ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES WYAS

Land off Midland Road
Royston
South Yorkshire

Archaeological Excavation

Report no. 2513

February 2014

Client: Prospect Archaeology Ltd

Land off Midland Road, Royston
South Yorkshire

Archaeological Excavation

Summary

An archaeological excavation was carried out on land to the north of Midland Road, Royston. The excavation identified two intersecting ditches of likely Roman date based on a few grey ware sherds.

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Report Information

Client:	Prospect Archaeology Ltd
Address:	Prospect House, Garden Lane, Sherburn-in-Elmet, Leeds, North Yorkshire, LS25 6AT
Report Type:	Archaeological Excavation
Location:	Royston
County:	South Yorkshire
Grid Reference:	SE 3620 1180
Period(s) of activity represented:	Romano-British
Report Number:	2513
Project Number:	4169
Site Code:	LMR13
Planning Application No.:	2012/1337
Museum Accession No.:	to be obtained
Date of fieldwork:	9th December 2013-8th January 2014
Date of report:	January 2014
Project Management:	Jane Richardson PhD MIfA
Fieldwork supervisor:	Debora Moretti MPhil MLitt AIfA
Report:	Debora Moretti
Illustrations:	Debora Moretti, Jon Prudhoe
Photography:	ASWYAS Staff
Specialists:	Diane Alldritt (environmental samples) Chris Cumberpatch (hand-made pottery) Ruth Leary (Roman pottery)

Authorisation for distribution: ----------

PO Box 30, Nepshaw Lane South, Morley, Leeds LS27 0UG
Telephone: 0113 383 7500.
Email: admin@aswyas.com

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1 Introduction

Archaeological Services WYAS was commissioned by Nansi Rosenberg of Prospect Archaeology Ltd to undertake an archaeological excavation in advance of and during the development of land off Midland Road, Royston, South Yorkshire (Fig. 1). The work was undertaken in accordance with The National Planning Policy Framework and the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Prospect Archaeology in September 2013.

Site location and topography

The village of Royston is located approximately 5.5km north-east of Barnsley (Fig. 1). The development area is situated north of Midland Road on land formerly occupied by Royston High School (Fig. 2). The site comprises two former school playing fields which are divided by a public footpath, Warren Walk. The land lies on a gentle east-facing gradient at between 70m and 75m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). At the time of the archaeological interventions, the land was not in use and was under tall grass.

Soils, geology and land-use

The underlying bedrock is recorded as Mexborough Rock - Sandstone (British Geological Survey 2013). The soils in this area are unclassified but are thought to consist of slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clays of the Dale association (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

2 Archaeological and Historical Background

Prehistoric period

No archaeological sites or find spots datable to this period have been identified within the development area. The nearest find spots, flint artefacts, have been recorded in the Darton area, to the west of the site (Wheelhouse 2002).

Cropmark evidence identified on aerial photographs of land to the north of the site are well known and may represent a trackway, field systems and enclosures associated with the Iron Age and Romano-British periods (OSA 2013).

Roman period

There are no known features or finds dating to this period, although a geophysical survey (Harrison 2013) and archaeological evaluation (Moretti 2013) carried out by ASWYAS on behalf of Prospect Archaeology Ltd revealed two ditches that may be part of an enclosure of possible Iron Age/Romano-British date (Fig. 2).

Post-Roman period

No known post-Roman archaeological evidence has been identified within the development area, although the place-name Royston derives from the Old Norse personal name *Hroarr*,

with a simplification of *Hroarr* to *Ror,* and the Old English *tun* Hror's farmstead' (OSA 2013, 10).

Medieval period

Royston is mentioned in the Doomsday Book of 1086 (see OSA 2013). The medieval village was located on an important crossroads on the north-south road between Wakefield and Barnsley and the east-west routeway between the Pennines to the west and Pontefract market town to the east (Wheelhouse 2002). The layout of the main medieval settlement on the High Street survives despite significant alterations to the buildings. A smaller settlement area to the east side of the village along Church Street is less structured but includes medieval buildings such as the church, chantry and a possible medieval moated site at the old vicarage (OSA 2013). The development area probably formed part of the town's medieval open fields system. Remnants of ridge and furrow have been identified on aerial photographs in several of the open areas of the village including within the current site (OSA 2013).

Post-medieval period

Before 1890, Midland Road (previously known as Senior Lane) contained almost no houses. Terraced housing soon replaced fields along this road to accommodate the large number of workers employed at a local colliery. Most of the 18th-century buildings and many from the medieval period along High Street and elsewhere were demolished in the 19th and 20th centuries. The development area survived as fields and allotment gardens, and later as playing fields.

3 Aims and Objectives

The aims of the archaeological excavation were to provide a full archaeological record of the features identified; to establish a more definite chronology for the site through collection of artefacts or scientific dating as appropriate; to determine the nature of the two previously identified ditches and any discreet features present and to place archaeological features within a local and regional context.

4 Methodology

All excavation was undertaken in accordance with IfA's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (2008), and in compliance with English Heritage's *MoRPHE PPN3: Archaeological Excavation* (2008).

The stripping of an area of approximately 3000m^2 was monitored by a qualified and experienced archaeologist. The excavations were carried out using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed in level spits of not more than 0.2m. All machining was stopped at the first identifiable archaeological horizon or natural deposits. The stripped surface was cleaned by hand and

inspected for any archaeological remains. All linear features were subject to a manual sampling regime of 20% of their total length and each section excavated was no less than 1m in length. All discrete features, such as pits and postholes, were 50% excavated, initially with a half section across each feature to record their form and nature.

