

COTTAM A

EXCAVATIONS IN 1996

ARCHIVE REPORT

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Introduction

Excavations in 1993 and 1995 (COT93 and COT95) at the site known as Cottam B, to the west of Burrow House Farm, had investigated a number of sub-rectangular enclosures which had been observed as crop marks and in magnetometer survey. These enclosures were coterminous with the distribution of Anglian and Anglo-Scandinavian copper alloy objects which had been discovered by metal detector users. The excavations demonstrated that the crop marks represented Anglian and Anglo-Scandinavian settlements.

A second concentration of metal objects had been recovered at a site known as Cottam A, in the 'Stockyard Field', adjacent to Cottam Grange Farm, c.0.5km to the south. The recovery rate was not as high as at Cottam B but the finds again included Anglian objects within a wider spread of Romano-British metalwork (and there were also one or two more widely dispersed Anglo-Scandinavian objects). Fieldwalking in Stockyard Field in 1994 had yielded a widespread area of Romano-British occupation material. Magnetometer survey of an area of 100m square confirmed the presence of rectangular enclosures to the west of a trackway, with possible interior features, and one large magnetic anomaly.

In 1996 it was decided to excavate a rectangular area of 40m east-west x 50m north-south, adjacent to the western boundary of the Stockyard Field. The area was chosen on the basis that most of the Anglian metalwork had been recovered from this area, that it included the southern boundary and at least one complete rectangular enclosure, and that it would also allow investigation of the large anomaly in the south-east of the trench. The aim of the excavation was to assess the extent of archaeological survival, to determine if there was Anglian settlement at this site, and to evaluate its nature. Excavation was delayed until after the harvest of the cereal crop and had to take place within the window of opportunity before the field was ploughed for the Autumn planting. It began on Monday 16th September and continued for three weeks until Friday 4th October 1996. Excavation conditions were far from ideal. The clay soil was baked hard after an exceptionally dry summer, although the month of September was cold with heavy rain showers. There were also some exceptionally strong winds which whipped up loose soil and stubble and made digging uncomfortable and photographic cleaning often impossible.

In the week prior to excavation a drott and 360 excavator had been employed to remove about 0.3m of ploughsoil from the site. Machining was stopped at the level at which white chalk was becoming visible; it was the intention, as in previous seasons, to proceed by defining the outline of features cut into the chalk, our assumption being that all material within the top 0.3m had been thoroughly worked by the plough. Indeed, vestigial plough grooves were observed across the cleaned surface.

The site was divided up by a 10m grid, creating 20 planning zones, numbered west-east from the south-west corner to the north-east corner. Cleaning commenced in Squares 1-4, across the southern edge of the site. A large number of features were encountered, as well as occupation levels within the Romano-British farm enclosure. The excavation of the large negative feature in the south-east corner also proved to be difficult. Prior to excavation this feature had been interpreted as a dew pond and it was not expected to be more than 1m in depth. The ground was exceptionally hard and the feature was also much deeper than expected, bottoming at around 3m. Its excavation necessitated the use of a JCB but even that did not have the reach needed to

excavate the base of the feature which therefore had to be completed by using manual labour and heavy tools. By the end of the excavation season 12 of the 10m squares had been cleaned and planned, and 10 had been completely excavated.

All squares were planned at 1:20 after cleaning; the plans were amended or redrawn at the end of excavation as appropriate. Sections were drawn at 1:10. All features and deposits were given single context numbers, following the system adopted by the York Environs Project (which was itself based on the West Yorkshire Archaeology Service pro forma sheets). Ceramic and metal finds from all features and occupation layers were plotted in three-dimensions, using a total station. Other finds were labelled by context.

