Land adjacent to Manor Farm and Weybrook Park Golf Club Monk Sherborne, Hampshire

Trial Trench Evaluation

for Monk Sherborne Solar Farm Ltd

Date: 28/03/2025

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Executive summary

Rocket Environmental Services Ltd was commissioned by Monk Sherborne Solar Farm Ltd to carry out a trial trench evaluation to support a planning application (23/00411/ENS) for development of a solar farm and associated infrastructure on land adjacent to Manor Farm and Weybrook Park Golf Club, Rookery Farm Lane, Monk Sherborne, Tadley, Hampshire (SU 60821 55166) (the 'Site'). The post-excavation studies and final report were completed by Cura Terrae, based on the archaeological record generated by Rocket Environmental Services. The work was undertaken to inform the local planning authority of the nature, extent and significance of any non-designated heritage assets within the Site.

The Site covers c.76ha of farmland and is made up of five arable fields, with trenching targeted on six areas of interest (Areas 1–6) located in four of the five fields The scope of the evaluation comprised excavation of 83 trial trenches, each measuring 30m by 1.80m. Trenches in Areas 1–3 and 5 were positioned to investigate anomalies detected by previous geophysical survey. Trenching aimed to avoid areas of potentially complex archaeology, which would not be excavated to an appropriate standard within the constraints of an evaluation exercise. Work was conducted in line with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (AOC Archaeology 2024), detailing the Local Authority's requirements and methodologies for work necessary to inform the planning process.

The results of the trial trench evaluation served to confirm the presence of archaeological remains highlighted by geophysical survey (ARS 2023; AOC 2024a) while also expanding on those results in revealing some previously unidentified features. The evaluation has also highlighted areas where archaeological remains are likely to be absent, and therefore these areas are not at risk of archaeological impact by the proposed development.

Trenching in Area 1 confirmed the presence of linear features identified from magnetic anomalies in the geophysical survey data. No chronologically diagnostic material was recovered, but the features are typical of later prehistoric and Romano-British land enclosure systems and associated domestic features. Area 2 confirmed the presence of a ring ditch, which was not dated, and the presence of internal features, perhaps representing the remains of a structure, may suggest a large, enclosed roundhouse rather than a funerary monument.

Trenching in Area 3 exposed the outer ditches of a sub-oval enclosure—the densest concentration of archaeological features and datable material within the Site. The enclosure, and associated features, contained finds assemblages including hand-built pottery and distinct Roman wares, ceramic building material, and a Roman coin of Tetricus I, suggesting activity during the mid- to late 3rd century AD. However, the presence of hand-built, potentially late prehistoric, pottery may suggest a late Iron Age precursor to a more traditional 3rd-century Roman settlement, which perhaps included a structure with a tiled roofed.

Four archaeologically blank trenches in Area 4 indicated that the Roman settlement in Area 3 did not continue to the north. Two sub-circular geophysical anomalies in Area 5 were interpretated as segmented Bronze Age ring ditches; however, excavation of three trenches in this area had mixed results and did not correspond well with the anticipated features, and the ditches, pits and postholes investigated were not dated. Area 6 was largely negative for archaeological remains. Features were present in only four trenches situated towards the south-east, and east of the Area. The features generally represented ditches associated with a possible trackway.

In general, the finds recovered from the Site were indicative of domestic activity, primarily consisting of native and Roman coarse wares, animal bone—particularly that of large mammals—and dumps of burnt flint and heat-affected stones that had probably originated from hearths. Sherds of Roman fine ware, although a small component of the assemblage, indicate that the inhabitants of the Site had access to the Roman market economy, although the presence of storage vessels such as amphorae was notably absent. The survival of environmental evidence was poor and only one context provided identifiable material, with barley and wheat attested.

An online OASIS data collection form has been initiated (OASIS ID: curaterr1-532689; Appendix F). Upon conclusion of the project, all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed. This will include an uploaded PDF version of the current report. The OASIS form will be validated by the Hampshire County Council archaeology team once the report is uploaded, which will become a public document upon submission.

1. Introduction

1.1.1 Rocket Environmental Services Ltd was commissioned by Monk Sherborne Solar Farm Ltd to carry out a trial trench evaluation to support a planning application (23/00411/ENS) for development of a solar farm and associated infrastructure on land adjacent to Manor Farm and Weybrook Park Golf Club, Rookery Farm Lane, Monk Sherborne, Tadley, Hampshire (SU 60821 55166) (the 'Site'). The post-excavation studies and final report were completed by Cura Terrae based on the archaeological record generated by Rocket Environmental Services. The work was undertaken to inform the local planning authority of the nature, extent and significance of any non-designated heritage assets within the Site.

1.1.2 The scope of archaeological evaluation was outlined during consultation with the Senior Archaeologist for Hampshire County Council, acting as the archaeological advisor to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. The scope comprised excavation of 83 trial trenches, each measuring 30m by 1.80m, within six prescribed Areas of archaeological interest. In Areas 1–3 and 5, the trenches were targeted on magnetic anomalies in geophysical survey data (ARS 2023; AOC 2024a). The targeting aimed to avoid areas of potentially complex archaeology which would not be excavated to an appropriate standard within the constraints of an evaluation exercise.

1.1.3 Work was conducted in line with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; AOC 2024b), detailing the local planning authority's requirements and methodologies for work necessary to inform the planning process. As agreed with the Senior Archaeologist for Hampshire County Council, the Site was issued a unique identifying code of A2024.23, to be applied to all records produced.

2. Location, topography and geology

2.1.1 The Site is located in Basingstoke and Deane Borough, Hampshire, centred on grid reference SU 60821 55166 (Fig. 1). The Site is located c.1.2km south of the village of Monk Sherborne and 2.8km north-west of Basingstoke on the north edge of the Basingstoke Open Downs Landscape Character Area.

2.1.2 The Site covers c.76ha of farmland and is made up of five arable fields, with trenching targeted on six Areas of archaeological interest within four of the five fields. The fields are bounded by hedgerows, with Manor Farm Lane separating the two western fields from three to the east of the lane.

2.1.3 To the south-east, the Site borders Weybrook Park Golf Club, separated from the Site by hedges. North of the Site is a small lane, on the other side of which is land associated with Manor Farm, including a small row of residential buildings and a former quarry. To the north-east, south, south-west, and west, the Site borders other arable fields, bounded by hedgerows. The north-most edge of the Site runs across an arable field, with no physical boundary present.

2.1.4 The Site occupies a relatively elevated position in an area of downland, with significant undulation resulting from the presence of two bournes, dry or seasonal chalk valleys, running approximately south-west to north-east in both the east and west sides of the Site. The elevation ranges from c.90m in the north-east of Area 1 to c.120m in the south of Area 3 (Fig. 2).

2.1.5 The bedrock geology consists of Seaford Chalk Formation, a firm white chalk with seams of nodular and tabular flint, formed between 89.8 and 83.6 million years ago (BGS 2025). This is overlain by superficial deposits of clay with flints from the interglacial of the Quaternary.

3. Archaeological and historical background

3.1.1 A desk-based assessment was conducted ahead of geophysical survey of the Site (ARS 2023), which is summarised below.

3.2 Prehistoric

3.2.1 Open Downs land has a strong and discrete association with the pattern of Neolithic and Bronze Age settled and farmed landscapes. At Manor Farm, a small scatter of very abraded pottery suggested some activity in the vicinity during the early and late Bronze Age periods (Teague 2006).

3.2.2 Cropmark evidence for prehistoric remains has been recorded in the form of three possible Bronze Age ring ditches (HER: 36033) near the top of the spur of higher ground that extends north towards All Saints. A further possible Bronze Age ring ditch (HER: 36034) has been located on the opposite slope of the valley that runs through the eastern part of the Site. Ordnance Survey maps also record a mound that may represent a Bronze Age barrow (HER: 19600) c. 300m south of the Site, although it is not clear if this has been destroyed by the development of the adjacent golf course. The remains suggest an elevated potential for Bronze Age funerary monuments to be encountered on areas of higher ground within the Site, as elsewhere in the Hampshire chalk downs.

3.2.3 Previous archaeological excavations at Manor Farm were located to the north of the development area on land situated between Areas 1 and 6 (Teague 2005). The earliest features at the Manor Farm excavations were of the Iron Age and comprised three pits and part of a system of enclosures defined by V-profiled curvilinear ditches. By the middle Iron Age there was certainly some form of agricultural settlement on the Site, as shown by the presence of deep pits, interpreted as grain storage pits.

3.2.4 Several other cropmarks recorded by the Hampshire Historic Environment Record (HER) also appear to be consistent with possible prehistoric activity within the southern part of the Site. These comprise a sub-oval enclosure (HER: 36031) and possible trackway marked by double ditches (HER: 36032) to the west of the modern road; and irregular cropmarks consistent with a possible Iron Age settlement site (HER 36064) on the eastern side of the road.

3.2.5 A 'keyhole' enclosure likely to date to the Iron Age is recorded approximately 100m west of the Site and is designated as a Scheduled Monument (List Entry: 1001802). A geophysical survey in 2016 detected internal features including pit-like features, post-holes representing a possible palisade, and linear ditches. Outside the enclosure and extending beyond the surveyed area was a field system and evidence for possible quarrying.

3.3 Roman

3.3.1 The most significant archaeological feature in the immediate area of the Site is a 4th-century Roman 'winged corridor house' excavated during the 1990s (Teague 2005) at Manor Farm immediately to the north and west of the Site. Remains of a hypocaust system, a masonry corn dryer and cess pits were among the features present.

3.3.2 Evidence of further Roman presence is indicated by finds including fragments of glass vessels, window glass, tile finds, building material finds and pottery that were obtained south of Rookery Farm Lane (HER ID 19499). These finds suggest that further elements of the villa are present across the Site.

3.3.3 The projected route of the Silchester to Winchester Roman Road passes c. 500m to the east of the Site (Margary 1973, Route 4b). Further significant remains are common across the surrounding area. There appears to have been an Iron Age and Romano-British settlement at the Park Prewett Hospital, to the south of Monk Sherborne. Roman sites in the parish of Wootton St. Lawrence, include settlement on the road to Winchester, and a villa within 2.5 km of the Site. Other Roman buildings are recorded in Sherborne St John at Meadow House and Elm Bottom.

3.3.4 There are substantial earthworks associated with the 'Stokes Lane' Public Right of Way, which crosses the Site between Areas 1 and 2. This has led the County Archaeologist to speculate that this route is Roman in origin, connecting the 'Manor Farm' Roman Villa to the Winchester to Silchester Roman Road.

3.4 Early medieval and medieval

3.4.1 At the Manor Farm excavations, the Roman villa was cut away be an Anglo-Saxon period ditch enclosing a timber building (Teague 2005), which showed evidence for metal working being carried out. Two significant finds form the work were a 7th-century intricately decorated belt buckle and square belt fitting in the Frankish style.

3.4.2 The present settlement at Monk Sherborne has existed from the Norman Conquest at least and was mentioned in the Domesday Book as Sireborne. The extant church, All Saints, is of early Norman date and has an aisle-less nave and north door with chevron decoration. The church seems to define the southerly extent of the existing village and borders the grounds of Manor Farm (Teague 2005).

3.5 Post-medieval and modern

3.5.1 The Hampshire Historic Landscape Assessment (Muir 2000) records that the Site lies within large, straight-sided fields consistent with parliamentary-type enclosure. Common land in Monk Sherborne was enclosed in 1793. Prior to this, the eastern part of the Site may have formed part of an open field known as 'East Field' referred to by the 1793 Tithe Award.

3.5.2 Late 19th-century Ordnance Survey maps depict the Site divided into several regular straight-sided enclosures and show a large chalk pit within the Site adjacent to the northern boundary on the west side of the road. The Site appears to have remained largely unchanged since, barring the removal of some field boundaries to create larger fields and the infilling of the chalk pit.

3.6 Previous archaeological works

3.6.1 Geophysical surveys were conducted covering Areas 1-5 (ARS 2023) and Area 6 (AOC 2024) (see Fig. 2).

3.6.2 A well-defined circular anomaly that relates to a probable ring ditch is visible in the east of the Site (Area 2). This does not appear to be associated with any other identified features and may represent the earliest feature identified by the survey.

3.6.3 The survey revealed two large enclosures that may represent enclosed settlements. These consist of a large curvilinear enclosure in south of the Site (Area 3) and a smaller curvilinear enclosure in the western field (not part of this programme of works). Both enclosures contain evidence of internal features. There is also a long linear anomaly crossing the Site north-west to south-east representing a probable trackway coinciding with the ditch that constitutes the north-east face of the southern enclosure before extending north-northwest in the direction of the enclosure in the west field, which the trackway appears to respect, curving as it does to the north-northeast around this enclosure. A possible routeway in the north of the Site is aligned on Manor Farm. Two possible circular ring ditches are located in the west of the Site.

3.6.4 Area 6 is composed of a single arable field measuring 16ha. The geophysical survey conducted in 2024 (AOC 2024a) identified some anomalies that may have an archaeological provenance. The chalk geology in places produced strongly enhanced anomalies that most likely reflect variations in the weathering of the surface of the chalk. Modern disturbance was also present to the west and north of the survey area.

3.6.5 Discrete positive anomalies were present over most of the survey area. These anomalies had a response that is characteristic of burning activity, although some of the anomalies are obscured by

natural disturbance. Some of the anomalies are possible responses to chalk extraction. Due to proximity of known archaeological features from a previous geophysical survey (ARS 2023), it may be that these features are linked. A hollow way might also be present in the east of the survey area, roughly parallel to the recorded former field boundary.

