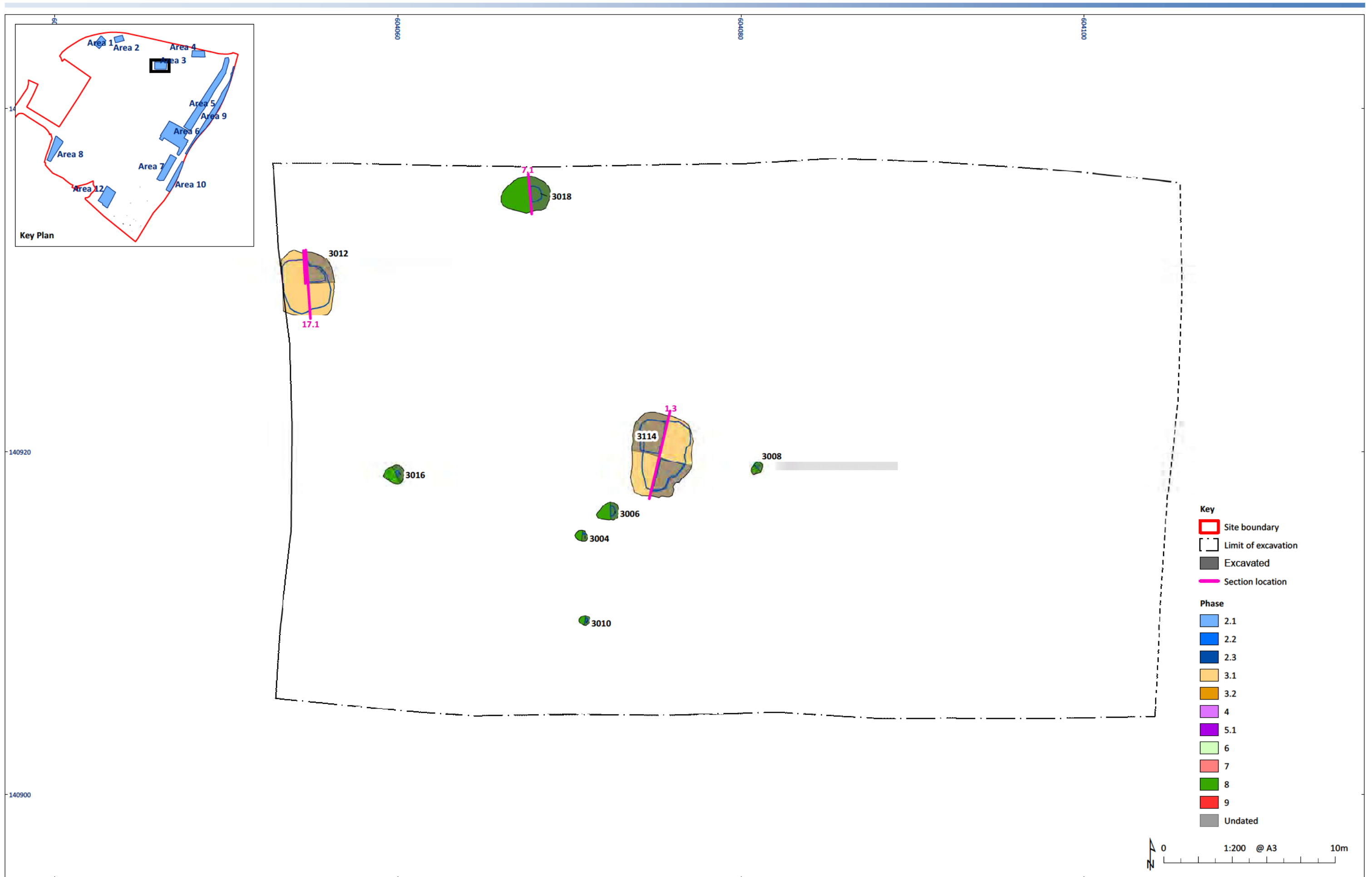


Figure 4: Area 3

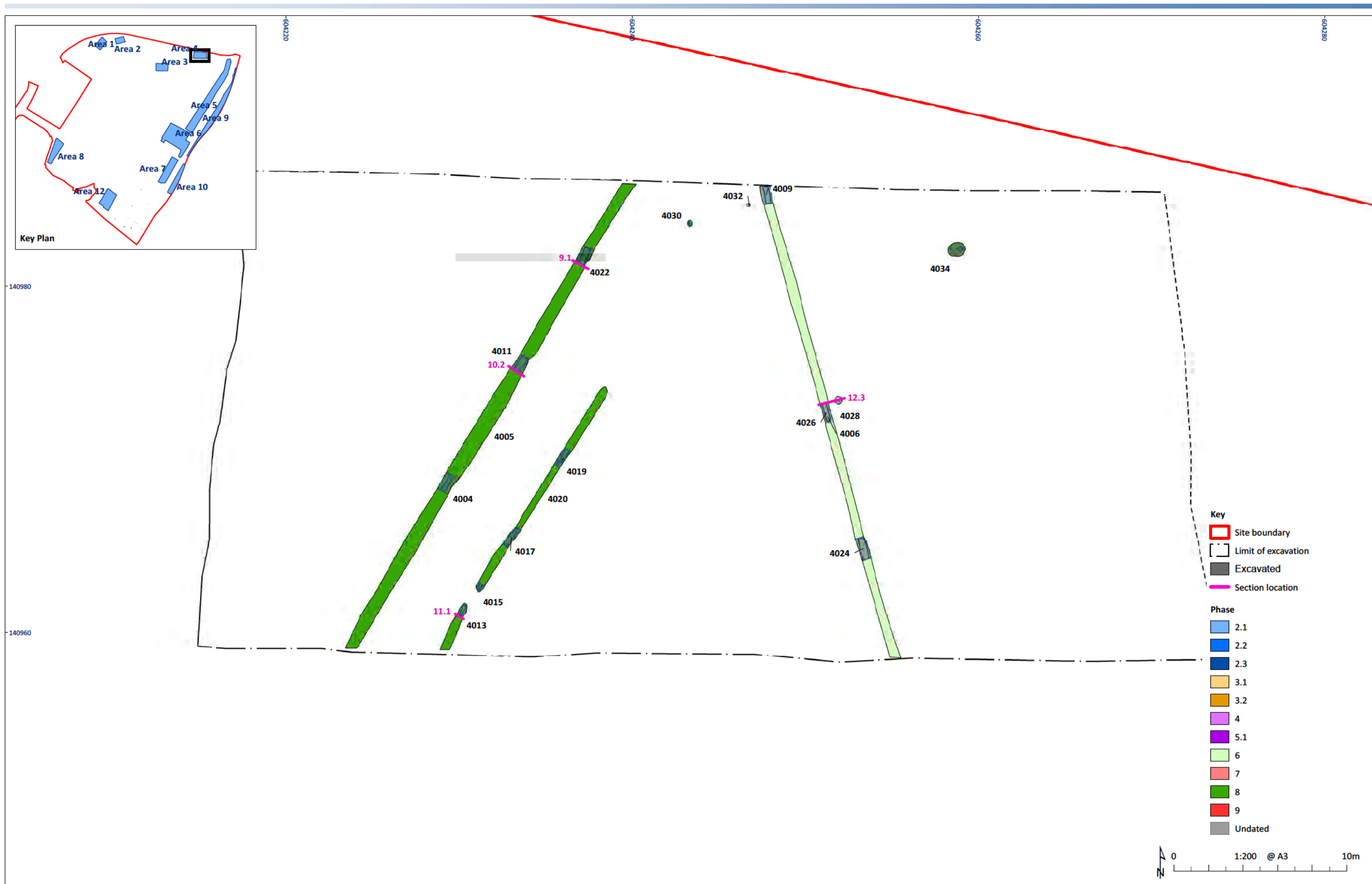
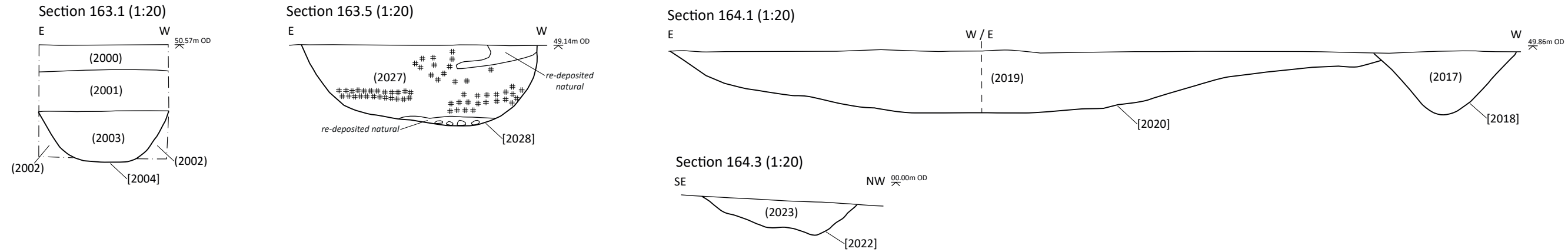


Figure 5: Area 4

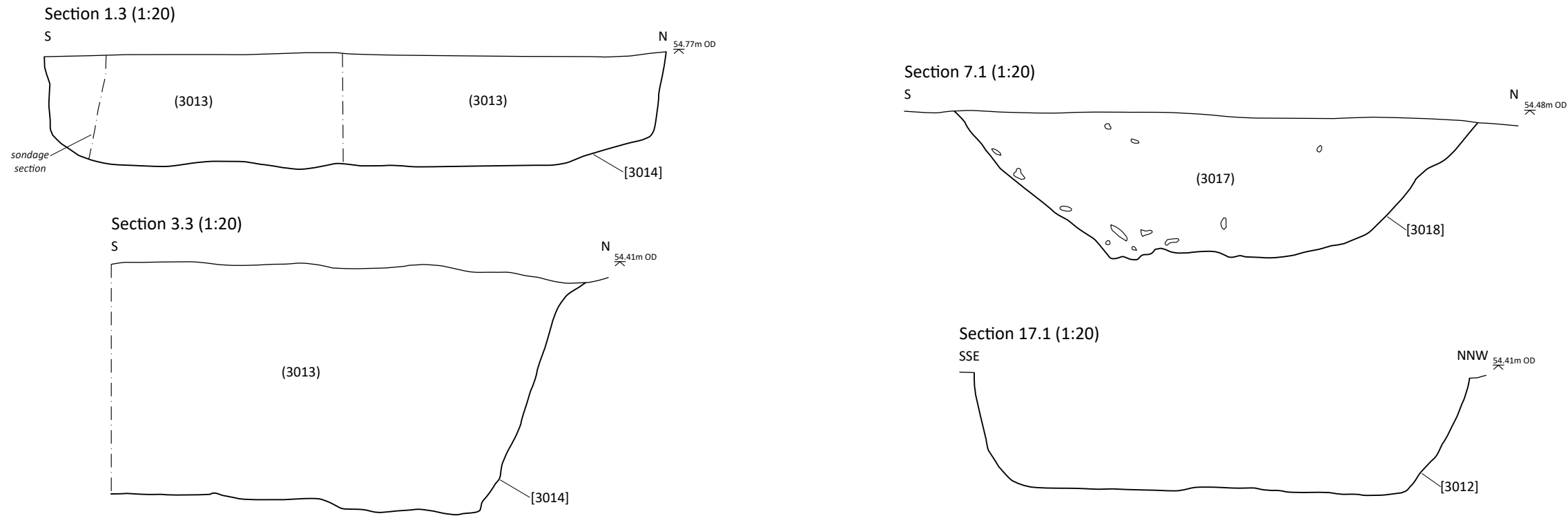
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Area 2