The site was directed by Julian Richards, with Tony Austin acting as site supervisor. The excavation team comprised Greg Blake, Hannah Collingridge, Bob Cooper, John Duffy, Kim Edgin, Robert Evans, Lynn Fletcher-Dibb, Nicola Fraser, Valerie Garver, Emma Goodwin, Michael Lewis, Donna McCally, Frieda Midgley, Karen Payne, Katherine Rusk, Iben Schmidt, Ruth Soames, Leigh Symonds, David Watts and Emma Williams. Jo Clarke was finds assistant; Ian Cornwell looked after environmental sampling, John English and Charles Webster took responsibility for planning, and Emma Hermansen produced the site matrix. Ben Middleton and Charles Webster undertook a contour survey of the environs. There was additional assistance from Hannah Borne, William Fitts, Steve Fletcher-Dibb, Aaron Kirby, Torsten Riese, Joachim Schultze, Nick Ryan and Janet Bagg. Elizabeth Jelley acted as site manager.

The Stratigraphic Sequence

Period I

I.1 Natural / animal features

5002, 5005, 5011, 5044, 5062, 5063

The natural bedrock comprised an uneven surface of frost-shattered chalk lying at a depth of 0.3-0.4m below the present day ground surface. Within cut features the chalk lay in horizontal bedding planes. The chalk surface was sprinkled with a number of patches of cemented orange brown silty clay (5002), lying in linear grooves and uneven hollows. The clay was extremely compacted and hard to excavate but wherever these features were dug the clay was eventually removed to reveal weathered irregular chalk surfaces. The clay was itself very clean and sterile and of even consistency. The features were not spread evenly across the site but were concentrated in the southern part, in an area which was outside the Romano-British farmstead enclosure. This led to an initial interpretation that the hollows had been created by animal disturbance or tree roots, although they may have been periglacial weathering features. There were few stratigraphic relationships between these features and those filled with darker soil, but they were clearly cut by the plough furrows (IV.1). A number of these features (5063) were originally investigated as possible man-made post-holes or pits and some had been disturbed so that they contained fragments of animal bone or flecks of charcoal, but on the basis of their homogenous orange brown fill (5005, 5011, 5044, 5062) they were eventually interpreted as natural features.

I.2 Possible Late Iron Age features

Cut	Fill
5012	5013
	5070
5022	5021
	5040

Towards the centre of the excavation there was a sub-circular pit (5012), c.2m in diameter x 0.55m in depth, cut into the chalk subsoil. This had a primary fill of a dark reddish brown compacted silty clay (5070) with subangular chalk fragments and occasional charcoal flecks. A Celtic silver coin (sf922) was recovered from this layer. This was overlain by a more friable and darker grey brown silty clay loam (5013) with occasional angular chalk fragments and charcoal flecks.

Running eastwards from this feature, and cut by the western ditch defining the Romano-British trackway (II.3: 5042) there was a narrow east-west U-shaped gully (5022), c.0.25m deep. This had a primary fill (5040) of light brown silty loam with abundant sub-angular chalk fragments and an upper fill (5021) of cemented red brown clay with common small subangular chalk fragments.

Period II: Romano-British farmstead

II.1 Quarry hole

5039, 5078, 5096, 5097, 5098, 5099, 5105, 5106, 5114

In the south-east corner of the site, and extending beyond its southern and eastern edges a large negative anomaly was visible on aerial photographs and magnetometer survey. This was a large sub-oval feature (5099/5114), estimated to be c.18m x 20m across at the base of the ploughsoil.

This feature was initially investigated by a 2m wide section extending from the western edge towards a point estimated to be the centre of the feature. This section was dug by heavy tools in 0.2m spits, but due to time limitations and the unexpected depth of this feature a machine cut trench was then dug at right angles to the first extending from the southern edge to the estimated centre. The feature was eventually determined to be c.3m in depth at the centre, with gently sloping sides, cut into the bedded chalk, which was frost-shattered and disturbed against its sides.

A small circular flat-bottomed pit or drainage sump (5106), 1.5m in diameter x 0.6m deep, had been cut in the base of the quarry hole. Its sides were of loose chalk; the southern edge was stepped into the bottom of the cut. It had been filled with a dark grey brown silty loam (5105) with abundant small, medium and large irregular chalk fragments. This cut was not recognised in any of the fills of the larger quarry pit; therefore it is presumed to have been cut directly into its base before any fills had accumulated.