3.6.6 A few negatively enhanced linear trends in the north could have an archaeological or natural provenance and are aligned with the slope of a hill. A single historic field boundary was located in the east of Area 6, and some linear trends around this feature may be related to it.

3.6.7 Geological features were present across Area 6 as broad trends. Modern ploughing activity was identified, running in two directions. Modern disturbance was present along the eastern and southern edge Area 6, with an area of enhanced disturbance in the centre that may be related to modern agricultural practices.

4. Aims and objectives

4.1 Aims

4.1.1 The aim of the field evaluation was to achieve an understanding of archaeological remains within a designated area through intrusive fieldwork. It sought to determine the presence or absence of significant features, structures, deposits, artefacts, or ecofacts. This comprehensive evaluation aimed to assess the nature, extent and preservation status of these archaeological elements, with the goal of understanding their historical and cultural significance (CIfA 2023a, CIfA 2023b).

4.1.2 The work was also to test the results of the geophysical survey and investigate the potential Roman building enclosures. It will be determined whether the results of the evaluation hold potential to contribute to the Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment (STRF).

4.2 Objectives

4.2.1 The objective of a field evaluation is to follow a precise project design for the implementation of a programme of intrusive fieldwork methods for the systematic identification, recording and documentation of archaeological deposits, providing detailed information on the nature, extent, and preservation status of identified archaeological remains, and the subsequent analysis of recorded data to evaluate the significance of findings in the context of historical and cultural importance. The outcomes will be encapsulated in a comprehensive report and supported by the establishment of an accessible archive for future research (CIfA 2023a, 2023b).

4.2.2 The work will enable the Hampshire County Council archaeology team to make an informed decision on the status of the application.

Research Framework

4.2.3 In addition to the general objectives noted above, the results of the work have the potential to contribute to the following questions outlined in the Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment (STRF):

8.4.3 *Why is there comparatively little evidence of early Bronze Age settlement, and to what extent can the distribution of round barrows and ring ditches be used to elucidate the picture?*

8.5.2	*What is the relationship of small burial monuments to the settlement evidence? Are smaller monuments found in areas of settlement?*
10.6.7	*The size of communities in the Iron Age, their social and economic relationships*
12.2.1	*Sites with well-preserved deposits of both late Iron Age and Roman date should be given careful attention in order to investigate continuity of local tradition at these sites.*
12.6.4 and 12.6.5	*The evidence for major change in settlement occupation across the diverse landscapes of the region between the late Iron Age and the early medieval period needs to be (examined) – the relationship of such change to the development and decline of 'villas' and associated reorganisation of the rural landscape should be investigated.*
14.2.4	*The identification of the extent to which there was continuity of use between Romano-British sites and Anglo-Saxon.*
14.2.5	*Identifying and exploring the extent to which Romano-British agricultural practices persisted into the Anglo-Saxon period.*

5. Standards and guidance

5.1.1 All archaeological works were carried out in accordance with archaeological best practice based on the following published standards and guidance:

- *Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment*
- *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2022);
- *Standard for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2023)
- *Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2023)
- *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials* (CIfA 2014b);
- *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (CIfA 2014c); and,
- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015a).

6. Methodology

6.1.1 The scope of archaeological evaluation was outlined during consultation with the Senior Archaeologist for Hampshire County Council, acting as the archaeological advisor to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

6.1.2 The scope comprised the excavation of 83 trial trenches, each measuring 30m by 1.80m within six prescribed Areas of archaeological interest. In Areas 1-3 and 5, the trenches were targeted on magnetic anomalies within geophysical survey data. The targeting aimed to avoid areas of potentially complex archaeology that would not be excavated to an appropriate standard within the constraints of an evaluation exercise, such as the interior of the possible enclosure in Area 3.

6.1.3 Area 6 was set out in two sections: areas most likely to contain archaeological features were subject to a 4% sample by area, while the remaining area was subject to a 2% sample. A 1% contingency was planned in the project WSI where needed to characterise archaeological features.

6.2 Machine excavation

6.2.1 Evaluation trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator working under the direction of a suitably qualified archaeologist. A toothless ditching bucket was used to remove the topsoil and non-archaeological deposits down to the uppermost archaeological horizon, or to the natural subsoil, whichever was highest.

6.3 Site recording

6.3.1 The location of the excavated areas and features within were recorded on hand-drawn plans at 1:20 scale and sections at 1:10 scale. All plans and sections included the Ordnance Datum (OD) height of principal features and were tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid through GPS recording.

6.3.2 All exposed archaeological deposits and features were recorded by context using a proforma recording system compatible with the single context recording methods of the Museum of London (MoLAS 1994). Registers were kept of all photographs, levels, plans, sections, finds and samples.

6.3.3 Digital colour photography of features was taken at a minimum resolution of 10 megapixels and in line with Historic England guidance (Historic England 2015b). Photographs included a scale bar and north arrow as appropriate. General record images to show work in progress were also taken.

6.4 Environmental sampling

6.4.1 Where environmental potential was identified, bulk samples of 20 litres were taken. Samples were collected from the fills of stratigraphically secure features and deposits only. Sample processing methods followed Historic England guidelines (2011).

7. Results

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits are presented in Appendix A. Context numbers consist of the trench number with three following digits.

Table 1: Summary of trenches (targeted parts of area 6 marked (*)).

Trench Number	Features
Area 1	
1	No archaeological features
2	Three possible pits/postholes; three possible ditches
3	One large pit
4	Three ditches or irregular pits
5	Two irregular pits
6	Two possible irregular pits
7	No archaeological features
8	Possible terminus or pit
9	One ditch, two pits and two post holes
10	One linear feature
11	No archaeological features
Area 2	
12	Two segments of a ring ditch
13	Two small post holes
14	No archaeological features
Area 3	
15	No archaeological features
16	Two linear ditches
17	One linear ditch
18	One linear ditch
19	One pit and one ditch
20	Four linear features, two of which terminate. Two pits and two post holes
21	One ditch and one curvilinear gully. Two possible pits
22	One ditch and one curvilinear gully
23	One pit and three linear features
24	Two linear features, four pits
Area 4	
25	No archaeological features
26	No archaeological features
27	No archaeological features
28	No archaeological features
Area 5	
29	Three small pits, one linear feature
30	Two pits, one linear gully
31	No archaeological features

Trench Number	Features
Area 6	
32*	No archaeological features
33	No archaeological features
34*	No archaeological features
35*	Two linear ditches
36*	No archaeological features
37	No archaeological features
38	No archaeological features
39	No archaeological features
40*	No archaeological features
41*	No archaeological features
42*	No archaeological features
43*	No archaeological features
44*	No archaeological features
45*	No archaeological features
46	No archaeological features
47	No archaeological features
48	No archaeological features
49*	No archaeological features
50	No archaeological features
51*	No archaeological features
52*	No archaeological features
53*	No archaeological features
54	No archaeological features
55*	No archaeological features
56*	No archaeological features
57	No archaeological features
58	No archaeological features
59	No archaeological features
60	No archaeological features
61	No archaeological features
62	No archaeological features
63	No archaeological features
64	No archaeological features
65	No archaeological features
66	No archaeological features
67	No archaeological features
68	No archaeological features
69	No archaeological features
70*	No archaeological features
71*	No archaeological features
72*	Three linear ditches
73*	One post hole
74*	No archaeological features
75*	One post hole
76*	No archaeological features
77*	No archaeological features
78*	No archaeological features
79*	No archaeological features
80*	No archaeological features
81*	No archaeological features
82*	Two linear ditches
83	No archaeological features

Trench Number	Features
84	No archaeological features
85	No archaeological features
86	No archaeological features
87	No archaeological features
88	No archaeological features
89	No archaeological features

7.1.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were cool and damp, with intermittent rain, which had no impact on the investigative work.

7.1.3 All trenches were excavated down to the natural geology which was exposed at a depth of 0.3–0.5m below ground level. Most trenches contained a layer of loose dark brown silty sand topsoil that was c. 0.3m deep, overlying a mid-orange-brown to red-brown clayey silt subsoil that was up to 0.2m deep. The subsoil sealed the natural substrate of white chalk with flint nodules.

7.2 Area 1

7.2.1 Area 1 contained Trenches 1 to 11, designed to investigate a series of features recorded by geophysical and cropmark surveys, including a broad linear feature interpreted as natural geological variation. Trenches 7 and 11 were archaeologically blank. Trench 3 contained a single possible large pit at the east end, while Trench 4 contained what appeared in plan to be either three intersecting ditch termini or one or more irregular pits. Trench 5 contained a single small pit or large posthole near the north-east end. Trench 8 contained a single possible ditch terminus at the north-east end. None of the features described above were excavated.

7.2.2 Trenches 2, 6, 9 and 10 contained archaeological features which were tested by excavation and are discussed below.

Trench 2

7.2.3 Trench 2 contained three linear ditches and three possible pits (Fig. 3). A pit (2006) and a ditch (2004) were sample excavated. Pit 2006 was located towards the north-west end of the trench, and ovoid in plan. It was 0.74m by 0.38m in size (Plate 1), with vertical sides and a sharp break of slope to a flat base, with a depth of 0.27m. The single fill (2007) was a grey-brown silty clay with fragments of chalk and flint.

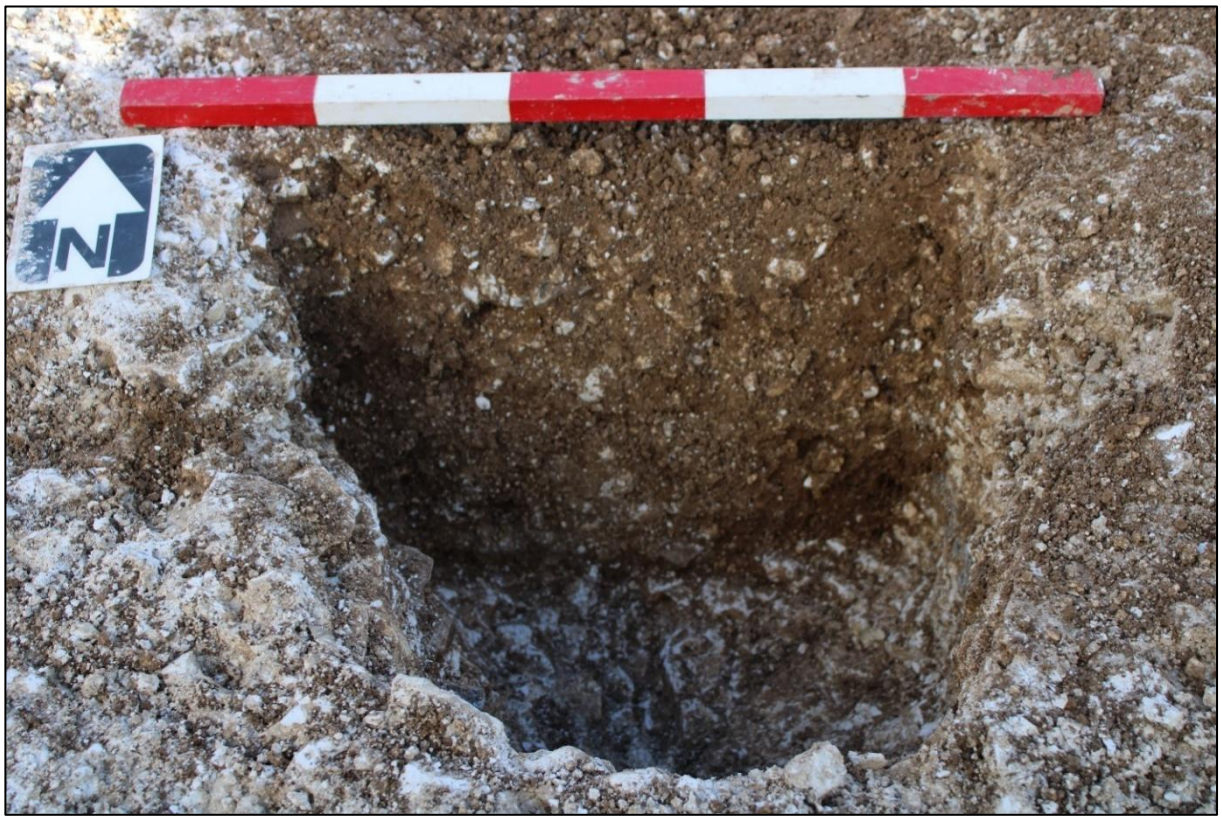

Plate 1: Trench 2. Section of pit 2006.

7.2.4 Ditch 2004 was located immediately to the east of pit 2006 and was aligned north-east to south-west. The ditch was 1.26m wide and 0.35m deep, with curved sides and a flat base (Fig. 13, Section 2a). Ditch 2004 contained a single fill (2005) of grey-brown silty clay with fragments of chalk and flint.

Trench 6

7.2.5 Trench 6 contained two features near the north-west end, including a possible pit and a probable ditch terminus (Fig. 4; Plate 2). Ditch terminus 6004 was oriented north-west to south-east and extended into the south-west trench section (Fig. 13, Section 6a). The ditch was 1.60m wide and 0.36m deep, with broadly concave but irregular sides, steeper to the north. There was one fill, a mid-brown silty clay (6005) with fragments of chalk and flint.