All archaeological features were accurately recorded in plan at a scale of 1:50 and all excavated features were recorded in section at scales of either 1:10 or 1:20. All plans and sections include spot heights related to the Ordnance Datum (OD) in metres. A full written and photographic record was made of all archaeological features.

A soil sampling programme was undertaken for the identification and recovery of carbonised remains, vertebrate remains, molluscs and small artefactual material although rain and ground water curtailed sampling in some areas. Excavation limits and exposed archaeological features were surveyed using a GPS system accurate to 5mm.

The site archive contains all the information gathered during the archaeological interventions and is listed in Appendix 1. A concordance of contexts is given in Appendix 2, and the WSI is reproduced in Appendix 3. The archive is currently held at ASWYAS headquarters but archive deposition will be arranged (and an accession number provided) following consultation with Barnsley Museum.

5 Results

An area of approximately 3000m^2 was excavated to depths of between 0.40m and 0.60m, with the removal of a topsoil of orange-brown clay silt (1001) and a subsoil of orange-brown sandy silt (1002). Two ditches, already investigated at the evaluation phase (Moretti 2013), and one pit were investigated, while a further two pits were identified as modern (Fig. 2).

Ditch A, oriented north-east to south west, had an irregular profile and an average width of 2.28m and an average depth of 0.49m. It was exposed over a length of 58m although it petered out to the north-east due to truncation (Fig. 3; Plates 1-2). It contained up to two fills of orange-grey sandy clay (1036, 1043) and grey-brown sandy clay (1035, 1042) (Fig. 4, S.108 and S.109). Ditch A was observed cutting through Ditch B, but their spatial relationship indicates that they clearly co-existed (Fig. 3; Plates 3 and 4).

Ditch B had a regular U-shaped profile (Fig. 4, S.107) and was oriented north-west to south-east. While it appeared to terminate at the intersection with Ditch A, it is possible that Ditch B and the southern limits of Ditch A once formed the corner of a field, with the northern limits of Ditch A representing a later extension. Ditch B was typically 1.83m in width and 0.53m in depth and was exposed for 46m in length. It contained up to six fills of orange-grey-brown clay (Fig. 4, S.107; Plate 5). From a primary fill of grey-orange sandy clay (1012), two fragments of Roman grey ware were found, with three hand-made sherds recovered from a fifth fill (1008) of orange-brown silt clay, rich in charcoal inclusions.

A sub-circular pit (1030) was identified cutting Ditch B (Fig. 2, Plate 6). The pit had a regular U-shaped profile, was 1.7m in length, 1.5m in width and 0.25m deep, and contained a sterile brown-orange silty clay fill. A second pit, also internal to the field formed by Ditches A and B, was investigated at the evaluation stage (Trench 4, Moretti 2013), although in the absence of finds, its association with the ditches was not confirmed.

6 Artefact Record

Pottery by C. Cumberpatch and R. Leary

Five sherds of pottery were recovered from Ditch B. Two distinct groups were present; two sherds of Romano-British grey ware from the primary fill (1012), and three sherds of quartz-tempered hand-made pottery of probable late prehistoric or Romano-British date from a fifth fill (1008).

The grey ware is represented by two basal sherds from a Crambeck open vessel, which dates to the late 3rd to 4th century (after *c*. AD 270/80). These sherds were recovered from a stratigraphically earlier deposit than the handmade sherds (Fig. 4, S.107).

The three heavily abraded hand-made sherds join to form the base of a small jar of indeterminate form. Although in poor condition and impossible to date with any degree of accuracy, it seems that these sherds are of later prehistoric date (*c*. 700BC to 43AD) or Roman period date and as such amongst a very small quantity of such pottery from South Yorkshire as a whole. Assuming that the hand-made sherds are not residual in a later context, however, they must be Roman in date given the presence of late 3rd to 4th-century grey ware from an earlier fill.

For reasons that are not yet fully understood, pottery manufacture was not a common feature of the societies that occupied the area of modern South and West Yorkshire prior to the Roman conquest, in spite of the fact that pottery was widely used in neighbouring areas to the east, south-east and south (Cumberpatch 2013). In eastern Yorkshire the production of wares in the local tradition continued alongside the use of wheel-thrown wares throughout the Roman period. These sherds conform to the characteristics of the H2 Quartz type as defined in East Yorkshire (Cumberpatch unpublished) and are occasionally found on sites in the aceramic zone (Cumberpatch 2013, table 3). It is possible that such sparse occurrences represent imported vessels, traded either for their contents or as part of the movement of individual people, perhaps as part of a system of patrilocal exogamy.

7 Environmental Record

Carbonised plant macrofossils and charcoal by D. Alldritt

Bulk environmental samples of approximately 30 litres were processed by ASWYAS using an Ankara-style water flotation system (French 1971), a 1mm mesh and a 300 micron sieve.

The flots were dried before examination under a low-powered binocular microscope. The retent portions of the samples was also examined for any identifiable carbonised remains, artefacts and metallurgical debris.

The samples produced only small amounts of carbonised detritus, generally <2.5ml up to 5ml of decayed charcoal fragments, with two samples found to be sterile. Modern roots were present in quite large amounts up to 30ml suggesting a degree of general biological disturbance. All identified plant remains including charcoal were removed and bagged separately by type.

Wood charcoal was examined using a high powered Vickers M10 metallurgical microscope at magnifications up to x200. The reference photographs of Schweingruber (1990) were consulted for charcoal identification.

