



## CYNERGY PARK SITE SITTINGBOURNE, KENT

*Archaeological Evaluation Report*



**CYNERGY PARK SITE  
SITTINGBOURNE  
KENT**

**Archaeological  
Evaluation Report**

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## Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Rokeagle Ltd (the Client) to undertake an archaeological field evaluation in advance of a programme of construction on the Cynergy Park site at Bobbing, Kent. The area comprised a roughly triangular portion of land measuring approximately 1.5 ha in extent, at the western end of a larger area centred on NGR 588850, 164700.

Previous archaeological work in the surrounding areas had detected remains of Iron Age and Romano-British date to the north and north-east of the Site.

The evaluation consisted of thirteen trenches measuring 30m in length and 2.2m wide, with one trench measuring 12m by 2.2m.

The evaluation revealed archaeological features to be present in four of the trenches, concentrated in the north western corner of the Site. The features comprised two ditches of a probable Iron Age date and a small cluster of stake holes dated to the same period. Two ditches of a probable medieval date were also found.

## **Acknowledgements**

The project was commissioned by Chris Boulter on behalf of Rokeagle Ltd (The Client). Wessex Archaeology would like to extend thanks to Graham Taylor and the ground-crew from Gallaghers Ltd for their assistance and co-operation; to Andy Miloch for assistance with surveying and to Simon Mason of Kent County Council for monitoring the project.

The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Lawrence Pontin. The fieldwork was directed by Cornelius Barton, assisted by Ruth Panes and Gary Evans. Cornelius Barton prepared this report with illustrations by Mark Roughley.

**CYNERGY PARK SITE,  
SITTINGBOURNE, KENT  
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Evaluation Report**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Project Background**

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned in February 2005 by Alliance Environment and Planning Ltd on behalf of Rokeagle Ltd (The Client) to undertake archaeological mitigation comprising a watching brief on land at the proposed Cynergy Park Bobbing, Sittingbourne, Kent (the Site) centred on NGR 588850 164700. Wessex Archaeology provided a Specification with a detailed methodology statement for the recording to be deployed during the watching brief (Wessex Archaeology 2005).
- 1.1.2 Due to an oversight, the contractor employed to undertake the earthmoving operations from October 2005 did not arrange for Wessex Archaeology to attend the Site as required. As a result earthmoving operations were undertaken over a large part of the Site unobserved, although this was in an area where brickearth extraction had taken place previously. As a result, and after consultation with Simon Mason, Kent County Council Archaeological Advisor to Swale Borough Council, it was decided to conduct an archaeological evaluation of the remaining Site area by trial trenching.
- 1.1.3 A revised Specification was produced for the evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2006). The fieldwork was carried out between 27<sup>th</sup> February and 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2006. Archaeological features were found in four of the 14 trenches excavated.

**2 SITE DESCRIPTION**

**2.1 The Site**

- 2.1.1 The Site lies directly to the south-east of the A249 and west of Sittingbourne. It is bounded to the north-east and north-west by roads, to the south-west by open land and a railway track, and to the south east by open land (**Fig 1**). A substantial part of the Site had been stripped of brickearth during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- 2.1.2 The evaluated area of the Site is approximately triangular in shape and approximately 1.5 ha in extent. (see **Fig 1**).
- 2.1.3 The Site is centred on National Grid Reference 590927 162433.

**2.2 Geology**

- 2.2.1 The underlying geology of the Site is Thanet Sand formations overlain by deposits of brickearth.

## **2.3 Topography**

- 2.3.1 The Site falls generally from west to east, with an elevation of 31.25m in the west, falling to 21.8m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the east.

## **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

### **3.1 SMR Search**

- 3.1.1 A search was undertaken on the Kent Sites & Monuments Record (KSMR) on the Site and its immediate environs, through which a number of sites and findspots were identified. None fell within the Site itself.
- 3.1.2 Three undated cropmarks suggesting the presence of ring ditches are recorded to the east and north-east of the Site. Although undated, these are likely to be of prehistoric origin, probably Bronze Age or Iron Age (2400BC-AD43).
- 3.1.3 A number of Iron Age finds are recorded from Bobbing Churchyard, to the north of the Site (across the A249), although no further details of the nature of this material is available. Further finds of this date are recorded to the south of the churchyard, including pottery and loomweights recovered in 1902.
- 3.1.4 Just to the east of the churchyard a group of cremation vessels dated to the Romano-British period were recorded in 1994. The largest held the cremated remains of a single adult, whilst the remaining three appeared to have been accessories to the main burial and thus held no cremated material.
- 3.1.5 Three Listed Buildings were also identified by the KSMR search, although none are in close proximity to the Site or would be affected by the development.