Area 3



Area 4



**Key**  
## Charcoal  
Stone

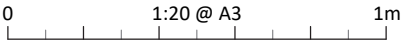


Figure 6: Areas 2, 3, and 4 - Sec ons

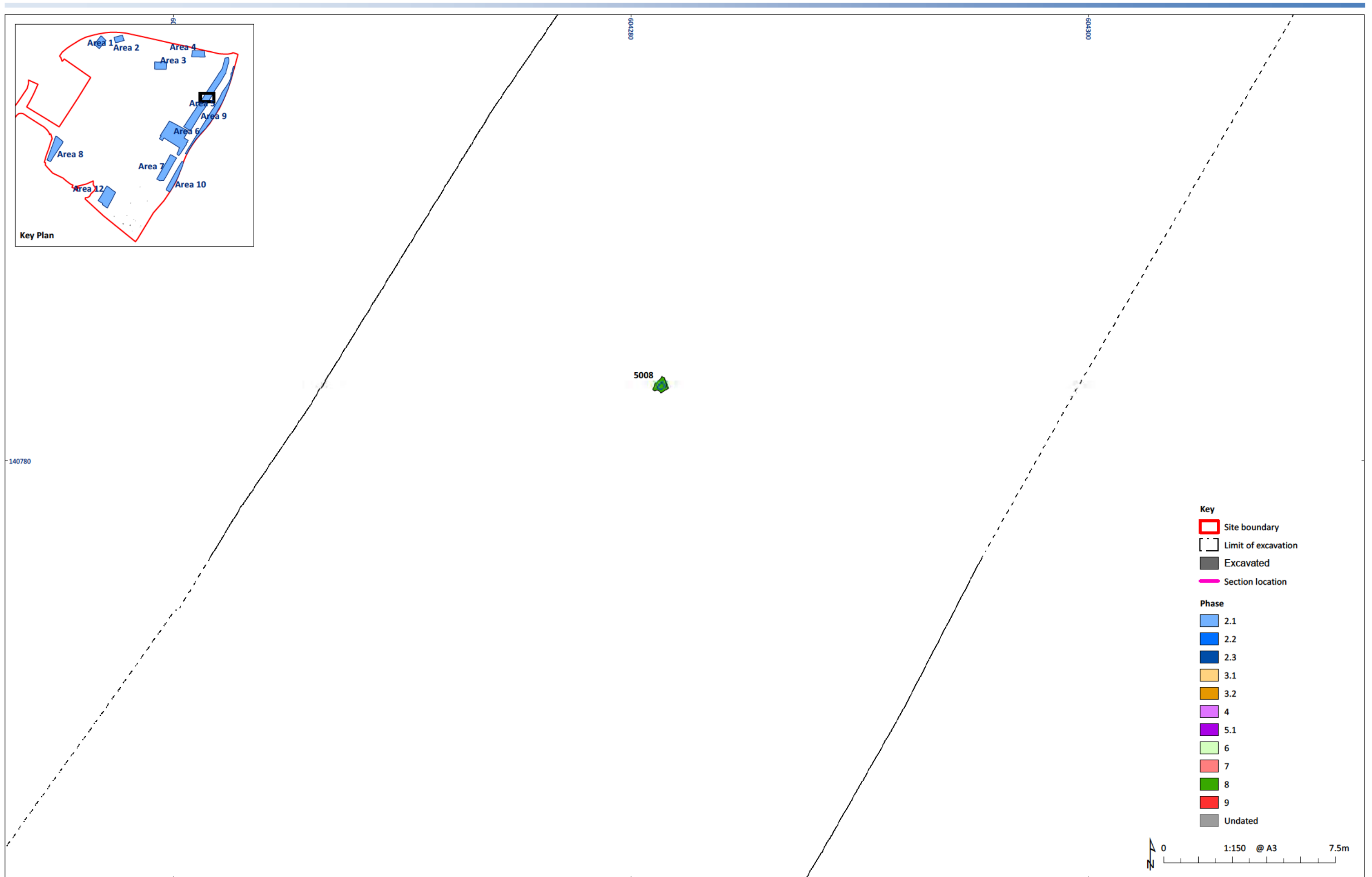


Figure 7: Area 5 Central

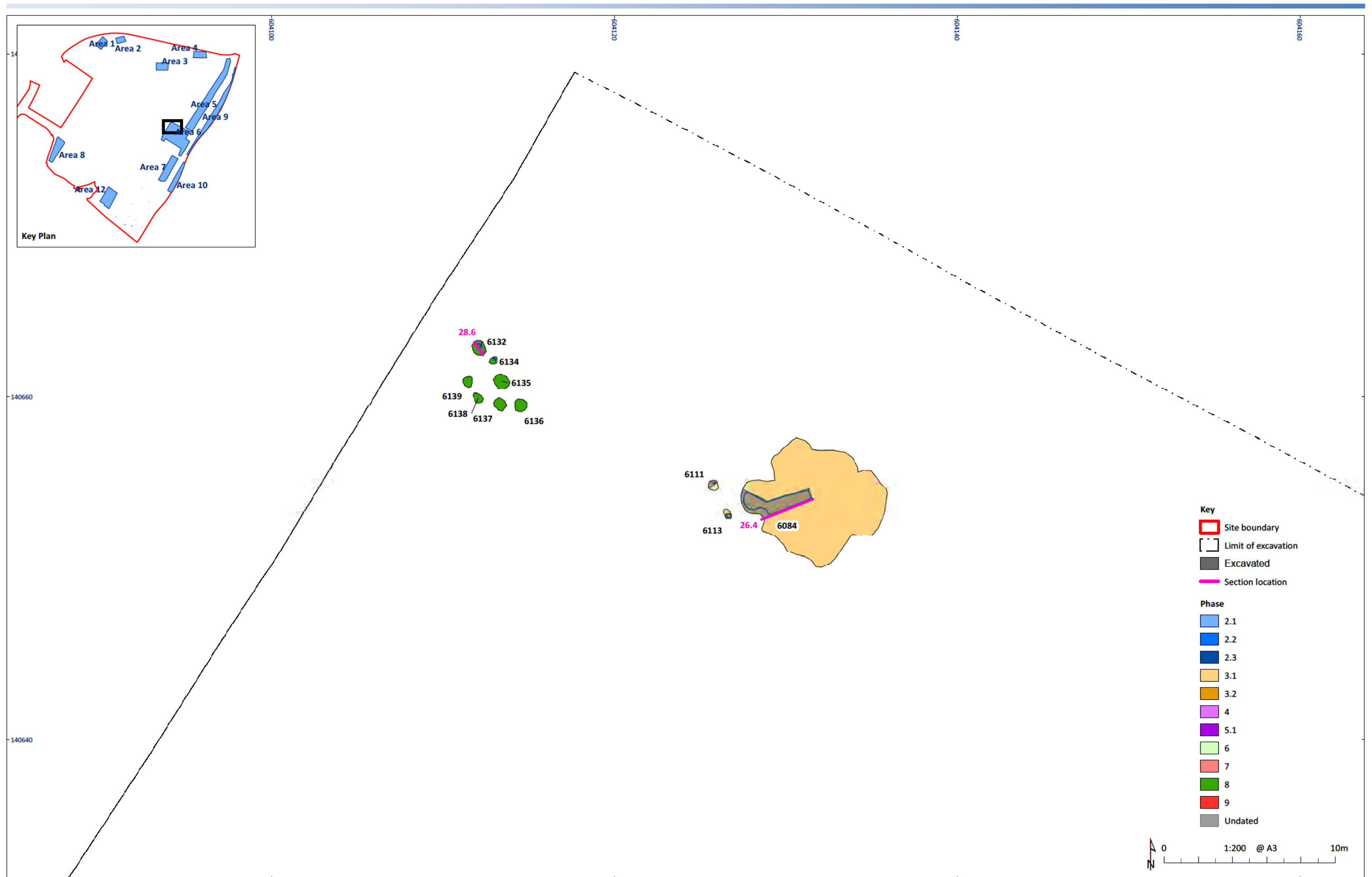


Figure 8: Area 6 North

03/34280/PXA/08/01

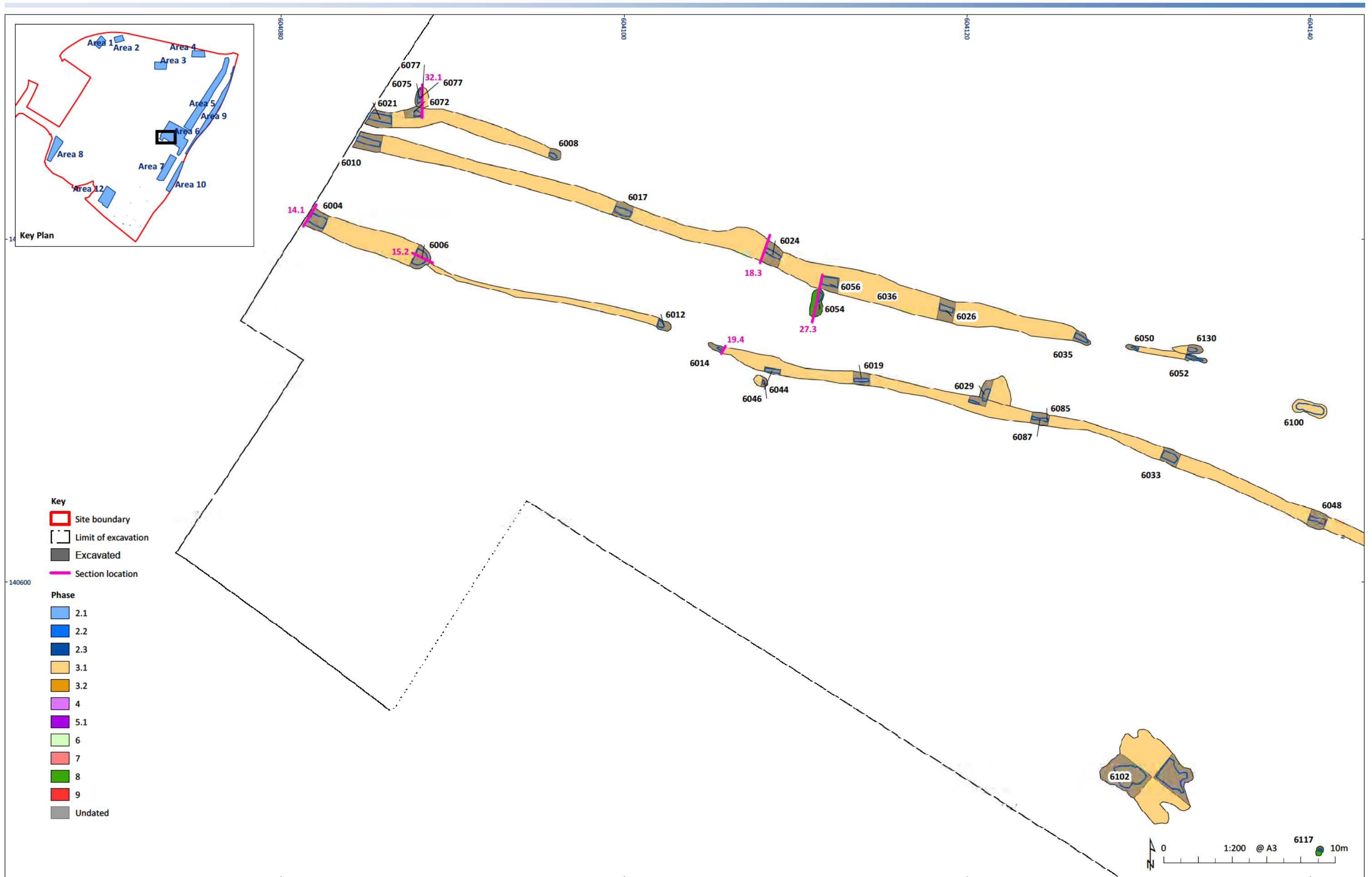


Figure 9: Area 6 West & Central

03/34280/PXA/09/01



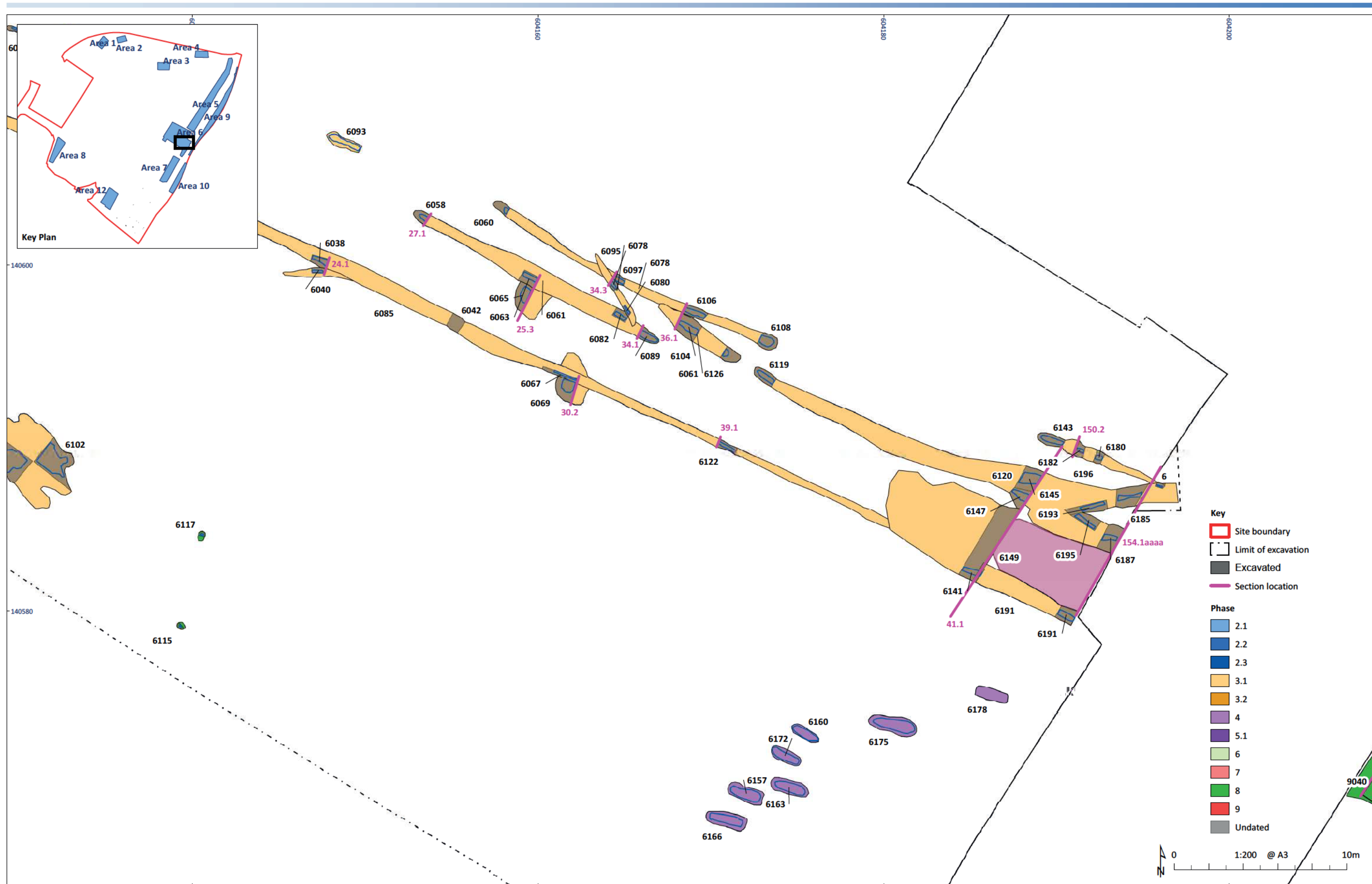
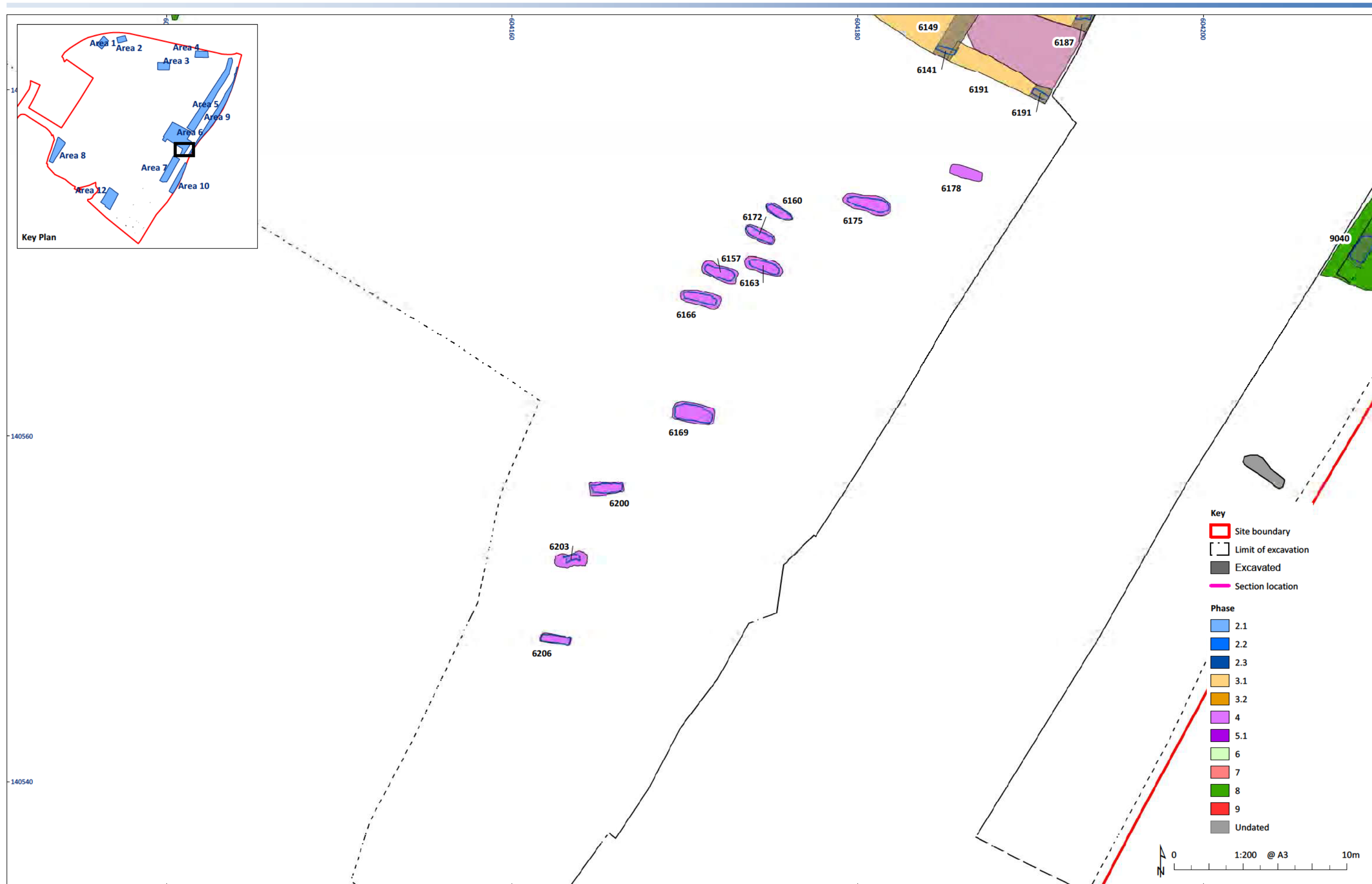


