TROWES LANE, SWALLOWFIELD, BERKSHIRE:

POST-EXCAVATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

PCA Report Number: R18424
April 2026

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

TROWES LANE, SWALLOWFIELD, BERKSHIRE: POST-EXCAVATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

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1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Tetra Tech Consulting to undertake archaeological mitigation works at Trowes Lane, Swallowfield, Berkshire, in response to proposed residential development for which a planning application has been submitted to Wokingham Borough Council (the Local Planning Authority, planning reference: 230422).

Archaeological works at the Site revealed only limited remains from the Iron Age and Romano-British periods. These were seen mainly during the earlier evaluation, where small groups of pits and a few pottery fragments suggested very light, peripheral use of the landscape. The strip, map and sample phase did not uncover any further Roman activity, and the few prehistoric or Roman finds recovered were residual, indicating no settled occupation.

Medieval and post-medieval features were more common but still sparse, consisting mainly of boundary ditches that reflect the long-term organisation of the area as farmland. No buildings, industrial features or clear signs of domestic life were identified. Overall, the evidence shows that the Site was used only at a low level and primarily for agricultural purposes, with no indication of sustained settlement.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project Background

2.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) was commissioned by Tetra Tech Consulting Ltd (TT) to undertake archaeological mitigation works (strip, map and sample) at Trowes Lane, Swallowfield, Berkshire (NGR centre: SU 72344 64505; **Figure 1**). The Site is subject to a proposed residential development for which a planning application has been submitted to Wokingham Borough Council (the Local Planning Authority, planning reference: 230422).

2.1.2 The Site covered an area of approximately 5.83ha (made up of 4.14ha of open land and 1.69ha of woodland), to the west of Trowes Lane.

2.1.3 An initial phase of archaeological trial trenching (PCA 2022) identified archaeological features including pits of Iron Age/Romano-British date, together with medieval and post medieval linear features, based on a small but datable pottery assemblage. Following the evaluation, the scope of the mitigation works was discussed and agreed by TT and Berkshire Archaeology (BA).

2.1.4 The mitigation works formed part of a staged approach to understanding and addressing the archaeological implications of the proposed development and followed the advice of BA's Archaeological Advisor, advisor to the Local Planning Authority (LPA).

2.1.5 This document provides a report on the results of archaeological strip, map and sample that was carried out between the 2nd – 20th February 2026 in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (PCA 2026).

2.1.6 This document has been prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard for Archaeological Excavation* (CIfA 2023a) and *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (CIfA 2023b), Berkshire Archaeology's *General Standards for Historic Environment Projects* (BA 2021) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015). PCA is a CIfA Registered Archaeological Organisation and is bound by its code of conduct.

2.2 Location, Topography and Geology

2.2.1 The Site lies to the south-west of the historic village of Swallowfield, Berkshire, and is flanked to the south-west by Charlton Lane and to the south-east by Trowes Lane, with access points from both roads. The southern part of the Site is occupied by woodland, while the remainder of the Site to the north has been cultivated.

2.2.2 The topography of the Site rises from c.45m aOD in the east to c.49m aOD to the west. The River Loddon flows to the northwest of the Site, and the River Blackwater flows to the northeast; drains are present in the fields to the north and east.

2.2.3 The British Geological Survey (2025) maps the bedrock geology within the site as London Clay Formation. Superficial (drift) geology of river terrace gravels has been recorded across the eastern part of the Site.

2.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

2.3.1 The archaeological and historical background the Site was set out in an archaeological desk-based assessment prepared for the proposed development (RPS 2021) and is not reproduced here. The desk-based assessment concluded that, based on the western part of the Site falling within an Area of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP) and known evidence identified in the Berkshire Historic Environment Record (HER), the Site has moderate potential to contain archaeological remains of later prehistoric and Romano-British periods and low potential for all other periods.

2.3.2 The AHAP encompasses an area of undated cropmarks visible on historic aerial photographs. The Berkshire HER identified evidence of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Romano-British settlement and field systems to the north, east and southeast of the Site

2.3.3 In 2022 Pre-Construct Archaeology (2022) carried out a trial trench evaluation within the Site where 31 trenches were excavated. The investigation uncovered Iron Age/Romano-British pits, together with medieval and post-medieval linear features, based on a small but datable pottery assemblage. The features did not indicate a readily identifiable site type, and the nature of the activity appeared to be unclear, although it could be broadly classified as rural and domestic. Post-medieval features were also recorded and are thought to be evidence of former field boundaries and correspond with features visible on the 1841 Tithe Map. No archaeological evidence of cropmarks recorded within the Site as part of the AHAP has been identified.

3 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

3.1.1 The archaeological mitigation works (strip, map and sample investigation) intended to offset the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological remains identified during the 2022 trial trench evaluation, and aimed to investigate the extent, character and date of archaeological remains within the defined areas, taking account of their potential to contain biological and palaeo-environmental remains in the context of local, regional and national research aims.

3.1.2 The general aims were to:

- Establish a broad phased plan of the archaeology revealed following the stripping of the site.
- Provide a chronology of the archaeological phasing.
- Determine the nature of any Iron Age, Romano British and medieval activity.
- Identify the nature of any specialised activity associated with the remains.

3.1.3 The following specific research aims were identified in the WSI in the context of the wider research aims set out in the *Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment* (Hey and Hind 2014) with particular reference to the Iron Age, Romano British and medieval periods:

- What evidence is there for settlement activity of later prehistoric date? Can the evidence from the evaluation be characterised more clearly and compared with contemporary sites in the area?
- Can the evidence for Iron Age and early Romano-British activity be better characterised and is there evidence to indicate mixed settlement and/or industrial activity?
- Can the evidence of Iron Age, Romano-British and medieval periods be more securely dated to indicate distinct phases related to specific activity and time periods?

3.1.4 This report provides an assessment of the results of the investigations and identifies the significance of the results. The report provides sufficient information so that the requirements of the Local Planning Authority and their archaeological advisor are satisfied in keeping with current archaeological standard and guidance.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The following presents a summary of the mitigation results based upon the Site archive, which comprises a site diary, written and drawn records, survey data and digital photographs. Photographs are provided in **Appendix 1**, and a trench index in **Appendix 2**. The Site archive is held at PCA's Winchester office under the Site code **BTLS22**.

4.2 Methodology

4.2.1 The archaeological mitigation works (strip, map and sample) was undertaken in accordance with the methodology detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation (PCA 2026), which was approved by the Local Planning Authority in advance of the works. With amendments to the original mitigation trench plan (regarding Mitigation Trench 32 – see section **4.2.3** below) agreed with TT and Berkshire CC Archaeology.

4.2.2 The strip, map and sample investigation comprised the mechanical stripping of 6 mitigation trenches: 32A, 32B, 32C, 33, 34 and 35 (**Figures 3-5**). Mitigation Trench 32 was placed to further investigate the area around evaluation in Trench 30 in which two Romano-British pits were observed. Mitigation Trench 33 was placed due to the Romano-British pits and medieval ditch found in Evaluation Trenches 9 and 10. Mitigation Trench 34's location was to target five Iron Age/ Romano-British pits seen in Evaluation Trench 4.

4.2.3 In discussion with TT and Berkshire CC Archaeology amendments to the original mitigation trench plan were approved due to heavy flooding within the Site, specifically regarding Mitigation Trench 32. This comprised the splitting of the initially planned trench into three (Mitigation Trenches 32A, 32B and 32C).

4.3 Phasing

4.3.1 Four chronological phases were identified across the excavated strip, map and sample trenches:

- **Phase 1:** Medieval
- **Phase 2:** Late medieval/post-medieval
- **Phase 3:** Post-medieval
- **Phase 4:** Undated

4.3.2 The phasing is primarily based on stratigraphic relationships between features augmented by the dating of the recovered ceramic building material and pottery.

4.4 Mitigation Trench 32A, 32B and 32C

4.4.1 A consistent depositional sequence was observed across all three mitigation trenches (**Plate 3**). The natural comprised a soft light yellow-grey sandy clay which was overlain by

a soft mid grey-brown silty clay subsoil. Capping this was topsoil comprising friable dark grey-brown clayey silt.

4.4.2 Trenches 32A, 32B and 32C, were focused on the area surrounding two Romano-British pits found during the evaluation phase. However, these pits were not within the excavated areas of the mitigation trenches. No archaeological features were observed within the mitigation trenches, and this suggests that these two pits are isolated features.

4.5 Mitigation Trench 33

Phase 1: Medieval

4.5.1 The only securely dated medieval feature uncovered during the mitigation was a northeast-southwest aligned ditch ([3325][3345]). The ditch was recorded in the eastern part of the trench terminating approximately 5m short of the southern boundary of the trench (**Figure 4, Plate 13**). The feature had shallow sides and a concave base. It measured 0.27m wide and 0.1m deep. A single fill was recorded, and it comprised a soft mid blue-grey sandy clay with some mid brown-orange mottling. Eleven sherds of 13th-century medieval pottery were recovered from the terminus of this ditch

Phase 2: Late medieval/post-medieval

4.5.2 Three linear features dating to the late medieval/early post-medieval period were recorded within Mitigation Trench 33. One [3306][3344], comprised a ditch aligned north-south in the western part of the trench (**Figure 4, Plates 7-8**). The ditch had moderately concave sides and a concave base. It measured between 0.85m and 0.9m wide, and 0.19m and 0.25m deep. The cut contained a single fill, which comprised a soft mid grey sandy clay with orange mottling. The dating of the feature is secured by late medieval to post-medieval ceramic roof tiles recovered from the fill. However, residual early to middle Saxon finds comprising a body and base sherd from the same dense quartz-tempered vessel, and a heavily abraded sherd of another, indicate some activity within the area in the early medieval period.

