

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land to the West of Ashton Road,
South Cerney, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Sophie Peng

Site Code: ARSC25/96

(SU 0399 9620)

Land to the West of Ashton Road, South Cerney, Wiltshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Acorn Bioenergy Ltd**

by Sophie Peng
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code ARSC 25/96

June 2025

Summary

Site name: Land to the West of Ashton Road, South Cerney, Wiltshire

Grid reference: SU 0399 9620

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 9th -23rd June 2025

Project coordinator: David Sanchez

Site supervisor: Sophie Peng

Site code: ARSC25/96

Area of site: c. 7.5ha

Summary of results: Of the 48 trenches opened, 12 contained certain or possible archaeological features. However, the majority consisted of post-medieval linear features and furrows. A pit/well in the centre of site contained five sherds of pottery, probably of the Late Bronze Age. Linear features and a pit in the middle of the site were largely undated, aside from a few Medieval sherds of pottery. The main potential for the site lies within the environs of the Late Bronze Age well, with moderate potential for Medieval activity in a portion of the middle of the site. The rest of site is considered to have low potential.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Devizes Museum in due course, with accession code DZSWS:25-2025 and a digital copy of the records will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

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Land to the West of Ashton Road, South Cerney, Wiltshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Sophie Peng

Report 25/96

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land to the west of Ashton Road, South Cerney, Wiltshire (SU099 9620) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Charlie Lywood of Acorn Bioenergy Ltd, 58 Marylebone High Street, London W1U 5HT.

Planning permission (PL/2023/03359) is being sought from Wiltshire Council to develop the site for a renewable biomethane generation plant. Due to the potential disturbance of below-ground archaeological features an archaeological evaluation has been requested to inform the planning process and allow the formulation of a mitigation strategy if necessary. This is in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2024), and the Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a written scheme of investigation approved by Mr Timothy Havard, Assistant County Archaeologist for Wiltshire Council, approved on 30th May 2025. The fieldwork was undertaken by Sophie Peng, Luke O'Callaghan, Richard Dewhurst, Jack Dumbelton, Maisie Foster, Erin Loat and Mike Murray between 9th and 23rd of June 2025, and the site code is ARSC25/96.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Devizes Museum in due course, with accession code DZSWS:25-2025, and a digital copy of the records will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located approximately 2km north of the village of Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire and 1.2km south west of the village of South Cerney. It is approximately 5.7km south of Cirencester, and 500m to the northeast of Cotswold Community (Fig. 1). The site itself is bordered to the east by Ashton Road and is slightly trapezoid in shape, formed of one complete field and part of a second field to the south, both of which are in arable use (Fig. 2). The site lies on the eastern slope of Ashton Down, a locally prominent hill. The underlying geology is mapped as mudstone (BGS 1974). The natural geology observed varied considerably across the site as noted below, but was mainly silty clay, clayey silt or clayey sand. The site lies at a height of c. 102m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at the western edge, sloping down to 89m aOD towards the eastern edge along Ashton Road.

The total area evaluated encompassed the whole of the application site as well as an additional area of land in the north western corner of the northern field. This area is not proposed to have any built development and instead is proposed to be used for biodiversity enhancement purposes, therefore, a more comprehensive assessment of the area was conducted.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site was highlighted in Chapter 10 Historic Environment of the Environmental Statement accompanying the planning application (SLR 2023). In summary, the site is located in the archaeologically rich Upper Thames Valley, which has received much archaeological attention in advance of the extensive mineral extraction that has taken place over the last few decades (Booth *et al.* 2007; Lambrick and Robinson 2009). In particular land to the west of the hill of Ashton Down has been subject to extensive archaeological excavation which has revealed deposits representing multi-period settlement, burial and land use (Barclay *et al.* 1995, Bray *et al.* 2020; Hearne and Adams 1999; Hearne and Heaton 1994; Powell *et al.* 2010; Foster *et al.* in prep.). In addition to a major enclosed Iron Age to Roman settlement complex, of particular note are the extensive spreads of mainly Iron Age farmstead sites consisting of little more than individual houses.

A second Iron Age or Roman settlement complex is visible from the air to the south of the site and is a Scheduled Monument (*Settlement E of Ashtonfield*).

The proposal site has been subject to geophysical survey (MS 2022) as part of a larger site for the first stage of investigation, which revealed in this area (Area 1) a small number of magnetic anomalies, the majority of which appeared to relate to ridge and furrow remnants of medieval and post-medieval agriculture (Fig. 3).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or paleoenvironmental deposits within the area of development.

The specific research aims of this project are:

- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to investigate geophysical anomalies identified by the previous geophysical survey;
- to establish whether further remains of small Bronze Age and Iron Age occupation sites are present similar to those on the western side of Ashton Down;

- to determine if the elevated topography of Ashton Down has led to different land use or settlement type; and to provide information to allow the preparation of a mitigation strategy if necessary.

It was proposed to dig 46 trenches, each 25m long and 1.8-2.0m wide targeting the area of development on site and on geophysical anomalies. In consultation with the Assistant County Archaeologist, a further two 15m long trenches (trenches 47 and 48) were excavated to explore any possible features that may be associated with the feature exposed in trench 19. All trenches were dug with a 13-tonne tracked 360°-type excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All spoil heaps were monitored for finds. Any probable or certain archaeological features were to be investigated by hand and sufficiently sampled to satisfy the aims outlined above, without compromising the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation *in situ*, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation. This evaluation was carried out according to Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' standards (CIfA 2023a and b).

The potential and significance of any such deposits located were to be assessed according to research priorities such as those set out in Historic England's *Research Agenda* (HE 2017) or more local or thematic research priorities such as the *South West Archaeological Research Framework* (Croft and Grove 2012).

Results

All trenches were dug as intended and ranged in length from 15m to 29m, and in depth between 0.25m and 0.80m. All were 1.8m wide. The subsoil observed throughout consisted of an orange brown clayey sand but the natural geology varied, as detailed below. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. Of the 48 trenches excavated, 12 contained potential archaeological features. The excavated features, with dating evidence, are summarized in Appendix 2. Trenches that contained no archaeological finds or features are described briefly below, grouped by their stratigraphy and natural geology. Land drains were noted in most trenches, of which only a few matched the locations of geophysical anomalies. Trenches with archaeological (or potentially archaeological) features or finds are then discussed individually in more detail.

Trenches containing no archaeological finds or features

Trenches 1, 3 and 8 (Figs 2 and 3)

These trenches varied between 24.4m and 25.8m in length, and between 0.36m and 0.64m in depth. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil above subsoil overlying a blue orange clayey sand natural geology. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Trenches 4, 32, 34, 35, 45 and 46 (Figs 2 and 3; Pl. 6)

These trenches varied between 25m and 28.8m in length, and between 0.35m and 0.79m in depth. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil above subsoil overlying an orange brown clayey sand natural geology. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Trenches 21-23, 25-27, 29, 30, 47 and 48 (Figs 2 and 3 ; Pl. 4)

These trenches varied between 24.4m and 25.8m in length, and between 0.36m and 0.64m in depth. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil above subsoil overlying a blue orange clayey sand natural geology. No archaeological finds or features were observed. The two shorter trenches 47 and 48 (15.4m and 15m long respectively) were added to the original layout to explore the area around Bronze Age well 1 but revealed no additional features or finds.

Trenches 7, 9, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20 (Figs 2 and 3; Pl. 2)

These trenches varied between 24.75m and 29m in length, and between 0.30m and 0.80m in depth. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil above subsoil overlying a blue orange silty clay natural geology. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Trenches 2, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13, 16 (Figs 2 and 3; Pl. 1)

These trenches varied between 25m and 26.7m in length, and between 0.44m and 0.68m in depth. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil above subsoil overlying an orange brown silty clay natural geology. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Trench 41 (Figs 2 and 3; Pl. 7)

This trench was 25m long and 0.52m deep with an observed stratigraphy of topsoil above subsoil overlying a dark red orange silty sand. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Trench 42 (Figs 2 and 3)

This trench was 25m long and 0.49m deep with an observed stratigraphy of topsoil above subsoil overlying an orange brown sandy clay natural geology. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Trenches containing archaeological finds or features

Trench 19 (Figs 2, 3, 4 and 6; Pls 3 and 9)

This trench was aligned North-South and measured 25m in length and 0.53m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.26m of topsoil overlying 0.13m of subsoil overlying an orange brown clayey silt natural. At 2.7m from the northern end, a possible well or pit (1) was recorded. It was 1.12m wide and at least 1.88m deep and contained (at least) four fills (52, 53, 54 and 55), with fill 52 being the uppermost. Fill 52 was a light blue grey clayey sand with few charcoal inclusions and was 0.25m thick. Fill 53 was a light grey brown sandy clay and was 0.34m thick. Fill 54 was a dark black grey silty clay with few charcoal inclusions and was 0.33m thick. Fill 55 was a grey blue sandy clay that was at least 0.95m thick. The well was hand excavated to a depth of 0.99m and subsequently augured to a depth of 1.88m. It is uncertain whether the natural geology was reached due to the water table. Five sherds of pottery were obtained from fill 54, with one diagnostic sherd dating from the Late Bronze Age, giving a *terminus post-quem* date for the disuse of the feature. A moderate amount of animal bone was also recovered, mainly from fills 53 and 54, representing an assemblage of cattle and indeterminate mammals (Appendix 4).

Trench 24 (Figs 2, 3, 4 and 6)

Trench 24 was aligned NE-SW and was 25.60m long and 0.26m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.18m of topsoil overlying a blue orange silty clay natural, with no subsoil observed. Two intercutting linear features were observed at 22.5m from the south-western end. Matching a geophysical anomaly (one of the few features which did), ditch or more likely furrow 5/7, aligned East-West, was 0.79m wide and 0.10m deep and contained a single light yellow grey silty clay fill (61), which produced one sherd of Medieval pottery, and was cut by gully 6. Gully 6, aligned North-South, was 0.53m wide and 0.14m deep, and contained a grey orange silty clay with few ironstone inclusion fill (62). No finds were recovered.