### **3.2 Previous Archaeological Work**

- 3.2.1 No previous archaeological work has been undertaken on the Site.

## **4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 4.1 The objectives of this evaluation were to establish, within the constraints of the evaluation sampling strategy, the presence or absence, location, extent, date, character, condition, and depth of any surviving remains within the Site.
- 4.2 In particular the evaluation sought to clarify the impact upon the archaeological resource of any development and to aid in the establishment of a design solution, which took into account both the quality of the archaeology and the engineering requirements of the proposed development.

## 5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Trenching

- 5.1.1 A 4% evaluation of the remaining area was undertaken in accordance with a specification agreed with Kent County Council. The evaluation involved the excavation of 14 trial trenches, generally 30m long and 2.2m wide. These trial trenches were distributed across the Site as illustrated in **Fig.1**.
- 5.1.2 The trenches were excavated using a 360 degree mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket, and were digitally mapped using a total station theodolite (TST).
- 5.1.3 The evaluation was conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* 1994 (revised 2001).

## 6 RESULTS

### 6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The sequence of deposits recorded was consistent across the Site. The topsoil had already been removed prior to the evaluation, revealing a mixed brickearth subsoil, overlying the Site area. This varied between 0.20- 0.50m, often containing modern ceramic material and similar debris. Below the subsoil was the undisturbed brickearth. This was a dark yellowish or reddish brown silty clay with sandy patches and frequent small angular chalk and flint inclusions.

### 6.2 Evaluation Results

- 6.2.1 The evaluation detected archaeologically significant features within three trenches (see **Figs 2 & 3**). These consisted of a number of linear ditches in trenches 2 and 13 and a series of stakeholes and a tree-throw in trench 1.

#### *Trench 1*

- 6.2.2 Trench 1 contained an oval cut **101** with the characteristic irregular base and mixed fill of a tree-throw (**Fig 2 & Plate 2**). The fill **102** contained a large quantity of burnt flint, although there was no heat discolouration at the base of the feature, suggesting that the burnt flint had been dumped.
- 6.2.3 To the north-east of the tree-throw was a small cluster of circular holes **118** containing burnt material, suggesting stakes were planted in the ground which subsequently burned *in-situ*. The stake-holes form a rough line, possibly the remains of a small structure such as a wind-break (**Plate 2**).
- 6.2.4 **104**, the fill of the largest stakehole contained a single sherd of later prehistoric pottery. A small quantity of animal bone was also recovered from the area surrounding the stake-holes.

#### *Trench 2*

- 6.2.5 Trench two contained two intersecting linear ditches, **206** and **212** aligned NE-SW and N-S respectively. The fill of both ditches contained later prehistoric pottery. The relationship between the two ditches could not be



established with certainty but there was a suggestion that **206** cut **212**. The two were of similar depth and profile and it appears likely that they were of contemporary date.

- 6.2.6 Further to the northeast, another, broader ditch **210** ran on an NW-SE alignment. This ditch contained a piece of medieval roof tile.

#### *Trench 13*

- 6.2.7 Trench 13 contained a broad, flat-bottomed ditch cut **1301** running on a NE-SW alignment. The fill, **1302**, contained medieval pottery and ceramic building material.

- 6.2.8 The remaining trenches contained no features of archaeological significance. Trenches 3, 13 and 14 contained narrow linear features which contained fragments of modern glass, pottery and CBM. These were probably drainage ditches.

## **7 FINDS**

- 7.1 A small quantity of finds was recovered during the evaluation. Datable material within this assemblage comprises sherds of pottery and fragments of ceramic building material.

- 7.2 Five of the six pottery sherds recovered are later prehistoric in date (contexts **104, 207, 211**); all five are small and abraded. All these sherds are in flint-tempered fabrics, in varying degrees of coarseness; none are diagnostic, but these can be dated on fabric grounds broadly to the later prehistoric period (late 2<sup>nd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC).

- 7.3 The sixth sherd (context **1302**) is medieval; this is a glazed sandy ware, probably deriving from a jug, with rilled decoration. The probable date range is 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.

- 7.4 The ceramic building material comprises four pieces of medieval roof (peg) tile from context **209**, and four less diagnostic but probably also medieval fragments from contexts **1302**.

- 7.5 Other finds consist of animal bone (cattle), one worked flint flake (prehistoric, not chronologically distinctive) and burnt, unworked flint (unknown date and origin).

- 7.6 This small finds assemblage is not recommended for long term curation.