Figure 10: Area 6 South-East

03/34280/PXA/10/01



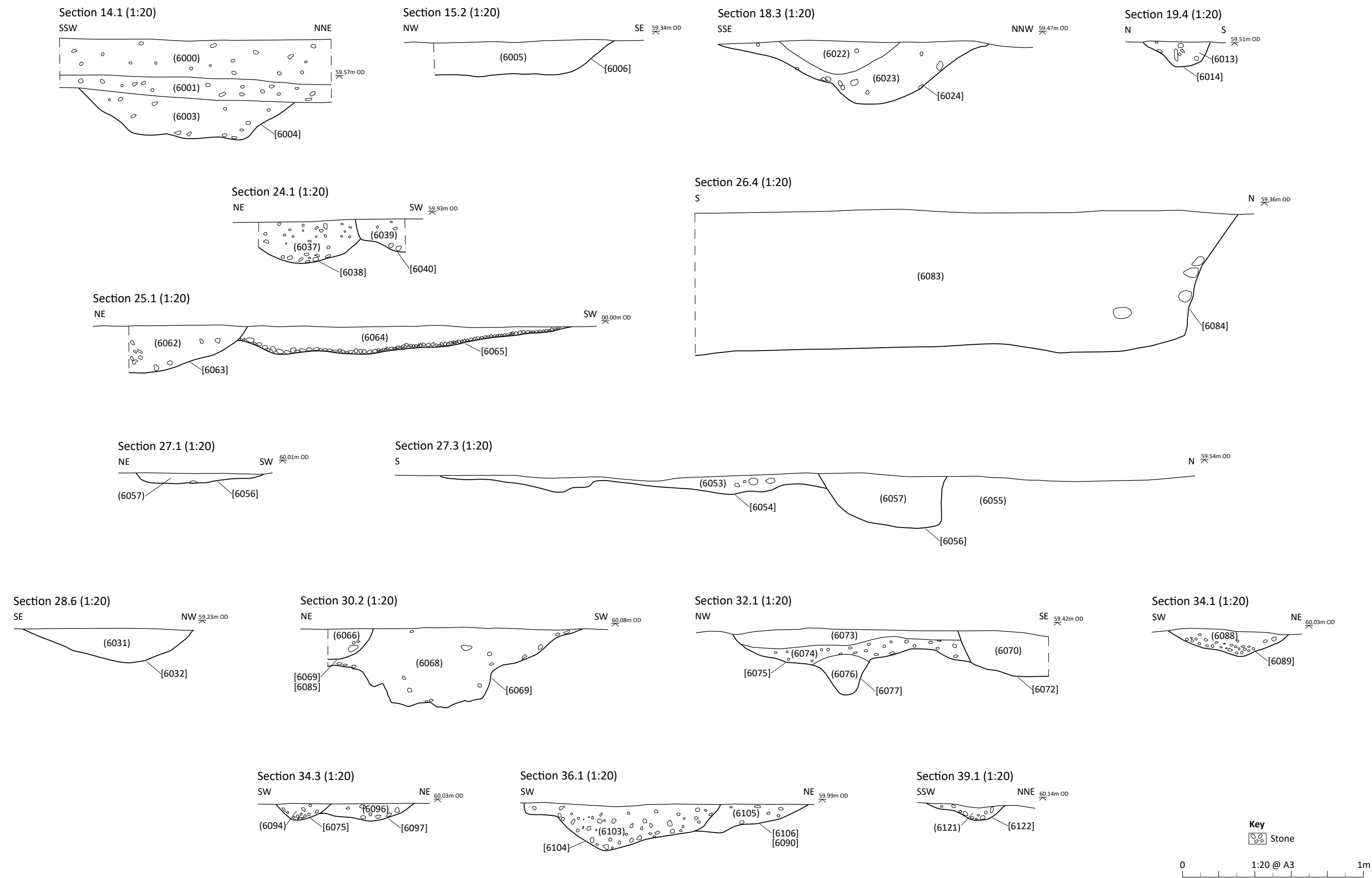


Figure 12: Area 6 - Sections 1

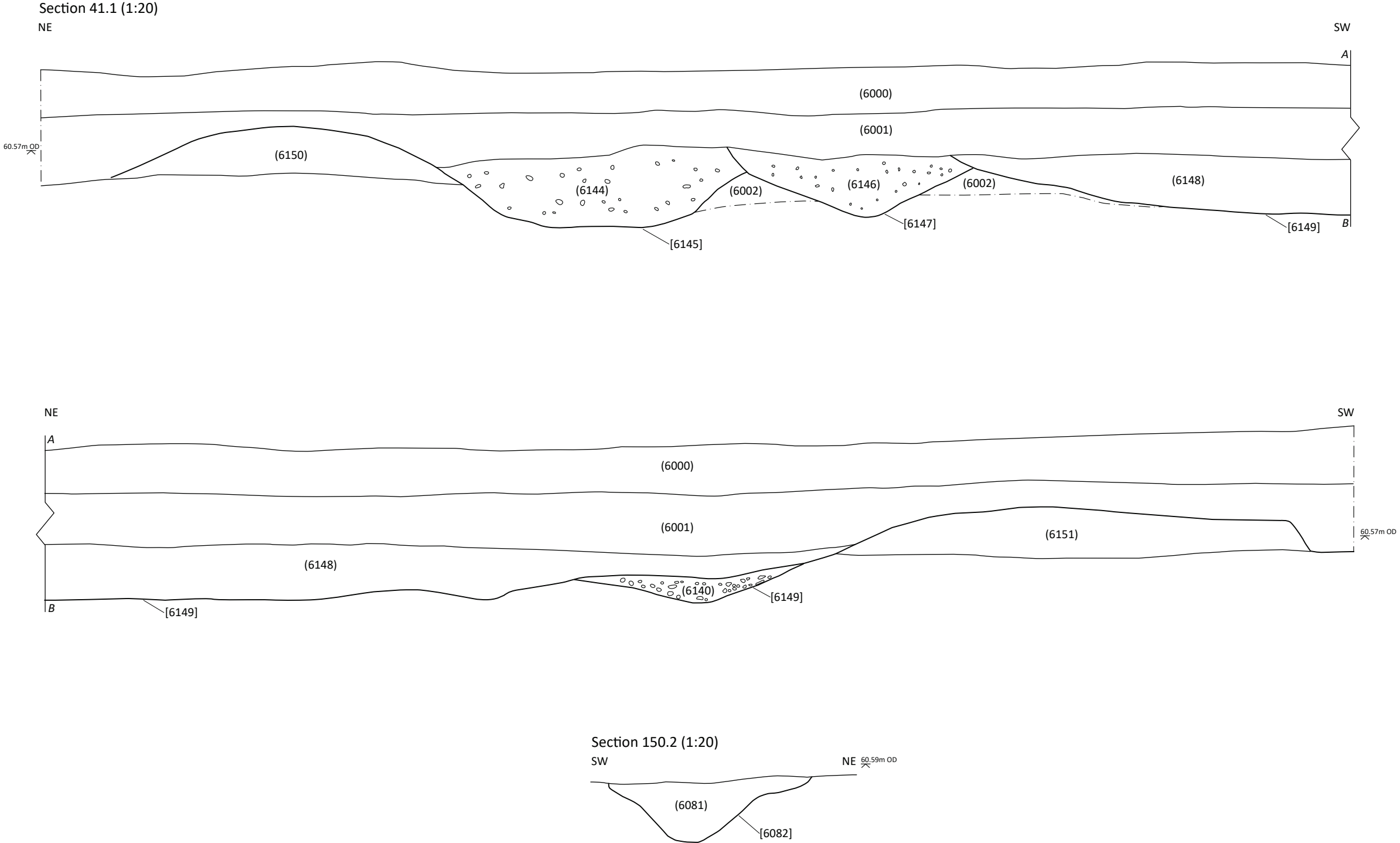


Figure 13: Area 6 - Sections 2



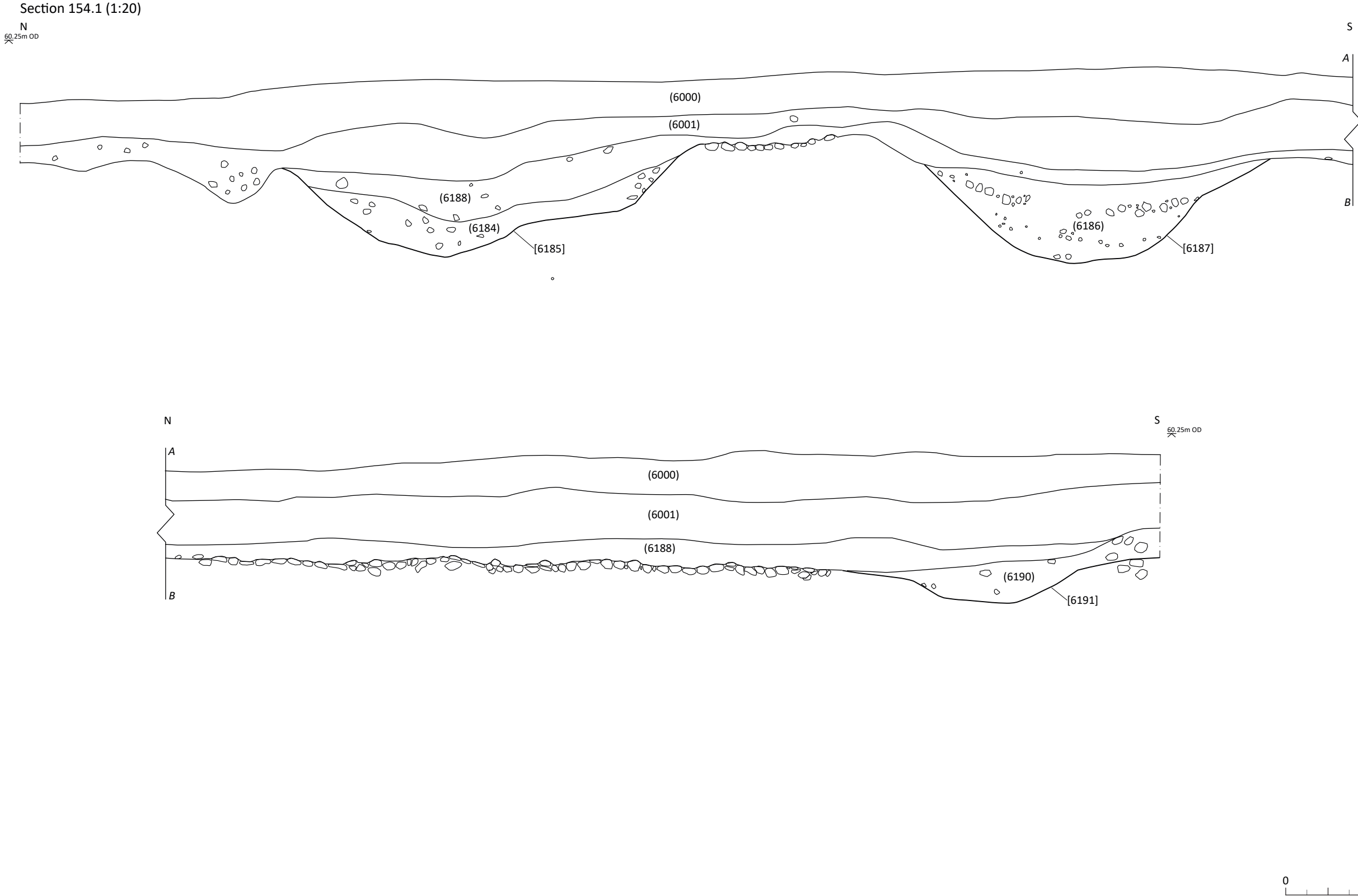