Trench 28 (Figs 2, 3, 4 and 6; Pl.10)

Trench 28 was aligned North-South and measured 25m long and 0.36m deep. The stratigraphy observed at the northern end consisted of 0.25m of topsoil overlying 0.09m of subsoil overlying an orange brown clayey silt natural. The stratigraphy at the southern end was 0.10m of topsoil overlying 0.15m of subsoil onto the same orange brown clayey silt natural. Possible pit 2 was recorded at 4.40m from the northern end of the trench. It was 0.95m wide and 0.18m deep, and contained fills 56, 57 and 58. Fill 56 was a brown orange sandy clay with few

flint inclusions and was 0.07m thick. Fill 57 was a grey brown silty clay with few flint inclusions and was 0.08m thick. Fill 58 was a dark grey black silty clay that was 0.06m thick. No finds were recovered, and it is undated.

Trench 31 (Figs 2, 3, 4 and 6; Pl. 11)

This trench was aligned close to North-South and was 25.60m long and 0.53m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of topsoil and 0.17m of subsoil overlying an orange brown clayey sand natural. Between 16.2m and 22.9m from the north end, a gully (3) aligned North-South was recorded. It was 0.68m wide and 0.11m deep, filled with a single light brown grey clayey sand fill (59). Despite extending the slot to enhance finds recovery, no finds were recovered.

Trench 33 (Figs 2, 3, 4 and 6; Pl. 5)

This trench was aligned ENE-WSW and measured 25m in length and 0.46m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.26m of topsoil and 0.20m of subsoil overlying an orange brown clayey silt natural. Between 10.6m and 11.3m from the ENE end, a North-South aligned gully (4) was recorded. It was 0.65m wide and 0.08m deep, containing a brown yellow clay sand fill (60) with occasional flint and manganese; this produced one sherd of Medieval pottery.

Trench 36 (Figs 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8)

This trench was aligned North-East to South-West and measured 26m long and 0.54m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of topsoil and 0.26m of subsoil overlying an orange brown clayey sand natural. Between 6.2m and 9.5m from the south-western end, a furrow (22) was recorded on the line of a geophysical anomaly, which was 2.17m wide and 0.18m deep and filled with a single orange brown silty clay with occasional flint inclusions (81). It produced two sherds of Post-Medieval pottery, dating the feature. An east-west aligned ditch (23), between 23.3m and 25.3m from the south-western end, was 0.59m wide and 0.3m deep. It contained an orange brown sandy clay fill (82) with no finds recovered. A possible ditch or furrow (25), aligned NE-SW was observed between 19.15m and 20.44m from the south-western end, and measured 1.29m wide and 0.38m deep and contained fills 84 and 85. Fill 84 was a light-mid brown grey clayey sand that was 0.25m thick with no finds recovered. Fill 85 was a grey brown clay sand that was 0.22m thick with no finds.

Trench 37 (Figs 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8; Pl. 16)

Trench 37 was aligned North-West to South-East and was 25m long and 0.40m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.20m of subsoil overlying an orange brown clayey sand. Between 13.3m and 16.6m from the south-eastern end, and matching a geophysical anomaly, ditch 21 was recorded with a width of 1.4m and 0.63m deep and contained two fills. Fill 79 was a grey brown silty sand with few manganese inclusions, measuring 0.35m thick and produced a single ferrous object, possibly a nail head. Basal fill 80 was a grey brown clayey sand with blue grey patches and occasional manganese inclusions, no finds were recovered from this fill. A furrow (24) was recorded between 5m and 6m from the SE end of the trench, with a width of 2m and depth of 0.14m. It contained a single brown grey silty clay with limited manganese inclusions (83) and was truncated by a land drain. No finds were recovered from this deposit.

Trench 38 (Figs 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7; Pl. 13)

Trench 38 was aligned North-East to South-West and measured 25.6m long and 0.4m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil and 0.17m of subsoil overlying natural geology of orange brown silty sand with blue grey patches. At the south western end of the trench was pit 18. It was sub-circular, 0.60m by 0.54m across and 0.24m deep and contained a single light grey brown sandy silt fill (73) from which no finds were recovered. Between 3.5m and 6.9m from the SW end, two intercutting ditches (15 and 16), aligned North-South, were recorded, on the line of a geophysical anomaly. Ditch 15 contained an orange brown sandy clay fill (71) and was at least 0.78m wide and 0.39m deep. Ditch 16, which was observed to cut ditch 15, contained an orange brown clayey sand fill (72) and was 0.76m wide and 0.39m deep. Neither contained any finds but they are presumed to be post-medieval in date as the geophysical survey showed them relation to the E-W field system. A gully (14), aligned East-West, was recorded at 9.8m. It was 0.28m wide and 0.23m deep and contained a single orange brown sandy clay fill (70). A single ferrous sheet/plate object was the only recovered from this. Between 16.9m and 20.3m, intercutting ditches 10 and 11 were recorded on the east-west alignment of the major geophysical anomaly. Ditch 10 was at least 0.98m wide and 0.55m deep containing a single brown grey clayey sand fill (66), producing two sherds of 17th-18th century pottery, dating the feature to the Post-Medieval period. Ditch 11 cut ditch 10 and was 1.14m wide and 0.27m deep. It contained fill 67, an orange brown sandy clay. No finds were recovered, but it has a *terminus post quem* of 17th-18th century.

Trench 39 (Figs 2, 3, 5 and 6)

Trench 39 was aligned North-West to South-East and was 26.2m long and 0.67m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.27m of topsoil and 0.38m of subsoil overlying an orange brown sandy silt with frequent manganese inclusions. At 6.8m from the north-western end, a ditch (8) aligned East-West was recorded. It was 0.88m wide and 0.39m deep and contained a grey brown clayey sand with few flint inclusions fill (64). Two sherds of Post-Medieval pottery were obtained from its fill, dating the feature. It is another element of the field system revealed by the geophysical survey.

Trench 40 (Figs 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7; Pl. 14)

Trench 40 was aligned North-East to South-West and was 25m long and 0.69m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil and 0.39m of subsoil overlying an orange brown sandy silt natural with frequent manganese inclusions at the north-eastern end, becoming a brown orange sandy clay natural towards the south-western end. Between 2.4m and 6m from the north-eastern end, a ditch (9) was recorded, again on the line of the major geophysical anomaly. It was 0.75m wide and 0.28m deep and contained a grey brown silty sand with few flint and manganese inclusions (65), which produced one sherd of Post-Medieval pottery and a piece of post-medieval glass, dating the feature. Another ditch (17), recorded between 13.9m and 16.7m and aligned East-West, was 1.6m wide and 0.72m deep and contained fills 74, 75 and 76. Top fill 74 was a grey brown silty sand with few flint and sandstone inclusions and was 0.39m thick. Fill 75 was a brown grey silty sand with few sandstone and manganese inclusions and was 0.15m thick. Fill 76 was a dark blue grey clayey sand with few sandstone and manganese inclusions and was 0.23m thick. No finds were recovered from ditch 17.

Trench 43 (Figs 2, 3, 5 and 6; Pl. 12)

Trench 43 was aligned WNW-ESE and was 25m long and 0.48m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.26m of topsoil and 0.18m of subsoil overlying an orange brown clayey sand natural. Between 13.5m and 15.2m from the WNW end, two intercutting ditches (12 and 13) were recorded. Both ditches were aligned North-South and match a geophysical anomaly. Ditch 12 was at least 1.18m wide and 0.52m deep and filled with a brown yellow sandy clay with few flint and manganese inclusions (68). This was cut by ditch 13, which was 0.78m wide and 0.53m deep and filled with a red brown sandy clay with few flint and manganese inclusions (69). Despite extending the slot, no finds were recovered from either, but they are confidently assigned a post-medieval date as part of the field system mapped by the geophysical survey.

Trench 44 (Figs 2, 3, 5 and 7; Pl. 8 and 15)

Trench 44 was aligned NNW-SSE and was 25.9m long and 0.47m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.22m of topsoil and 0.25m of subsoil overlying orange brown clayey sand natural. Two furrows, aligned East-West, were recorded, both fairly close matches for geophysical anomalies. Furrow 19, at 15.4m from the SSE end, was 1.60m wide and 0.11m deep and filled with a compact yellow brown sandy clay with few flint and manganese inclusions (77). It was truncated by a land drain and produced two sherds of pottery, dating it to the Post-Medieval period. Furrow 20, at 4m from the SSE end, was 1.08m wide and 0.06m deep and filled yellow brown sandy clay with few flint and manganese inclusions (78). It was also truncated by a land drain and produced four sherds of Post-Medieval pottery.

Finds

Pottery by Lorraine Mephram

The pottery assemblage amounts to 34 sherds (weighing 164g), and includes material of prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval date. These were recovered from contexts in ten of the trenches excavated (Appendix 3). The condition of the material is fair to poor; sherds are small and, in most cases, abraded. Prehistoric sherds in particular are friable and fragmented. Mean sherd weight overall is 4.8g.

The assemblage has been quantified by sherd count and weight by ware type within each context. Ware identification has followed known ware types for medieval and post-medieval sherds (e.g. Minety-type ware, redware) while prehistoric sherds have been characterised by dominant inclusion type (e.g. calcareous wares). Details of diagnostic forms, surface treatment and decoration have been noted. Appendix 3 gives a full list of the pottery by context. The level of recording accords with the ‘basic record’ advocated by CIfA (2024) guidelines for the rapid characterisation of assemblages, and this is a Type 1 report.

