

Cothelstone Farm Community Excavation

Archaeological Analysis Report

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Purpose of document

This document has been prepared as an Analysis Report for the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme (QLPS). The purpose of this document is to provide a comprehensive account of the community archaeological investigation at Cothelstone Farm, with specialist assessment and analysis of finds and samples.

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Project summary

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The fieldwork was directed by Ben Swain who was ably assisted by Ant Haskins, Harriet Tatton and Anna van Nostrand. The project was managed for DigVentures by Stephanie Duensing and Manda Forster, with Brendon Wilkins in the role of Project Executive.

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Executive summary

DigVentures was commissioned by the Quantocks Landscape Partnership Scheme (QLPS) to deliver a community archaeological excavation at Cothelstone Farm, Somerset, between 24th May and 9th June 2024. This was the fourth and final community excavation carried out by the QLPS as part of the wider landscape partnership scheme's delivery programme. Previous public participatory archaeological excavations investigated a Late Bronze Age enclosure on Cothelstone Hill in summer 2021, a Medieval Manor at Crowcombe in 2022 and a Late Bronze Age ring-work at Broomfield in 2023.

The principle archaeological aim of the community project at Cothelstone Farm was to assess the nature of cropmarks identified by aerial photography through geophysical survey and community excavation. The excavations revealed evidence of a Late Bronze Age ring ditch enclosure that was re-used in the Late Romano-British or Early Post-Roman period as a cemetery. Special finds of note included a deposit of three largely complete Late Bronze Age ceramic vessels at the base of the ring ditch, whilst three iron knives representing grave goods were recovered from the burials.

Public engagement and meaningful participation was integral to the success of the project, which offered a range of opportunities for local community members and visitors to get involved in and learn more about the archaeology of Cothelstone Farm. Volunteers were trained in field excavation and recording tasks, including finds handling, photogrammetry and GPS survey. In total, the project provided excavation and finds room training for 71 adult participants as well as 61 children and young people through in person participatory experiences. Additionally, guided tours on a public open day engaged a further 41 individuals with the archaeology of Cothelstone Farm.



Results summary

A 35m diameter ring ditch identified in cropmark and geophysical surveys was excavated and confirmed to be Late Bronze Age in origin. A deposit of three ceramic vessels had been intentionally placed directly on the base of the newly opened ditch, dating to between the late 11th and 9th centuries BC. This likely represented a social act of ceremonial significance within a small-scale rural domestic context, possibly to commemorate the completion of the enclosure itself.

The ditch was recut in either the Early or Middle Iron Age. In the years that followed, waste from sporadic domestic activity within the enclosure was tipped into the ditch and interspersed with short periods of silting. This could be indicative of seasonal abandonment and re-occupation around the early 8th to mid 6th centuries BC. A longer period of abandonment occurred after the Middle Iron Age when the ditch began to more substantially silt up but was likely still visible as an earthwork in the landscape into the Romano-British period and beyond.

Most likely in the Late Romano-British or Early Post-Roman period, possibly around the 5th century AD, the ring ditch enclosure was reused as a cemetery. At least 13 east to west aligned grave cuts were identified in parallel rows respecting each other in what appears to be an organised cemetery. Nine graves were excavated but no skeletal remains survived due to poor preservation conditions. However, three iron knives and a possible tang or awl were recovered from two of the graves in Trench 4. The cemetery may have been enclosed by shallow linear ditches from which two 3rd to 4th century black burnished ware jars were recovered that may represent grave goods partially disturbed by later ploughing.

Comparison with other contemporary sites in the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age local landscape, including at Broomfield and Cothelstone Hill, opens the possibility that all three locations may have been used seasonally by members of the same communities.

Evaluation of the public impact from the Cothelstone Farm community archaeological excavations shows significant benefit for both individual participants and community visitors as a result of the project. In total, the project provided excavation and finds room training for 71 adult participants and 61 children and young people through in person participatory experiences. Additionally, guided tours on a public open day engaged a further 41 individuals with the archaeology of Cothelstone Farm.



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 This report presents an analysis of the community archaeological excavations undertaken at Cothelstone Farm in late May and early June 2024 by DigVentures on behalf of the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme (QLPS). The project, commissioned by the QLPS and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, included a programme of geophysical survey, community-based excavation and a heritage open day. It was designed to contribute towards the wider QLPS programme aims; to conserve, protect and interpret the cultural and natural heritage of the Quantocks landscape.

1.1.2 The QLPS is a landscape partnership led by the Quantock Hills National Landscape (QHNL) to deliver a five-year programme of works and activities in and around the Quantock Hills. The scheme consists of twenty-three individual projects grouped under the three themes of *Inspire*, *Live*, and *Learn*. The project at Cothelstone Farm was the fourth and final programme of community excavation carried out by the QLPS under sub-theme 3.5; *Understanding the Landscape*. Previous public participatory excavations investigated a Late Bronze Age enclosure on Cothelstone Hill in summer 2021, a Medieval Manor at Crowcombe in 2022 and a Late Bronze Age ring-work at Broomfield in 2023.

1.1.3 The aims, objectives and methodology for the community archaeological excavation at Cothelstone Farm were designed and delivered in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Jackson and Duensing, 2024). The principle archaeological aim of the project was to assess the nature of cropmarks identified by aerial photography through geophysical survey and community excavation. Public engagement and meaningful participation was integral to the success of the project, which offered a range of opportunities for local community members and visitors to get involved in and learn more about the archaeology of Cothelstone Farm.

1.1.4 The information contained in this report provides a full account of the archaeological work undertaken. This technical analysis report is one of several archive and dissemination products generated by the project, including the digital archive and metadata, the paper archive as well as the artefacts and ecofacts recovered. Upon project closure, all digital and physical material selected for archiving will be archived with the South West Heritage Trust and freely disseminated through the Somerset Historic Environment Record (HER), OASIS portal (OASIS ID: digventu1-528876) and the Archaeological Data Service (ADS). The physical archive will be deposited with South West Heritage Trust.

1.2 Site description

1.2.1 The site of the excavations (centred on NGR: ST 17901 31650) was located in a pasture field north of Cothelstone Road and approximately 300m west of the Cothelstone Manor Farm estate (Figure 1). Cothelstone sits within the Quantock Hills National Landscape, 2.5km to the northeast of Bishops Lydeard and 7km north of Taunton. The excavations themselves were located on a high point in the local landscape at a maximum elevation of 98mAOD, sloping towards the east at a minimum elevation of



85mAOD. Significant views from the site are available south towards Toulton and west towards Stoneage Barton. Further east, the land rises significantly to a height of 330mAOD at Cothelstone Hill, where a number of Prehistoric Bowl Barrows are located. The land at Cothelstone Farm is part of the historic Cothelstone Park and currently in permanent use as grassland for the grazing of livestock.

- 1.2.2 The bedrock geology of the site is part of the Helsby Sandstone Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed between 247.1 and 241.5 million years ago during the Triassic period. No superficial deposits have been recorded (British Geological Survey, 2024).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Historic background

- 2.1.1 Cothelstone village is dominated by two main features; Cothelstone Manor (HER number 17909) and the Church of St Thomas of Canterbury (HER number: 43023). The earliest parts of the church date back to the 12th century, it mostly dates to the 15th century and was restored in the 1860s.
- 2.1.2 Cothelstone Manor and estate was given to the Stawell family following the Norman conquest in 1066. The current manor was originally built in the mid-16th century. During the First English Civil War the lord of the manor, John Stawell fought on the side of the royalists and was imprisoned for high treason. During this time Oliver Cromwell ordered the destruction of the manor by canon fire, the right wing and the first floor were demolished, and the house abandoned. The manor was returned to Stawell following the restoration of Charles II. The estate was purchased in 1791 by Edward Jeffries, whose grandson Edward Jeffries Esdaile built a new residence, Cothelstone House, between 1817 and 1820, and was demolished in the 1960s. In the 1850s Esdaile restored Cothelstone Manor to the way it had been when John Stawell was living there in the mid-17th century (<https://www.cothelstonemanor.com/estate>; accessed 29/01/24).
- 2.1.3 On the land around Cothelstone Manor an extensive earthwork survey was carried out in 2003 as part of the English Heritage archaeological survey of the Quantock Hills (HER number: 17905). This work included a brief assessment of the principal buildings of Cothelstone Manor and the remnants of the surrounding medieval landscape.

2.2 Previous fieldwork

- 2.2.1 To the south west of Cothelstone at Stoneage Barton an excavation was carried out in 2000 (Webster & Brunning, 2004) (HER number: 11697). This targeted cropmarks (HER numbers: 26796, 44524 and 44524), and revealed Romano-British enclosures and a 7th century cemetery. The graves, unlike those at Cothelstone Farm did contain a small amount of bone, from which radiocarbon dates were taken that returned early to middle 7th century AD dates. No grave goods were recovered.
- 2.2.2 Within the QLPS project various other excavations have taken place in the local landscape near to Cothelstone Farm (Figure 3). These include a large ring ditch at Broomfield (Green and Fairclough, 2024), a 17th century garden at Crowcombe court



(McConnell, 2023) and earthworks at the top of Cothelstone Hill (Brunning and Grove, 2022). The aim of the excavation at Crowcombe manor was to investigate the location of a 13th-century manor house, however, this proved elusive and the instead evidence of a 17th-century formal garden was revealed in the form of a pavilion and garden wall. The excavations at Broomfield and Cothelstone Hill are more relevant to those at Cothelstone Farm, both were investigating prehistoric features that were roughly contemporary with those discovered on site.

- 2.2.3 The excavations at Broomfield, located 4km to the east of Cothelstone Farm, targeted a large 93m diameter ring ditch and internal features. The ditch itself likely dates to the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age, however no secure dating from the construction was found. Radiocarbon dates from the Middle to Late Iron Age were recovered from internal features, a post hole and a pit, indicating sporadic occupation during this time. A later Romano-British field system was also identified on site.
- 2.2.4 At Cothelstone Hill earthworks previously thought to be associated with a cross-ridge dyke were suggested through recent LiDAR survey to be a complete enclosure. The excavations aimed to prove this. The earthworks were dated to the Late Bronze Age, and a rampart identified there probably collapsed shortly after its creation. Evidence of burning in the partially filled ditches were from various points in the Iron Age and so, like at Broomfield, suggest sporadic occupation in this period.

3 PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Geophysics

- 3.1.1 The principle aim of the geophysical survey (see Aim 1, below) was to clarify the presence and absence of potential archaeological remains at the site and to provide updated and accurate locations for these remains, as observed through aerial photography.

Aim 1: Through non-intrusive investigation, establish the extent and depth of potential buried archaeology at the site.

- Q1. Can the extent of archaeological remains be established through geophysical survey, including the presence and nature of any interior details of the enclosures?
- Q2. Can geophysical survey clarify the presence and absence of potential archaeological remains within the site, providing updated and accurate locations for the remains observed through aerial photography?

- 3.1.2 A full magnetometer survey of approximately 7Ha was conducted in February 2024, the results of which informed targets for the subsequent community excavation at the site. Results were presented in a full scientific report (Appendix J) including georeferenced greyscale plots of the data, interpretative figures, and photographs.

3.2 Excavation

- 3.2.1 The overarching aim of the archaeological excavation was to define and characterise several identified features in the site through a programme of intrusive excavations, obtaining data which will better characterise and understand the site. The principal



aim of the excavation was to provide further information concerning the presence/absence, date, nature, and extent of any buried archaeological remains and to investigate and record these within the target area. Fieldwork comprised a structured community volunteer assisted project, providing a range of physical and digital opportunities to participate and/or observe findings. The project model is framed as overarching aims and key questions/objectives designed to meet the project requirements to:

- verify the archaeological potential of the site,
- characterise buried archaeology associated with the cropmarks,
- where possible, establish the relationship and stratigraphic sequence between the three cropmarks
- establish a date and sequence for the cropmarks and enclosure closure complex.

3.2.2 The excavation targeted each of the three enclosures (HER numbers: 44536, 44537, and 44538) with the aim of establishing the date and function of each. Trench locations were decided following the geophysical survey of the area and in consultation with the QLPS and their partners at the South West Heritage Trust (SWHT).

Aim 2: Characterise the results of non-invasive survey, refining the chronology and phasing of the site with a programme of targeted excavation.

- Q3. Can we establish the date and sequence for the enclosure / ring ditch complex?
- Q4. Can the nature of the enclosures / ring ditches be established?
- Q5. Can a chronological sequence and stratigraphic phasing for the cropmark features archaeological evidence be established?
- Q6. Can a relationship between the cropmark features be established?

Aim 3: Understand the site's archaeological and palaeoenvironmental conditions.

- Q7. What is the current state of preservation of the archaeological and palaeoenvironmental material across the sites?
- Q8. How well do deposits and artefacts survive, and how deeply are they buried?
- Q9. What is the range and spatial patterning of ecofacts and artefacts recovered from the site?

Aim 4: Making recommendations, analysis and publication

- Q10. What can an integrated synthesis of the results of this work with previous studies of contemporary regional sites tell us about the site and its setting?
- Q11. What recommendations can be made to protect, conserve and enhance the site?
- Q12. What strategies should be put in place to protect archaeological remains and deposits at Cothelstone Farm for the enjoyment of future generations?

3.3 Public participation

3.3.1 Public engagement and meaningful participation is integral to the success of the project and sits with equal importance alongside our research aims. The excavation



involved participation from volunteers, who were trained and mentored in the techniques of archaeological excavation. Our site team delivered an in-person programme at a ratio of 1:3 throughout the dig, with online social media updates to engage and inform the public about the archaeological discoveries. In summary, the project offered a range of opportunities for local community members and visitors to the area to get involved and learn more about the archaeology of Cothelstone Farm.

- 3.3.2 In addition to public participation in the excavation, an archaeological Open Day took place on the final weekend of the excavation, (exact day to be confirmed). The Open Day was hosted by team members and involve site tours with a display of the finds recovered. Site visitors were able to talk to the excavation team (including staff and volunteers) and heard about the archaeological discoveries as they were guided around the site.

Aim 5: To engage and train local people in the research of Quantocks Landscape study area, and provide opportunities for public engagement.

- To further the study, understanding and enjoyment of the study area by interested individuals and community groups.
- To provide training, guidance and technical support to members of the community in the methods and techniques used in archaeology and the investigation of the historic environment.
- To disseminate the results of fieldwork in an accessible and clear way, raising awareness to the archaeology of the site and wider landscape.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Archaeological method

- 4.1.1 All work was completed to ClfA standards and guidance for archaeological excavation (2023) and was undertaken in accordance with the standards set out within the WSI (Jackson and Duensing 2024).
- 4.1.2 All areas were stripped of overburden deposits with a mechanical excavator under continuous archaeological supervision down to the first archaeological horizon. All machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision using a toothless bucket and included visually scanning spoil for artefacts. The area was then assessed by a professional archaeologist to establish the extent of survival and preservation of archaeological remains.
- 4.1.3 A sufficient sample of each feature type/deposit was examined in order to establish the date, nature, extent and condition of any archaeological remains, encompassing the following percentage interventions as a minimum where relevant:
- 50% of each intrusive feature (pits, postholes)
 - 10% of each linear feature's exposed area + all terminals & intersections
 - 50% structural features (beamslots, ring ditches) - actual surviving structural elements (walls, collapse/debris fields) just require exposure, cleaning and preservation for excavation in more appropriate circumstances
 - 50-100% domestic/industrial working features (hearths, ovens).



- 4.1.4 Full written, drawn and photographic records were made of each trench. They were showing the areas investigated and the location of contexts and features observed and recorded during the investigation. Sections and elevations of archaeological features and deposits were drawn as necessary at an appropriate scale (1:20 or 1:10).
- 4.1.5 All interventions were surveyed using a GPS tied into the Ordnance Survey grid. All recording was undertaken using the digital first format DiggIt, following the DigVentures single context recording system. Digital photography was used for all photography of significant features, finds, deposits and general site working. The photographic record illustrates both the detail and the general context of the principal features and finds excavated, and the Site as a whole.

4.2 Finds and environmental samples

- 4.2.1 Finds were treated in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation (revised 2014), and the Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (2014), excepting where they were superseded by statements made below. Archaeological material was handled and sorted following advice in Watkinson and Neal (1998).
- 4.2.2 All artefacts from excavated contexts were washed, counted, weighed, and identified. Finds recovered were assessed by appropriately qualified specialists, who examined the finds to provide an identification, date, and provenance of the material, and to also evaluate the significance of the assemblage.
- 4.2.3 Bulk environmental soil samples for plant macrofossils, small animal bones and other small artefacts were taken from appropriate sealed and dateable archaeological contexts. Samples of between 10-20 litres were taken of each context. Samples were not taken from the intersection of features. Bulk environmental soil samples were processed by flotation and scanned to assess the environmental potential of deposits. The residues and sieved fractions have been recorded and retained with the project archive.

4.3 Geophysical survey

Matthew Harris

- 4.3.1 Magnetic survey methods rely on the ability of a variety of instruments to measure very small magnetic fields associated with buried archaeological remains. A feature such as a ditch, pit or kiln can act like a small magnet, or series of magnets, that produce distortions (anomalies) in the earth's magnetic field. In mapping these slight variations detailed plans of sites can be obtained, as buried features often produce reasonably characteristic anomaly shapes and strengths (Gaffney & Gater 2003). Further information on soil magnetism and the interpretation of magnetic anomalies is provided in Appendix J.
- 4.3.2 Magnetometry is the most widely used geophysical survey technique in archaeology as it can quickly evaluate large areas and, under favourable conditions, identify a wide range of archaeological features including infilled cut features such as large pits,



gullies and ditches, hearths, and areas of burning, and kilns and brick structures. It is therefore good at locating settlements of all periods, prehistoric field systems and enclosures, and areas of industrial or modern activity, amongst others. It is less successful in identifying smaller features such as post-holes and small pits (except when using a non-standard sampling interval), unenclosed (prehistoric) settlement sites and graves/burial grounds. However, magnetometry is by far the single most useful technique and was assessed as the best non-intrusive evaluation tool for this site.

- 4.3.3 The survey was undertaken using four Bartington Grad601 sensors mounted at 1m intervals (1m traverse interval) onto a rigid frame. The system was programmed to take readings at a frequency of 10Hz (allowing for a 10-15cm sample interval) on roaming traverses (swaths) 4m apart (Illus 5). These readings were stored on an external weatherproof laptop and later downloaded for processing and interpretation. The system was linked to a Trimble A12 Real Time Kinetic (RTK) differential Global Positioning System (dGPS) outputting in NMEA mode to ensure a high positional accuracy for each data point.
- 4.3.4 MLGrad601 and MultiGrad601 (Geomar Software Inc.) software was used to collect and export the data. Anomaly GeoSurvey v1.11 (Austrums 2018) and QGIS software was used to process and present the data respectively.

4.4 Animal bone

Hannah Russ

- 4.4.1 The animal remains were identified to element, side and to as low a taxonomic level as possible using the archaeology.biz reference collection and published and online identification guides (2003; 2005). Quantification for hand-collected remains was by weight (g) and count, and for mammals used the diagnostic zone method as presented by Dobney and Rielly (1988). A taphonomic assessment of each fragment was undertaken, recording the presence and absence of butchery (specified as cut, chop and/or saw marks), burning and calcination, any evidence for animal activity (canid or rodent gnawing), any abnormal features or bone formation (pathology and non-metric traits), and surface preservation; any other surface modifications of note were also recorded.
- 4.4.2 No attempt was made to sex any of the remains, or to measure any elements. Sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat (*Capra hircus*) and Equid distinctions were also not considered. Fragments of bones that could be identified to element but not any specific species were grouped as far as possible using size and class or order categories. Animal bone recovered from bulk environmental samples was weighed and only identified specimens included in the overall count for animal bone from the site. Results for all quantification were recorded in an electronic proforma in Microsoft Excel. This assessment has been undertaken in line with published standards and guidelines (Baker and Worley 2019; ClfA 2014; 2021), with reference to the South West England Archaeological Research Framework (Accessed September 2024).



4.5 Prehistoric pottery

Imogen Wood

- 4.5.1 The methods and terminology used conform to the 'Standards in pottery studies in archaeology' guidance (2016) and CIFA guidelines for specialist reporting (<https://www.archaeologists.net/reporting-toolkit>). The sherds were counted and weighed, and the sherd type noted (rim/body/handle), as far as possible, individual sherds were identified to a broad class. General observations of fabric and surface treatment were noted. Minimum Number of Vessels is not included as the features were not fully excavated and not representative.
- 4.5.2 588 sherds from 18 contexts were examined macroscopically with a hand lens at x2 magnification to identify initial fabric groups; these groups were then examined under a binocular microscope at a magnification of x10. This enabled large areas of the surface and edges of sherds to be examined, and in many cases useful diagnostic mineral and rock components to be identified. Sherds have been assessed by a subjective measure of 'condition' from level 1 good, level 2 moderately good, to level 3 abraded using Sorensen's method (Sorensen 1996). Sorensen's commonly established method of assessing abrasion was developed in the Runnymede Bridge Research Excavations, ceramic report, see this publication for further details (Sorensen 1996).

4.6 Romano-British pottery

David Griffiths

- 4.6.1 All pottery was examined visually by eye and sorted into broad ware groups including handmade and wheel-made Romano-British fine wares and coarse wares. Identification and classification of fabrics was based on colour, hardness, fracture, and inclusion composition, as outlined in Tomber and Dore (1998, 6-8). The material was recorded and analysed in accordance with national guidelines (Barclay et al. 2016; CIFA 2024). The ware groups were further refined by class, and fabric codes assigned based on fabric composition (see Table 10, Appendix D). Reference is made to Holbrook and Bidwell's type series from Exeter (1991), and Young's (2000) extensive study of pottery of the Oxford region.
- 4.6.2 This analysis was undertaken following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' documents: Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials (2014); Toolkit for Specialist Reporting (2021); and Toolkit for finds: pottery (2024). Reference was made to the Written Scheme of Investigation produced by DigVentures (Jackson and Duensing, 2024) and an overall narrative for the excavations (DigVentures, 2024). In addition, reference was made to the South West England Archaeological Research Framework (Accessed November 2024).
- 4.6.3 Each class of pottery was quantified by count, weight, and estimated vessel equivalents (EVEs, based on percentage of rim preserved). Where appropriate, key vessels with diagnostic features have been illustrated (Figure 28, IDs 1/6, 3, and 5). Featured vessels are identified using a reference 'ID' code in the text based on the

relevant entry row in Table 10 (Appendix D). Where vessel form and chronology were clear, a date range is provided. A full catalogue of all material is provided in Table 10 (Appendix D).

4.6.4 Detailed fabric analysis was undertaken using a low power microscope at X30 magnification. This analysis has enabled refinement of fabrics and identified local/regional wares, and possibly nationally distributed wares within the assemblage. A full catalogue of fabric descriptions is provided in Table 11 (Appendix D). The results are presented by period and area and are followed by a discussion of pottery supply and consumption at the site. The results are discussed to place the pottery consumed by the inhabitants of the settlement within the wide local and regional context.

4.6.5 Romano-British pottery type codes broadly follow classifications of material from Exeter (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991), and Young (2000) for Roman pottery from Oxfordshire. Where it was not possible to identify a source for pottery, fabric codes (i.e. RE1, OX1, etc.) have been assigned which are site specific (see Table 11, Appendix D).

4.7 Fired clay

David Griffiths

4.7.1 Analysis of the fired clay/daub and fired clay included quantification by count and weight, identification by type, broad date range (if possible), and discussion of the findings in their regional and chronological context.

4.7.2 A catalogue of items is provided in Table 13 of Appendix E. Fired clay/daub is reported on following the Minimum Standards for Recovery, Curation, Analysis, and Publication for Ceramic Building Material (Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group 2002) and Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014).

4.7.3 Reference was made to the Written Scheme of Investigation produced by DigVentures (Jackson and Duensing 2024) and an overall narrative for the excavations (DigVentures 2024). In addition, reference was made to the South West England Archaeological Research Framework (<https://researchframeworks.org/swarf/> Accessed November 2024).

4.8 Lithics

Joshua Hogue

4.8.1 The typo-technological classification follows standard recording procedures (Ballin 2021; Butler 2005; Inizan et al. 1999). A primary removal is a flake with at least half of the dorsal surface retaining cortex. A blade is a flake with length at least equal to twice its width; a bladelet is a small blade with a width less than 12 mm; and a blade-like flake is a flake exhibiting traits of a true blade (e.g. parallel margins, arises), but not fulfilling the metric criteria of a true blade. A chip refers to debitage or indeterminate fragments less than 10mm. A chunk is an indeterminate piece measuring equal or greater than 10mm (cf. Ballin 2000).



4.9 Registered finds

Dot Boughton and Richard Henry

- 4.9.1 The specialist finds recording and reporting was completed in accordance with the national finds standards and guidance (Historic England 2008; ClfA 2014; 2021a; 2021b). The assemblage of four objects was recorded in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and further assessed using a magnifier with 55x magnification. The objects were described, weighed, and recorded in a single data table (Table 17, Appendix G). Identification was made using appropriate reference material and other assemblages as needed.
- 4.9.2 The report was prepared with support from the South West England Regional Research Framework (2023), the draft post-excavation report, and site plans. Reference to individual fragments in the report use 'SF' numbers (SF1-SF2, SF4-SF6), which corresponds to the accompanying data spreadsheet. This spreadsheet contains all finds data and metadata.
- 4.9.3 All context details, identifications, dates, weights, measurements, descriptions as well as general notes and a note on the artefacts' condition were recorded in an Excel Spreadsheet (Table 17, Appendix G). The metal finds were x-rayed and where an object's measurements were taken from its x-ray rather than the object itself, it was indicated in Table 17. Objects were taken out of their bags for analysis. The objects were analysed using a hand lens and measured using pocket scales and callipers with a rubber sleeve to protect the objects' surfaces.
- 4.9.4 For the identification and dating of the knives and spindle whorl, standard identification references were used, such as Crummy 1983, Manning 1976, Manning 1985, Humphreys 2021, Walton Rogers 2007, Owen-Crocker 2010 and Goodall 2011.

4.10 Environmental – Flotation

Emma Tong

- 4.10.1 The samples were processed using the Siraf method of flotation (Williams 1973) at Ecus facilities in Barnard Castle. Light fractions (flots) were collected using a 500 µm (micron) mesh and once dry were sieved using 2mm and 1mm Endecott sieves. The flots were then sorted under a low-powered Microtec stereo zoom microscope. Dry heavy fractions (residues) were sieved at 4mm and 2mm, with the >4mm fraction sorted and the <4mm scanned for any artefacts or ecofacts. A magnet was run through the residues to recover magnetic material, including any hammerscale (Dungworth and Wilkes 2007).
- 4.10.2 Plant macrofossils were identified to the lowest taxon where possible, under a low-powered Microtec stereo zoom microscope using the Ecus reference collection and published guides (Digital Plant Atlas; Cappers et al. 2006; Jones et al. 2004; Delorit 1970; Jacomet, 2006; Zohary et al, 2012). Plant nomenclature followed Stace (2019). Quantification was by count, with grain/seed/fruit remains with 51-100% survival quantified separately from fragments representing 50% or less of the complete item.



4.10.3 All material has been counted and/or assigned an abundance score, listed as; a (1-10), b (11-50), c (51-100), d (101-200), e (201-500), f (501-1000), g (>1000). Results were recorded in an electronic proforma in Microsoft Excel. The sample residues were assessed in accordance with Historic England guidelines for environmental archaeology (Campbell et al. 2011) and the ClfA toolkit for specialist reporting (ClfA 2021). The assessment has been carried out in line the project Written Scheme of Investigation (Jackson and Duensing, 2024).

4.11 Environmental – Charcoal

Hannah Russ

4.11.1 The charcoal fragments had been extracted from the heavy residues of bulk environmental samples, with material from eight samples provided for assessment. The charcoal was quantified by fragment, count and weight in grams to the nearest 0.1g. A sample of fragments from each archaeological context was selected for fracturing to attempt wood species identification. Wood charcoal was identified to species where possible using published identifications guides (Fahn et al. 1986; Hather 2000; Schoch et al. 2004).

4.11.2 Results for all quantification were recorded in an electronic proforma in Microsoft Excel. This assessment has been undertaken in line with published standards and guidelines (Campbell et al. 2011; ClfA 2014; 2021), with reference to the South West England Archaeological Research Framework (Accessed September 2024) and a Review of Archaeological Wood Analyses in Southern England (Smith 2002).

4.12 Environmental – Pollen

Tom Hill

4.12.1 A selection of three spot samples were prepared for pollen assessment from the trench sequence under investigation. A summary of the sampling strategy applied by DigVentures to the sequence, including generalised descriptions of the deposits encountered, can be found in Table 25 of Appendix H.

4.12.2 Pollen extraction for the samples was undertaken by Quaternary Scientific, University of Reading (QUEST) and the standard methodology is modified from Campbell et al (2016) as follows (1) sampling a standard volume of sediment; (2) adding one tablet of the exotic clubmoss *Lycopodium clavatum* to provide a measure of pollen concentration in each sample, when required; (3) deflocculation of the sample in 1% Sodium pyrophosphate; (4) sieving of the sample to remove coarse mineral and organic fractions (>125µ); (5) acetolysis; (6) removal of finer minerogenic fraction using Sodium polytungstate (specific gravity of 2.0g/cm³); (7) mounting of the sample in glycerol jelly. Each stage of the procedure was preceded and followed by thorough sample cleaning in filtered distilled water.

4.12.3 Upon completion of preparation, a standard assessment of potential requires a count of at least 100 total land pollen grains (TLP), excluding aquatics and spores or, if pollen abundance is found to be low, 10 microscope slide traverses are undertaken. Pollen nomenclature follows Moore et al. (1991) with the amendments suggested by Bennett



et al. (1994). During assessment, the state of pollen and spore preservation is observed, whilst other visible microfossil features (charcoal, pre-Quaternary pollen and spores, other identifiable non-pollen palynomorphs such as dinoflagellate cysts, testate amoebae etc) are also recorded, if encountered.

4.13 Health and safety

- 4.13.1 All work was carried out in accordance with DigVentures' company Health and Safety Policy (2018), in accordance with its company Health and Safety Policy, to standards defined in The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and The Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999, and in accordance with the SCAUM (Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers) health and safety manual Health and Safety in Field Archaeology (1996), and DigVentures Health and Safety Policy.

5 EXCAVATION RESULTS

Ben Swain

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Excavations at Cothelstone Farm consisted of four evaluation style trenches located in a pasture field that is part of the Cothelstone Manor Farm estate. No previous archaeological excavations are known to have occurred in this location, however a number of cropmarks are recorded in the local HER (ID: 44536) relating to an undated ring ditch and an enclosure. Consequently, DigVentures commissioned Headland Archaeology to conduct a magnetometry survey in February 2024 (Appendix J) of the pasture field to inform the location of potential archaeological targets for investigation as part of the community excavations (Figure 2).
- 5.1.2 The principal purpose of these excavations was to define and characterise a number of the geophysical anomalies and cropmarks visible from aerial imagery, obtaining data that will better characterise and understand the site (Jackson and Duensing, 2024). Details of the key questions and objectives that contributed towards achieving the aims of the excavation are available in Section 3 of this report. The overarching archaeological aims were to:
- verify the archaeological potential of the site,
 - characterise any buried archaeology associated with the cropmarks and geophysical anomalies,
 - establish stratigraphic relationships and a chronological sequence between these features.
- 5.1.3 The topsoil and subsoil were removed by a mechanical excavator, revealing archaeological features cut into the natural geology; an orange clay and yellowish pea-gravel with moderately frequent sandstone and shillet inclusions. All features were cleaned, photographed, excavated and recorded by hand. Figure 2 shows the location of each targeted area, Figures 4-11 provide orthorectified trench plans and annotated drawings, Figures 12-15 and Figures 21-25 illustrate the digitised section drawings. Figures 16-20 show record photographs of excavated features and detailed descriptions of every context are included in Appendix A.



5.1.4 The following sub-sections detail the stratigraphic narrative of each trench chronologically by feature type, which has been phased (unless otherwise stated) by results from radiocarbon dating, pottery and registered finds. Detailed analysis relating to the pottery can be found in Sections 8-9, the registered finds in Section 12 and radiocarbon dating in Appendix I.

5.2 Trench 1

5.2.1 Trench 1 (Figures 4-5) measured 15m x 6m and was positioned over the southern arc of a circa 35m diameter cropmark (HER ID: 44536) and geophysical anomaly interpreted as a ring ditch of probable archaeological origin (Harris, 2024, 3-4; Appendix J). The trench, oriented NNE-SSW, was also positioned to target a possible inner bank and a large magnetic response internal to the ring ditch. These were interpreted from the geophysical survey results as of possible and probable archaeological origin respectively. No evidence of the inner bank or large magnetic response was encountered during excavation and it is possible these anomalies were geological in origin.

5.2.2 Upon mechanical excavation, a common sequence of topsoil (1001) and subsoil (1002) was observed to a maximum depth of 0.46m before the natural geology (1003) was located. The trench was cleaned and a number of archaeological features were observed cut through the natural geology. These were then excavated and recorded by hand, with the results from this process discussed chronologically by feature type as part of the following phased stratigraphic narrative.

Late Bronze Age ring ditch monument

5.2.3 The earliest feature excavated in Trench 1 was a ring ditch (F01) constructed in the Late Bronze Age having fully silted no earlier than the Middle Iron Age. The 2.50m excavated segment of the ditch showed that the cut [1024] was at least 1.38m in width and 1.44m in depth at this location (Figures 12-13). In summary, the chronological sequence of deposits filling this segment of the ring ditch consisted of the following;

- an intentional deposit of at least three Late Bronze Age ceramic vessels placed directly on the base of the ditch and buried by a charcoal-rich basal fill,
- a recut or cleaning-out event in the early Iron-Age followed by a series of fills slipping in from the southern (exterior) side of the ditch.
- next, a number of single-event burnt/ashy tipping deposits originating from the northern (interior) side of the ditch were interspersed with periodic silting during the Early to Middle Iron Age,
- finally, gradual homogenous silting completely filled the ditch no earlier than the Middle Iron Age.

5.2.4 Shortly after the ditch was originally cut, a very thin compacted clean greyish clay (1030) no more than 0.03m in thickness formed at its base. This was interpreted as likely representing the natural clay geology that had been exposed when the ditch was cut and had discoloured with exposure to air and water. Placed directly on to this material at the base of the ditch was a deposit of three largely complete Late Bronze Age ceramic vessels; SF8, SF10 and SF11 (Figure 20). Detailed analysis of these vessels is available in Section 8 of this report with digitised illustrations showing form and

fabric available in Figure 27. In summary, they consisted of the following vessels in a coarse local red sandstone fabric:

- **SF8** – Late Bronze Age plain ware hook-rim jar,
- **SF10** – Late Bronze Age plain ware bucket-shaped jar,
- **SF11** – Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age plain ware high-shouldered jar.

5.2.5 Although largely complete, the vessels were partially fragmented and whilst SF11 was block lifted intact, SF8 and SF10 were too fragile to lift whole. Subsequently, upon micro excavation, SF11 also became fragmentary. Sherds from SF9 were determined in post-excavation to have likely been part of vessel SF8. Further sherds were recovered from other fills higher in the sequence (1028, 1029) that may relate to these three vessels, or at least other vessels of very similar form and fabric. Combined with the broken and fragmented nature of the vessels, this strongly implies at least some degree of post-depositional disturbance that most likely occurred through cleaning out and maintaining of the ditch itself.

5.2.6 There was no evidence for a cut feature truncating the ditch to deposit these vessels and stratigraphically they must have been placed directly onto the base of the ditch shortly after it was originally opened. Radiocarbon dating of charcoal retrieved during micro-excavation of the contents of vessel SF11 returned a date of 911-814calBC with 95.4% probability (lab code: SUERC-128589) and a date of 1005-841calBC with 95.4% probability (lab code: SUERC-128590) was retrieved from a sample taken directly below the base of vessel SF11. Further details of the radiocarbon dating results are available in Appendix I.

5.2.7 These radiocarbon dates align well with the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age dates for vessels SF8, SF10 and SF11 assigned by the ceramic specialist (Section 8). Combined, this analysis strongly supports a Late Bronze Age date for the intentional deposition of these three vessels and the origin of the ring ditch itself, due to their location in the stratigraphic sequence.

5.2.8 The vessels were buried by the basal fill of the ditch (1025), consisting of an ash and charcoal-rich deposit of silty clay at least 0.16m thick. Other artefacts recovered from this fill included small fragments of fired clay, animal bone and two pieces of flint blade debitage (SF12), all suggestive of domestic waste. During the very Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age transition, a significant cleaning event or ditch recut truncated deposit (1025) from above. This recut [1041] measured 3.38m in width and 1.25m in depth and likely accounts for the broken and fragmented nature of the ceramic vessels as well as the presence of some of these sherds in stratigraphically later deposits.

5.2.9 Next in the sequence was a series of fills (1031, 1032, 1033) that had slipped in from the external side of the ring ditch. All three deposits combined measured a maximum thickness of 0.49m, contained no finds and were consistent with re-deposited natural geology. Context (1032) in particular was a very gravelly deposit consistent with natural slumping. Whilst these events could be indicative of the presence of a possible bank external to the feature, no extant bank material was observed in profile due to the truncation of both the southern and northern ditch edges by later features F04 and F05 respectively. Therefore, the slumping events could also relate to erosion of the southern ditch edge over time.

