RPS Planning, Transport and Environment

INDEX DATA	RPS INFORMATION
Scheme Title Park Farm, Silfield, Wymondham.	Details Evaluation Report.
Road Number	Date November 1992
Contractor ~~Norfolk~~ Archaeological Unit.	
County Norfolk.	
OS Reference TM19.	
Single sided ✓ Double sided A3 0 Colour 0	

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

EVALUATION REPORT

Park Farm, Silfield, WYMONDHAM

by

Myk Flitcroft

with
Finds Assessments by Julia Huddle
and Illustrations by Piers Wallace

November 1992

Frontispiece: Excavation in progress at Southwest end of Site

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

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Location:	Park Farm, Silfield, Wymondham
Grid Reference:	TM 10679919 - TM 10879936
Dates of Field Work:	17 August - 11 September 1992
SMR No:	25887

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SUMMARY

The Norfolk Archaeological Unit conducted an archaeological evaluation of part of the proposed A11 Wymondham bypass for the Department of Transport. The trenches demonstrated the survival of features datable to the Iron Age which have been interpreted as the remains of a rural settlement or farmstead.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In July 1992 the Norfolk Archaeological Unit was contracted by the Department of Transport to conduct an archaeological evaluation of a potential site located by fieldwalking at Park Farm, Silfield, Wymondham (Figure 1); the evaluation took place between 17 August and 11 September.

1.2 The site lies on the line of the proposed A11 Wymondham bypass, 600m due west of Park Farm yard. Figure 2 shows the location of the farm and site in relation to Wymondham, and Figure 3 the location of the trenches themselves.

1.3 The area evaluated lies on a moderate southwest-facing slope, with the land dropping from 45.5m OD to 41.7m OD within the evaluation area. The ground becomes level at the southwestern end of the field. A small circular depression, around 30m in diameter, is visible at the foot of the slope; this feature was provisionally identified as a glacial pingo. Figure 4 illustrates the topography of the Southwest end of the evaluation site (viewed from the west with a vertical scaling of X10), showing the evaluation trenches and the continuation of the hillslope in the field to the southwest.