4.5.3 Ditch [3337] was recorded in the south-eastern part of the trench (**Figure 4, Plate 14**), although it was not fully excavated due to flooding. Ditch [3337] was truncated by a later recut/field drain [3339], which had moderately sleep sides and a single fill which consisted of a light brown-grey silty clay. The fill produced two fragments of late medieval to post-medieval roof tiles. A section of most likely the same feature was identified in the 2022 evaluation in Trench 10.

Phase 4: Undated

4.5.4 Thirteen undated features were recorded in Mitigation Trench 33. Ditch [3304][3341] was identified in the western part the trench running parallel (c. 2m to the east) of to the late medieval/post-medieval ditch [3306][3344] described above (**Figure 4, Plates 5-6**). The

undated ditch had steep sides and a flat base. It measured between 0.78m and 0.8m wide, and 0.13 and 0.2m deep. The ditch contained a single fill which comprised a light mid grey-brown sandy clay. No datable material was recovered from this feature.

4.5.5 In the centre of Mitigation Trench 33 was another ditch [3321]. Only one slot was excavated across this feature due to its truncation by land drains and flooding. The slot was focused on the northern terminus of the feature, which at this location had moderate sides and a concave base (**Figure 4, Plate 11**). The terminus measured 0.75m wide and 0.17m deep. A single fill of a friable light grey-brown silty clay with orange mottling was recorded. Two discoloured, heavily burnt pieces of micro-debitage were recovered from the fill; small size and condition of the pieces made it difficult to discern whether they were struck or instead fractured naturally, or by heat. The debitage is likely to be the result of incidental discard from very sparse prehistoric usage of the site, and it is believed to be residual. The ditch also produced an assemblage of sixteen sherds of the same thin-walled grayware Roman vessel. However, given that all surfaces are heavily abraded, it is most likely that they were residual.

4.5.6 A third undated ditch [3319] / [3347] was recorded in the eastern part of Mitigation Trench 33 on a northeast-southwest alignment (**Figure 4, Plates 9-10**). The ditch had uneven concave sides and a concave base. It measured between 0.95m and 1.65m wide, and 0.37m to 0.51m deep. The ditch contained a single fill which comprised a firm mid grey-brown silty clay. No dateable material was recovered. It is likely that this ditch is the same as feature [1006] seen in the evaluation.

4.5.7 A fourth undated linear feature [3323] was recorded in the south-eastern corner of Mitigation Trench 33, broadly parallel to the other ditches (**Figure 4, Plate 12**). The terminus of the ditch had concave sides and a sub-rounded base. It measured 0.3m wide and 0.18m deep. A single fill comprised a firm light brown-grey silty clay. No dateable material was recovered.

4.5.8 A cluster of eight small pits ([3311], [3317], [3313], [3327], [3329], [3331], [3333], [3335]) were recorded in the south-eastern corner Mitigation Trench 33, and a solitary pit [3308] was recorded in the north-western corner. Pits in the south-eastern cluster were sub-circular with shallow concave sides and concave bases (**Figure 4, Plates 16-23**). They varied in size from 0.27m to 0.53m wide, and between 0.11m and 0.23m deep. Each pit was filled with a similar single fill of light blue-grey silty clay with orange mottling or a mid grey-brown silty clay. Pit [3308] located in the north-western corner of Mitigation Trench 33 was oval in plan, with sloping sides and a slightly concave base (**Figure 4, Plate15**). It measured 1.4m long, 0.51m wide and 0.21m deep. It was filled with two deposits: the upper fill was a 0.02m deep charcoal layer, while the lower comprised a light yellow brown-grey silty clay 0.19m deep. No dateable material was recovered from any of these pits.

4.6 Mitigation Trench 34

Phase 3: Post-medieval

4.6.1 A post-medieval ditch [3408]/[3416] was recorded in Mitigation Trench 34 (**Figure 5, Plates 27-28**). The ditch had steep sides and a concave base. It measured between 1.86m and 3.3m wide, and 0.59m and 0.8m deep. It contained a single fill of a mid-grey-brown silty clay, which produced a 16th/17th-century brick. One fragment of sheep/goat metatarsus was recovered from [3416], and a poorly preserved sheep-sized limb bone fragment was recovered from [3408]. The bones are likely to have been deposited during the manuring process, given the notably poor condition of one of them. The size of the metatarsus implies a sheep/goat variety widely reared in the medieval period, and it does not resemble improved varieties characteristic of the late post-medieval period. Such smaller types, however, persisted well into the 19th century. This interpretation is confirmed by sherds of post-medieval pottery recovered from the upper fill (3417), both non-diagnostic sherds of local redware dating to between the 16th and 19th centuries. This feature corresponds with a ditch recorded in the evaluation in Trenches 14, 17 and 27.

Phase 4: Undated

4.6.2 Two undated features were recorded in Mitigation Trench 34. Ditch [3406]/ [3411] aligned north-east to south-west had steep sides and a concave base (**Figure 5, Plates 25-26**). It measured 0.4m to 0.61m wide, and between 0.26m and 0.33m deep. A single fill comprised a firm mid grey-brown silty clay. Ditch [3406]/ [3411] was truncated by the post-medieval ditch [3408]/[3416]. One flint flake was recovered from [3411]. It was a piece of generic debitage: fairly thin, with narrow dorsal scars, although it was poorly detached, with minor edge chipping from post-depositional damage. The flake came from good knapping quality 'glassy' brownish grey flint. It is likely Neolithic, although the form is generic enough that it could have been struck during any period of flint working. The debitage is likely to be the result of incidental discard from very sparse prehistoric usage of the site, and it is believed to be residual in the later feature, which remains otherwise undated. Similarly, a single sherd of prehistoric pottery was retrieved from the environmental sample, weighing just 2g. The sherd is abraded with no diagnostic features, although the medium to coarse calcined flint temper would be consistent with a broad Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age date, and is most likely residual in a later context.

4.6.3 Undated pit [3404] was identified in the north-western corner of the trench (**Figure 5, Plate 24**). It was sub-oval in plan with concave sides and a concave base. A single fill comprised a friable mid-grey sandy clay. No dateable material was recovered.

4.7 Mitigation Trench 35

4.7.1 A consistent stratigraphic sequence was observed throughout Mitigation Trench 35 (**Figure 7, Plate 1**). The natural, a soft light yellow-grey sandy clay, was overlain by a soft

mid grey-brown silty clay subsoil. The subsoil was, in turn, overlain by friable dark grey-brown clay silt topsoil. No archaeological features were identified in Trench 35.

4.8 Environmental Sampling

4.8.1 Nine environmental samples were taken from Mitigation Trenches 33 and 34 with the aim of recovering ecofacts. The recovered environmental material was minimal, likely representing residual material.

4.8.2 Charcoal retrieved from the samples being near-exclusive to the retents is unusual but may result from the mineral concretions attached to the charcoal fragments making them denser than water, and unable to float during flotation.

4.8.3 Notably, all environmental material recovered from samples was charred, which could represent a preservation bias within the archaeological record. The underlying geology of the Site gives rise to two unique soil types: "loamy soils with naturally high groundwater" to the east, and "slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils" to the west. While these soil types are suitable for the preservation of charred plant remains, they are not conducive to the preservation of other ecofacts, including charcoal, shell, and animal bone. This suggests that the lack of material produced by the samples is likely due to a mix of a general absence of charred plant remains, combined with poor preservation of shell and bone.

4.8.4 Minimal interpretation can be gleaned from the artefactual assemblages within the retents, predominantly due to the overall low quantity of material.

4.9 Summary of Finds

Pottery

4.9.1 As observed during the evaluation phase, the pottery recovered during mitigation works sample ranges in date from the prehistoric period to the post-medieval period. In addition to material of prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval date, a probable early to middle Saxon vessel was also recovered.

4.9.2 The assemblage from both the evaluation and the mitigation provides dating evidence for prehistoric, Roman and post-Roman activity on site, although ceramic continuity cannot be demonstrated. The small, largely non-diagnostic and re-deposited nature of the material not only suggests that the site is likely to have been the focus of very low-level sporadic activity over a long period of time but also limits any further interpretative potential.

Ceramic Building Material

4.9.3 A small assemblage of ceramic building material recovered during the mitigation phase, totalling 12 fragments, weighing 1,304g. When added to the material recovered during the evaluation phase, this brings the site total to 201 fragments, weighing 2.8kg.