Figure 14: Area 6 - Sections 3

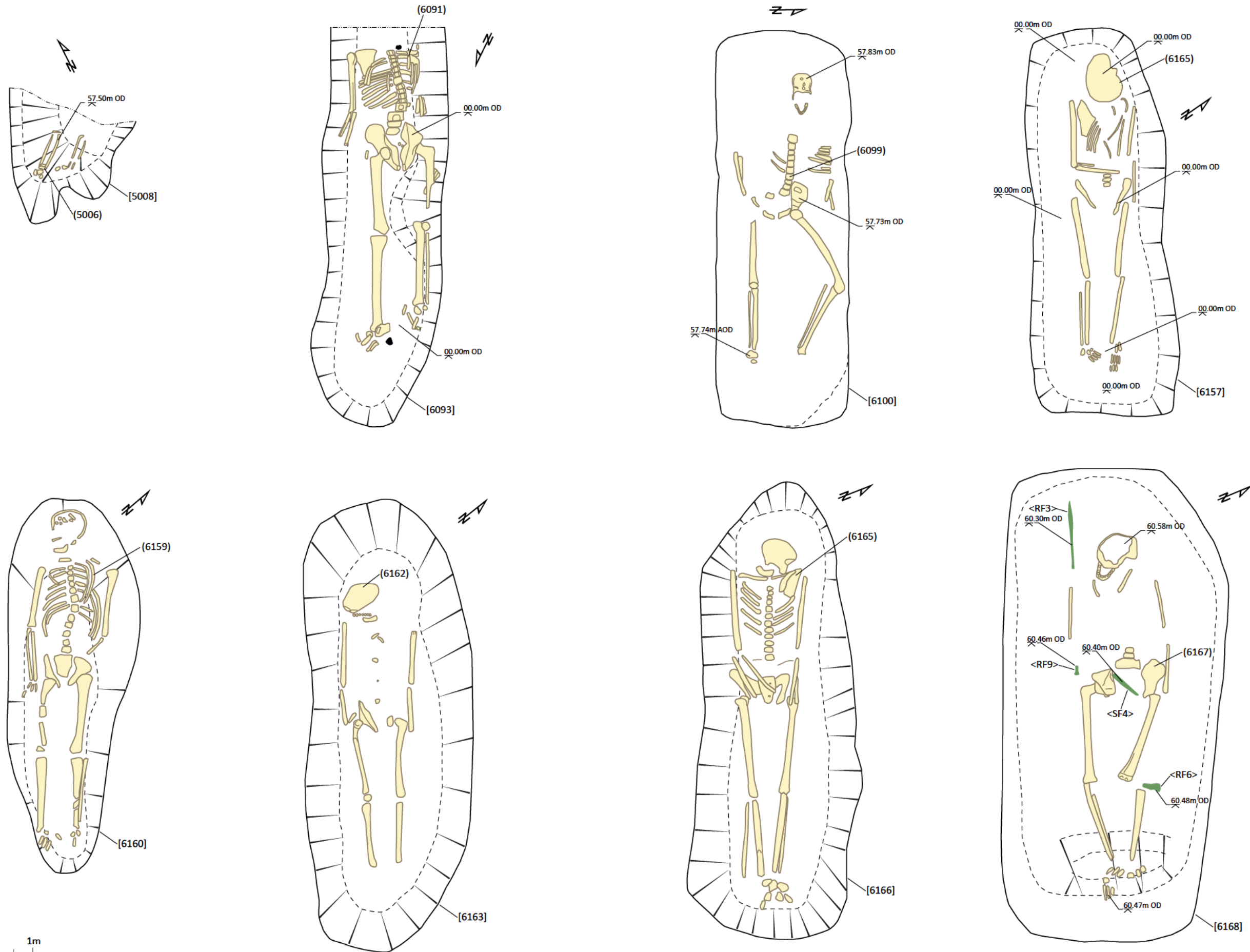


Figure 15: Detailed plans of graves [5008], [6093], [6100], [6157], [6160], [6163], [6166], and [6168]

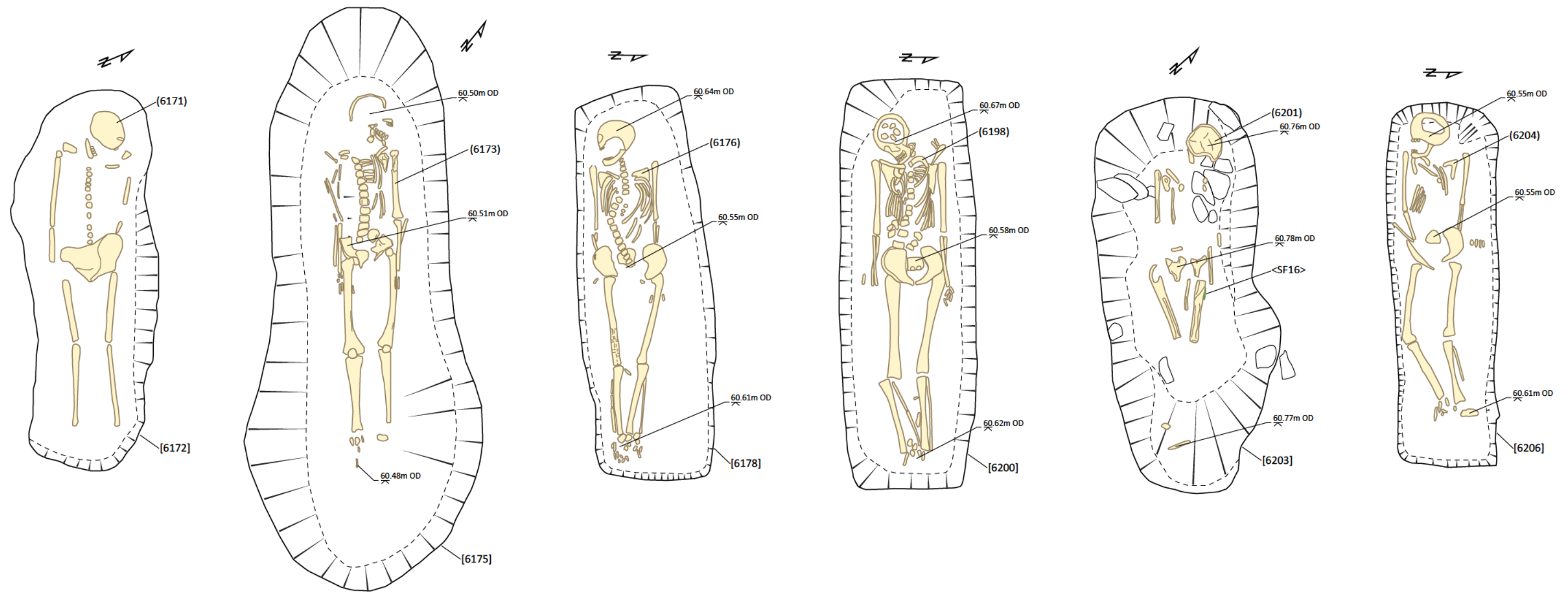
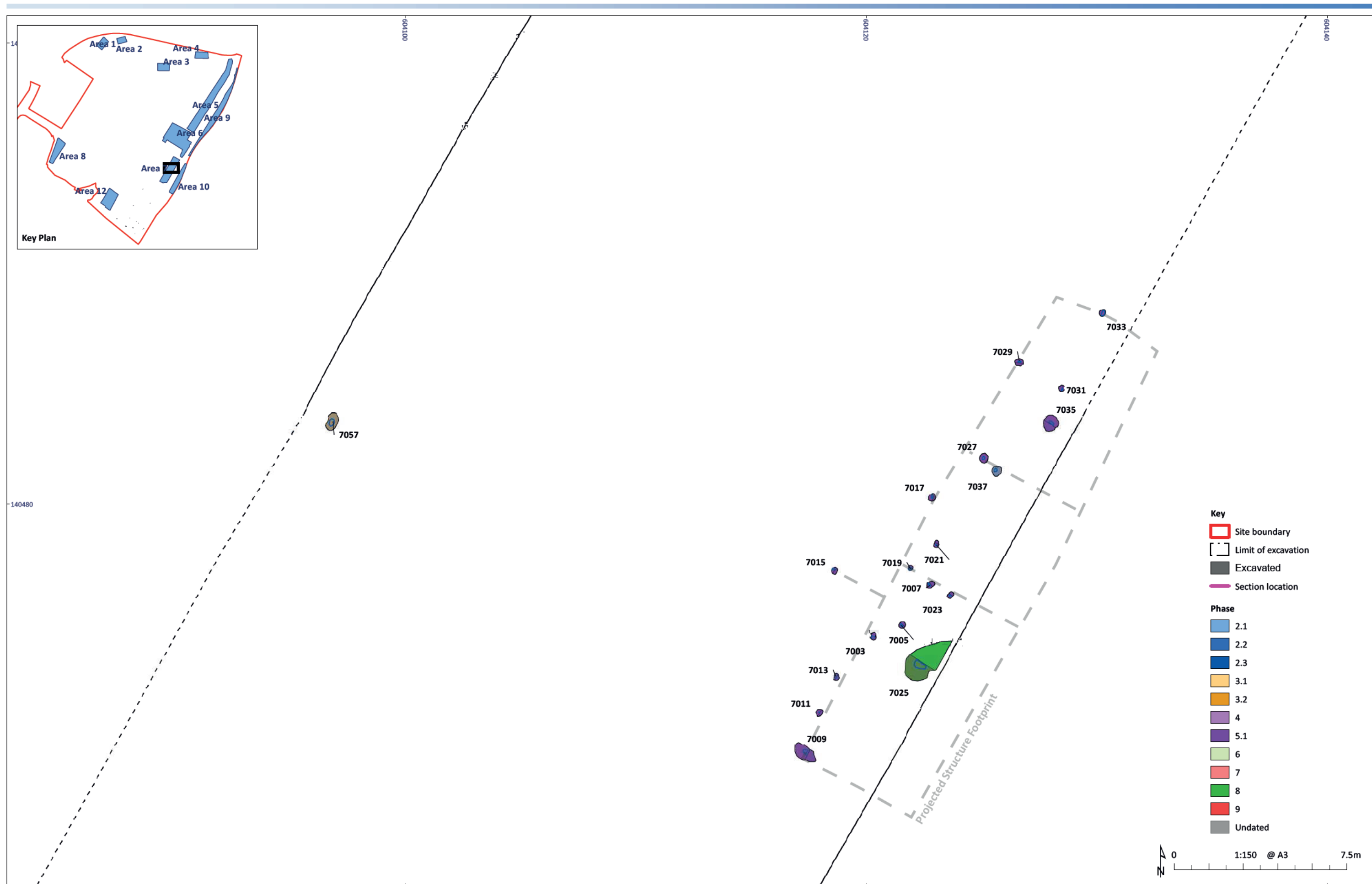