Five distinct fills were visible in the eastern section of the north-south machine-cut trench; the first three are interpreted as being Roman and immediate post-Roman. The primary fill was a layer, c.0.8m thick, of a hard dark greyish brown silty loam (5098) with abundant small and

medium irregular chalk fragments. This layer is interpreted as initial collapse and silting. It contained only Roman pottery and bone, and an iron globular pin head (sf1209), possibly Anglo-Saxon. It was overlain by a friable dark brown silty loam (5097), also 0.8m thick, with common small, medium and large irregular chalk fragments, and large numbers of animal bones and charcoal flecks, as well as Roman pottery. There was a band of charcoal at the base of this layer which is interpreted as destruction level for the farmstead. The overlying material is assumed to represent weathered occupation material which had then been dumped in the quarry hole. Layer 5097 was then covered by a third fill, comprising a deposit of dark greyish brown silty loam (5096), 0.35m thick, with common small, medium and large angular chalk fragments, which is thought to represent natural silting of the quarry pit over several centuries. This layer is thought to be equivalent to the upper fills (II.2:5009, 5032) in the east-west boundary ditch.

All the material removed from the north-south section by machine was numbered as 5078; most of the finds probably belong to this horizon although some may also belong to overlying levels which have been phased to Period III. They included a bone fragment with a broken knife blade (sf114) embedded within it.

The lowest fill examined in the hand-excavated east-west section was a hard brown silty clay (5039) with very abundant irregular small, medium and large chalk fragments. This may be equivalent to the chalky basal layer 5098 in the machine cut section. However, the quarry pit was not bottomed in this trench, other than at its western edge where this very chalky layer appears to represent a weathered ramp leading down into the quarry pit during the Roman period.

II.2 E-W enclosure ditches

Cut	Fill
5041	5010
	5069
5073	5053
5016	5015
5025	5024
5029	5028
5075	5071
5089	5088
5064	5009
	5030
	5032
	5058
	5072
	5074
	5076
5091	5090
	5112
	5113

5084	5085
	5101
	5104
5093	5092

The southern boundary of the farmstead was marked by a flat-bottomed ditch with steeply sloping sides (5064), running east-west from the western edge of excavation to the quarry pit (II.1). This ditch was c. 2.7m wide at the top and cut 1.2m into the natural bedrock, the lower 0.4m having been cut into bedded natural chalk, above which is a band of frost-damaged chalk, c.0.15m deep where the chalk has fractured and split along its bedding planes, creating cavities within it. The upper 0.65m consists of very broken chalk cemented with a pale creamy chalk paste. The primary fill comprised a compacted chalky layer in a matrix of pale greyish brown silty clay loam (5074) immediately against the natural chalk on both the sides and base of the cut. This formed a shallow layer, c.0.1m in depth, containing many very large slabs of chalk, slumped against the ditch sides. On the northern side of the ditch there was a mixed layer of small to medium chalk rubble and mid greyish brown silty clay loam (5072), representing silting of the ditch. Against the northern edge of the ditch there was a narrow band of mid-brown silty clay loam (5030) with a number of large sub-angular chalk blocks. This layer appears to represent further gradual silting from the northern edge of the ditch. Along the southern side of the ditch was a layer of light greyish brown silty loam (5058) with very abundant medium to large angular chalk fragments which, with increasing depth, were often angled downwards against the slope of the ditch sides. This layer is interpreted as tumble of chalk rubble derived from a possible bank of material excavated from the ditch which had been built on the external southern side. Overlying these layers there was a general fill of mid greyish brown sandy clay loam (5032), some 0.6m in depth, which extended the full width of the ditch apart from the narrow bands of weathered material against the southern and northern edges. The compaction of this layer varied slightly with some patches seeming more solid than others, but this was imprecise and variable. Small to medium chalk fragments were spread evenly throughout the layer. Finally, the upper fill consisted of a layer of dark reddish brown cemented silty clay loam (5009) with abundant small chalk fragments. Two Roman coins (sfs78, 572) and a fragment of a fine-grained honestone (sf242) were recovered from the surface of this fill, and the remains of a human infant were recovered from within it. It is thought that all these fills belong to the Romano-British period and that the ditch was fully backfilled by the end of the Roman period.