4.9.4 Eight fragments of late medieval to post-medieval roof tile were collected during the mitigation. Seven of these are flat tiles, which may be of peg or nib form, but no diagnostic elements survive. A single small fragment of curved roof tile was also recovered, possibly representing a ridge tile. The firing of the latter is very similar to the flat tile, possibly indicating a degree of contemporaneity, although the fragment is so abraded that it is difficult to be certain, and a Roman date is also possible. The tiles appear to have been made from a similar clay to the Roman tile, iron-rich with cream and red clay streaks and inclusions, perhaps indicating the exploitation of similar local clays during both periods. Both curved and flat tiles represent long-lived forms with little observable typological development over time, although moulding sand tends to become finer during the post-medieval period, and flat tile forms tend to become thicker and more evenly moulded. All the tiles recovered from site are likely to be of later medieval to post-medieval date, as observed during the evaluation.

4.9.5 The small assemblage of daub and ceramic building material from both phases of investigation provides limited evidence for potential prehistoric, Roman and later medieval/ post-medieval structures in the broader vicinity of site. Very little further can be concluded regarding the nature or location of these given the modest size, fragmentary and generally dispersed condition of the material.

Lithics

4.9.6 The mitigation resulted in the recovery of a small assemblage of lithic material, totalling three struck lithic pieces. The assemblage comprised one flake, from ditch [3411], and two pieces of microdebitage from ditch [3321].

4.9.7 Little can be said about flint knapping practices, or prehistoric more generally, based on the small assemblage from this site. The pieces appear to be the result of incidental discard from very sparse prehistoric usage of the site, which were subsequently disturbed by later activity, resulting in their secondary deposition within later features.

Animal Bone

4.9.8 A rather small collection of animal bones was recovered from Mitigation Trench 34. The site provided just two bones, one of which was in two pieces. They include a sheep/goat metatarsus from the upper fill of ditch [3416] and a very poorly preserved sheep-size limb bone fragment from the fill of ditch [3408]. These represent cuts through the same post-medieval ditch, located in Trench 34. The sheep/goat metatarsus is from a typically small animal of a type continuing from the medieval through to the post-medieval era.

4.9.9 These two bones may well represent the remains of field manuring, with one out of the two notably in poor condition, i.e. no doubt left out for some considerable period before entering the ditch fill.

5 STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

5.1 Discussion

5.1.1 The archaeological mitigation works (strip, map and sample investigations) were undertaken following trial-trench evaluation carried out by PCA in 2022 (PCA 2022). The evaluation identified several phases of activity in the western and northern parts of Site. Archaeological remains of Iron Age/Romano-British date were identified in Evaluation Trenches 4, 6, 9 and 30, comprising ten pits in total. Trench 4 contained the largest group, with several pits producing small quantities of mid- to late-Iron Age pottery and others undated but likely contemporary. Trenches 6 and 9 each contained small pits, one yielding Roman pottery and another burnt flint, while two pits in Trench 30 included a Roman mortarium fragment that provides the clearest dating evidence for this phase. Medieval activity was limited to Trench 10, where a single shallow linear feature contained pottery dating to the 12th–14th century, alongside a small amount of residual Roman material. Post-medieval remains were more widespread, with Evaluation Trenches 6, 10, 14, 17 and 27 exposing sections of two field boundaries corresponding to those shown on the 1841 Tithe Map. An additional undated deposit in Trench 10 contained a substantial quantity of burnt clay, which could relate either to earlier Iron Age/Romano-British activity or to medieval use of the area but cannot be securely assigned.

5.1.2 Following the results of the evaluation, a scope of mitigation works was discussed and agreed upon between TT and Berkshire Archaeology. Six targeted mitigation trenches were positioned over areas where archaeological remains had been concentrated during the evaluation (**Figure 3**). The mitigation works revealed a small number of medieval, late medieval/post-medieval, post-medieval and undated features, although overall archaeological survival was limited and further constrained by modern drainage and poor ground conditions.

5.1.3 Medieval activity was represented solely by a single ditch in Mitigation Trench 33, aligned northeast-southwest and containing a small assemblage of 12th-14th-century pottery. No other medieval features were identified, and the ditch appears to form part of a minor agricultural boundary rather than a settlement focus. Its isolated character and modest artefactual content suggest low-intensity use of the area during this period, with no evidence for domestic structures or industrial activity.

5.1.4 Late medieval to post-medieval remains were recorded in Mitigation Trench 33 as a small number of linear features, including a north–south ditch in the western part of the trench and a further linear feature in the southeast, the latter truncated by a later field drain. These features contained ceramic roof tile and pottery spanning the late medieval to early post-medieval period. Their alignments correspond with the pattern of former field boundaries identified in the evaluation, indicating continuity of agricultural land division

from the later medieval period onwards. The character of these features reinforces the impression of a landscape structured by field systems rather than settlement.

5.1.5 Post-medieval activity was most clearly expressed in Mitigation Trench 34, where a substantial boundary ditch produced 16th/17th-century brick, post-medieval pottery and small quantities of animal bone likely introduced through manuring. This ditch corresponds to boundaries recorded in the evaluation trenches to the north and west and is consistent with the field layout shown on the 1841 Tithe Map. No other post-medieval features were identified elsewhere, suggesting that the Site lay on the periphery of agricultural land rather than within an area of concentrated activity.

5.1.6 Undated features were the most numerous, particularly in Mitigation Trench 33, where several ditches and a cluster of small pits were recorded. The pits, located mainly in the southeastern corner of the trench, were shallow, sub-circular and uniformly filled. While their clustering could conceivably hint at low-level domestic or agricultural activity, none produced datable material, and all appear to respect the later medieval and post-medieval boundaries.

5.1.7 No additional features, to those Romano-British pits seen in evaluation Trench 30, were observed within mitigation Trenches 32A, 32B and 32C. Whilst it was not possible to excavate the full extent of Trench 32 due to flooding. These excavated trenches demonstrate an absence of archaeology and that the pits are likely isolated features.

5.1.8 Crucially, no direct evidence of Roman activity was identified during the mitigation works, despite the proximity of Romano-British features recorded in the evaluation. The residual nature of the prehistoric and Roman finds uncovered during the mitigation suggests only very sparse, non-intensive use of the area in earlier periods.

5.1.9 Taken together, the mitigation works successfully met the aims and objectives of the project. The investigations confirmed that there is no secure evidence for later prehistoric settlement activity, and the residual nature of the prehistoric material indicates only incidental or peripheral use of the landscape, consistent with patterns observed at other contemporary sites in the region. The strip, map and sample produced no new evidence for Iron Age or early Romano-British occupation, and the absence of structural, industrial or domestic features means that the limited activity identified in the evaluation cannot be characterised more closely. Finally, the dating evidence recovered during mitigation does not refine the phasing of Iron Age, Romano-British or medieval activity beyond that already established: the prehistoric and Roman material is residual, the medieval ditch is securely dated to the 12th–14th century, and the later boundaries fall within the late medieval to post-medieval and post-medieval periods. The results, therefore, provide a coherent refinement of the evaluation findings.

5.2 Conclusion

5.2.1 The evaluation and subsequent mitigation works identified only limited archaeological activity across the Site, comprising small groups of Iron Age/Romano-British pits in the western and northern areas, a single medieval boundary ditch, and a series of late medieval to post-medieval and post-medieval field boundaries corresponding to those shown on the 1841 Tithe Map. The mitigation phase refined this picture but did not reveal any further evidence for Roman occupation, and the prehistoric and Roman material recovered was residual. Medieval activity remained restricted to a single ditch dated to the 12th–14th century, while later features reflected the long-term organisation of the landscape into agricultural plots. Undated features - particularly the cluster of shallow pits in Trench 33 - offered only limited interpretive potential; although their arrangement could suggest low-level domestic or agricultural activity, they respected later boundaries and produced no datable material.

5.2.2 Overall, the investigations confirmed that the Site preserves only sparse and peripheral archaeological remains, with no secure evidence for later prehistoric settlement, no additional Iron Age or Romano-British activity beyond that identified in the evaluation, and no refinement of the existing phasing for earlier periods. The results demonstrate that activity at the Site was intermittent, low-intensity and predominantly agricultural from the medieval period onwards. Assessment of the archaeological activity suggests that it is of local significance, contributing modestly to wider research themes for the area—particularly the character of dispersed prehistoric and Romano-British activity and the development of medieval and post-medieval field systems—while offering no evidence for more substantial settlement or industrial use.

6 ARCHIVE PREPARATION AND DEPOSITION

6.1 The Site Archive

6.1.1 The Site archive, to include all project records and cultural material produced by the project, will be prepared in accordance with 'Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage' (UKIC 1990) and the Institute for Archaeologists 'Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives' (CIfA 2023). On completion of the project, PCA will arrange for the archive to be deposited with the appropriate museum.

6.2 Copyright

6.2.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, with all rights reserved. Berkshire Archaeology, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking and conforms to the Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003. Further distribution and uses of the report, either in its entirety or part thereof, in paper or electronic form, are prohibited without the prior consent of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.

6.2.2 The licence extends to the use of all documents arising from this project in all matters relating directly to the project, as well as for bona fide research purposes (which includes the Berkshire HER).

6.2.3 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the content of this report. However, Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd cannot accept any liability in respect of, or resulting from, errors, inaccuracies, or omissions this report contains.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The work was supervised by Lara Cook and assisted on site by Gareth Hatt, Giovani Calvia, Anthony Matthew, Thomas Squib, Dedyn Williams and Matt Shugar. The report was prepared by Lara Cook, and the report illustrations were prepared by Joanna Nastaszyc. The project was managed for PCA by Maisie Marshall.