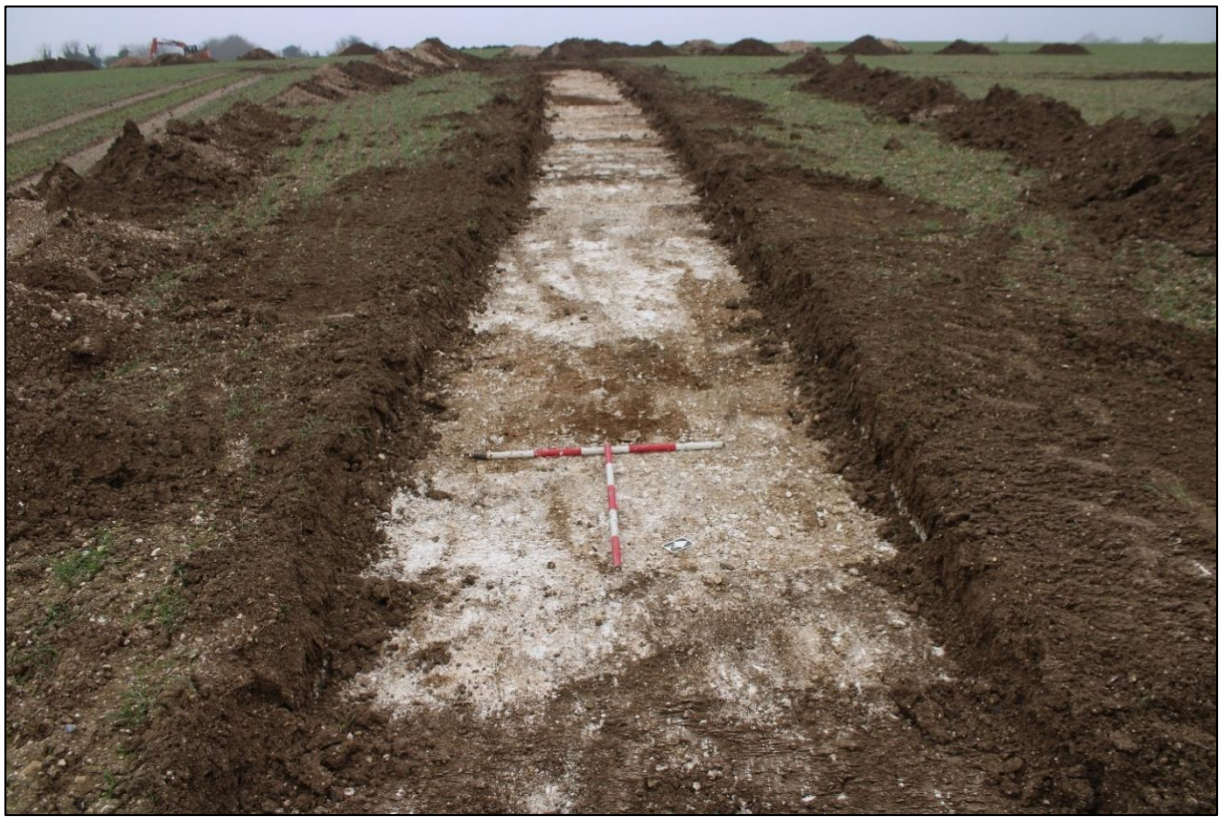

Plate 2: Trench 6. Pre-excavation shot of ditch terminus 6004, looking north-west.

7.2.6 Pit 6006 was subcircular in plan, with moderately steep concave sides and a slightly rounded base. It was 3.45m wide and 0.96m deep (Fig. 13, Section 6b). The primary fill (6007) was a firm yellow-white redeposited natural chalk with some clayey silt. The upper layer was a friable mid-orange-brown clayey silt with some chalk fragments that contained a small quantity of animal bone (6006; Appendix D).

Trench 9

7.2.7 Trench 9 contained a single ditch, two probable pits, and two smaller discrete features interpreted as possible postholes (Fig. 5). Ditch 9013 was oriented south-east to north-west, running across the middle of the trench and corresponded to a geophysical survey response representing a square enclosure recorded by geophysical survey (ARS 2023). Ditch 9013 had moderately steep sides with an uneven concave base and was 0.97m wide and 0.35m deep (Fig. 13, Section 9a). The primary fill (9014) was a mid-grey-brown silty clay with chalk fragments that was up to 0.14m deep. The upper fill (9015) was a mid-red-brown silty clay up to 0.14m deep.

7.2.8 To the south of ditch 9013 was a possible pit or ditch terminus (9011) that extended beyond the western edge of the trench. Feature 9011 was up to 2m wide and 0.35m deep and was filled by a single deposit of mid-greyish brown silty clay (9012) (Fig. 13, Section 9b).

7.2.9 A second possible ditch terminus (9008) was located to the south of feature 9011. It was orientated north-west to south-east and was 2.12m wide and up to 0.37m deep (Fig. 13, Section 9c). Ditch 9008 was filled by a primary deposit of weathered chalk (9009), originating from the north-eastern edge of the feature and a secondary fill of mid brownish-yellow silty clay (9010).

7.2.10 Two postholes were excavated at the southern end of the trench. Posthole 9004 measured 0.35m in diameter and was 0.2m deep, whereas posthole 9006 was smaller, measuring 0.25m wide and 0.08m deep. Both features were filled with comparable deposits of mid-greyish brown silty clay (9005 and 9007).

Trench 10

7.2.11 Trench 10 contained a single north-east to south-west ditch 10004 (Fig. 5). Ditch 10004 was 0.71m wide and 0.42m deep, with steep sides forming a roughly V-shaped profile to the natural chalk substrate (Plate 3). It was filed by a single mid-brown silty clay deposit (10005).

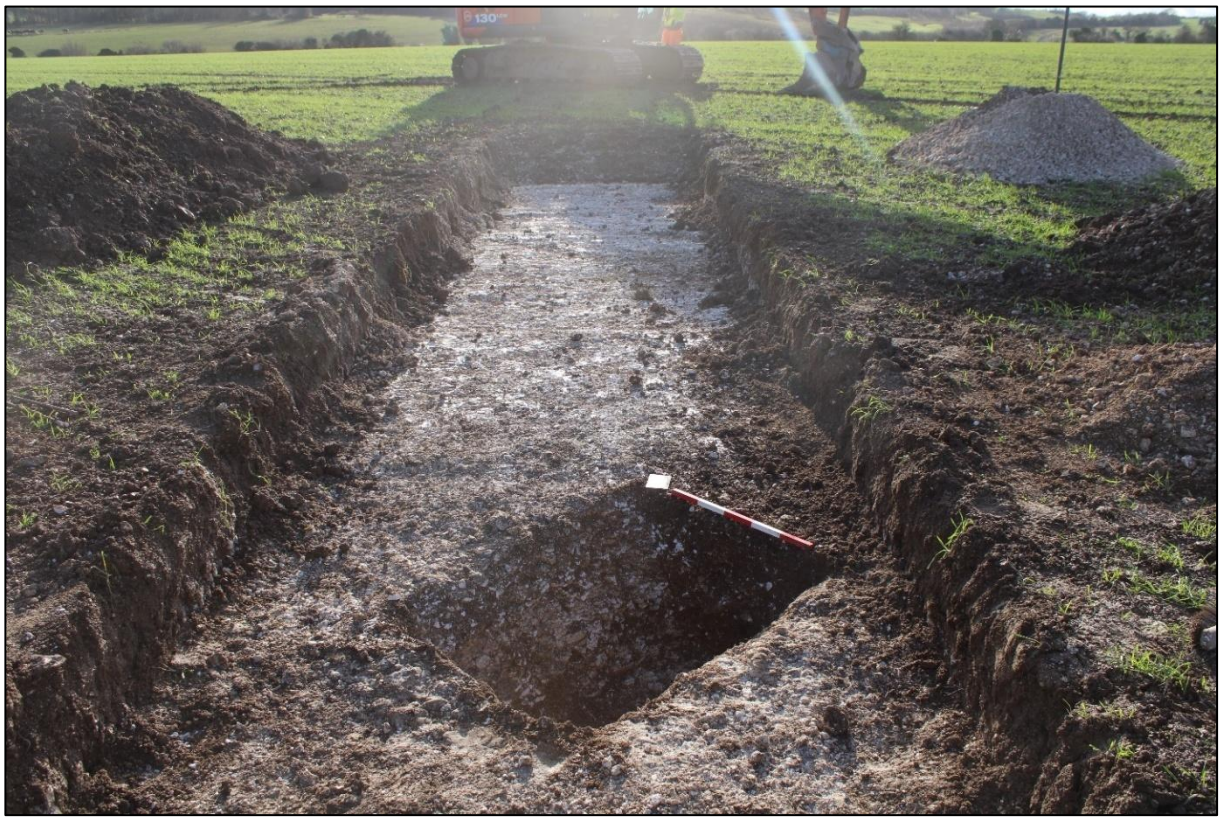

Plate 3: Trench 10. Ditch 10004 at the southern end of the trench.

7.3 Area 2

7.3.1 Area 2 contained three trenches, Trenches 12–14 (Fig. 2). Trench 12 was targeted on a ring ditch previously identified by cropmark evidence; Trenches 13 and 14 targeted the site of the ring ditch as recorded by geophysical survey, which was found not to be accurate. Trench 14 contained no archaeological features.

Trench 12

7.3.2 Both sides of the ring ditch were identified in the trench, with the east side recorded as ditch 12004 and the west side as ditch 12007 (Fig. 6; Plate 4). In both excavated sections, the profile was of steep concave sides with a roughly flat base (Fig. 13, Sections 12a and 12b). Both ditches contained two fills. Fills 12005 and 12006 filled ditch 12004 to the east, and fills 12008 and 12009 filled ditch 12007 to the west. Ditch 12004 was 2.60m wide and 0.51m deep and ditch 12007 was 1.30m wide and 0.55m deep. The lower fill in both ditches (12005 and 12008) was a deposit of compact off-white chalk that was 0.20 to 0.30m deep and had most likely been redeposited through collapse from the surrounding natural substrate. The upper fill in both ditches (12006 and 12009) was of mid-grey-brown clayey silt containing fragments of chalk and flint that was 0.43 to 0.45m deep. Fill 12006 contained a potential worked flint and a small assemblage of animal bone (Appendix B and D), while fill 12009 contained no finds.

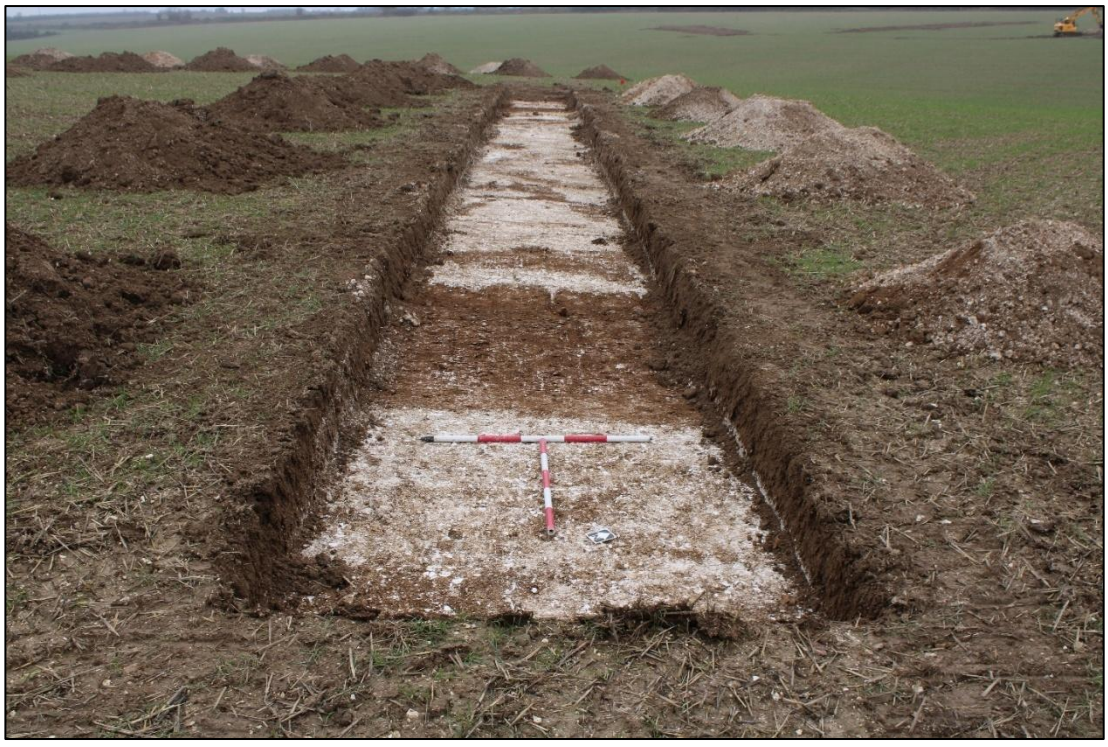

Plate 4: Trench 12. Eastern segment of ring ditch 12004, looking west.

7.3.3 The area defined by the ring ditch contained a series of curving gullies and possible discrete features that were potentially structural in nature (12010, 12012, 12014, 12016, 12018, 12020, 12022 and 12024). Some of these features were partially investigated, whilst others were issued context numbers but were not excavated. All were planned using dGPS.