Prehistoric

Prehistoric sherds (13 in total, including some small crumbs) were recovered from Trenches 19 (well/pit 1) and 46 (subsoil 51). All are in calcareous (limestone-tempered) fabrics and are highly friable. The sherds from well/pit 1 include the only diagnostic piece: a rim sherd from a convex vessel, the rim slightly inturned and with a simple rounded profile. There are traces of an external burnish, and an internal burnt residue. The form suggests a Late Bronze Age date. Examples are recorded, for example, from a Late Bronze Age assemblage from nearby Shorncote Quarry (Morris 1994, fig 11, nos 13, 14, 22, 24). The sherds from Trench 46 are undiagnostic and could be of the same date, but equally, as the fabric itself is not particularly chronologically distinctive, they could date later in the 1st millennium BC.

Medieval

Eight sherds were identified as medieval. Six of these are in oolitic-tempered fabrics which can be identified as Minety-type wares, a type found commonly across north Wiltshire and south Gloucestershire and with one known source at Minety. The industry spanned the medieval period from at least the 12th century with a technological change from handmade to wheel thrown vessels in the 13th century (Vince 1984). There is one diagnostic sherd here, a jar rim from Trench 22 (surface find from land drain), but none of the sherds are of sufficient size and condition to determine manufacturing technique. Other Minety-type sherds came from Trenches 24 (ditch 5), 33 (gully 4) and 44 (furrow 19).

The remaining two (conjoining) sherds were found in subsoil in Trench 46. These are in a chalk-/flint-tempered fabric identifiable as Kennet Valley ware. Kennet Valley wares have a lengthy currency from at least the 11th century through the medieval period, and a wide distribution across west Berkshire, north-east Wiltshire, south Oxfordshire and south Gloucestershire. They were almost certainly made at more than one centre (Mephram 2000). The high proportions of Kennet Valley wares seen in assemblages from north-east Wiltshire suggests a local source in that area (Mephram 2021). The sherds from Trench 46 are not diagnostic; the chalk-/flint-tempered fabric variant dates between the 12th and 14th centuries.

Post-medieval

The remaining 13 sherds are post-medieval. All are redwares, mostly glazed. They include one rim sherd from a small convex bowl with a notched rim (Trench 40, ditch 9) and a second rim, from a small bowl or jar, from Trench 44 (land drain 20). Redwares are not generally susceptible to close dating within the post-medieval period and could date anywhere from the 16th century onwards. One sherd from Trench 38 (ditch 10) has trailed slip decoration, which dates it to the 17th or 18th century. The nearest known source for redwares is at Ashton Keynes, operating between the 16th and 18th centuries (McSloy 2002/2003), but other sources could also be represented. As well as the contexts already mentioned, redwares were recovered from Trenches 36 (furrow 22), 39 (ditch 8) and 44 (land drain 19).

Glass by Danielle Milbank

A single piece of glass weighing 26g was recovered from deposit 65 infilling ditch 9, in trench 40. This comprises very dark green glass, from the base of a wine bottle of 18th to 19th century date.

Metalwork by Sophie Peng

Three ferrous objects were recovered from the evaluation. Two are likely to be nail fragments and the other is a sheet/plate likely related to a fixture/fitting. All objects were heavily corroded.

A possible nail was recovered from ditch 8 (fill 64). It is square in section with a possibly flat, rectangular head, however, it is heavily corroded. It measures 47mm long, 11mm wide and 4mm thick, and weighs 5.5g.

A possible nail head was recovered from ditch 21 (fill 79). It is square in section with a flat, circular head. It measures 14mm long, 15mm wide and 9mm thick, and weighs 4.2g.

A sheet/plate was recovered from gully 14 (fill 70). It is roughly triangular in shape with a rectangular section. It measures 47mm long, 19mm at its widest point and 8mm thick, and weighs 13.4g

Animal Bone by Harriet Wright

Animal bone was recovered from just one feature, pit/well 1. In total 73 fragments weighing a total of 597g were databased. Bone was identified to the lowest possible taxon and element using Schmid (1972) and Hillson (1992), when this was not possible, they were identified by animal size (e.g. medium, large) or bone type (e.g. long, flat) (Appendix 4).

Bone was mainly in fair (79%) and good (21%) condition (Lyman 1994). The assemblage had a high amount of fragmentation, much of which occurred on excavation, indicating the friability of the bone. Most bone is stained orange-red and brown, likely due to mineral staining (Stathopoulou *et al.* 2019, 2). Over half the bone was recently damaged or could be refitted. Some loose teeth were apparent indicating some post depositional disturbance, but the assemblage is not large enough to make extensive conclusions. Butchery and burning were not apparent in the assemblage. Table A4.2 displays taphonomic processes. The archive contains further details on preservation, weathering, fusion, refitting, etc.

The assemblage from the pit/well consisted of cattle and other mammals. Cattle were represented by larger long bone fragments such as a femur and metapodials, as well as teeth. The teeth showed a moderate level of wear. Other mammal remains followed similar trends, with a large amount of long bone fragments apparent.

The preservation of the assemblage presents a bias to better preserved remains such as teeth and larger long bones, and it is too small to make any extensive conclusions about the site.

Macrobotanical remains by Jo Pine

A total of seven samples were processed from the deposits encountered during the excavation. The samples were wet sieved to .25mm and air dried. The flots were examined under a low-power binocular microscope at magnifications between x10 and x40. Only flakes of charcoal were present in very small quantities in samples 1, 4, 5 and 7, none of which is likely to permit the fracturing necessary for species identification.

Conclusion

All 46 trenches were successfully opened as well as two additional trenches (trenches 47 and 48), of which 12 contained certain or possible archaeological features. The majority of features in the southern extent of the site (trenches 36-40, 43 and 44), matched anomalies identified on the geophysical survey (MS 2022) and represent post-medieval field boundaries or other agricultural activity, and have been dated by pottery and glass.

A single isolated pit, or more likely a well, towards the centre of the site (trench 19) produced the only animal bone on site, with the assemblage representing cattle and mammals. Five sherds of pottery were obtained from fill 54, with one diagnostic sherd dating from the Late Bronze Age, and the others in the same fabric, giving a plausible date for the feature. Despite the opening of two additional trenches, no other features were encountered within its immediate vicinity.

An additional undated pit and several undated or Medieval features in the middle part of site were uncovered and explored. It is possible that ditch 3 in trench 31 is the same as ditch 4 in trench 33, which was tentatively dated to the Medieval period by one bodysherd. However it is aligned similarly to the post-medieval field system further south and so may be later.

The sparse quantity of dating evidence and other finds makes it hard to conclude with certainty the archaeological potential of the linear features in the middle of the site. The only potential for the site lies within the environs of the Late Bronze Age pit/well, despite the additional trenching not revealing any other features. The rest of site is considered to have low potential.