Figure 16: Detailed plans of graves [6172], [6175], [6178], [6200], [6203], and [6206]





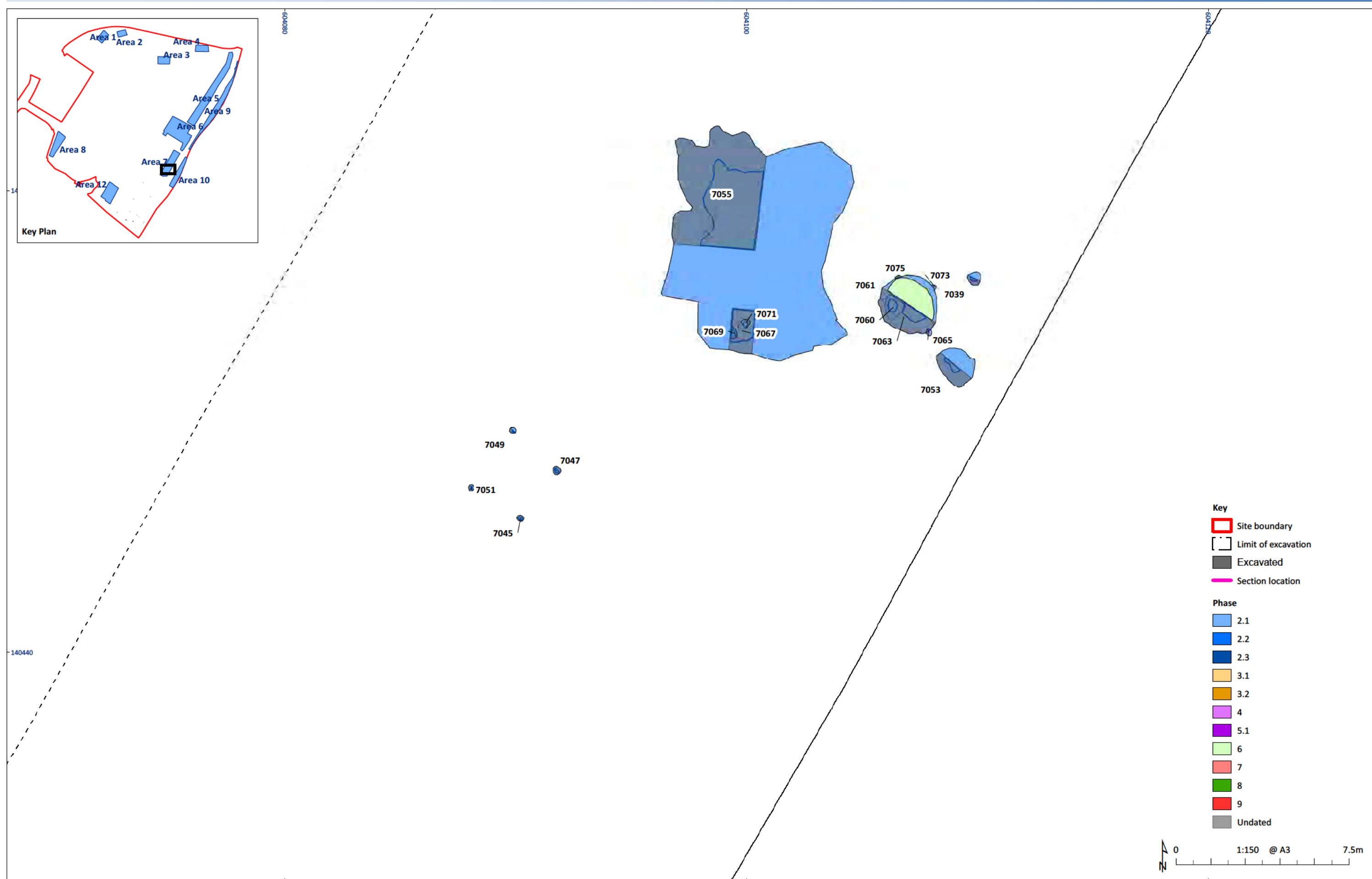
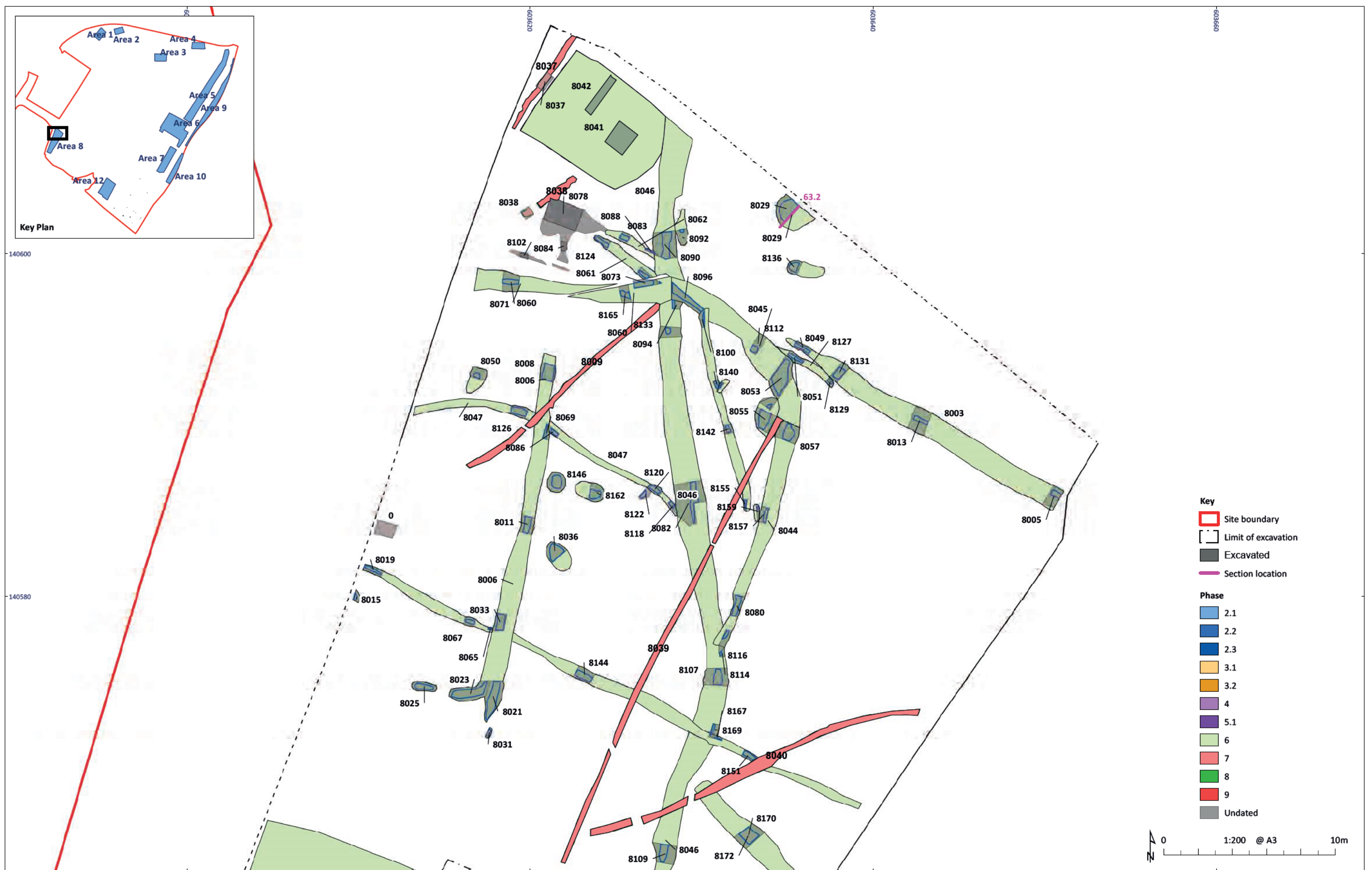