Trench 13

7.3.4 Trench 13 contained three possible postholes located towards its south-east end (Figure 6). Posthole 13004 was sub-rectangular, measuring 0.18m by 0.10m by 0.08m deep. Its fill (13005) was friable mid-orange-brown sand. Posthole 13006 was circular and concave, measuring 0.10m in diameter and 0.03m deep. The fill (13005) was loose dark grey-brown silt. Posthole 13007 was implied by a circular patch of discoloured chalk on the trench base that was 0.12m in diameter and appeared to have been truncated to its base. The trench was extended 2m by 2m in the direction of the curved alignment of postholes, but no further features were exposed. The circular geophysical response was not present in Trench 13.

7.4 Area 3

7.4.1 Area 3 contained ten trenches; Trenches 15–24, in an area of geophysical anomalies and cropmark evidence that suggested the presence of an enclosed settlement (Fig. 2). The trenches were targeted on the outer anomalies that appeared to describe the enclosure of an internal area containing potential settlement evidence to avoid damaging any possibly significant remains in the interior. Trench 15 was archaeologically blank, while the other trenches all contained features and assemblages of finds indicative of Roman period activity.

Trench 16

7.4.2 Trench 16 contained two possible pits and a segment of a boundary consisting of two ditches, 16004 and 16007 (Fig. 7; Plate 5). The earlier ditch (16004) had straight sloping sides with a rounded base and was 0.57m deep. The lower fill (16005) was redeposited chalk with a smaller component of firm yellow-brown clayey silt. This was sealed by a mid-brown clayey silt with grey hues (16006), with no finds. These were interpreted as natural silting. Ditch 16004 was cut by later ditch 16007 along its length.

7.4.3 Ditch [16007] was 1.38m wide and 0.61m deep, with straight sides and a largely flat base. It presumably represented redefinition of the boundary. The primary fill (16008) of ditch 16007 was mid-yellow to grey-brown clayey silt with frequent chalk fragments. The upper fill (16009) was a mid-brown clayey silt with chalk fragments, which contained 22 sherds of Roman pottery, five

sherds of hand-built pottery, and an assemblage of CBM which included fragments of tile (Appendix B).

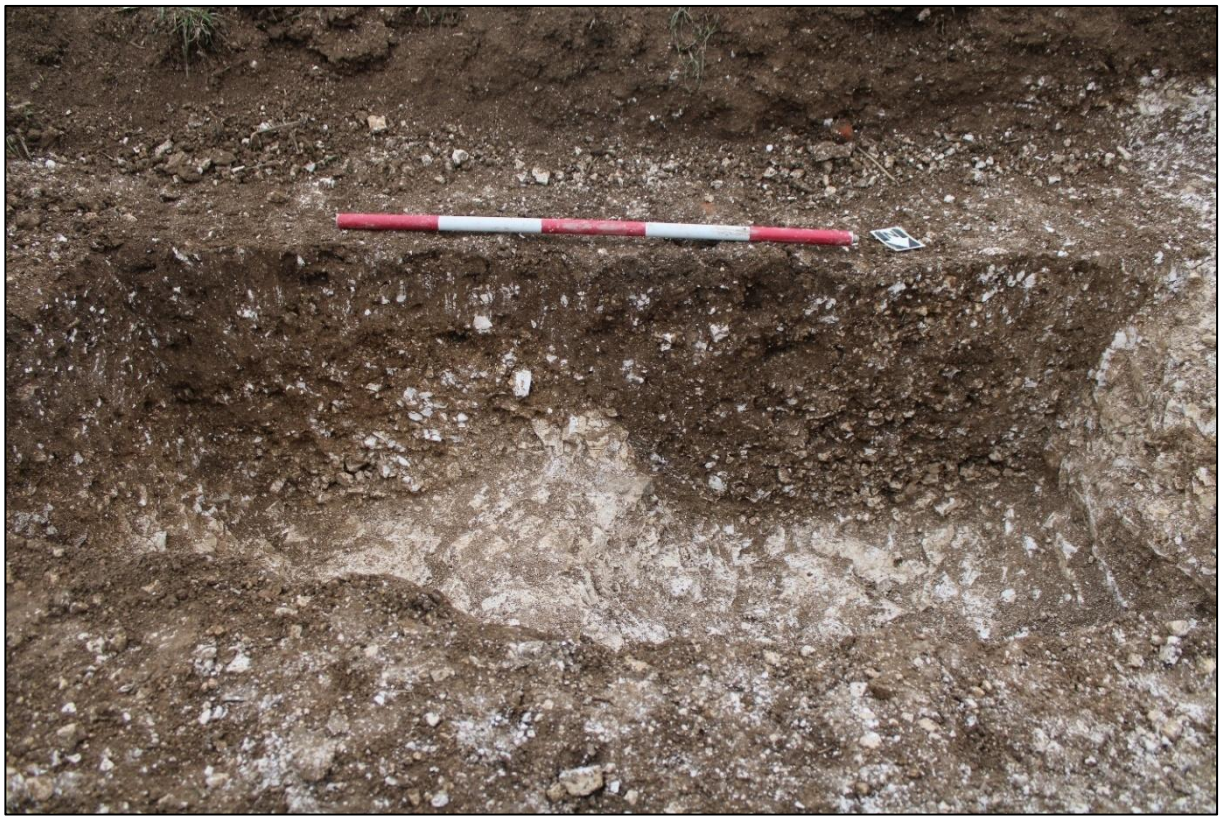

Plate 5: Trench 16. North-east facing section of ditches 16004 and 16007.

7.4.4 The two possible pits were planned via dGPS but not excavated.

Trench 17

7.4.5 Trench 17 contained a north to south ditch 17004 that was 1.8m wide and 0.64m deep (Fig. 8; Plate 6). The ditch had steep sloping sides and a rounded base. The lower fill (17005) was a loose deposit of grey-white pea gravel with redeposited natural chalk and was likely a natural infill. This was sealed by fill 17006, which was dark grey-brown silt with flint and chalk fragments that was 0.64m deep. Fill 17006 contained a significant quantity of mollusc shell, 27 iron hobnails and fragments of CBM (Appendix B). A coin of Tetricus I was recovered, which indicated a terminus post quem for the feature in Trench 17, with potential inferences of date for the wider enclosure system, of the mid- to late 3rd century (Appendix C).

Plate 6: Trench 17. North-east facing section of ditch 17004.

Trench 18

7.4.6 Trench 18 contained north-west to south-east ditch 18004. Ditch 18004 had straight sides and a flat base (Fig. 8; Plate 7). It was 2.30m wide and 0.82m deep. The single fill (18005) was a mid-brown clayey silt with chalk and flint fragments. A sherd of hand-built pottery and sherd of black-burnished ware were recovered from the fill, along with fragments of Roman tile (Appendix B).

Plate 7: Trench 18. South-east facing section of ditch 18004.

Trench 19

7.4.7 Several features were identified in Trench 19, including a ditch (19004) and a pit (19006; Fig. 8). Ditch 19004 was oriented north-east to south-west and was 2.19m wide and 0.89m deep (Plate 8). Its single fill (19005) was mid-brown clayey silt that contained fragments of Roman tile (Appendix B).

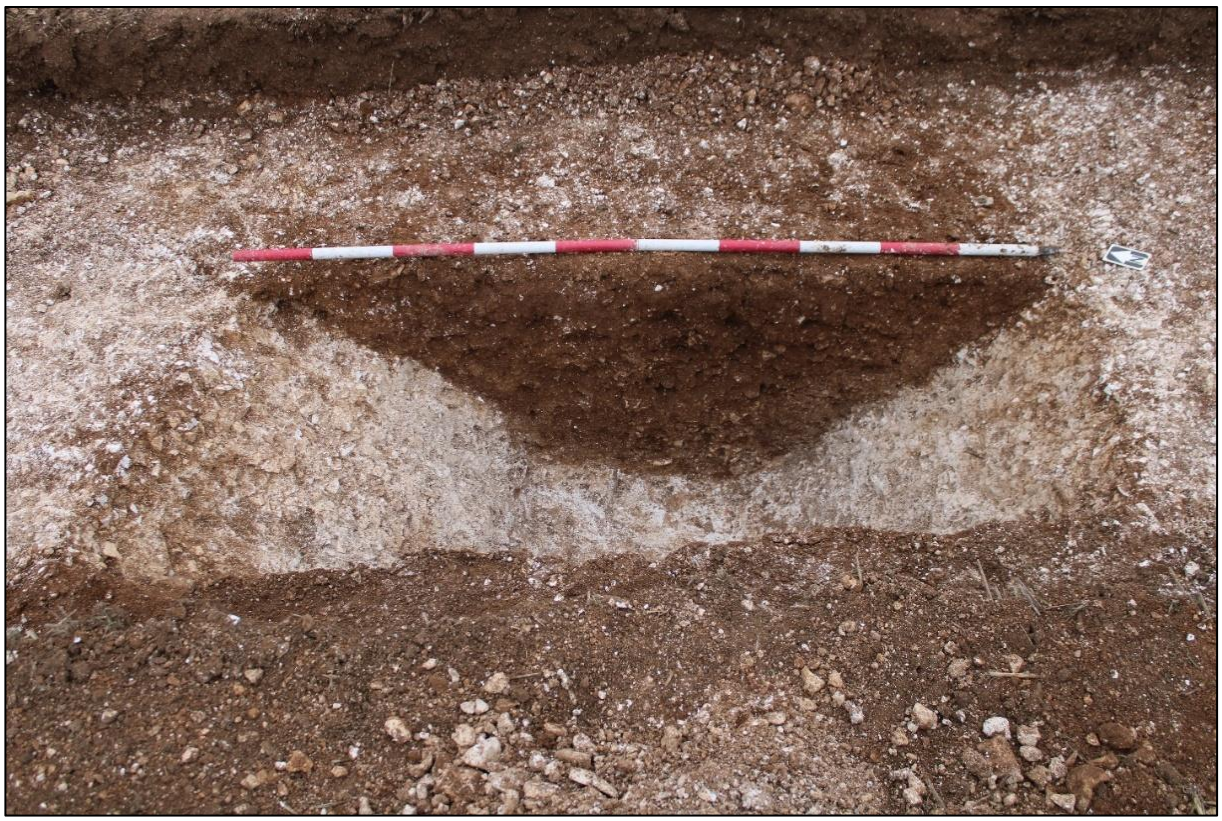

Plate 8: Trech 19. South-west facing section of ditch 19004.

7.4.8 Pit 19006 was 1.07m long by 0.36m wide with a depth of 0.81m. The profile consisted of straight, steep sides and a flat base. It was filled by redeposited chalk in a mid-yellow-brown silty matrix (19007).

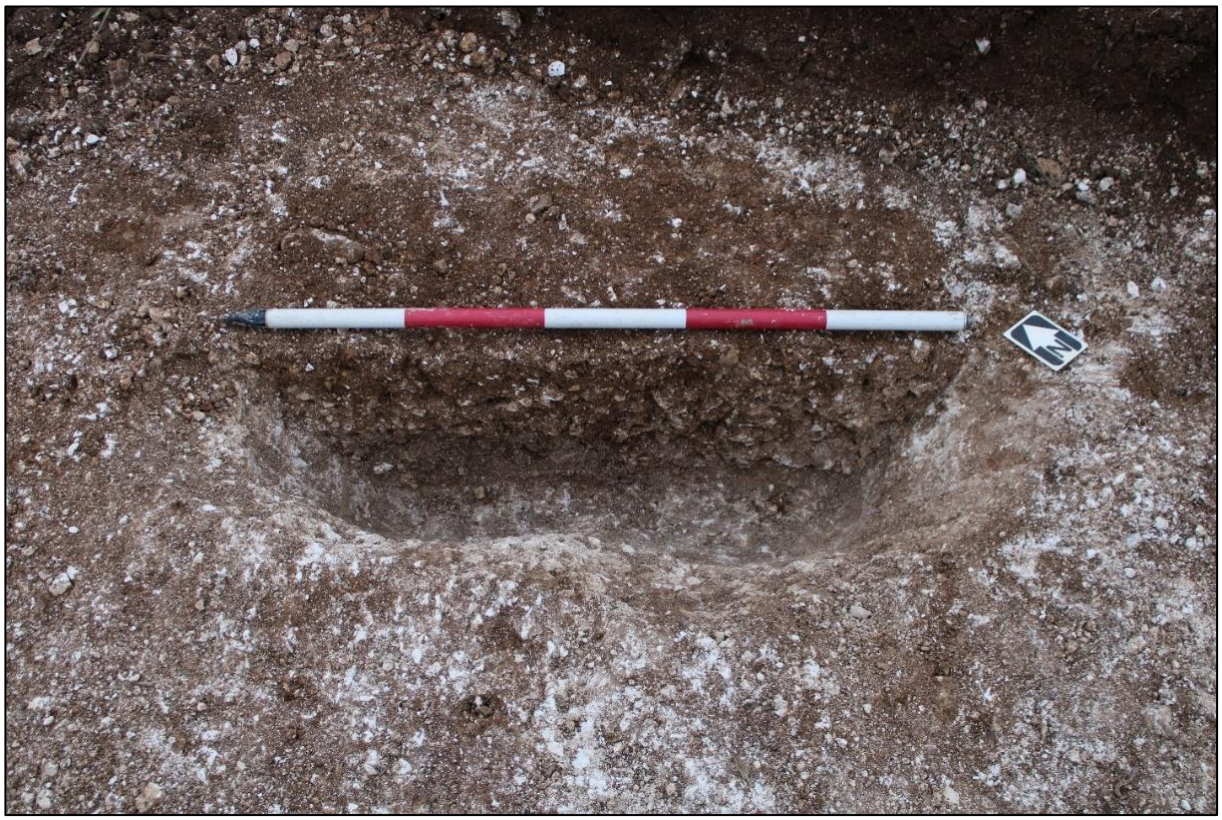

Plate 9: Trench 19. South-west facing section of pit 19006.