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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	24.40	1.80	0.36-0.64	NW end: 0-0.13m topsoil; 0.13-0.23m subsoil; 0.23m+ mid blue orange clayey sand. SE end: 0-0.19m topsoil; 0.19-0.56m subsoil; 0.56m+ mid blue orange clayey sand.
2	25.00	1.80	0.60	0-0.23m topsoil; 0.23-0.49m subsoil; 0.49m+ mid orange brown silty clay.
3	25.20	1.80	0.48	0-0.16m topsoil; 0.16-0.39m subsoil; 0.39m+ mid blue orange clayey sand with blue clay and orange sand patches.
4	28.80	1.80	0.39-0.45	SW end: 0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15-0.32m subsoil; 0.32m+ mid orange brown clayey sand. NE end: 0-0.18m topsoil; 0.18-0.32m subsoil; 0.32m+ mid blue orange silty clay.
5	26.10	1.80	0.62	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15-0.45m subsoil; 0.45m+ mid orange brown silty clay with mid blue orange patches at NNW end. [PI 1]
6	26.70	1.80	0.64	0-0.19m topsoil; 0.19-0.49m subsoil; 0.49m+ mid orange brown silty clay.
7	26.60	1.80	0.33-0.60	NW end: 0-0.2m topsoil; 0.2-0.4m subsoil; 0.4m+ mid blue orange silty clay. SE end: 0-0.21m topsoil; 0.21-0.25m subsoil; 0.25m+ mid blue orange silty clay.
8	25.80	1.80	0.40	0-0.22m topsoil; 0.22-0.33m subsoil; 0.33m+ mid blue orange clayey sand.
9	24.75	1.80	0.80	0-0.26m topsoil; 0.26-0.7m subsoil; 0.7m+ mid blue orange silty clay. [PI 2]
10	26.00	1.80	0.47	0-0.22m topsoil; 0.22-0.35m subsoil; 0.35m+ mid orange brown silty clay.
11	25.00	1.80	0.68	0-0.24m topsoil; 0.24-0.58m subsoil; 0.58m+ mid orange brown silty clay.
12	25.60	1.80	0.57	0-0.19m topsoil; 0.19-0.5m subsoil; 0.5m+ mid blue orange silty clay.
13	25.00	1.80	0.67	0-0.22m topsoil; 0.22-0.5m subsoil; 0.5m+ mid orange brown silty clay.
14	26.20	1.80	0.40-0.50	SSW end: 0-0.2m topsoil; 0.2-0.37m subsoil; 0.37m+ mid blue orange silty clay. NNE end: 0-0.2m topsoil; 0.2-0.39m subsoil; 0.39m+ mid blue orange silty clay.
15	29.00	1.80	0.30-0.62	SW end: 0-0.19m topsoil; 0.19-0.24m subsoil; 0.24m+ mid blue orange silty clay. NE end: 0-0.27m topsoil; 0.27-0.53m subsoil; 0.53m+ mid orange brown silty clay.
16	25.90	1.80	0.44	0-0.21m topsoil; 0.21-0.33m subsoil; 0.33m+ mid orange brown silty clay.
17	25.40	1.80	0.48-0.70	NW end: 0-0.22m topsoil; 0.22-0.29m subsoil; 0.29m+ mid blue orange silty clay with mid orange brown silt patches. SE end: 0-0.24m topsoil; 0.24-0.62m subsoil; 0.62m+ mid blue orange silty clay with mid orange brown silt patches.
18	25.10	1.80	0.25	0-0.23m topsoil; 0.23m+ mid blue orange silty clay.
19	25.00	1.80	0.53	0-0.26m topsoil; 0.26-0.39m subsoil; 0.39m+ mid orange brown clayey silt. Pit/well 1. [PIs 3 and 9]
20	25.00	1.80	0.47	0-0.22m topsoil; 0.22-0.4m subsoil; 0.4m+ mid blue orange silty clay.
21	25.00	1.80	0.55	0-0.28m topsoil; 0.28-0.48m subsoil; 0.48m+ mid orange brown clayey silt.
22	25.80	1.80	0.36	0-0.19m topsoil; 0.19-0.3m subsoil; 0.3m+ mid orange brown clayey silt.
23	24.90	1.80	0.40	0-0.23m topsoil; 0.23-0.37m subsoil; 0.37m+ mid orange brown clayey silt.
24	25.60	1.80	0.26	0-0.18m topsoil; 0.18m+ mid blue orange silty clay. Furrow 5 and 7. Gully 6
25	25.50	1.80	0.50	0-0.23m topsoil; 0.23-0.43m subsoil; 0.43m+ mid orange brown clayey silt.
26	25.00	1.80	0.48	0-0.18m topsoil; 0.18-0.36m subsoil; 0.36m+ mid orange brown clayey silt becoming mid brown grey silty clay with few flint inclusions towards SSE end.
27	25.10	1.80	0.46-0.52	SE end: 0-0.26m topsoil; 0.26-0.42m subsoil; 0.42m+ mid orange brown clayey silt. NW end: 0-0.28m topsoil; 0.28-0.4m subsoil; 0.4m+ mid orange brown clayey silt.
28	25.00	1.80	0.36	S end: 0-0.1m topsoil; 0.1-0.25m subsoil; 0.25m+ mid orange brown clayey silt. N end: 0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.34m subsoil; 0.34m+ mid orange brown clayey silt. Pit/tree hole 2. [PI 10]
29	25.20	1.80	0.39	0-0.23m topsoil; 0.23-0.38m subsoil; 0.38m+ mid orange brown clayey silt. PI 4]
30	25.90	1.80	0.53	0-0.27m topsoil; 0.27-0.45m subsoil; 0.45m+ mid orange brown clayey silt.
31	25.60	1.80	0.53	0-0.28m topsoil; 0.28-0.45m subsoil; 0.45m+ mid orange brown clayey sand. Ditch 3. [PI 11]
32	25.00	1.80	0.51	0-0.23m topsoil; 0.23-0.47m subsoil; 0.47m+ mid orange brown clayey sand.
33	25.00	1.80	0.46	0-0.26m topsoil; 0.26-0.46m subsoil; 0.46m+ mid orange brown clayey silt. Ditch 4. [PI 5]
34	25.00	1.80	0.35-0.51	E end: 0-0.23m topsoil; 0.23-0.35m subsoil; 0.35m+ mid orange brown clayey sand. W end: 0-0.29m topsoil; 0.29-0.51m subsoil; 0.51m+ mid grey blue silty clay.
35	25.60	1.80	0.53-0.64	N end: 0-0.22m topsoil; 0.22-0.49m subsoil; 0.49m+ mid orange brown clayey sand. S end: 0-0.24m topsoil; 0.24-0.43m subsoil; 0.43m+ mid orange brown clayey sand. [PI 6]
36	26.00	1.80	0.54	0-0.28m topsoil; 0.28-0.54m subsoil; 0.54m+ mid orange brown clayey sand. Furrow 22. Ditch 23. Ditch/furrow 25
37	25.00	1.80	0.40	0-0.2m topsoil; 0.2-0.4m subsoil; 0.4m+ mid orange brown clayey sand. Ditch 21. Furrow 24. PI [16]
38	25.60	1.80	0.40	0-0.23m topsoil; 0.23-0.4m subsoil; 0.4m+ mid orange brown silty sand with blue grey patches. Ditch 10, 11 15 and 16. Gully/furrow 14. Pit 18. [PI 13]
39	26.20	1.80	0.67	0-0.27m topsoil; 0.27-0.65m subsoil; 0.65m+ mid orange brown sandy silt. Ditch 8.
40	25.00	1.80	0.69	0-0.23m topsoil; 0.23-0.62m subsoil; 0.62m+ mid orange brown sandy silt becoming mid brown orange sandy clay towards the SW end. Ditch 9 and 17. [PI 14]
41	25.00	1.80	0.52	0-0.29m topsoil; 0.29-0.51m subsoil; 0.51m+ dark red orange silty sand. [PI 7]
42	25.00	1.80	0.49	0-0.21m topsoil; 0.21-0.46m subsoil; 0.46m+ mid orange brown sandy clay.
43	25.00	1.80	0.48	0-0.26m topsoil; 0.26-0.44m subsoil; 0.44m+ mid orange brown clayey sand. Ditch 12 and 13. [PI.12]

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
44	25.90	1.80	0.47	0-0.22m topsoil; 0.22-0.47m subsoil; 0.47m+ mid orange brown clayey sand. Furrow 19 and 20. [Pls 8 and 15]
45	25.80	1.80	0.43	0-0.21m topsoil; 0.21-0.38m subsoil; 0.38m+ mid orange brown clayey sand.
46	25.40	1.80	0.51-0.79	SW end:0-0.21m topsoil; 0.21-0.48m subsoil; 0.48m+ mid orange brown clayey sand. NE end:0-0.27m topsoil; 0.27-0.69m subsoil; 0.69m+ mid orange brown clayey sand.
47	15.40	1.80	0.50-0.57	SW end:0-0.26m topsoil; 0.26-0.47m subsoil; 0.47m+ mid orange brown clayey silt. NE end:0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.4m subsoil; 0.4m+ mid orange brown clayey silt.
48	15.00	1.80	0.55	0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.45m subsoil; 0.45m+ mid orange brown clayey silt.

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
		50	Topsoil		
		51	Subsoil		
19	1	52, 53, 54, 55	Pit or well	Late Bonze Age?	Pottery
28	2	56, 57, 58	Pit or tree hole		
31	3	59	Ditch		
33	4	60	Ditch	Medieval (tentative)	One sherd of pottery
24	5=7	61	Furrow	Medieval (tentative)	One sherd of pottery
24	6	62	Gully	Medieval (tentative) or Later	Stratigraphy
39	8	64	Ditch	Post-Medieval	Pottery
40	9	65	Ditch	Post-Medieval	Pottery + Glass
38	10	66	Ditch	17 th -18 th century	Pottery
38	11	67	Ditch	17 th -18 th century or later	Stratigraphy
43	12	68	Ditch	Post-Medieval	Association
43	13	69	Ditch	Post-Medieval	Association
38	14	70	Gully or furrow	Post-Medieval	Metal
38	15	71	Ditch	Post-Medieval	Association
38	16	72	Ditch	Post-Medieval	Association
38	18	73	Pit (possible)		
40	17	74, 75, 76	Ditch		
44	19	77	Furrow	Post-Medieval	Pottery
44	20	78	Furrow	Post-Medieval	Pottery
37	21	79, 80	Ditch	Post-Medieval	Metal + Association
36	22	81	Furrow	Post-Medieval	Association
36	23	82	Ditch		
37	24	83	Furrow		
36	25	84, 85	Ditch or furrow		

APPENDIX 3: Catalogue of pottery by context

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Feature</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Wt. (g)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
19	1	54	PH calc	1	6	rim sherd: inturned rim (simple profile) on convex body; poss ext burnish; internal burnt residue (sampled)
19	1	54	PH calc	4	2	body sherd + crumbs
33	4	60	Minety	1	2	body sherd
24	5	61	Minety	1	4	body sherd, abraded
39	8	64	PMR	1	38	body sherd, unglazed
39	8	64	PMR	1	14	basal angle, trace of internal glaze
40	9	65	PMR	1	9	bowl rim (small convex), notched around top; glazed int (glaze degraded)
38	10	66	PMR	1	4	glazed int
38	10	66	PMR	1	6	trailed slip dec & glazed int
44	19	77	Minety	1	12	body sherd, poss traces of internal glaze
44	19		PMR	2	14	body sherds, both glazed
44	20	78	PMR	2	23	body sherds, both glazed
44	20		PMR	1	8	body sherd, glazed int
44	20		PMR	1	2	rim sherd, small jar or bowl, glazed int & ext
36	22	81	PMR	2	6	body sherds, both glazed
22	land drain		Minety	3	5	jar rim sherd + crumbs
46		51	KVW	2	5	conjoining body sherds on fresh break
46		51	PH calc	8	4	body sherd + crumbs