The samples produced very small quantities of charred plant remains, all of which were found to be wood charcoal. Preservation was quite poor, with evidence for iron panning or water disturbance in the soil observed within the internal structure of the charcoal, resulting in the obliteration of many of the diagnostic features used for charcoal identification. As a result, the charcoal is not suitable for radiocarbon dating.

Three samples from the primary (or only) fill of Ditch A contained only trace amounts of carbonised remains, including a single fragment of *Quercus* (oak) charcoal.

Samples from Ditch B (primary, tertiary and fifth fills) produced more charcoal compared to Ditch A, but the overall amounts were still quite small. The primary fill (1040) of the ditch produced many indeterminate pieces, and a single fragment of *Corylus* (hazel), while the fifth fill (1008) contained a small concentration of charcoal fragments, much of which was poorly preserved and stained by iron panning or other water intrusion. One fragment of *Betula* (birch) was identified. The tertiary fill (1003) was sterile.

8 Discussion and Conclusions

The archaeological excavation confirmed the geophysical results that two ditches intersected within the development area. These features are likely to be boundary ditches, probably part of a larger Romano-British field system, based on the recovery of two sherds of Roman grey ware.

The results of the excavation suggest that this area was situated on the periphery of settlement activity during the Roman period and the dearth of finds supports this hypothesis. The land was subsequently under a regime of arable production throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods, as indicated by plough furrows.