- 5.2.10 Following this, a series of silting events (1034) and (1037) were interspersed with discrete single-event tipping lines of charcoal and ash containing animal bone and pottery (1026) and (1027). From their profile, these deposits appear to have been tipped into the ditch from the internal side of the feature and may represent the discard of debris from the periodic re-occupation of the space enclosed by the ring ditch whilst the monument was in active use.
- 5.2.11 Silting event (1037) was 0.20m thick and originated from the northern (interior) side of the ditch. No artefacts were recovered from this material, suggesting a short period of abandonment at the site. This was followed by (1026), the first of two discrete ash and charcoal-rich tipping lines, measuring 0.09m in thickness and containing six fragments of animal bone as well as 90 sherds of pottery dated to the Late Bronze Age. Radiocarbon dating of a concentration of charcoal (Sample 19) retrieved from tipping line (1026) returned a date of 790-551calBC with 95.4% probability (lab code ref: SUERC-128588), suggesting this tipping event most likely occurred in the Early or Middle Iron Age. This was followed by another silting event (1034), a dark orangey-brown silty clay measuring 0.18m in thickness. Again, no artefacts were recovered from this material, suggesting a secondary short period of abandonment at the site. This was followed by another discrete ash and charcoal-rich tipping event (1027), measuring 0.08m in thickness, implying a temporary re-occupation of the site.
- 5.2.12 These deposits were then capped by two thick homogenous silting fills (1028) and (1029) to a maximum combined thickness of 0.97m, representing the final sealing of the ring ditch. Both fills consisted of an orangey brown clayey silt and contained similar artefacts, including 71 sherds of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age transitional pottery, occasional pieces of charcoal, fired clay and fragments of animal bone. Two flint cores and three flint tools were recovered from (1029), including two end/side scrapers and a retouched flake dating to the Mesolithic or Early Neolithic. The dating attributed to the pottery and flint from these fills indicates a degree of residuality consistent with long-term silting.

Romano-British enclosures

- 5.2.13 The next phase of activity in Trench 1 consists of two very shallow Romano-British ditches. The earlier of the two, F02, was observed as a linear measuring 9.20m in length and 1.03m in width. It was aligned northeast-southwest and extended beyond the eastern and western limits of excavation. This feature was excavated in three separate interventions with the overall depth varying between 0.06m and 0.13m. Two near-complete, albeit fragmentary, late 3rd to 4th century black-burnished ware jars (Figure 28) were the only artefacts recovered from the feature in two of these interventions; [1008] and [1014]. Further details and analysis on these vessels is available in Section 9 of this report.
- 5.2.14 The later of the two ditches, F03, was observed measuring at least 3m in length and 0.84m in width. It was similarly aligned northeast-southwest and partially truncated ditch F02 where the two features met in the central northern part of the trench. Ditch F03 terminated in the central western half of the trench and two interventions were placed into the feature, establishing a depth of between 0.08m and 0.15m. A single piece of flint recovered from fill (1007) was determined in post-excavation to be unworked and no other artefacts were recovered. The stratigraphic relationship

observed between these features means F03 must be at least Roman in date and may represent a recut of the original feature.

Late Romano-British/Early Post-Roman cemetery

- 5.2.15 The latest features excavated in Trench 1 were five approximately east-west aligned probable graves (F06-F10), with at least four other probable graves left unexcavated (Figures 4-5). The graves were all of a similar size and orientation. They were laid out in parallel rows at similar distances respecting each other in what appears to be an organized cemetery. Remnants of possible stone lining were visible around the western edge of grave F08. Despite dry sieving all excavated material, no skeletal remains were recovered from these features due to the highly acidic soils at the site. Another possible grave F05 was only partly excavated and was visible truncating the internal edge of the ring ditch F01 but was not fully characterized. Six small fragments of heavily abraded Late Bronze Age pottery and three pieces of possible Bronze Age flint debitage were recovered from F06-F10, and are most likely residual due to their abraded nature.
- 5.2.16 The graves were all broadly similar in character, however there was some minor variation in size. F07 was the smallest, measuring 1.53m in length and 0.51m in width, whilst F06 was the largest, measuring 2.40m in length and 1.15m in width. The former could represent the burial of a smaller or younger individual, with the latter representing a larger adult. However, in the absence of any skeletal remains or associated grave goods, it is impossible to make further insights into the demographics of the burial population.
- 5.2.17 Whilst there was an absence of dateable material recovered from these features, stratigraphic relationships can give a broad insight into their chronology. Grave F07 was observed partially truncating Romano-British ditch F03, which itself truncates ditch F02. This shows that F07 cannot be earlier in date than the late 3rd to 4th century and implies that at least one phase of the cemetery was in use during or shortly after the later Romano-British period. Consequently, F02 and F03 may represent boundary ditches from an earlier phase of the cemetery or another form of 3rd to 4th century enclosure at the site.

5.3 Trench 2

- 5.3.1 Trench 2 (Figures 6-7) measured 15m by 1.5m and was positioned oriented east-west targeting a segment at the western end of a D-shaped enclosure visible on the geophysical survey (Figure 2) and as a cropmark on the HER (ID: 44536). Topsoil (2001) and subsoil (2002) were removed by mechanical excavator to a maximum depth of 0.68m, revealing the colluvial hillwash (2006) below.
- 5.3.2 Only one feature was observed in the centre of Trench 2; a northeast-southwest aligned stone-filled channel in the style of a French drain, F11. This 1.5m segment of drain was visible extending beyond the northern and southern limits of excavation and measured 0.30m in width. It was observed truncating through the subsoil (2002) into the colluvial hillwash (2006) below (Figure 23).

5.3.3 An intervention approximately 8m in length and 0.5m in width was placed through the colluvial hillwash against the northern limit of excavation in an attempt to reach any masked archaeological features below. However, excavation within this intervention ceased after 0.22m upon the discovery that drain F11 was still actively channelling water and it was decided not to disturb the area any further to prevent flooding the trench.

5.3.4 The only artefact recovered from Trench 2 was an indeterminate residual flint flake fragment from Topsoil (2001). No evidence of the D-shaped enclosure visible on the geophysical survey was recovered in Trench 2, almost certainly due to the shallow depths of the excavations and the thickness of the colluvial hillwash (2006) masking the archaeology further below.

5.4 Trench 3

5.4.1 Trench 3 (Figures 8-9) measured 15m by 1.5m and was positioned northeast-southwest on the eastern slope of the hillside down towards Cothelstone Farm at the bottom of the valley. It was targeting a segment at the western end of a crescent-shaped feature on the geophysical survey (Figure 2), interpreted from the survey results as possibly relating to quarrying activities (Harris, 2024, 3-4; Appendix J).

5.4.2 A common stratigraphic sequence of topsoil (3001) and subsoil (3002) was removed by mechanical excavator to a maximum depth of 0.85m before the natural geology (3003) was located. A large pit, F12, was observed cut through the natural geology measuring 9.7m in width and extending beyond both the northwest and southeast limits of excavation. Due to its substantial size, this feature could only be safely excavated in a 0.50m wide intervention against the southeastern limit of excavation to a maximum depth of 0.45m without reaching the base (Figure 24).

5.4.3 The lowest fill encountered within F12 was (3005); a mid-greyish brown sandy loam 0.34m in thickness, with a mid-greyish brown clayey silt (3004) 0.11m thick representing the uppermost silting fill. Eighteen small fragments of abraded Late Bronze Age pottery and seven pieces of flint flake or blade debitage were recovered from these fills in addition to a near-complete flint arrowhead (SF3) from (3004). This leaf-shaped arrowhead (Figure 26) had a slight break at the tip but was kite-shaped in plan and is probably Neolithic. Further analysis is available in Section 11 of this report.

5.4.4 The artefacts recovered from F12 are likely residual and suggest the presence of Prehistoric activity in the vicinity, but in a secondary context having washed into the upper fills of this feature down the hillside over time. The limited size of the interventions in Trench 3 makes it difficult to characterize the crescent-shaped feature identified from the geophysical survey beyond initial interpretations of possible quarrying.

5.5 Trench 4

5.5.1 Trench 4 (Figures 10-11) measured 13m x 4m and was positioned over the northern arc of the same ring ditch targeted by excavations in Trench 1. The trench, oriented approximately north-south, was also positioned to target the possible continuation of a linear anomaly identified from the geophysical survey. Upon excavation, a common

sequence of topsoil (4001) and subsoil (4002) was observed to a maximum depth of 0.42m before the natural geology (4003) was located.

Late Bronze Age ring ditch monument

- 5.5.2 The earliest feature excavated in Trench 4 was ring ditch F01, constructed in the Late Bronze Age having fully silted up no earlier than the end of the Romano-British period. The 4.30m excavated segment of the ditch showed that the original cut [4030] was at least 2m in width and 1.58m in depth at this location (Figures 14-15). In summary, the stratigraphic sequence of deposits filling this segment of the ring ditch consisted of a series of basal and slumping fills before a significant cleaning or recut event followed by long term final homogenous silting.
- 5.5.3 The basal fill (4029) was a dark reddish-brown sandy clay with regular sandstone and shillet inclusions, measuring 0.10m in thickness. This was followed by a mid greyish-red sand (4019), measuring 0.18m in thickness directly above. The next earliest fill (4024) was 0.16m thick and may represent a partial collapse of the natural sandy ditch edge on the internal side of the feature. Five sherds of Late Bronze Age pottery in a red sandstone fabric were recovered from (4019), including one sherd from a high-shouldered plain ware jar. Additionally, two pieces of blade and flake debitage and one flint chip were also recovered from (4019) of indeterminate date. No other artefacts were recovered from the fills of [4030].
- 5.5.4 This sequence was followed by a significant cleaning event or recut of the ditch measuring 3.29m in width and 1.37m in depth. This recut [4034] truncated all three fills of the original ditch from above and was itself filled by a series of three homogenous silting events; (4012), (4011) and (4004).
- 5.5.5 Whilst it is possible, based on their profile, that the fills of the original ditch [4030] were formed from slipped bank material originating from the external side of the monument, this cannot be proven due to the later recut. A layer of light greyish yellow silty sand with frequent sandstone and shillet inclusions (4031) measuring 4.90m in width and 0.07m in thickness was observed external to the ring ditch feature in the east facing section of Trench 4 (Figure 15). However, this material was not directly observed slumped into the ditch profile itself due to truncation by the recut and no direct relationship can be proven between (4031) and the fills of original ditch [4030]. Therefore, the presence of an external bank contemporary with the construction phase of F01 remains tentative.
- 5.5.6 Recut [4034] was filled by three homogenous silting events that indicate a gradual filling in of the feature over time. The first of these is (4012) from which three joining everted rim sherds of a Romano-British jar or bowl were recovered (Figure 28; ID3_4012). Another artefact recovered from the recut was SF2, a probable Late Iron Age baked clay spindle whorl. Residual artefacts include two pieces of flake debitage and a Late Upper Palaeolithic curved back point. Deposit (4012) was the earliest fill in the sequence where material suitable for radiocarbon dating was recovered. Charcoal retrieved from environmental sampling was dated to 1051-851calBC with 95.4% probability (lab code ref: SUERC-129541), consistent with the Late Bronze Age radiocarbon dates from the ring ditch in Trench 1. However, due to the presence of

the Romano-British pottery, (4012) must date the silting up of the recut ditch to no earlier than this period.

- 5.5.7 No artefacts were recovered from silting fill (4011), the next in the sequence, implying a period of abandonment at the site. A final thick homogenous silting fill (4004) measured 0.68m thick and fully sealed the ditch deposits. Residual Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age pottery was recovered from this fill as well as six pieces of flint debitage and three tools; an endscraper, a retouched flake and a notched fragment. The residual nature of these artefacts is consistent with long-term silting.

Late Romano-British/Early Post-Roman cemetery

- 5.5.8 Four E-W aligned graves (F15-F18) were excavated in Trench 4. Like the graves in Trench 1, they were all of a similar size and orientation, being laid out in parallel rows at similar distances and respecting each other in what appears to be a continuation of the cemetery. Grave F18 was the smallest, measuring at least 0.50m in length, 0.45m in width and 0.06m in depth. However, this grave had been heavily truncated by a Post-Medieval field boundary ditch and from above by ploughing. The largest grave was F15, measuring 1.80m in length, 0.80m in width and 0.29m in depth.
- 5.5.9 Whilst no skeletal remains were present due to the high acidity of the soil in this location, two of the graves produced ironwork grave goods (Figures 18, 26). These included an iron knife (SF1) recovered from F16, with two iron knives (SF4 and SF5) and a possible knife tang or awl (SF6) recovered from F17. All three knives were domestic tools, likely used for food preparation or consumption. In all cases they were recovered from the central portion of the grave, indicating they would likely have fastened to a belt around the waist. SF4 and SF5 were recovered together (Figure 18). Typologically, these knives cannot be more precisely dated than to the later Romano-British or Early Post-Roman period, possibly the 5th century AD. Further detailed analysis on these artefacts is available in Section 12 of this report. The only other artefact recovered was a single flint chip from F15, considered to be residual.

Post-Medieval field boundaries

- 5.5.10 Two linear ditches, F13 and F14, were visible running NW-SE through Trench 4 extending beyond the LOE. These ditches truncated through all other features within Trench 4. Interventions were placed at the northern end of Trench 4 to characterise the ditches and establish any relationships. F13 measured 5.63m in length, 1.10m in width and 0.40m in depth whilst F14 measured 9.95m in length, 0.76m in width and 0.39m in depth. Whilst no direct relationship was observed between the two ditches, Post-Medieval pottery was recovered from F14, strongly indicating these features are likely field boundary or drainage ditches of this date.

6 THE FINDS – PRESERVATION, ASSEMBLAGE OVERVIEW AND CHRONOLOGY

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 The finds are the tangible objects that connect us with the people who lived and died in the local landscape at Cothelstone Farm from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Post-Roman period. They give us glimpses of their identities, perceptions of place and belief systems in both life and death. The analysis carried out on these finds provide fascinating insights into domestic settlement practices and the significance of social acts of commemoration in the Late Bronze Age as well as beliefs and practices regarding burial of the dead in the later Romano-British or Early Post-Roman period. This section of the report looks at the condition and preservation of finds recovered from across the site, the artefact assemblage, and the radiocarbon dating.

6.1.2 The chronology and stratification of the finds has provided a vastly improved understanding of the site. This has been supplemented by four radiocarbon dates (see section 6.4) targeting dateable material recovered from deposits of particular stratigraphic importance to the phased chronological site narrative.

6.2 Preservation of archaeological data

6.2.1 Generally, the preservation of archaeology at the site ranged from fair to poor depending on the depth of deposits. Modern and historic agricultural practices have clearly played a role in heavily truncating a number of shallower archaeological features, such as the graves. However, more deeply stratified deposits including within the ring ditch are far better preserved.

6.2.2 Organic preservation suffered from highly acidic soil conditions, with a significant adverse impact on the preservation of bone. No skeletal remains were recovered from any of the burials excavated at the site and only very fragmentary pieces of bone were recovered from the lower fills of the ring ditch. The preservation of environmental remains was also poor, with plant remains and pollen suffering in particular; even within the deeper deposits of the ring ditch.

6.2.3 The ironwork recovered from the site was well preserved, including the three iron knives from graves in Trench 4. The preservation of ceramics was also good, with a deposit of Late Bronze Age pottery consisting of three near-complete vessels recovered from the base of the ring ditch in Trench 1.

6.3 The artefact assemblage

6.3.1 The excavations yielded an assemblage of over 800 artefacts, including 588 sherds of Prehistoric pottery (Appendix C), 157 sherds of Romano-British pottery (Appendix D), 59 pieces of worked flint (Appendix F), 32 pieces of animal bone (Appendix B), six fragments of fired clay/daub (Appendix E), three iron knives and a ceramic spindle whorl (Appendix G). In addition, eleven bulk samples and three pollen samples were processed for the recovery and assessment of environmental remains. The finds assemblage has been analysed by the appropriate specialists and several finds have been conserved. A summary of the results from the assessment and analysis of each material type assemblage are discussed below.



- 6.3.2 The ceramic assemblage has been split in Prehistoric and Romano-British pottery. The prehistoric material predominantly dates to the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age and included four registered finds, SF8, SF9, SF10 and SF11. These were all from ring ditch F01, and SF8, SF10 and SF11, were recovered from the base of the feature. SF9 may represent a part vessel of the same vessel as SF8 and post-depositional disturbance probably accounts for the separation. The Romano-British assemblage included fine table wares and coarse utilitarian vessels. The material was recovered from the ring ditch F01, and two later gullies, F02 and F03. Two near complete but fragmentary black burnished ware jars were recovered from F02 and F03 and may have originally been deposited as grave goods in the burials nearby.
- 6.3.3 The flint recovered from site was likely all residual. The material included a Later Upper Palaeolithic curved-backed point, and a leaf-shaped arrowhead from the Neolithic. Other material dating from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age was also recovered throughout site.
- 6.3.4 The registered iron and ceramic finds consisted of a Late Iron Age spindle whorl (SF2), three knives (SF1, SF4 and SF5) and a possible awl or tang of another knife (SF6). The iron objects were all found in graves and are either very Late Roman or very Early Medieval in date.
- 6.3.5 Only a small quantity of animal bone was recovered from the site and no human remains were preserved within the excavated graves due to the high acidity of the soil. The bone recovered was very poorly preserved and the sole species identified was cattle. Preservation was also an issue for the environmental remains and yielded minimal results. Charred material recovered included a small quantity of seeds and fragments of wood charcoal. Three samples were submitted for pollen analysis, but the preservation proved too poor in assessment for a full analysis to take place.
- 6.4 Radiocarbon dating
- 6.4.1 Four samples were submitted to Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC) for radiocarbon dating. The samples were all taken from ring ditch F01; three from Trench 1 and one from Trench 4. They consisted of charcoal recovered from well-stratified deposits within the feature to assist in refining the chronology of its construction, occupation and abandonment. No material suitable for radiocarbon dating was recovered from the graves excavated at the site. The date ranges have been calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4 (Ramsey, 2009) and using a mix of the IntCal13 and Marine13 calibration curves (Reimer et al., 2013) (Dunbar et al. 2016). Detailed results of the four samples sent for radiocarbon dating are available in Appendix I.
- 6.4.2 The three charcoal samples submitted from the ring ditch in Trench 1 consisted of one from sample 29; context (1030), one from sample 28; context (1025), and one from sample 19; context (1026). One charcoal sample was submitted from the ring ditch in Trench 4 and was recovered from sample 7; context (4012).
- 6.4.3 Charcoal from sample 29 was recovered during the micro-excavation of vessel SF11 directly adhering to the external base of the vessel. The date returned from this sample was considered to represent the time after which the vessel must have been deposited

at the base of the feature. The result returned from radiocarbon dating of this sample was 1005-841calBC with 95.4% probability (lab code: SUERC-128590).

- 6.4.4 Charcoal from sample 28 was recovered during the micro-excavation of vessel SF11 directly adhering to the internal base of the vessel. The date returned from this sample was considered to be contemporary with when the vessel must have been deposited within the feature. The result returned from radiocarbon dating of this sample was 911-814calBC with 95.4% probability (lab code: SUERC-128589).
- 6.4.5 The final sample from F01 in Trench 1 was sample 19, recovered during the excavation of context (1026). It was interpreted as a discrete single-event tip line originating from domestic waste from activity internal to the ring ditch enclosure. The date returned from this sample was thought to be contemporary with when this waste tipping had occurred and the result was 790-551calBC with 95.4% probability (lab code: SUERC-128588).
- 6.4.6 Charcoal from sample 7 was recovered during the processing of environmental samples taken from context (4012); interpreted as the primary silting fill of a recut of the ring ditch in Trench 4. This was the stratigraphically earliest deposit within the ring ditch in Trench 4 from which material suitable for radiocarbon dating was recovered. The aim of this sample was to provide a date for before the recut of the ring ditch must have occurred, and as a control date from which the dates from Trench 1 could be compared. The result returned from radiocarbon dating of this sample was 1051-851calBC with 95.4% probability (lab code: SUERC-129541).
- 6.4.7 The results from the radiocarbon dating at Cothelstone Farm have been highly informative in refining the chronology and phasing of the ring ditch enclosure excavated in Trench 1 and Trench 4. Two of the dates were returned from material stratigraphically contemporary with the construction of the ring ditch and the deposition of the three ceramic vessels at its base. Combined with the typological date assigned to the vessels themselves by the ceramic specialist, it is clear that the ring ditch must have been constructed in the Late Bronze Age, likely between the late 11th and early 9th centuries BC.
- 6.4.8 The date from sample 19 suggests an Early to Middle Iron Age date for the recut of the ring ditch and when sporadic or seasonal domestic occupation internal to the enclosure may have occurred. This chronology also implies that the homogenous silting that occurred within the ring ditch after this deposit must have happened after this date.
- 6.4.9 The final date returned was 1051-851calBC from context (4012) in Trench 4. Artefacts recovered from this deposit were typologically dated to the Late Iron Age and Romano-British period, implying this sample was residual. However, its value is more in acting as a comparator control sample for the dates received from the ring ditch in Trench 1, where very similar Late Bronze Age dates were returned from radiocarbon dating of more secure deposits.

7 ANIMAL BONE

Dr Hannah Russ MCiFA FSA

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 Animal bone (32 fragments weighing 49.2g) representing mammals was recovered via hand collection and from a bulk environmental sample taken during the excavation. This report includes quantification of the assemblage recovered with identification at species level where possible (Table 5, Appendix B), an assessment of significance, and recommendation(s) for any further work.

7.2 Results

- 7.2.1 Thirty-two fragments of animal bone weighing 49.2g were recovered from four contexts across two of the four excavation trenches, Table 5. Hand-collected bone comprised 28 specimens weighing 47.9g from four contexts, while four fragments of animal bone weighing 1.3g were recovered from a bulk environmental sample from context (1025) (sample <10>). Preservation was extremely poor throughout the assemblage (see taphonomic assessment, below), with bone preserved either through being burnt (n= 18; 10.1g) or through impregnation by iron from the burial environment (n=14; 39.1g); surface preservation was poor and fragmentation extremely high; no complete bones were recovered and a species identification could only be suggested for a single fragment of axis (C2 vertebra) which compared with cattle (*Bos taurus*). Additional mammal remains were identified within size categories at class level (96.9% of total remains, n=31).

- 7.2.2 Most of the remains were recovered from three fills of a ring ditch (F01), contexts (1025), (1026), and (1028); the only other bone recovered was a single fragment of burnt bone from the fill of a sub-circular crescent-shaped feature in Trench 3 (3005), Table 5.

7.3 Taphonomic assessment

- 7.3.1 Bone surface preservation varied throughout the assemblage from 'good' (2), to very poor (5) on a scale of 1 to 5 from 'excellent' to 'very poor'. Most specimens had 'very poor' (5) or 'poor' (4) surface preservation, 87.5% by count (n=28). Fragmentation was extremely high throughout the assemblage with only partial bones recovered.
- 7.3.2 No evidence for skeletal abnormalities, butchery in the form of chop, cut or saw marks or carnivore/rodent gnawing activity was observed. Bone fusion data and measurable elements suitable for use in size or shape reconstruction were not recovered. No animal remains were suitable for estimating sex. Burnt bone, 18 fragments weighing 10.1g, was recovered from Trench 1, contexts 1025 (n=7), 1026 (n=3) and 1028 (n=7), and Trench 3, context 3005 (n=1).

7.4 Discussion

- 7.4.1 The animal bone recovered during archaeological excavations at Cothelstone Farm formed a very small assemblage of fragmentary, poorly preserved bone that was either burnt or preserved through iron absorption from the burial environment. The only



species identified was cattle, a species present in Britain from the Neolithic period onwards and is one of the main domestic livestock species kept for meat, milk, leather and traction since that time. The burnt animal bone from Trench 1, the fills of ring ditch F01, were recovered alongside three complete, though fragmentary, ceramic vessels of Late Bronze Age date. Whilst at least one fragment represented cattle, the possibility remains that fragments attributed to both the medium and medium/large mammal categories (Table 5) could include human bone.

- 7.4.2 The recovery of only bone that had been burnt or had absorbed iron from the surrounding burial environment demonstrates poor burial conditions for the preservation of bone. The few remains that were recovered demonstrate the presence of animals and/or animal products at the site, and that some animal remains were exposed to high temperatures before being deposited/discarded in features at the site.
- 7.4.3 Due to the small size and fragmentary condition of the assemblage, it is not possible to comment further on the role of animals at the site, nor confirm the presence of human burials. The assemblage is of low local significance, with no future research potential beyond the information contained within this report and associated data spreadsheet.

8 PREHISTORIC POTTERY

Imogen Wood

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 The 588 sherds weighing 13403g from features in Trenches 1, 3 and 4 date to the Late Bronze Age -Early Iron Age period. The vessels are characteristic of Late Bronze Age Plain Ware which crosses over chronologically into the Early Iron Age period. This is supported by the carbon dates from associated vessels in enclosure ditch deposits. The deposition of three near complete vessels in enclosure ditch [1024] possibly suggests a socially specific act, whilst their life after deposition demonstrates the open nature of the ditch deposits and gradual burial over time. The assemblage is of moderate (regional) significance contributing to the growing corpus of Late Bronze Age / Early Iron Age sites in Somerset.

8.2 Aims

- 8.2.1 The aim of this report is to identify and characterise the ceramic forms and fabrics of the vessel excavated. To inform the dating evidence for excavated features containing pottery on the site and support the stratigraphic interpretation. Macroscopic analysis identified fabrics for comparison to established regional fabrics and refers to relevant petrographic descriptions.
- 8.2.2 The aims of this project of relevance to the ceramic analysis are to:
- Date and function of each feature,
 - Establish the relative date, sequence and nature for the enclosure / ring ditch,
 - Establish current state of preservation of the pottery.



8.3 Recovery strategy and condition of the assemblage

- 8.3.1 Finds were treated in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (2014), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.
- 8.3.2 All artefacts were retained from excavated contexts, except features or deposits undoubtedly of modern date. In these circumstances, sufficient artefacts were only retained to elucidate the date and function of the feature or deposit.
- 8.3.3 The condition of the pottery is moderately good with most sherds being abrasion level 2 but there is variable abrasion on some of the mostly complete vessels and many of the sherds from the ditch fill contexts are small and Level 3 highly abraded. This suggests that the larger almost complete vessels were partly sealed within the ditch fill material and partly exposed to the dynamic post depositional environment of the ditch feature. See table 7 for detail of each context.

8.4 Geology

- 8.4.1 The nearby Quantock Hills provide a clear geological contrast due to their predominant middle Devonian Sandstone formations resulting in quartz rich derived gravels and clay. In places the solid geology is overlain by Pleistocene sediments, which comprise sands and gravels, undifferentiated Head deposits, and alluvium interspersed with peat layers. The upper alluvium is equivalent to the Wentlooge palaeosol, which is thought to have formed as a result of land drainage during the Romano-British period (Allen and Rae 1987).
- 8.4.2 The fabric of 95% of the assemblage is coarse and fine variations of a sandy fabric with a harsh feel. This is directly comparable with fabric (SS1) identified at Hinkley Point (Quinnell and Wood 2024, 52), which is of a similar date to the pottery at Cothelstone Farm. The comprehensive petrographic analysis of the Hinkley Point Late Bronze Age Early Iron Age assemblage carried out by the author is the type-site for this fabric.
- 8.4.3 The Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age assemblage from Hinkley Point has a predominant and homogenous group of sandstone tempered fabrics which are clearly composed of a locally derived mudstone clay to which sand from a sandstone-rich river has been added as temper. It is characterised by common New Red Sandstone rock fragments, sub-rounded 10mm–0.5mm, predominant monocrystalline quartz sub-rounded to well-rounded generally <2mm, but larger 6mm if angular in shape. Rare mudstone and iron-rich limonite, well-rounded 1.5mm–0.5mm (Quinnell and Wood 2023, 52-53). The local sandstone-derived pottery (SS1) makes up 88% of the Late Bronze Age pottery at Hinkley Point. The analysis by the author established a provenance source of the clay suite of minerals and rock fragments in this quartz-rich temper most likely derives from the geology of the Quantock Hills and extracted from a river system such as the River Parrett (Quinnell and Wood 2023, 52-53).
- 8.4.4 The small quantity of sherds with Quartzite inclusions from Cothelstone Farm are comparable with Fabric 6 'Quartzite' identified by David William during his petrographic analysis of Late Bronze Age pottery from Norton Fitzwarren (1987). The



results and a full description this fabric from this type-site carried out by David Williams's can be found in the Norton Fitzwarren petrographic report (Williams 1987).

8.5 Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age pottery assemblage

- 8.5.1 The forms of vessels have been identified using Tyler and Woodward's Late Bronze Age Jar typology from vessels excavated at Tinney's Lane, Sherbourne (2013, 37). The stratigraphic context of the finds is indicated in the text by nature of fill and feature cut. For further information please consult the context descriptions (Tables 1-4, Appendix A).

8.6 Trench 1

- 8.6.1 See Table 7 for detail of vessel form and fabric by context. There are a minimum number of 20 vessels present in Trench 1 based on the rims and fabrics present. Most are from context (1025).
- 8.6.2 The majority of the pottery from this trench derives from basal fill (1025) from the enclosure ditch [1024], overlain by fill (1037), (1026), (1031), (1033), (1034), (1027), (1028) and (1029), all of which are accumulated deposits and do not represent (1025) being immediately sealed.
- 8.6.3 The Hook-rim Type 3 Jar; SF8 (Figure 27) has 119 sherds weighing 6416g found in enclosure ditch [1024] fill (1025). It has a 200mm base diameter and 340mm rim diameter. The vessel walls are between 8-12mm thick, and the exterior of the vessel has deep vertical finger-smearing which has in some places dragged large inclusions creating incised lines. The rim sherds vary considerably in levels of abrasion, and evidence of burning between con-joining sherds suggests that some sherds were in sealed layer and others more exposed. The differential abrasion on the breaks indicates a dynamic post-depositional environment which is consistent with a ditch feature. There is only one base sherd and basal angle sherd suggest only 60% is present with some sherds lost. There are two con-joining rim sherds from (1026) and two con-joining rim sherds from SF11 (1025), demonstrating the mixed nature of the deposit.
- 8.6.4 There is a rim sherd from a smaller vessel included in SF8 with a 180mm rim diameter of a similar Type 3 Hook-rim Jar with a wall thickness of 6-9mm in the same Red Sandstone fabric.
- 8.6.5 There are a further eleven body sherds from fill (1025) which are mostly likely part of vessel SF8 and there is one basal angle sherd in a Quartzite fabric seen in (1026) and (1028). The pottery from soil samples <10> and <16> also have finger-smearing suggesting a similar vessel type. The vessel SF9 from fill (1025) is probably the same vessel as SF8 as the sherd thickness, sandy fabric and deep finger-smearing marks suggest.
- 8.6.6 The Bucket-shaped jar Type 1 SF10 (Figure 27) from deposit (1025) is mostly complete but lacking 50% of the 180mm in diameter flat-topped rim, with a total vessel height of 190mm in a Red Sandstone fabric. The complete base is 160mm diameter and the body sherds a between 7-10mm thick with vertical finger-smearing marks on the

exterior surface. The sherds are in good condition, all the breaks are fresh suggesting it was immediately sealed within the deposit and not exposed as the sherds from SF8 were. This vessel is smaller and finer than SF8.

- 8.6.7 The Plain high shouldered jar Type 2 SF11 (Figure 27) has a 200mm diameter rim and possible 100mm base with a 6mm sherd thickness. The fine vessel has a reduced burnished exterior in a Red Sandstone fabric. The abrasion of the breaks on the lower body suggests the base was lost, whilst the upper body and rim are not as abraded suggesting it was in a sealed deposit. The total vessel height is 140mm, total girth at shoulder height is 260mm. A sherd found within the vessel during micro-excavation is from a Bucket-form Jar with finger-smearing on the exterior surface and a rim diameter of only 12mm suggesting a very small vessel, the abrasion suggests was most likely accidentally included.
- 8.6.8 The ditch fill (1026) has sherds from at least 10 other vessels. There is a flat-topped Bucket-form Type 1 Jar with a diameter rim 160mm from a small vessel, a larger Hook-rim Jar Type 3 with a rim diameter of 220mm with a wall thickness of 15mm, both in a Red Sandstone fabric. A Barrel-form Jar Type 4 has a rim diameter of 200mm with finger-smearing marks on the exterior. There is a basal angle sherd 120mm in diameter from a very fine well-made vessel with slightly burnished external surface in a reduced sandy fabric which is similar to or part of SF11. There is one Bucket-form Jar Type 1 with a coarse body and basal angle sherd 100mm in diameter with external expansion which has been exposed to high temperatures suggesting burning. The rest of the body sherds from fill (1026) represent large vessels with finger-smearing Jars similar to SF8 and SF10 and finer carinated body sherds similar to the high shouldered vessel SF11. A small flared-out rim sherd belonging to the Plain Ware vessel con-joins with a rim from (1028) suggesting a mixing of these contexts.
- 8.6.9 The only vessels in this context not to be in a Red Sandstone fabric are two body sherds with a soft fabric tempered with crushed white Quartzite from a large coarse jar with finger-smearing, suggesting it is a comparable form to the other jars. Williams (1987) identified a quartzite fabric at Norton Fitzwarren, fabric 6, which dated to the Late Bronze Age.
- 8.6.10 The sherds from fill (1028) have differential abrasion suggesting this was a dynamic context. There are five everted rim sherds 140mm in diameter of a Plain Ware flared-rim Jar most are conjoining and 26 body sherds from the same vessel all in a reduced sandy fabric. Comparable examples of the form are seen at Brean Down in the Late Bronze Age phase (Woodward 1991). There are 18 sherds, mainly basal angle, from a small jar with a burnished exterior surface and well-made reduced fabric with a base diameter of 80mm. There are seven small, abraded body sherds in a Quartzite fabric very similar to the two sherds in (1026). A single sherd, SF13 from (1028), is most likely from the same vessel as SF11 or if not a very similar form and burnished surface treatment.
- 8.6.11 The sherds from (1029) are small and highly abraded, but their Red Sandstone and Quartzite fabrics suggest a similar date to the rest of the ditch fills. There are three very abraded small sherds in a Quartzite fabric from (1036) which suggests a Late Bronze Age Early Iron Age date. The two small sherds from (1023) are equally abraded and date from the same period. A flat-topped Bucket-form Type 1 Jar rim sherd from

(1017) is of a similar date. The small sherd from (1013) with two horizontal incised grooves is similar to Trevisker Related pottery which is often decorated with incised lines and contemporary with Plain Ware Jars as seen at Brean Down (Woodward 1990).

8.7 Trench 3

- 8.7.1 See Table 7 for detail of vessel form and fabric by context. There are a minimum number of 4 vessels present in Trench 3 based on the rims and fabrics. The small assemblage of abraded sherds from (3005) are the same forms as seen in Trench 1 and characteristic of the Late Bronze Age Early Iron Age period as suggested by a flat-topped rim from a Bucket-form Jar Type 1 in a sandy fabric; as is the flared-out rim of a Plain Ware jar from (3004). The highly abraded sherds from (3001) are of a similar Red Sandstone fabric to pottery in other trenches suggesting a similar date.

8.8 Trench 4

- 8.8.1 See Table 7 for detail of vessel form and fabric by context. There are a minimum number of 4 vessels present in Trench 4 based on the rims and fabrics present. There is a neck from a High shouldered Plain Ware Jar from fill (4019) and a very small highly abraded pottery sherd from (4019); SF7, which is undiagnostic in terms of form, but the sandy fabric could suggest a similar date as those from Trenches 1 and 3.
- 8.8.2 There is one sherd from a high shouldered vessel, a carinated body sherd from a similar vessel, along with an expanded basal angle sherd from (4004) and a small Bucket-form Jar Type1 with flat-topped rim 160mm diameter. These diagnostic forms and sandstone fabrics strongly suggest the pottery from context (4004) is Late Bronze Age - Early Iron Age in date. A piece of ceramic from sample <21> is too small to establish a date.

8.9 Discussion

- 8.9.1 The interpretation of the result of the analysis of the pottery from features excavated at Cothelstone Farm have contributed to the research aims set out in the WSI. The ceramic assemblage from Cothelstone Farm clearly demonstrate diagnostic characteristics confirming a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age date for the enclosure ring ditch monument and features in Trenches 3, and the ring ditch monument in Trench 4. This compares well with the date range 911-814calBC from within SF11 and charcoal from underneath the vessel SF11 1005-841calBC, which also provide relative dates for SF8 and SF10. The date 790-551calBC, from ditch fill (1026) associated with the vessels in (1025), is moving into the Early Iron Age which is still consistent in the range of forms present.
- 8.9.2 The carbon dates of the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age Plain ware high shouldered jars from the enclosure ditch at Cothelstone Farm are directly comparable with those of the Shurton enclosure ditch at Hinkley Point which have dates from 930-800calBC (SUERC-70970) to 840-790calBC (SUERC-70974) (Quinnell and Wood 2024, 54). The first phase of the Shurton enclosure has Late Bronze Age dates of 1150-800calBC (SUERC-70979), 1280-105calBC (SUERC-70970) and 930-800calBC (SUERC-70973), giving non-overlapping date ranges (Quinnell and Wood 2024). The Shurton Enclosure ditch at Hinkley Point was roughly square shaped and is thought to have incorporated



a palisade and bank and was used into the Early Iron Age (Mudd et al 2024, 43). The same range of Plain Ware shouldered jars from Norton Fitzwarren are considered to be Late Bronze Age into the Early Iron Age up to the 7th century BC (Woodward 1989, Fig20.45-47, p45).