7.4.9 A section of curving gully (19008) and a second potential pit (19010) were recorded using dGPS but were not excavated.

Trench 20

7.4.10 Trench 20 contained five ditches and two pits that corresponded to elements of the enclosure system identified by geophysical survey (Fig. 8).

7.4.11 Pit 20004 was located at the north-west end of the trench and was subcircular in plan, measuring 0.63m by 0.38m (Plate 10). It had steeply sloping edges with a flat base and was 0.28m deep. The primary fill was redeposited chalk with elements of dark grey-brown silt (20005), which contained burnt flint. This was sealed by dark grey-brown silt with chalk fragments (20006).

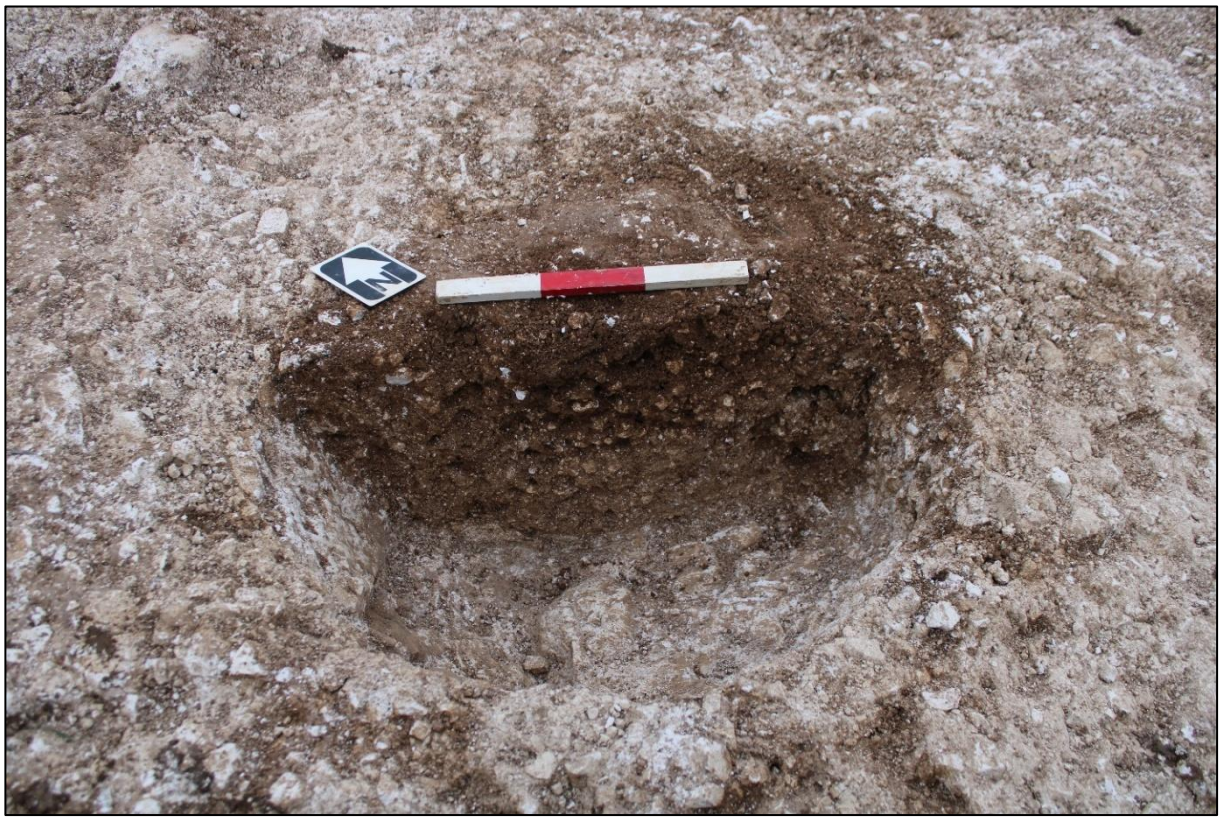

Plate 10: Trench 20. South-west-facing section of pit 20004.

7.4.12 Pit 20007 was located to the north-west of pit 20004. Pit 20007 was 0.43m long and 0.27m wide, with a depth of 0.27m. It had steep sides and a concave base (Fig. 13, Section 20a). There was one fill, loose mid-grey to brown silt (20008) which also contained burnt flint.

7.4.13 Ditch 20009 was oriented north-east to south-west, and was 0.86m wide and 0.13m deep (Fig. 13, Section 20b). The single fill was loose dark orange-brown silt (20010) that contained fragments of hand-built pottery along with sherds of locally produced Roman ceramics (Appendix B).

7.4.14 Ditch 20012 was oriented north-northwest to south-southeast, potentially forming a corner with ditch 20009 and tapered to a blunt terminus (Plate 11). The ditch was 1.19m wide and 0.53m deep, with steep straight sides and a concave base. The single fill comprised mid-orange-brown sandy silt (20011), which contained hand-built and Roman pottery types (Appendix B), and animal bone fragments including a partial dog skull and horse mandible (Appendix D).

Plate 11. Trench 20. South-east facing section of ditch 20012.

7.4.15 Partial ditch 20013 was moderately steeply sloped, with a flat base. The ditch was 0.83m wide and 0.14m deep. The fill was loose mid-grey to brown clayey silt (20014). The feature was discontinuous and had clearly been truncated away.

7.4.16 At the south-east end of the trench were two north-east to south-west aligned ditches, which represented the outer boundary of the enclosure as recorded by geophysical survey (Plate 12). The earliest ditch (20015) was 1.36m wide and 0.70m deep. The moderately steep sides had a sharp break of slope to a concave base. This feature had two fills: the lower fill was loose light grey-brown clayey silt (20016) that was 0.16m thick; the upper fill was loose mid-orange-brown clayey silty (20018), which contained fragments of animal bone and oyster shell (Appendix D).

7.4.17 The later ditch (20017) was 1.37m wide and 0.47m deep, with steep sides and a flat base. It contained two fills. The lower fill (20019) was a loose mid-orange-brown clayey silt that was 0.33m thick, while the upper fill (20020) was friable mid-orange-brown clayey silt with chalk inclusions and fragments of Roman pottery and CBM (Appendix B).

Plate 12: Trench 20. South-west facing section of boundary ditches 20015 and 20017.

Trench 21

7.4.18 Trench 21 contained a north-east to south-west ditch (21004) towards its east end, and a gully (21007) that adhered to the same alignment to the west (Fig. 7). Slightly to the east of gully 21007 were two further linear features aligned north-east to south-west. These included ditch 20010, which had been cut by a ditch terminus (21011) (Plate 13).

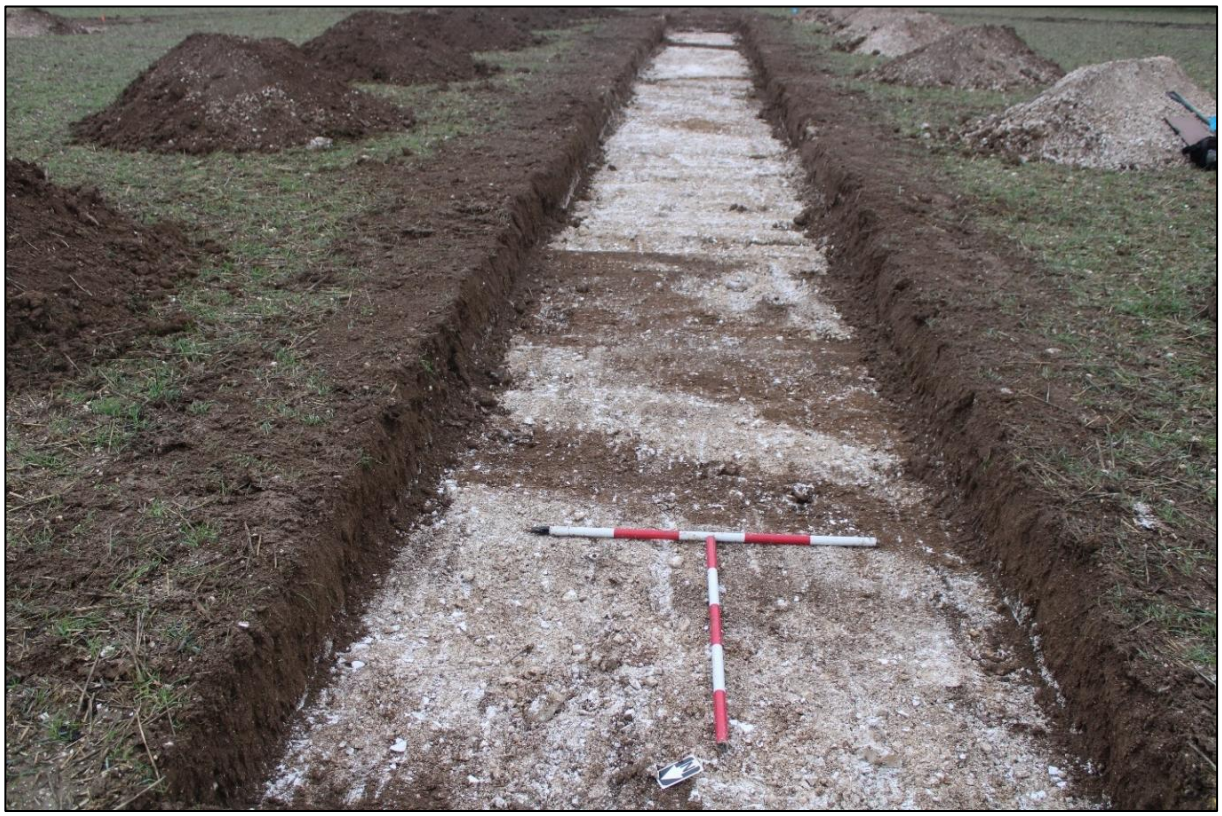

Plate 13: Trench 21. Looking east with gully 21007 in the foreground and ditches 21009 and 21011 to the rear. Ditch 21004 can be seen in the background, at the eastern end of the trench.

7.4.19 Ditch 21004 was 1.32m wide and 0.57 deep, with steep sides and a flat base (Fig. 13, Section 21a). It contained two fills. The lower fill (21005) consisted of redeposited chalk with an admixture of clayey silt. It was 0.27m thick and contained fragments of animal bone. The upper fill (21006) was mid-grey-brown clayey silt that was 0.34m thick.

7.4.20 Gully 21007 was 0.62m wide and 0.14m deep, with moderately sloped sides and a flat base. It contained one fill, mid-grey-brown clayey silt (21008), which included two sherds of Roman black-burnished ware (Appendix B).

7.4.21 Ditch 21009 was 0.81m wide and 0.44m deep, and had been truncated along its east edge by ditch terminus 21011 (Plate 14). Ditch 21009 contained one fill (21010) of mid-grey-brown clayey silt containing fragments of hand-built and Roman pottery types along with an iron nail (Appendix B). Ditch terminus 21011 was 0.69m wide and 0.39m deep. The ditch had vertical sides and an irregular base, and extended c.1m into the trench before ending. The fill (21012) was mid-grey-brown clayey silt and contained five sherds of Roman pottery and an iron cleat from a Roman shoe (Appendix B).

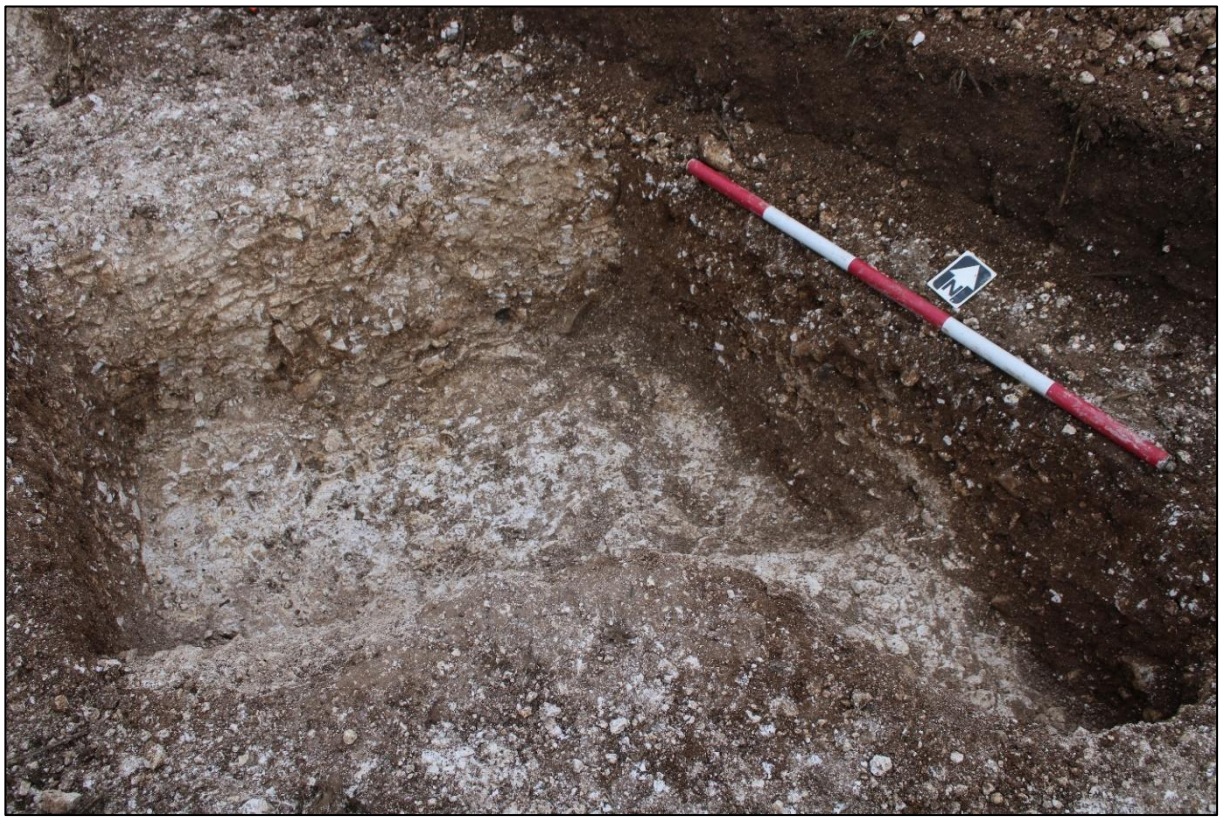

Plate 14: Trench 21. South-facing section of ditch 21009 and ditch terminus 21011.