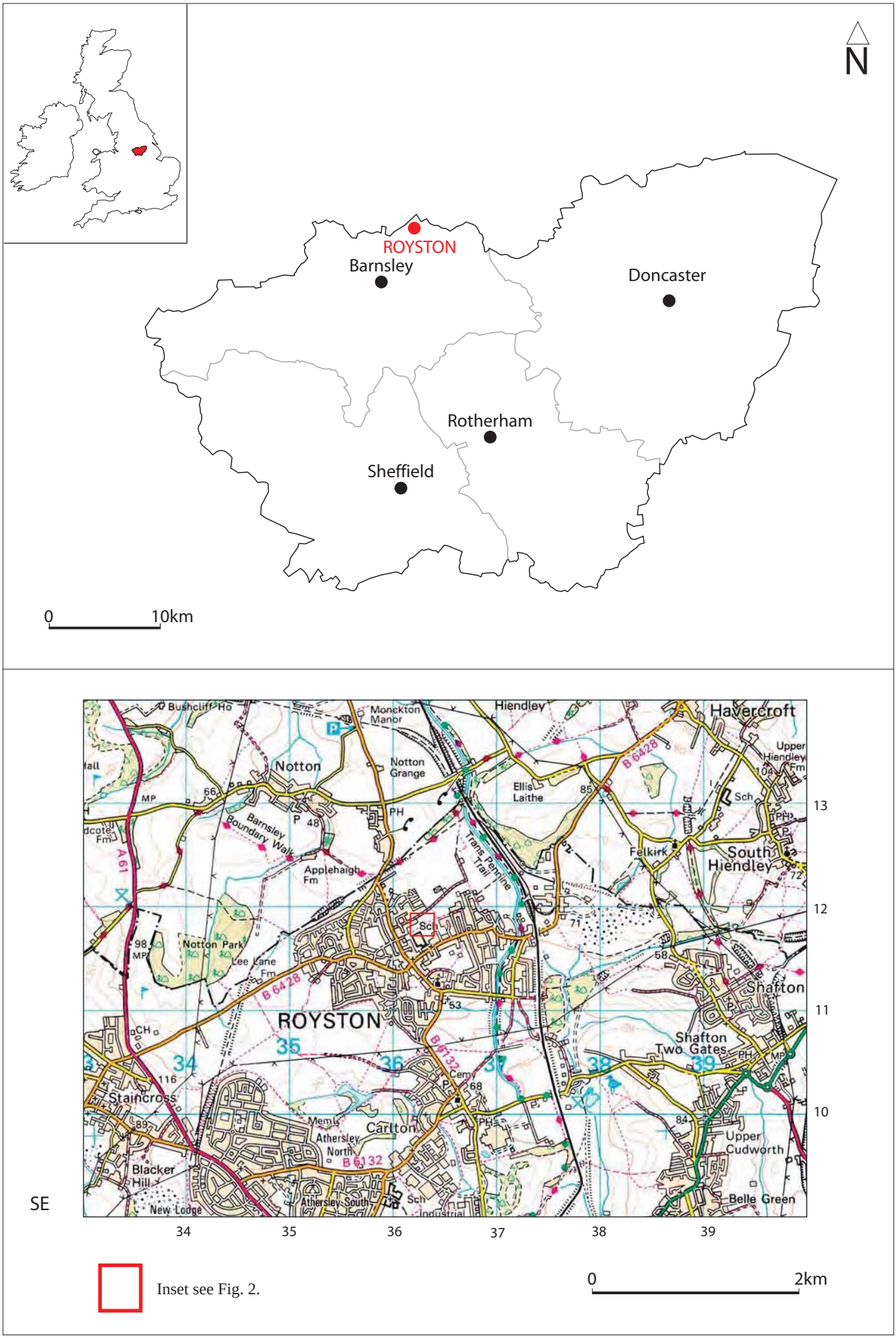

Fig. 1. Site location

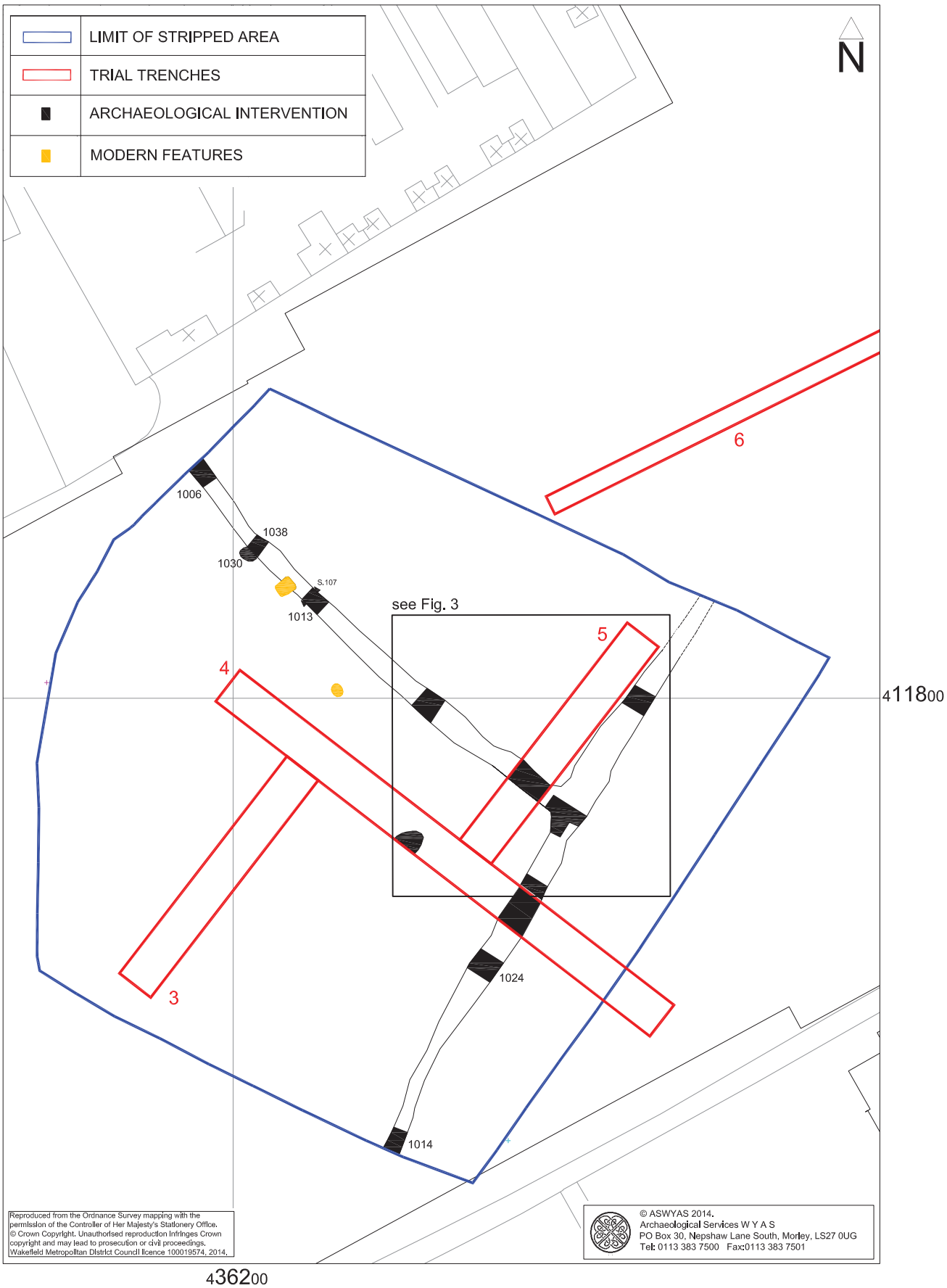

Fig. 2. Site location showing stripped area and archaeological features (1:500 @ A4)