To the south of this main boundary, and separated from it by c.1-2m there was a parallel but smaller and much shallower ditch (5073), 1.2m wide at the top, heading directly east to the quarry pit where it petered out in a butt end. The primary fill was a friable dark brown silty loam (5053) with abundant chalk fragments which was observed on the S side and in the base of the cut but had largely been removed by a recut (5041). The recut ditch had two distinct fills: a lower fill of dark reddish brown silty loam (5069) with chalk fragments, representing primary frost shattering and slumpage, and an upper fill (5010) of similar consistency but distinguished by a smaller proportion of chalk fragments. This feature was too small to represent a boundary in its own right. It may have been a drainage feature or perhaps the trench for a hedge or fence. A fragment of beaded copper alloy ring (sf134) was recovered from the upper fill.

Within the central section of the site there was a number of possible post-holes (5016, 5025,

5029, 5075, 5089) between this ditch and its larger more northerly neighbour, ranging in diameter from 0.15m to 0.25m, and in depth from 0.15m to 0.5m. The fills (5015, 5024, 5028, 5071, 5088) were generally fairly clean dark brown silty loams with some charcoal flecks. In some cases there was evidence of chalk packing. These post-holes may represent the foundation posts for continuous fencing, evidence for which had been removed elsewhere.

A slit trench aligned north-west / south-east, 1m x 5m, was positioned in order to examine the intersection of the main east-west ditch and the quarry pit. At its western end this trench was bottomed at 0.7m, but at the eastern end it was still dipping down steeply into the quarry pit at 1.7m. The lowest fill examined (5076), was a layer at least 0.8m thick, comprising shattered irregular chalk blocks ranging in size from small to large, in a matrix of 10% cemented creamy silt. The chalk blocks sloped down to the east and layering and voids could be detected within the deposit, supporting the theory that this represented several seasons of frost shattering and weathering of the sides of the quarry pit. If this were the case then it would suggest that the lowest excavated fill of the quarry pit (5098) was itself resting on a layer of primary weathered chalk which remained unexcavated. Indeed, such loose chalk was present in the sides of cut 5106. However, it was also suggested that this was natural bedded chalk which was in situ but had been broken up by the effects of weathering. Against this, however, there was a band of plastic dark grey brown clay loam with relatively few chalk fragments lying directly on top of the bedded chalk slope but apparently lying below 5076, although this could be interpreted as an animal burrow. Above 5076 there was a fill, 0.2-0.3m thick, of grey brown silty loam (5112) with common small to medium irregular chalk blocks. In section this was largely indistinguishable from the overlying layer (5009B). However, from the surface of 5112 a clear east-west drainage gully (5091) had been cut. This was a shallow U-shaped gully, c.0.4m wide by 0.2m deep. It had a distinctive fill of orange brown plastic silty clay (5090) with occasional small rounded chalk fragments. Therefore there must have been a clear break in the sequence of deposition at this point. If equivalences can be sought with quarry pit fills at this depth then if the next layer (5009) is equivalent to 5096, then 5112 must be equivalent to 5097, and 5076 could be equivalent to 5039 and 5098. Finally there was a grey brown silty loam fill with abundant irregular small and medium chalk fragments. This is the direct equivalent to the upper fill ditch (5009) to the west, but finds recovered from it have been numbered 5009B. It was overlain by two layers dipping down into the quarry pit (III.1: 5001B, 5043). Thus 5009 should also be seen as equivalent to layer 5096 in the quarry pit.