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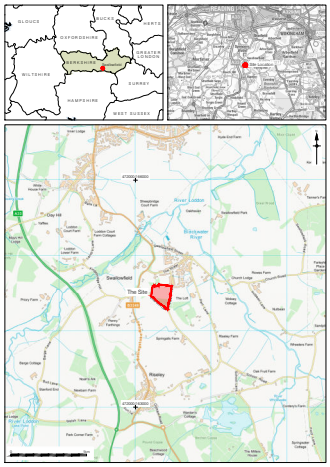
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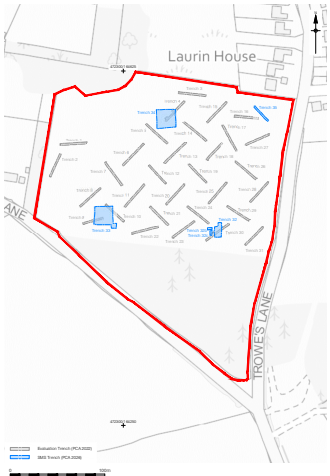
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Figure 1
Site Location
1:2,000,000, 1:250,000, 1:25,000 at A4

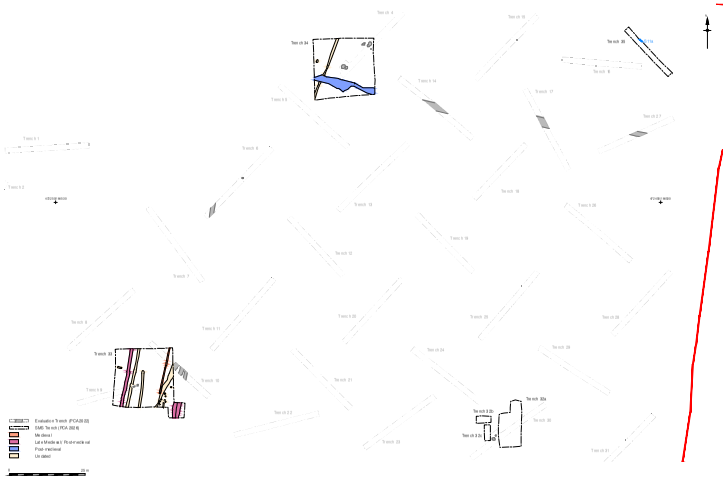
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Figure 2
Detailed Site Plan
1:2,000 at A4

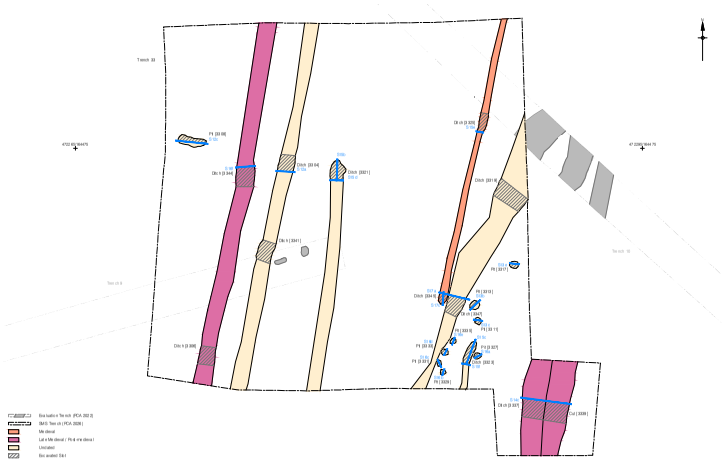
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Figure 3
Phased Features Plan
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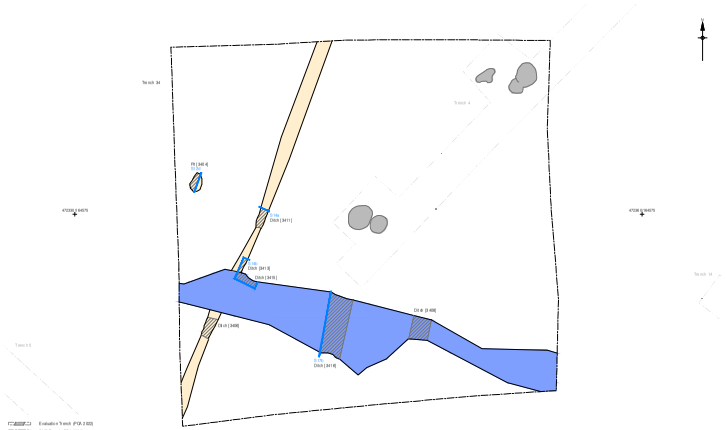
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Figure 4
Detailed Plan of Trench 33
1:100 at A3

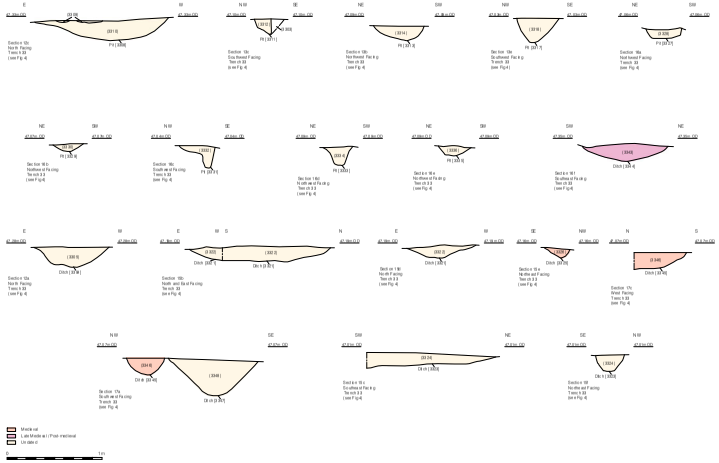
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Figure 5
Detailed Plan of Trench 3-4
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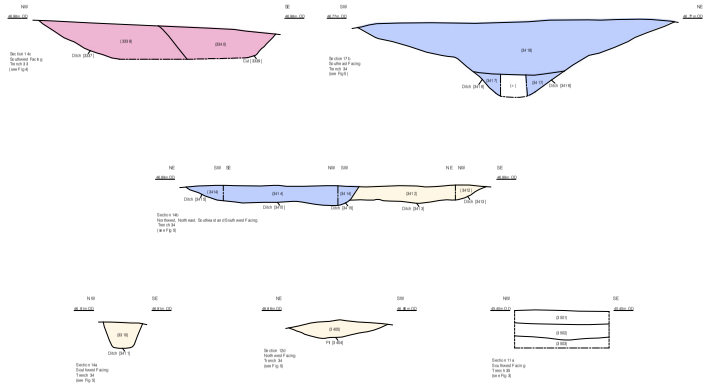
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Figure 6
Sections
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Figure 7
Sections
1:20 at A3

APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: Mitigation Trench 35 view to South. 1m scale.



Plate 2: Mitigation Trench 32A, view to West. 1m scale.



Plate 3: Mitigation Trench 32B, view to South. 1m scale.



Plate 4: Mitigation Trench 32, view to Southeast.



Plate 5: Feature [3304] North Facing Section. 1m scale.

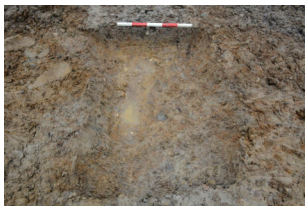


Plate 6: Feature [3341]. 1m scale.



Plate 7: Feature [3306] North Facing Section. 1m Scale.



Plate 8: Feature [3344] South Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 9: Feature [3319] Northeast Facing Section. 1m Scale.



Plate 10: Feature [3347] South Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 11: Feature [3321] East Facing Section. 1m Scale.

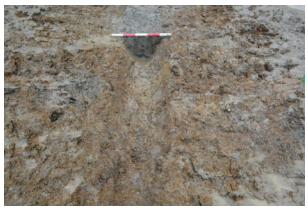


Plate 12: Feature [3323] North Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 13: Feature [3345] South Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 14: Features [3337] and [3339] South Facing Section. 2m Scale.



Plate 15: Feature [3308] North Facing Section. 1m Scale.



Plate 16: Feature [3311] South Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 17: Feature [3313] Northwest Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 18: Feature [3317] South Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 19: Feature [3327] Northwest Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 20: Feature [3329] West Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 21: Feature [3331] Southwest Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 22: Feature [3333] West Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.

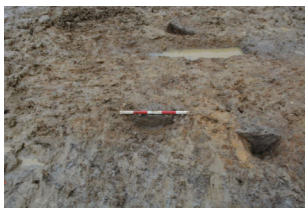


Plate 23: Feature [3335] West Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 24: Feature [3404] Northwest Facing Section. 1m Scale.



Plate 25: Feature [3406] Northeast Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 26: Feature [3411 Southwest Facing Section. 0.5m Scale.



Plate 27: Feature [3408] East Facing Section. 1m Scale.



Plate 28: Feature [3416] Northwest Facing Section. 1m Scale.