- 8.9.3 These dates also compare well with the Tinney's Lane 12th -11th centuries BC Type 1 Bucket-form Jar, Type 3 Hook-rim Jar and Type 4 barrel-form Jars (Woodward and Tyler 2013) and the 11th-9th centuries BC assemblages at Brean Down (Woodward 1990).
- 8.9.4 The petrographic analysis of the assemblage from Cothelstone Farm has identified that a Red Sandstone derived fabric dominates the assemblage for both the fine high shouldered Jars and the Bucket, Barrel and Hook-rim Jars. This is mirrored at Hinkley Point where analysis concluded that 88% of the Late Bronze Age Early Iron Age Plain Ware was in a Red Sandstone fabric (Quinnell and Wood 2024, 53). David Williams analysis of Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age pottery from Norton Fitzwarren also identified Sandy fabrics (1987).
- 8.9.5 In South West Britain, Late Bronze Age Plain Ware appears to have been in use by the 11th century BC and continued into the 9th century BC, when elements of the subsequent style were certainly present the degree of overlap is uncertain (Quinnell and Wood 2024, 54). All the forms seen at Cothelstone Farm are also seen within the enclosure ditch at Hinkley Point, with the same carbon date range, suggesting comparable domestic activity in that period (Quinnell and Wood 2024) and are also a match for the less well dated assemblages in many features from Norton Fitzwarren (Woodward 1989, 19–20).
- 8.9.6 The refitting of vessels SF8, SF10 and SF11 indicate that the vessels were not complete in that context and that parts of them have been transported into other deposits (1028) and (1029). The variable level of abrasion suggests that these vessels were possibly deposited whole and broke in the ditch context, after which some sherds were sealed in ditch deposits and others were exposed on the surface and became more abraded overlain by a succession of fills (1037), (1026), (1031), (1033), (1034), (1027), (1028) and (1029). The sherds found within SF11 during micro-excavation do not represent an accessory vessel but sherds from other vessels that had been transported within the ditch. The vessel had external sooting suggesting they were used in a domestic context and not a new vessel.
- 8.9.7 The deposition of largely complete vessels in ditches is not a common practice and is typically assumed to represent an atypical domestic practice and considered a 'special' deposit particularly in ditch termini. J. D. Hill proposed the idea of 'special' or 'structured' deposits of artefacts in the 1990's to explain artefacts deposited in a way not consistent with casual waste disposal (Hill 1995). Pollard suggests that maintenance and creation of social action in the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age is based within the settlement context and "evidence for a range of practices affecting the way in which pottery was treated in deposition, from routine and largely unconsidered use and disposal to special acts as part of a ritual" (2002, 29).
- 8.9.8 The reason for 'special' deposits in ditches is open to speculation but is assumed to represent the performance of a socially significant act. However, the excavation of

well-preserved Late Bronze Age houses has demonstrated that a relatively large portion of vessels were deposited in midden areas relatively rapidly (Brudenell 2024). It must be noted that as only one section through the enclosure ditch [1024] at Cothelstone Farm was excavated, the deposition of three possibly complete vessels from (1025) may indeed be representative of the typical process of deposition. It is not possible to conclusively comment unless the entire enclosure ditch was excavated.

- 8.9.9 The pottery excavated at Cothelstone Farm across the three trenches represents vessels used in everyday domestic life in the Late Bronze Age/ Early Iron Age period. The function of the features and range of ceramic forms indicate this was a typical settlement site. The abrasion of the pottery suggests the ditch and gully features were open to the elements and backfilled slowly over time incorporating more pottery from disposal of settlement waste material. It is possible that if the deposition of the three vessels in the enclosure ditch was not typical disposal and the nature of their deposition offers a glimpse into the unknown roles they can perform outside the everyday.

9 ROMAN POTTERY

David Griffiths

9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1 Later prehistoric to Romano British period handmade and wheel-thrown Romano-British period pottery was recovered via hand collection during archaeological excavations at Cothelstone Farm, Somerset (NGR: ST 17901 31650), conducted by DigVentures in 2024 (CSF24). The excavations revealed a series of ditches and pits containing prehistoric handmade and Romano-British period pottery. Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery was also recovered and is reported on in Section 8 of this report.

9.2 Results

- 9.2.1 A total of 158 sherds, weighing 813.2g, were recovered from stratified and topsoil deposits (Tables 8 and 10, Appendix D). A single sherd of handmade pottery was recovered and dates and may date to the Late Iron Age or Romano-British period (i.e. the 1st century AD). The Romano-British period pottery assemblage included the remains of fine and coarse wares and fine wares; the range was limited and did not include amphorae, mortaria, or samian ware.

9.3 Late Iron Age to Romano-British pottery

- 9.3.1 A single body sherd (10.7g) of handmade pottery was recovered from topsoil (ID12, context 1001; Tables 8 and 10, Appendix D). The fabric had large quartz inclusions. The sherd had no clear diagnostic features and it was not possible to identify vessel form or infer a reliable date. The sherd was found alongside Romano-British pottery, including the partial remains a black-burnished ware jar dating from the late 3rd to 4th century AD (ID1/6).



9.4 Romano-British pottery

- 9.4.1 In total, 157 sherds weighing 802.5g of Romano-British pottery were recovered, which included fine table wares and coarse utilitarian vessels. The material was recovered from deposits in ditch F01 (4 sherds), gullies F02 (41 sherds) and F03 (83 sherds), and topsoil (29 sherds).

9.5 Fine wares

- 9.5.1 In total, there were eight body sherds of fine table ware recovered from gully F03 (6 sherds) and topsoil (2 sherds; Tables 8 and 10, Appendix D). All the sherds were heavily abraded Oxford Red-slipped ware (fabric OXF RS, Tomber and Dore 1998, 176) and may all be part of the same vessel (IDs 2 and 7). It was not possible to identify vessel form, however, an open vessel, such as a bowl, is possible. Oxford Red-slipped ware types date broadly from approximately AD240 to 400 (Young 2000, 123-4).
- 9.5.2 In total, 149 sherds weighing 776.2g of coarse wares were recovered from deposits in features ditch F01, gullies F02 and F03, and topsoil. Black-burnished wares formed the greatest component of the assemblage (135 sherds); however, these likely represent only two vessels (ID5, gully F02, context 1009, and ID1/6, 77 sherds from gully F03, context 1015 and 17 sherds from topsoil). The two black-burnished ware vessels were both everted rim jars dating from the late 3rd to 4th centuries AD (Holbrook and Bidwell's type 20 (1991, 103, and fig. 28, 104 and fig. 29, 105), and Gillam's form 12 (1976, 64, and fig. 2, 65)). One vessel (ID5) was decorated with a band of obtuse-angled lattice; jar ID1/6 had a rough unburnished band around the upper body of the vessel (see Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, fig. 29, no. 20.3). Vessel ID1/5 was in South-East Dorset Black-burnished ware 1 (DOR BB 1, Tomber and Dore 1998, 127); vessel ID5 was in an unsourced fabric and a full description is provided (Table 11, Appendix D).
- 9.5.3 There were 13 sherds in a range of reduced ware fabrics (Tables 8, 10 and 11; Appendix D). There were three joining rim sherds (weighing 55.3g) of a jar or large bowl (ID3, ditch F01, context 4012); the rim of the vessel was everted and relatively upright, and may be a type similar Holbrook and Bidwell's type 8.1 jar (1991, 149), dating from the late 1st to 2nd century AD, or Young's reduced ware type R38 (2000, 220), dating from the 1st to 4th centuries AD, or oxidised bowl type O27 (2000, 195), dating from approximately AD240 to 400. The fabric (RE1, Table 11) is similar to that described by Holbrook and Bidwell for 'Fabric ware B' – a heavily gritted fabric with a 'pimply' surface (1991, 149). The remaining ten sherds of reduced wares were recovered from topsoil (context 1001); the sherds were all body sherds and heavily abraded, with a range of fabrics represented (Table 11).
- 9.5.4 A single body sherd (weighing 7.7g) of oxidised ware (ID4) was recovered from ditch F01, context 4012.

9.6 Pottery by feature

- 9.6.1 Pottery was recovered from three contexts in Trench 1 and one context in Trench 4 (Table 9). Near complete pots, albeit fragmentary, were recovered from a fill in gully F02 (ID5, a late 3rd to 4th century AD black-burnished ware jar) and a fill in gully F03



(ID1/6, a second late 3rd to 4th century AD black-burnished ware jar with joining sherds also recovered from topsoil (context 1001)). A Romano-British coarse ware jar rim was recovered from ditch F01 (context 4012). Given the proximity of multiple graves nearby (of uncertain date), the two black-burnished ware pots may have originally been deposited as grave goods in nearby burials during in late Roman period, which were disturbed at a later date and redeposited in gullies F02 and F03. The fragmentary remains of fine table wares, in Oxford Red-slipped fabric (c. AD240-400), were also recovered from gully F03 and topsoil.

9.7 Discussion and conclusions

- 9.7.1 There is relatively limited evidence for Roman period sites in the region of Cothelstone Farm. There are a range of Roman military sites, including a marching or temporary camp near Taunton (Norton Fitzwilliam), and a small fort at Nunington Park, Wiveliscombe, Somerset (Webster 1958, approximately 11km to the west of the site. There were more substantial settlements during the Romano-British period further afield at Exeter, c. 46km to the south-west (an early Roman legionary fortress and later town (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991)), and the settlement at Bath, c. 65km to the north-east.
- 9.7.2 The overall pottery assemblage contained material potentially dating from the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age (reported on in Section 8) and the Late Iron Age to late Roman periods, indicating human occupation at or close to the site for potentially for more than a millennium. A single handmade body sherd was recovered which may date to the Late Iron Age or Romano-British periods; this was residual and recovered from topsoil along with late Roman material. The Roman pottery assemblage was small, but it was possible to provide reliable dates (i.e. late 3rd to 4th century AD) for the two black-burnished ware jars (IDs 5 and 1/6).
- 9.7.3 The two black-burnished ware jars may have originally been deposited as goods in graves nearby. Vessels of this type were common throughout Britain (Gillam 1976, 65), with examples found in late 3rd to 4th century contexts at Exeter (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, 104-5). There were sherds of fine, table ware, the sherds may be of a single vessel; these were produced in Oxfordshire, and were common at sites in the south of England from the middle of the 3rd to 4th centuries AD. The jar/bowl (ID3) may have been produced in the Exeter region, as the fabric has similarities with Holbrook and Bidwell's Fortress ware B (1991, 149). It was not possible to source many of the coarse ware fabrics. The pottery assemblage was too small for statistical comparisons with other sites in the region. The pottery vessels were likely originally used by low-status individuals living and working nearby in a long-lived rural settlement, with some vessels potentially reused as grave goods in the later Roman period.
- 9.7.4 The pottery sherds are in relatively poor condition, with evidence of post-depositional damage. This report and associated data should be integrated into any site-wide analysis or publication reporting and retained within the site archive. A basic archive catalogue of material is provided in Appendix D.

10 FIRED CLAY

Dr David G Griffiths

10.1 Introduction

- 10.1.1 Fragments of fired clay/daub and fired clay were recovered via hand collection during archaeological excavations at Cothelstone Farm, Somerset (NGR: ST 17901 31650), conducted by DigVentures in 2024 (CSF24). The excavations revealed a series of ditches and pits containing prehistoric handmade and Romano-British period pottery.

10.2 Results

- 10.2.1 In total, six fragments of fired clay/daub and one fragment of fired clay were recovered during the excavations (Table 12; Appendix E). All material was recovered from three fills of ring ditch 1024, Trench 1 (Appendix E). The basal fill (1025) of the ring ditch also contained prehistoric pottery (Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age), including the remains of three vessels which had been placed directly onto the base of the ditch. Radiocarbon dates correspond with the dates of the prehistoric pottery (see Section 8). The upper fills (1028) and (1029), where fragments fired clay/daub was found, also date to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age.

10.3 Fired clay or daub

- 10.3.1 Six fragments weighing 77.8g of fired clay or daub were recovered from two fills (1028) and (1029) in ring ditch 1024, Trench 1. While these fragments were orange-brown, there was no evidence of them being subjected to very high temperatures, such as vitrification of the clay or melted residues (as might result from metalworking); there was also no evidence of any finished surfaces. These fragments may be the remains of a hearth; however, they may also be daub, used in wattle-and-daub construction.

10.4 Fired clay

- 10.4.1 A single fragment of fired clay weighing 20.2g was recovered from the basal fill of ring ditch 1024, Trench 1. The fragment has two distinct colour layers, one of which is red-brown and has been subjected to high temperatures and direct heat; the other layer is pale brown and was presumably not in direct contact with heat. The clay fabric is mostly fine quartz sand with some large quartz, rock, and iron-rich inclusions. Three complete vessels dating to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age were also recovered from this deposit, along with charcoal.

10.5 Discussion

- 10.5.1 This was a small fired-clay assemblage, all of which was recovered from three fills of ring ditch 1024. The material was relatively undiagnostic, and it was not possible to infer what type of feature the material was original part of, and/or their function. The material provides limited information for site function or dating. There was no structural evidence associated with these fired clay finds, however, there was prehistoric pottery found in association with this material, which may suggest that it results from activity that took place around the same time.



11 LITHICS

Joshua Hogue

11.1 Introduction

- 11.1.1 In total, 59 worked flints, 1 burnt unworked flint, and 4 naturally broken/unmodified stones were recovered during excavations. None of the material could be confidently identified as being in situ and all were likely residual finds incorporated into later features. In amongst the assemblage were pieces characteristic of knapping strategies adopted in the Later Upper Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age.

11.2 Results

- 11.2.1 None of the flintwork appears to have been part of a single cohesive assemblage. Most of the assemblage had slight edge damage, characterised by isolated or small discontinuous nicks, consequently indicating that may have moved some distant from its original place of discard, albeit not necessarily particularly far.
- 11.2.2 There were distinct differences in the condition of the finds, with some flints exhibiting a slight patina, a slight speckling or 'milky' film on the surfaces, whilst others were heavily patinated with a distinctive white re-cortication entirely obscuring the colour of the flint. A distinction in the surface condition plausibly indicates that the flintwork had distinct depositional histories.
- 11.2.3 The raw materials were also relatively diverse, again suggesting a lack of coherency amongst the assemblage. A breakdown description of the raw materials is included in Table 15 of Appendix F. It includes a variety of flints and chert, diversity reflective of the heterogeneous lithologies available within the clay-with-flints accessible within the Wellington district, within the Wessex Basin, as well as quartz that outcrops in the bedrock geology (Scrivener et al. 2014).
- 11.2.4 The assemblage includes cores, debitage and retouched tools, indicating a diversity of activities from blank production to tool use, but due to the lack of chronological coherence amongst the assemblage it is not possible to more accurately describe the activities taking place during any given period. A description of the most characteristic elements of the assemblage is given below by trench, with further attribute data provided in the archive catalogue. It should be noted that although the handful of more diagnostic pieces dated to the Later Upper Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and/or Early Neolithic, most of the flintwork was generally more characteristic of knapping strategies adopted in the Later Neolithic and Bronze Age, with a high occurrence of features associated with the hard-hammer technique (e.g. bulb of percussion, no lip, hinged terminations).

11.3 Trench 1

- 11.3.1 A single platform core was recovered from (1029) of F01. It was conical in shape, had blade-like removals, and measured 30.7 x 32.9 x 22.2 mm. It was typo-technologically consistent with dating from the Mesolithic or Early Neolithic. An end-scrapers on a broken blade was recovered from the same feature and was likely broadly contemporary in age. It measured 27.1 x 21.3 x 4.7 mm. All three blades, two proximal



fragments and one distal fragment, recovered from the trench were also likely LUP, Mesolithic or Early Neolithic date. All were recovered from F01; however, one was more heavily patinated than the others and may indicate it was relatively old.

11.3.2 Most of the other material was less diagnostic, although there were some identifications that the assemblage also contained flints from the later Neolithic or Bronze Age. A retouched flake recovered from F01 and a retouched fragment from topsoil (1001), both had features commonly associated with hard-hammer percussion (e.g. pronounced bulb, hinged termination) and were broadly consistent with dating to Later Neolithic or Bronze Age. A bipolar flake was recovered from F10 and was indicative of bipolar reduction, a technique more typically associated with the Bronze Age, especially in the southwest, albeit not unknown in the LUP, Mesolithic or Neolithic (Ballin 2021, p.24).

11.4 Trench 2

11.4.1 A single undiagnostic flake fragment from topsoil was the only find recovered from Trench 2.

11.5 Trench 3

11.5.1 A leaf-shaped arrowhead was the only find of note in Trench 3. It was recovered from fill (3004) of F12. It had a slight break at the tip but was kite-shaped and classified as Green's type 2B. It measured 38.2 (45.5) x 22.9 x 5.4 mm. It was finely worked by invasive low sub-parallel retouch. It was more heavily patinated than most of the finds from the same feature, plausibly indicating that it was earlier in origin and had been later incorporated into the backfill of the feature. An age of c.2500-2000BC has been provided for this type of arrowhead (Green 1980), albeit others place these pieces within the later part of the Early Neolithic period (Ballin 2021, p. 27).

11.6 Trench 4

11.6.1 A curved backed point made on a plunging blade was recovered from fill (4012) of F01. It was of particular significance, likely dating from the Later Upper Palaeolithic (Ballin 2021, p.25). It was made on an opaque mid grey flint, distinct from the rest of the assemblage. It measured 47.1 x 11.4 x 12.3 mm.

11.7 Discussion

11.7.1 The lithic assemblage recovered during excavations represents a diverse collection of materials and techniques spanning multiple prehistoric periods, with notable evidence of activity from the Later Upper Palaeolithic/Mesolithic to the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Despite the lack of stratigraphic integrity and the residual nature of many finds, the assemblage provides some insights into past human activity in the region. However, the lack of cohesive chronological or functional context limits the scope for more precise interpretation.

11.7.2 The assemblage is characterized by a mixture of diagnostic and undiagnostic flintwork, including cores, blades, debitage, and retouched tools. The diagnostic elements span a wide temporal range.



- 11.7.3 Later Upper Palaeolithic/Mesolithic/Early Neolithic: The conical core and end-scrapers from Trench 1, along with blade fragments, suggest activity dating to this period. The curved-backed point from Trench 4 is particularly significant, typologically associated with the Later Upper Palaeolithic.
- 11.7.4 Neolithic/Bronze Age: The recovery of retouched flakes and fragments, some with features associated with hard-hammer percussion, suggests activity during the later Neolithic/Bronze Age, though these finds are less temporally specific. A leaf-shaped arrowhead from Trench 3 classified as Green's type 2B, reflects a formalized knapping tradition and may date to c.2500–2000 BC, though alternative interpretations place such tools within the later part of the Early Neolithic. A bipolar flake from Trench 1 is most likely indicative of Early Bronze Age reduction strategies.
- 11.7.5 The chronological range and diversity of the assemblage suggest sporadic, low-intensity activity at the site, with material deposited through a combination of primary and secondary processes. The residual nature of the assemblage complicates attempts to ascribe specific activities to any given period. The absence of clear stratigraphic integrity and the mixed depositional histories of the finds limit the interpretative value of the material.

12 REGISTERED FINDS

Dot Boughton and Richard Henry

12.1 Introduction

- 12.1.1 The registered finds that were not pottery were sent for assessment with Dot Boughton and then for further analysis with Richard Henry. This chapter combines both these reports into one.
- 12.1.2 A small assemblage of one ceramic and four iron registered finds (SFs) was recovered during the excavations. The iron and ceramic single finds (SF1, SF2, SF4, SF5, and SF6) were hand-collected from three contexts (4006), (4012), and (4017) on-site during the excavation (Table 17). The assessment of the five objects includes a discussion of their individual identification and date of production/use as well as an assessment of significance and recommendations for any further work.
- 12.1.3 The iron and ceramic small finds assemblage from Cothelstone Farm is made up of one ceramic object (SF2) and four iron objects (SF1, SF4, SF5 and SF6). The character of the assemblage can tentatively be identified as either intentional deposition or accidental loss. The ceramic object (SF2) is a spindle whorl of likely Late Iron Age/early Romano-British date which was discovered in the silting fill of a ditch and may have been an accidental loss whilst the iron objects – likely three knives and an awl or other tanged implement (SF1, SF4, SF5, and SF6) – were found in what has been interpreted by the excavators as shallow remnants of grave cuts. The preliminary report by DigVentures indicates that skeletal material recovery was extremely poor across much of the site; hence the lack of skeletal material in what was interpreted as graves.
- 12.1.4 The artefactual remains discussed in this assessment can be provisionally dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British or very early post-Roman period, likely 1st-5th centuries



AD. The ceramic spindle whorl (SF2) is probably the oldest object, likely dating from the Late Iron Age, when ceramic spindle whorls were most common. During the Roman period, spindle whorls were predominantly made from reused broken pottery fragments (amongst a small number of whorls made from other materials such as amber) whilst early medieval Anglo-Saxon whorls were usually made from natural materials: stone, bone, chalk, or rarely, amber or quartz.

- 12.1.5 The four iron objects are identified as knives; there was one fragmentary iron object (SF6) which was identified by the excavators as shroud pin, but identification as a small tool, perhaps an awl, or the tang of another knife seems more appropriate. Iron knives and knife blades are notoriously difficult to date: their shape and size did not change much from the Iron Age to the medieval period and often they can only be dated via their handles (material, shape and decoration). However, in this case, none of the handles have survived. The blades are in good condition, having been conserved prior to assessment.

12.2 Results

- 12.2.1 Four iron objects (SF1, SF4, SF5, SF6) and one ceramic object (SF2) were submitted for assessment. They all survive in fair to good condition; the iron finds were professionally conserved prior to assessment. However, SF4 and SF5 have broken into two and three fragments respectively with remnants of glue on the surfaces of the breaks. It is unclear if the breaks occurred before, during or after conservation. Even though conserved, the awl or tang fragment (SF6) survives in flaky condition with two slivers of ferrous material already flaked off the surface: it will need further conservation treatment. The ceramic object (SF2) is sturdy and survives without fragmentation or damage.

Ceramic (SF2)

- 12.2.2 The ceramic object was found in the middle silting fill of the ditch that sat above slumping fills which the excavators postulated had started forming after the nearby ring ditch went out of use. The object is a spindle whorl with a diameter of 37.5mm and a thickness/height of 20mm. It is generally of oval shape with one face slightly flattened, giving that side a slightly more conical shape. The central aperture has a diameter of 6mm. The distaff does not survive. Distaffs are often made from bone, wood or iron and rarely survive in the archaeological record (Owen-Crocker 2010, 274-275).
- 12.2.3 The shape and size of the spindle whorl from Cothelstone Farm strongly suggest that it is a spindle whorl of Walton Rogers Type B2 or D2 dating from the Iron Age to the early medieval period (Walton Rogers 2007, Fig 2.18). Walton Rogers suggests that amongst early medieval spindle whorls ceramic specimens are more common in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period rather than the later Anglo-Saxon or middle Saxon periods (Walton Rogers 2007, 25). Furthermore she argues that amongst the clay or ceramic spindle whorls those with a central aperture of 6mm or less are much more common in the Roman period and pre-Roman Iron Age (Walton Rogers 2007, 24) making it likely for the spindle whorl from Cothelstone Farm to predate the 5th century.

12.2.4 Baked clay or ceramic spindle whorls are more common than whorls made from other materials in the Iron Age of South West Britain (Cunliffe 2005, 453, 485-487, fig. 18.1) strongly suggesting that the spindle whorl found at Cothelstone Farm predates the Roman and post-Roman features and was a residual find most likely dating from the Later Iron Age. Generally, Roman ceramic or baked clay spindle whorls were fabricated from reused broken ceramic sherds rather than being made separately – they are known to have been made using most known Roman fabrics (Samian, Black-Burnished, colour-coated ware or amphorae) (Crummy 1987, 67). Furthermore, Owen-Crocker argues that the spindle whorls of the conversion period were usually made from natural materials such as stone, bone, chalk or, rarely, amber or quartz (Owen-Crocker 2007, 274-275; Walton Rogers in: Parfitt and Anderson 1988, 144-145). Thus, on the basis of probability, the ceramic spindle whorl from Cothelstone Farm was most likely residual, dating to the pre-Roman Later Iron Age.

Further analysis

12.2.5 A ceramic spindle whorl which is broadly oval in plan and broadly D shaped in cross section with one face slightly flattened (this is likely the top face). The perforation tapers from 6mm to 4mm narrowing towards the top and has been created by inserting an object from the bottom face. The distaff is missing.

12.2.6 As has been noted by Broughton (above paragraph 12.2.2) the spindle whorl is likely to be a Walton Rogers type B2 or D2 that dates from the Iron Age to the early-medieval period (Walton Rogers, 2007, Figure 2.18). The method of manufacture, diameter of the aperture to affix to the distaff and material suggests the spindle whorl was likely to have been produced in the late Iron Age or Early Roman period.

12.2.7 The spindle whorl was recovered from a ring ditch that had a number of basal and slumping gills followed by homogenous silting that represented gradual filling of the ditch over time. The object was recovered from (4012) which is the first of these silting fills. The site narrative notes that the second silting layer (4011) included Roman pottery supporting the suggestion of a late Iron Age or early Roman date for the manufacture of this object.

Iron (SF1, SF4, SF5, SF6)

12.2.8 Amongst the small finds assemblage from Cothelstone Farm were also four iron objects: three knives (SF1, SF4, SF5) and one iron fragment which has been identified by the excavators as a 'shroud pin' but may in actual fact be better identified either as a small tool (an awl) or the tang of a fourth knife. It has a flat rectangular cross section very similar in shape to the tangs on the other knives whereas cloth/shroud, clothes or hair pins generally have a circular cross section to avoid snagging and damaging or tearing the weave of the cloth.

12.2.9 The awl/tang (SF6) was found in the same context as SF4 and SF5: 4017, a feature which the excavators postulated is a grave. SF4 and SF5 are most certainly small knives used in the kitchen or during food preparation or consumption. This is also true for SF 1 from context 4006 which was recovered from a single event backfill material. SF4 and SF5 were discovered in the middle section of the hollow, suggesting that if they were part of a grave assemblage, they would have been attached to a belt or girdle.

However, without any skeletal or other organic remains present, the identification of the feature must remain speculative. It would be highly unusual – though not impossible by all means – to find a number of graves without grave goods or clothes attachments (brooches, buckles, pins or strap fittings) but with iron knives still attached to a woven or plaited girdle (unlikely a belt as no belt attachments were found). The knives were certainly not types of early medieval seax: generally, even the narrow seax is defined as having a blade longer than 174mm and a blade wider than 20mm (Bayliss, A. et al 2013, 194-195; see also West 1998, fig. 8.1).

12.2.10 The knives from Cothelstone Farm are 100mm, 130mm and 180mm in length respectively, but this is their entire length (blade and tang), not just the blade length. Furthermore, the shape and outline of the iron knives from Cothelstone Farm does not match any of the smaller seax types discussed by Bayliss et al (2013, figs. 5.119-5.121), making their identification as small knives for food production or consumption more likely than their identification as a seax or bladed weapon: they were too small to be effective weapons in combat. However, iron knives are very common finds in graves and other features from the Roman to the medieval period: in Anglo-Saxon graves they are slightly more common in male than female graves, but it is rare to find assemblages with two or more knives: it was most common to be buried with one small knife in the 6th-7th century AD (Bayliss et al 2013, 228). Small iron knives with more or less angled or rounded backs or angled tips are known from both Roman and (early) medieval contexts (Manning 1976, fig. 21, 121-6; Manning 1985, Plates 53-55; West 1998, figs. 78.11 and 79.1). Single finds of iron knives are difficult to date more precisely without other body accessories or grave goods, but generally, a late Roman or early post-Roman date for the knives from Cothelstone Farm is put forward in this assessment.

Further analysis – the knives (SF1, SF4, and SF5)

12.2.11 The three utilitarian knives are of a common form with relatively long blades with a straight back set slightly above the tang and an almost straight edge, which is stepped down from the tang and which slopes up at its end to meet the back in a pointed tip. The main typology for the Roman period was developed by William Manning, these examples appear to be Type 15 which are the most common knife type. In x-ray K24/66 the tip of the blade appears more angled than in K24/65 which might suggest a Type 17. The utilitarian nature of these objects is problematic in this instance as very similar examples to both Roman types also occur in the early-medieval period (Cf Babb, 1998, no. 51-54).

12.2.12 It is unfortunate that the human remains from the burials do not survive due to the acidic soils. The selection of graves goods allows for some tentative discussions on the potential date of the burials. Knives have been recovered from Roman and post-Roman burials in Britain. The absence of other goods such as buckles and other belt fittings or brooches suggests a late Roman date is less likely but this date cannot be discounted.

12.2.13 Assigning a date for the burials based on knives alone will always be problematic as they are a utilitarian item and a range of forms were deposited as grave goods at the extensive urban cemetery at Lankhills in Winchester, the vast majority of knives were deposited as part of a wider suite of graves goods which predominantly consist of

form of knife regularly seen is distinctive with a wider more oval blade (Clarke, 1979; Booth et al., 2010 such as Grave 1175; Cool, 2010). Further forms which fall into William Manning's typology of domestic knives include a Manning type 14 knife (from grave 1760) and a type 16 (from grave 1310).

12.2.14 758 graves were excavated at Lankhills by the Winchester Excavation Committee and subsequently by Oxford Archaeology. Of the many often elaborately furnished burials, only four had only a knife as the single grave good (Grave 1760 and 1805 from the Oxford Archaeology excavations as well as Grave 349 and Grave 418 from the Winchester Excavation Committee excavations). Knives tend to be part of a wider suite of material including late Roman belt fittings.

12.2.15 Ironwork, particularly Manning 1b nails, are a ubiquitous find from excavations of Roman sites across Britain. In the later fourth century the evidence suggests that the supply of raw materials is decreasing, and we see greater evidence of recycling and more selective disposal of ironwork archaeologically even in London and at the Saxon shore fort of Richborough (Rhodes, 1991; Fleming, 2012; Henry, 2020). At sites such as Poundbury which had a significant fourth and early fifth century cemetery ironwork becomes much scarcer in the fifth century and the prominence or importance of these objects arguably increases (Farwell and Molleson, 1993; Sparey-Green, 1996).

12.2.16 In this setting the selection of knives as the only form of grave good has a greater prominence in the post-Roman period. We have a limited number of potential parallels for cemeteries in the fifth and sixth centuries in the region but include Bradley Hill (Leech et al., 1981; Gerrard, 2005), Stoneage Barton Farm (Webster and Brunning, 2004) and Lamyatt Beacon (Leech, 1986) all in Somerset. These cemeteries do not have knives as recorded grave goods, but single knives do occur in post-Roman burials further afield include a number published by Babb (1998) from Buckinghamshire.

Further analysis – Knife tang / awl (SF6)

12.2.17 This iron fragment was identified as a potential shroud pin on site and a potential knife tang or awl by Broughton (2024) who noted that it was found in the same grave as SF4 and SF5. The tang of SF4 is missing, little further discussion can be added but it has potential to be the tang of SF4.

12.3 Discussion

12.3.1 Based on what can currently be observed, the iron objects are not strongly identifiable, but likely identification can be put forward based on their size, shape, occurrence of rivet holes and information gleaned from excavation report provided. Whilst the spindle whorl most likely dates from the Later Iron Age, the iron knives were probably late Roman, transitional or very early medieval in date, probably c5th century. However, determining their exact dating and date of deposition is difficult due to the lack of other datable finds (organic and inorganic) and skeletal material from the site in general and their contexts in particular. Nevertheless, if they are part of the local post Roman-to-early medieval transitional period, their archaeological potential is considerable and should be investigated further. It is likely that the contexts at Cothelstone Farm are comparable to (and can be interpreted similarly) to the later prehistoric and Roman-British sites at Fosse Way and Cannards Grave, both Shepton

Mallet, and Bradley Hill, Somerset, were similar less well-furnished graves and contexts were discovered (Birbeck, V. 2000; Moscrop 2001, Gerrard 2004).

13 ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

13.1 Flotation

Introduction

13.1.1 Eleven bulk environmental samples (140 litres of sediment in total) were taken during the excavations. All eleven samples yielded flots, which were sorted and assessed in September 2024. This report presents the results of sample processing, including a list of items recovered from the heavy fractions and an assessment of environmental remains recovered from the heavy fractions, light fractions and handpicked material micro excavated from a complete ceramic vessel.

13.1.2 A range of artefactual, faunal and environmental remains were present in the residues and flots derived from the soil samples, as summarised in Table 18. Material from residues is presented in Table 19, and that present in flots is detailed in Table 20.

Results

Charred plant remains

13.1.3 In total, 4 charred plant remains were recovered from flots (Table 20). Context 1025 and Samples 21, 23 and 26 yielded single indeterminate cereal grains (*Cerealia* indet.). A single charred indeterminate rachis segment was recovered from Sample 23. The single charred grains recovered from Samples 21 and 26 can be tentatively identified as ?oat (cf. *Avena* sp.) and ?wheat (cf. *Triticum* sp.) (Table 21). Four fragments of charred hazelnut (*Corylus avellana*) shell were recovered from Sample 23 (Table 21).

Uncharred plant remains

13.1.4 Six uncharred plant remains were recovered from Context 1025 and Samples 23 and 26 (Table 20). The list of plant remains from this sample was sparse and included weedy vegetation, fat hen (n=3 *Chenopodium album*) and grasses (n=3 *Poaceae*) (Table 21).

Charcoal

13.1.5 A total of 790 fragments of charcoal (measuring >2mm) weighing 101.11g were recovered from the heavy residues, flots and handpicked material (Table 22). These were recovered from Contexts 4012, 1025, 1028 and 1026, and Sample 23 from the heavy residues; and Contexts 1025 and 1027, and Samples 21, 23 and 26 from the flots and handpicked material. The >2mm charcoal will allow for surface breakage to consider species identification and therefore may be considered as potential samples for radiocarbon dating, if required. Several roundwood fragments were present in the charcoal assemblage that are most suitable for submission.



- 13.1.6 Microcharcoal measuring <2mm was present in flots from all contexts and from the handpicked material (Sample 26; abundance, e). The microcharcoal fragments were abraded, in poor condition and not of sufficient size for wood species identification, therefore none of the microcharcoal is suitable for radiocarbon dating.

Discussion

- 13.1.7 The fills from a ring ditch in Trench 1 (1025, 1026, 1027 and 1028) contained charcoal and a single charred, indeterminate cereal grain that may be interpreted as being derived from a domestic context, with the assemblage accumulating, or being discarded in the ditch. Two seeds and a single floret identified as belonging to the family of grasses (Poaceae) and a single fat hen seed (*Chenopodium album*) were also recovered from these contexts, which may be modern inclusions. The charcoal and single charred grain are suitable for radiocarbon dating; however, there remains the possibility that the material is residual.
- 13.1.8 The fills from a ring ditch in Trench 4 (4012, 4019 and 4029) contained comminute and small fragments of charcoal that was in poor condition. The material had abraded edges, suggesting there has been some post-depositional movement.
- 13.1.9 Sample 21 contained comminute and small fragments of poorly preserved charcoal along with some larger fragments (>2mm), which may represent discarded domestic waste. A single charred cereal grain, possibly ?oat (cf. *Avena* sp.) was also present in Sample 21; however, its preservation was poor due to charring and the grain could not be confidently identified.
- 13.1.10 Sample 23 contained an accumulation of domestic waste including charcoal, a single charred grain and 4 fragments of charred hazelnut (*Corylus avellana*) shell. A single weed seed (likely a modern inclusion) identified as fat hen (*Chenopodium album*) was also present. The single charred grain and fragments of hazelnut shell provide limited information regarding the past use of the site and human diet due to the paucity of material.
- 13.1.11 A similar assemblage was recovered from the flot of Sample 26, which represented material micro excavated from a complete vessel. The flot included comminute and small fragments of poorly preserved charcoal, along with larger fragments of charcoal (>2mm) and a single charred cereal grain. The preservation of the cereal grain was poor due to charring and has been tentatively identified as ?wheat (cf. *Triticum* sp.). This assemblage of material is indicative of discarded domestic waste.

Conclusions

- 13.1.12 The overall preservation of the archaeobotanical remains was fair/poor. The >2mm charcoal from Contexts 1025 and 1027, and Samples 21, 23 and 26; and the charred cereal grains from Context 1025 and Sample 21, 23 and 26 has the potential to provide sufficient material for radiocarbon dating should this be desirable; however, the condition of the remains suggests there may have been some post-depositional movement, and the material may exhibit a degree of residuality. The presence of charcoal suggests that burning activities were taking place at, or in the vicinity of, the site such as domestic hearths. Wood species identification may contribute to an

understanding of tree species accessible, and exploited by the community that once occupied the site.

13.1.13 In terms of plants cultivated for food or other purposes, the assemblage contained only sparse evidence. Cultivated cereal species included ?oat (n=1 cf. *Avena* sp.), ?wheat (n=1 *Triticum* sp.) and a fragmentary indeterminate grain (n=1). The recovery of single grains from a context that is as yet undated, precludes further interpretation. Gathered food items included hazelnuts, a common source of food throughout history.