Finally, towards the northern edge of the site a third major east-west ditch (5084) was investigated. This was c.2m wide with a V-shaped profile. The primary fill (5104) was compacted red brown silty clay with occasional charcoal fragments and abundant large subangular chalk fragments, suggestive of fairly rapid primary silting, to a depth of c.0.5m. This was overlain by a looser dark grey silty clay loam (5101) with some larger chalk fragments but generally smaller pieces, indicating more gradual silting and exposure to weathering. Finally, the upper fill (5085) was loose grey brown silty clay with abundant large subangular chalk fragments indicating final dumping and levelling. A Romano-British copper alloy ring (sf67) and an Anglo-Saxon knife (sf1084) were recovered from this layer, as well as two large fragments of a gritstone quern (sfs1068-69). (To the east, in the unexcavated area, a Roman coin (sf181) and lead tablet (sf190) were recovered on the alignment of this feature by metal detector and may have been from its fill).

Beyond this, a fourth E-W ditch (cut 5093 with fill 5092) was planned in outline but not excavated, although a Roman coin (sf73) was recovered from its surface.

II.3 N-S trackway

Cut	Fill
5027	5026
5042	5004

Within the eastern half of the site, and running north from about the centre, two ditches (5027, 5042) defined the sides of a trackway, c.2m in width, which led South as far as the quarry pit (II.1) and which were overlain by its upper fills (III.1: 5001). The western edge of the trackway was defined by a steep-sided flat-bottomed N-S ditch (5042), c.1.1m wide, and 0.6m deep at the top and 0.4m wide at the base, cut into the natural bedded chalk. This was filled with a grey brown silty loam (5004) with abundant irregular chalk fragments, increasing in size with depth. This feature cut the earlier E-W ditch (II.2: 5022). The eastern edge of the trackway was defined by a second steep-sided ditch (5027) cut into the chalk, although this was considerably wider at the top (c.2.3m) and also deeper (c.0.7m). This had a similar grey brown silty loam fill (5026), with progressively larger chalk fragments towards the base. This fill was overlain by the upper fill of the quarry pit (III.1: 5001).

II.4 Occupation surface

5031, 5045, 5046, 5055, 5060, 5061, 5077, 5079, 5109, 5110, 5111

Within the western central section of the site there was a large area of darker loam representing an area of surviving internal occupation spreads.

One of the earliest features was an area of stone standing (5046), c.0.95m x 1.25m, comprising some 22 stones, some of which had been placed on edge at the south-western edge, and the remainder lying flat. All of the stones consisted of slabs of chalk apart from a large fragment of quern stone (sf1177) in re-use at the South. The stones show some evidence of burning and were arranged in a sub-circular layout. They were set within a deposit of friable dark brown silty clay (5109), c.0.05m thick. The feature may represent an oven base. The area of the feature was also defined by an overlying layer of firm dark brown silty clay (5055) with abundant irregular chalk fragments.

Against the western edge of excavation there was a roughly circular pit (5061), 0.75m in diameter x 0.3m deep, with a U-shaped profile. It was filled with a dark brown firm silty clay (5060) with abundant chalk fragments of varying size. This fill contained the bones of the front half of a large calf. The pit appears to have been deliberately dug in order to dispose of them.

To the north of the pit there was a gully (5045) running east-west, c.0.5m wide and 0.08m in depth, with a very shallow U-shaped profile. The gully had been backfilled by the occupation soil (5077: see below).

There was a second hollow (5111), c.1.4m long x 0.5m wide x 0.18m in depth, running east-west away from 5046, and narrowing towards its eastern end. It was filled with dark brown silty clay with subangular chalk fragments (5110).

To the north-east there was a sub-rectangular hollow with a fill of firm dark brown silty clay (5079) with abundant chalk fragments. This may have been a natural hollow in the chalk or may represent some internal feature.