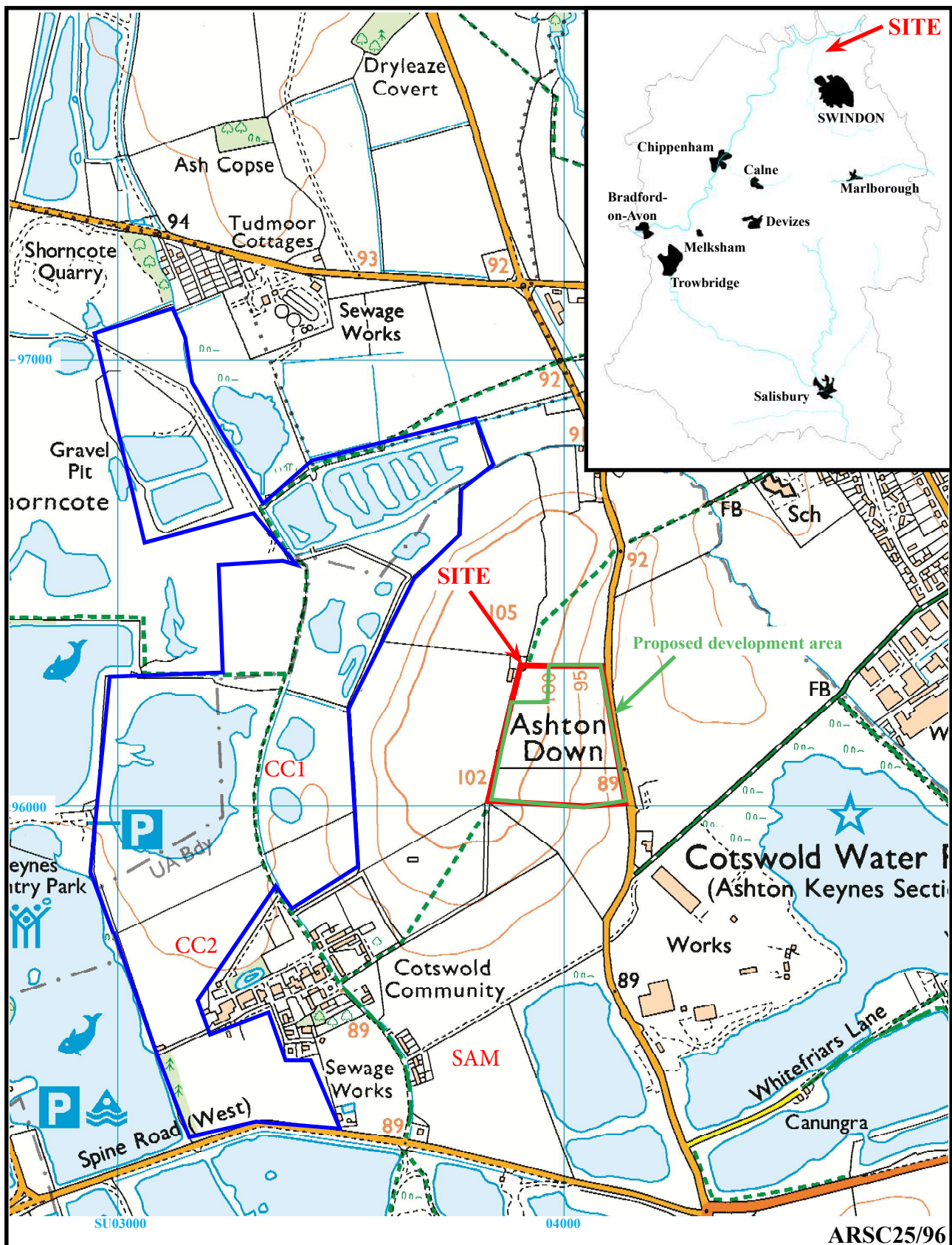
Key: PMR = post-medieval redware; PH calc = prehistoric calcareous; KVW = Kennet Valley Ware

APPENDIX 4: Catalogue of animal bone by context

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Taxon</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Element</i>
19	1	52	Cattle	1	Tooth
19	1	53	Cattle	2	Femur
19	1	53	Cattle	1	Metatarsal
19	1	53	Cattle	4	Tooth
19	1	54	Cattle	1	Mandible with tooth
19	1	54	Cattle	1	Metatarsal/metapodial
19	1	54	Cattle	2	Tooth
19	1	52	Large Mammal	1	Tooth
19	1	53	Mammal	10	Long
19	1	53	Mammal	1	Long / Flat
19	1	53	Mammal	1	Long / Irregular
19	1	53	Mammal	17	U
19	1	54	Mammal	4	Long
19	1	54	Mammal	1	MN/MX
19	1	54	Mammal	28	U

Table A4.2: Summary of taphonomic processes (NISP)

<i>Weathering (Lyman 1994)</i>	
Good	15
Fair	58
<i>Fragmentation</i>	
A (75-100% complete)	6
B (50-75% complete)	1
C (25-50% complete)	2
D (less than 25% complete)	10
E (less than 5% complete)	54
<i>Total</i>	<i>73</i>
Refit	3
Recent fragmentation	49
Loose teeth	8
Teeth in situ	1

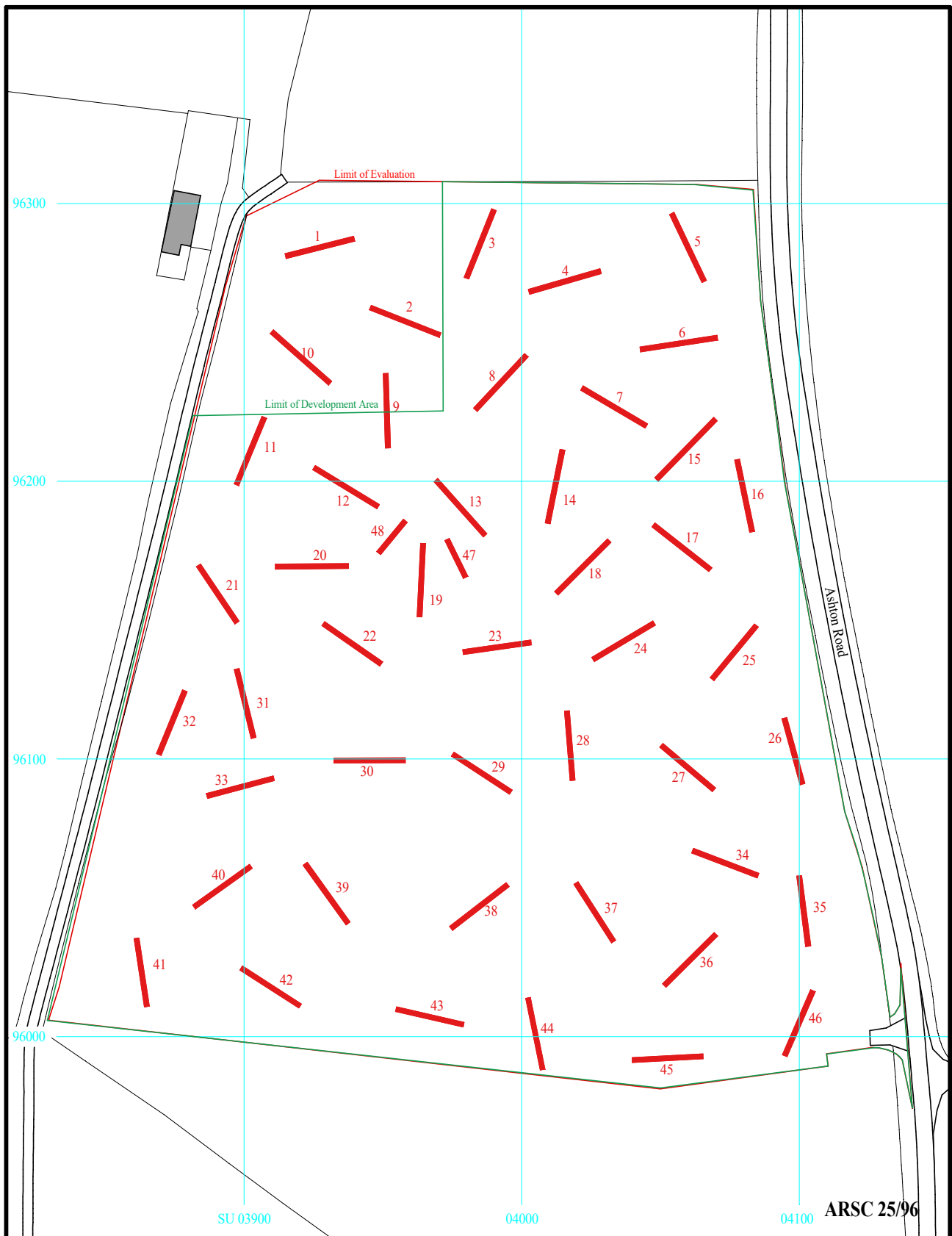


**Land to the West of Ashton Road,
South Cerney, Wiltshire,
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within South Cerney and Wiltshire.
(blue- previous excavation areas)