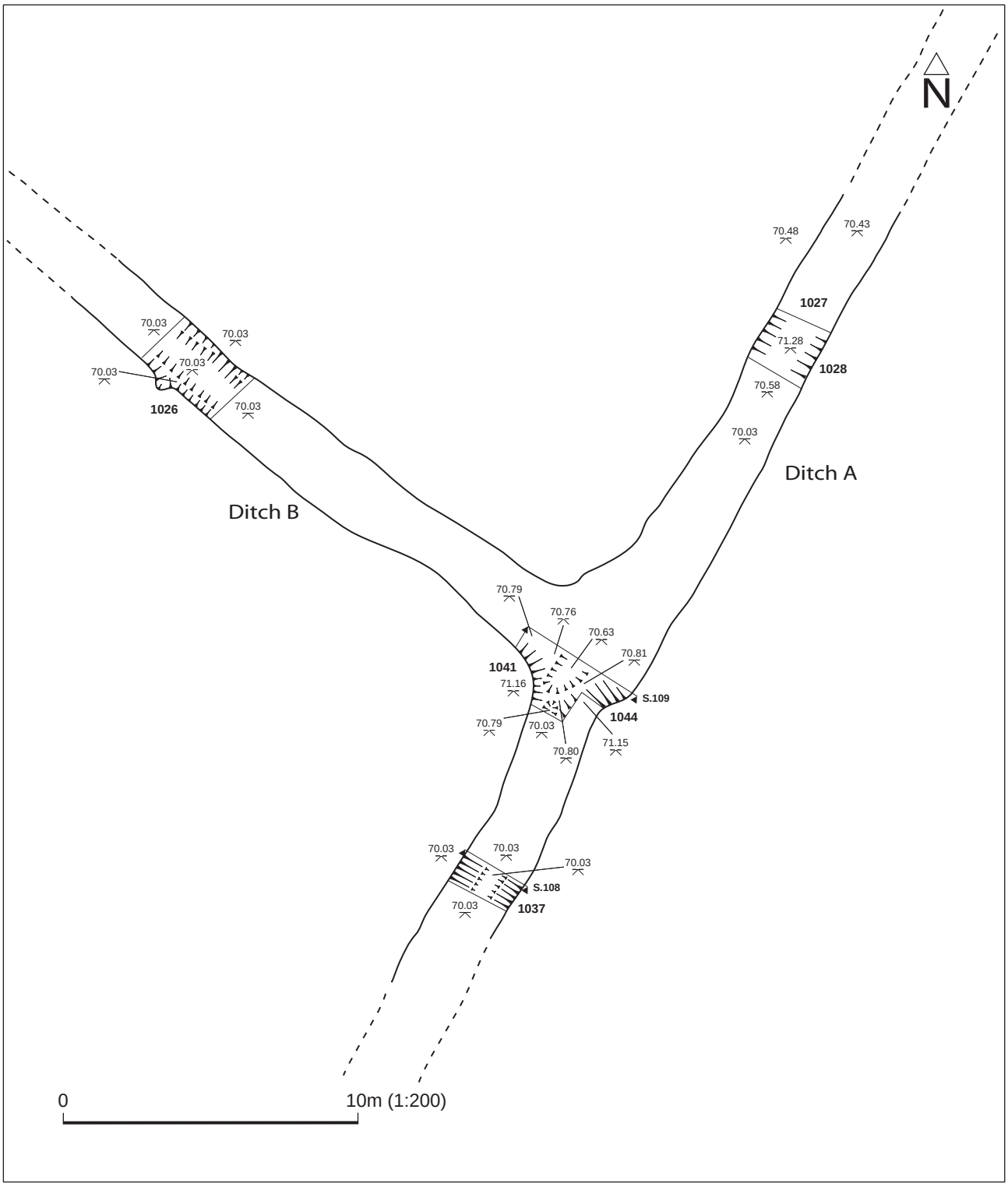

Fig. 3. Plan of intersection of Ditches A and B

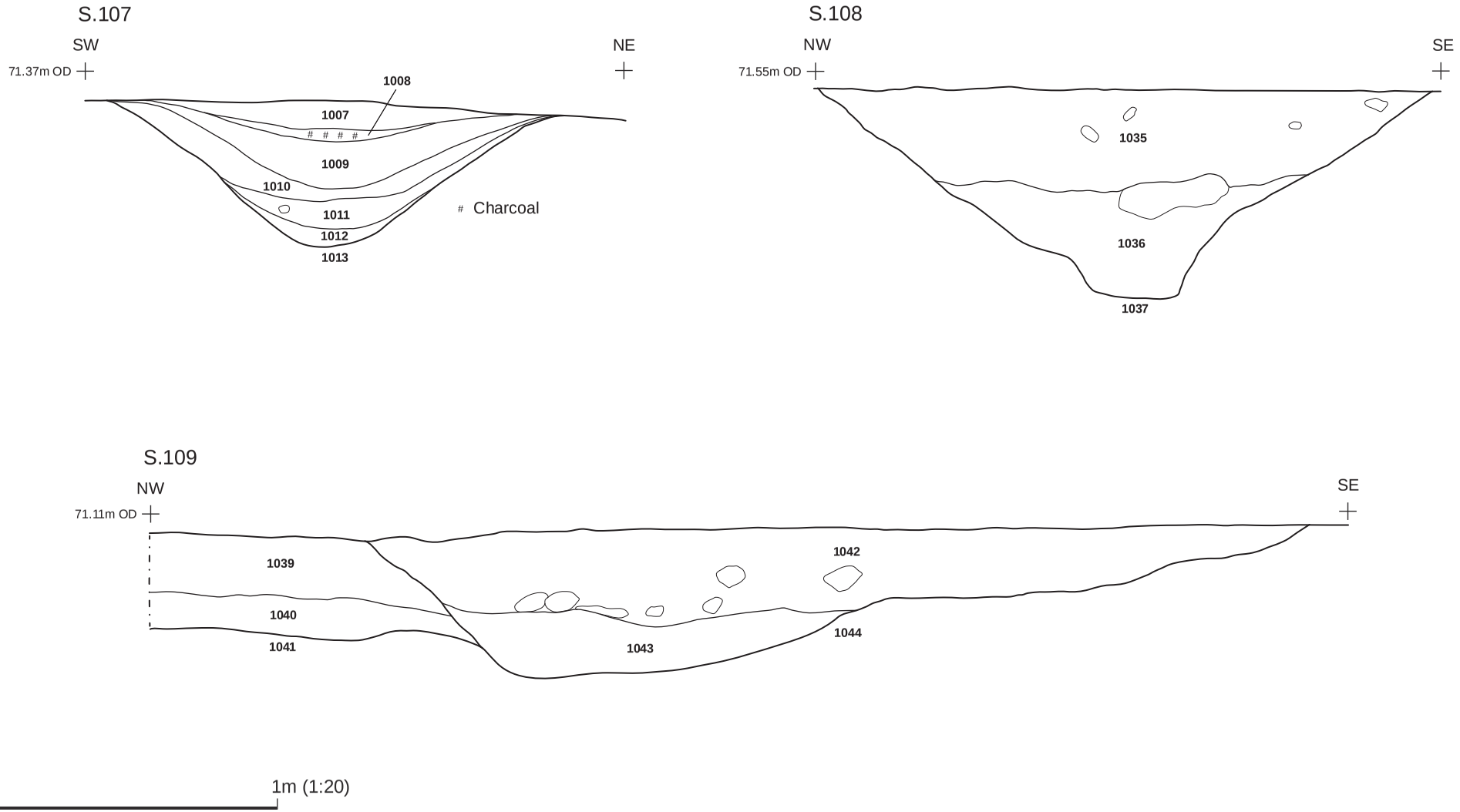

Fig. 4. Sections through Ditches A and B

Plate 1. South-west facing section of Ditch A (1028), looking north-east

Plate 2. South-west facing section of Ditch A (1037), looking north-east

Plate 3. Intersection of Ditch B (1041) and Ditch A (1044), looking north-east

Plate 4. Intersection of Ditch B (1041) and Ditch A (1044), with full extension of section, looking north-east

Plate 5. South-east facing section of Ditch B (1013), looking north-west

Plate 6. South-east facing section of pit 1030 and Ditch B (1038), looking north-west

Appendix 1: Inventory of primary archive

Phase	File/Box No	Description	Quantity
Evaluation	File no.1	Context register sheets	2
		Drawing register sheets	2
		Sample register sheets	1
		Environmental sheets	6
		Daily record sheets	13
		Digital photograph record sheet	1
		B&W photograph record sheets	1
		Film ID sheet	1
		Level sheets	3
		Finds and samples Form B	2
		Context sheets (nos 1000-1044)	40
	File no.2	Sign in sheets	2
		Induction file	4
		Risk assessment	1
		Written scheme of investigation	1

Appendix 2: Concordance of contexts yielding artefacts or environmental remains

Context	Group	Description	Artefacts and environmental samples
1000		Natural	
1001		Topsoil	
1002		Subsoil	
1003	B	Tertiary fill of ditch 1006	GBA 3
1004	B	Secondary fill of ditch 1006	
1005	B	Primary fill of ditch 1006	
1006	B	Cut of ditch	
1007	B	Final fill of ditch 1013	
1008	B	Fifth fill of ditch 1013	Pottery (2), GBA 1
1009	B	Fourth fill of ditch 1013	
1010	B	Tertiary fill of ditch 1013	
1011	B	Secondary fill of ditch 1013	
1012	B	Primary fill of ditch 1013	Pottery (2)
1013	B	Cut ditch	
1014	A	Cut of ditch	
1015	A	Single fill of ditch 1014	GBA 4
1016		Cut of furrow	
1017		Single fill of furrow	
1018		VOID	
1019		VOID	
1020		VOID	
1021		VOID	
1022		VOID	
1023	A	Single fill of ditch 1024	GBA 2
1024	A	Cut of ditch	
1025	B	Single fill of ditch 1026	
1026	B	Cut of ditch	
1027	A	Single fill of ditch 1028	
1028	A	Cut of ditch	
1029		Fill of pit 1030	
1030		Cut of pit	
1031	B	Final fill of ditch 1038	
1032	B	Tertiary fill of ditch 1038	
1033	B	Secondary fill of ditch 1038	
1034	B	Primary fill of ditch 1038	
1035	A	Secondary fill of ditch 1037	
1036	A	Primary fill of ditch 1037	
1037	A	Cut of ditch	
1038	B	Cut of t ditch	
1039	B	Secondary fill of ditch 1041	