APPENDIX 2: TRENCH INDEX

Site Code	Context Number	Area/Trench	Description	Type	Grid Square	Date	Phase	Interpretation	Fill of	Same as	Filled by	Finds
BTLS22	3301		Friable, dark grey brown clay silt.					Topsoil				
BTLS22	3302		Soft mid grey brown silty clay.					Subsoil				
BTLS22	3303		Soft light grey yellow sandy clay.					Natural				
BTLS22	3301		Friable, dark grey brown clay silt.					Topsoil				
BTLS22	3302		Soft mid grey brown silty clay.					Subsoil				
BTLS22	3303		Soft light grey yellow sandy clay.					Natural				
BTLS22	3304	33	Linear, moderate sides, flat-irregular base 0.78m w 0.2m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of ditch			3305	

BTLS22	3305	33	Soft, light brown grey sandy clay	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of ditch [3301]	3304			
BTLS22	3306	33	Linear, gradual slope sides, concave base, north south 0.85m w x 0.25m d	Cut		LMPM	2	Cut of ditch			3307	
BTLS22	3307	33	Soft, mid grey mottled with orange, sandy clay, frequent small to medium flints and gravel, some charcoal flecks	Fill		LMPM	2	Fill of ditch [3307]	3306			CBM

BTLS22	3308	33	Oval, sloping sides, slightly concaved base. 1.42m x 0.51m w x 0.21m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of possible pit or natural feature			3309, 3310	
BTLS22	3309	33	Friable, black grey, charcoal, 0.02m d	Fill		Undated	3	Charcoal layer within pit [3309]	3308			
BTLS22	3310	33	Firm light brown grey with light orange yellow mottling, 0.21m d	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of feature [3308]	3308			
BTLS22	3311	33	Sub-oval, moderately steep sides, concave base. 0.53m w x 0.15m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of pit			3312	

BTLS22	3312	33	Soft light blue grey with mid orange mottling, sandy clay, small to medium flint and gravel inclusions.	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of pit [3311]	3311			
BTLS22	3313	33	Sub-circular, concave sides, concave base, 0.49m l x 0.53m w x 0.16m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of pit			3314	
BTLS22	3314	33	Moderately compact light brown grey silty clay with rare small stones	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of pit [3313]	3313			

BTLS22	3315	33	Sub-circular, moderately steep sides, flat base. 0.45m w x 0.11m d	Cut		RB	1	Cut of pit			3315		
BTLS22	3316	33	Firm light brown blue grey silty clay.	Fill		RB	1	Fill of pit [3315]	3316			CBM	
BTLS22	3317	33	Sub-oval, steep west side and moderate east side, concave base. 0.4m w x 0.22m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of pit			3318		
BTLS22	3318	33	Soft light blue grey with mid orange mottling, sandy clay, small to medium flint and gravel inclusions.	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of pit [3317]	3317				

BTLS22	3319	33	Linear, steep NW side and moderate SE side, concave base, 1.63m w x 0.51m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of pit			3320	
BTLS22	3320	33	Firm light brown grey silty clay	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of pit [3319]	3319			
BTLS22	3321	33	Linear, moderate sides, concave base, 0.79m w x 0.17m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of ditch			3322	
BTLS22	3322	33	Friable light grey brown and orange silty clay, occasional flints	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of ditch [3321]	3321			

BTLS22	3323	33	Linear, concave sides, sub-concave base, 0.3m w x 0.18m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of ditch			3324	
BTLS22	3324	33	Firm light brown grey silty clay	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of ditch [3323]	3323			
BTLS22	3325	33	Linear, shallow sides, concave base, 0.27m w x 0.1m d	Cut		RB	1	Cut of ditch			3326	
BTLS22	3326	33	Soft mid blue grey with some orange brown mottling, sandy silt, occasional small to medium stone inclusions	Fill		RB	1	Fill of ditch [3325]	3325			Pot

BTLS22	3327	33	Sub-circular, steep sides, concave base, 0.37m l x 0.49m w x 0.08m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of pit			3328		
BTLS22	3328	33	Friable light grey brown and orange silty clay, occasional flints	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of pit [3327]	3327				
BTLS22	3329	33	Sub-circular, moderate sides, concave base, 0.3m l x 0.34m w x 0.08m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of pit			3330		
BTLS22	3330	33	Friable light grey brown and orange silty clay, occasional flints	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of pit [3329]	3329				

BTLS22	3331	33	Sub-rectangular, steep sides, concave base, 0.34m l x 0.27m w x 0.23m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of pit			3332		
BTLS22	3332	33	Friable light grey brown and orange silty clay, occasional flints	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of pit [3331]	3331				
BTLS22	3333	33	Sub-circular, steep sides, concave base, 0.28m l x 0.4m w x 0.19m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of pit			3334		
BTLS22	3334	33	Friable light grey brown and orange silty clay, occasional flints	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of pit [3333]	3333				

BTLS22	3335	33	Sub-circular, moderate sides, concave base. 0.33m l x 0.29m w x 0.11m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of pit			3336		
BTLS22	3336	33	Friable light grey brown and orange silty clay, occasional flints	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of pit [3335]	3335				
BTLS22	3337	33	Linear, moderately steep sides. Seen in previous phase of work. Cut by field drain [3338]	Cut		LM/PM	2	Cut of ditch			3338		

BTLS22	3338	33	Moderately firm, light brown grey silty clay, frequent small stones	Fill		LMPM	2	Fill of ditch [3337]	3337			CBM
BTLS22	3339	33	Field drain cut	Cut		Post Med	2	Cut of field drain			3340	
BTLS22	3340	33	Moderate firm, mod grey brown silty clay	Fill		Post Med	2	Fill of field drain	3339			
BTLS22	3341	33	Linear, steep sides, flat base. 0.8m w x 0. 13m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of ditch			3342	
BTLS22	3342	33	Firm mid brown grey silty clay, some small to medium stone inclusions	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of ditch [3341]	3341			

BTLS22	3343	33	Friable mid grey brown silty clay with some flint inclusions	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of ditch [3344]	3344			
BTLS22	3344	33	Linear, moderate sides, concave base, 0.91m w x 0.19m d	Cut		LM/PM	2	Cut of ditch			3343	
BTLS22	3345	33	Linear, sloping sides, concave base, 0.4m w x0.18m d	Cut		LM/PM	2	Cut of ditch			3346	
BTLS22	3346	33	Compact, mid brown grey silty clay, small rounded stone inclusions	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of ditch [3345]	3345			

BTLS22	3347	33	Linear, moderately steep sides, concave base. 0.99m w x 0.37m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of ditch			3348	
BTLS22	3348	33	Firm, mid grey brown silty clay, moderate small rounded stones	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of ditch [3347]	3347			
								Topsoil				
BTLS22	3401	34						Subsoil				
BTLS22	3402	34						Natural				
BTLS22	3403	34										
BTLS22	3404	34	Sub-oval, shallow concave sides, concave base	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of pit			3405	
BTLS22	3405	34	Friable grey clay sand	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of pit [3404]	3404			

BTLS22	3406	34	Linear, steep sides, concave base. 0.6m w x 0.33m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of ditch			3407	
BTLS22	3407	34	Firm light brown grey silty clay	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of ditch [3406]	3406			
BTLS22	3408	34	Linear, steep concave sides, tapered rounded point base. 1.85m w x 0.59m d	Cut		Post Med	2	Cut of ditch			3409	
BTLS22	3409	34	Friable mid grey orange sandy silt	Fill		Post Med	2	Fill of ditch [3408]	3408			CBM
BTLS22	3410	34	Soft light grey silty clay	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of ditch [3411]	3411			
BTLS22	3411	34	Linear, steep sides, concave base. 0.41m w x 0.26m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of ditch			3410	

BTLS22	3412	34	Friable light grey brown silty clay	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of ditch [3412]	3413			
BTLS22	3413	34	Linear, steep sides, concave base. 0.44m w x 0.19m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of ditch			3412	
BTLS22	3414	34	Friable mid grey brown silty clay	Fill		Undated	3	Fill of ditch [3415]	3415			
BTLS22	3415	34	Linear, moderate sides, concave base. 0.79m w x 0.21m d	Cut		Undated	3	Cut of ditch			3414	
BTLS22	3416	34	Linear, moderate steep sides, sub-concave base. 3.33m w x 0.8m d	Cut		Post Med	2	Cut of ditch			3418, 3419	

BTLS22	3417	34	Compact mid grey brown silty clay with small stone inclusions	Fill		Post Med	2	Upper fill of 3416	3416			
BTLS22	3418	34	Firm mid grey brown silty clay, frequent stones and rooting	Fill		Post Med	2	Lower fill of [3416]	3416			
BTLS22	3901	35	Friable, dark grey brown clay silt	Layer				Topsoil				
BTLS22	3902	35	Soft mid grey brown silty clay	Layer				Subsoil				
BTLS22	3903	35	Soft light grey yellow sandy clay	Layer				Natural				

APPENDIX 3: LITHIC ASSESSMENT

8.1 Lithic Assessment

Laura Desrosiers-Whalley

Introduction

8.1.1 The excavation at Trowes Lane, Swallowfield, resulted in the recovery of a small assemblage of lithic material, totalling three struck lithic pieces.The assemblage has been catalogued and this includes further descriptive details of the pieces (Table XX).