Trench 22

7.4.22 Trench 22 contained a north-east to south-west orientated boundary comprising two phases of ditch. The earlier ditch (22004) had steep sides leading to a narrow, rounded base. It was 0.76m wide by 0.56m deep and contained two fills. The lower fill (22005) was light grey-brown silt, that was 0.31m thick, and the upper fill (22006) was loose mid-orange-brown silt, which contained sherds of hand-built and Roman pottery (Appendix B).

7.4.23 Ditch 22004 was cut by a later ditch (22007), which displayed shallower sides and a rounded base, and measured 1.10m wide and 0.52m deep. The lower fill was mid-orange-brown silt (22008) that was 0.26m deep, which was sealed by a dark orange-brown silt (22009) and an upper dark brown silt deposit (22010) along its western edge. Deposit 22009 contained an assemblage of animal bone, among which were two elements of bone from a human neonate skeleton (Appendix D).

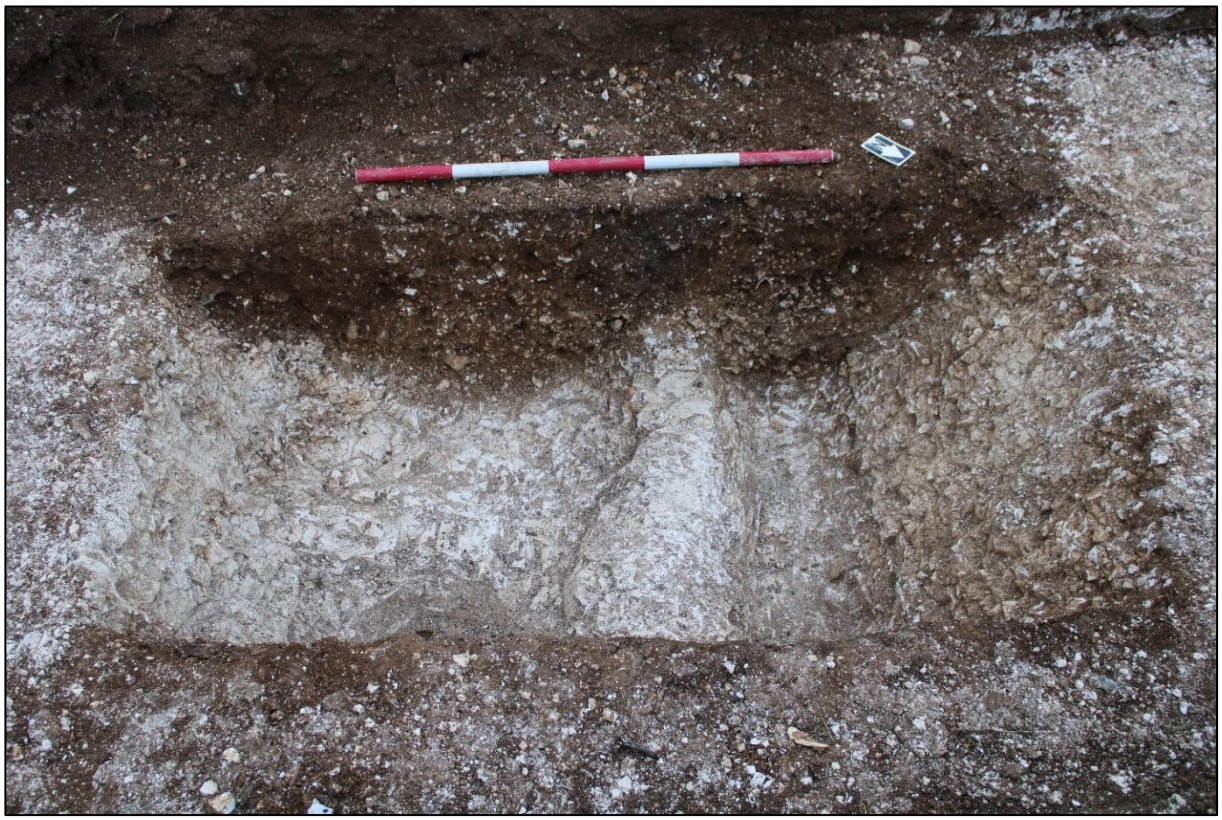

Plate 15: Trench 22. North-east facing section of ditches 22004 (R) and 22007 (L).

Trench 23

7.4.24 Trench 23 contained the intersection of two linear features at the south-east end, gully 23007 and ditch 23004 (Fig. 7; Plate 16). Gully 23007 was 0.65m wide by 0.28m deep and was oriented south-west to north-east. It contained one fill (23008), friable light grey-brown clayey silt, which contained fragments of hand-built pottery. Gully 23007 was cut by north to south ditch 23004, which measured 1.20m wide and 0.53m deep. In profile, the ditch had moderate concave sides and a flat base. There were two fills. The lower fill was a deposit of redeposited chalk and clayey silt (23005) containing fragments of hand-built and Roman pottery. This was sealed by a deposit of loose dark brown silt (23006) 0.11m thick, from which a single sherd of hand-built pottery was recovered (Appendix B).

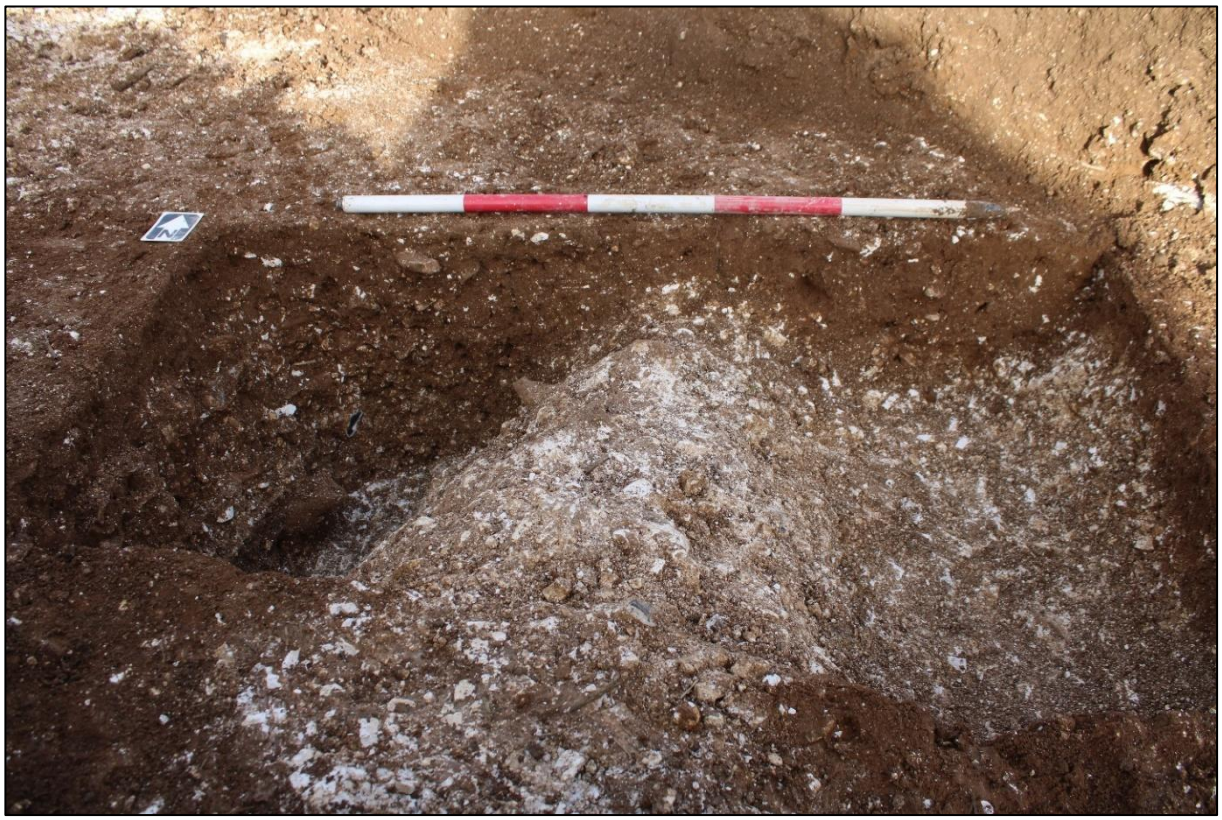

Plate 16: Trench 23. South-facing section showing ditch 23004 (L) cutting gully 23007 (R).

7.4.25 At the north-west end of the trench was a pit (23009). This was visible for 0.80m before continuing beyond the limit of excavation. It was 0.18m deep with straight sides and a flat base. The single fill (23010) was mid-grey-brown clayey silt.

7.4.26 A second pit (23014) was located to the south. It was 0.97m wide and 0.48m deep, extending beyond the limit of excavation (Plate 17). Pit 23014 contained one fill, mid-grey-brown silt (23015).

Plate 17: Trench 23. South-east facing section of pit 23014.

7.4.27 In the centre of Trench 23 was a south-west to north-east aligned gully (23018), which had been cut by a later ditch (23016). Gully (23018) was 0.34m wide and 0.20m deep, and contained one fill, mid-grey-brown clayey silt (23019). Later ditch (23016) measured 1.02m wide and 0.34m deep (Plate 18). It contained a single mid-grey-brown clayey silt fill (23017).

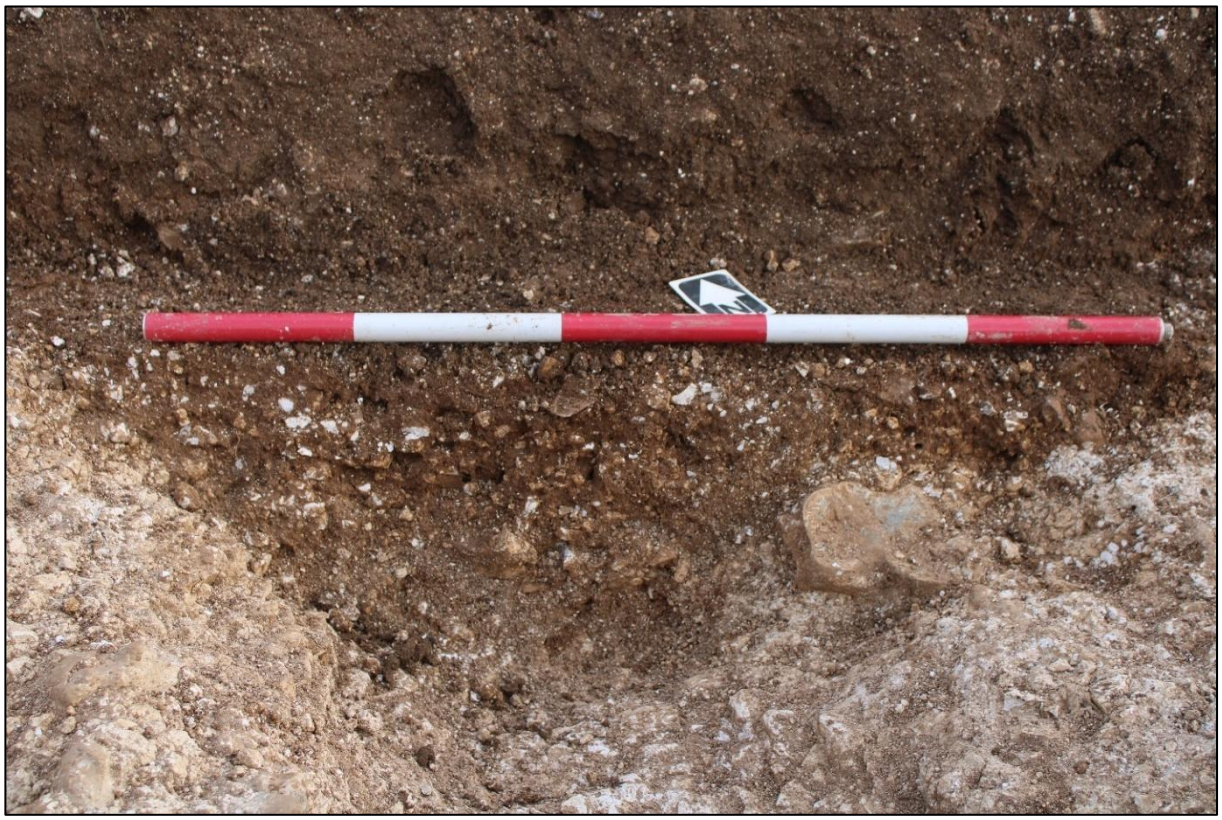

Plate 18: Trench 23. South-facing section showing gully 23018 (R) cut by ditch 23016 (L).