1040	B	Primary fill of ditch 1041	GBA 6
1041	B	Cut of ditch	
1042	A	Secondary fill of ditch 1044	

Context	Group	Description	Artefacts and environmental samples
1043	A	Primary fill of ditch 1044	GBA5
1044	A	Cut of ditch	

Appendix 3: Written Scheme of Investigation

prospect archaeology

Midland Road, Royston

Written Scheme of Investigation

– Evaluation Excavation

Client: Persimmon Homes West Yorkshire

Local Planning Authority: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Planning Reference: 2012/1337

Date of Report: July 2013

Author: Nansi Rosenberg

Prospect Archaeology Ltd, Prospect House, Garden Lane, Sherburn-in-Elmet, Leeds, North Yorkshire LS25 6AT.
Tel 01977 681885. Email mail@prospectarc.com. www.prospectarc.com
Limited company registered in England 07130161

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Kier Property Developments have been granted outline planning permission for the construction of 143 dwellings, supermarket (Class A1), petrol filling station, additional parking for community campus, public open space, landscaping access, parking and outline permission for health centre (Class D1) (planning permission ref: 2012/1337). The planning permission includes a condition relating to archaeology as follows:

Condition 36
No development, including any demolition and groundworks, shall take place in each phase until the applicant, or their agent or successor in title, has submitted a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that sets out a strategy for archaeological investigation for that phase and this has been approved in writing by the LPA. The WSI shall include:

- *The programme and method of site investigation and recording.*
- *The requirement to seek preservation in situ of identified features of importance.*
- *The programme for post-investigation assessment.*
- *The provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the results.*
- *The provision to be made for deposition of the archive created.*
- *Nomination of a competent person/persons or organisation to undertake the works.*
- *The timetable for completion of all site investigation and post-investigation works.*

Thereafter the development of each phase shall only take place in accordance with the approved WSI and the development of each phase shall not be brought into use until the LPA has confirmed in writing that the requirements of the WSI have been fulfilled or alternative timescales agreed.