13.1.14 The presence of uncharred seeds belonging to weed/wildflower and grasses are indicative of cultivated and open grassland environments at, or in the vicinity of the site in more recent times. The material was most likely introduced into these contexts by bioturbation, further suggested by the presence of modern roots in all sampled contexts.

13.2 Charcoal

Introduction

13.2.1 Wood charcoal (1080 fragments weighing 76.1g) and three fragments of charred hazelnut shell were recovered from eight bulk environmental samples taken during the excavation. This section includes quantification of the assemblage recovered with identification at species level where possible, and an assessment of significance.

Results

13.2.2 Wood charcoal (1080 fragments weighing 76.1g) and three fragments of charred hazelnut shell were recovered from eight bulk environmental samples (Table 23). One hundred and twenty fragments of charcoal were fractured to attempt woods species identification, of which 74 were identified, Table 24.

13.2.3 A maximum of seven possible species or groups of wood charcoal were identified, with common hazel (*Corylus avellana*) being the most frequently represented species within the wood charcoal as well as the charred remains of hazelnut shell being recovered, Table 24. Wood charcoal from willow (*Salix* sp.) or poplar (*Populus* sp.) could not be differentiated due to the similarities in their microscopic structures, but wood from one or both of these trees formed the second most frequently identified group, Table 24. Nine fragments were identified as oak (*Quercus* sp.), seven as one or more trees of the *Prunus* genus (plum/cherry genus), two as English ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), one as birch (*Betula* sp.) and one as possible common elder (*Sambucus nigra*). Both heart wood and round wood were present, with roundwood being most common.

13.2.4 Preservation was variable between the samples, with material from the ring ditch (F01, contexts 1025, 1026, 1027, 1028 and 4012) being especially fragile and, on occasion, crumbling when fracturing for identification was attempted; wood charcoal from these contexts was also affected by iron-rich burial conditions with oxidised residues occurring internally affecting attempts to identify wood species.

13.2.5 Roundwood charcoal suitable for radiocarbon dating was present in all samples except that from context 1027, Table 23. The abundance of roundwood indicates that smaller

branches and twigs formed a large proportion of the wood burned and subsequently preserved as charcoal at the site. These types of remains may result from the use of small branches and twigs as kindling, the burning of old wattle

Ring ditch F01

- 13.2.6 All of the wood charcoal was recovered from fills of a ring ditch (F01), contexts (1025), (1026), (1027), and (1028) in Trench 1 and context (4012) in Trench 4; samples <21> and <26> were the fills of two Late Bronze Age pots recovered from context 1025, SF10 and SF11, respectively, Table 23. The lower fills of this feature appear to represent activity in the later prehistoric period based on Late Bronze Age pottery and Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age radiocarbon dates (contexts 1025 and 1026), while the upper fills contain pottery dating to the Roman period (contexts 4012).

Discussion

- 13.2.7 The charcoal from the two lower fill of the ring ditch (context 1025 and 1026) as well as that from inside the late Bronze Age ceramic vessel from context 1025 is likely associated with later prehistoric period activity in the Late Bronze Age and/or Early Iron Age. The species recorded in these contexts are consistent with those expected resulting from activity during these periods, with hazel and oak being particularly common in wood charcoal and waterlogged wood assemblages dated to these time periods (Smith 2002, 23).
- 13.2.8 All of the seven groups identified have been recorded previously within charcoal and/or waterlogged wood assemblages for this time period (op. cit.), and represent species considered native to the British Isles. The abundance of roundwood indicates that smaller branches and twigs formed a large proportion of the wood burned and subsequently preserved as charcoal at the site. These types of remains may result from the use of small branches and twigs as kindling, or perhaps the burning of old wattle, which would be consistent with the high frequency of hazel and willow/poplar identified as species well suited to weaving.
- 13.2.9 The charred hazelnut shells could result from a range of activities and/or processes. The hazelnut fruit of the common hazel could have been collected whilst still attached to branches and become burnt through incidental inclusion with firewood; if this could be confirmed this would provide evidence for season of activity at the site as hazelnuts would only be ripe on the tree in late summer. However, it would be impossible to confirm that this was the case, and the shells could easily result from human collection, consumption and discard of the inedible shell in fires as a means of disposal or could have become burnt as a result of drying accidents as people prepared the nuts for longer-term storage. Alongside hazel being the most frequently recorded species within the wood charcoal assemblage the hazelnut shells support their being hazel dominated woodland at or close to the site during the later-prehistoric period
- 13.2.10 The species recorded in the charcoal from the lower fills of the ring ditch are broadly consistent with those recovered from the upper fills, suggesting some continuity in the species of trees growing locally. Again, the species recorded in the contexts with Roman pottery are as expected for the Roman period in Britain (Smith 2002), including other sites in Somerset (e.g., Metcalfe and Levy 1977; Metcalfe and Richardson 1977).

- 13.2.11 The charcoal recovered from Cothelstone Farm provides an insight into wood use and the woodland environment within the vicinity of the site during the later prehistoric and Roman periods. The data recorded for charcoal from later prehistoric contexts is sufficient to allow comparison with that recovered from contemporary sites within the region and ring ditch sites nationally.

Further discussion

Nat Jackson

- 13.2.12 Within the charcoal assessment (above Section 13.2.1-9) it was recommended that further work be carried out on the specific use of different wood types seen in the assemblage and to place them in their wider chronological and geographic context. The most prevalent species identified at Cothelstone and over half the identifiable assemblage was common hazel and hazelnut shell. The hazel may be indicative of managed woodland (Smith 2002, p23). Coppiced hazel was used for wattle in wattle and daub structures, and basket weaving. The second most common wood seen in the charcoal assemblage was poplar/willow. This again would have been used for construction.
- 13.2.13 Oak was recovered from the basal fill of the ditch F01 (1025) and from samples recovered from pot fills of SF10 and SF11. It is likely that the oak was being brought in specifically for ritual use. Oak found in a cemetery ditch at Cowleaze, Dorset, was linked to the barrow 'structure and cremation ritual at the time of the cemetery usage' (Carruthers and Thomas, 1991, 114). This may also be the case at Cothelstone. The other wood species recovered are indicative of a scrubbier environment rather than dense woodland, this may be due to increased deforestation and farming by the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age periods.

13.3 Pollen

Introduction

- 13.3.1 A total of three samples were submitted by DigVentures for pollen assessment. The three samples derived from a ring ditch feature [1024] excavated in Trench 1, in which artefacts including pottery, charcoal and fragments of burnt bone were encountered towards the base of the feature. Sampling focussed on sedimentary deposits surrounding a number of pots, including SF8, that were believed to have been intentionally placed on the base of the ditch not long after it was first opened. At the time of writing, it was believed that a single sample was taken from the sediments that surrounded the pottery (1025), in addition to further samples from sediments overlying the deposit (1026 and 1028), which were believed to be associated with a series of silting and tipping fills that took place after the pots have been placed within the ditch. With regards the chronology of the archaeological features, the pottery has been tentatively dated on site as Romano-British and as such it is assumed the ring ditch feature also dates to this period.
- 13.3.2 Provisional pollen assessments were commissioned in order to evaluate whether pollen is preserved in sufficient abundance and diversity within the samples. If so, the

assessment will infer whether the pollen assemblages can inform landscape conditions that prevailed during the development of the sedimentary archives.

Results

- 13.3.3 In relation to the contexts under provisional palynological assessment, pollen preservation was found to be very poor in all samples under consideration, whilst pollen abundance and diversity was similarly low in all samples. A summary of the pollen and spores encountered within each of the three samples is summarised in Table 26. Due to the relatively restricted nature of the assemblages encountered, brief summaries of the assemblages encountered will be provided below.

(1025)

- 13.3.4 The sample derived from the deposits surrounding the pottery remains contained a very restricted assemblage, with only eight pollen grains in total being encountered during the assessment. These were restricted to occasional grains derived from herbs and shrubs, with no tree pollen encountered. The pollen present included occasional grains of Lactuceae (e.g. dandelions), *Corylus-Myrica* type (hazel or sweetgale) and isolated grains of Cyperaceae (sedges) and Poaceae (wild grasses). Aquatic pollen was absent from the sample. Spores were relatively common within the sample, with *Pteropsida* (monolete) *undif.* (ferns) most frequently encountered, in addition to occasional spores of *Polypodium* (polypody) and *Peridium* (bracken).

- 13.3.5 Supporting microfossil information was restricted. Charcoal appeared to be present in abundance, whilst the majority of grains displayed evidence of surface corrosion to suggest post-depositional alteration of the pollen archive. Grains were also often crumpled, whilst many of the spores of *Pteropsida* (monolete) *undif.* were broken; such preservation features may allude to taphonomic issues, such as transportation into the depositional setting.

(1026)

- 13.3.6 The sample derived from the lowermost stratigraphic units that overlay the pottery within Trench 1 contained a similarly restricted assemblage, with only 16 pollen grains in total being encountered during the assessment. These were predominantly species of herbs, with a slightly greater floral diversity than that encountered within (1025). The assemblage included occasional grains of Poaceae, Cyperaceae, Lactuceae and *Sambucus* type (e.g. elderberry). In addition, isolated grains of Poaceae (>37µm) (grasses with grain diameters exceeding 37microns), Asteraceae *undif.* (e.g. daisies), *Cirsium* type (thistles), Caryophyllaceae (e.g. pinks) and *Plantago undif.* (plantains) were present. A single grain of *Corylus-Myrica* type was also observed. Aquatics are once again absent, whilst a more restricted spore assemblage was present, including occasional spores of *Pteropsida* (monolete) *undif.*, *Polypodium* and *Peridium*.

- 13.3.7 Supporting microfossil information was once again restricted. Charcoal appeared relatively abundant, whilst the majority of grains displayed evidence of surface corrosion to suggest post-depositional alteration of the pollen archive. Grains were also often crumpled, which may allude to taphonomic issues, such as transportation into the depositional setting.



(1028)

- 13.3.8 The sample derived from one of the uppermost stratigraphic units under investigation yielded a similarly restricted assemblage, with only 16 pollen grains in total being encountered during the assessment. These were predominantly species of herbs, with a single grain of *Betula* (birch) also encountered. The herbs present were typified by Poaceae, including occasional grains of Poaceae ($>37\mu\text{m}$), Cyperaceae and a single grain of Lactuceae. Aquatics are once again absent, whilst only occasional spores were present, including *Pteropsida* (monoete) *undif.*, *Peridium* and a single spore of Sphagnum (moss).
- 13.3.9 Supporting microfossil information was limited. Charcoal once again appeared relatively abundant, and isolated ascospores of *Podospora* sp (HdV368) and testate amoebae were also encountered. Grains once again displayed evidence of surface corrosion to suggest post-depositional alteration of the pollen archive. Grains were also often crumpled, which may allude to taphonomic issues, such as transportation into the depositional setting.

Discussion

- 13.3.10 The following comments are based on assessment level pollen counts and as a result, any provisional interpretations must be treated with caution. For interpretations to be deemed reliable, full analysis would be required. However, the overall very restricted assemblages observed throughout the three samples derived from ring ditch [1024] would suggest such further analyses would not be of palaeoenvironmental value.
- 13.3.11 The overall absence of pollen within the selected samples, combined with the poor level of preservation (evidenced through of grain/spore surface corrosion, crumpling or fragmentation), suggests the biochemical and mechanical alteration of the pollen archive and as such it is highly likely that, if pollen was indeed present within the archive during the development of the various contexts, much of the pollen has since been destroyed through post-depositional processes. Biochemical alteration (indicated through grain/spore corrosion) suggests in-situ degradation of the archive, whilst the crumpling and/or fragmentary nature of some of the grains and spores would suggest some level of transportation prior to deposition within the ditch feature. This understandably makes any interpretations of such a limited set of assemblages tenuous at best.
- 13.3.12 The majority of grains encountered are derived from herbs, which may suggest an open landscape at the time of deposition (assuming the assemblage is indeed a fair reflection of the original pollen archive). Isolated large wild grasses were occasionally encountered, which could be grains of cereal pollen. However, the level of crumpling hinders any grain dimensions from being reliably measured to confirm this interpretation. Isolated ascospores of *Podosira* sp were encountered within the uppermost sample (1028), which are coprophilous fungi often believed to relate to the presence of herbivore dung.



14 PUBLIC IMPACT

Anna van Nostrand

14.1 Introduction

14.1.1 This section details the social impact of the community excavations at Cothlestone Farm delivered by DigVentures on behalf of the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme (QLPS) for project participants and visitors over three weeks from 25 May to 9 June 2024. DigVentures defines social impact as a measure of the positive and negative primary and secondary long-term effects produced by the programme, whether directly or indirectly, intended or unintended, over and above what would have happened in the absence of the project initiative. Results were analysed using a bespoke social impact methodology, drawing on DigVentures' Theory of Change and Standards of Evidence framework (Wilkins 2019; 77; Wilkins 2019: 30).

14.1.2 Public engagement was integral to the aims of the QLPS project and the community dig, guided site tours and finds laboratory sessions were designed by DigVentures to meet the aim to 'increase the capacity and skills of the volunteer base working in the area and to give more, and more diverse people opportunities to contribute' (Landscape Conservation Action Plan; Part 1: 7) through.

While the Quantock Hills AONB and parishes that make up the LPS are relatively affluent, a high proportion of areas in the surrounding towns fall into the 30% most deprived areas in England with four areas in the towns of Taunton and Bridgwater falling into the top 10% most deprived (Landscape Conservation Action Plan; Part 1: 65-7). The project therefore presented an opportunity to help address some of the social and educational needs of the surrounding communities, based on the principle that archaeology can do so much more than answer a planning brief: it can transform lives and communities and provide the kind of public support that underpins positive, sustainable growth (Wilkins 2020: 33).

14.2 Public programming

14.2.1 A carefully designed programme of public participation was planned for the course of the three-week project, creating different levels of engagement for adults and young people. Participation and training of participants in the trench and the finds room were serviced to National Occupational Standards.

- Excavation training for adults (24th May until 9th June) – 59 participants
- Finds room training for adults (4th 5th 8th and 9th June) – 12 participants
- Guided tours on (8th June) – 41 bookings
- Three 'DigCamps' for children (aged 6-11) and parents (26th and 29th May, 10th June) – 30 participants
- 'DigClub' for teenagers (aged 12-16) and parents (31st May) – 11 participants
- Two Young Archaeologist Club sessions (6th June) - 20 participants
- Digital engagement strategy for participants



14.3 Digital engagement strategy

- 14.3.1 DigVentures' digital engagement strategy for the excavation was designed to keep its core audience up to date and provide opportunities to get a detailed look at what was happening on site. This was achieved through regular progress updates by email, and a 'live blog' on the Dig Timeline <https://digventures.com/projects/cothelstone-farm/timeline/>. Updates on the the DigVentures live feed, the Cothelstone Farm Community Excavation live feed and the Cothelstone Farm Community Excavation project page were viewed a total of 1,962 times during the time the excavation was promoted to the public.
- 14.3.2 The excavation was covered by BBC Somerset both as a radio piece and in an article: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c988n19q0pjo>. The project was also featured during an edition of the BBC Points West regional television news show, with reporters visiting site to capture a recorded piece.
- 14.3.3 Whilst these results demonstrate a public appetite for the Cothelstone excavation, any evaluation of social impact needs to go beyond a list of output numbers of participants and visitors (Gould 2016). DigVentures has developed a bespoke evaluation methodology for measuring the social impact of public archaeology programmes and this is discussed in specific relation to this project below.

14.4 Evaluation methodology

- 14.4.1 DigVentures have developed a methodology for measuring the social impact of archaeology programmes for participants, pictured as a Theory of Change detailing outputs, outcomes and impacts (Figure 33). In this framework, social impact can be conceived as the difference that activities make to people's lives over and above what would have happened in the absence of that initiative. Outputs are a measurable unit of product or service, such as a community excavation; outcomes are an observable change for individuals or communities, such as acquiring skills or knowledge. Impact is therefore the effect on outcomes attributable to the output, measured against two metrics: scale, or breadth of people reached; and depth, or the importance of this impact on their lives.
- 14.4.2 The credibility of a Theory of Change rests on the level of certainty that organisational activities are the cause of this change. In order for this certainty to be achieved, the correct data must be collected to isolate the impact to the intervention. The DV Theory of Change is therefore linked to a Standards of Evidence framework designed to articulate and highlight the causal links between activity and change (Figure 32). These tools are then used to create an evaluation table linking activities, outputs, outcomes and evidence base.
- 14.4.3 In support of this overarching methodology, slightly different data collection strategies were undertaken for excavation participants and site tour audiences; all adult participants complete a questionnaire as part of the booking process (100% completion rate or 77 in total) and then participants are interviewed on-site about their experience (75% completion rate, or 58 in total). Data for Dig Club and Dig Camp participants who are minors consist of age group, student status (100% completion rate or 25 in total) and on-site experience survey (52% or 13 in total). Tour audiences

only complete the booking questionnaire (100% completion rate, or 41 in total). The age, pronouns and professional background of participants were derived through digital analytics, with categories derived from the Office for National Statistics, followed by more in-depth analysis designed to reveal 'whether or not people will have learnt about heritage, developed skills, changed their attitudes and/or behaviour, and had an enjoyable experience'. Questionnaires combined closed-end questions easily convertible to statistical data (usually attitudinal questions) and open-ended questions designed to elicit extended responses which were then coded for statistical analysis or otherwise consolidated in order to address the observable implications. The social impact results for both groups are discussed in turn below, with evidence organised according to the specific social outcome that activities were designed to achieve. Due to the format of the activities and the fact that the Young Archaeologists Club bookings were made through their group leader, participant information for the YAC groups is limited to participant numbers.

14.5 Social impact – in-person participants

- 14.5.1 The focus of the community excavation at Cothelstone Farm was to get people involved in their local heritage and broaden the typical audience for archaeology and heritage projects. To ensure that a wide range of people will be involved in archaeology, different groups of people were invited to actively participate in the excavation and take part in recording and finds processing.
- 14.5.2 Participation on the excavation was free of charge and to help decrease perceived barriers to participation, adults and teenagers over 12 who crowdfunded the project, could take part for any length of time starting from a taster day and culminating in two or three entire weeks, depending on their availability. Accessible half-day DigCamp sessions were offered to children between 6 and 11 years and accompanying guardians to give them a taste of the work happening in the trench. DigClub sessions for teenagers lasted for 5 hours, which was a slightly shorter day than that of the adults. All training followed DigVentures' ClfA-endorsed Field School curriculum.
- 14.5.3 A larger proportion of people who use female pronouns joined the excavation with 69% preferring she/her pronouns and 25% preferring he/him pronouns (see Figure 29). The age of participants ranged from children aged 6 to one participant aged over 75 with Figure 29 showing that 32% of participants or 32 in total were under age 35. This mainly reflects the DigCamp and DigClub sessions making archaeology accessible to this younger age group. Apart from the 17-24 and 75-84 age groups which each had a single participant, each of the age groups from ages 6-12 to 75-84 was well represented, with representation ranging from 6%-18% of participants showing this excavation was attractive to people of all ages.
- 14.5.4 Participants represented a variety of full-time occupations (46%) and retirees (14%). The remainder were students, either of compulsory educational age or those attending university (27%), Carers, Homemakers or Volunteers (10%) or people in long-term unemployment (1%). Those in full time employment were divided into categories based on the Office of National Statistics (ONS) classifications, the breakdown of which can be seen in Figure 29 which illustrates that excavation opportunities were taken up by people with a variety of socioeconomic classifications. Examples of professions included Accountant, Carpenter, Drug Manufacturer, Farmer, Geospatial Specialist,



HR Manager, Labourer, Mechanical Engineer, Nurse, Pilates Instructor, Sales, Teacher, and Vet. Taking this into consideration, all age groups and socio-economic backgrounds (apart from routine and semi-routine professions) were represented in the data, with a marked improvement on existing community archaeology provision compared with the typically retired, over age 65 local civic society groups (Wilkins 2020, 33) (Figure 29).

- 14.5.5 Local residents were the main target audience for participation. Places on the excavation were advertised through the existing Quantocks Landscape Partnership networks and then through DigVentures to fill additional availability. This method was successful in reaching a hyper local audience (See Figure 29). 35% of respondents or 27 individuals lived within 10 miles of the site. A further 9 participants or 11% of respondents lived within 15 miles of site. 19% or 15 individuals travelled between 20 and 30 miles to participate, 10 participants (13%) travelled between 30 and 40 miles and just 5 individuals (6%) travelled more than 40 miles to participate in the excavation.
- 14.5.6 As part of the booking process, all project participants were asked why they had decided to get involved in an archaeology project to provide a baseline understanding against which the impact of the experience could be determined through post-experience interviews. Participants answered in their own words, and the responses were coded into 12 categories.
- 14.5.7 The results show that almost 35% of respondents described themselves as having 'always enjoyed watching/ reading about archaeology' and embraced the opportunity to finally get hands-on with their interest. A further 4% of said that it was Time Team that had specifically influenced their desire to be involved with archaeology. 4% of respondents were prospective archaeology students or able to tick this experience off their bucket list. In contrast, 3% of respondents said that it was the teamwork and camaraderie that drew them to the project rather than the archaeology and 3% of participants joined a friend or family member who was interested in the project, but they did not have pre-existing interest in archaeology themselves (See Figure 29) This shows that while the main reason people joined the excavation was to be involved with the archaeology, others found a purely social benefit
- 14.5.8 21% of participants stated that they joined the project because they 'enjoy being actively involved in archaeology' and 12% of participants took part because they had a 'special interest in the project'. These are likely to be previous participants in Quantocks Landscape Partnership Scheme excavations and people with a connection to the local area. 14% of participants who joined said they did so because of a recommendation from somebody else. This speaks to the positive experiences that people have had as a result of other QLPS or DigVentures projects and events.
- 14.5.9 Post-experience 'exit' interviews were also undertaken with participants, indicating how initial perceptions of archaeology may have changed and providing evidence for wider social outcomes, such as learning, skills acquisition and well-being. Participants were asked to summarise their highlight of the project in their own words, with responses then codified into 9 categories to visualise the results (Figure 29). The most important consideration for 44% of participants was the experience of real archaeology, and the opportunity to get hands-on experience. Closely related to the

experience of real archaeology was the 'thrill of discovery' for 14% of participants, indicating a positive emotional reaction to the process of excavation.

14.5.10 Five individuals (5%) stated that the quality of teaching on the excavation and their experience with the DigVentures staff gave them the most value - indicating a positive experience for participants. 6% of respondents described the teamwork and camaraderie or watching their child or companion participate as the highlight of their experience, illustrating a powerful positive side product of taking part in archaeology (Figure 29). A closer assessment of interviewees answers (often elicited through follow up questions) reveals that in addition to having a good time (such as "I just love it!"), more subtle impacts could be clearly discerned.

14.5.11 Further analysis of participant responses indicates that many of the participants felt that the community excavation at Cothlestone Farm provided a unique opportunity to be a part of; Rachel, a 31-year-old Pilates instructor, said she "never thought [she would] get to do something like this" and she was happy to be able to bring her son along saying "[he] is really interested so it's been nice seeing him broaden his horizons." A DigCamp participant expressed "I just like digging in the dirt, I don't ever get to do anything like this." This demonstrates that the project achieved the QLPS goal of "giving more people opportunities to contribute" (Landscape Conservation Action Plan; Part 1: 7). Participants also expressed that they were happy to have learned something new. Emily, a 58-year-old carer said "I feel really privileged to have been able to take part and I hope that we can do more." Similarly, Sara (42) said "learning stuff I hadn't done before was really good!" this demonstrates that the project was successful in meeting the QLPS outcome of "[increasing] capacity and skills of the volunteer base working in the area" (Landscape Conservation Action Plan; Part 1: 7). These responses also show success in reaching the outcomes: "A wider range of people will be involved in archaeology and heritage" and "people will have learnt about heritage" within the DigVentures Theory of Change.

14.5.12 Several participants described the positive benefit of sharing an experience with likeminded people. Jacqui a 66-year-old administrator said "I really enjoyed being with other people who like the same things as me" Krista, a 67-year-old children's author said she relished "the camaraderie, the group experience and enthusiasm of the dig." This demonstrates a positive experience that resulted from the opportunity to participate in archaeology as well as reaching the outcome: "people will have greater wellbeing" within the DigVentures theory of change. Participants also expressed that excavating burials made them feel a particularly strong connection with the history. Sam (49) said "You realise that it's someone's last resting place. It's a sobering and enriching experience." Kit (54) felt "the graves were really emotional. It's that connection to people who were buried there but their remains have gone." These thoughts demonstrate the outcome: "people will have learnt about heritage, leading to changes in ideas and actions"

14.5.13 Participants also expressed an excitement in learning new things about their local area and a desire to remain involved. Jane a 55-year-old retiree said "It was amazing to see the graves I think they're early medieval and I'm going to enjoy following along online as you find out what they are" This demonstrates the achievement of the outcome that "heritage will be identified, interpreted and better explained" through the excavation and post excavation analysis and dissemination of results.

14.6 Social impact – Community – site tour

- 14.6.1 Alongside structured activities for project participants, site tours were provided at the end of the excavation as an opportunity for members of the wider public to talk to and interact with the team, and to see what had been discovered. Attendees completed a booking form to attend.
- 14.6.2 By analysing the responses on the booking survey we can see that there was a reasonably even split of gender identity between preferring she/her pronouns (54% or 22 individuals) and he/him pronouns (41% or 17 individuals). All professional categories (according to ONS classifications) were also represented including; accountant, cleaner, delivery driver, farmer, geologist, museum conservator, office manager and teacher (Figure 30).
- 14.6.3 78% (n=32) of people who booked the tour stated that this was their first time participating in archaeology. 20% of participants or 8 individuals stated that they had been involved with archaeology through other organisations and 1 participant had previously participated in archaeology through DigVentures (Figure 30). When asked about their motivation for attending the tour, 70% of participants said they booked because they enjoy watching or reading about archaeology, enjoy being actively involved in it or that it is on their bucket list. 10% of participants stated that they booked because of a special interest in the area or the project. 7% of participants stated they joined due to a recommendation from somebody else and the remaining 5 participants joined for a variety of reasons including that they wanted to support DigVentures, they were an archaeology student, or they were accompanying someone else (Figure 30).
- 14.6.4 Site tour attendees were almost entirely from the immediate vicinity of the site with 71% of tour participants saying they visited from within 10 miles. 6 people (14%) travelled between 10 and 20 miles to attend the site tour and 3 (7%) people travelled between 20 and 30 miles to visit the site (Figure 30).

14.7 Conclusions

- 14.7.1 Structured through a Theory of Change, the evidence presented here shows significant impact for both individual participants and community visitors as a result of the community excavation at Cothlestone Farm. The project attracted a diverse community of people within the local community to explore and investigate the heritage the Quantock Hills Landscape in a new and different way. Evaluation shows that the project tackled the social and educational needs of the surrounding communities and was a success for public engagement. A high number of locals was engaged with archaeology and individuals gained a deeper connection to their heritage, as well as ownership of their involvement in the excavation. This project improved participants' skills and understanding of the discipline, and provided a new opportunity for local visitors to the site – 70% of whom had never been involved with archaeology before.
- 14.7.2 The credibility of a Theory of Change rests on the level of certainty that organisational activities are the cause of any impact observed. To address this DigVentures has developed a 'Standards of Evidence' framework drawing on evidential standards



devised by Nesta. This framework determines the levels of certainty that project activities will have a positive impact on the intended outcome, ensuring that the correct data is collected to isolate the impact to the intervention, and that findings are validated externally.

- 14.7.3 This framework begins with Level 1, where practitioners are able to give an account of hypothesised impact, providing a logical reason why project activities could have an impact on outcomes, and how that would be an improvement on alternative provision. For a project to achieve Level 2 practitioners gather data that shows some change amongst participants, but this may not be sufficient to provide evidence of direct causality. At Level 3 practitioners will be able to demonstrate that they are causing the hypothesised impact, by showing less impact amongst those who don't participate in the project or receive the product/service. Progressing to Level 4 and practitioners can explain why and how the project is having the impact observed, with results potentially independently verified. Finally, at Level 5 the project methodology is robust and well-evidenced enough to be scaled up and operated by other teams or organisations, whilst continuing to have positive and direct impact on the outcome and remaining a financially viable proposition.
- 14.7.4 The Project offered different activity streams for participants and visitors, and as such, can be seen to have reached differing levels on the standards of evidence framework (level 1 for community and level 3 for participant impact). Evidence was collected for project participants indicating a change as a consequence of project activities (level 2), however, impact for participants was additionally established through a pre-and post-experience survey showing a significant improvement on similar data for other local archaeological society groups (Wilkins 2020, 33). Training activities were also independently accredited through ClfA – an independent body – ensuring that impact evidence for participants can be assigned to level 3. By allowing volunteers to join for as short or long as they were able, creating opportunities for children and families and by offering tours for the public we were able to attract a diverse audience for different levels of engagement with the community excavation.
- 14.7.5 The insights gained from this evaluation have established a clear community need and demand for more archaeological work in the Quantocks Landscape and should assist with the impactful design and funding applications for any future activities.

15 ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION

15.1 Introduction

- 15.1.1 Four trenches were excavated at Cothelstone Farm by 71 in-person adult participants as well as 61 children and young people. The participants and volunteers from the QLPS scheme and wider local region revealed evidence of a Late Bronze Age ring ditch enclosure that was re-used as a cemetery, likely in the later Romano-British or Early Post-Roman period.
- 15.1.2 The following discussion places the results of the fieldwork at Cothelstone Farm within the context of the project's key aims and objectives, which included verifying the archaeological potential of the site, characterising any buried archaeology and



establishing key stratigraphic relationships between features. The results are discussed chronologically by feature type, establishing a narrative of the development, function and character of human interaction with the landscape at Cothelstone Farm from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Medieval and beyond.

15.2 Ring ditch monument

- 15.2.1 An intervention was placed into the southern arc of the ring ditch in Trench 1, revealing that the steep-sided U-shaped ditch was 3.38m in width and 1.44m in depth with a sub-rounded base at this location. Originally constructed in the Late Bronze Age, the ditch was recut to a depth of 1.25m and possibly widened in a significant cleaning episode that occurred in the Early Iron Age. Artefacts recovered from the upper fills indicate the ditch cannot have silted up at this location before the Middle Iron Age.
- 15.2.2 A second intervention was placed into the northern arc of the same ring ditch in Trench 4, revealing a similar profile measuring 3.29m in width and 1.58m in depth at this location. The ditch was also recut and possibly widened, this time to a depth of 1.37m, in the Iron Age. Pottery recovered from the upper fills indicates the ditch was not fully silted up at this location before the Romano-British period, implying the monument must have been partially maintained in some capacity as a visible earthwork in the landscape for many centuries.
- 15.2.3 Excavations in Trench 1 revealed that shortly after the ditch was originally cut, a group of three ceramic vessels dated typologically and by radiocarbon dating to the Late Bronze Age were intentionally placed together directly on its base. These undecorated plain-ware jars were all a coarse local red sandstone fabric and typically associated with a domestic function. They were buried by a basal deposit rich in charcoal and ash containing fragments of fired clay, animal bone and flint debitage consistent with domestic debris.
- 15.2.4 The processing of samples retrieved during micro-excavation of the vessels and of the surrounding burial deposit recovered small quantities of charred cereal grains, including wheat and oats as well as hazelnut shells, implying waste products from small-scale food processing and consumption at or near the site. The charcoal recovered represented a range of wood species available in the local environment including Hazel, Poplar, Willow, Oak, Ash, Birch and Elder. The highest proportion of this was roundwood Hazel suggestive of twigs, small branches and perhaps old wattle being used as fire kindling.
- 15.2.5 The intentional deposition of multiple ceramic vessels grouped together at the base of a ring ditch is not common practice within the context of everyday domestic settlement in the Late Bronze Age (Hill, 1995). It is instead more likely indicative of a single-event social act of ceremonial significance (Pollard, 2002). Some possibilities, such as a funerary deposit, can be ruled out. No evidence of cremated human remains were recovered, with the limited quantity of burnt bone fragments considered too small to represent a cremation burial and more likely to consist of burnt animal bone from domestic waste. Additionally, roundwood charcoal from comparatively cooler-burning wood species would also be unsuited to cremation; an act more commonly associated with the heartwood of hotter burning woods such as oak (Carruthers and Thomas, 1991, 114).

- 15.2.6 Due to the stratigraphic location of the vessels directly on the base of the ditch cut and buried by the basal fill itself, they must have been placed there very shortly after it was opened. Therefore, it is considered most likely that this deposit represents a single-event social act, perhaps associated with a feast commemorating the completion of the ring ditch monument in the Late Bronze Age. Similar regional examples of Late Bronze Age vessel deposits of the same form and fabric as those at Cothelstone Farm found in enclosure ditches are known from the Shurton enclosure at Hinkley Point (Quinnell and Wood, 2024) and at Norton Fitzwarren (Williams, 1987).
- 15.2.7 Whilst largely complete, the vessels were very fragmented and some joining sherds were located in fills much later in the stratigraphic sequence. This post-depositional disturbance is explained by a recut of the ditch in the Early Iron Age. The recut was filled initially by material eroding in from the external side of the ditch. This was shortly followed by periodic silting events interspersed with a series of discrete tipping lines of domestic waste being discarded from inside the enclosure. This sequence suggests successive periods of abandonment and re-occupation of the space enclosed by the ring ditch throughout the Early to Middle Iron Age, based on radiocarbon dating from one of these tipping lines. The two homogenous upper fills of the ditch represent an extended period of abandonment at the monument after the Middle Iron Age as it began to fully silt up.
- 15.2.8 In contrast, finds recovered from the first phase of the ring ditch in Trench 4 were sparse. Environmental sample processing was largely unproductive and no material suitable for radiocarbon dating was present in the basal fills. However, a few sherds of Late Bronze Age pottery were recovered from one of these fills, corroborating the narrative that the ring ditch was constructed during this period. Tentative evidence for possible bank material, heavily truncated by historic ploughing, was observed in the form of a very thin layer of gravel and silty sand visible in profile external to the ring ditch feature. However, no direct relationship was observed between this ephemeral spread and the ring ditch itself, meaning the existence of an external bank remains tenuous.
- 15.2.9 The recut of the ditch in Trench 4 was filled by homogenous silting with no evidence of tipping lines indicative of discarding domestic waste in discrete events. This may imply the ditch was more regularly cleaned at this location, or that domestic waste discard within the enclosure was more focused towards the southern area near Trench 1. A Late Iron Age ceramic spindle whorl and three joining sherds of Romano-British pottery were recovered from the first of these silting fills. The remainder of the limited selection of artefacts recovered from the recut ditch were considered residual and consistent with long-term silting. The presence of Late Iron Age and Romano-British artefacts within the recut ditch is particularly informative and suggests the ring ditch was at least still partially open and visible in the landscape into this period.
- 15.2.10 No other archaeological features relating to Late Bronze Age or Iron Age occupation were present within the ring ditch enclosure in either trench. This does not discount the possibility that features relating to such activities do exist at or near this location due to the limited size of the interventions in Trench 1 and Trench 4. Alternatively, the apparently sporadic nature of occupation within the enclosure may mean that any such evidence was too ephemeral to survive being truncated away by later archaeological features as well as historic ploughing.

15.3 Late Romano-British/Early Post-Roman cemetery

- 15.3.1 Excavations in Trench 1 and Trench 4 revealed evidence of up to 13 approximately east to west aligned grave cuts. Five of these were excavated in Trench 1 and four in Trench 4. In all cases, the graves were laid out in parallel rows respecting each other in an arranged pattern indicative of an organised cemetery. A single grave in Trench 1 was observed to contain remnants of possible stone lining at its western end.
- 15.3.2 No skeletal remains or material suitable for radiocarbon dating survived due to poor preservation conditions caused by the acidic soils. However, two of the graves in Trench 4 produced ironwork grave goods; three small personal utilitarian knives and a possible knife tang or awl. Two of these knives were found together within a single grave. Typologically they are broadly dateable to the Late Romano-British or Early Post-Roman periods, with a 5th century AD date considered most likely. However, without any additional securely dateable material from the graves themselves it is impossible to attribute any firm dating based on the knives alone.
- 15.3.3 The graves were all of broadly similar shape with some minor variation in size that could be indicative of a range of age at death. However, without any surviving skeletal remains, it is impossible to make any further insights to the demographics of the burial population. All graves excavated in Trench 1 were inside the prehistoric enclosure whilst those in Trench 4 were external. The trenches were approximately 35m apart at the northern and southern extents of the ring ditch, suggesting a sizeable cemetery that likely covers most of the monument.
- 15.3.4 Two ephemeral linear ditches that may represent cemetery enclosures were observed aligned northeast to southwest in Trench 1. It is also possible that these ditches relate to a pre-cemetery phase of mid to late Romano-British occupation at the site. One of these partially truncated the other in what could be a recut. A number of square-ditched enclosures were excavated at the nearby cemetery site of Stoneage Barton, where burials were dated to the 7th century AD (Webster and Brunning, 2004). The possible cemetery enclosures within the excavated area at Cothelstone Farm were linear and two near complete, though fragmented, late 3rd to 4th century AD black-burnished ware jars were recovered from these features.
- 15.3.5 These vessels may have represented grave goods or were placed in the ditches nearby graves and disturbed through later ploughing. Later Romano-British pottery is known to be reused in Early Post-Roman burial contexts and could support the tentative 5th century AD date for the knives. However, the presence of the knives could equally be attributed to a later Romano-British date in association with the late 3rd to 4th century AD date of the pottery. Consequently, the date of the cemetery cannot at this point be refined any further than the later Romano-British or early post-Roman period.