The Struck Lithic Assemblage

8.1.2 The assemblage comprised one flake, from ditch [3411], and two pieces of microdebitage (flakes measuring <10mm in their maximum dimension), from ditch [3321]. The flake, a piece of generic knapping debitage, was fairly thin, with narrow dorsal scars, though was fairly poorly detached. The piece was made from good knapping quality 'glassy' brownish gray flint, with minor edge chipping from post-depositional damage. The piece was likely Neolithic in origin, though was generic enough that it could have been generated during any period of flintworking. Both of the pieces of microdebitage were heavily burnt to the point of discolouration; the size and condition of the pieces made it difficult to discern whether these pieces were naturally fractured, or fractured by heating, rather than struck.

8.1.3 Little can be said about flint knapping practices, or prehistoric more generally, based on the small assemblage from this site. The pieces appear the result of incidental discard from very sparse prehistoric usage of the site, which were subsequently disturbed by later activity, resulting in their secondary deposition within later features.

Conclusions & Recommendations for Further Work

8.1.4 No further work is required on this assemblage. However, if further work is undertaken on the site, this material should be included alongside any further lithic material recovered.

Table 1XX: Catalogue of the struck lithic material

Context	Cut no.	Feature	Trench	Sample	Type	Count	Weight (g)	Colour	Cortex	Condition	Retouched	Hagdorn/Microlith date range	Comments
3322	3321	Ditch	33	6	Micro-debitage <10mm	2	1	Unknown	None	Heavily burnt	None	Preh	2x small MD flakes, burnt to the point of complete discolouration (red), poss not struck
3410	3411	Ditch	34	2	Flake	1	2	Translucent brownish grey	None	Good	None	Meso-Neo	thin flake, poorly detached, narrow dorsal scars

APPENDIX 4: POTTERY ASSESSMENT

The pottery
Berni Sudds

Introduction and methodology
A total of 34 sherds of pottery were recovered from the mitigation phase, representing an estimated 13 vessels (ENV) and weighing 200g. When added to the material recovered during the evaluation phases, this brings the site total to 79 sherds, weighing 523g (Hudak 2022).
The fabrics were examined under x20 magnification and recorded using a system of mnemonic codes based on inclusions or common name, following the Prehistoric Pottery Research Group guidelines (PCRG 2010), the Museum of London Archaeology typology (MOLA 2024) and fabric codes used in Reading (Underwood 1997). The assemblage was recorded and quantified for each context by fabric, vessel form and decoration in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Barclay et al (2016). An ACCESS database recording these attributes can be found with the site archive. A summarised catalogue of the pottery by context, including date ranges and suggested spot dates, is presented in Appendix 1 at the end of the report.

Assemblage chronology
As observed during the evaluation phase, the pottery ranges in date from the pre-historic period to the post-medieval period. In addition to material of prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval date a probable Early to Middle Saxon vessel was also recovered.

Assemblage characterisation
With an average sherd weight of just under 7g the assemblage is quite fragmentary but in keeping with levels typically observed on rural sites. There is some observable difference in the condition of the pottery of different periods with the prehistoric and Roman pottery being particularly fragmentary and abraded with a low mean weight of 5.77g. The post-Roman pottery has a slightly higher average sherd weight (10.57g) but also demonstrates varying levels of abrasion.

Prehistoric
A single sherd of prehistoric pottery was recovered during the mitigation phase, retrieved from an environmental sample and weighing just 2g (Ditch [3411] fill [3410] <2>). The sherd is abraded with no diagnostic features although the medium to coarse calcined flint temper would be consistent with a broad Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age date.

Early to Middle Saxon
A body and base sherd from the same dense quartz-tempered vessel were collected from Ditch [3344] (fill [3343]). The vessel is fairly thick-walled with a dark grey/black body and inner surface and dark grey to buff heavily worn outer surface. The forming and firing suggest the vessel could be of early to middle

Saxon date, although given the exploitation of similar clays and methods of manufacture and firing during the Iron Age an earlier date is possible.

Roman

Seventeen additional sherds of Roman pottery were collected during the mitigation. The majority of these (16 sherds) derive from the same thin-walled greyware vessel (Ditch [3321] fill [3322]). The surfaces are completely abraded, and a precise source cannot be determined (E. Hudak pers comm.). A small white/buff ware sherd was also recovered from Ditch [3344] that may be of Roman date but is very small and non-diagnostic, with a later medieval date also possible.

Code	Pottery type	Date range	SC	ENV	Weight
Prehistoric pottery					
MFL	Medium to coarse flint-tempered ware	Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age	1	1	2
Roman					
GREY	Roman greyware (unsourced)	40 – 400+	16	1	35
MISC	Miscellaneous buff/whiteware	40 – 400	1	1	2
Early to Middle Saxon pottery					
QT	Quartz-tempered ware	400 – 850	2	1	54
Medieval pottery					
S/ LCW	Local iron-rich coarse sandy ware	1150 – 1400	7	2	24
LSF/ NEWB	Newbury 'B' ware	1150 – 1400	4	4	36
Sag/ ASH	Ashampstead ware	1175 – 1400	1	1	2
Post-medieval pottery					
RBOR	Surrey-Hampshire border redware	1550 – 1900	2	2	25

Table 1: Pottery types from the mitigation phase. SC = Sherd count; ENV = Estimated number of vessels; Weight in grams.

Medieval pottery

The small assemblage of medieval pottery (12 sherds; 7 ENV) is comprised of coarsewares and glazed wares that can be well paralleled in the region. The local types include Local iron-rich coarse sandy wares (LCW), similar to those recorded during the Reading Waterfront excavations (Fabric S, Underwood 1993) and at least one glazed ware from Ashampstead (Ssg/ ASH). There appear to be a number of similar iron-rich sandy wares found across the region, indicating that there are likely to have been a number of centres producing similar products not limited to but including Ashampstead, Camley Gardens and possibly Reading (Mepham and Heaton 1995, 33-4; Underwood 1997, 145; Jarrett 2021, 56-7; Blinkhorn 2004, 13-4. The flint, limestone and quartz tempered Newbury 'B' wares, of which there are four sherds in the assemblage, originate from the Kennet Valley to the west, but are also found widely across Berkshire. With the exception of one thickened and internally beaded Local iron-rich coarse sandy ware jar rim, the medieval pottery occurs and non-diagnostic body and base sherds.

Post-medieval

Two sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from the upper fill of ditch [3416] (fill [3417]), both non-diagnostic sherds of Surrey-Hampshire border redware (RBOR), produced at a number of kiln sites c. 10km to the south-east of Swallowfield.

Distribution

The mitigation assemblage was collected from the fill of six features; five ditches and one pit (Table 3; Appendix 1). The majority was recovered from ditches of uncertain date (Phase 3), with just one intrusive sherd of medieval pottery collected from Phase 1 pit [3316] and two post-medieval sherds from Phase 2 ditch [3416].

Phase	Date	SC	ENV	REVE	Weight
Phase 1	Roman	1	1	-	22
Phase 2	Post-medieval	2	2	-	25
Phase 3	Undated	31	10	0.05	153

Table 2: Distribution of the pottery by phase. SC = Sherd count; ENV = Estimated/ minimum number of vessels; REVE = Estimated vessel equivalent by percentage rim present. Weight in grams.

A very similar distribution pattern to the pottery was observed as noted during the evaluation with both the prehistoric and post-medieval pottery recovered in ditches to the north of site (Trench 34; ditch [3411] and [3416]) and the Roman and medieval pottery in features to the south (Trench 33). The probable Early to Middle Saxon vessel was also retrieved from Trench 33 (ditch [3344]). Despite a similar focus to the dated activity on site the small size of the feature assemblages and poor condition suggest the pottery of all periods is highly likely to be redeposited.

Significance of the assemblage and recommendations for further work

The assemblage from both phases of investigation provides dating evidence for prehistoric, Roman and post-Roman activity on site, although ceramic continuity cannot be demonstrated. The small, largely non-diagnostic and re-deposited nature of the material not only suggests that the site is likely to have been focus of very low-level sporadic activity over a long period of time but also limits any further interpretative potential. The composition of the assemblage of all periods can also be well paralleled in the region and as such no further analysis or reporting is recommended.

Cut	Cxt	Area/ Trench	Fabric	Form	SC	ENV	Wgt	Comments	Date range		Context considered date
3316	3316	33	Sag/ ASH		1	1	22	Heavily abraded base sherd. Traces of green glaze. Partially burnt. Ashampstead or possibly Camley Gardens.	1175	1400	1175 – 1400
3321	3322 <6>	33	GREY		16	1	35	Multiple sherds from the same vessel. Thin-walled greyware. Highly abraded surfaces.	40	400	40 - 400
3344	3343	33	QT		2	1	54	Probably EBSAX. Fairly thick-walled. Abraded. Worn outer surface. Dark grey/black body and inner surface, dark grey to buff outer surface.	400	850	400 - 850
3344	3343 <8>	33	MISC		1	1	2	Small, abraded thin-walled off-white/buff sandy ware. Fine to medium quartz, some iron-stained (up to 0.5mm). Occasional larger grains of quartz and some iron ore. Roman or possibly a medieval whiteware?	40	400	
3345	3346	33	SI LCW		6	1	13	Sherds from the same sagging base. Externally scorched. Abundant coarse, predominantly iron-stained quartz. Occasional iron-ore and flint.	1175	1300	1175 - 1300
3345	3346	33	LSF/ NEWB		1	1	9	Body sherd. External scoring. Abundant fine to coarse quartz and sparse limestone and flint.	1150	1400	
3345	3346 <5>	33	SI LCW	Jar	1	1	11	Short everted neck and thickened, flat-topped and internally beaded rim. Post-depositional residue. Rim diameter 160mm; REVE 0.05.	1175	1300	
3345	3346 <5>	33	FLILSF/ NEWB		3	3	27	Body and base sherds. X1 body sherd with external scoring. Predominantly flint and/or quartz. Some abrasion.	1150	1400	
3411	3410 <3>	34	MFL		1	1	2	Small sherd. Externally scorched/ burnt.	LBA	EIA	LBA-EIA
3416	3417	34	RBOR		1	1	10	Unglazed body sherd.	1550	1900	1550 - 1900
3416	3417	34	RBOR		1	1	15	Body sherd with internal clear glaze.	1550	1900	

Table 3: Summary catalogue of the pottery by context. Cxt = Context; SC = sherd count; ENV = Estimated number of vessels; Wgt = Weight in grams. REVE = Estimated vessel equivalent by percentage rim present.