Trench 24

7.4.28 Trench 24 contained two linear and four discrete features (Fig. 7). Possible posthole (24004) was subcircular in plan, measuring 0.44m by 0.42m. It was 0.09m deep with straight sides leading to a concave base. There was one fill, a mid-grey-brown clayey silt (24005) that contained no finds.

7.4.29 Possible posthole (24006) was subcircular and measured 0.40m by 0.39m. It was 0.09m deep, with concave sides and base. There was one fill, a mid-grey-brown clayey silt (24007) that contained no finds.

7.4.30 Gully 24009 was aligned north-east to south-west and was 0.4m wide and 0.24m deep (Plate 19). The profile had a sharp break of slope to a concave base. The primary fill was redeposited chalk with mid-orange-brown clayey silt (24008), which was sealed by mid-grey-brown clayey silt (24010).

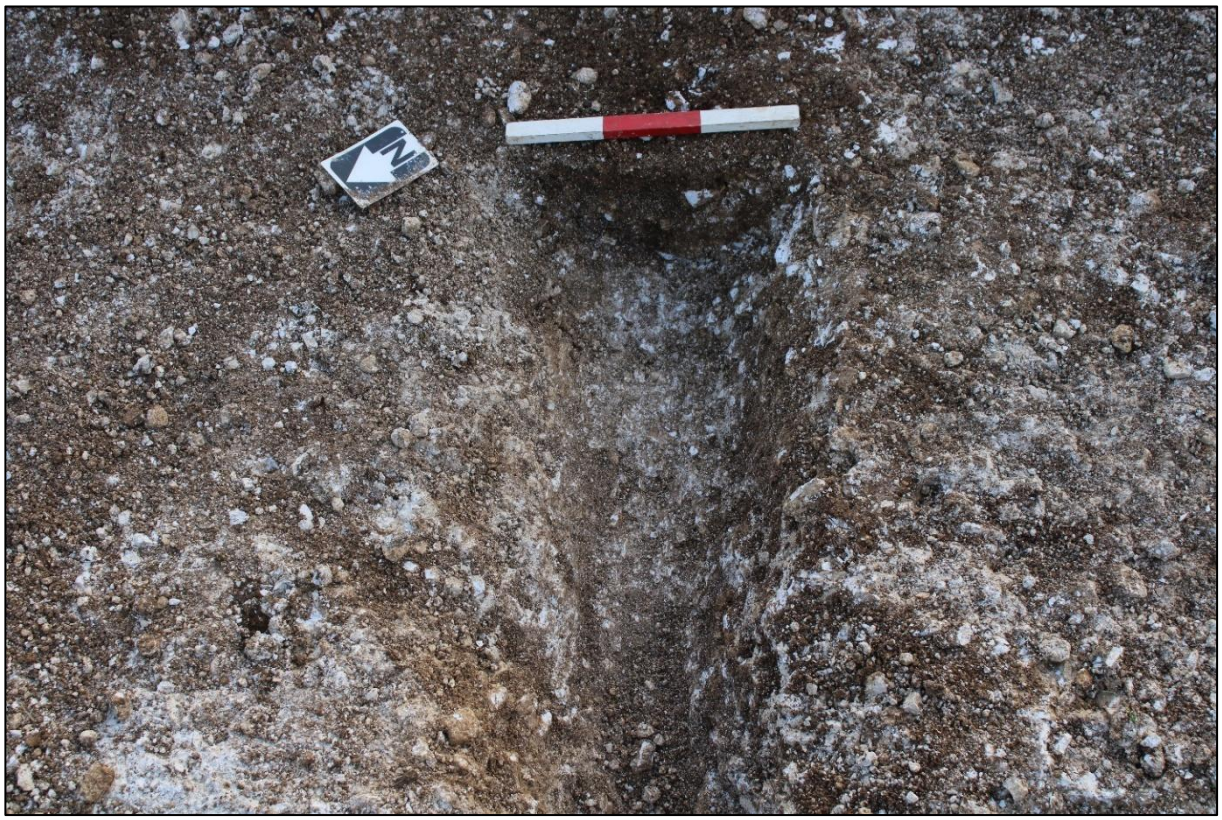

Plate 19. Trench 24. North-west-facing section of gully 24009.

7.4.31 Pit or posthole 24012 was circular in plan with a diameter of 0.50m and was 0.07m deep (not illustrated). The feature had vertical sides and a flat base. The single fill was of mid-yellow-brown clayey silt (24011). No finds were recovered.

7.4.32 Pit 24013 was also sub-circular in plan, with a diameter of 0.60m, and was 0.22m deep (Plate 20). It had vertical sides and a concave base. It extended beyond the limit of the trench and a further possible interpretation is as a ditch terminus. The single fill was dark brown silt (24014) that contained eight fragments of slag (Appendix B).

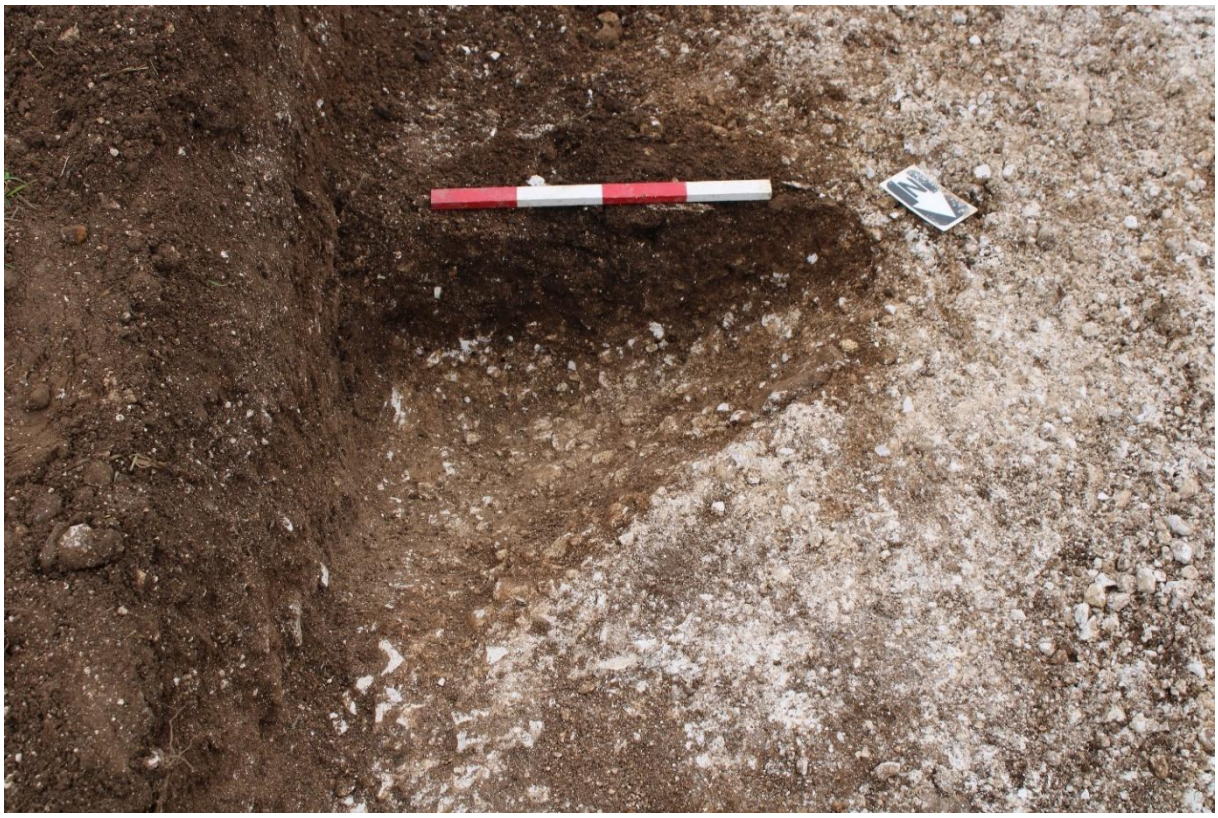

Plate 20: Trench 24. North-west facing section of pit/ditch terminus 24013.

7.4.33 Ditch 24014 was oriented north-west to south-east and was 1.62m wide and 0.40m deep. The ditch had steep straight sides and a flat base (Fig. 13, Section 24a). The lower fill was mid-grey-brown clayey silt (24015), sealed by dark brown clayey silt (24016). The upper fill contained CBM (Appendix B) and an assemblage of animal bone (Appendix D).

7.5 Area 4

7.5.1 Area 4 consisted of four trenches: Trenches 25–28 (Fig. 2). There were no anomalies recorded by geophysical survey for this area, and the trenches were intended to test this absence. All four trenches were devoid of archaeological features.

7.6 Area 5

7.6.1 Area 5 included Trenches 29 to 31 (Fig. 2). Trenches 30 and 31 were targeted on features identified in the geophysics data. Trench 29 was placed to the east to test an area where no anomalies had been recorded. Trenches 29 and 30 contained archaeological features (Fig. 9). Trench 31 was blank.

Trench 29

7.6.2 Trench 29 contained three pits and a linear feature. Pit 29004 was subcircular measuring 0.50m by 0.45m. The pit was 0.10m deep with concave sides and a flat base and was filled by a single mid-grey-brown clayey silt fill (29005).

7.6.3 Pit 29006 was located to the south of pit 29004. Pit 29006 was circular measuring 0.71m by 0.70m and 0.32m deep, with near-vertical sides leading to a flat base (Fig. 13, Section 29a). The single fill was mid-grey-brown clayey silt (29007).

7.6.4 Ditch 29008 was oriented west-northwest to east-southeast and was 1.10m wide. It was 0.34m deep with stepped sides and a flattened base (Fig. 13, Section 29b). The single fill was mid-grey-brown clayey silt (29009).

7.6.5 A large pit 29010 was exposed to the south of ditch 29008, and the trench was extended in this area to reveal the full extent of the feature. Pit 29010 was circular with a diameter of 1.7m and had vertical sides with a flat base, reaching a depth of 1.2m (Fig. 13, Section 29c). The primary fill (29011) represented a dump of grey-brown silty clay, which contained a single sherd of hand-built pottery (Appendix B). The primary fill was sealed by two deposits, one to the north (29012) and one to the south (29013). Both fills represented natural weathering deposits of light brown and white chalk. The pit had been recut and a 0.08m thick deposit of reddish brown silty clay (29014) accumulated along its redefined base. Further natural infilling occurred from both edges, resulting in a 0.7m-thick deposit of light brown and white chalk (29015). Pit 29010 was then backfilled with a deposit of greyish brown silty clay (29016), which contained hand-built pottery, industrial waste (Appendix B) and animal bone (Appendix D).

Trench 30

7.6.6 Trench 30 contained one possible pit and one ditch. A further feature was recorded (30004) that represented a tree throw. Pit 30007 was oval measuring 0.65m by 0.59m. It was 0.22m deep with concave sides and a concave base (Fig. 13, Section 30a). Pit 30007 was filled with grey-brown silty clay (30008).

7.6.7 Ditch 30009 was oriented approximately north to south towards the east end of the trench. It measured up to 3.75m wide and was over 0.62m deep (Fig. 13, Section 30b). It had steep sides and the base of the features was not exposed as its depth exceeded 1.2m below present ground level. The ditch was interpreted as part of a segmented ring ditch that was most likely Bronze Age in date and had been detected as an anomaly by geophysical survey (Fig. 9; ARS 2023). The lowest investigated fill was redeposited chalk and flint (30010), which was sealed by an upper fill of mid-

grey-brown clayey silt (30011) that contained a single sherd of hand-built pottery (Appendix B) and animal teeth (Appendix D).

7.7 Area 6

7.7.1 Area 6 contained 58 trenches: Trenches 32–89. Most of these trenches were blank, and features were present in only six trenches (Trenches 35, 36, 72, 73, 75, and 82), which were concentrated towards the south-east and east edge of the Area (Fig. 2).

Trench 35

7.7.2 Trench 35 contained two south-southwest to east-northeast aligned ditches that were parallel and closely spaced (Fig. 10; Fig. 13, Section 35a). Ditch 35004 was 1.07m wide and 0.29m deep, with moderately steep sides and a flat base. It contained one fill that of mid-grey-brown clayey silt (35005).

7.7.3 Ditch 35006 had no stratigraphic relationship to ditch 35004. Dich 35006 was 1.17m wide and 0.41m deep with moderately steep sides and a flat base. It contained mid-grey-brown clayey silt fill (35007).

Trench 36

7.7.4 Trench 36 contained one south-west to north-east gully (36004; Fig. 10), which was 0.45m wide and 0.10m deep, with steep sides and a flat base (Fig. 13, Section 36a). The gully contained mid-grey-brown clayey silt fill (36005).

Trench 72

7.7.5 Trench 72 contained two potential linear features and was extended to investigate them further. The following description is derived from written records associated with Trench 72, as some site recording issues have resulted in only a partial plan of the trench being available during report production, as illustrated on Figure 11.

7.7.6 A subcircular feature extending from the limit of excavation was interpreted as a ditch terminus (72004), or a possible pit. Feature 72004 was 2.5m by 2.1m in size and was 0.40m deep (Fig. 13, Section 72a). The primary fill was redeposited chalk (72005) that was sealed by red-brown silty clay (72006).