## **8 DISCUSSION**

- 8.1 The alignment of ditches **206** and **212** suggest that they may have formed part of a field system- when originally dug they would have been some 0.5m deeper and therefore a viable means of delineating property or controlling stock, but neither ditch extends far into the Site area. The stake-holes appear to represent the remains of a structure of some sort, but the rather ephemeral nature of the structure suggests that it is unlikely to have been in long-term

use. The general scarcity of material in the area suggests that it was not a centre of occupation.

- 8.2** Similarly the possible medieval ditches **210** and **1301** appear to be isolated features, and were probably field boundaries.

## **9 CONCLUSION**

- 9.1** The Site area was clearly not a centre of settlement during any period. The few features found most probably relate to the Iron-Age landscape known to exist to the north and west of the Site.

## **10 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Institute of Field Archaeologists 2001 | <i>Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (1994, amended 2001)</i>              |
| Wessex Archaeology 2005                | <i>Cynergy Park Site, Sittingbourne, Kent- Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief</i>    |
| Wessex Archaeology 2006                | <i>Cynergy Park Site, Sittingbourne, Kent - Specification for an Archaeological Field Evaluation</i> |

11 APPENDIX 1

Summary of trench descriptions

<b>Trench: 1</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width:2.2m</b>	<b>Depth: 1m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth</b>	
101	Sub-oval “cut” of tree-throw	0.32m	
102	Mid grey-brown silty clay with 20% burnt flint and charcoal	0.32m	
103	Cut of stake-hole	0.13m	
104	Mid grey-brown silty clay with charcoal- fill of stake-hole	0.13m	
105	Cut of stake-hole	0.06m	
106	Mid grey-brown silty clay with charcoal- fill of stake-hole	0.06m	
107	Cut of stake-hole	0.07m	
108	Mid grey-brown silty clay with charcoal- fill of stake-hole	0.07m	
109	Cut of stake-hole	0.04m	
110	Mid grey-brown silty clay with charcoal- fill of stake-hole	0.04m	
111	Cut of stake-hole	0.04m	
112	Mid grey-brown silty clay with charcoal- fill of stake-hole	0.04m	
113	Cut of stake-hole	0.05m	
114	Mid grey-brown silty clay with charcoal- fill of stake-hole	0.05m	
115	Cut of stake-hole	0.06m	
116	Mid grey-brown silty clay with charcoal- fill of stake-hole	0.06m	
117	Dark yellow-brown silty clay with sand and gravel patches- natural brickearth		
118	Group number for stake-holes		

<b>Trench: 2</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width:2.2m</b>	<b>Depth: 0.4m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth</b>	
201	Mid brown silty clay with occasional subangular flint- subsoil	0.25m	
202	Mid orange silty clay with occasional sub-angular flint gravel- natural brickearth	0.25m+	
203	Mid red-brown silty clay- fill of posthole	0.11m	
204	Circular posthole cut	0.11m	
205	Light red-brown silty clay fill of ditch <b>206</b>	0.14m	
206	E-W aligned ditch	0.14m	
207	Mid red-brown silty clay fill of ditch <b>208</b>	0.17m	
208	N-S aligned ditch same as <b>206</b>	0.17m	
209	Mid red-brown silty clay fill of ditch <b>210</b>	0.37m	
210	N-S aligned ditch	0.37m	
211	Mid red-brown silty clay fill of ditch <b>212</b>	0.20m	
212	N-S aligned ditch	0.20m	

<b>Trench: 3</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width: 2.2m</b>	<b>Depth: 0.22 m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
301	Post-medieval linear		0.26m
302	Mid grey-brown silty clay fill of linear		0.26m
303	Post-medieval linear		0.31m
304	Mid grey-brown silty clay fill of linear		0.31m
305	Mid yellow-brown silty clay natural brickearth		0.25m+
306	Dark yellow-brown silty clay subsoil		0.25m

<b>Trench: 4</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width: 2.2m</b>	<b>Depth: 0.34m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
401	Dark yellow-brown silty clay subsoil		0.26m
402	Mid yellow-brown silty clay natural brickearth		0.26m+

<b>Trench: 5</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width: 2.2m</b>	<b>Depth: 0.38m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
501	Dark yellow-brown silty clay subsoil		0.35m
502	Mid yellow-brown silty clay natural brickearth		0.35m+

<b>Trench: 6</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width: 2.2m</b>	<b>Depth: 0.27m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
601	Dark yellow-brown silty clay subsoil		0.25m
602	Mid yellow-brown silty clay natural brickearth		0.25m+

<b>Trench: 7</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width: 2.2m</b>	<b>Depth: 0.33m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
701	Dark yellow-brown silty clay subsoil		0.27m
702	Mid yellow-brown silty clay natural brickearth		0.27m+