15.4 Post-Medieval and undated features

- 15.4.1 Two parallel Post-Medieval field boundaries were excavated in Trench 4, aligned northwest to southeast and truncating all other features within the trench. The location of these ditches tie in well with the potential continuation of a strong magnetic linear anomaly interpreted from the geophysical survey to represent a probable field boundary. Post-Medieval pottery was recovered from this feature and it is likely that a

number of other strong magnetic linear responses on the survey results also relate to Post-Medieval field systems.

- 15.4.2 Excavations in Trench 2 targeted a D-shaped enclosure ditch but were hampered by the presence of a field drain actively channelling water at this location. It was decided not to disturb this area any further to avoid flooding the trench and consequently the anomaly could not be characterised at this location.
- 15.4.3 Trench 3 targeted a crescent-shaped geophysical anomaly interpreted as possible quarrying. The substantial size and depth of the feature meant that excavation had to cease for safety reasons without reaching the base it could not be fully characterised. However, artefacts recovered included small quantities of abraded Late Bronze Age pottery, flint flake debitage and a near complete Neolithic leaf-shaped arrowhead from the upper fills. Whilst these artefacts are likely residual, they strongly suggest human interaction with the local environment in the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods. Their residuality is also consistent with the upper silting fills of very large cut features and at this point there is no reason to doubt the interpretation of the anomaly as a quarry pit.

16 CONCLUSIONS

16.1 Archaeological conclusions

- 16.1.1 Community excavations at Cothelstone Farm confirmed that the 35m diameter ring ditch identified in cropmark and geophysical surveys was Late Bronze Age in origin. A deposit of three ceramic vessels intentionally placed directly upon the base of the newly opened ditch were dated typologically and by radiocarbon dating to between the late 11th and 9th centuries BC. This social act of ceremonial significance was carried out most likely within a small-scale rural domestic context, possibly to commemorate the completion of the enclosure itself.
- 16.1.2 Probably in the Early or Middle Iron Age, the ditch was recut in a significant cleaning event that partially disturbed and fragmented the vessels on the base of the ditch. In the years that followed, waste from sporadic domestic activity within the enclosure was tipped into the ditch and interspersed with short periods of silting indicative of seasonal abandonment and re-occupation around the early 8th to mid-6th centuries BC. A longer period of abandonment occurred after the Middle Iron Age when the ditch began to more substantially silt up. However, based on finds recovered from the upper silting fills, the ditch was still partially open and visible as an earthwork attracting the presence of people in the local landscape into the Romano-British period.
- 16.1.3 Most likely in the later Romano-British or Early Post-Roman period, possibly around the 5th century AD, the ring ditch monument was reused as a cemetery. At least 13 east to west aligned grave cuts were identified in parallel rows respecting each other in what appears to be an organised cemetery. Nine of these graves were fully excavated but no skeletal remains survived due to poor preservation conditions. However, three iron knives and a possible tang or awl were recovered from two of the graves in Trench 4. The cemetery may have been enclosed by shallow linear ditches from which two 3rd to 4th century largely complete, though fragmented, black



burnished ware jars were recovered. Late Romano-British pottery is known to be re-used in Early Post-Roman burial contexts, and these may have represented grave goods disturbed by later ploughing.

16.2 Character and function

16.2.1 No evidence of extant bank material, funerary deposits or internal features within the enclosed space contemporary with the construction phase of the ringwork were recovered during the excavations. Combined with the Late Bronze Age date for the ring ditch, it is considered unlikely that the enclosure originally represented a ritualised space, such as a Henge or Hengiform-type monument. The lack of evidence relating to funerary deposits or an extant mound, berm or bank also makes it difficult to argue the feature was a definitive Bronze Age Barrow. However, given the limited extent of the excavations and the characteristic re-use of the site as a later Romano-British or Early Post-Roman cemetery, this remains a possibility.

16.2.2 On balance of the evidence available, it is most likely that the space enclosed by the ring ditch was sporadically settled and abandoned within the context of seasonal domestic occupation from the Late Bronze Age to the Middle Iron Age. The domestic nature of the Late Bronze Age vessels and occupation debris within the surrounding burial deposit, and the Early to Middle Iron Age waste tipping events containing artefacts of a similar character, are all indicative of a domestic function for the site.

16.2.3 After the primary function of the ring ditch enclosure ceased and the site was abandoned as a domestic space after the Middle Iron Age, it was re-used in the Late Romano-British or Early Post-Roman period as a cemetery. This change in function is characteristic of up to a quarter of cemeteries dating to around this period in southern, central and eastern England, but is less common in the south west (Williams, 1997, 4-5). A well-known example is the 6th century Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Barrow Clump in Wiltshire (Andrews et al., 2019). The reuse of the enclosure at Cothelstone Farm shows that the ring ditch was still visible as an earthwork at this time and was viewed as a significant place in the local landscape, perhaps symbolising a relationship between ancient monuments and the world of the dead (Williams, 1997, 25).

16.3 Local and regional landscape synthesis

16.3.1 The recent growth in contemporary excavations of Late Bronze Age enclosures in the local and regional landscape provide a number of parallels for the ring ditch at Cothelstone Farm. Most recently, excavations in 2023 by the QLPS at a 93m diameter ring ditch near Broomfield, located 2.7 miles east of Cothelstone Farm, revealed an enclosure ditch that was probably constructed in the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age and backfilled in the Middle to Late Iron Age (Green and Fairclough, 2024). Evidence of small-scale structure and sporadic domestic occupation was recovered from inside the enclosure. Similarly, another excavation by the QLPS in 2021 at Cothelstone Hill, just over a mile to the east of Cothelstone Farm, found evidence of a Late Bronze Age ditch and rampart with sporadic domestic occupation into the Iron Age (Brunning and Grove, 2022).

16.3.2 These results suggest that the enclosures at Cothelstone Farm, Cothelstone Hill and Broomfield were local contemporaries in the Early to Middle Iron Age landscape and

perhaps even before. They may well have been known and visited by members of the same communities, with the apparent sporadic and temporary nature of Iron Age domestic occupation at Broomfield and Cothelstone Hill fitting well with the narrative at Cothelstone Farm. It is possible that all three sites were occupied seasonally and visited by the same communities at different points throughout the year.

16.3.3 The re-use of the ring ditch monument at Cothelstone Farm as a cemetery strongly implies it was still visible as an earthwork in the later Romano-British or Early Post-Roman period, possibly as a known focal point in the local landscape. Prehistoric ringwork monuments such as barrows are known to have been re-used as places of burial in the later Romano-British and Early Post-Roman periods (Gerrard, 2015; Williams, 1997). Excavations at Stoneage Barton, very close to Cothelstone Farm, provide the nearest example geographically and chronologically of a Post-Roman cemetery in the local landscape (Webster and Brunning, 2004). At Stoneage Barton, a number of unfurnished burials were observed to be enclosed by square ditches and one of these returned a radiocarbon date of the 7th century AD.

16.3.4 Minimally furnished burials on an east to west alignment and those completely unaccompanied by grave goods are typically associated with Late Roman burial practice in eastern England, and in the west country it is apparent this burial tradition continued well into the early Post-Roman period (Gerrard, 2015). Regionally comparable 5th and 6th century AD graves were excavated in rural cemeteries at Bradley Hill (Leech, 1981) and Poundbury (Sparey-Green, 1987) where the graves were aligned east to west and contained few or no grave goods. Comparative examples from other cemetery sites in the local and regional landscape combined with the iron knives and late Romano-British ceramics recovered from Cothelstone Farm imply a later Romano-British or Early Post-Roman date for this cemetery, possibly the 5th century AD.

16.4 Public impact

16.4.1 Evaluation of the public impact from the Cothelstone Farm community archaeological excavations shows significant benefit for both individual participants and community visitors as a result of the project. In total, the project provided excavation and finds room training for 71 adult participants and 61 children and young people through in person participatory experiences. Additionally, guided tours on a public open day engaged a further 41 individuals with the archaeology of Cothelstone Farm.

16.4.2 The excavations attracted a diverse community of people within the local community to explore and investigate the heritage the Quantock Hills Landscape in a new and different way. Evaluation shows that the project tackled the social and educational needs of the surrounding communities and was a success for public engagement. A high number of locals were engaged with archaeology and individuals gained a deeper connection to their heritage, as well as ownership of their involvement in the excavation. This project improved participants' skills and understanding of the discipline and provided a new opportunity for local visitors to the site – 70% of whom had never been involved with archaeology before.

17 ARCHIVING AND DISSEMINATION

17.1 Digital archive

- 17.1.1 All archiving products will be prepared to the Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives (ClfA, 2014) and Archaeological Archives; A guide to best practice in the creation, compilation, transfer and curation (Archaeological Archives Forum, 2007).
- 17.1.2 The digital data and accompanying metadata pertaining to the Cothelstone Farm archive will be selected in accordance with a data management plan (DMP) and FAIR Principles. A copy of the final report will be sent to the HER, collecting repository and uploaded to OASIS under unique identifier digventu1-5228876.
- 17.1.3 The full selected digital archive and accompanying metadata will be uploaded to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) or other appropriate Core Trust Seal Digital Repository.

17.2 Physical archive

- 17.2.1 The physical archive including documentary or artefactual material produced from the excavations will be deposited with South West Heritage Trust (SWHT), from whom an accession number for the archive has been requested. Decisions regarding selection will be made in conjunction with the collecting repository taking into account their deposition requirements alongside any key recommendations given by specialists throughout this report.
- 17.2.2 Any material selected for discard will be offered back to the landowner or in the case that the landowner does not wish for it to be returned will be utilised for another purpose such as reference collections, handling collections, educational materials etc. A more finite option of discard such as reburial will be considered as a last resort.

17.3 Dissemination

- 17.3.1 Copies of this report and its digital archivable products will be disseminated to the QLPS, the South West Heritage Trust, the Somerset HER and to the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) via the OASIS platform.

ADS, 2015, Guidelines for Depositors, Version 3, (Accessed January 2024) <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/guidelinesForDepositors>.

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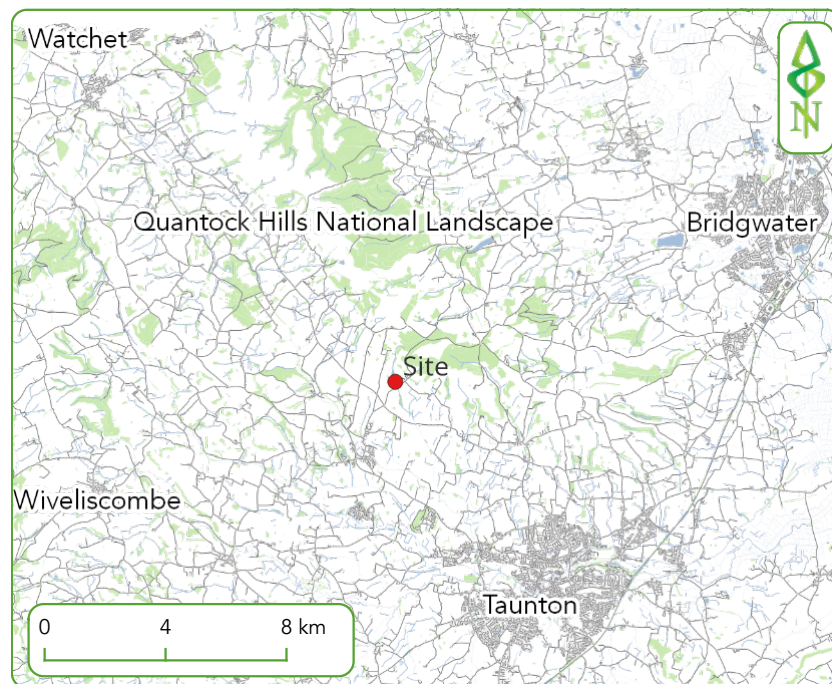


Figure 1. Site location



Figure 2. Geophysical survey of land at Cothelstone Farm with location of trenches.

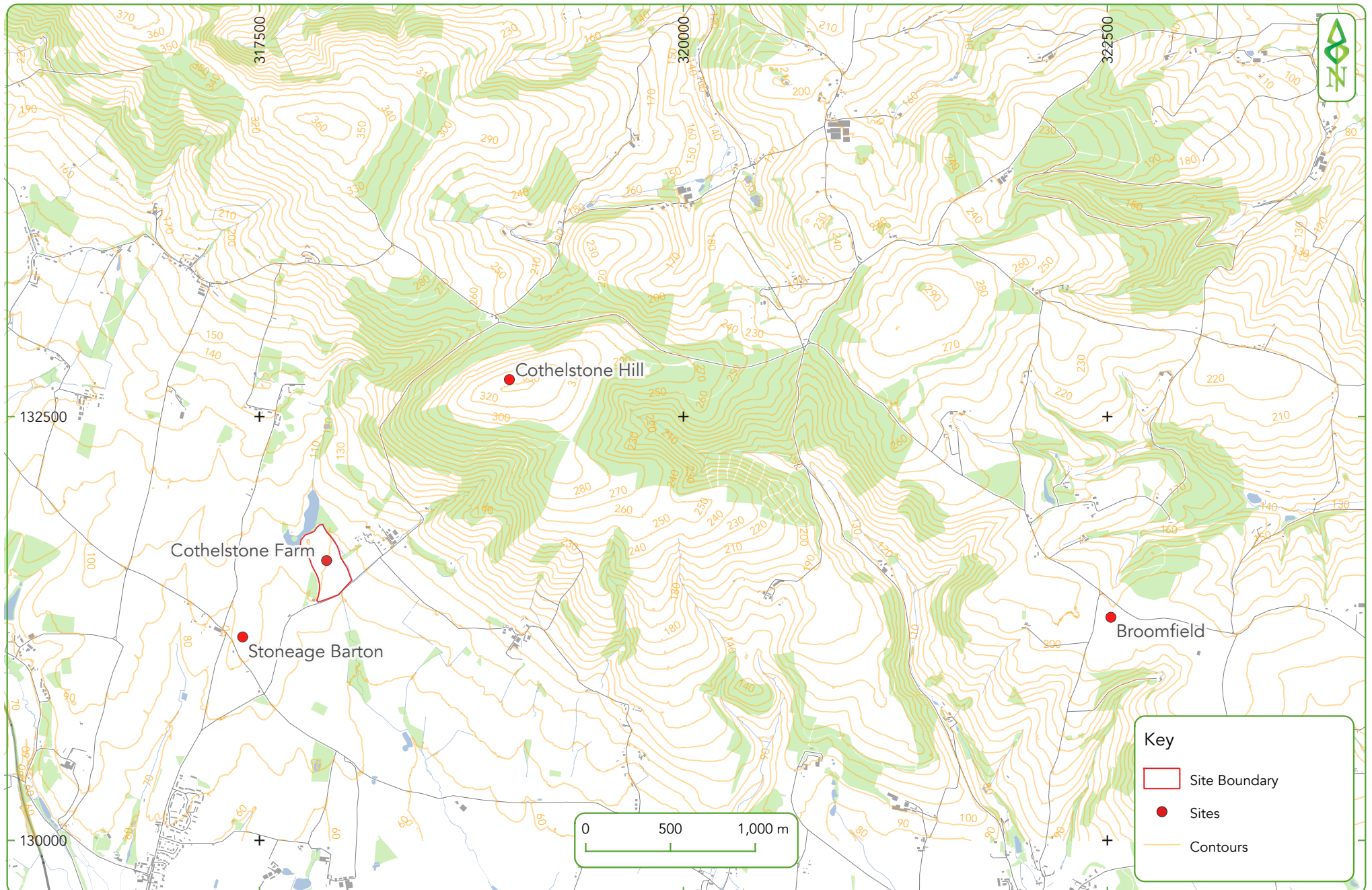


Figure 3. Parallel sites to Cothelstone Farm in the local landscape.



317820

317830

131620

+

+

131610

+

+

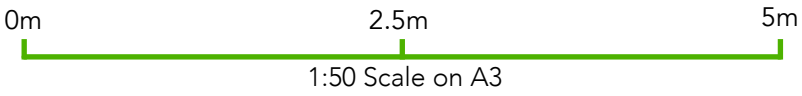


Figure 4. Post Excavation Orthomosaic plan of Trench 1

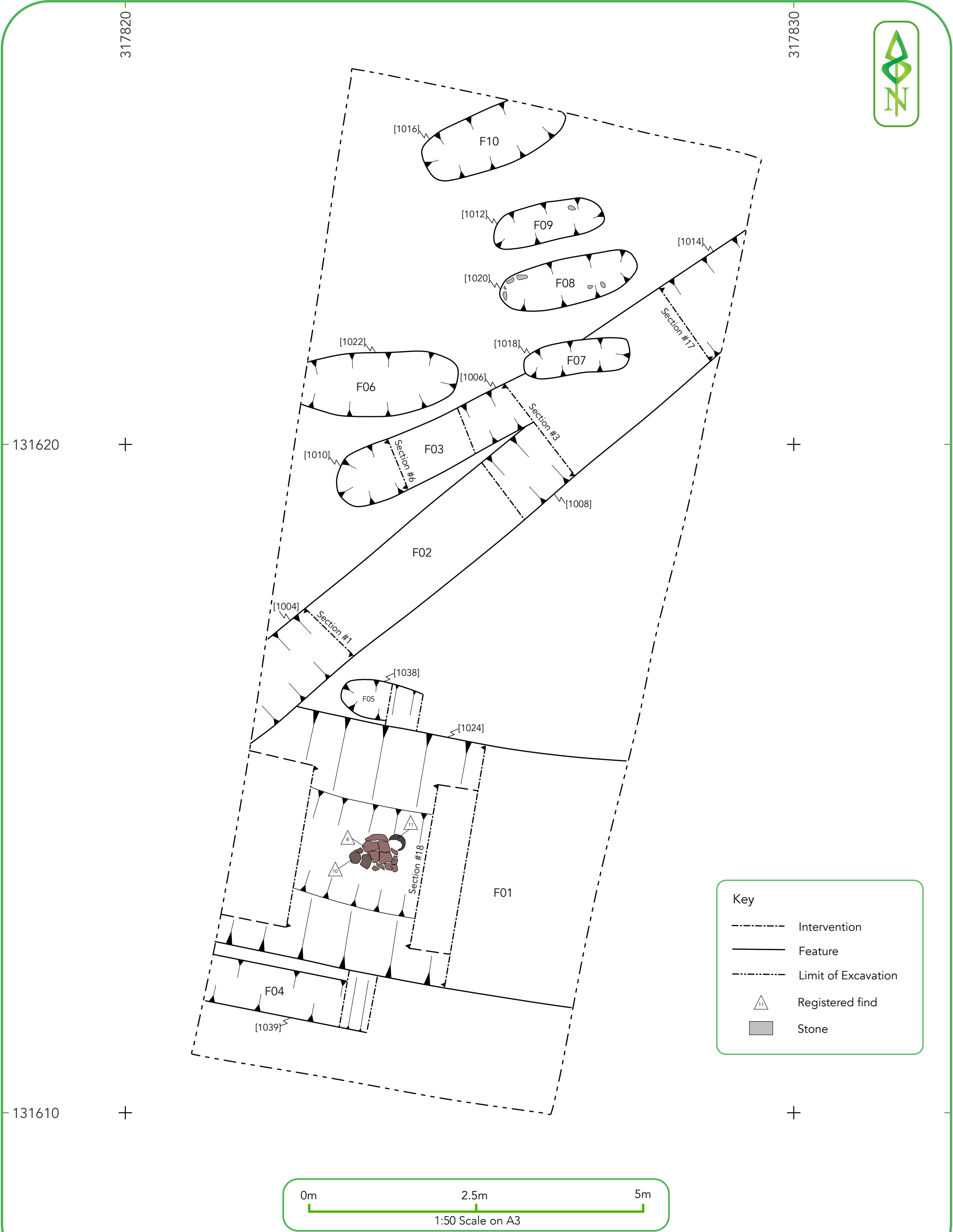


Figure 5. Annotated post-excavation plan of Trench 1



Figure 6. Post-excavation orthomosaic plan of Trench 2

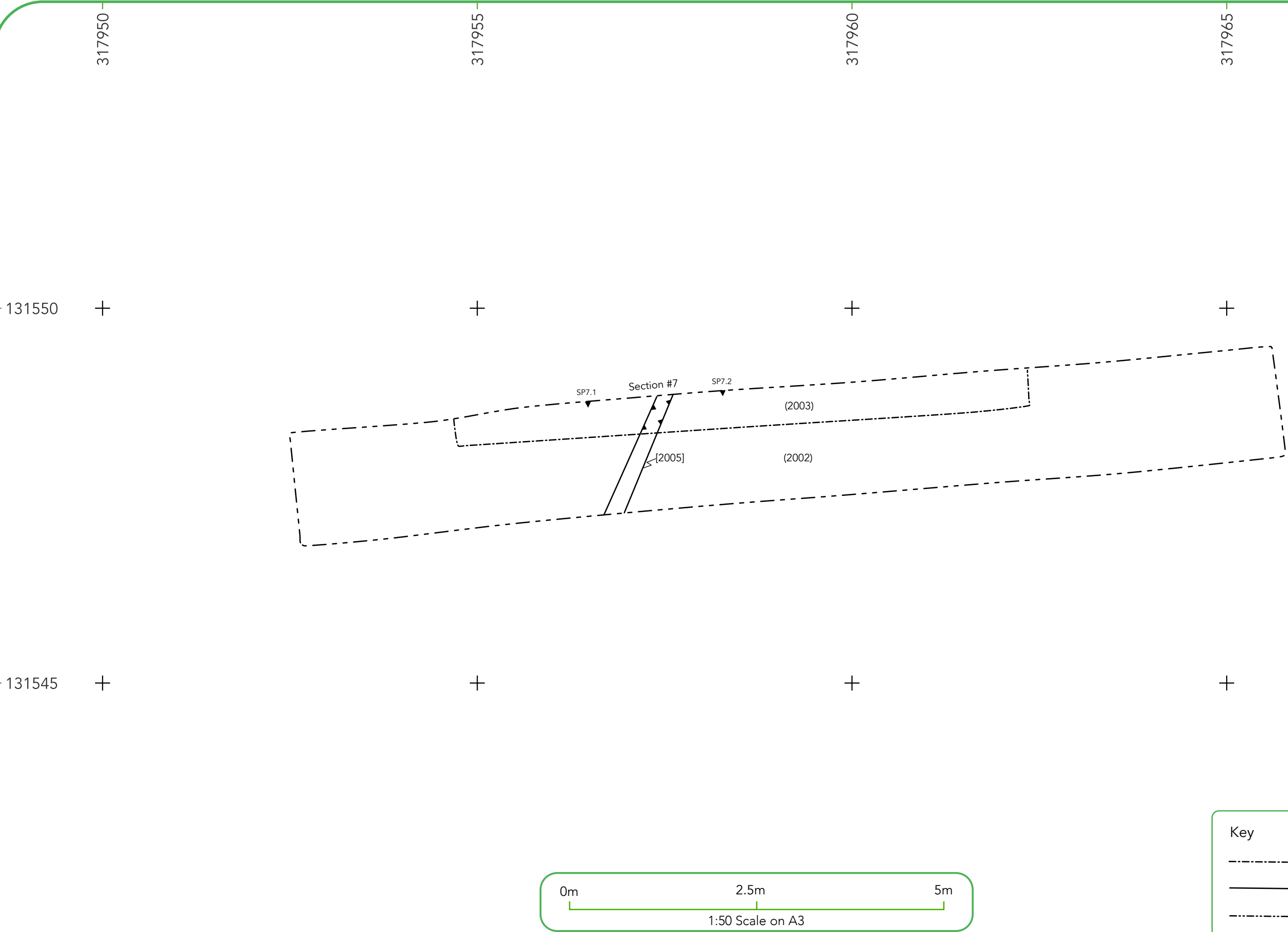


Figure 7. Annotated post-excavation plan of Trench 2



Figure 8. Post-excavation orthomosaic plan of Trench 3

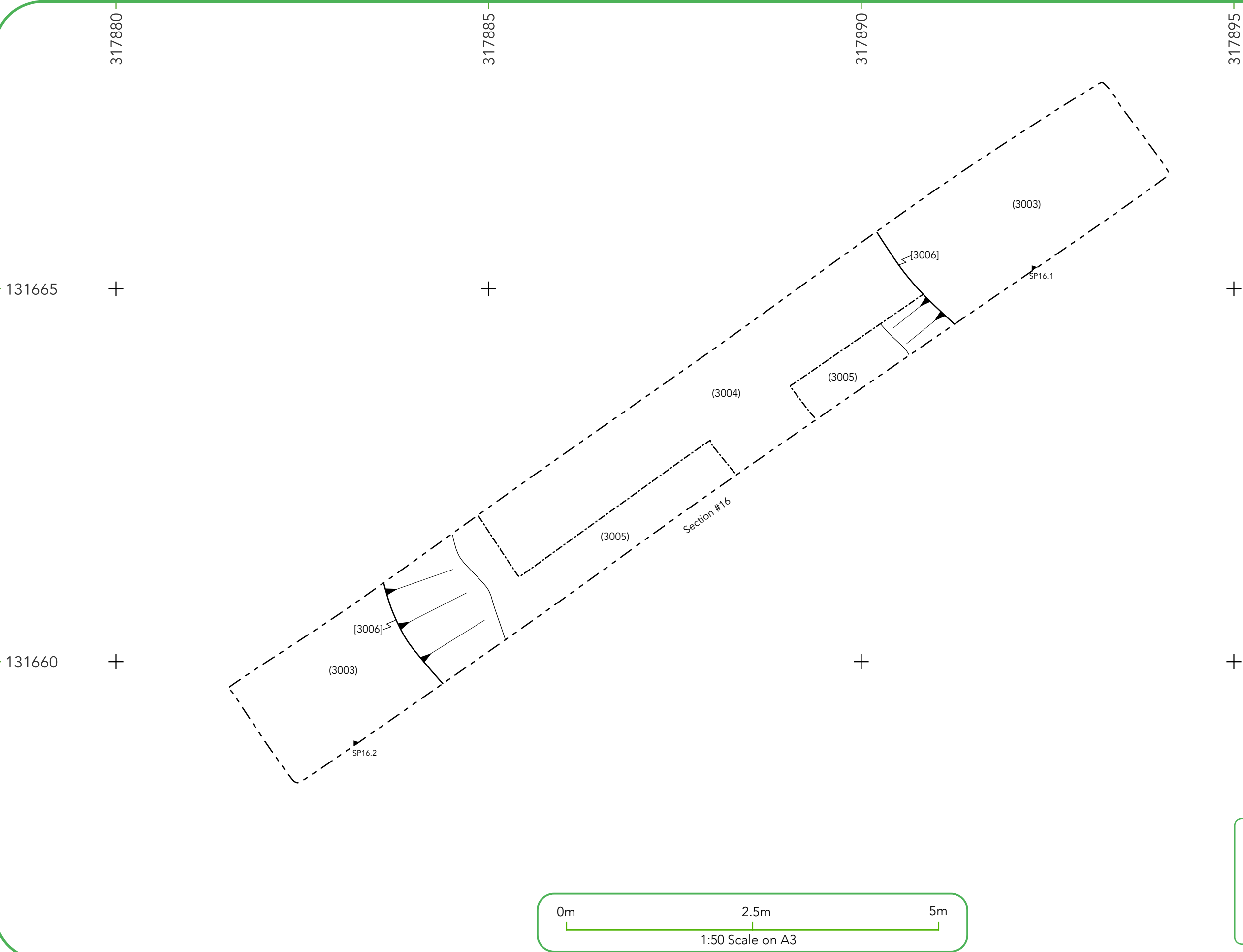


Figure 9. Annotated post-excavation plan of Trench 3

317811

317821



131650

+

+

131640

+

+

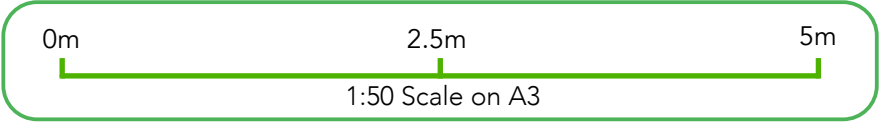


Figure 10. Post-excavation orthomosaic plan of Trench 4



317811

131650

+

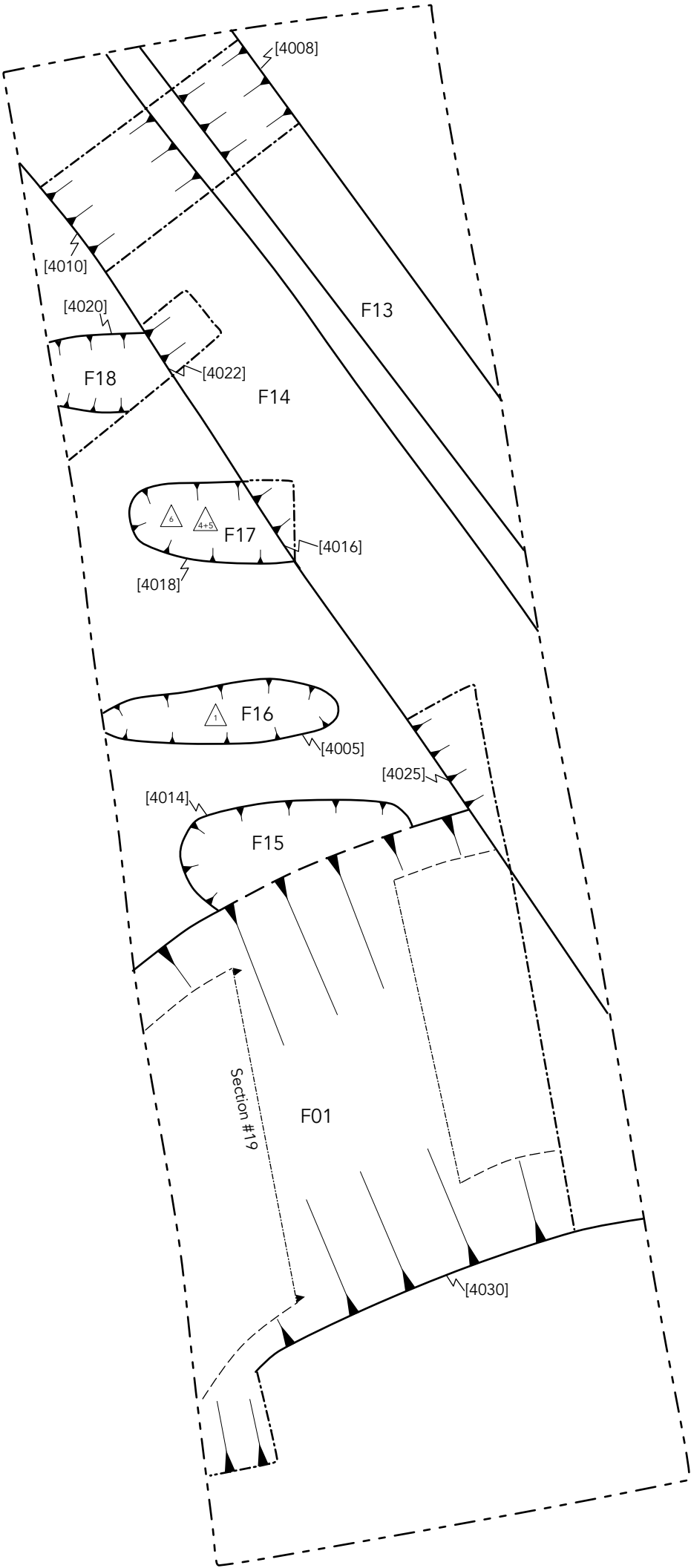
131640

+

317821

+

+



Key

Intervention

————

Feature

Limit of Excavation

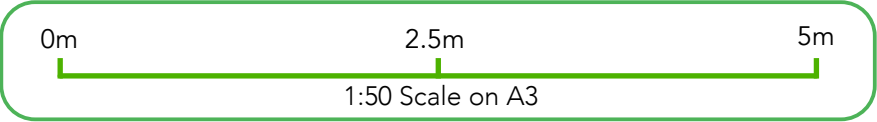


Figure 11. Annotated post-excavation plan of Trench 4

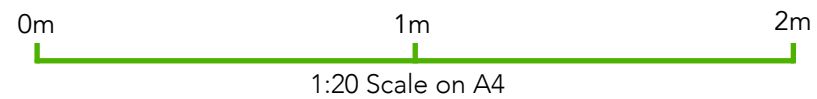


Figure 12. Section 18 - west facing section of ring ditch in Trench 1.

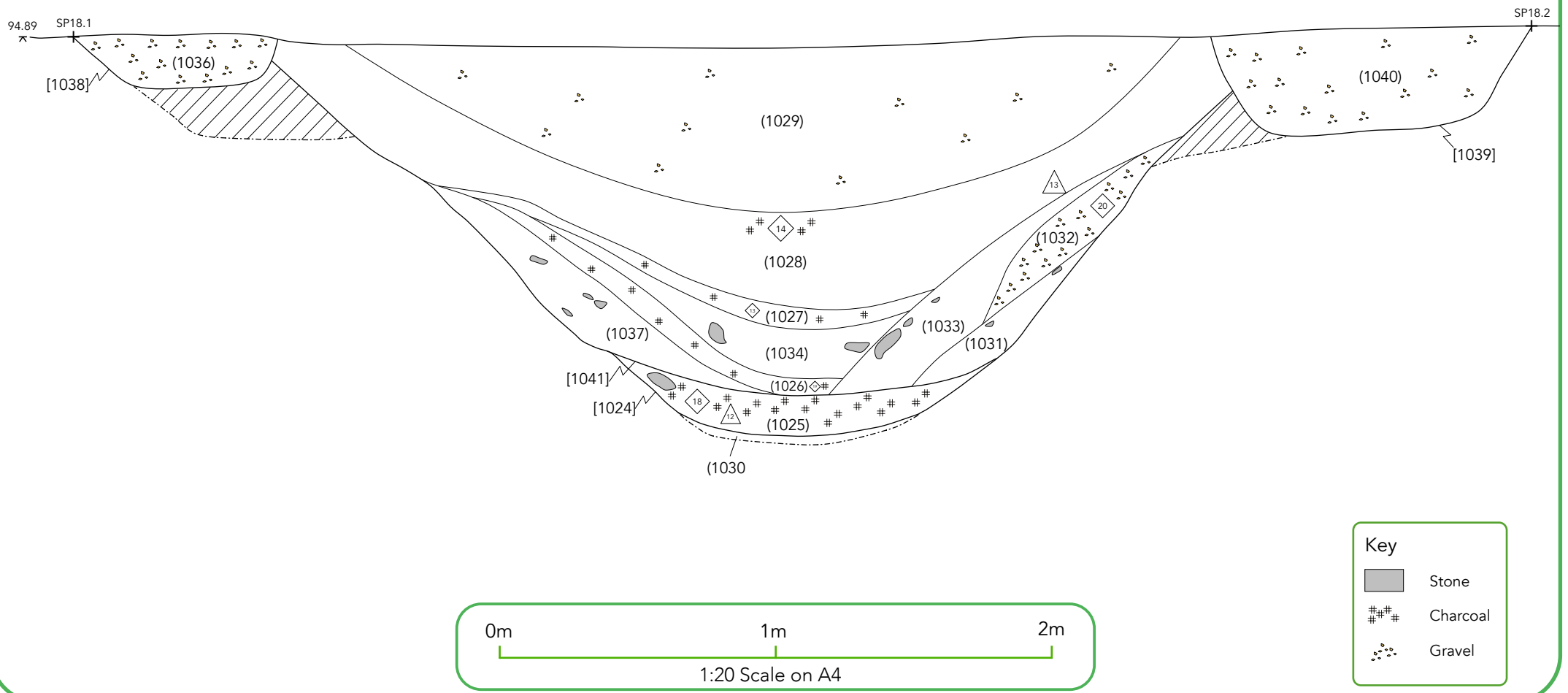


Figure 13. Annotated drawing of Section #18 .



Figure 14. Section 19 - east facing section of ring ditch in Trench 4.