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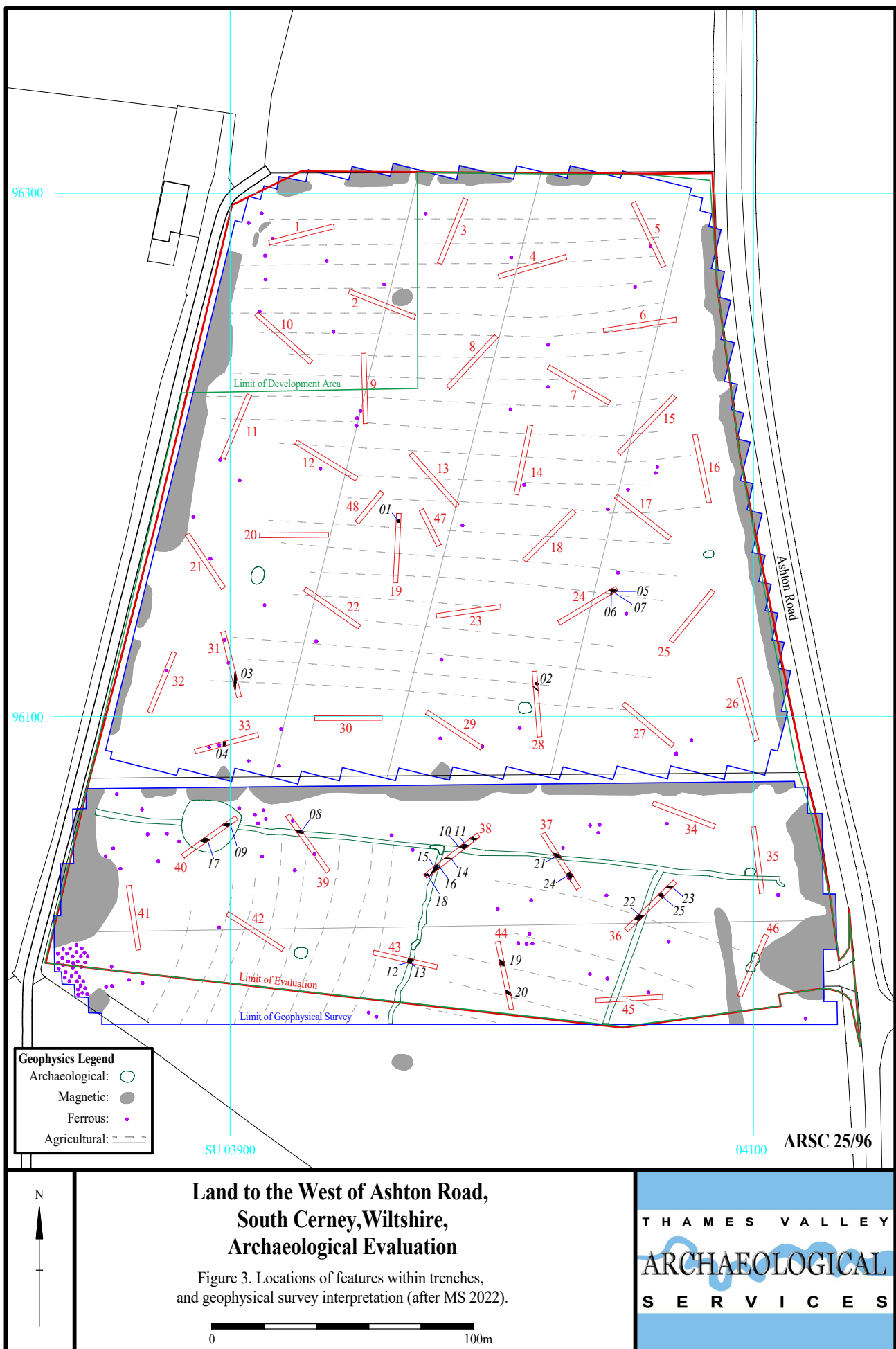


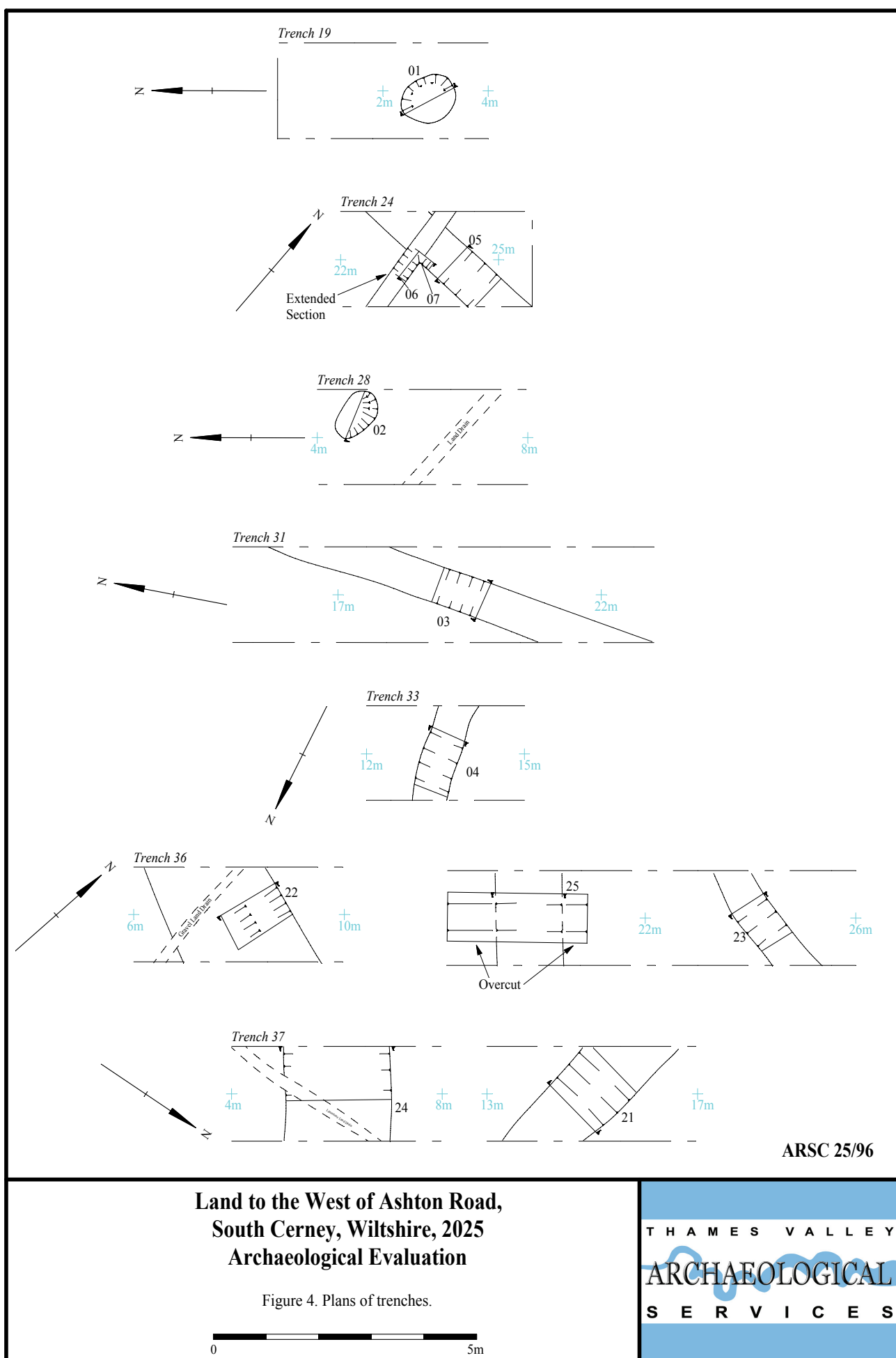
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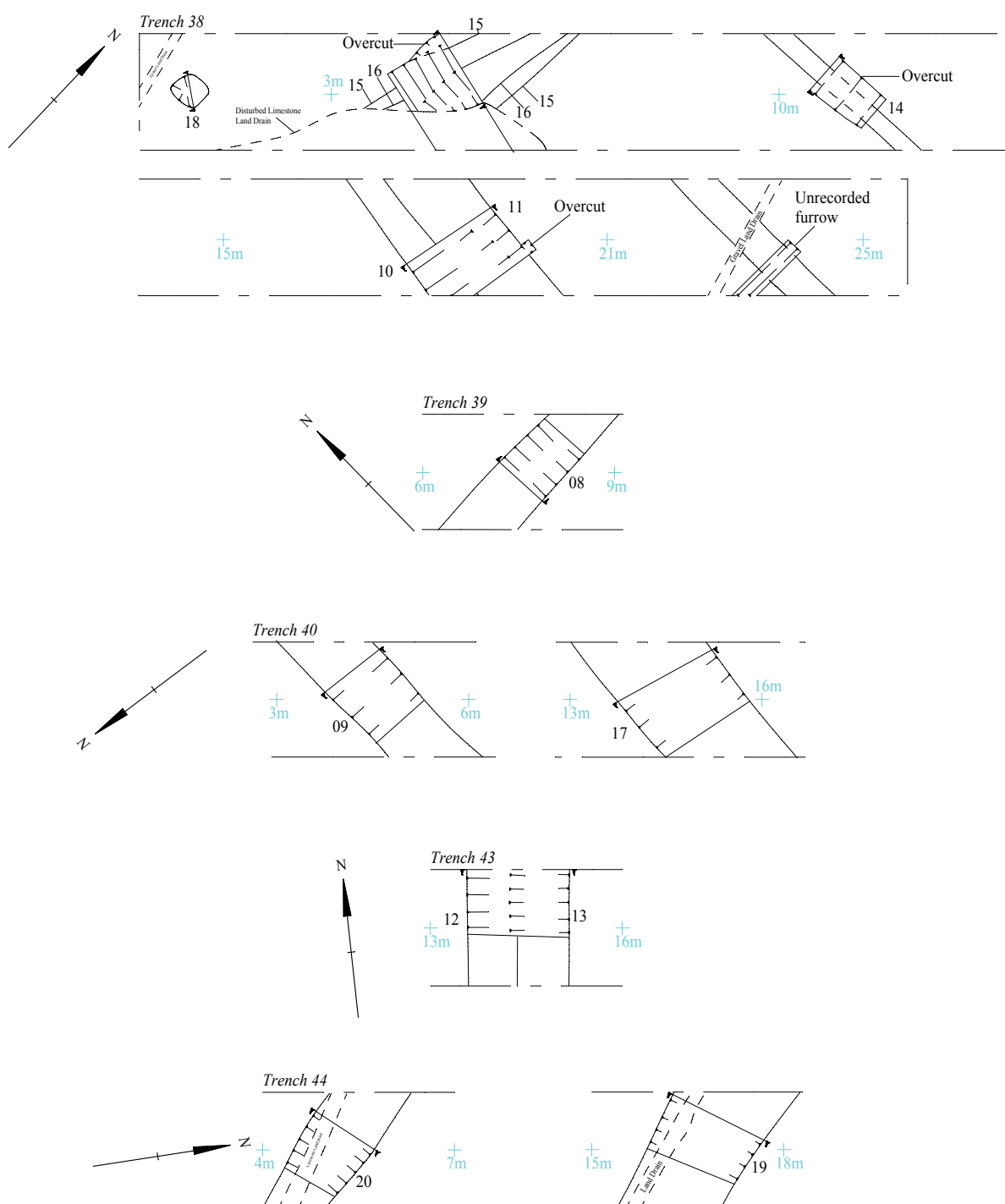
Figure 2. Locations of trenches.