Figure 18: Area 7 Central South

03/34280/PXA/18/01



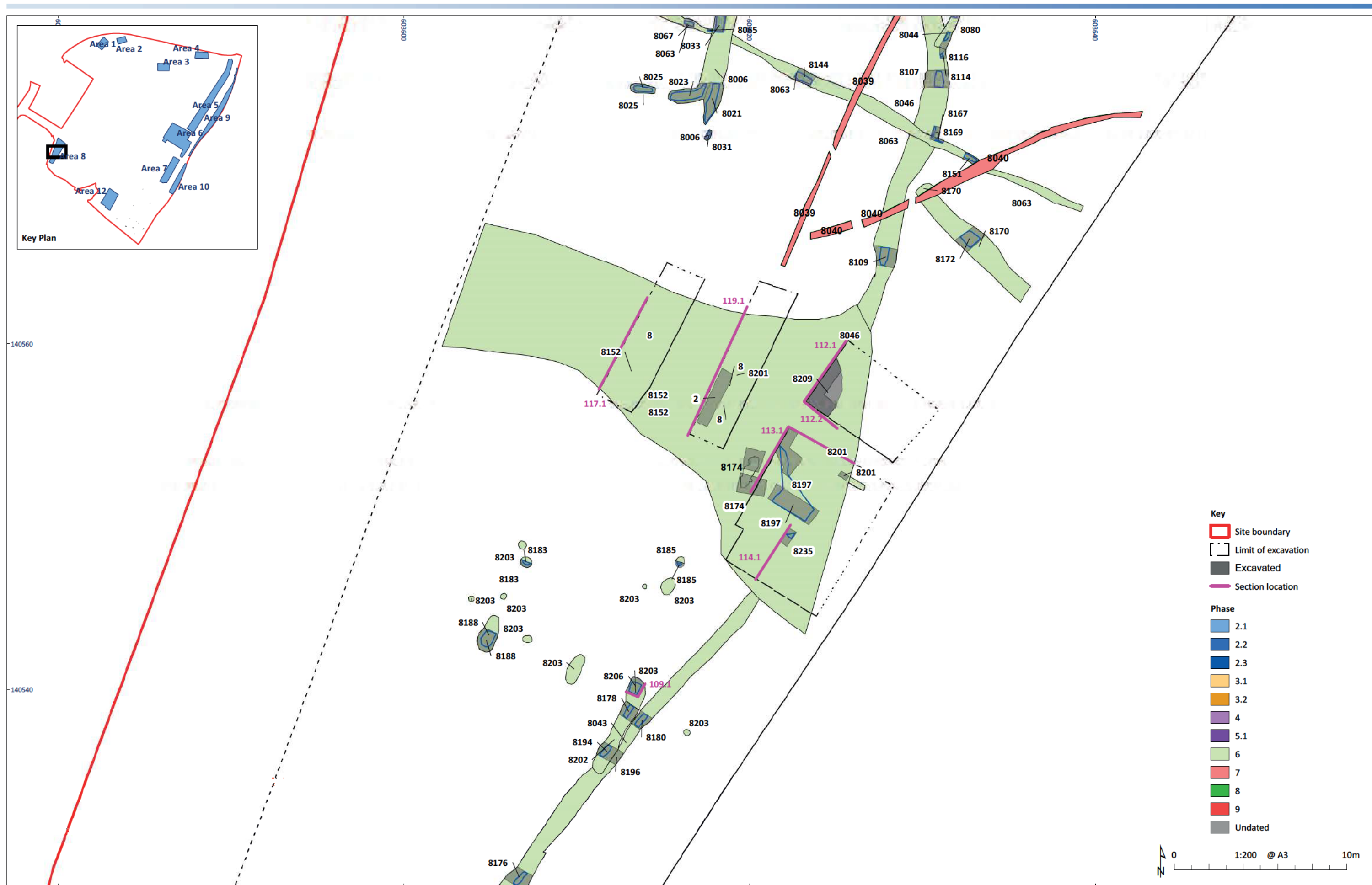


Figure 20: Area 8 Central



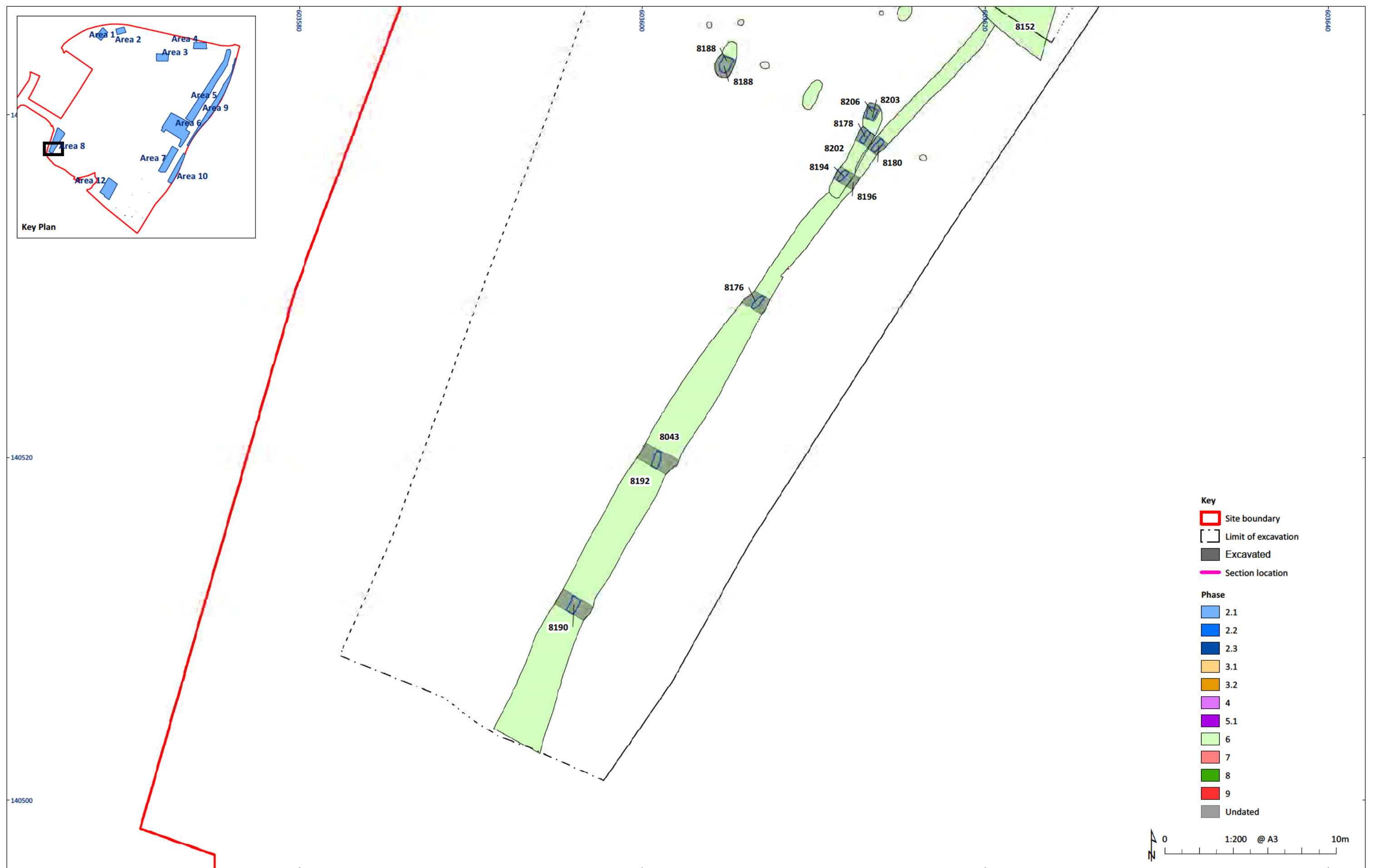


Figure 21: Area 8 South

03/34280/PXA/21/01

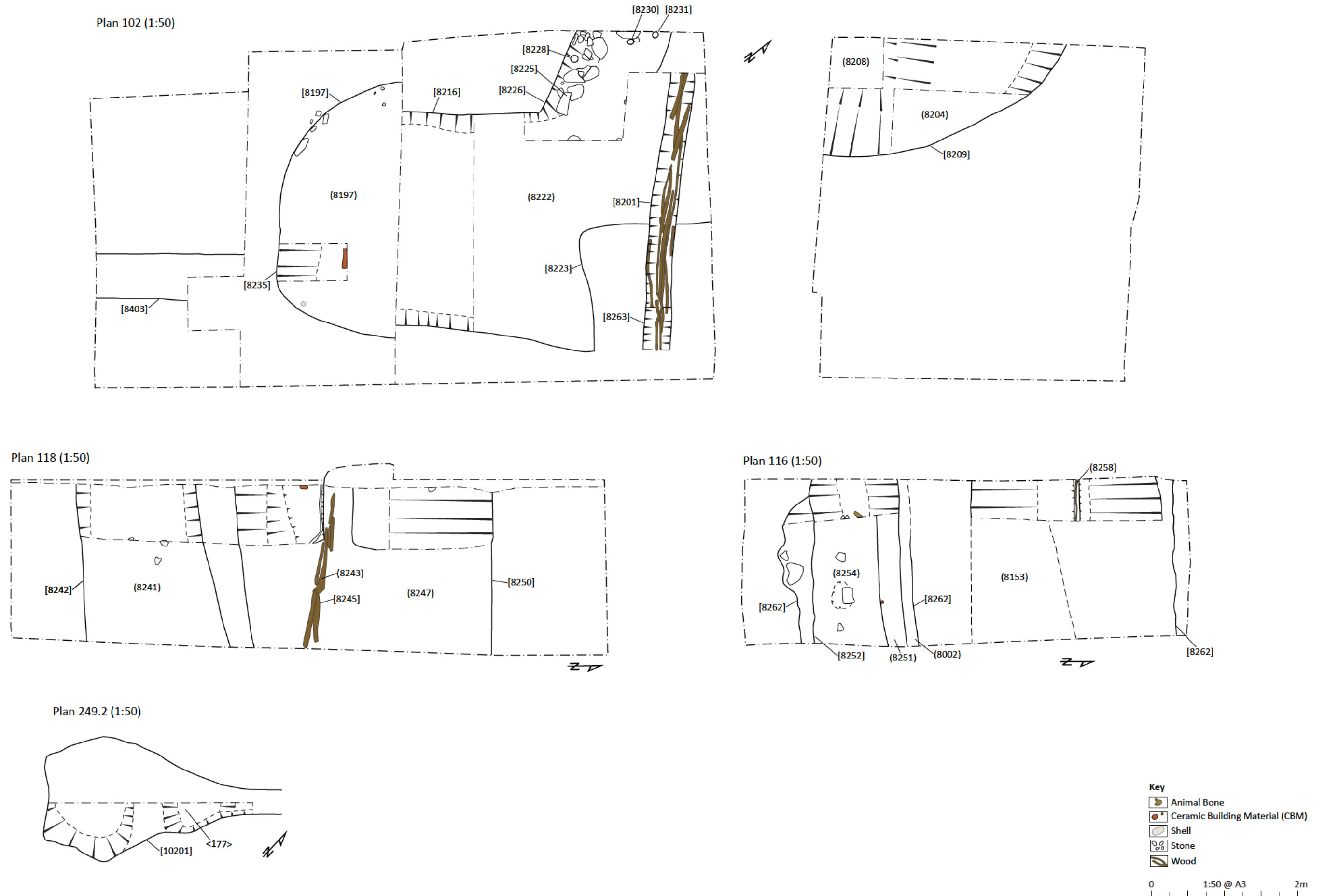