All these features were overlain by a general spread of firm dark brown silty clay (5031, 5077), some 11.5m x 22m. This layer contained abundant irregular chalk fragments of varying size, as well as fragments of gritstone, probably derived from one or more disintegrated quernstones. It was excavated in 0.05m spits, 5031 being the upper layer and 5077 the lower. This layer was rich in Romano-British pottery and finds, including a lead weight (sf583), an enamelled mount (sf62), an iron hinge (sf70) and chain link (sf1053), and five coins (sfs63, 584, 589, 590, 953). A number of oyster shells came from the same layer. It also contained a fragment of an Anglo-Saxon strap end (sf876). It is interpreted as a farmyard occupation surface with midden material.

II.5 External structure

5006, 5007, 5008, 5033, 5034, 5047, 5048

In the south-west corner of the site, outside the southern boundary ditch, the stone foundations of a small external structure were identified. A number of substantial chalk fragments (5006) appeared to define part of the southern and western sides of a sub-rectangular structure whose northern and eastern sides had been removed by plough damage. These blocks were sitting on a sub-rectangular spread of dark grey brown clay (5008) overlain by an occupation spread of dark grey brown silty clay loam with charcoal flecks (5007); the blocks, therefore, may represent internal packing for post-holes around the outside of a clay floor surface. Only one of these post-holes survived well enough to be separately defined. A sub-rectangular cut (5034), c.0.3m in diameter x 0.5m in depth, was defined by fragments of wall foundation 5006. It was filled with a friable dark grey brown silty clay loam (5033) with small chalk fragments. In the centre of the floor there was a shallow sub-circular possible post-hole (5048), c.0.25m in diameter x 0.15m in depth, filled by a friable dark grey brown silty clay loam (5047). This cut was visible in 5008 but not in the overlying 5007.

II.6 Miscellaneous features

Cut	Fill
5050	5049
5052	5051

Towards the eastern edge of the excavation, adjacent to the N-S driveway, there was a rather regularly shaped cut (5050) of unknown function, c. 1m in length by 0.6m wide and with a depth of 0.1m. The outline of the cut was that of a large square adjoined by a smaller square to the east. The cut was filled with dark grey brown silty clay (5049) with abundant subangular small and medium chalk fragments.

Nearby was a possible post-hole (5052), c.0.3m in diameter by 0.1m in depth, with near vertical sides but no evidence of packing. If this had been a post-hole then it is likely that it had been severely truncated. It had been filled with dark brown silty clay (5051) with common small subangular chalk fragments.

Period III Anglo-Saxon occupation

III.1 Backfilling of quarry hole

5001, 5023, 5035, 5054, 5068, 5094, 5095

In the quarry hole the long period of natural silting represented by 5096 came to a sudden end. The next horizon comprised a layer of dark brown silty loam (5095), 0.3m thick, with common small and medium irregular chalk fragments, thought to represent a fairly rapid build-up of occupation soil. This layer is thought to correspond with an identical deposit (5068) in the east-west section, from which an Anglo-Saxon styca of Archbishop Wulfere (c.854-c.900) (sf866) and two iron knives (sf905, sf906) were recovered. It is therefore interpreted as having built up during the Anglo-Saxon phase.

Finally, it was covered by a layer of hard brown silty loam (5094), 0.7m thick, with abundant small and medium irregular chalk fragments. The upper part of this context as defined in plan across the full extent of the quarry pit was numbered 5001. This layer is seen as representing the final stage of silting of the quarry pit which may have taken place over a long period of time as earlier material gradually settled. Finds recovered from this layer date from Roman to medieval, and included an Anglo-Saxon iron bell (sf43) from the edge of the feature, and a chalk weight (sf75)

In the east-west section which was excavated by hand this final fill was removed in 0.2m spits (5023, 5035, 5054). These contexts are all described as grey brown cemented silty clay with abundant small, medium and large irregular chalk fragments. Again the finds recovered from these levels suggested it was mixed midden material which was weathering and slumping into the hollow. They included pottery of various dates, a Roman coin (sf545), an Anglo-Saxon knife (sf664), a copper alloy buckle pin (sf814), and fragments of lava quernstone (sf514).