0 100m

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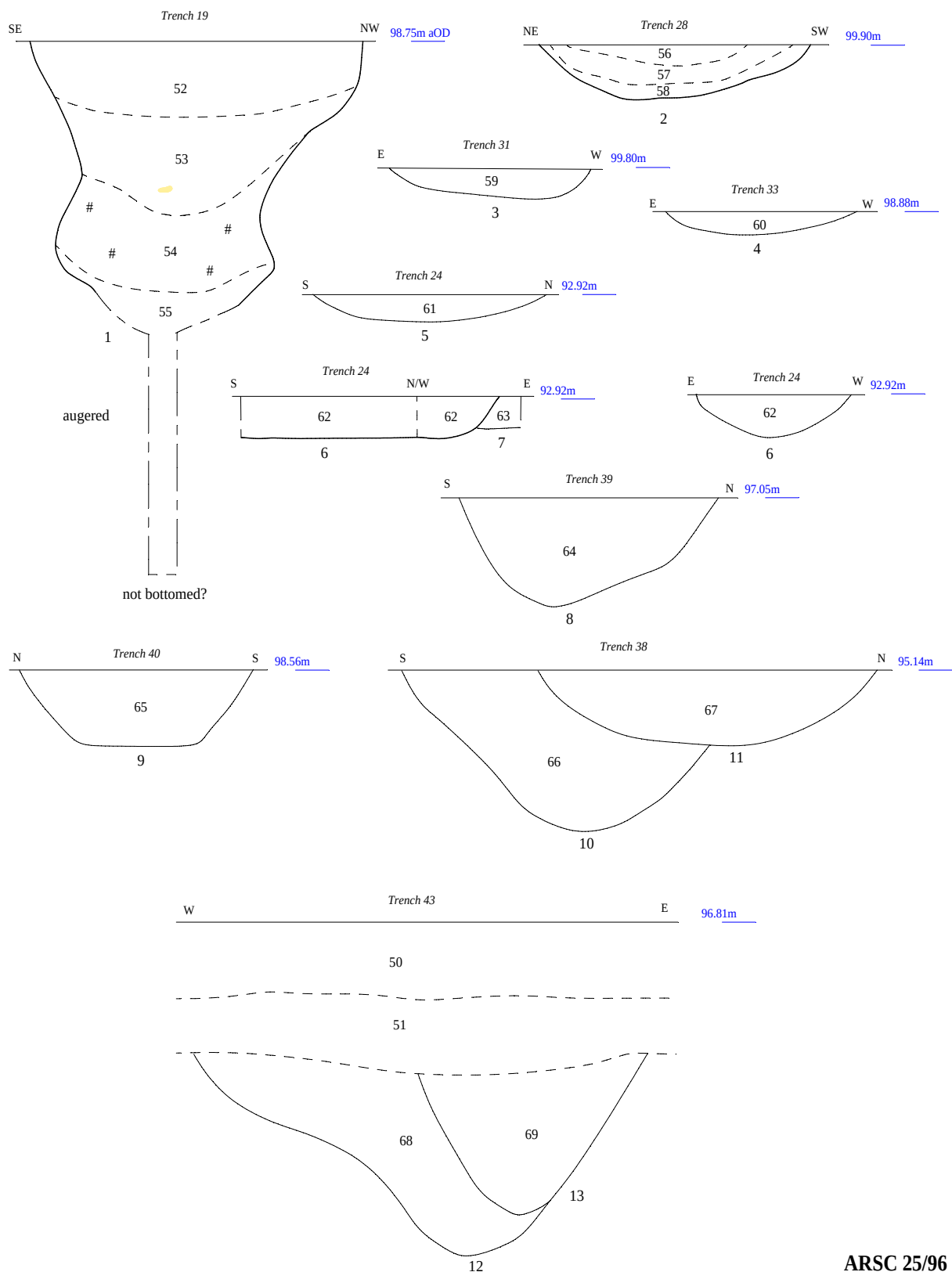
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Figure 5. Plans of trenches continued.

0 5m

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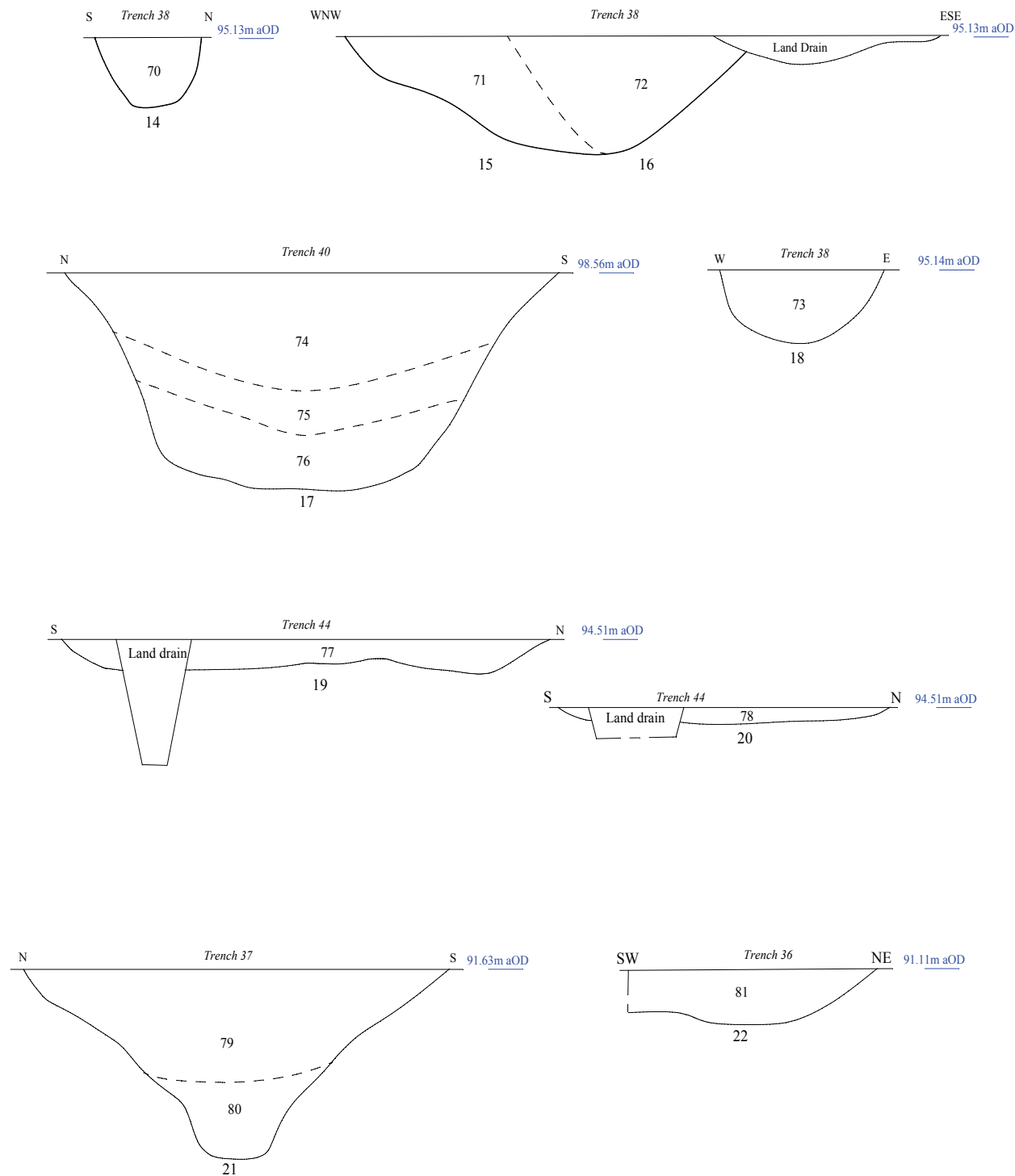
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Figure 6. Sections



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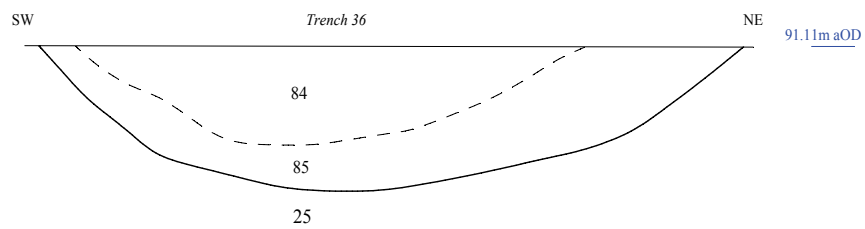
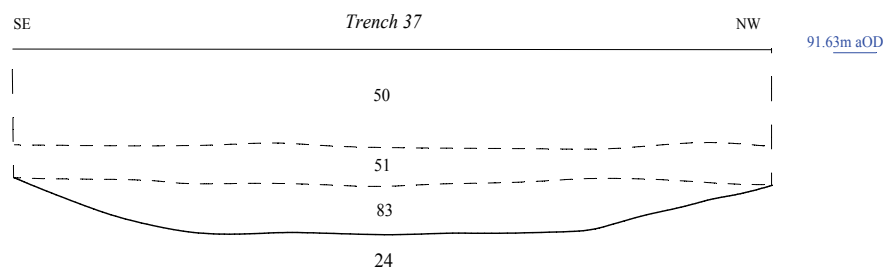
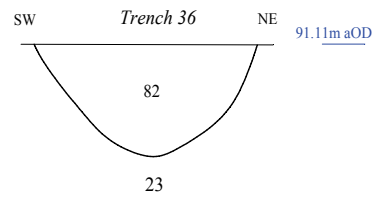
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Figure 7. Sections continued.