7.7.7 A curving ditch ran along the south-western edge of the trench, which was subsequently extended to reveal the full width of the feature. Ditch 72007/72010 was oriented approximately north-west to south-east and cut possible ditch terminus 72004. Ditch 72007/72010 was 0.40m wide and 0.25m deep. The primary fill was redeposited chalk (72008/72011) that was sealed by an upper fill of red-brown silty clay (72009/72012).

Trench 73

7.7.8 Trench 73 contained a posthole (73004; Fig. 12). Posthole 73004 was circular, measuring 0.32m in diameter and 0.3m deep with near-vertical sides and a gradual break of slope to a flat base (Fig. 13, Section 73a). It was filed by mid-grey-brown clayey silt fill (73005).

Trench 75

7.7.9 Trench 75 contained one subcircular feature (75003) that was 0.70m by 0.35min size and may have represented a shallow pit filled with burnt material (Fig. 12). The feature was 0.10m deep with concave sides and a flat base. The single fill (75005) was dark grey-brown silty clay with visible charcoal flecking and one sherd of hand-built pottery (Appendix B). An environmental assemblage of eight grains of barley and two of wheat were recovered from a sample taken of context (75005) (Appendix E).

Trench 82

7.7.10 Trench 82 contained two south-southwest to north-northeast ditches that were parallel, spaced 7m apart (Fig. 11). Ditch 82004 was 1.04m wide and 0.55m deep, with steep sides leading to a concave base (Fig. 13, Section 82a). The lower fill was grey-white silty chalk (82005) that was sealed by an upper fill of mid-grey-brown clayey silt.

7.7.11 Ditch 82007 was 1.12m wide and 0.35m deep, with a V-shaped profile of steep sides and a narrow concave base (Fig. 13, Section 82b). The ditch was filled by a single fill of light grey-brown clayey silt with frequent chalk inclusions. One fragment of animal bone was present at the top of the fill.

7.8 Artefactual, environmental and faunal results

Artefactual evidence

7.8.1 Excavations recovered c.20.8kg of artefactual material and 146.9g of shell. The artefacts include ceramic building material (hereafter CBM), fired clay, industrial waste, ferrous metalwork, pottery,

'small finds' and natural unmodified material (stone and flint). Where chronologically diagnostic, the material dated to the Iron Age to Roman period.

7.8.2 The late Iron Age to Roman pottery assemblage included hand-built, coarse- and fine- wares that dated throughout the period, with most of the material potentially having been produced in the local region (oxidised and reduced wares and BB2), a small amount representing nationally traded wares (e.g. Black-burnished ware 1), and some representing potential international imports (Samian ware). There was material that dated to the late Iron Age to Roman period (hand-built wares), material that dated more securely to the Roman period (reduced, oxidised and Black-burnished ware 1), as well as examples that dated to the early-middle part of the Roman period (Black-burnished ware 2) and some that potentially dated to the late Roman period (white ware). This may therefore indicate that the Site at Monk Sherborne may have seen occupation throughout the late Iron Age and Roman periods. The pottery recovered represented domestic activity, with vessels for the cooking and storage of food (jars), as well as vessels for food consumption i.e., table ware (fine wares). Although a small assemblage, it should be noted that no mortaria or amphora were identified, perhaps suggesting that food preparation and storage was not a common feature of the community it derived from, although this may be due to lack of recovery. However, while the pottery assemblage was limited to the presence of regionally produced wares, such as the BB2, oxidised and reduced wares, alongside nationally traded wares (BB1) and possible internationally produced wares (samian ware), would suggest that the Site was part of a network of trade and interaction with wider Roman Britain, especially southern England, with access to continental imports.

7.8.3 The coin is an *antoninianus* (double denarius) of Tetricus I, conventionally dated to AD 270–73 though the latest edition of RIC suggests a mint date in early AD 274. This is a common type, part of a series of very common coins, some of which continued in circulation for many years. This example, however, exhibits little-to-no sign of circulation wear and was thus, in all probability, deposited sometime in the mid-AD 270s. A radiate of Tetricus I was recovered during previous excavations at Manor Farm (Teague 2005).

7.8.4 The CBM recovered was mostly representative of roofing material, although a single wall tile was also represented. Most was probably recovered from secure contexts, suggesting buildings were situated on or around the immediate Site during the Roman period.

7.8.5 Hobnails and a cleat were recovered from features in Trenches 17 and 21, obviously being representative of footwear of the Roman period and further confirming that activity had taken place at the Site during this period.

7.8.6 The late Iron Age to Roman period material was recovered from Trenches 12, 16-24, 29-30 and 75 indicating that these areas were loci of activity throughout the periods, probably being connected to settlement(s) previously identified on and around the Site (AOC 2024, 3-4).

7.8.7 Further work could include more secure identification of the fabrics and forms recovered within the pottery assemblage, as well as further investigation into the samian stamp recorded to identify a specific source of the products. This, and a detailed comparison with other sites within Hampshire could help to fully define the character of the settlement, establish exactly where and when most of the pottery was produced, and contribute to local Romano-British pottery studies by informing on local trends, as well as providing tighter dates for the features excavated and the occupation of the Site.

Animal bone

7.8.8 A total of 445 fragments of faunal bone were recovered from the Site, of which 410 fragments (3.6kg) were recovered via hand collection and 35 fragments (13g) were recovered from two environmental samples.

7.8.9 The small size and poor preservation condition of the Monk Sherborne assemblage limits the further potential of the material. A small amount of age data can be retrieved from the cattle (one mandible and nine preserved epiphyseal fusion points), along with a single ageable pig mandible. Minimal biometric information is retrievable from the assemblage, with three cattle post-cranial bones and two dog cranial elements/teeth considered measurable. The poor condition of the material also limits the possibility of biomolecular sampling, although a single dog petrous bone is present.

7.8.10 The assemblage is substantially domestic in character. The 445 recovered fragments derive from ditch and pit fills occurring across several trenches with the only substantial collection of bone deriving from a ditch terminus fill in Trench 20 (context 20011). There is relatively little further information considered recoverable from the assemblage, and it is unlikely that the assemblage can provide substantial further information about human-animal interactions at the Site.

Environmental evidence

7.8.11 Eight sampled contexts resulted in approximately 90 litres of environmental soil sample being processed. The material derived from these samples was dominated by modern rootlet fragments and terrestrial mollusca. Charred plant remains were limited; however, cereal grains were present in pit 75004 included barley and wheat, and fragments of charcoal of identifiable size were found in pit 29010, and samples <6>, <7> and <8> and pit 75004, sample <5>.

7.8.12 If charcoal in pits 29010 and 75004 is found to be of a short-lived species, sapwood or a twig, it will be suitable for radiocarbon dating, as could be the grains in pit 75004. The assessment has determined that charred plant macro-remains survive on the Site.

8. Conclusions

8.1.1 The results of the trial trench evaluation served to confirm the presence of archaeological remains indicated by the geophysical surveys, while also expanding on those results by revealing some previously unidentified features. The evaluation has highlighted areas where archaeological remains are likely to be absent and in which there will be no archaeological impact by the development.

8.1.2 The division of the trenching plan into distinct areas, which deliberately targeted defined anomalies within the geophysical survey data, was designed to characterise the below ground remains so that the results could be extrapolated across the wider area of the Site. It was therefore expected that archaeological remains would be present.

8.1.3 No finds were recovered from the archaeological features excavated in Area 1, but both the excavated and unexcavated features recorded confirmed the presence of linear features identified as geophysical anomalies (ARS 2023). These features are typical of late prehistoric and Romano-British land enclosure systems, primarily conforming to elements of square enclosures with internal pits and ditches/gullies perhaps representing circular structures.

8.1.4 The three trenches in Area 2 were targeted on a circular anomaly previously recorded as a cropmark, and by geophysical survey (ARS 2023), and listed on the HER as a possible Bronze Age ring ditch (HER36034). Trench 12 was sited centrally across the cropmark and revealed an outer ditch defining an area c. 20m in diameter. A number of potential curving gullies and pits or postholes were identified in the internal area of the ring ditch, which were only partially investigated; nevertheless these features indicated that the feature was likely a large, enclosed roundhouse rather than a funerary monument such as a barrow. Three postholes were recorded in Trench 13 to the south-west that may indicate more ephemeral structures around the Trench 12 dwelling, perhaps related to storage or the housing of livestock. No datable material was recovered from any of the excavated features in Area 2 to confirm a Bronze Age date.

8.1.5 The trenches in Area 3 contained the densest concentration of archaeological features and datable material found at the Site. The trenches targeted the outer ditches of a sub-oval enclosure listed on the HER as potentially prehistoric (HER36031). Although the character of the features was typical of later prehistoric/Iron Age enclosure systems, which often display a sinuous form, the finds assemblage consisted of native hand-built pottery in association with Roman forms, and distinctive Roman period finds which included ceramic building material and iron hobnails. A coin of Tetricus I and identifiable Roman pottery forms suggested Roman period activity in the Area 3 enclosure during the mid- to late 3rd century AD. No trenches were placed centrally within the interior of the

sub-oval enclosure and therefore the focus of activity within can only be speculated upon. There is potential that the enclosure originally defined an area of native settlement, which was later redeveloped to include a more typically Roman structure, as evidenced by finds of roof tile from Trenches 16, 21 and 24. None of the recovered material from the features of Area 3 suggests that anything other than domestic occupation was present in the vicinity. The Roman pottery assemblage was limited to Area 3, but compares well with that from the Manor Farm excavations located to the north of the Site on land between Areas 1 and 6, in terms of identified forms and a mid- to late 3rd-century date (Tague 2005). The evidence derived from Area 3 perhaps indicates a second focus of Roman period settlement to the south of Manor Farm, at the south-eastern corner of the Site.

8.1.6 The four blank trenches excavated in Area 4 indicated that the Roman settlement within Area 3 did not continue to the north, or had been removed by later agricultural activity. The geophysical survey (ARS 2023) indicated a potential crossroads of two trackways in the intervening area and additional settlement remains may be concentrated along these routeways.

8.1.7 Two sub-circular geophysical anomalies in Area 5 were located close to a potential trackway and were interpretated as segmented Bronze Age ring ditches (ARS 2023). However, excavation of three trenches in this area had mixed results and did not correspond well with the anticipated features. Trench 31, sited across the north-western anomaly, was entirely blank. The archaeology in the remaining two trenches consisted of two sections of ditch, four possible postholes and one large pit, none of which contained diagnostic or datable material.

8.1.8 The archaeology recorded in Area 6 was concentrated along the south-east edge and at the north-east corner, along the alignment of a possible north to south trackway. All trenches to the west were blank. Trenches 35, 36, 72 and 82 all revealed sections of ditch that likely corresponded to this trackway. The features recorded in Area 6 most likely form a continuation of prehistoric features identified in the Manor Farm excavations immediately to the east, which included a multiple-ditched boundary aligned north-west to south-east and a series of pits from which hand-built pottery sherds were recovered (Teague 2005).

8.1.9 A circular ditch with internal features in Area 2 provided the main evidence for potential prehistoric structures within the Site, although this would require further excavation to characterise the nature of the features and confirm a possible Bronze Age date, as referenced in the HER (HER 36034).

8.1.10 There was no definitive evidence for post-Roman activity in the finds assemblage from the evaluation. During the Manor Farm excavations, a post-Roman building was recorded, in addition to pits and ditches filled with Roman building material deriving from demolished structures. A wire-inlaid buckle and belt fitting recovered from an upper pit fill potentially dates this activity to the 7th century (Teague 2005). Hand-built pottery also recovered from these features was tentatively

identified as Anglo-Saxon based on identifiable forms, but was of a fabric type that had parallels with the local hand-built Iron Age pottery of the Basingstoke area, and it is therefore possible that elements of the hand-built pottery assemblage recovered by the evaluation could be early medieval in date rather than prehistoric.

8.1.11 In general, the finds recovered from across the Site were indicative of domestic activity, primarily consisting of native and Roman coarse wares, animal bone—particularly that of large mammals—and dumps of burnt flint and heat-affected stones that had probably originated from hearths. Sherds of Roman fine ware, although a small component of the assemblage, indicate that the inhabitants of the Site had access to the Roman market economy, although fragments of storage vessels such as amphorae were notably absent. The survival of environmental evidence was poor and only one context provided identifiable material, with barley and wheat attested.

8.1.12 The overall results of the evaluation have confirmed the presence of archaeological remains across the Site and have largely supported the results of earlier geophysical survey. They have demonstrated the remains present within the development area have the potential to address regional research agendas. This is particularly relevant in confirming the interpretation of Heritage Assets within the development boundary as Bronze Age and being able to track the development of settlement potentially from the Iron Age to the Roman period in Area 3.

Storage, curation and deposition of the project archive

8.1.13 The written, drawn and photographic records, and artefactual and environmental evidence are currently held by Cura Terrae at Barnard Castle, Co. Durham. Subject to finalisation of discard policies and landowner permission, it is intended that the project archive will be transferred to Hampshire County Council Arts and Museum Service upon conclusion of the project. All material is appropriately packaged for long-term storage.

8.1.14 An online OASIS data collection form has been initiated (OASIS ID: curaterr1-532689; Appendix F). Upon conclusion of the project, all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed. This will include an uploaded PDF version of the current report. The OASIS form will be validated by the Hampshire County Council archaeology team once the report is uploaded, which will become a public document upon submission.

9. References

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