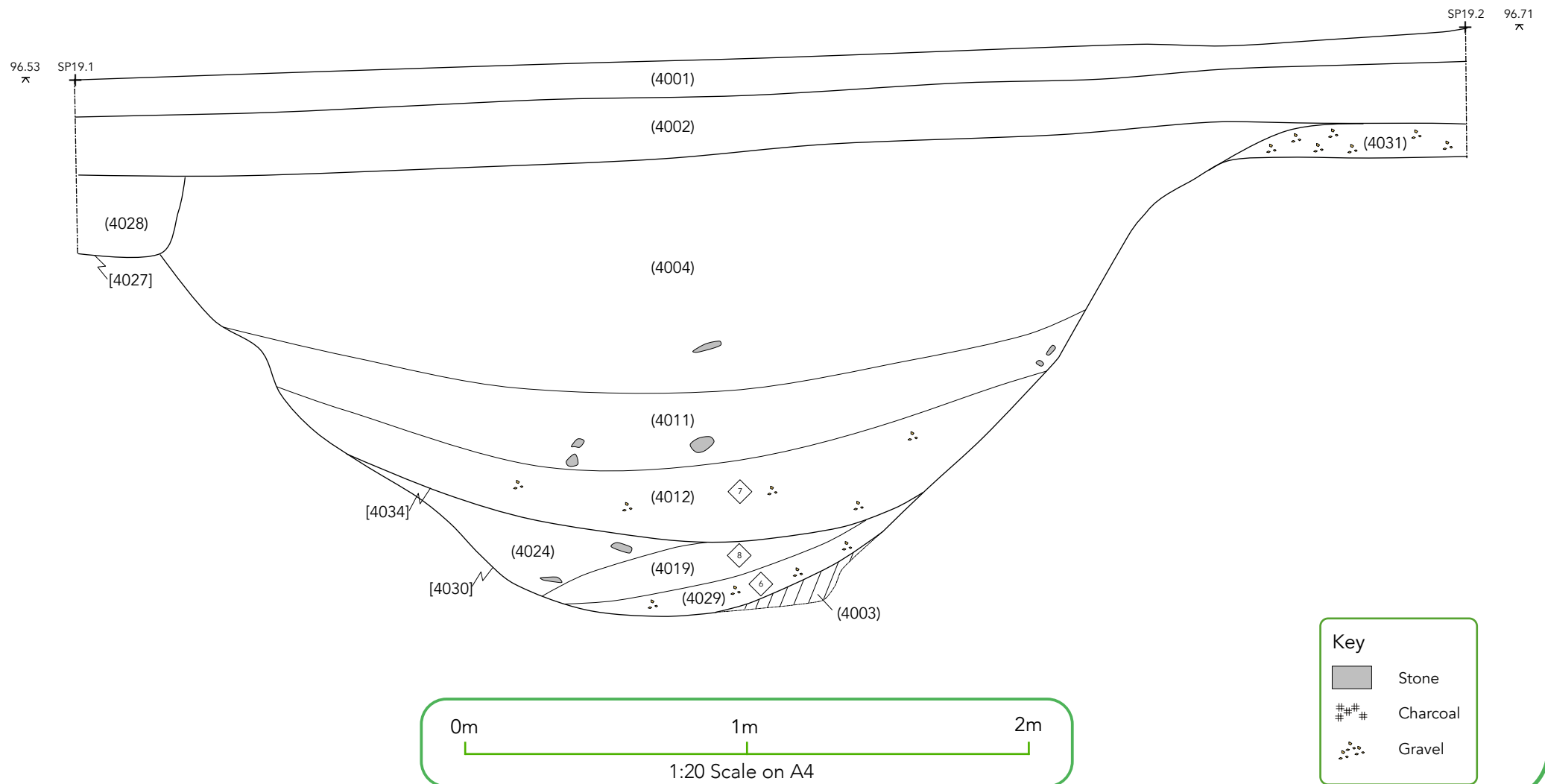


Figure 15. Annotated drawing of Section #19.



SW looking photo of half-section through likely grave F09, 1m scale.



South looking photo of half-section through likely grave F16, 1m scale.



North looking photo of half-section through likely grave F07, 1m scale.

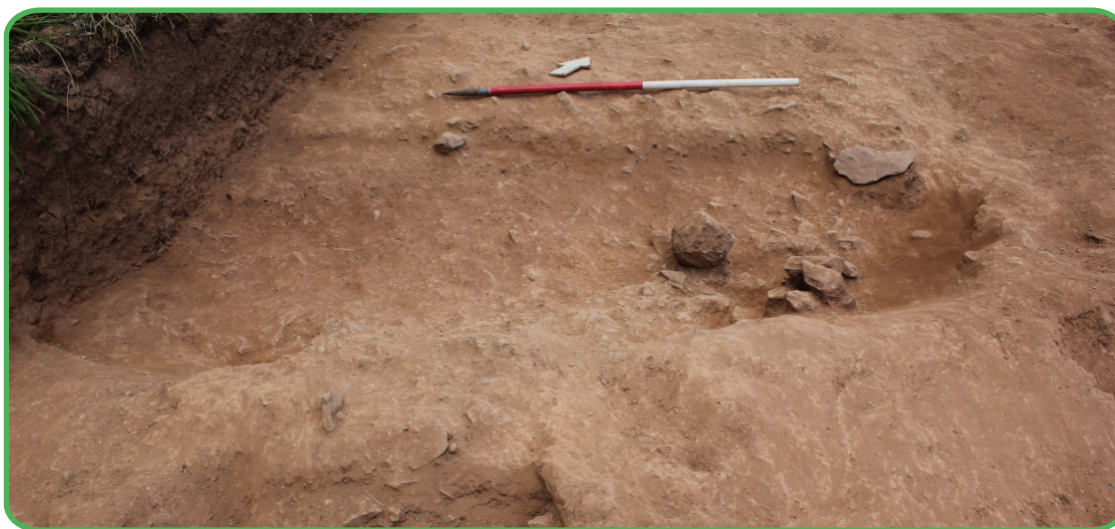
Figure 16. Selected photographs of half-sections excavated through graves.



East looking photo of fully excavated grave F08, 1m scale.



WNW looking photo of fully excavated grave F10, 1m scale.



NNW looking photo of fully excavated grave F06, 1m scale.

Figure 17. Selected photographs of fully excavated graves.



South looking photo of iron knives SF4 and SF5 in grave F17, 0.20m scale.



Close up photo of iron knives SF4 and SF5 found within grave F17, 0.20m scale.



Close up photo of iron knife SF1, 0.20m scale.



North looking photo of grave F16 showing iron knife SF1, 0.20m scale.

Figure 18. Selected photographs of in-situ iron knives recovered from graves at Cothelstone Farm.



West facing section of ring ditch F01 in Trench 1 (Section drawing #18), 2m scales.



East facing section of ring ditch F01 in Trench 4 (Section drawing #19), 2m scales.

Figure 19. Photographs of interventions through Ring Ditch F01 in Trench 1 and 4.



North looking shot of In-situ Deposit of all three ceramic vessels SF8, SF10 and SF11 at base of ditch F01 in Trench 1. 1m and 0.20m scales.



East looking shot of vessel SF10 before lifting, 0.20m scale.



East looking shot of SF8 before lifting. 0.20m scale.



North looking shot of vessel SF11 before lifting. 1m scale.

Figure 20. Late Bronze Age vessels recovered from the base of ring ditch F01 in Trench 1.

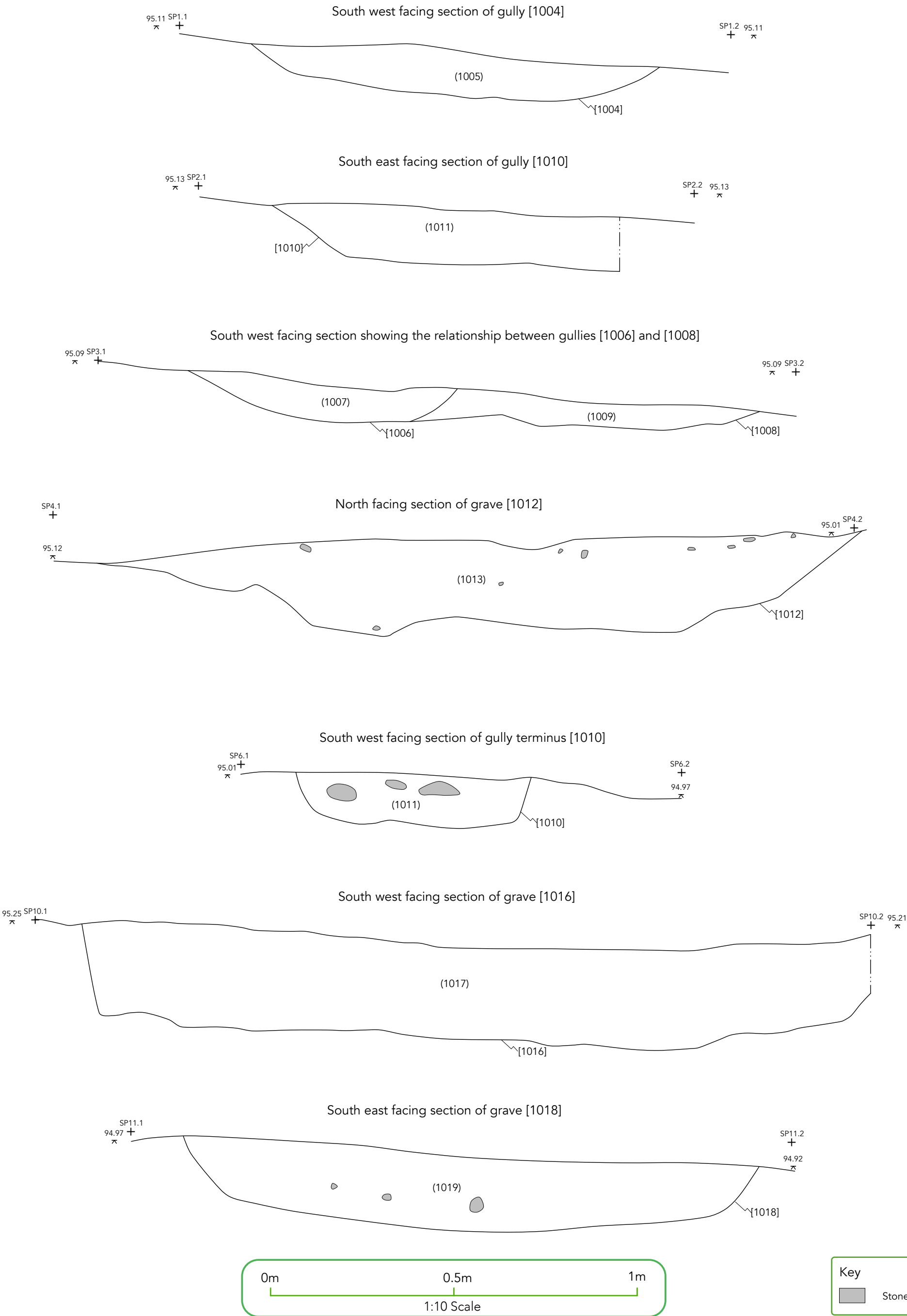


Figure 21. Trench 1 Section drawings (1 of 2).

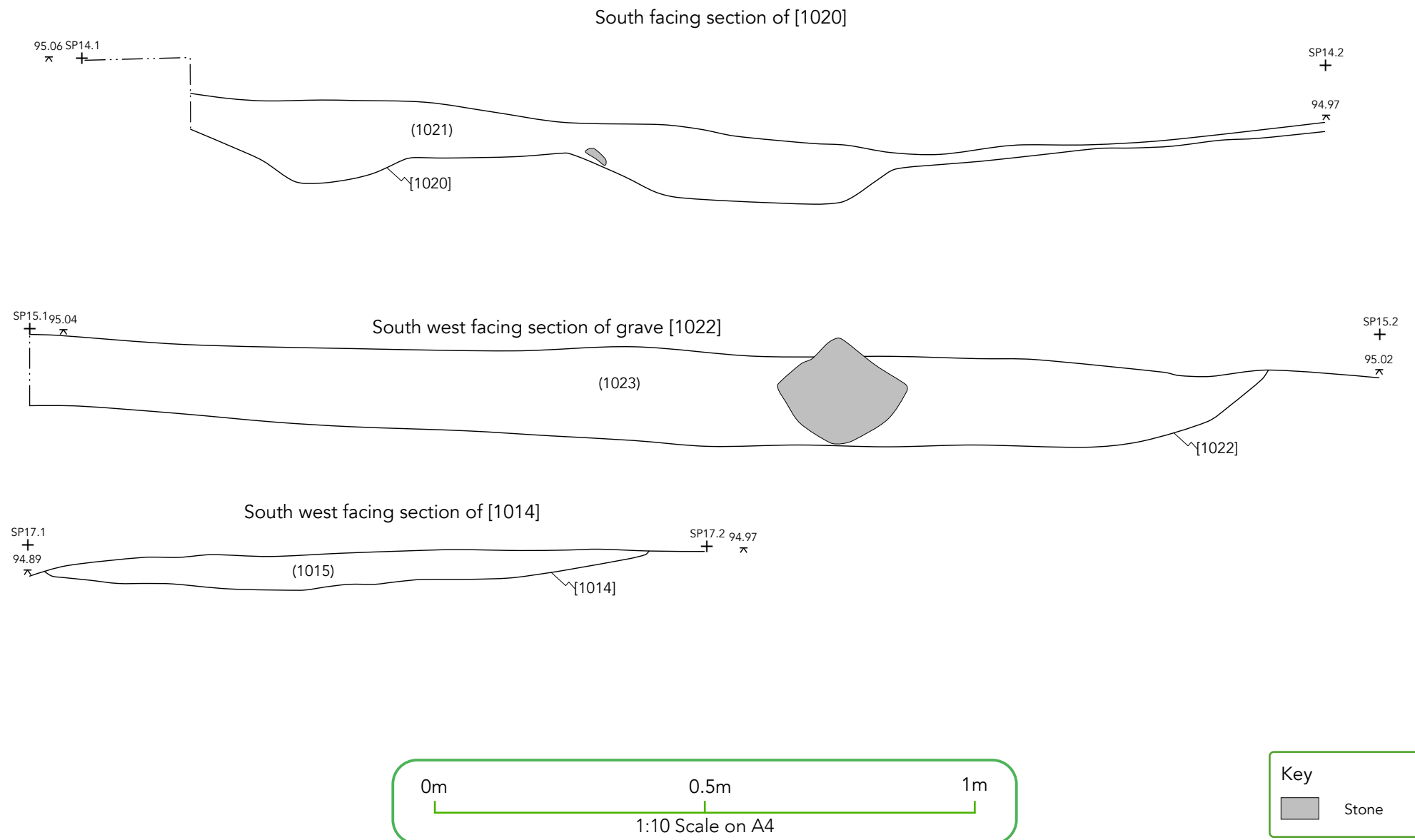


Figure 22. Trench 1 Section drawings (2 of 2).

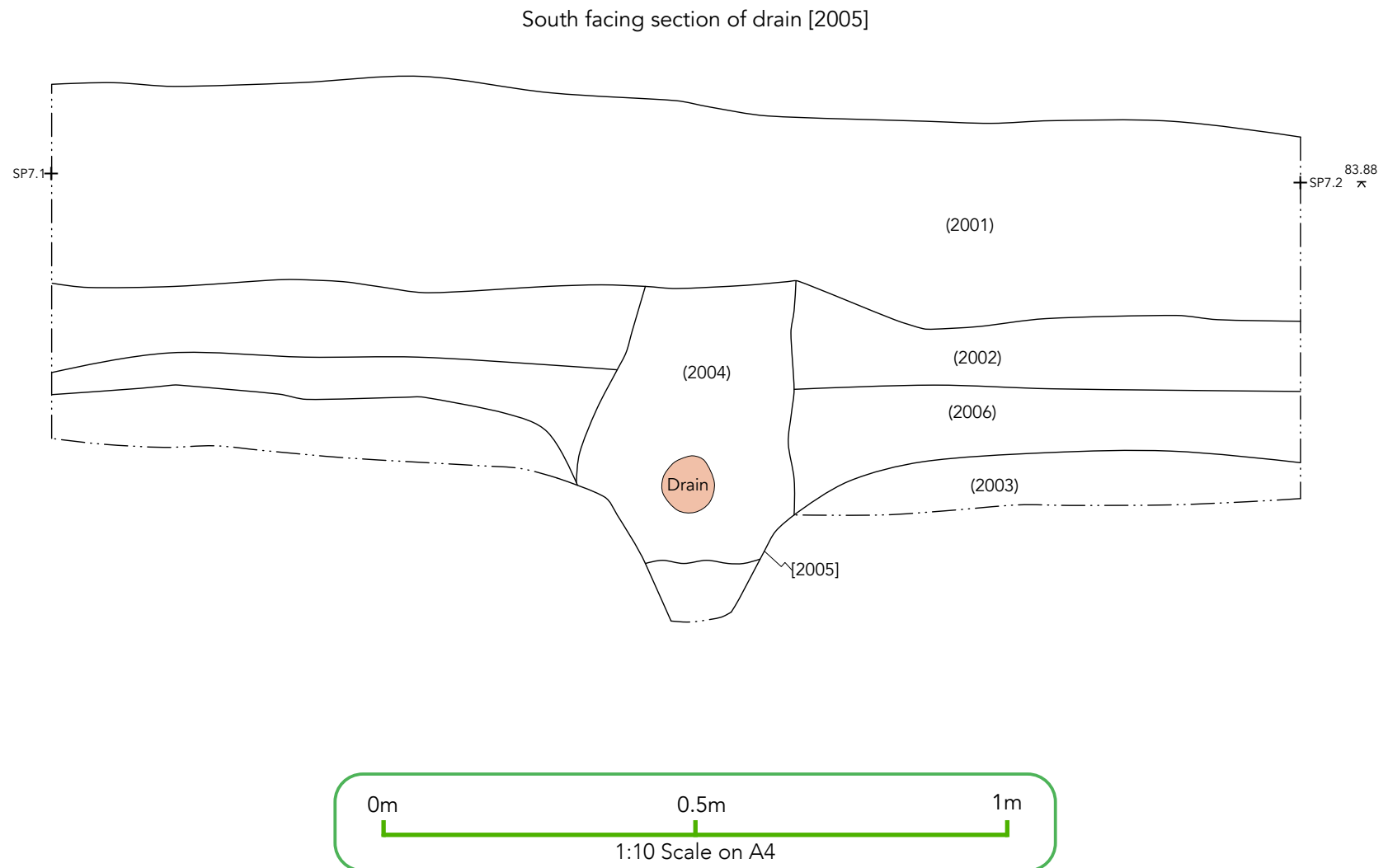


Figure 23. South facing representative section of Trench 2.

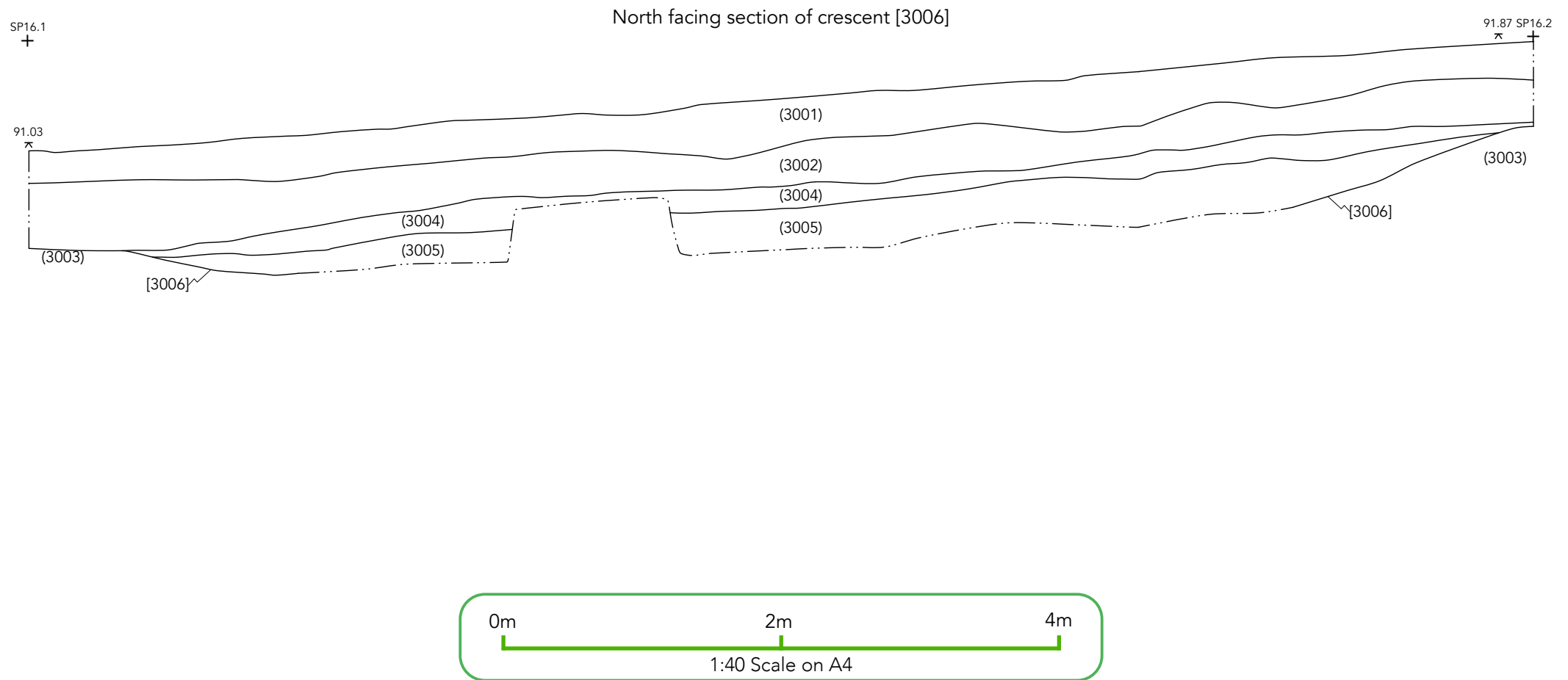


Figure 24. North facing representative section of Trench 3.

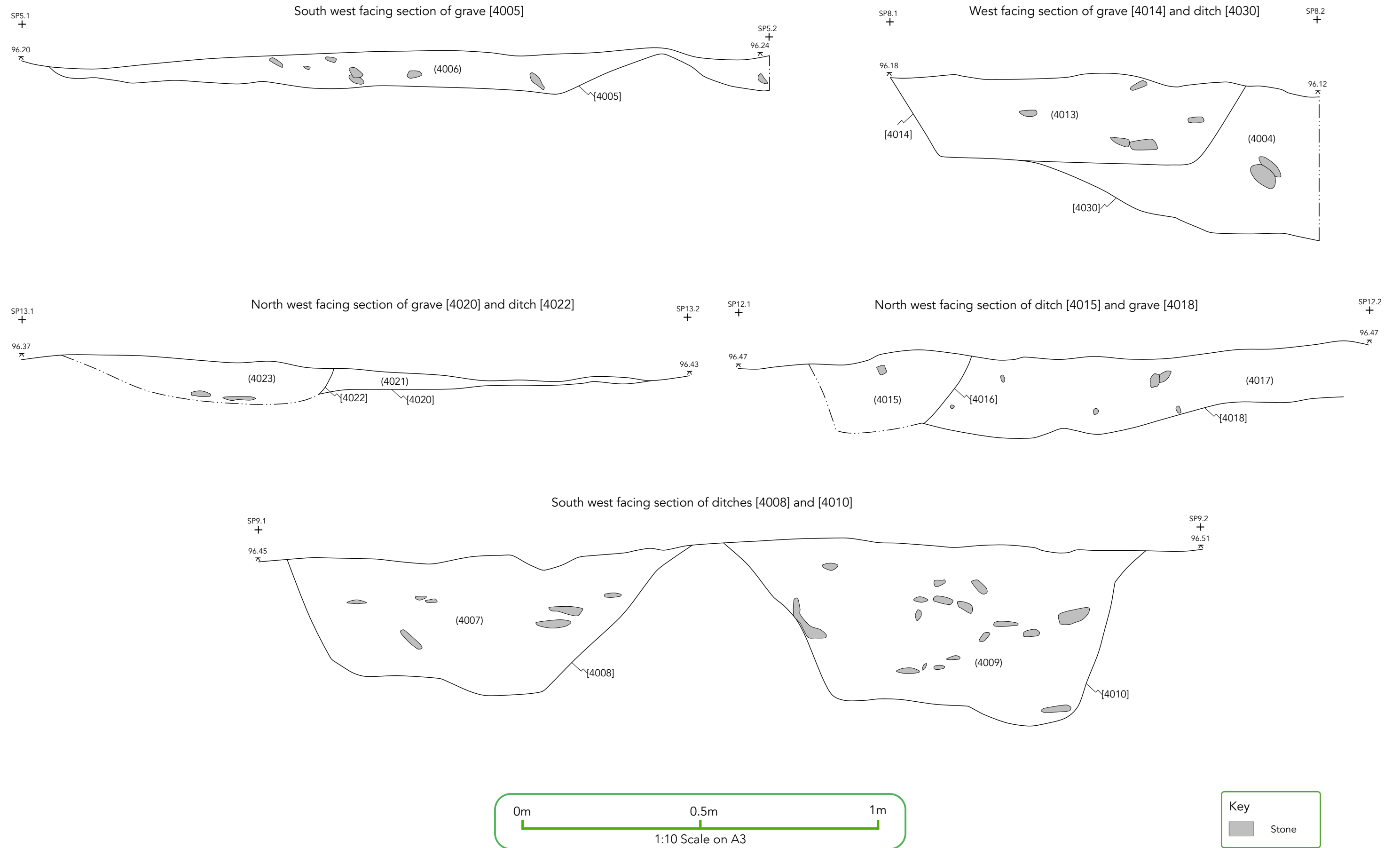


Figure 25. Trench 4 Section drawings.

1.



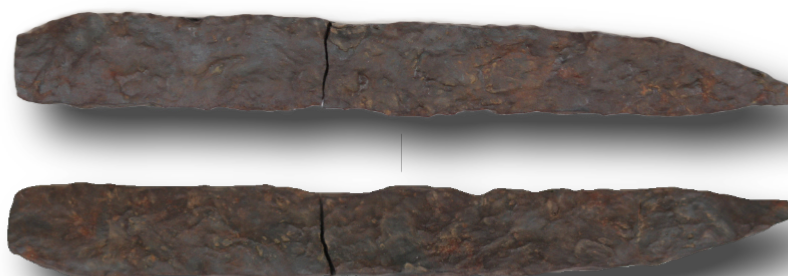
2.



3.



4.



5.



0 5cm

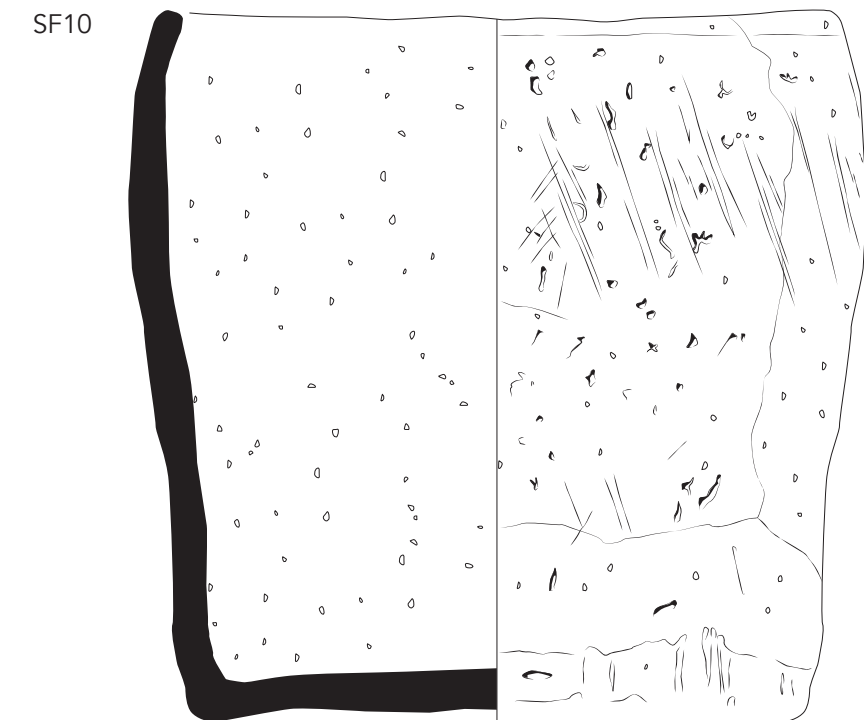
1:1 Scale on A4

1. SF1 - Iron knife (4006); 2. SF2 - Spindle whorl (4012); 3. SF3 - Leaf-shaped arrowhead (3004); 4. SF4 - Iron knife (4017); 5. SF5 - Iron knife (4017)

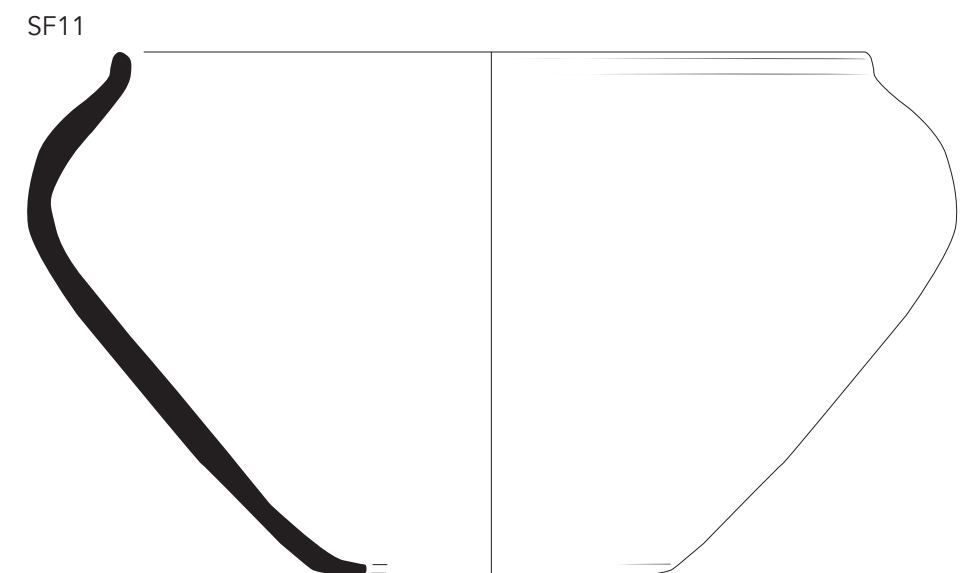
Figure 26. Photographs of selected registered finds.



Tinney's Type 1 Late Bronze Age plain ware bucket-form jar, coarse red sandstone fabric, deep vertical finger marks on exterior surface



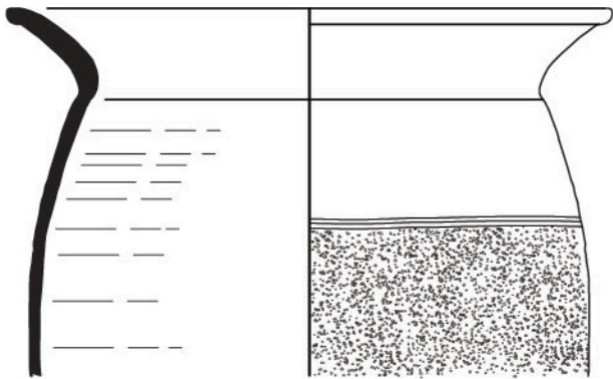
Tinney's Type 2 Late Bronze Age plain ware high-shouldered jar, red sandstone fabric, slightly burnished external surface



0 10cm
1:2 scale on A3

Figure 27. Digital illustrations of the three Late Bronze Age vessels recovered from the base of the ring ditch in Trench 1.

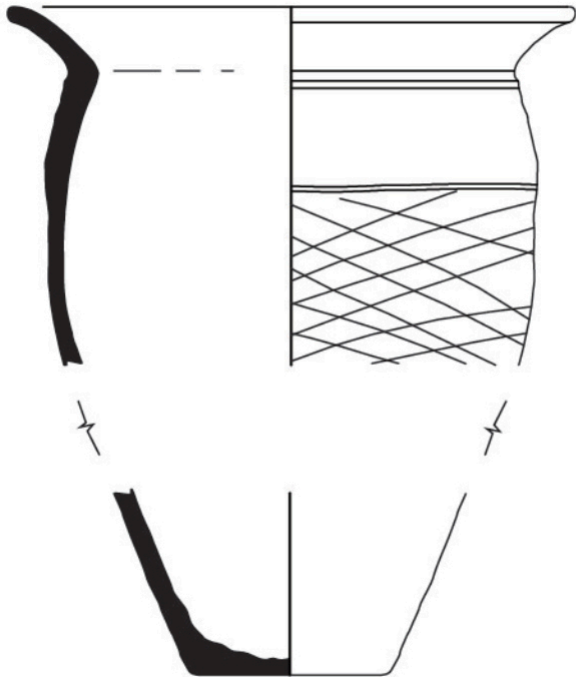
ID 1/6_1015/1001
Everted rim jar with broad unburnished/rough band to upper body. Heavily abraded and worn.
Some patches of burning and limescale residue on inner surface.



ID3_4012
Everted rim jar with relatively upright rim Similar form to Holbrook and Bidwell 8.1 (1991, 150, and fig. 8.1).
The fabric is mostly reduced (mid- grey) with pinkish margins and surfaces; 'pimply' feel.

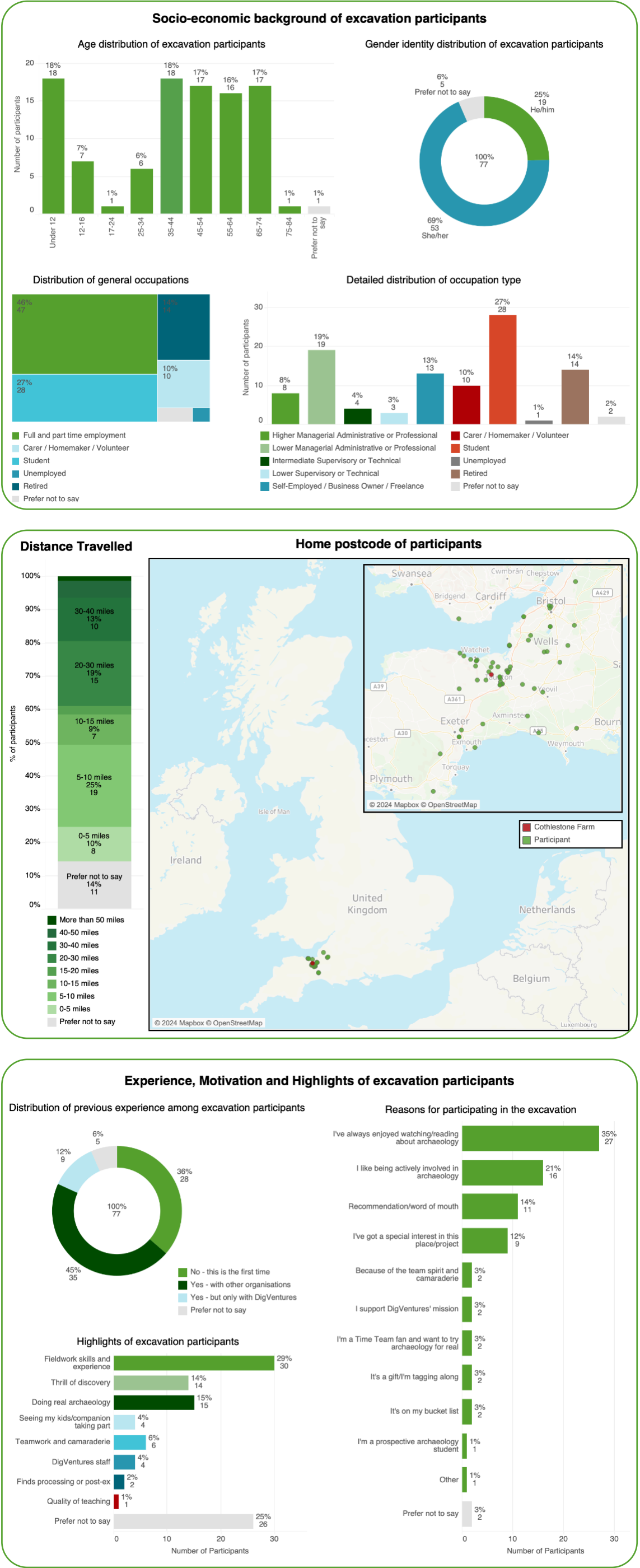


ID5_1009
Everted rim jar with broad band of obtuse-angled cross-hatch decoration to middle body; some fragments with incised cross-hatching.



0 10cm
1:2 scale on A3

Figure 28. Digital illustrations of Romano-British pottery recovered in Trench 1.