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APPENDIX 5: CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL REPORT

The ceramic building material
Berni Sudds

Introduction

A small assemblage of ceramic building material recovered during the mitigation phase totalling 12 fragments, weighing 1,304g. When added to the material recovered during the evaluation phase this brings the site total to 201 fragments, weighing 2.8kg (2811g; Sudds 2022). The material was examined under magnification (x20) and quantified by number, weight and dimension in accordance with the guidelines laid out by the ACBMG (2001). The fabrics are described below, assigned a provisional code unique to the site (Table 1) and a catalogue of the assemblage by context is presented in Table 2.

Fabrics

Fabric code	Description	Form/ type	FC	Wgt
Roman tile				
BTSL22 RT1	Orange sandy fabric with sparse cream and red (iron-rich) clay streaks and inclusions. Moderate fine to medium quartz and sparse medium flint inclusions.	Roman tile	1	24
Post-medieval roof tile				
BTLS22 PRT1	Fine orange sandy fabric with cream and red (iron-rich) clay streaks and inclusions. Sparse inclusions of fine to coarse quartz, flint and iron ore.	Flat roof tile		
BTLS22 PRT2	Fine dull orange to orange sandy fabric with cream and red (iron-rich) clay streaks and inclusions. Occasional grey core. Abundant very fine to fine quartz and sparse inclusions of fine to medium quartz, flint and iron ore.	Flat roof tile		
Post-medieval brick				
BTLS22 PB1	Fine dense sandy fabric with few inclusions. Abundant very fine silt-sized sand and sparse inclusions of fine to coarse red iron ore.	Unfrogged brick		

Table 1: Site fabric descriptions. FC = Fragment count; Wgt = weight in grams.

Forms

Roman tile

A single small, abraded fragment of non-diagnostic Roman tile was recovered from pit [3315] (**fill** [3316]). The fragment occurs in an orange sandy fabric with sparse cream and red (iron-rich) clay streaks and inclusions (BTSL22 RT1).

Late medieval - post-medieval roof tile

Eight fragments of late medieval to post-medieval roof tile were collected during the mitigation. Seven of these are flat tiles, which may be of peg or nib form but no diagnostic elements survive. A single small fragment of curved roof tile was also recovered, possibly representing a ridge tile. The firing of the latter is very similar to the flat tile, possibly indicating a degree of contemporaneity, although the fragment is so abraded it is difficult to be certain and a Roman date is also possible. The tiles appear to have been made from a similar clay to the Roman tile, iron-rich with cream and red clay streaks and inclusions, perhaps indicating the exploitation of similar local clays during both periods. One of these has few inclusions (BTLS22 PRT1) and the other contains abundant very fine to fine quartz that may have been naturally present in the clay (BTLS22 PRT2).

Both curved and flat tiles represent long-lived forms with little observable typological development over time, although moulding sand tends to become finer during the post-medieval period, and flat tile forms tend to become thicker and more evenly moulded. All the tiles recovered from site are likely to be of later medieval to post-medieval date, as observed during the evaluation (Sudds 2022).

Post-medieval brick

A single incomplete post-medieval stock-moulded unfrogged brick was recovered from site, weighing 794g. The brick is moderately well moulded but has an uneven and grass-marked base, consistent with low quality place bricks or inferior stocks generally used in lower-status dwellings, agricultural or ancillary buildings, or as foundations or internal partitions where they would not have been visible. The example is relatively thin, at 52mm thick (2 inches), generally indicative of an earlier post-medieval date, c.16th to 17th century, although could extend into the 18th century.

Distribution

Similarly to the evaluation phase, the majority of the small assemblage was recovered from features to the south of site (Trench 33). No further structural burnt clay was identified but a fragment of abraded Roman tile was recovered from Phase 1 pit [3315], alongside a fragment of late medieval or early post-medieval flat roof tile. The remaining late medieval to post-medieval roof tile was collected from Phase 2 ditches [3306] and [3337]. The unfrogged brick was recovered from Phase 2 ditch [3408] in Trench 34 to the north of site. The fragmentary nature and poor condition of the assemblage would indicate that the majority is likely to be re-deposited.

Significance and recommendations for further work

The small assemblage of daub and ceramic building material from both phases of investigation provides limited evidence for potential prehistoric, Roman and later medieval/ post-medieval structures in the broader vicinity of site. Very little further can be concluded regarding the nature or location of these given the modest size, fragmentary and generally dispersed condition of the material.

The assemblage occurs as well-paralleled types and as such has little intrinsic merit and limited further interpretative potential. No further analysis or reporting is recommended, and the assemblage is deemed suitable for discard.

Pth	Cut	Cxt	Feature type	Fabric	Form	FC	Wgt	W	Thk	Comment	Date
2	3306	3307	Ditch	BTLS22 PRT2	Flat roof tile	1	138		12	Edge fragment. Very abraded surfaces. No moulding sand remaining.	Late medieval – post-medieval
		3307		BTLS22 PRT2	Flat roof tile	1	69		12	Corner fragment. Very abraded surfaces. Some fine to medium moulding sand present to base.	Late medieval – post-medieval
		3307		BTLS22 PRT2	Flat roof tile	1	64		14	Corner fragment. Abraded. Fine moulding sand.	Post-medieval
1	3115	3316	Pit	BTSL22 RT1	Roman tile	1	24		17	Small, abraded fragment of flat form tile. Medium moulding sand.	Roman
		3316		BTLS22 PRT2	Flat roof tile	1	70		13	Very abraded fragment of flat tile. Fine to medium moulding sand with sparse medium/coarse flint. Dull orange with grey core.	Late medieval – early post-medieval
2	3337	3338	Ditch	BTLS22 PRT1	Flat roof tile	1	50		12	Abraded. Fine to medium moulding sand.	Late medieval – post-medieval
		3338		BTLS22 PRT1	Flat roof tile	1	17		11	Edge fragment. Very abraded surfaces.	Late medieval – post-medieval
		3338		BTLS22 PRT1	Curved roof tile	2	78		12	Con-joining fragments from the end of a curved roof tile. Very abraded. Some fine to medium moulding sand with sparse medium/coarse flint. Small scorched patch.	Uncertain
2	3408	3409	Ditch	BTLS22 PB1	Unfrogged brick	3	794	100	52	Handmade, stock moulded brick. Uneven base, worn top. Slightly rounded arrises. Organic impressions to surfaces in places.	16th – 17th century

Table 2: Summary catalogue of ceramic building material and burnt clay by context. Cxt = Context; FC = Fragment count; Wgt = weight in grams; W = Width in mm; Thk = thickness in mm.

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APPENDIX 6: ANIMAL BONE ASSESSMENT

Assessment of the animal bone recovered from Land north of Charlton and Trowes Lane, Swallowfield, Reading, Berkshire (BTLS22)

Kevin Rielly, April 2026

Introduction
This site is situated at the southern extremity of Swallowfield, just to the south of Reading, to the north and at the junction of Charlton and Trowes Lane. An extra 4 trenches were excavated during the mitigation stage following the 31 strip trenches within the previous evaluation. Of these, only 2 (Trenches 33 and 34) provided archaeological features with evidence for Roman, medieval and post-medieval occupation. A rather small collection of animal bones was recovered by hand from Trench 34.

Methodology
The bone was recorded to species/taxonomic category where possible and to size class in the case of unidentifiable bones such as ribs, fragments of longbone shaft and the majority of vertebra fragments. Recording follows the established techniques whereby details of the element, species, bone portion, state of fusion, wear of the dentition, anatomical measurements and taphonomic including natural and anthropogenic modifications to the bone were registered.

Description of faunal assemblage by phase
The site provided just 2 bones, both by hand collection, one of which was in 2 pieces. They include a sheep/goat metatarsus from the upper fill (3417) of ditch [3416] and a very poorly preserved sheep-size limb bone fragment from the fill (3409) of ditch [3408]. These represent cuts through the same post-medieval ditch, located in Trench 34. There was limited dating material but (3417) has a pot date between 1550 and 1950 while (3409) was dated to the 16th/17th century from a single brick. The sheep/goat metatarsus is from a typically small animal of a type continuing from the medieval through to the post-medieval era.