<b>Trench: 8</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width: 2.2m</b>	<b>Depth: 0.26m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
801	Dark yellow-brown silty clay subsoil		0.22m
802	Mid yellow-brown silty clay natural brickearth		0.22m+

<b>Trench: 9</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width:2.2m</b>	<b>Depth: 0.51m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
901	Dark yellow-brown silty clay subsoil		0.44m
902	Mid yellow-brown silty clay natural brickearth		0.44m+

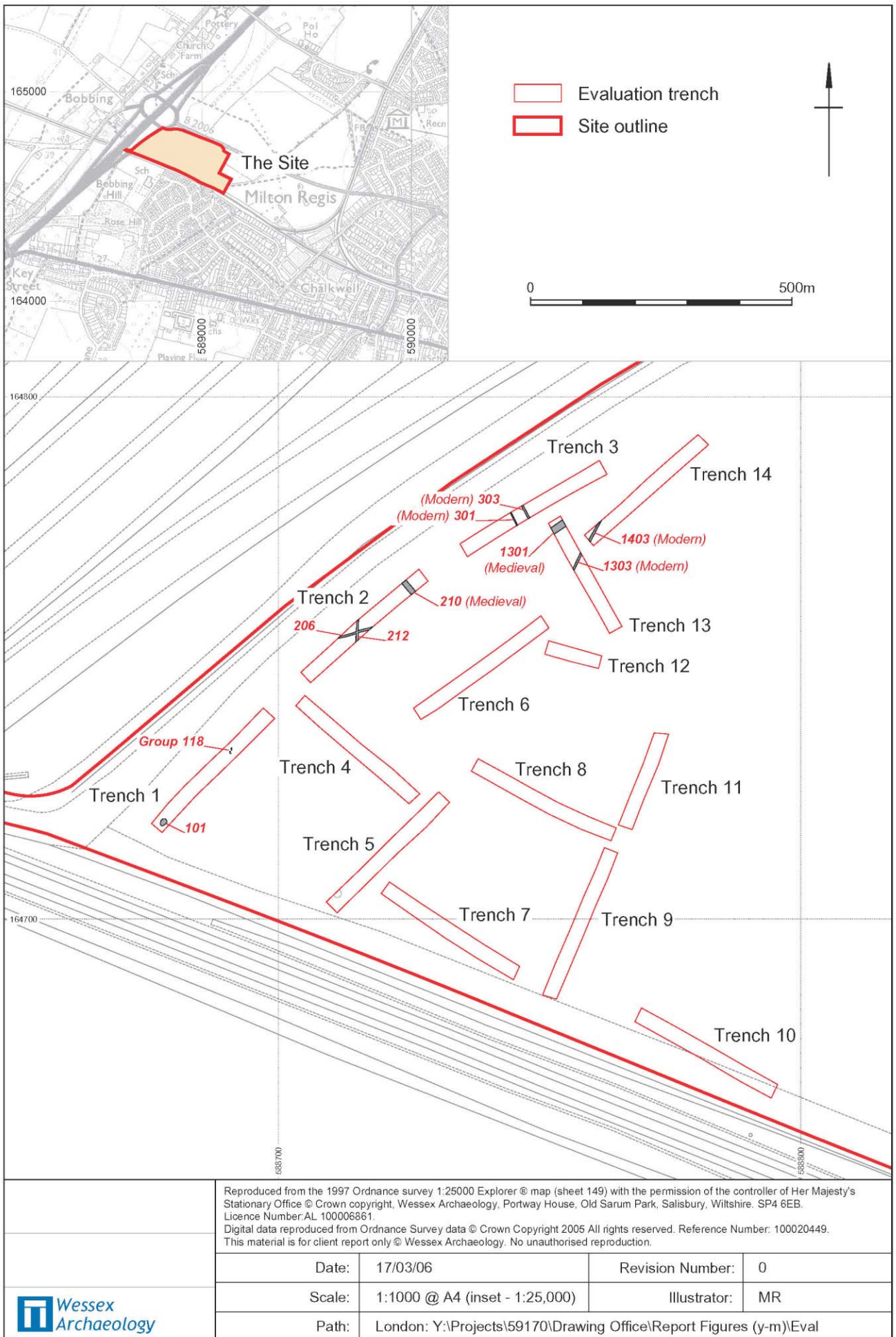
<b>Trench: 10</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width:2.2m</b>	<b>Depth: 0.53m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
1001	Dark yellow-brown silty clay subsoil		0.48m
1002	Mid yellow-brown silty clay natural brickearth		0.48m+