Experience, Motivation and Highlights of excavation participants

Distribution of previous experience among excavation participants

Experience	Percentage	Count
No - this is the first time	45%	35
Yes - with other organisations	36%	28
Yes - but only with DigVentures	12%	9
Prefer not to say	6%	5

Reasons for participating in the excavation

Reason	Percentage	Count
I've always enjoyed watching/reading about archaeology	35%	27
I like being actively involved in archaeology	21%	16
Recommendation/word of mouth	14%	11
I've got a special interest in this place/project	12%	9
Because of the team spirit and camaraderie	3%	2
I support DigVentures' mission	3%	2
I'm a Time Team fan and want to try archaeology for real	3%	2
It's a gift/I'm tagging along	3%	2
It's on my bucket list	3%	2
I'm a prospective archaeology student	1%	1
Other	1%	1
Prefer not to say	3%	2

Highlights of excavation participants

Highlight	Percentage	Count
Fieldwork skills and experience	29%	30
Thrill of discovery	14%	14
Doing real archaeology	15%	15
Seeing my kids/companion taking part	4%	4
Teamwork and camaraderie	6%	6
DigVentures staff	4%	4
Finds processing or post-ex	2%	2
Quality of teaching	1%	1
Prefer not to say	25%	26

Figure 29. Public impact - Excavation participants demographics

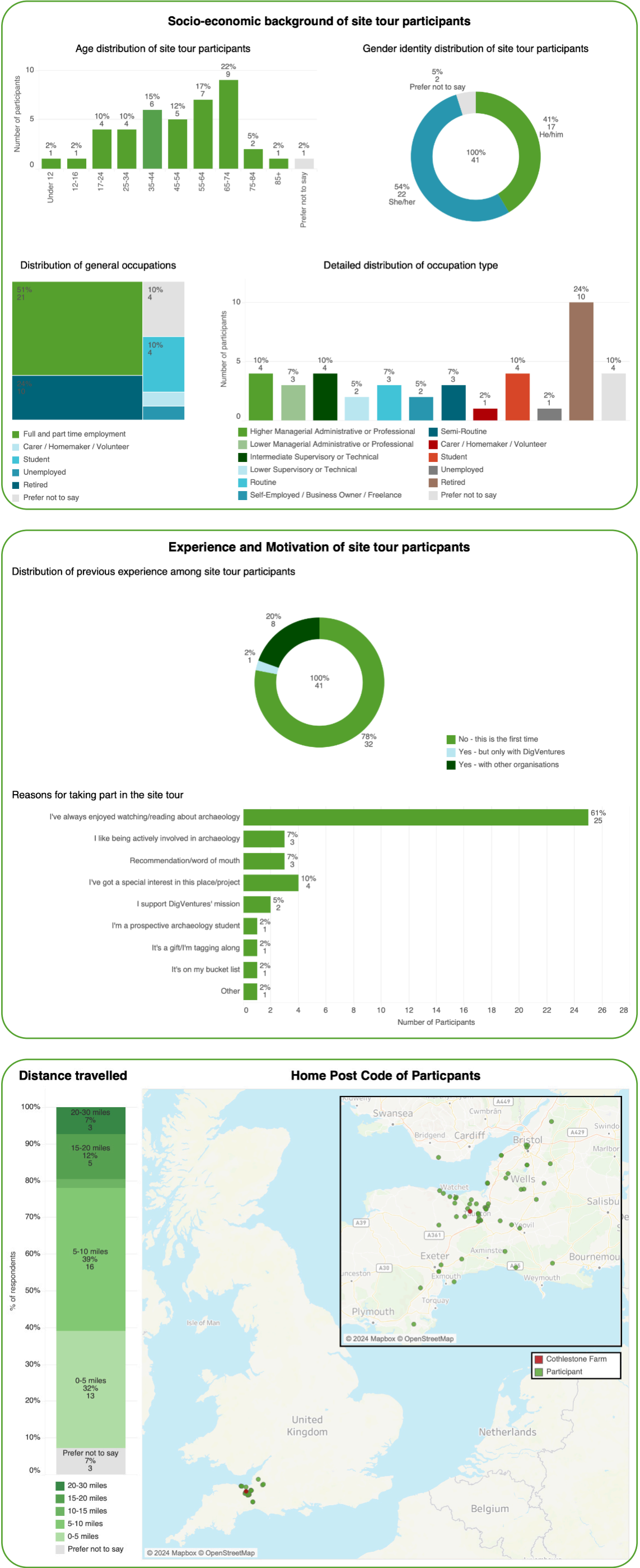


Figure 30. Public impact - Site tour participants demographics



A morning briefing in the trench



A clean trench is a happy trench! All smiles in the trowel line.



Lifting the pottery in the bottom of the ditch



The finds team reconstructing one of the Roman pots



Having a sieve searching in vain for any surviving human remains



The moment of discovery, one of the iron knives as it was excavated

Figure 31. Photographs of community participants excavating at Cothelstone Farm.

	EXPECTATION	SUGGESTED METHOD	OUTCOMES FOR HERITAGE	OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE	OUTCOMES FOR COMMUNITIES
Level One	Providing an academically rigorous framework, whilst ensuring that impact measurement is appropriate to the stage of development of a variety of different products, services and programmes. A low threshold, appropriate to very early stage innovations, which may still be at the idea stage. Involving little more than a clear articulation of why the intervention is needed, what it will aim to achieve why this is better than what currently happens. Project owners will be able to give an account of impact, providing a logical reason why their intervention could have an impact and why that would be an improvement on the current situation.	Steps needed to ensure correct evidence is collected to determine whether or not a venture is making a positive difference A clear rationale to show why the product/service could have an impact, and why that would be an improvement on the current situation. Articulated as a theory of change and logic model, linking activities, outputs, outcomes to hypothesized impact.	Intrinsic benefits relating to the research dividend and evidence baseline required for successful management of archaeological sites and landscapes A fully illustrated Project Design, signed off by statutory stakeholder, outlining key archaeological research questions, roles, procedures, stages and outputs.	Instrumental benefits for participants and platform users, enabling the voluntary sector to scale in a sustainable and ethically responsible fashion A training or activity plan, linking activities to outputs, outcomes and impact, and an explanation of how the outcome could be measured.	Wider social impacts received by those who may not be direct participants, but benefit through increased amenity value, tourism and local distinctiveness. A training, activity, audience development and/or heritage resource management plan, linking activities to outputs, outcomes and impact, and an explanation of how the outcome could be measured.
Level Two	At Level 2 projects will be gathering data that shows some change amongst those receiving or using the intervention. At this stage, data can begin to show that there is a change in the measure of the outcome among the recipients of the product or service, but this may not be sufficient to provide evidence of direct causality.	Pre and post-survey evaluation; cohort/panel study; and regular interval surveying.	Assessment Report; Management Report, base-lined against previous investigations	Evaluation survey for participants to quantify demographics, socio-economic characteristics and spatial data, followed up with a pre and post-survey qualitative evaluation using a separate questionnaire methodology to determine any changes as a consequence of taking part	Evaluation survey for site visitors to quantify audience demographics, socio-economic characteristics and spatial data, followed up with a qualitative study using a separate questionnaire methodology to determine any changes that took place as a consequence of the visit
Level Three	At Level 3 projects will be able to demonstrate that they are causing the hypothesized impact, by showing less impact amongst those who don't receive the product/ service.	Robust methods using a control group, or evaluating a random selection of participants, begin to isolate the impact of the product/ service. All products/services at Level 3 will be well documented, with necessary skills, training (and other delivery requirements) outlined clearly, to enable effective replication in alternative places, situation, contexts etc.	Analytical report, synthesizing specialist reports with previous work locally, regionally and nationally, to determine significance, importance and potential of the site.	Meta-analysis of evaluation results with those derived from projects delivering similar community-based activities, including archaeological/ heritage and other unrelated arts/ citizen science projects.	Meta-analysis of evaluation results with those derived from projects delivering similar community-based activities - including both archaeological/heritage and other unrelated arts/citizen science projects.
Level Four	At Level 4 projects can explain why and how the intervention is having the impact observed and evidenced so far, supported by an independent evaluation to validate the findings. This will also assess the extent to which the intervention can deliver impact at a reasonable cost, and whether it can be replicated and purchased in multiple locations.	Robust independent evaluation that investigates and validates the nature of the impact; this might include endorsement via commercial standards or industry kitemarks, underpinned by a documented standardisation of delivery and processes, data on costs of production and acceptable price point for customers.	Quality assured by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) under the Registered Organisation scheme, and involving independent site inspections and documentary audit.	External audit of quality of training programmes and activities by CIfA, The Archaeological Training Forum, Register of Professional Archaeologists, Skills Passport and National Occupational Standards.	External audit of community programming and impact by specialist consultancy, undertaken independently of project team.
Level Five	At Level 5, projects will be able to demonstrate that the intervention could be operated up by someone else, somewhere else and scaled up, whilst continuing to have positive and direct impact on the outcome, and whilst remaining a financially viable proposition. For a service, this will establish whether it can be delivered by different staff in different locations.	Evidence will be derived from multiple evaluations of the product/ service in different settings (at least two evaluations; one of which will be independent) to demonstrate that the product/service can be used in different settings (which could be in different settings geographically and/or with different types of product/service users). Appropriate methods at this level will include multiple replication evaluations; future scenario analysis; or fidelity evaluation.	An excavation manual, underpinned by a broader operations manual and 'culture deck', detailing how the DigVentures project model should be applied in differing contexts.	A syllabus and training manual, underpinned by a broader operations manual and outline spectrum of engagement, detailing the participant's journey from digital supporter to experienced field digger.	An audience engagement and communications plan, underpinned by a broader operations manual and tailored 'culture deck', detailing how the intervention should be applied with clear and measurable benchmarks.

Figure 32. Standards of Evidence



Figure 33. OUR THEORY of CHANGE - Measuring impact for both intrinsic outcome for archaeology and instrumental benefits for people and communities

Appendix A: Context descriptions

Table 1. Trench 1 context descriptions

Trench 1	Dimensions:	15.00m x 6.00m						
	Orientation:	NNE-SSW						
	Reason for trench:	To investigate geophysical anomalies and cropmarks from aerial photographs consistent with a ring ditch						
Context	Description	Type	Interpretation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Feature	
1001	Dark greyish brown, loose, clayey silt with occasional small to medium sub-angular charcoal and moderately small to medium sized angular to sub-angular platy shillet/sandstone inclusions.	Deposit	Topsoil	15	6	0.28 (avg.)	N/A	
1002	Mid greyish brown, loose, clayey silt with moderately frequent small to medium sized angular to sub-angular platy shillet/sandstone.	Deposit	Subsoil	15	6	0.18 (avg.)	N/A	
1003	Light greyish yellow, firm, sandy clay with frequent small to medium angular to sub-angular platy shillet/sandstone inclusions and moderately frequent small angular to sub-angular spheroidal gravel.	Deposit	Natural geology in Trench 1 - superficial yellow gravel, sandstone and greyish green shillet coming on to a dark orange clay with sands.	15	6	0.05 (avg.)	N/A	
1004	NE-SW aligned linear gully with a flat base and shallow, concave sides.	Cut	Possible water drainage gully or one phase of a cemetery boundary ditch. Terminus slot	> 2.00	1.03	0.13	F02	
1005	Dark pinkish brown, friable clayey silt with moderately frequent small to medium sized sub-angular platy stones concentrated towards the base of the feature.	Fill	Silting fill of a gully	> 2.00	1.03	0.13	F02	
1006	E-W aligned linear, shallow u-shaped gully with a rounded base and shallow concave sides.	Cut	Cut of a linear gully/ditch that truncates Romano-British feature [1008], possibly representing two phases of cemetery boundary	> 0.98	0.84	0.08	F03	
1007	Mid reddish brown, firm, clayey silt with moderately frequent small to medium sized sub-angular platy sandstone/shillet.	Fill	Fill of a potential linear gully	> 0.98	0.84	0.08	F03	
1008	NE-SW aligned linear shallow u-shaped gully with a flat base and shallow, concave sides.	Cut	Possible drainage gully or cemetery boundary	> 1.00	0.92	0.07	F02	
1009	Dark reddish brown, friable clayey silt with moderately frequent small sub-angular spheroidal gravel inclusions and occasional medium sub-angular platy sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Silting fill of a possible Romano-British gully or cemetery boundary ditch	> 1.00	0.92	0.07	F02	
1010	NE-SW aligned linear shallow u-shaped gully with a flat base and shallow, concave sides.	Cut	Possible shallow drainage gully or maybe a cemetery boundary ditch	> 1.00	0.67	0.15	F03	
1011	Dark reddish brown, friable clayey silt with occasional small to medium sized angular platy sandstone.	Fill	Gradual silting fill of a linear gully	> 1.00	0.67	0.15	F03	
1012	E-W aligned sub-rectangular possible grave cut with a flat base and steep, straight sides.	Cut	Likely grave cut, part of a group of potential graves in the northern half of Trench 1 on an E-W alignment. No skeletal remains were recovered but these features are aligned parallel and respect each other as part of a possible arranged cemetery	1.9	0.54	0.27	F09	
1013	Mid reddish brown, friable sandy clay with rare flecks of sub-angular platy sandstone inclusions concentrated towards top of feature.	Fill	Backfill of possible grave 1012. One pot sherd recovered. No bone preservation due to soil conditions	1.9	0.54	0.27	F09	



Trench 1	Dimensions:	15.00m x 6.00m					
	Orientation:	NNE-SSW					
	Reason for trench:	To investigate geophysical anomalies and cropmarks from aerial photographs consistent with a ring ditch					
Context	Description	Type	Interpretation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Feature
1014	NE-SW aligned linear shallow u-shaped gully with a flat base and shallow, concave sides.	Cut	Cut of a very shallow linear gully - Romano-British pottery recovered from the fill. Ephemeral nature makes it uncertain as to whether this is a plough furrow truncating features in the vicinity or a genuine Romano-British feature, such as a cemetery boundary ditch	> 1.30	1.2	0.06	F03
1015	Light reddish brown, firm clayey silt with moderate small to medium sized sub-angular platy sandstone/shillet inclusions.	Fill	Fill of a possible Romano-British gully or a plough furrow truncating Romano-British features in the vicinity.	> 1.30	1.2	0.06	F03
1016	E-W aligned sub-rectangular shallow u-shaped possible grave cut with a flat base and vertical, straight sides.	Cut	Cut of a grave - larger and better dug than the three excavated graves to the south, possibly of a different phase of cemetery.	> 1.82	0.88	0.25	F10
1017	Dark reddish brown, firm clayey silt with occasional small to medium sized sub-angular platy sandstone/shillet inclusions.	Fill	Backfill of a grave - silty material	> 1.82	0.88	0.25	F10
1018	E-W aligned sub-rectangular shallow u-shaped possible grave cut with a sub-rounded base and vertical, straight sides.	Cut	Cut of an E-W aligned grave in the early Christian tradition. Shallow and slightly irregularly dug. Possibly relating to an earlier phase of cemetery.	1.53	0.51	0.18	F07
1019	Mid reddish brown, firm clayey silt with moderate small to medium sub-angular platy sandstone/shillet inclusions.	Fill	Backfill of a grave	1.53	0.51	0.18	F07
1020	E-W aligned sub-rectangular possible grave cut with a flat base and vertical, straight sides.	Cut	Cut of an E-W aligned burial, part of a row of four parallel burials in Trench 1. Very shallow and poorly dug - possibly representing one phase of cemetery.	1.95	0.58	0.12	F08
1021	Mid reddish brown, firm, clayey silt with moderate small to medium sized sub-angular platy sandstone/shillet inclusions.	Fill	Backfill of grave	1.95	0.58	0.12	F08
1022	E-W aligned irregular sub-rectangular shallow u-shaped possible grave cut, flat base and shallow, concave sides.	Cut	Irregularly shaped large possible E-W aligned possible grave	2.4	1.15	0.16	F06
1023	Mid reddish brown, firm clayey silt with moderately frequent small to medium sized sub-angular platy sandstone/shillet inclusions	Fill	Backfill of a possible E-W aligned grave	2.4	1.15	0.16	F06
1024	35m diameter circular deep u-shaped ring ditch with sub-rounded base and steep, concave sides.	Cut	Cut of a circular ring ditch	> 2.50	1.38+	0.16+	F01
1025	Dark orangey brown, friable silty clay with frequent small to medium sized sub-angular to sub-rounded spheroidal charcoal inclusions and rare small to medium sized sub-angular elongated shillet/sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Basal fill of the ring ditch in Trench 1. This material was very charcoal rich with ashy sediments throughout indicating an intentional dumping deposit of burnt waste directly into the base of the ditch not long after it was first opened. Within this basal fill was an intentionally placed deposit of three complete though partially fragmented ceramic vessels (SF8, SF10-11) that were placed directly onto the base of the ditch perhaps either as cremations or intentional offerings of food vessels.	> 2.50	1.32	0.16	F01
1026	Dark orangey grey, friable clayey silt with frequent medium to large sub-angular spheroidal shaped charcoal inclusions.	Fill	Intentional tipping event of burnt ashy waste material. Thin tip line visible in section below silting (1034) and above (1037). Could represent waste tipping from whatever activity is being carried out inside the ring ditch enclosure.	> 2.50	1.47	0.09	F01

Trench 1	Dimensions:	15.00m x 6.00m					
	Orientation:	NNE-SSW					
	Reason for trench:	To investigate geophysical anomalies and cropmarks from aerial photographs consistent with a ring ditch					
Context	Description	Type	Interpretation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Feature
1027	Light orangey grey friable clayey silt with occasional small to medium sized sub-angular charcoal inclusions.	Fill	Thin layer of silting with some grey ashy charcoal inclusions. This represents the last of a series of thin silting and tipping events containing burnt material before later thicker homogeneous silting up of the ring ditch in the Romano-British/early medieval periods.	> 2.50	1.78	0.08	F01
1028	Mid orangey brown friable clayey silt with occasional flecks of small sub-rounded spheroidal charcoal inclusions concentrated towards top central area of the fill.	Fill	Silting fill of the ring ditch in Trench 1, possibly associated with use during the Romano-British period based on pottery recovered. This silting event appears to have occurred after a series of ashy tipping and silting below and may represent a change in use of the monument in the Romano-British period from its function in the Prehistoric	> 2.50	3.42	0.38	F01
1029	Dark orangey brown friable clayey silt with occasional small to medium sized sub-angular to sub-rounded platy gravel inclusions.	Fill	Final silting event filling in and sealing off ditch [1024] after the ring ditch monument finally went out of use and was no longer visible in the landscape. A fairly homogeneous silting fill with occasional gravel inclusions suggests a relatively undisturbed silting event over an extended period of time	> 2.50	3.02	0.59	F01
1030	Light grey, plastic clay, no inclusions	Fill	A very thin band of greyish clay was observed immediately below the basal fill (1025) where small pools of water were occasionally developing. It is perhaps most likely this represents the exposed natural clay base of the originally cut ditch that changed color over time due to exposure to water and air. Alternatively this could also represent an intentional clay lining to the base of the ditch, but this is considered unlikely given that the natural geology in this location is clay	> 2.50	0.83	0.03	F01
1031	Mid orangey brown, friable, silty clay with occasional small to medium angular to sub-angular spheroidal shale/sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Possible initial bank slippage material slumping in from the external side of the ring ditch and sitting on top of basal fill (1025).	> 2.50	0.84	0.13	F01
1032	Light yellowish brown, loose sandy silt with frequent small to medium sized angular to sub-angular spheroidal gravel inclusions	Fill	Likely bank slippage material consisting of a very gravelly redeposited natural slump falling in from the external side of the ring ditch.	> 2.50	0.97	0.16	F01
1033	Dark orangey brown friable silty clay with occasional small to medium sized angular to sub-angular platy sandstone/shillet inclusions.	Fill	Possible silting event consisting of material washing in from the external side of the ring ditch after initial bank slumping (1031) and (1032).	> 2.50	1.3	0.2	F01
1034	Dark orangey brown, firm, silty clay with rare medium sub-angular spheroidal shillet/sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Silting event between two possible tipping lines (1026) below and (1027) above. This likely represents a short period of silting between two burnt waste tipping events.	> 2.50	1.43	0.18	F01
1035	Light orangey brown, plastic, clay with moderately frequent small sub-angular spheroidal gravel inclusions.	Fill	Upon further excavation this context was considered to be natural geological clays and gravels	> 2.50	0.56	> 0.02	F01
1036	Colour: light greyish yellow. Compaction: dry, firm. Composition: clayey silt. Inclusions: frequent small to medium sub-angular platy gravel, evenly distributed.	Fill	Gravelly backfill of a possible grave	> 1.25	0.75	0.2	F05

Trench 1	Dimensions:	15.00m x 6.00m						
	Orientation:	NNE-SSW						
	Reason for trench:	To investigate geophysical anomalies and cropmarks from aerial photographs consistent with a ring ditch						
Context	Description	Type	Interpretation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Feature	
1037	Dark orangey brown, friable silty clay with frequent small to medium sized sub-angular platy sandstone/shillet inclusions and moderately frequent small to medium sized sub-angular platy gravel inclusions.	Fill	First silting event after the basal fill deposition and before the first burnt ashy tipping event.	> 2.50	1.49	0.2	F01	
1038	E-W aligned irregular sub-rectangular possible shallow u-shaped grave cut with flat base and steep, concave sides.	Cut	Cut of a possible grave visible in west facing section through ring ditch in Trench 1. A relationship was established in section of this feature cutting the upper ring ditch fills but it is not known for sure if this was a grave as no bone or grave goods were recovered and the full extent of the feature was not identified. The feature is on an E-W alignment, but at a slightly different orientation to the other graves excavated in the trench. Therefore it could also represent a shallow gully similar to [1039] on the southern side of the ring ditch.	> 1.25	0.75	0.2	F05	
1039	E-W aligned regular, sub-rectangular shallow u-shaped possible grave cut with flat base and steep, concave sides.	Cut	Cut of a possible gully or shallow recut running parallel to the ring ditch. This was visible in both the west facing section of the ring ditch and in the east facing section of the trench. It's continuation beyond the ring ditch intervention towards the east could not be seen in plan due to the similarity of the soil matrix. It had also been considered that this feature could be a grave truncating the ring ditch, but this appears unlikely due to the size and orientation of this feature.	> 1.80	1.16	0.37	F04	
1040	Light yellowish brown, friable clayey silt with moderately frequent small to medium sub-angular platy gravel inclusions concentrated towards base of feature.	Fill	Silting fill of a possible shallow gully running parallel to the southern side of the ring ditch.	> 1.80	1.16	0.37	F04	
1041	Recut of [1024] with sub-rounded base	Cut	Possible recut of ring ditch in Trench 1	2.50+	3.38	1.25	F01	

Table 2. Trench 2 context descriptions

Trench 2	Dimensions:	15.00m x 1.50m						
	Orientation:	E-W						
	Reason for trench:	To investigate geophysical anomalies and cropmarks from aerial photographs consistent with a sub-circular enclosure						
Context	Description	Type	Interpretation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Feature	
2001	Mid reddish brown, friable silty loam with small angular to sub-angular platy gravel inclusions.	Deposit	Topsoil	15	1.5	0.28 (avg.)	N/A	
2002	Dark brownish red, friable silty clay with frequent flecks of medium sized angular to sub-angular platy stone inclusions.	Deposit	Subsoil	15	1.5	0.09- 0.40	N/A	
2003	Mid orangey brown plastic silty clay with frequent inclusions of small to medium sized angular to sub-angular platy shillet/sandstone inclusions.	Deposit	Natural	15	1.5	0.10+	N/A	
2004	Mid reddish brown moderately loose silty clay with frequent flecks of large and very angular to sub-angular platy gravel and stone inclusions.	Fill	Fill of field drain	1.50+	0.21- 0.30	0.53+	F11	
2005	N-S aligned linear cut of a field drain with steep, straight sides.	Cut	Cut of field drain - not fully excavated	1.50+	0.21- 0.30	0.53+	F11	
2006	Mid orangey brown silty clay with frequent flecks of medium angular to sub-angular stone inclusions.	Deposit	Colluvial build up above the natural	15	1.5	0.12+	N/A	



Table 3. Trench 3 context descriptions

Trench 3	Dimensions:	15.00m x 1.50m					
	Orientation:	NE-SW					
	Reason for trench:	To investigate a large semi-curvilinear oblong geophysical anomaly					
Context	Description	Type	Interpretation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Feature
3001	Dark greyish brown, friable clayey silt with frequent small angular to sub-rounded sandstone/shillet inclusions.	Deposit	Topsoil	15	1.5	0.20 to 0.40	N/A
3002	Mid greyish brown, friable clayey silt with frequent medium sized angular to sub-rounded platy sandstone/shillet.	Deposit	Subsoil	15	1.5	0.20 to 0.45	N/A
3003	Dark greyish brown, compacted fine silty sand with moderately frequent small to very large sub-angular to sub-rounded sandstone inclusions	Deposit	Natural	15	1.5	0.10 (avg.)	N/A
3004	Mid greyish brown, malleable clayey silt with frequent flecks of large angular to sub-rounded platy sandstone/shillet inclusions.	Fill	Uppermost silting fill of partially excavated large geophysical feature. Prehistoric artefacts such as a flint arrowhead and pottery were recovered from this fill. This feature could not be fully characterized due to its large size within the trench 3 limit of excavation.	9.7	1.50+	0.11	F12
3005	Mid greyish brown, friable sandy loam with frequent large angular to sub-rounded sandstone/shillet inclusions and moderately frequent flecks of charcoal.	Fill	Lowest fill encountered as part of the partial excavation of feature [3006]. This very dark clayey silt fill contained small sherds of prehistoric pottery. Only a very small depth of this deposit was excavated and it could not be fully characterized due to depth restrictions.	9.7	1.50+	0.34	F12
3006	Irregular sub circular crescent shaped feature - not fully excavated	Cut	This feature could not be fully characterized due to its large size and depth within the limit of excavation. It was partially excavated with two interventions - neither reached the base. The fills were fairly homogeneous throughout and this feature may be related to post industrial quarrying, as interpreted on the geophysical survey. However, the fills did not contain any modern artefactual material and all finds appeared to be prehistoric. It is possible this feature may have been some sort of utilization of the old paleochannel river bank that once existed here, but further excavation would be required to refine this interpretation.	9.7	1.50+	0.45	F12

Table 4. Trench 4 context descriptions

Trench 4	Dimensions:	13.00m x 4.00m					
	Orientation:	NNW-SSE					
	Reason for trench:	To investigate geophysical anomalies and cropmarks from aerial photographs consistent with a Ring Ditch and linear features					
Context	Description	Type	Interpretation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Feature
4001	Dark greyish brown, loose clayey silt with occasional flecks of small sub-angular to platy shillet/sandstone inclusions	Deposit	Topsoil	13	4	0.17 (avg.)	N/A
4002	Light reddish brown, loose clayey silt with occasional small to medium sized sub-angular platy sandstone/shillet inclusions.	Deposit	Subsoil	13	4	0.25 (avg.)	N/A
4003	Very light greyish yellow, firm medium sand with frequent medium to large sized angular platy sandstone/shillet inclusions.	Deposit	Natural	13	4	0.05 (avg.)	N/A
4004	Mid reddish brown, friable silty sand with rare flecks of medium sub-angular to rounded spheroidal hematite and frequent pieces of large angular to sub-rounded platy sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Upper silting fill of ditch 4030 marking the final abandonment of the feature as it fully silted up.	> 3.50	4	0.68	F01
4005	E-W aligned sub-rectangular shallow u-shaped grave cut with a flat base and steep, straight sides.	Cut	E-W aligned shallow grave cut with a single intentional backfill. No skeletal remains surviving, an iron knife SF1 was recovered. This is a likely early Christian or Anglo-Saxon burial, part of a group of at least 4 in the northern part of trench 4. The very shallow nature of this cut may suggest heavy ground erosion over the centuries eroding away a possible bank into which this grave may have been cut.	2.1	0.63	0.12	F16
4006	Dark reddish brown, firm sandy silt with occasional small sub-angular to sub-rounded platy sandstone inclusions concentrated towards Surface of feature.	Fill	Single event backfill material of a grave. No skeletal remains recovered although a small knife SF1 was recovered.	2.1	0.63	0.12	F16
4007	Mid reddish brown, friable silty sand with frequent large sub-angular to rounded platy sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Single event possible backfill of field drain	> 1.00	1.1	0.4	F13
4008	NW-SE aligned linear deep u-shaped ditch with a flat base and moderately steep, straight sides.	Cut	Possible post medieval agricultural drainage ditch. Aligned nw-se and running parallel to another similar ditch [4010], though no relationship could be established between the two. They are however likely broadly contemporary	> 1.00	1.1	0.4	F13
4009	Mid reddish brown, friable silty sand with frequent large sub-angular to rounded platy sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Fill of post medieval field boundary or agricultural drainage ditch.	> 1.00	0.76	0.39	F14
4010	NW-SE aligned linear deep u-shaped ditch with a flat base and steep, straight sides.	Cut	Possible post med drain/field boundary ditch running parallel to similar ditch [4008]. The two are likely broadly contemporary.	> 1.00	0.76	0.39	F14
4011	Mid brownish red, friable silty sand with frequent large sub-angular to rounded platy sandstone and shillet inclusions	Fill	Secondary silting fill of ditch 4030. Represents gradual silting up of ditch as it went out of use. Romano-British pottery fragments found within this layer Suggesting the feature remained visible in the landscape over a long period of time and was possibly being maintained to achieve this.	> 1.50	2	0.3	F01
4012	Mid brownish red, loose clayey sand with frequent medium sub-angular to rounded platy sandstone inclusions and occasional small sub-angular to sub-rounded spheroidal hematite inclusions.	Fill	Middle silting fill of the ditch. Potentially started forming after ring ditch went out of use. Spindle whorl found in it. Sits above slumping fills	> 1.50	1.8	0.3	F01

Trench 4	Dimensions:	13.00m x 4.00m						
	Orientation:	NNW-SSE						
	Reason for trench:	To investigate geophysical anomalies and cropmarks from aerial photographs consistent with a Ring Ditch and linear features						
Context	Description	Type	Interpretation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Feature	
4013	Mid reddish brown, friable sandy silt with rare flecks and small sub-angular to sub-rounded platy sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Fill of possible early medieval E-W aligned grave visible truncating northern edge of ring ditch in Trench 4.	1.8	0.8	0.29	F15	
4014	E-W aligned shallow u-shaped potential grave with flat base and vertical, straight sides.	Cut	Possible grave cut on an E-W alignment truncating ring ditch F01 on it's external northern edge in trench 4. No skeletal remains recovered. Part of a series of graves making up an early medieval cemetery in this location	1.8	0.8	0.29	F15	
4015	Mid reddish brown, friable sandy silt with frequent large angular to sub-rounded platy sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Fill of post medieval drain 4018. Cuts through grave 4016	> 0.80	> 0.50	> 0.22	F14	
4016	NW-SE aligned linear deep u-shaped ditch with flat base and steep, straight sides.	Cut	Cut of a post medieval drainage ditch/field boundary truncating grave 4018.	> 0.80	> 0.50	> 0.22	F14	
4017	Mid reddish brown, friable silty sand with frequent flecks and small sub-angular to rounded platy sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Likely single event backfill of grave 4016 containing two iron knives.	1.1	0.6	0.19	F17	
4018	E-W aligned sub-rectangular possible grave with flat base and vertical, straight sides.	Cut	Cut of E-W aligned grave truncated by post medieval drainage ditch 4016. No skeletal remains were recovered but two iron knives, likely grave goods, were recovered suggesting these burials may date to the Anglo Saxons period. This grave is part of a group of at least 4 burials visible in the northern part of trench 4 indicating a possible Anglo Saxon cemetery	1.1	0.6	0.19	F17	
4019	Mid greyish red very loose medium-grained sand.	Fill	Sandy slump material collapse into the ditch. The profile would again suggest this has entered from the external side of the ditch, but may also have been manufactured by cleaning out of the feature.	1.5	> 0.80	0.18	F01	
4020	E-W aligned shallow u-shaped sub-rectangular possible grave cut with a flat base and shallow, straight sides.	Cut	Heavily truncated very shallow possible grave. Likely truncated by ploughing from above and on the eastern side by a post med boundary ditch.	0.5	0.45	0.06	F18	
4021	Mid reddish brown, firm silty sand with occasional flecks and medium sized sub-angular to sub-rounded platy sandstone inclusions	Fill	Heavily truncated fill of possible grave	0.5	0.45	0.06	F18	
4022	NW-SE aligned linear ditch, not fully excavated.	Cut	Cut of post-medieval boundary/drainage ditch showing relationship with truncated grave [4020].	> 0.50	> 0.60	> 0.10	F14	
4023	Mid reddish brown, friable silty sand with frequent large sub-angular to rounded platy sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Fill of post med drainage/field boundary ditch	> 0.50	> 0.60	> 0.10	F14	
4024	Mid reddish brown, loose fine-grained silty sand with frequent flecks of sub-angular to sub-rounded platy sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Possible collapsed natural ditch edge slumping from the internal side of the ditch.	> 1.50	0.7	0.16	F01	
4025	NW-SE aligned, linear deep u-shaped ditch with rounded base and steep, straight sides.	Cut	Cut of post med drain drainage or field boundary ditch visible truncating ring ditch F01 in trench 4	> 1.50	> 0.62	0.46	F14	
4026	Mid reddish brown, friable silty sand with frequent very large sub-angular to rounded platy sandstone inclusions.	Fill	fill of post med ditch/field boundary truncating ring ditch F01 in trench 4.	> 1.50	> 0.62	0.46	F14	
4027	E-W aligned sub-rectangular shallow u-shaped possible grave with flat base and steep, straight sides.	Cut	Probable grave cut truncating edge of ditch 4030. Same alignment as other similar features possibly indicating an early medieval cemetery	> 0.60	0.8	0.25	F20	

Trench 4	Dimensions:	13.00m x 4.00m						
	Orientation:	NNW-SSE						
	Reason for trench:	To investigate geophysical anomalies and cropmarks from aerial photographs consistent with a Ring Ditch and linear features						
Context	Description	Type	Interpretation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Feature	
4028	Mid reddish brown, friable sandy clay with moderately frequent flecks of small angular to sub-angular platy sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Fill of possible grave truncating ditch 4030, only partially excavated.	> 0.60	0.8	0.25	F20	
4029	Dark reddish brown, malleable sandy clay with frequent flecks of large angular to sub-rounded platy sandstone and shillet inclusions.	Fill	Basal slump in ditch with the profile suggesting slumping from the outside of the feature. However, it is also possible this profile has been manufactured by clearing out of the ditch, but no clear recut is visible.	> 1.50	1.4	0.1	F01	
4030	Curvi-linear, deep u-shaped ring ditch with a flat base and moderately steep, concave sides.	Cut	Large 35m diameter ring ditch visible in both trenches 1 and 4. The intervention in trench 4 revealed a very different sequence of deposition compared to trench 1 with a series of homogeneous silting fills approximately 1.6m in depth. Possible remnants of initial slumping from the external side of the ditch and remnants of external bank material 4031 was visible in the western LOE of the trench. Romano-British pottery was found within the later silting fills, suggesting the ditch was still at least partially open at this period and may have been maintained until final silting up after abandonment.	> 4.30	1.96	0.27	F01	
4031	Light greyish yellow, friable silty sand with frequent large angular to rounded platy sandstone and shillet inclusions.	Deposit	Remnants of potential bank material outside of ring ditch. Seen in east facing section of tr 4.	4.9	4	0.07 (avg.)	F01	
4032	Mid reddish brown, friable silty sand with frequent flecks of medium sized angular to sub-rounded platy sandstone inclusions.	Fill	Possible single event backfill of a grave heavily truncated by drainage ditch [4010].	> 0.28	> 0.29	0.34	F19	
4033	E-W aligned irregular, rectangular deep u-shaped possible grave cut with a flat base and steep, straight sides.	Cut	Heavily truncated possible grave cut by post med drainage ditch 4008. Only a very small portion of this feature survives and it is not possible to fully characterize it as a grave at this point.	> 0.28	> 0.29	0.34	F19	
4034	Regular deep U-shaped with steep concave sides and a rounded base	Cut	Recut of ring ditch F01, likely in the Romano-British period	4.30+	3.29	1.37	F01	

Appendix B: Animal Bone

Table 5. Summary of animal bone

Trench	Context	Feature	Context description	cf. Cattle	Medium/large mammal	Medium mammal	Total
1	1025	F01	Basal fill of ring ditch [1024]		7	4	11
	1026		Fill of ring ditch [1024]		6		6
	1028		Fill of ring ditch [1024]	1	6	7	14
3	3005	F12	Fill of sub-circular crescent-shaped feature [3006]			1	1
Total				1	19	12	32



Appendix C: Prehistoric pottery

Table 6. Quantification by Trench with individual vessels from Trench 1 listed separately to not skew the data for the feature.