III.2 Backfilling of boundary ditches

5001B, 5043

In the slit trench excavated to examine the interface between the quarry pit and the east-west boundary ditch the upper fill was part of the general layer covering the quarry pit. Finds recovered from this level, including a chalk spindlewhorl (sf633) and fragments of lava quernstone (sf632), were assigned the number 5001B. It is thought to correspond to layers 5001 and 5094 in the quarry pit.

Below this layer was a loose grey brown silty clay loam (5043) with occasional small and medium chalk fragments. This layer was fairly rich in finds, including an iron bucket handle (sf618), a fragmentary single-handled bone comb (sf621), and fragments of lava quernstone (sfs670, 741, 786). It is thought to correspond with layers 5068 and 5095 in the quarry pit, and is interpreted as representing the level of Anglo-Saxon occupation. It overlay the upper fill of the east-west boundary ditch (II: 5009), which therefore must have been fully backfilled by this stage.

III.3 Structural features

Cut Fill

5081	5080
5083	5082
5103	5102

Towards the north-west corner of the site a shallow sub-circular feature (5081), c.0.6m in diameter and up to 0.2m deep, was cut into the natural chalk. There was no evidence of any obvious structure and the feature had an irregular base and gently sloping sides; it was an unlikely post-hole and may have suffered from truncation. It was filled with dark grey brown silty clay loam (5080) with occasional medium chalk fragments and moderate small sub-angular chalk fragments, with charcoal flecking and other evidence of burning. This feature is classed as Anglian (unlike the other sub-circular features in this area) simply on the basis of the finds from its fill, which included an 8th century Anglo-Saxon disc-headed dress pin (sf955) recovered by metal detector.

To the west of this feature there was a pair of circular pits (5083, 5103) of similar size, the three features forming an approximate east-west line. These features contained no dating evidence and have been provisionally assigned to Period 3 simply on the basis of their association with 5081. The westernmost pit (5103) was c.1m in diameter and 0.2m deep with sloping sides cut into the chalk bedrock. It was filled with friable grey brown silty loam (5102) with common small irregular chalk fragments. The second pit (5083) was also 1m in diameter and 0.25m deep. It was also filled with friable grey brown silty loam (5082) with common small fragments of chalk.

Period IV

IV.1 Deep ploughing episode

cut	fill
5014	5003
5018	5017
5020	5019

A series of regularly-spaced shallow V-shaped grooves was visible in the southern part of the site. The first group was aligned north-south (5018); there was a second group at right angles to the first, aligned east-west (5020). The grooves were generally placed at intervals of 1.8m across, although there were some instances of double-grooves, and 'dog-legs', and other cases where there was a larger gap. The grooves are known to be plough furrows related to two episodes of deep ploughing. The fills (5017, 5019) were generally dark grey brown silty clay loam and were indistinguishable from the overlying ploughsoil (IV.2: 5000). A further east-west groove (5014), about 2m in length, and filled with a brown silty loam (5003) of similar consistency to the ploughsoil, may also have been a plough furrow.

IV.2 General ploughsoil

5000, 5038, 5059, 5065, 5066, 5067

Finally, a general layer of dark grey brown silty clay loam, c.0.2-0.3m in depth (5000) overlay the whole excavated area. This layer was removed by machine, with shovel cleaning of the residue. Finds were hand-collected, and the spoil was screened by metal-detectors. This layer is 20th-

century ploughsoil, but incorporates material disturbed from earlier features. In particular, it contained abundant chalk fragments of varying size which had probably been disturbed from the underlying chalk bedrock by the plough, and were being gradually broken up by frost action. A number of residual metal finds were recovered from the ploughsoil, including a votive axe (sf196), Roman coins (sfs55, 181, 185), a Romano-British penannular brooch (sf57), a 2nd or 3rd century bow brooch (sf189), a fragment of lead sheeting (sf190), and a number of Anglo-Saxon artefacts, including a fragment of worked bone (sf428), two iron knives (sf36, sf192), an iron key (sf191), a polyhedral pin with ring and dot ornament (sf956), a pin shank (sf1046) and two stycas, the first of Eanred (810-841?) (sf74), and the second of Aethelred II's second reign (844-9) (sf180).