0 1m

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Figure 8. Sections continued.



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Plate 1. Trench 5, looking north,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.4m.



Plate 2. Trench 9, looking south,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.4m.



Plate 3. Trench 19, looking south,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.4m.



Plate 4. Trench 29, looking north west,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.4m.

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**Land to the West of Ashton Road, South Cerney,
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Archaeological Evaluation
Plates 1 - 4.

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Plate 5. Trench 33, looking north west,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.4m.



Plate 6. Trench 35, looking north,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.4m.

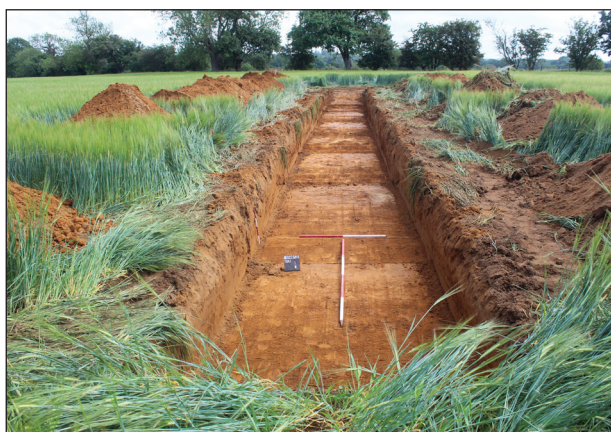


Plate 7. Trench 41, looking south,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.4m.



Plate 8. Trench 44, looking south,
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.4m.

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Plates 5 - 8.

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Plate 9. Trench 19, pit/well 1, looking south west,
Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 10. Trench 28, pit 2, looking north,
Scales: 0.5m and 0.2m.



Plate 11. Trench 31, ditch 3, looking south,
Scale: 0.5m.

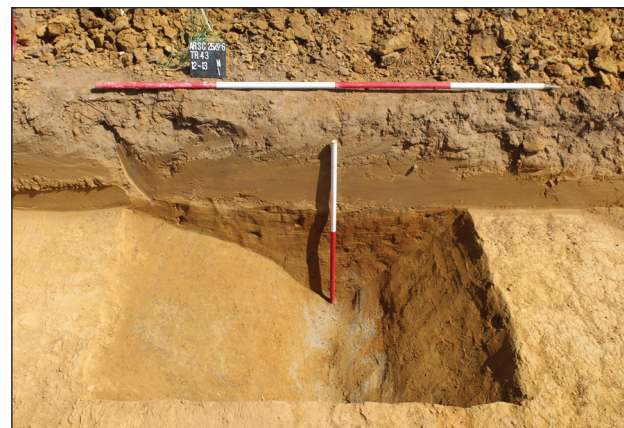


Plate 12. Trench 43, ditches 12 and 13, looking north,
Scales: 2m and 1m.

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Plates 9 - 12.

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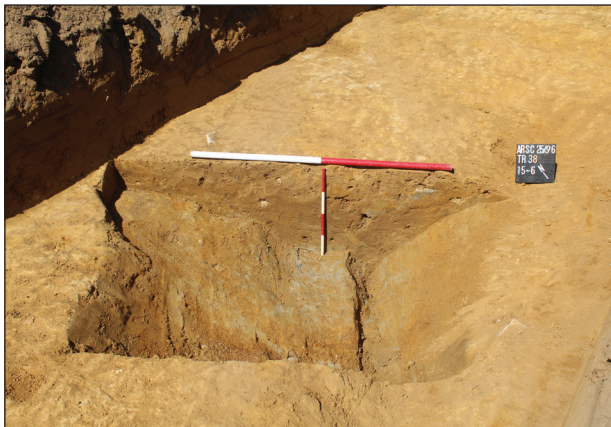


Plate 13. Trench 38, ditches 15 and 16, looking north east, Scales: 1m and 0.4m.

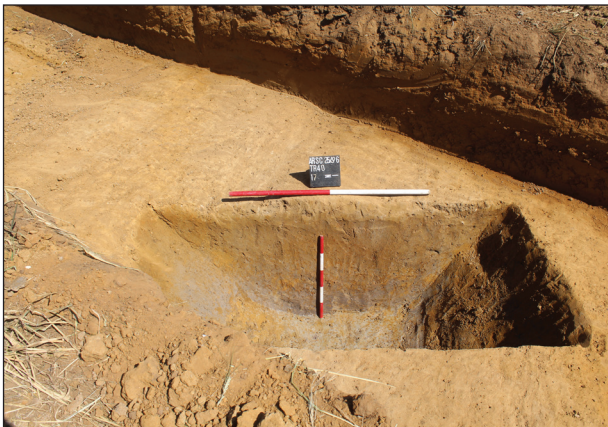


Plate 14. Trench 40, ditch 17, looking east, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 15. Trench 44, furrow 20, looking west, Scales: 1m and 0.1m.



Plate 16. Trench 37, ditch 21, looking east, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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Land to the West of Ashton Road, South Cerney,
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Archaeological Evaluation
Plates 13 - 16.

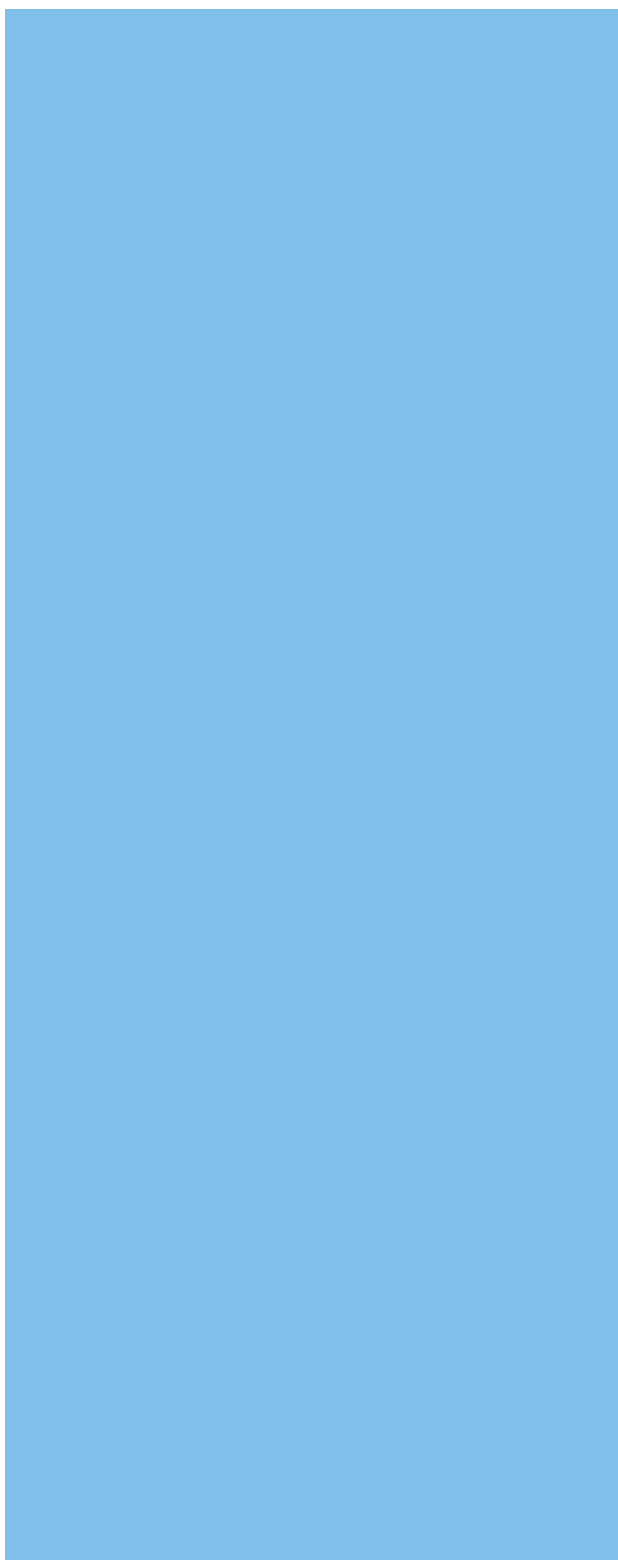
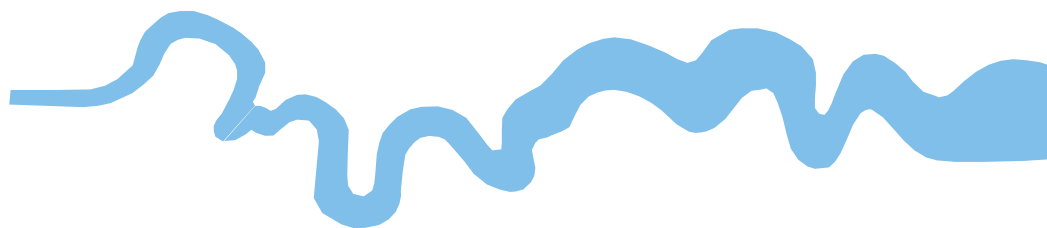
THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES

TIME CHART

Calendar Years

Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
	AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





**Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd,
47-49 De Beauvoir Road,
Reading RG1 5NR**

**Tel: 0118 9260552
Email: tvas@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk**

***Offices in:
Brighton, Taunton, Stoke-on-Trent, Wellingborough
and Ennis (Ireland)***