<b>Trench: 11</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width:2.2m</b>	<b>Depth: 0.23m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
1101	Dark yellow-brown silty clay subsoil		0.20m
1102	Mid yellow-brown silty clay natural brickearth		0.20m+

<b>Trench: 12</b>			
<b>Length: 12m</b>		<b>Width:2.2m</b>	<b>Depth: 0.16m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
1201	Dark yellow-brown silty clay subsoil		0.10m
1202	Mid yellow-brown silty clay natural brickearth		0.10m+

<b>Trench: 13</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width:2.2m</b>	<b>Depth:0.32 m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
1300	Dark yellow-brown silty clay subsoil		0.22m
1301	Medieval linear		0.27m
1302	Mid grey brown silty clay fill of 1301		0.27m+
1303	Post-medieval linear		0.33m
1303	Mid grey-brown silty clay fill of linear 1303		0.33m
1304	Brickearth natural.		-

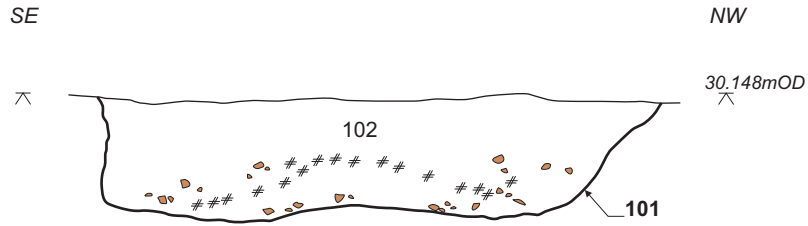
<b>Trench: 14</b>			
<b>Length: 30m</b>		<b>Width:2.2m</b>	<b>Depth:0.21m</b>
<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
1401	Dark yellow-brown silty clay subsoil		0.16m
1402	Mid yellow-brown silty clay natural brickearth		0.16m+
1403	Post-medieval linear		0.26m
1404	Mid grey-brown silty clay fill of linear		0.26m



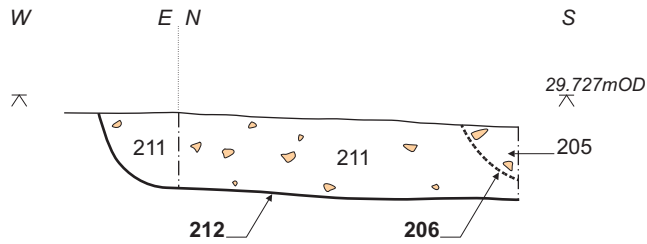
Site Location Map and Site Plan showing WA Evaluation Trenches in Area E

Figure 1

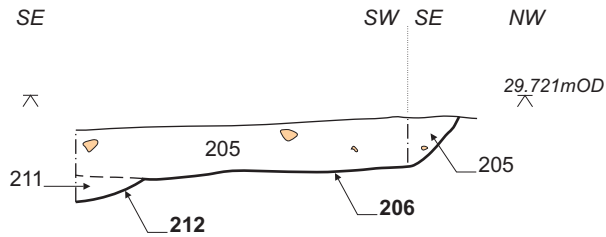
**Trench 1 - Section of feature [101]**



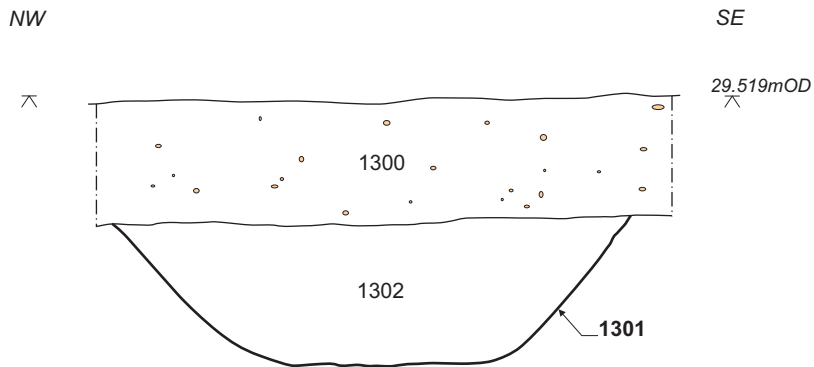
**Trench 2 - Section of ditches [206] & [212]**



**Trench 2 - Section of ditches [206] & [212]**



**Trench 13 - Section through ditch [1301]**



 Stone
  Charcoal
  Burnt flint



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Plate 1: View of stake holes in Trench 1 (Group 118)  
(Scale = 1m)



Plate 2: View of feature **101** in Trench 1  
(Scale = 1m)





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