Conclusion and recommendations for further work
These two bones may well represent the remains of field manuring, with one out of the two notably in poor condition i.e. no doubt left out for some considerable period prior to entering the ditchfill. The identifiable bone, a sheep/goat metatarsus is of a size to suggest a 'type' potentially dating back to the medieval era. It is certainly not reminiscent of one of the improved sheep which could then be indicative of a late post-medieval date. Such smaller types persisted well into the 19th century (with evidence taking from PCA archives).

The animal bone evidence is too small and of insufficient interest to warrant any further work.

APPENDIX 7: ENVIRONMENTAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

By Bronagh Rae-Quinn, ACIfA

Introduction

A total of nine environmental samples were taken across two excavation areas (33 and 34) at Trowes Lane, Swallowfield, Berkshire. The samples were all taken from features dated to Phase 3 (Undated). This report summarises the results of the environmental assessment of the samples, aiming to determine the environmental potential of the organic material recovered. That is, its state of preservation and respective quantitative and qualitative ratios, to assess whether further environmental analysis is required.

Methodology

Sampling strategy

The processing strategy followed procedures as stated in the written scheme of investigation (Hatt, 2025).

Processing

All nine of the samples taken (totalling 150 litres in volume) were processed by a trained member of staff using a modified Siraf-type flotation system (Williams, 1973). Material produced by the flotation process was collected using a 300µm (micron) mesh for the light fraction (flot), and a 1mm mesh for the heavy residue (retent). The retent was air-dried, sieved at 1mm, 2mm and 4mm fractions, and sorted by a trained member of staff, to extract artefacts and ecofacts.

Assessment

Flots were scanned by the author under a UltraZOOM-3 binocular microscope at 7X-63X magnification. The prevalence/abundance of environmental material (and other inclusions such as intrusive organic matter and archaeological material) was quantified using a standard non-linear scale: where '1' indicates rare occurrence (1–10 items), '2' indicates occasional occurrence (11–30 items), '3' indicates frequent occurrence (31–100 items); and '4', indicates abundance (>100 items).

An additional recording system has been implemented to record the preservation of cereal grains (*=poorly preserved, **=moderately well preserved, ***=well preserved).

The identification of archaeobotanical seeds and grains etc. were undertaken using the author's botanical reference collection, and standard references (Cappers et al., 2012; Cappers and Neef, 2012; Jacomet, 2006). Nomenclature for plant macrofossils is taken from Stace (2014).

All retent and flot residues were scanned with a magnet to ascertain if micro-slags/ferro-magnetic residue (such as hammerscale) was present, although none was recovered in any of the samples.

All finds and human bone have been passed on to the appropriate specialists for more detailed identification. Where struck flint has been recorded within the retent, this is a provisional identification

made by a non-specialist member of staff and will be more accurately reported on by an appropriate specialist. For further detail on any of this material detailed in this assessment report please see the appropriate specialist report.

The Assemblage

The flots varied in volume from 7 – 41ml and were almost completely devoid of environmental material. Modern intrusive seeds were present in all nine of the samples, in frequent/abundant (31-100/>100) counts. Intrusion of modern seeds can be expected on sites with shallow ploughsoils or that have been occupied over a long period of time (Pelling et al., 2015) and should not affect interpretations or the dating of a site. Where the modern seeds were present, their quantity was noted, but they were not identified. Modern intrusive material also includes rootlets, and insect eggs/larvae.
Results are presented in Table 2 at the end of this report.

Results

Of the nine environmental samples taken, eight were from ditches, and one was from a pit, all of which were undated.

Sample number	Context number	Deposit information	Feature type	Feature number
1	3405	Fill	Ditch	3404
2	3410	Fill	Ditch	3411
3	3324	Fill	Ditch	3323
4	3348	Fill	Ditch	3347
5	3346	Fill	Ditch	3345
6	3322	Fill	Ditch	3321
7	3342	Fill	Ditch	3341
8	3343	Fill	Ditch	3344
9	3309	Fill	Pit	3308

Table 1 – Sample information

Charcoal was present in all nine of the samples, although predominantly within the retents - only three samples (Samples <4>, <8>, and <9>) had charcoal within the flot. Fragments of diagnostic >10mmØ charcoal were present in rare (≤10) counts within Samples <1> and <6>. All of the charcoal within the samples was recorded as being heavily abraded, with mineral encrustations.

The only other charred plant macrofossil within the samples were rare counts of charred cabbage/mustard (*Brassica/Sinapis* sp.) seeds in Sample <8>.

Artefacts within the retents were relatively scarce, being recorded in only rare/occasional (11-30) counts. This included burnt flint in eight samples, potsherds in four samples, struck flint in three samples, and slag and glass in one sample each. No ecofacts beyond charcoal were recovered from the retents.

Discussion

Overall, the environmental material recovered from the samples taken during excavations at Trowes Lane, Swallowfield, Berkshire was minimal, likely representing residual material. Pelling *et al.* (2015)

suggest that "on sites with low densities of remains, with few items per litre of deposit, assemblages are more likely to include intrusive material derived from later land management practices…or residual material which has been reworked". Meanwhile, Renfrew (1973) notes that before the development of modern herbicides, Brassica/Sinapis was "one of the worst weeds of arable land", further evidencing the conclusion that the seeds identified in Sample <6> were residual in nature.

The charcoal within the samples being near-exclusive to the retents is unusual, but is likely the result of the mineral concretions attached to the charcoal fragments making them denser than water, and unable to float during flotation (Brady, 1989).

However, it should be noted that all of the environmental material recovered was charred, which could represent a preservation bias within the archaeological record. The site itself is split into two unique soil types: "loamy soils with naturally high groundwater" to the east, and "slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils" to the west (Cranfield University, 2026). While these soil types are suitable for the preservation of charred plant remains, they are not conducive to the preservation of other ecofacts, including charcoal, shell, and animal bone (Historic England, 2026). This suggests that the lack of material is likely due to a mix of a general absence of charred plant remains, combined with poor preservation of shell and bone.

Minimal interpretation can be gleaned from the artefactual assemblages within the retents, predominantly due to the overall low quantity of material.

Significance and Recommendations

The environmental remains recovered from the samples taken at Trowes Lane, Swallowfield, Berkshire, are statistically insignificant, containing no samples with notable concentrations of environmental material (i.e. >100 charred seeds/cereals, >50 fragments of identifiable charcoal).

Recommendations

- While there are two samples - <1> and <8> - with (albeit statistically insignificant) amounts of possibly diagnostic charcoal, they are inadvisable for radiocarbon dating. This is due to the likely residual nature of the charcoal fragments, their likelihood of being reworked (potentially over several centuries), and the "old-wood effect", whereby charcoal from long-lived trees such as oak can give inaccurate dates (Bayliss and Marshall, 2022). Anthracological work could be undertaken to ascertain the wood type and therefore its viability for radiocarbon dating, but as the material is statistically insignificant overall, this is not recommended. The best that could be gleaned from this material would be a *Terminus Post Quem* (*TPQ*).
- If any further phases of excavation take place, environmental sampling should be undertaken in line with the WSI. However, it should be noted that the results of this report suggest that the preservation of environmental remains was limited, and this should be reflected in any sampling strategies going forward.
- Upon approval of the final site report, the environmental assemblage may be discarded.

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APPENDIX 8: OASIS REPORT

OASIS ID (UID)	preconst1-542019
Project Name	Strip Map And Sample at Trowes Lane, Swallowfield
Sitename	Trowes Lane, Swallowfield
Sitecode	STLS22
Project Identifier(s)	
Activity type	Strip Map And Sample
Planning Id	230422
Reason For Investigation	Planning requirement
Organisation Responsible for work	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project Dates	02-Feb-2026 - 20-Feb-2026
Location	Trowes Lane, Swallowfield NGR: SU 72344 64505 LL: 51.375000936743 21, -0.962016919390855 12 Fig: 472344,164505
Administrative Areas	Country: England County/Local Authority: Wokingham Local Authority District: Wokingham Parish: Swallowfield
Project Methodology	The archaeological strip, map and sample was undertaken following the methodology detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation (PCA, 2026), which was approved by the Local Planning Authority in advance of the works. The strip, Map and Sample investigation comprised the mechanical stripping of 6 areas, 32, 32A, 32B, 33, 34 and 35. Amendments to the original trench plan were as follows: Trench 32 was split into three trenches (Trenches 32, 32A and 32B) due to heavy flooding.

Project Results	Archaeological works at the Site revealed only limited remains from the Iron Age and Romano-British periods. These were seen mainly during the earlier evaluation, where small groups of pits and a few pottery fragments suggested very light, peripheral use of the landscape. The strip, map and sample phase did not uncover any further Roman activity, and the few prehistoric or Roman finds recovered were residual, indicating no settled occupation. Medieval and post-medieval features were more common but still sparse, consisting mainly of boundary ditches that reflect the long-term organisation of the area as farmland. No buildings, industrial features or clear signs of domestic life were identified. Overall, the evidence shows that the Site was used only at a low level and primarily for agricultural purposes, with no indication of sustained settlement.
Keywords	Ditch - Roman - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Ditch - Post Medieval - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types
Funder	Private or public corporation Tetra Tech Consulting
HER	Berkshire Archaeology HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Maisie Marshall
HER identifiers	
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive; Physical Archive, Documentary Archive, Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archives: no repository;

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