Period	No of sherds	Weight (grams)
Late Bronze Age Early Iron Age		
Trench 1 SF8	119	6416
Trench 1 SF9	7	268
Trench 1 SF10	24	2039
Trench 1 SF11	66	1364
Trench 1	329	3027
Trench 3	25	62
Trench 4	18	227
Total	588	13403g

Table 7. Details of Context, fabrics, abrasion, quantification vessel types and date of all Trenches

Trench	Deposit (Fill/Layer)	SF No.	Quantity	Weight (g)	Abrasion	Fabric	Description	Date
1	1001		26	124	2		Not present	
1	1009		39	401	2		Not present	
1	1013		1	3	2	Red sandstone	two horizontal incised grooves is similar to Trevisker Related pottery	LBA/EIA
1	1015		75	238	2		Not present	
1	1017		3	11	2	Red sandstone	flat-topped Bucket-form Type 1 Jar rim sherd	LBA/EIA
1	1023		2	6	2	Red sandstone	two small sherds abraded similar to (1036) and date	LBA/EIA
1	1025	8	4	81	1	Red sandstone/Quartzite	Type 3 hook-rim jar Smaller vessel 180mm rim diameter of Type 3 hook-rim jar	LBA
1	1025	8	119	6416	1 to 3	Red sandstone	Type 3 Hook-rim jar 200mm base diameter, 340mm rim diameter, wall thickness 8-12mm coarse fabric, deep vertical finger marks on exterior surface average inclusions size 3mm largest 12mm. Type 3 Hook-rim jar	LBA
1	1025	9	7	268	2	Red sandstone	Same vessel as SF8 as the sherd thickness, sandy fabric and deep finger-smearing marks	LBA

Trench	Deposit (Fill/Layer)	SF No.	Quantity	Weight (g)	Abrasion	Fabric	Description	Date
1	1025	10	24	2039	1	Red sandstone	Type 1 bucket-form jar vessel height of 190mm mostly complete but lacking 50% of the flat-topped rim 180mm in diameter in a Red sandstone fabric. The complete base is 160mm diameter with a sherd thickness of 7-10mm with vertical finger-smearing marks on the exterior surface. smaller than SF8	LBA
1	1025	11	66	1364	1	Red sandstone	High shouldered jar burnished	LBA/EIA
1	1025		14	199	2	Red sandstone	Body sherds from fill mostly part of vessel SF8, one basal angle sherd in a Quartzite fabric seen in (1026) and (1028). The pottery from soil samples <10> and <16> also have finger-smearing suggesting similar vessel type.	LBA/EIA



Trench	Deposit (Fill/Layer)	SF No.	Quantity	Weight (g)	Abrasion	Fabric	Description	Date
1	1026		90	1389	2	Red sandstone and Quartzite	a flat-topped Bucket-form Type 1 Jar diameter rim 160mm from a small vessel, a larger Hook-rim Jar Type 3 rim diameter 220mm wall thickness of 15mm. A Barrel-form Jar Type 4 rim diameter of 200mm with finger-smearing marks on the exterior. A basal angle sherd very fine well-made vessel 120mm in diameter from a with slightly burnished external surface in a reduced sandy fabric which is similar to or part of SF11. One Bucket-form Jar Type 1 coarse body and basal angle sherd 100mm diameter with external expansion, evidence of burning at high temperatures. Sherds from large vessels with finger-smearing Jars similar to SF8 and SF10, two finer carinated body sherds similar to the high shouldered vessel SF11. A small flared-out rim sherd belonging to the Plain Ware vessel conjoins with a rim from (1028)	LBA



Trench	Deposit (Fill/Layer)	SF No.	Quantity	Weight (g)	Abrasion	Fabric	Description	Date
1	1028		63	500	2	Red sandstone	five everted rim sherds 140mm in diameter of a Plain Ware flared-rim Jar most are conjoining and 26 body sherds from the same vessel all in a reduced sandy fabric	LBA/EIA
1	1029		8	49	2	Red sandstone and Quartzite	18 sherds, mainly basal angle, from a small jar with a burnished exterior surface and well-made reduced fabric base diameter of 80mm. seven small, body sherds in Quartzite fabric.	LBA/EIA
1	says (1028) on bag no bag with 1033 on	13	1	20	2	Red sandstone	In bag (1028) not (1033) same vessel as SF11 or if not a very similar form and burnished surface treatment	LBA/EIA
1	1036		3	6	2	Red sandstone and Quartzite	Three very abraded small sherds in a Quartzite fabric suggests a Late Bronze Age Early Iron Age date	LBA/EIA
3	3001		7	24	3	Red sandstone	highly abraded sherds undiagnostic but fabric suggests LBA/EIA date	LBA
3	3004		4	11	3	Red sandstone	flat-topped rim from a Bucket-form Jar Type 1 flared-out rim of a Plain Ware jar	LBA
3	3005		14	27	3	Red sandstone	Abraded sherds undiagnostic but probably similar date LBA/EIA	LBA

Trench	Deposit (Fill/Layer)	SF No.	Quantity	Weight (g)	Abrasion	Fabric	Description	Date
4	4004		9	145	3	Red sandstone	One sherd from high shouldered vessel and carinated body sherd from a similar vessel, One sherd with an expanded basal angle sherd, rim sherds from a small Bucket-form Jar Type1 flat-topped rim 160mm diameter.	LBA/EIA
4	4012		4	65			Not present	
4	4019		4	15	3	Red sandstone	One sherd High shouldered Plain Ware Jar	LBA
4	4019	7	1	2	3	Red sandstone	one very small highly abraded pottery sherd from /SF7\ which is undiagnostic in terms of form.	LBA



Appendix D: Roman pottery

Table 8. All pottery by period, ware and class, and count, weight, and estimated vessel equivalents (EVEs).

Period	Ware and class	Count	Weight	EVEs
Late Iron Age to Romano-British	Handmade	1	10.7	
	Quartz	1	10.7	
Romano-British	Fine ware	8	26.3	
	Oxford Red-slipped ware	8	26.3	
	Coarse ware	149	776.2	144.5
	Black-burnished ware	135	687	127
	Reduced ware	13	81.5	17.5
	Oxidised ware	1	7.7	
	Grand Total	158	813.2	144.5

Table 9. Pottery by feature, count, weight (g).

Feature	Context number	Count	Weight
Ditch F01	4012	4	63
Gully F02	1009	41	399
Gully F03	1015	83	233.6
Topsoil	1001	30	117.6
Grand Total		158	813.2

Table 10. Roman pottery archive catalogue

ID	Area / Trench	Context	Same	Part	Abrasion	Feature type	Feature	Earliest date	Latest date	Ware general	Ware class	Fabric code	Form1	Form2	Count	Weight	Rim diameter	Rim percentage	Base diameter	Base percentage	Sooting / Burning	Reference	Draw	Notes	Dectec1	Decmotif1
1	1	1015	6	Rim + Body	Abraded	Gully	Gully F03	L3C	4C	Coarse ware	Black-burnished ware 1	BB1-T1/DOR BB1	Jar	Gillam form 12	77	215.5	160	47			Y	Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, p. 103, type 20.1; fig. 28, p. 104. Gillam (1976) form 12, p. 64; fig. 2, p. 65. Fabric DOR BB 1, Tomber and Dore 1998, 127	X	Everted rim jar with broad unburnished/rough band to upper body. Heavily abraded and worn. Some patches of burning and limescale residue on inner surface.		
2	1	1015		Body	Heavy	Gully	Gully F03	240	410	Fine ware	Oxford Red-slipped ware	OXF RS	Uncertain		6	18.1					X	Fabric OXF RS, Tomber and Dore 1998, 176.	X	Heavily abraded body sherds of an open vessel, possibly a bowl.		
3	4	4012		Rim	Abraded	Ditch	Ditch F01	ROM	ROM	Coarse ware	Reduced ware	RE1/Fortress ware B; fabric 190/ Young fabric O1 (p. 185)	Jar/Bowl	Fortress ware B type 8.1/Young O27 (AD240-400) or R38 (1-4C)	3	55.3	180	17.5			X	Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, 149, fabric Fortress ware B/Fabric 190. Young 2000, p. 195, type O27 or type O38, p. 220	Y	Everted rim jar with relatively upright rim Similar form to Holbrook and Bidwell 8.1 (1991, 150, and fig. 8.1. The fabric is mostly reduced (mid- grey) with pinkish margins and surfaces; 'pimply' feel.		
4	4	4012		Body	Abraded	Ditch	Ditch F01	RB	RB	Coarse ware	Oxidised ware	OX2	Uncertain		1	7.7					X		X			
5	1	1009		Full profile	Unabraded	Gully	Gully F02	L3C	4C	Coarse ware	Black-burnished ware 1	BB1-T2	Jar	Gillam form 12	41	399	150	52.5	50	100	X	Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, p. 103, type 20.1; fig. 28, p. 104. Gillam (1976) form 12, p. 64; fig. 2, p. 65. Fabric DOR BB 1, Tomber and Dore 1998, 127	Y	Everted rim jar with broad band of obtuse-angled cross-hatch decoration to middle body; some fragments with incised cross-hatching.	Burnished	Obtuse-angled cross-hatch
6	1	1001	1	Rim + Body	Abraded	Topsoil	Topsoil	L3C	4C	Coarse ware	Black-burnished ware 1	BB1-T1/DOR BB1	Jar	Gillam form 12	17	72.5	160	27.5			Y	Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, p. 103, type 20.1; fig. 28, p. 104. Gillam	Y	Everted rim jar with broad unburnished/rough band to upper body. Heavily		



ID	Area / Trench	Context	Same	Part	Abrasion	Feature type	Feature	Earliest date	Latest date	Ware general	Ware class	Fabric code	Form1	Form2	Count	Weight	Rim diameter	Rim percentage	Base diameter	Base percentage	Sooting / Burning	Reference	Draw	Notes	Dectec1	Decmotif1
																						(1976) form 12, p. 64; fig. 2, p. 65. Fabric DOR BB 1, Tomber and Dore 1998, 127		abraded and worn. Some patches of burning and limescale residue on inner surface.		
7	1	1001		Body	Heavy	Topsoil	Topsoil	240	410	Fine ware	Oxford Red-slipped ware	OXF RS	Uncertain		2	8.2					X	Fabric OXF RS, Tomber and Dore 1998, 176.	X	Heavily abraded body sherds of an open vessel, possibly a bowl.		
8	1	1001		Body	Heavy	Topsoil	Topsoil	ROM	ROM	Coarse ware	Reduced ware	RE2	Uncertain		1	11.1					X		X			
9	1	1001		Body	Heavy	Topsoil	Topsoil	ROM	ROM	Coarse ware	Reduced ware	RE3	Uncertain		1	2.1					X		X			
10	1	1001		Body	Heavy	Topsoil	Topsoil	ROM	ROM	Coarse ware	Reduced ware	RE4	Uncertain		4	5.6					X		X			
11	1	1001		Body	Heavy	Topsoil	Topsoil	ROM	ROM	Coarse ware	Reduced ware	RE5	Uncertain		4	7.4					X		X			
12	1	1001		Body	Heavy	Topsoil	Topsoil	LIA	ROM	Handmade	Quartz	HM1	Uncertain		1	10.7					X		X			

Table 11. Fabric descriptions

The fabric of the pottery was first examined by eye and sorted into fabric groups on the basis of colour, hardness, feel, fracture, inclusions and manufacturing technique. Samples of the sherds were further examined under an x30 binocular microscope to verify these divisions. The size of the sample was as large as was felt necessary for each fabric group. National fabric collection codes are given wherever possible (Tomber and Dore 1998).

Colour: narrative description only

Hardness: after Peacock 1977

soft - can be scratched by finger nail

hard - can be scratched with penknife blade

very hard - cannot be scratched

Feel: tactile qualities

smooth - no irregularities

rough - irregularities can be felt

sandy - grains can be felt across the surface

leathery - smoothed surface like polished leather

soapy - smooth feel like soap

Fracture: visual texture of fresh break, after Orton 1980.

smooth - flat or slightly curved with no visible irregularities

irregular - medium, fairly widely spaced irregularities

finely irregular - small, fairly closely spaced irregularities

laminar - stepped effect

hackly - large and generally angular irregularities

Inclusions:

Type: after Peacock 1977

Frequency: indicated on a 4-point scale - abundant, common, sparse and very sparse where abundant is a break packed with an inclusion and very sparse is a break with only one or two of an inclusion.

Sorting: after Tomber and Dore 1998

Shape: angular - convex shape, sharp corners

sub-angular - convex shape, sharp to rounded corners

rounded - convex shape, no corners

sub-rounded - convex shape, rounded to no corners

Size: after Orton 1980

Size: subvisible - only just visible at x30 and too small to measure

fine - 0.1-0.25mm



medium - 0.25-0.5
coarse - 0.5-1mm
very coarse - over 1mm

Handmade

HM1 Handmade 1. Medium dark-brown fabric with dark-brown surfaces. Soft fabric, rough surface, with finely irregular fracture. Ill-sorted, common coarse rounded iron-rich, sparse coarse sub-rounded quartz, and sparse mica inclusions.

Fine wares

OXF RS Oxford Red-slipped ware. Fabric OXF RS, Tomber and Dore 1998, 176.

Black-burnished wares

DOR BB1 South-East Dorset Black-burnished ware. Fabric DOR BB 1, Tomber and Dore 1998, 127.

BB1-type Black-burnished ware 1-type. Medium fabric with black/brown burnished surface, brown-grey core and brown-orange margins. Hard fabric with smooth surface, and irregular fracture. Well-sorted, abundant medium sub-angular quartz, abundant medium sub-rounded iron-rich, common coarse rounded iron-rich, and sparse mica inclusions.

Oxidised wares

OX1 Oxidised ware 1. Medium fabric with pale brown margins and surface, and pale grey core. Hard fabric, rough surface, with irregular fracture. Ill-sorted, abundant fine rounded quartz, common coarse rounded iron-rich, sparse coarse angular quartz, sparse coarse sub-rounded rock, and sparse mica inclusions.

Reduced wares

RE1 Reduced ware 1. Medium fabric with broad grey core and pinkish margins and surface. Hard fabric with 'pimply' surface, and finely irregular fracture. Ill-sorted, common medium sub-rounded quartz, common coarse rounded grey rock, common medium and coarse sub-angular iron-rich, and sparse mica inclusions.

RE2 Reduced ware 2. Very coarse, gritty fabric, with grey core and pinkish-grey surface. Hard fabric with rough surface, with finely irregular fracture. Ill-sorted, common medium sub-rounded quartz, common coarse rounded grey rock, common coarse sub-angular iron-rich, and sparse mica inclusions. A coarser version of RE1.

RE3 Reduced ware 3. Medium, grey-brown fabric and surface. Hard fabric, rough surface, and finely irregular fracture. Well-sorted, common medium sub-angular quartz, sparse coarse rounded grey rock, common coarse sub-angular iron-rich (some black), and common mica inclusions.



- RE4 Reduced ware 4. Medium, dark brown-grey fabric and grey-brown surfaces. Hard fabric, rough surface, with finely irregular fracture. Ill-sorted, abundant fine and medium sub-angular quartz, common medium sub-rounded iron-rich, and sparse mica inclusions.
- RE5 Reduced ware 5. Fine fabric with some coarse inclusions. Dark brown fabric with brown-grey surfaces. Soft fabric, rough surfaces, with fine fracture. Ill-sorted, common fine and medium angular quartz spares coarse rounded iron-rich, sparse fine rounded lime, and common mica inclusions.

Appendix E: Fired clay

Table 12. Material by count and weight (g).

Material type and context	Count	Weight
Fired Clay/Daub	6	77.8
1028	1	43
1029	5	34.8
Fired Clay	1	20.2
1025	1	20.2
Grand Total	7	98

Table 13. Fired clay archive catalogue

ID	Context	Feature number	Feature type	Feature group	Context description	Type	Fabric code	Count	Weight	Height	Reused	Mortar	Overfired	Keying	Signature	Impressions	Reduced Core:	Comments	Retained	Catalogue	Illustrate	Period	Further analysis	Lath marks	Finished surface	Discarded	Scoring/tool marks	Underfired	Category	Glaze	Vitrified	Residue	Sooting
1	1028	F01	Ring ditch	F01 ring ditch 1024	Fill of ring ditch 1024	Fired Clay/Daub	Oxidised	1	43	21mm	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Orange-brown fabric, mostly fine quartz sand with some large quartz and rock. Possible surface preserved.	X	X	X	Unknown	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
2	1029	F01	Ring ditch	F01 ring ditch 1024	Fill of ring ditch 1024	Fired Clay/Daub	Oxidised	5	34.8	10-22mm	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Orange-brown fabric, mostly fine quartz sand with some large quartz and rock. Possible surface preserved on some fragments.	X	X	X	Unknown	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
3	1025	F01	Ring ditch	F01 ring ditch 1024	Basal fill of ring ditch 1024	Fired Clay	Oxidised	1	20.2	22mm	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Sample No. 10. Fragment of fired clay. The fragment has two distinct layers, one of which is red-brown and has been subjected to high temperatures (possibly a hearth?); the other layer is pale brown and presumably not in direct contact with heat. The clay fabric is mostly fine quartz sand with some large quartz, rock, and iron-rich inclusions.	X	X	X	Unknown	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X



Appendix F: Lithics

Table 14. Summary of lithics assemblage according to class/type by trench/feature

	Trench 1										Trench 2		Trench 3			Trench 4				Total
	F01	F02	F03	F05	F06	F09	F10	Subsoil	Topsoil	Total	Topsoil	Total	F12	Topsoil	Total	F01	F15	Topsoil	Total	
core	2									2										2
rough-out	1									1										1
single platform	1									1										1
conical	1									1										1
debitage	11	1		1		2	1	1	1	18	1	1	5		5	8		1	9	33
blade	3			1						4			2		2	1			1	7
flake	7	1				1	1	1	1	12	1	1	3		3	6		1	7	23
primary removal	1					1				2						1			1	3
debris	1								3	4			1	2	3	3	1		4	11
chip									2	2				2	2	1	1		2	6
chunk	1								1	2			1		1	2			2	5
tool	3								2	5			1	2	3	4		1	5	13
backed point																1			1	1
curved-backed																1			1	1
end-/side-scraper	1									1										1



	Trench 1										Trench 2		Trench 3			Trench 4				Total
	F01	F02	F03	F05	F06	F09	F10	Subsoil	Topsoil	Total	Topsoil	Total	F12	Topsoil	Total	F01	F15	Topsoil	Total	
endscraper	1									1						1			1	2
on a break	1									1										1
leaf-shaped arrowhead													1		1					1
notched									1	1						1			1	2
flake									1	1										1
fragment																1			1	1
retouched	1								1	2				2	2	1		1	2	6
flake	1									1						1			1	2
fragment									1	1				2	2			1	1	4
unworked	1		1		1				1	4			1		1					5
burnt, unworked									1	1										1
unworked	1		1		1					3			1		1					4
Total	18	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	7	33	1	1	8	4	12	15	1	2	18	64



Table 15. Raw materials

No.	Description
1	Flint, indeterminate (e.g., through burning).
2	Flint, translucent dark brown to opaque greyish brown flint with light brownish-grey spots; thin (less than 1mm) slightly abraded light reddish-brown cortex, likely from soil staining.
3	Flint, semi-transparent pale brown to mottled pale grey/opaque flint with thin, heavily abraded cortex
4	Flint, semi-transparent light greyish-brown flint with thin, heavily abraded and cortex.
5	Quartz, translucent pale yellowish.
6	Chert, dark brown, almost opaque chert with speckled light grey limestone-like inclusions; cortex is thin, hard, pockmarked, and light brownish-grey.
7	Flint, opaque mid-grey flint, homogeneous, lacking fossiliferous inclusions; distinct from other flints. The coloration is likely due to patination.



Appendix G: Registered finds

Table 16. Registered finds (metalwork and spindle whorl) catalogue

Context Number	SF No.	Object Type	Short description	Material	Weight (g)	Date (c.)
4006	1	KNIFE	Complete iron knife (blade and tang), organic hilt plate missing; blade is curved	iron	18.94	3rd-5th C
4012	2	SPINDLE WHORL	Complete ceramic spindlewhorl, flat oval cross-section, one face slightly tapered, undecorated	ceramic	31.51	1st-5th C
4017	4	KNIFE	Knife blade, tang/handle plate and organic handle missing; blade is long and thin, slightly curved	iron	10.65	3rd-4th C
4017	5	KNIFE	Complete iron knife (blade and tang), organic hilt plate missing; blade is angled at the tip	iron	23.92	1st-4th C
4017	6	AWL	Awl fragment or tang of small bladed tool	iron	1.37	3rd-5th C



Table 17. Archive catalogue

ID	Site code	Excavation year	Box no	Trench no	Context	Unstratified	SF no	Material	Object simple type	Condition	Description	Head count	Length (mm)	Clenched	Clenched length (mm)	Type	Length (mm)	Width (mm)	Thickness (mm)	Diameter (mm)	Weight (g)	Count	MNI	Period	Date from	Date to	Type	Comment	Recommendation Illustration	Recommendation X-ray	Recommendation Conservation	Recommendation Research	Recommendation Other	Xray no
1	CSF24	2024		4	4006	FALSE	1	Iron	KNIFE	Good	Complete iron knife (blade and tang), organic hilt plate missing; blade is curved	1	12.92	FALSE		KNIFE	12.92	15.5	3.5		18.94	1	1	ROMAN	LATE ROMAN	EARLY MEDIEVAL	Manning (1985), Fig. 28, Type 14	3rd - 5th C	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	Photography, Publication	FALSE
2	CSF24	2024		4	4012	FALSE	2	Ceramic	SPINDLE WHORL	Good	Complete ceramic spindlewhorl, flat oval cross-section, one face slightly tapered, undecorated	1	37.5	FALSE		SPINDLE WHORL	37.5	20	20	37.5	31.51	1	1	ROMAN	LATE IRON AGE	EARLY MEDIEVAL	Walton Rogers (2007), B2	1st - 5th C	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	TRUE	Photography, Publication	FALSE
4	CSF24	2024		4	4017	FALSE	4	Iron	KNIFE	Good	Knife blade, tang/handle plate and organic handle missing; blade is long and thin, slightly curved	2	102.5	FALSE		KNIFE	102.5	7	4		10.65	2	1	ROMAN	LATE ROMAN	EARLY MEDIEVAL	Late Roman/EM types	3rd - 4th C	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	Photography, Publication	FALSE
5	CSF24	2024		4	4017	FALSE	5	Iron	KNIFE	Good	Complete iron knife (blade and tang), organic hilt plate missing; blade is angled at the tip	3	179	FALSE		KNIFE	179	15	4		23.92	3	1	ROMAN	LATE IRON AGE	EARLY MEDIEVAL	Manning (1985), Fig. 29, Type 19	1st - 4th C	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	Photography, Publication	FALSE
6	CSF24	2024		4	4017	FALSE	6	Iron	AWL	Good	Awl fragment or tang of small bladed tool	1	31.4	FALSE		AWL	31.4	3.5	2		1.37	1	1	ROMAN	LATE ROMAN	EARLY MEDIEVAL	fragmentary: no further id possible	3rd - 5th C	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	Photography, Publication	FALSE



Appendix H: Environmental

Table 18. Summary of material from heavy residues and flots, by count, abundance and weight.

Material	Heavy residue		Flot		
	Count	Weight (g)	Abundance	Count	Weight (g)
Bone	4	1.3			
Charcoal	223	87	g	381	9.7
Charred plant remains				4	<0.1
Nutshell				4	0.14
Seeds				5	<0.1
Roots			g		
Fired clay	1	20.3			
Pottery	6	21.9			
Stone	1	70			

a (1-10), b (11-50), c (51-100), d (101-200), e (201-500), f (501-1000), g (>1000).

Table 19. Summary of artefacts from heavy residues, by count and weight.

		Bone		Charcoal		Fired clay		Pottery		Stone		Total	
Context	Sample	Count	Weight (g)	Count	Weight (g)	Count	Weight (g)	Count	Weight (g)	Count	Weight (g)	Count	Weight (g)
0	21			10	0.2			1	0.7			11	0.9
	23			10	0.9							13	1.1
	26			65	13.6							65	13.6
1025	10	3	1.3	50	36.1	1	20.3	5	21.2	1	70	60	148.9
	16			15	6.4							15	6.4
1026	12			25	12.1							25	12.1
1027	13			10	6.8							10	6.8
1028	14			25	9.1							25	9.1
4012	7			10	1.6							10	1.6
Total		3	1.3	220	86.8	1	20.3	6	21.9	1	70	234	200.5

Table 20. Summary of material from flots by count, abundance and weight.

		Charcoal <2mm	Charcoal >2mm		Charred plant remains		Nutshell		Roots	Uncharred seeds		Total	
Context	Sample	Abundance	Count	Weight (g)	Count	Weight (g)	Count	Weight (g)	Abundance	Count	Weight (g)	Count	Weight (g)
1025	10	f	7	1					c	3	1	10	2
	16	f	33	1	1	1			c			34	2
1026	12	c	6	1					c			6	1
1027	13	b	27	1					a			27	1
1028	14	c							c				
4012	7	e							e				
4019	8	a							a				
4029	6	a							a				
0	21	e	57	1	1	1			b			58	2
	23	f	155	1	1	1	4	1	c	1	1	161	4
	26	e	96	1	1	1			e	1	1	98	3
Total			381	7	4	4	4	1		5	3	394	15

Table 21. Summary of charred and uncharred plant remains from flots by count.

Context	Sample	Charred plant remains		Uncharred plant remains		Total
		Cerealia indet.	Corylus avellana	Chenopodium album	Poaceae	
1025	10			1	3	4
	16	1				1
0	21	1				1
	23	1	4	1		6
	26	1		1		2
Total		4	4	3	3	14

Table 22. Summary of charcoal from the heavy residue and flots by abundance and weight.

		Heavy residue		Flot			Handpicked		
		Charcoal >2mm		Charcoal <2mm	Charcoal >2mm		Charcoal <2mm	Charcoal >2mm	
Context	Sample	Count	Weight (g)	Abundance	Count	Weight (g)		Count	Weight (g)
1025	10	50	36.1	f	7	0			
1025	16	15	6.4	f	33	0.3			
1026	12	25	12.1	c	6	0			
1027	13	10	6.8	b	27	4.6			
1028	14	25	9.1	c					
4012	7	10	1.6	e					
4019	8			a					
4029	6			a					
0	21	10	0.2	e	57	1.5			
	23	13	0.11	f	155	2.4			
	26	65	13.6	e	96	0.9	e	186	5.4
Total		223	86.01		381	9.7		186	5.4

Table 23. Summary of charcoal recovered from bulk environmental samples from Cothelstone (CSF24), count and weight (g).

Context	Sample	Fraction		Feature	Date	Count	Weight (g)	No. fractured	Roundwood?	
1025	10	Heavy	>4mm	Ring ditch F01	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age	385	36.1	24	Yes	
	16	Heavy	>4mm			64	6.4	12	Yes	
	21	Heavy	4-2mm	(Pot fill SF10)		57	1.5	12	Yes	
		Heavy	>4mm	(Pot fill SF11)		41	1.6	12	Yes	
			4-2mm			96	0.9	0	Yes	
	1026	12	Heavy	>4mm			212	12.1	24	Yes
	1027	13	Heavy	>4mm			Roman?	16	6.8	6
1028	14	Heavy	>4mm		201	9.1		24	Yes	
4012	7	Heavy	>4mm		11	1.6		6	Yes	
Total						1083	76.1	120		

Table 24. Identification of wood charcoal species, including hazelnut shell, from Cothelstone Farm (CSF24), count.

Context	Sample	Feature	Date	Hazel	Hazelnut shell	Poplar /willow	Oak	Plum/cherry genus	Ash	Birch	Elder?	Total
1025	10	Ring ditch	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age	10		5	4					19
	16	F01		7	2	1				1		11
	21	(Pot fill SF10)		1			3	3	1			8
	26	(Pot fill SF11)		4		5	1				1	11
	1026	12			5	1	2		3			
1027	13							1				1
1028	14			7		1	1					9
4012	7			1		2			1			4
Total				35	3	16	9	7	2	1	1	74

Table 25. Summary of samples submitted for palynological consideration from ring ditch [1024], Cothelstone Farm

Site	Sample	Stratigraphic description
CSF24 Trench 1	1025	Dark orangey brown, friable silty clay with frequent small to medium sized sub-angular to sub-rounded spheroidal charcoal inclusions and rare small to medium sized sub-angular elongated shillet/sandstone inclusions.
	1026	Dark orangey grey, friable clayey silt with frequent medium to large sub-angular spheroidal shaped charcoal inclusions.
	1028	Mid orangey brown friable clayey silt with occasional flecks of small sub-rounded spheroidal charcoal inclusions concentrated towards top central area of the fill.

Table 26. Summary of pollen encountered in ring ditch [1024], Cothelstone Farm

		Context		
		1025	1026	1028
Trees	Betula			1
Shrubs	Corylus-Myrica type	2	1	
Herbs	Poaceae	1	3	8
	Poaceae >37mic		1	2
	Cyperaceae	2	3	4
	Asteraceae undiff.		1	
	Caryophyllaceae		1	
	Cirsium type		1	
	Lactuceae undiff.	3	2	1
	Plantago undif.		1	
	Sambucus type		2	
Spores	Polypodium	2	4	
	Pteridium	3	1	1
	Pteropsida (monolete) undif.	25	2	2
	Sphagnum			1
Charcoal		xxx	xxx	xxx
HdV368 Podospora sp				x
Testate amoebae				x
Grain crumpling		xx	xx	xxx
Grain degradation		xxx	xx	xxx
Abundance		low	low	low
Diversity		low	low	low
Suitable for further analysis?		n	n	n

Appendix I: Radiocarbon dates

Table 27. Radiocarbon dating certificate – sample 19 (1026)



Rankine Avenue, Scottish Enterprise Technology Park, East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 0QF, Scotland, UK
Director: Prof. Darren F Mark Tel: +44 (0)1355 223332 www.glasgow.ac.uk/suerc



RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE
02 October 2024

Laboratory Code SUERC-128588 (GU69189)
Submitter Jasmine Tomys
DigVentures
Witham Studios #5
Hall Street
Barnard Castle
DL12 8JB
Site Reference Corthelstone Farm (CSF24)
Context Reference 1026
Sample Reference 19
Material Charcoal
 $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ relative to VPDB -22.7 ‰

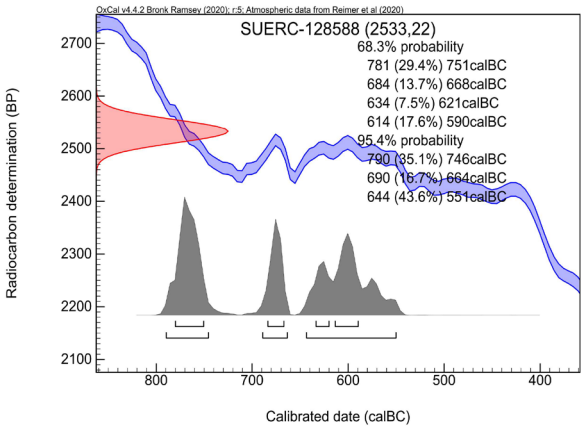
Radiocarbon Age BP 2533 ± 22

N.B. The above ^{14}C age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD) and requires calibration to the calendar timescale. The error, expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.

Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the SUERC AMS Laboratory and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. The laboratory GU coding should also be given in parentheses after the SUERC code.

Detailed descriptions of the methods employed by the SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory can be found in Dunbar et al. (2016) *Radiocarbon* 58(1) pp.9-23.

For any queries relating to this certificate, the laboratory can be contacted at suerc-c14lab@glasgow.ac.uk.



The radiocarbon age given overleaf is calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4.^{*}

The above date ranges have been calibrated using the IntCal20 atmospheric calibration curve![†]

Please contact the laboratory if you wish to discuss this further.

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by : E. Dunbar

Checked and signed off by : Helen Rose Kirk



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^{*} Bronk Ramsey (2009) *Radiocarbon* 51(1) pp.537-60
[†] Reimer et al. (2020) *Radiocarbon* 62(4) pp.725-57



Table 28. Radiocarbon dating certificate – sample 28 (Micro-excavation of SF11)



Rankine Avenue, Scottish Enterprise Technology Park, East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 0QF, Scotland, UK
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RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE
02 October 2024

Laboratory Code SUERC-128589 (GU69190)
Submitter Jasmine Tomys
DigVentures
Witham Studios #5
Hall Street
Barnard Castle
DL12 8JB
Site Reference Cothelstone Farm (CSF24)
Context Reference Micro-ex of SF11
Sample Reference 28
Material Charcoal
δ¹³C relative to VPDB -25.0 ‰

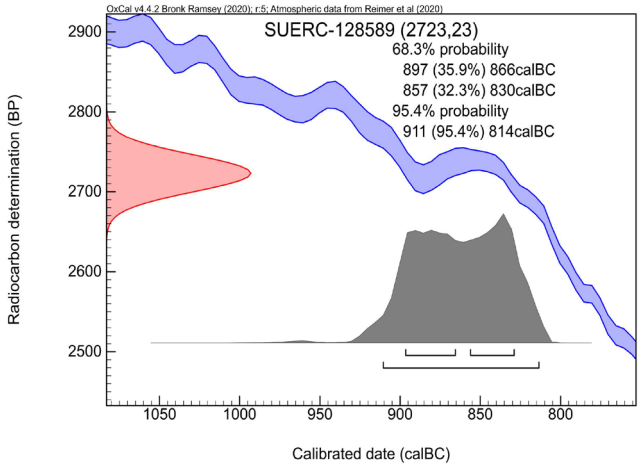
Radiocarbon Age BP 2723 ± 23

N.B. The above ¹⁴C age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD) and requires calibration to the calendar timescale. The error, expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.

Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the SUERC AMS Laboratory and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. The laboratory GU coding should also be given in parentheses after the SUERC code.

Detailed descriptions of the methods employed by the SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory can be found in Dunbar et al. (2016) *Radiocarbon* 58(1) pp.9-23.

For any queries relating to this certificate, the laboratory can be contacted at suerc-cl4lab@glasgow.ac.uk.



The radiocarbon age given overleaf is calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4.*

The above date ranges have been calibrated using the IntCal20 atmospheric calibration curve†

Please contact the laboratory if you wish to discuss this further.

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by : E. Dunbar

Checked and signed off by : Helen Rose Kirk



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* Bronk Ramsey (2009) *Radiocarbon* 51(1) pp.337-60

† Reimer et al. (2020) *Radiocarbon* 62(4) pp.725-57



Table 29. Radiocarbon dating certificate – sample 29 (1030)



Rankine Avenue, Scottish Enterprise Technology Park, East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 0QF, Scotland, UK
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RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE
02 October 2024

Laboratory Code SUERC-128590 (GU69191)
Submitter Jasmine Tomys
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Witham Studios #5
Hall Street
Barnard Castle
DL12 8JB
Site Reference Cothelstone Farm (CSF24)
Context Reference 1030
Sample Reference 29
Material Charcoal
 $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ relative to VPDB -24.3 ‰

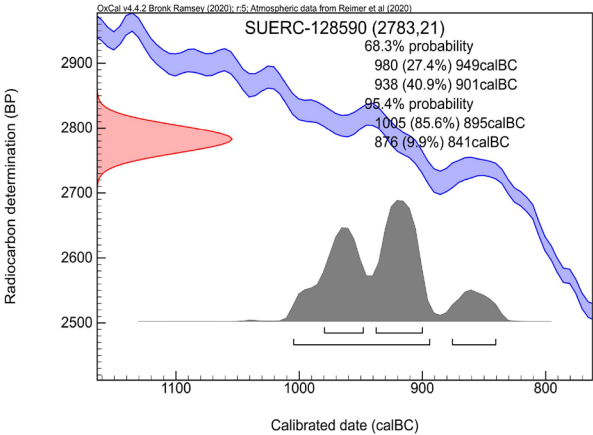
Radiocarbon Age BP 2783 ± 21

N.B. The above ^{14}C age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD) and requires calibration to the calendar timescale. The error, expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.

Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the SUERC AMS Laboratory and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. The laboratory GU coding should also be given in parentheses after the SUERC code.

Detailed descriptions of the methods employed by the SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory can be found in Dunbar et al. (2016) *Radiocarbon* 58(1) pp.9-23.

For any queries relating to this certificate, the laboratory can be contacted at suerc-c14lab@glasgow.ac.uk.



The radiocarbon age given overleaf is calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4.*

The above date ranges have been calibrated using the IntCal20 atmospheric calibration curve†

Please contact the laboratory if you wish to discuss this further.

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by : E Dunbar

Checked and signed off by : Helen Rose Kirk



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* Bronk Ramsey (2009) *Radiocarbon* 51(1) pp.337-60
† Reimer et al. (2020) *Radiocarbon* 62(4) pp.725-57



Table 30. Radiocarbon dating certificate – sample 7 (4012)



Rankine Avenue, Scottish Enterprise Technology Park, East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 0QF, Scotland, UK
Director: Prof. Darren F Mark Tel: +44 (0)1355 223332 www.glasgow.ac.uk/suerc



RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE
06 December 2024

Laboratory Code SUERC-129541 (GU69778)
Submitter Jasmine Tomys
DigVentures
Witham Studios #5
Hall Street
Barnard Castle
DL12 8JB
Site Reference Cothelstone Farm (CSF24)
Context Reference 4012
Sample Reference 7
Material Charcoal
 $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ relative to VPDB -26.3 ‰

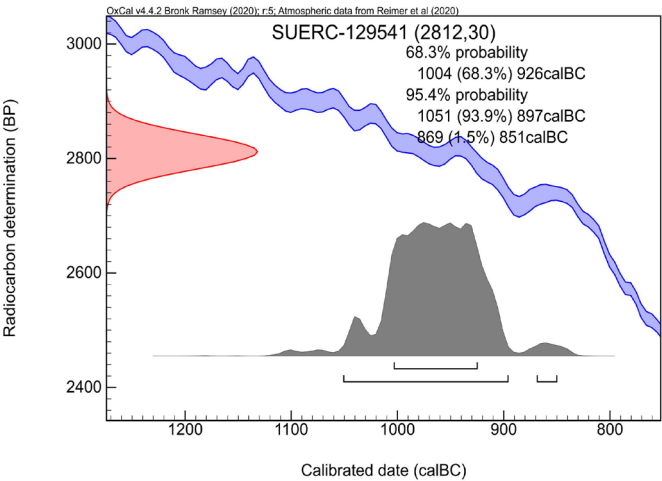
Radiocarbon Age BP 2812 $\pm$ 30

N.B. The above ^{14}C age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD) and requires calibration to the calendar timescale. The error, expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.

Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the SUERC AMS Laboratory and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. The laboratory GU coding should also be given in parentheses after the SUERC code.

Detailed descriptions of the methods employed by the SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory can be found in Dunbar et al. (2016) *Radiocarbon* 58(1) pp.9-23.

For any queries relating to this certificate, the laboratory can be contacted at suerc-c14lab@glasgow.ac.uk.



The radiocarbon age given overleaf is calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4.*

The above date ranges have been calibrated using the IntCal20 atmospheric calibration curve†

Please contact the laboratory if you wish to discuss this further.

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by :

B. T. G. M.

Checked and signed off by :

Helen Rose Hall



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* Bronk Ramsey (2009) *Radiocarbon* 51(1) pp.337-60
† Reimer et al. (2020) *Radiocarbon* 62(4) pp.725-57



Appendix J: Geophysics report