1.2 This document represents that Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority.

2.0 Previous Archaeological Work

2.1 A desk-based heritage assessment was prepared by On-Site Archaeology in January 2013 in support of the planning application. Following the granting of planning permission, consultation with the South Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service, as advisors to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) established the need for a geophysical survey followed by trial trench evaluation. The geophysical survey was undertaken by Archaeological Services WYAS (ASWYAS) in June 2013 and identified the presence of a partial rectangular or square enclosure of probably Iron Age or Roman date.

2.2 The geophysical survey and site investigations identified extensive made-ground in the north-eastern part of the site and it is believed there is very little potential for archaeological activity in that area.

3.0 Aims and Objectives

3.1 The primary aim of the programme of works is to determine the absence / presence of archaeological remains and to allow a mitigation strategy to be developed for their treatment in advance of or during development.

4.0 Fieldwork

4.1 The fieldwork is split into two elements: strip and record of the Phase 1 road, and trial trench evaluation of the remainder of the site. In both situations, standard accepted methodologies for machine and hand excavation & recording will be followed as described below.

Machine excavation

4.2 The existing ground surface and topsoil will be removed by 360^{o} excavator a toothless ditching bucket under continuous archaeological supervision. Mechanical excavation will cease at the direction of the supervising archaeologist; the level at which stratified archaeological deposits or natural soils are identified may vary across the site and there should be no prior assumption as to what level mechanical stripping will cease.

4.3 Following the identification of significant archaeological deposits, all further excavation will be by hand, by experienced/qualified archaeologists to natural undisturbed deposits.

4.4 Work will be carried out in compliance with the Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) Standards and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation (IfA 1994, revised 2008).

4.5 The project team (including specialists) will be appropriately qualified and experienced, with the Project Manager being accredited at full Member status of the IfA. Specialists will have experience of local artefact traditions.

Excavation and Recording

4.6 Should any features of archaeological interest be encountered sufficient time and resources will be made available to permit an adequate record to be made.

4.7 All archaeological features will be recorded and sampled by hand excavation. Sufficient of each feature will be excavated to determine its date and function. In the case of deep stratigraphy, 100% of features/deposits will be excavated to reveal earlier remains. Where a single archaeological level is identified or in the earliest deposits the following sampling strategy will be used as a guide:

- 50% of structural remains, discrete features, postholes and pits, will be excavated
- 50% of ditch intersections and apparent ditch intersections will be dug to recover the stratigraphic relationship between them
- A 10% sample of linear features will be excavated
- Slots will be excavated through floors and surfaces to determine their construction method and date, and to establish whether earlier deposits survive beneath. If earlier remains are identified, floors and surfaces will be 100% excavated
- Deposits and feature cuts will be excavated using a stratigraphic method and individually recorded using pro-forma context sheets.

4.8 A drawn record will be maintained, comprising a site plan showing the locations of trenches, individual trench plans and section drawings. These will be produced at appropriate scales, normally 1:100, 1:50, 1:20 and/or 1:10, as the complexity of the drawing requires. Detailed plans will be made of key features and section or elevation drawings provided of cut features and upstanding structures as appropriate. All drawings will be referenced to the overall site plan.

4.9 A photographic record of the project and of each feature will be maintained in colour digital shots. Photographs illustrating the relationships between groups of features and general progress will also be taken.

4.10 All context, drawing and photographic registers will be cross-referenced.

4.11 Finds will be bagged and labelled according to their context of origin. All finds will be treated in accordance with the recommendations contained in First Aid for Finds (Watkinson & Neale 1998, 3rd edition). Advice will be taken on any finds requiring immediate specialist treatment.

4.12 Should human remains be encountered the consultant, curator and coroner should be informed immediately. Unless otherwise agreed with the consultant, curator and coroner, the remains will be cleaned and recorded but left *in-situ* for later excavation.

Environmental Sampling

4.13 An appropriate level of environmental samples will be taken from deposits that can be securely dated and/or placed in the site's stratigraphic sequence. Samples will be no less than 30 litres (where possible). If samples are required from discrete features that are not proposed for 100% excavation they will be taken from the unexcavated 50%. Sampling of stake-holes or small features will require the excavation of 100% of the feature.

4.14 Sampling will focus on deposits that have the potential to assist with the research objectives. The potential for scientific dating of industrial residues or structures will be considered as a contingency item in preparation of quotations.

4.15 Advice will be sought from an environmental archaeologist both in terms of sampling of specific deposits and in assessing the wider palaeoenvironmental evidence. The local English Heritage Scientific Advisor (Jim Williams) will be consulted and his comments on the proposed sampling strategy sought in advance of the commencement of fieldwork.

5.0 Monitoring

5.1 The South Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service (SYAS) will be responsible for monitoring the work on behalf of the LPA. SYAS will be informed of the proposed start date and will be kept informed of progress throughout the field and post-excavation work. A member of Prospect Archaeology staff will monitor the excavation and post-excavation work on behalf of the client. Site monitoring visits will be co-ordinated by Prospect Archaeology.

6.0 Post-excavation processing

6.1 Finds and records will be returned to the contracted unit for processing. Records will be checked and entered into a computerised database. Finds will be cleaned (where appropriate), marked and boxed for transfer to the relevant specialists. Environmental samples will be washed and assessed by an environmental archaeologist. Further analysis (e.g. scientific dating) may be considered appropriate at this stage and should be identified as a contingency item in quotations. Allowance will be made for x-rays to be taken of all iron objects.