Figure 22: Detailed plans of selected features



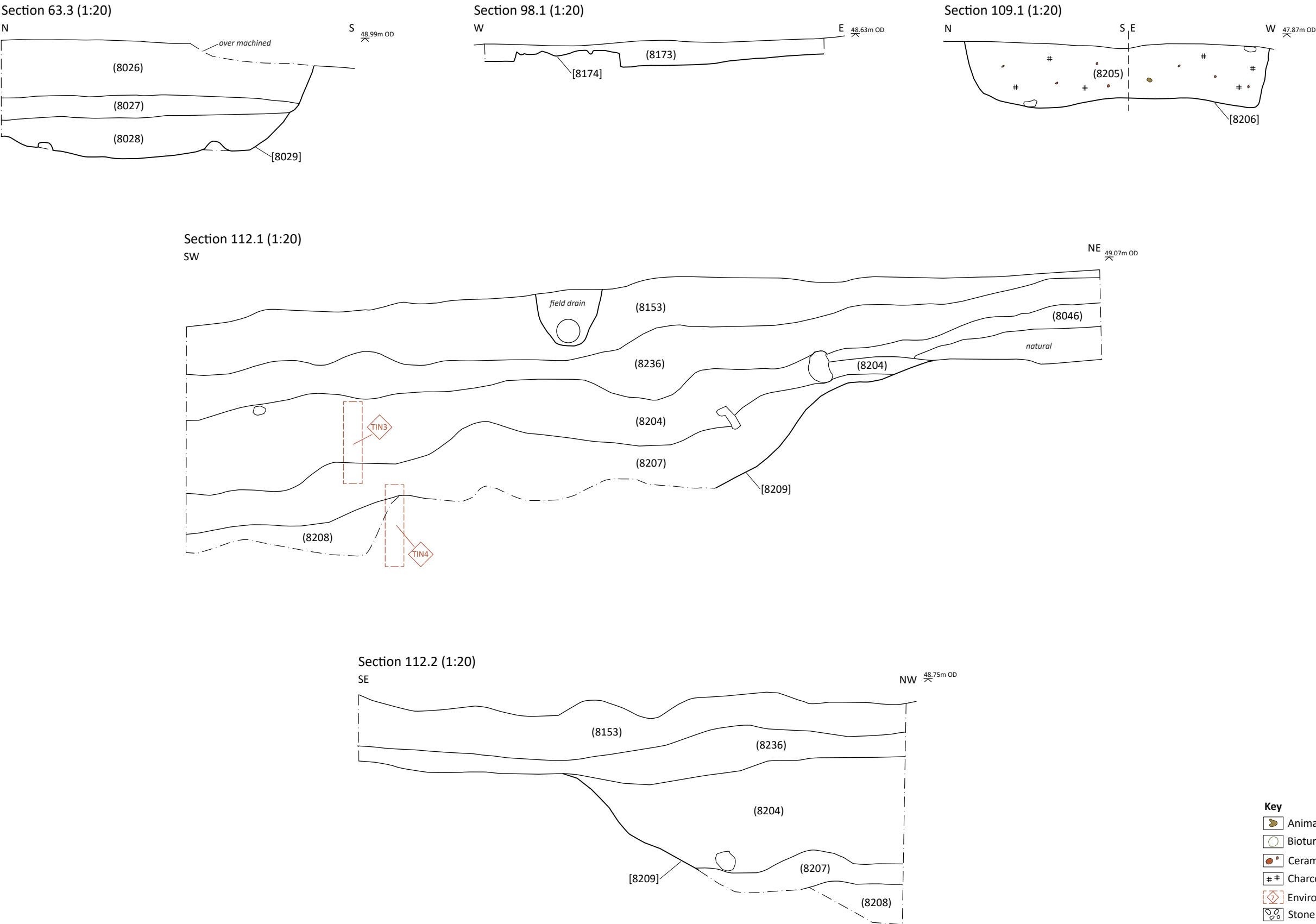


Figure 23: Area 8 - Sections 1

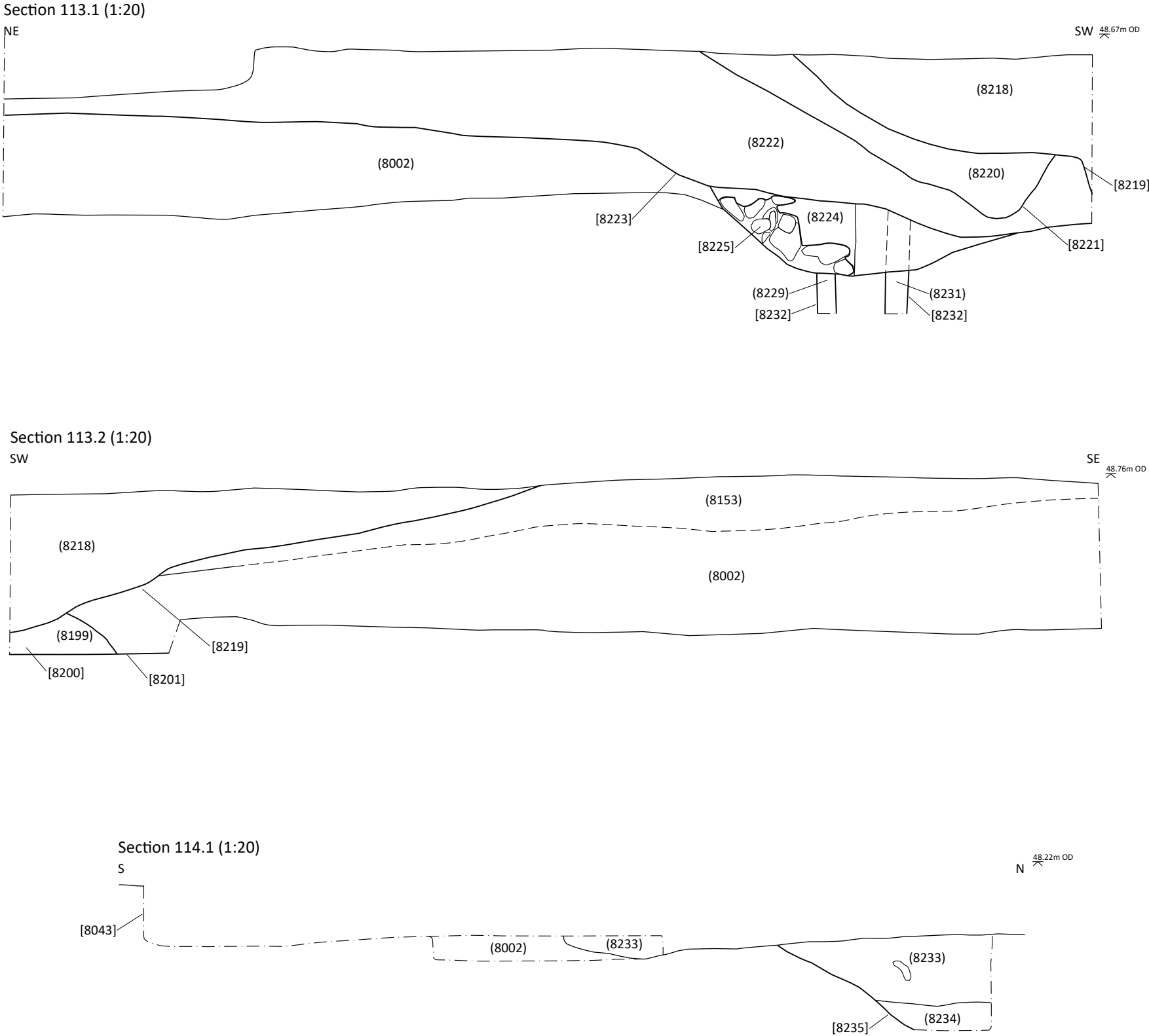
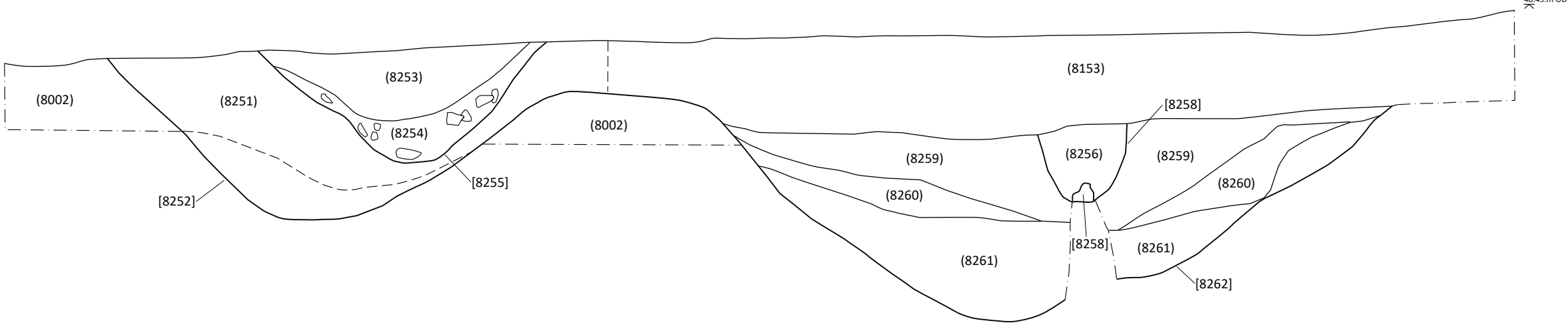
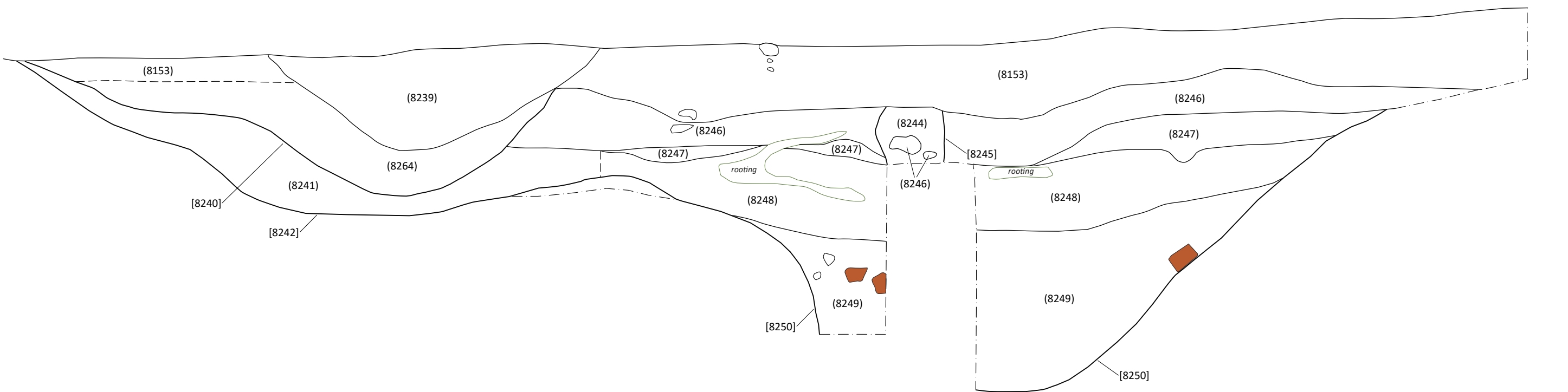