There were also a number of shallow features filled by dark brown silty clay loam with charcoal flecks (5038, 5059, 5065, 5066, 5067), which may have been residual spreads of ploughsoil lying in natural hollows or areas of modern disturbance caused by tree removal.

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<u>CONTEXT NO</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>PHASING</u>
5000	Ploughsoil	IV.2
5001	Pit fill	III.1
5001B	Ditch fill	III.2
5002	Natural fill	I.1
5003	Plough furrow fill	IV.1
5004	Ditch fill	II.3
5005	Natural fill	I.1
5006	Structural fabric	II.5
5007	Layer	II.5
5008	Layer	II.5
5009	Ditch fill	II.2
5009B	Ditch/pit fill	II.2
5010	Ditch fill	II.2
5011	Natural fill	I.1
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5018	Plough furrow cuts	IV.1
5019	Plough furrow fills	IV.1
5020	Plough furrow cuts	IV.1
5021	Ditch fill	I.2
5022	Ditch cut	I.2
5023	Pit fill	III.1
5024	Post-hole fill	II.2
5025	Post-hole cut	II.2
5026	Ditch fill	II.3
5027	Ditch cut	II.3
5028	Post-hole fill	II.2
5029	Post-hole cut	II.2
5030	Ditch fill	II.2
5031	Occupation layer	II.4
5032	Ditch fill	II.2
5033	Post-hole fill	II.5
5034	Post-hole cut	II.5
5035	Pit fill	III.1
5038	Plough soil	IV.2
5039	Pit fill	II.1
5040	Pit fill	I.2
5041	Ditch cut	II.2
5042	Ditch cut	II.3

5043	Ditch fill	III.2
5044	Natural fill	I.1
5045	Ditch cut	II.4
5046	Cut	II.4
5047	Post-hole fill	II.5
5048	Post-hole cut	II.5
5049	Pit fill	II.6
5050	Pit cut	II.6
5051	Post-hole fill	II.6
5052	Post-hole cut	II.6
5053	Ditch fill	II.2
5054	Pit fill	III.1
5055	Fill	II.4
5058	Ditch fill	II.2
5059	Plough soil	IV.2
5060	Pit fill	II.4
5061	Pit cut	II.4
5062	Natural fill	I.1
5063	Natural cut	I.1
5064	Ditch cut	II.2
5065	Fill	IV.2
5066	Fill	IV.2
5067	Fill	IV.2
5068	Pit fill	III.1
5069	Ditch fill	II.2
5070	Pit fill	I.2
5071	Pit fill	II.2
5072	Ditch fill	II.2
5073	Ditch cut	II.2
5074	Ditch fill	II.2
5075	Pit cut	II.2
5076	Ditch fill	II.2
5077	Occupation layer	II.4
5078	Pit fill	II.1
5079	Fill	II.4
5080	Pit fill	III.3
5081	Pit cut	III.3
5082	Pit fill	III.3
5083	Pit cut	III.3
5084	Ditch cut	II.2
5085	Ditch fill	II.2
5088	Post-hole fill	II.2
5089	Post-hole cut	II.2
5090	Ditch fill	II.2
5091	Ditch cut	II.2
5092	Ditch fill	II.2
5093	Ditch cut	II.2

5094	Pit fill	III.1
5095	Pit fill	III.1
5096	Pit fill	II.1
5097	Pit fill	II.1
5098	Pit fill	II.1
5099	Pit cut	II.1
5101	Ditch fill	II.2
5102	Pit fill	III.3
5103	Pit cut	III.3
5104	Ditch fill	II.2
5105	Pit fill	II.1
5106	Pit fill	II.1
5109	Fill	II.4
5110	Fill	II.4
5111	Cut	II.4
5112	Ditch fill	II.2
5113	Ditch fill	II.2
5114	Cut	II.1