7.0 Reporting

7.1 A grey literature report will be produced within 4-6 weeks of the completion of fieldwork. This will be submitted to the consultant for distribution to the client, design team, LPA, and South Yorkshire HER as appropriate.

7.2 The report will contain the following section:

- Executive Summary, brief summary of the reasons for the work, methods used and results.
- Introduction, describing the scope and circumstances of the work, archaeological background and structure of the report
- Methodology
- Objective narrative account of the results of the evaluation

- Conclusions describing the archaeological potential of the site
- Illustrations and plates as appropriate
- References
- Appendices and supporting data, including artefact and/or ecofact analysis if appropriate

7.3 Six (6) copies of the assessment report will be supplied to Prospect Archaeology for distribution to the client (1 copy), the design team (2 copies), the local planning authority (1 copy), and the Historic Environment Team (1 copy).

7.4 In addition to the full report, an OASIS report form will be completed online at www.ads.adhs.ac.uk.

8.0 Archiving

8.1 Ultimately the ordered and checked archive, along with artefacts, ecofacts and relevant documents will be deposited with an appropriate museum or repository. This excludes finds that are subject to the Treasure Act 1996 (and later amendments), the deposition of which will be determined separately.

9.0 Programme & Staffing

9.1 Fieldwork will take 2-3 weeks followed by 4-6 weeks for reporting depending on the need for specialist assessments.

9.2 ASWYAS have been commissioned to undertake the evaluation. Fieldwork is expected to be done by Deborah Moretti and Phil Weston of ASWYAS.

10.0 Figures

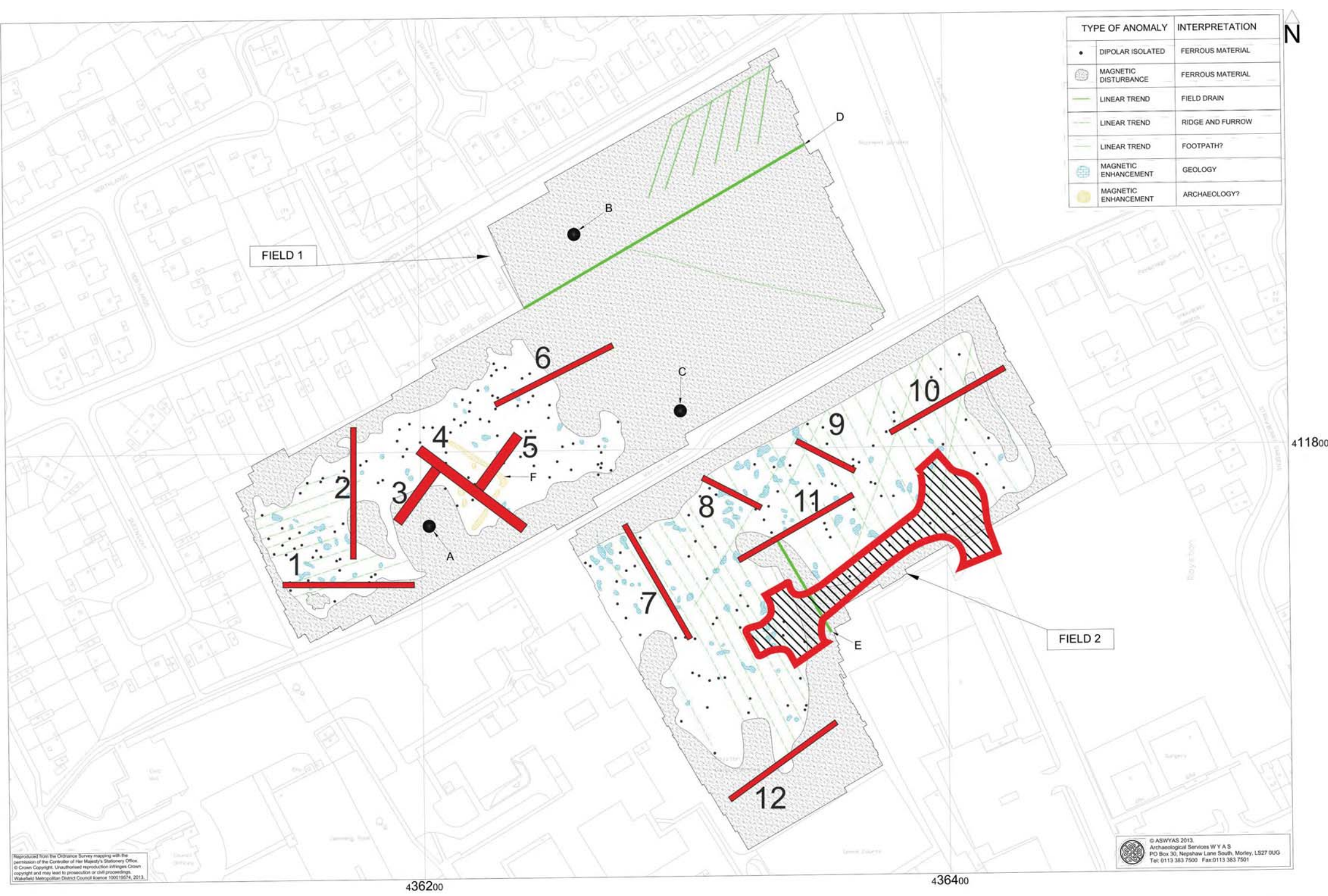

Fig. 5. Interpretation of magnetometer data (1:1250 @ A3)

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