Figure 24: Area 8 - Sections 2

Section 117.1 (1:20)  
S



Section 119.1 (1:20)  
S



- Key**
- Bioturbation
  - Ceramic Building Material (CBM)
  - Stone

0 1:20 @ A3 1m

Figure 25: Area 8 - Sections 3

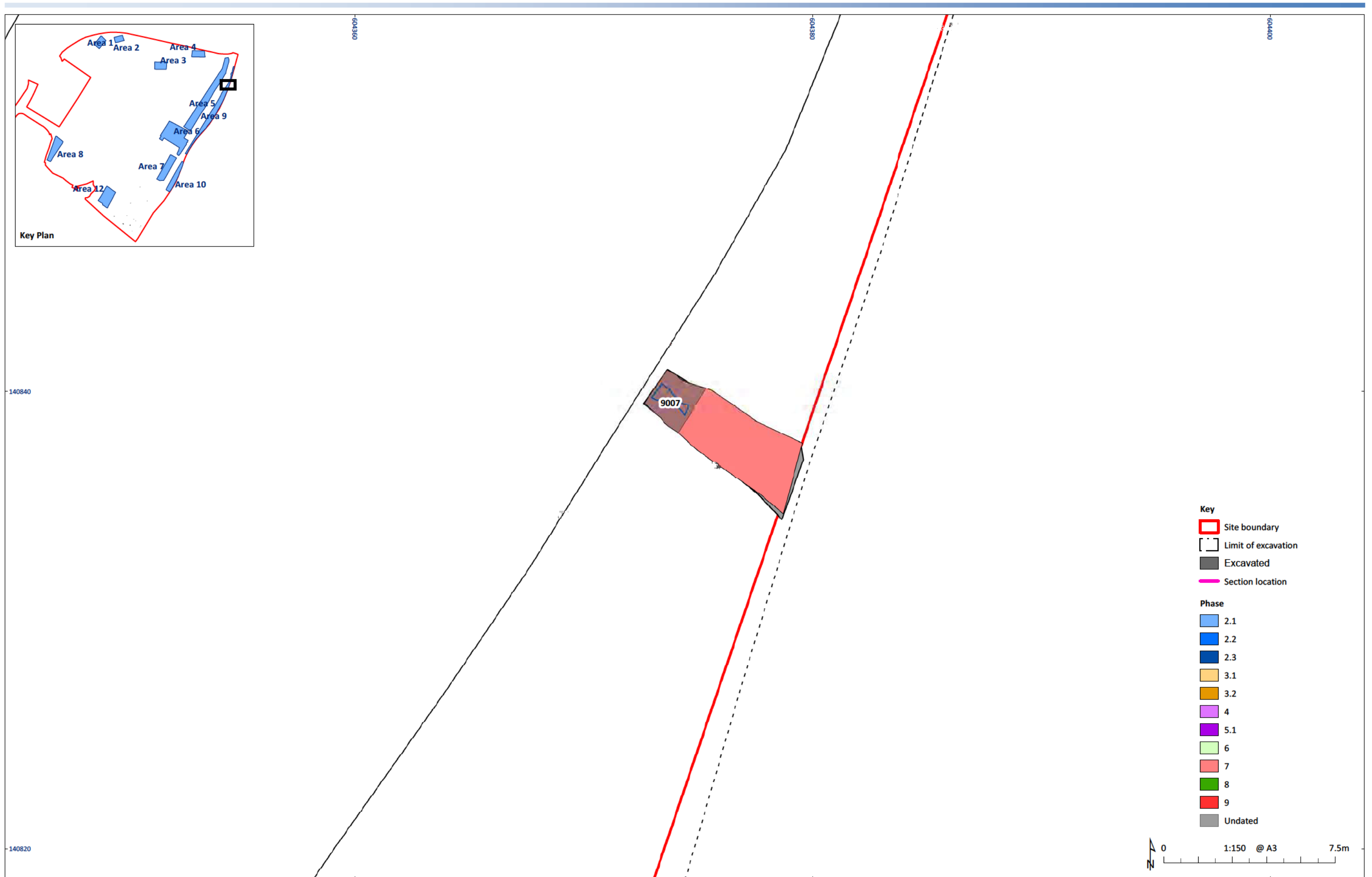


Figure 26: Area 9 North

03/34280/PXA/26/01



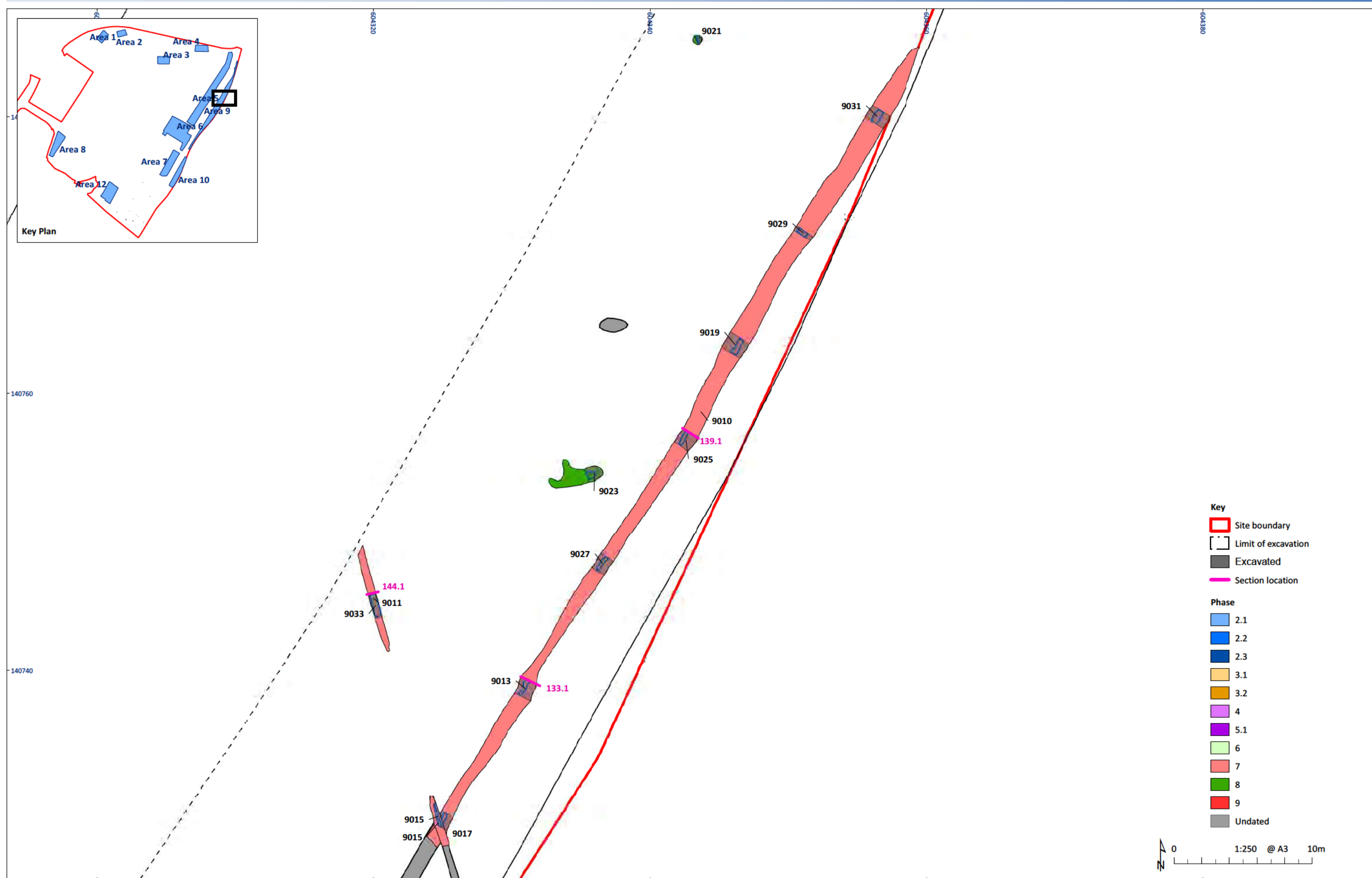


Figure 27: Area 9 Central

03/34280/PXA/27/01

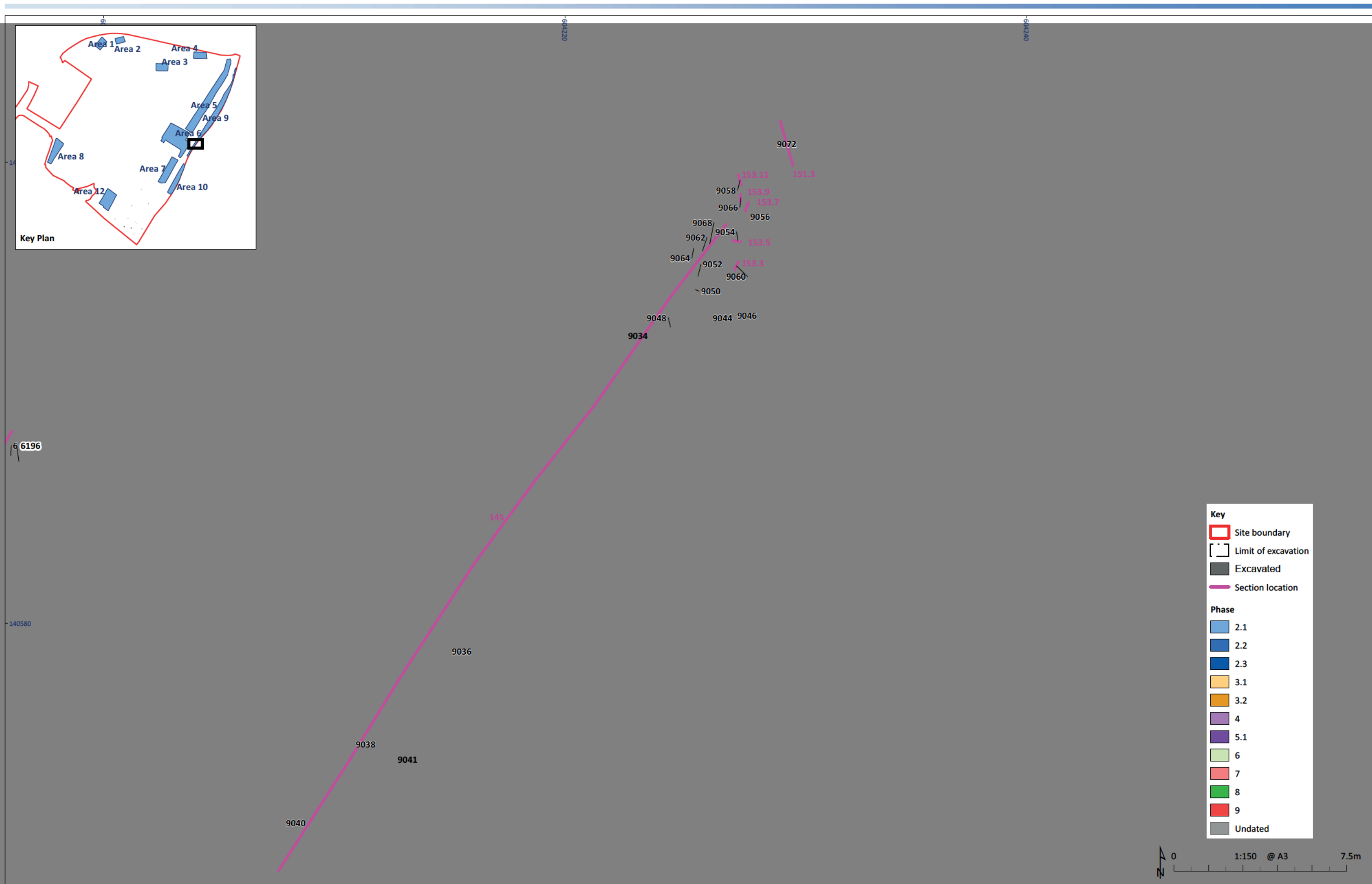


Figure 28: Area 9 South

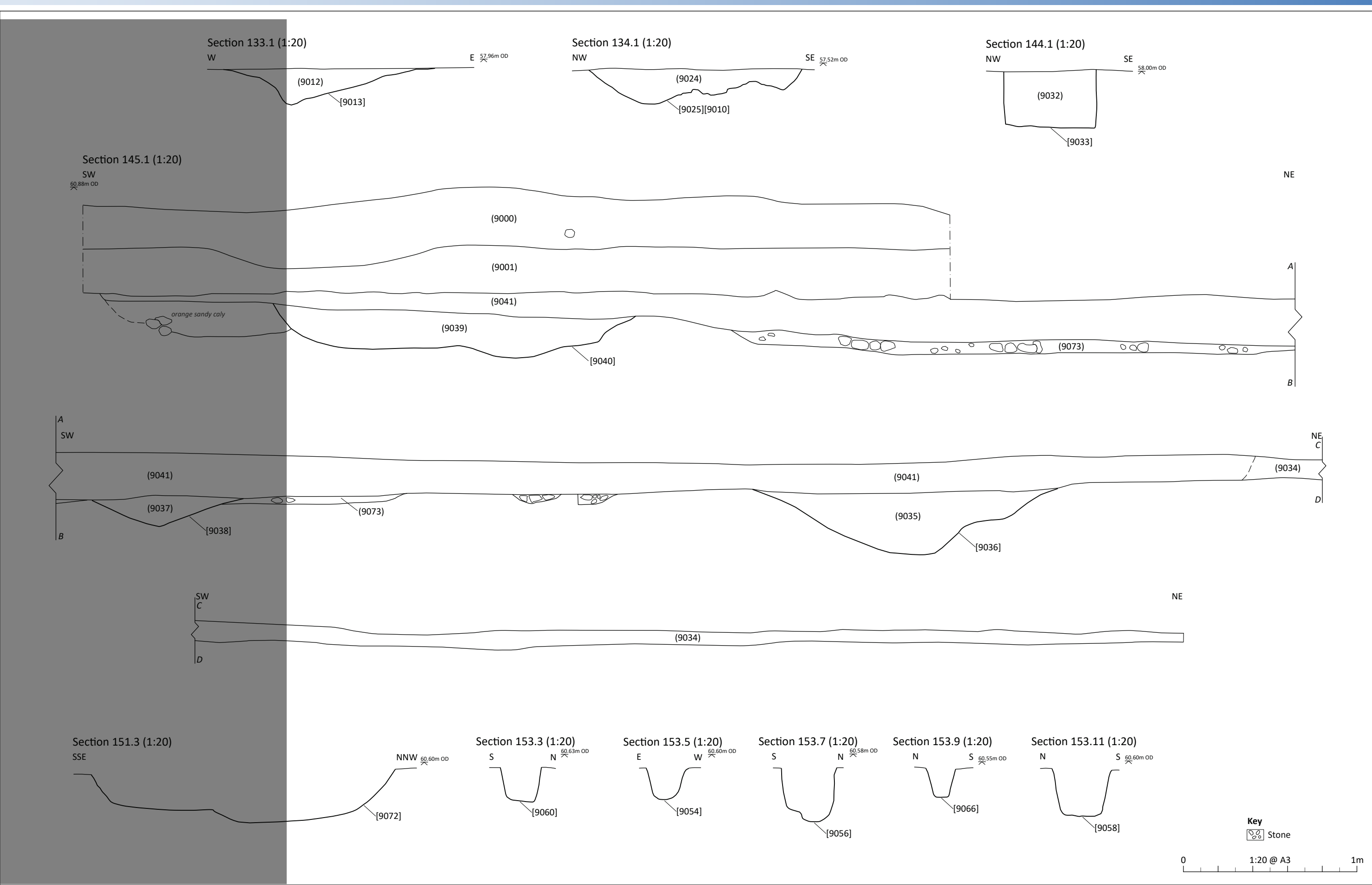


Figure 29: Area 9 - Sections

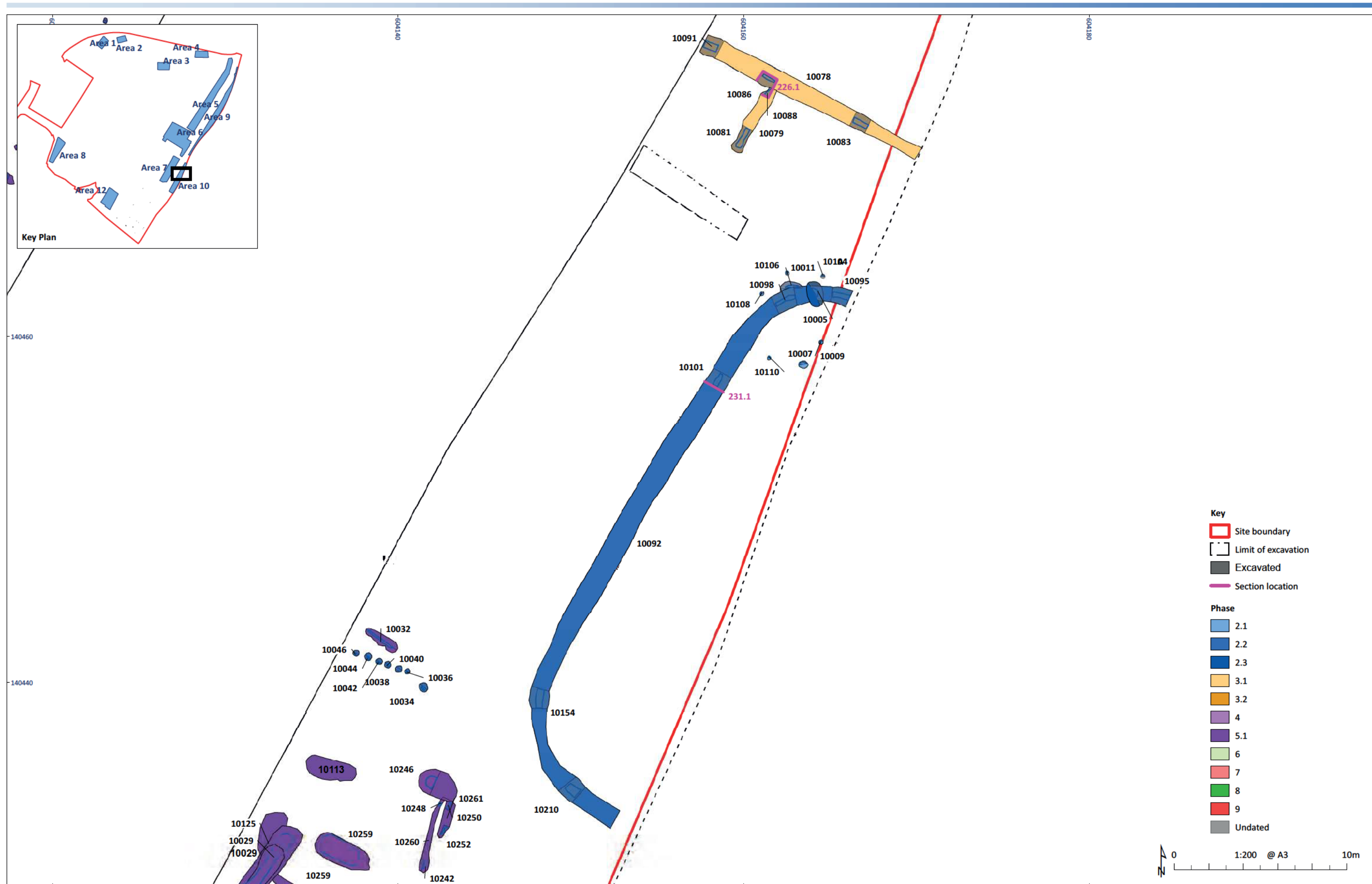


Figure 30: Area 10 North