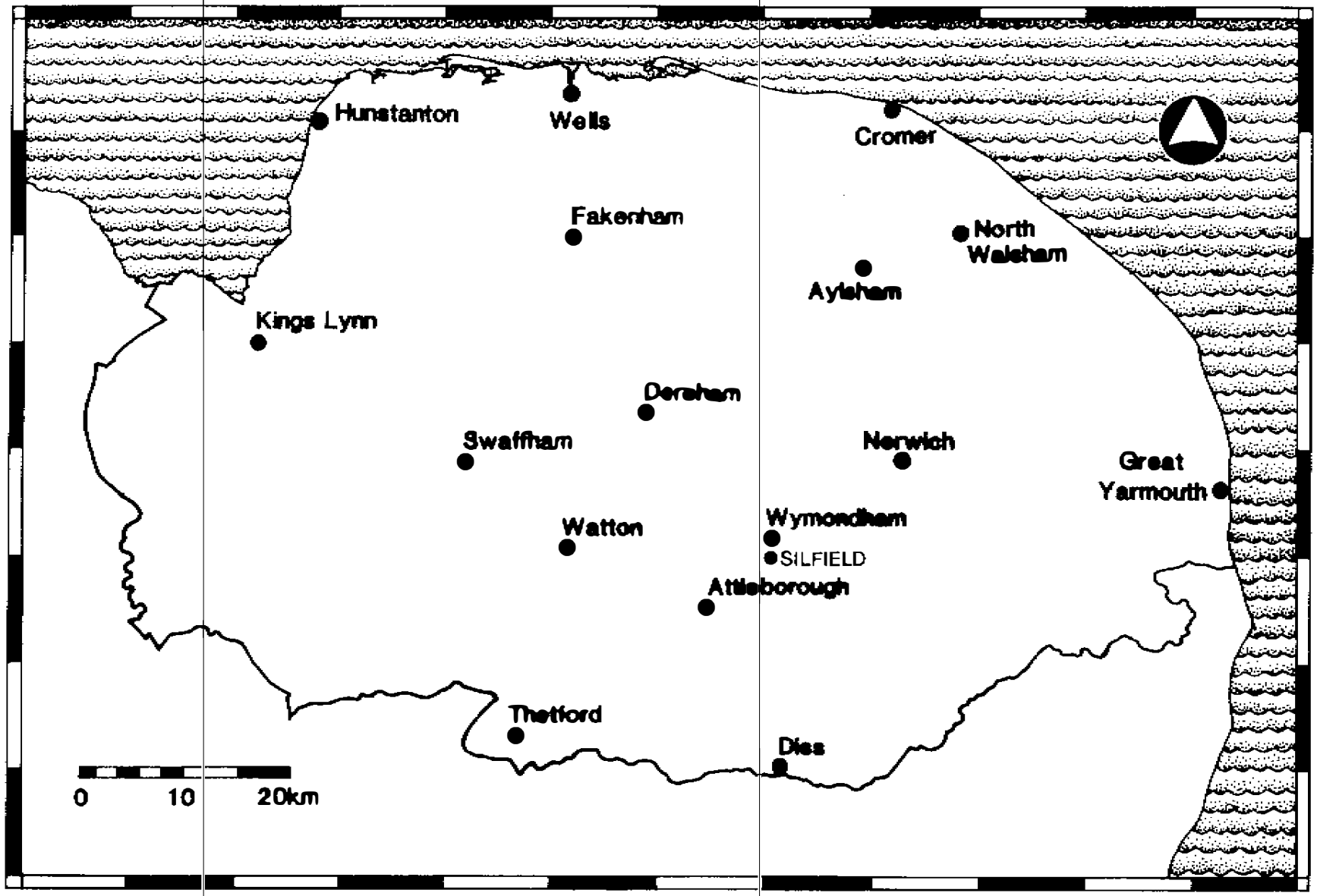


Figure 1 Map of Norfolk, showing location of Silfield and Wymondham.

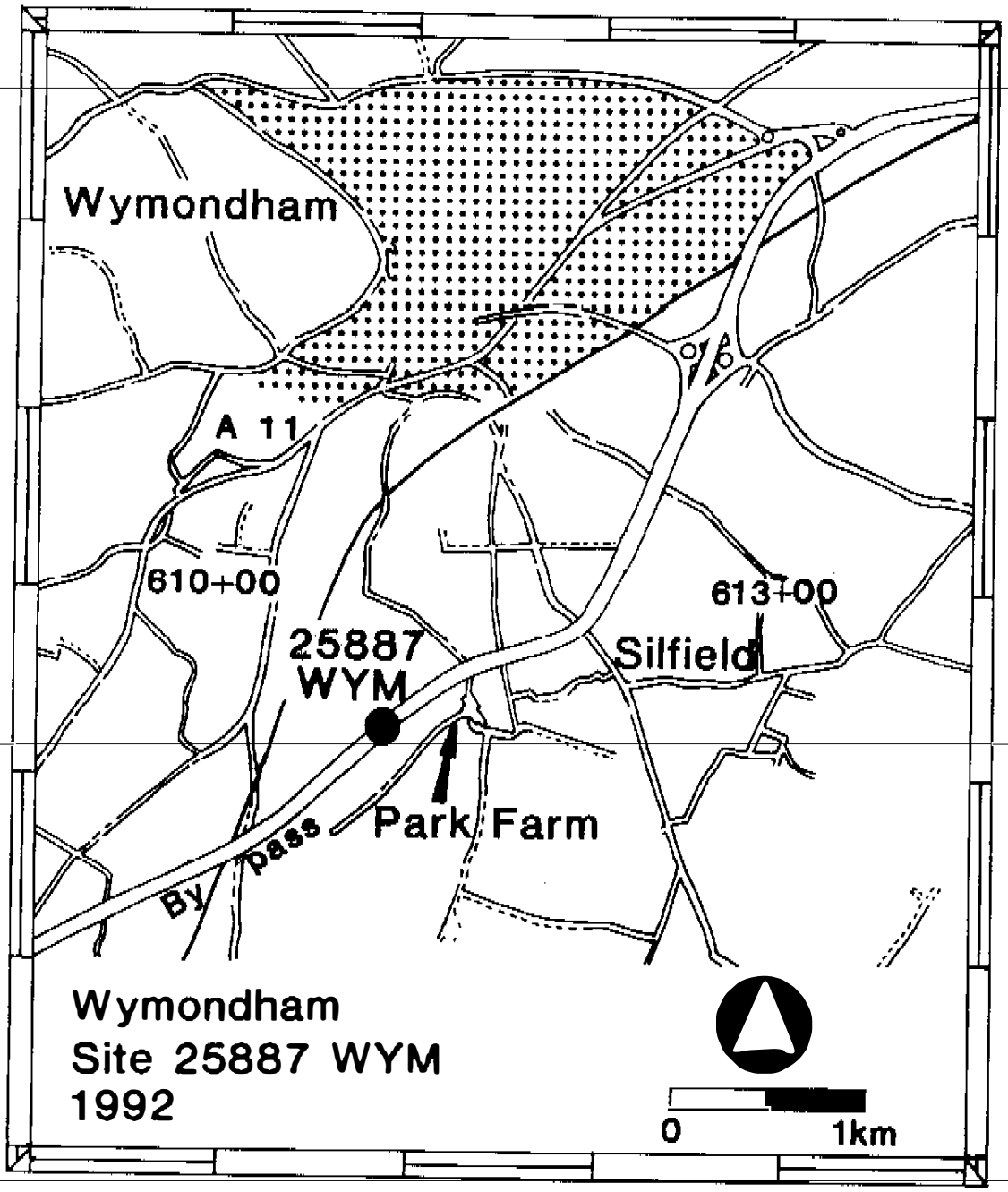


Figure 2. Location of evaluation site.

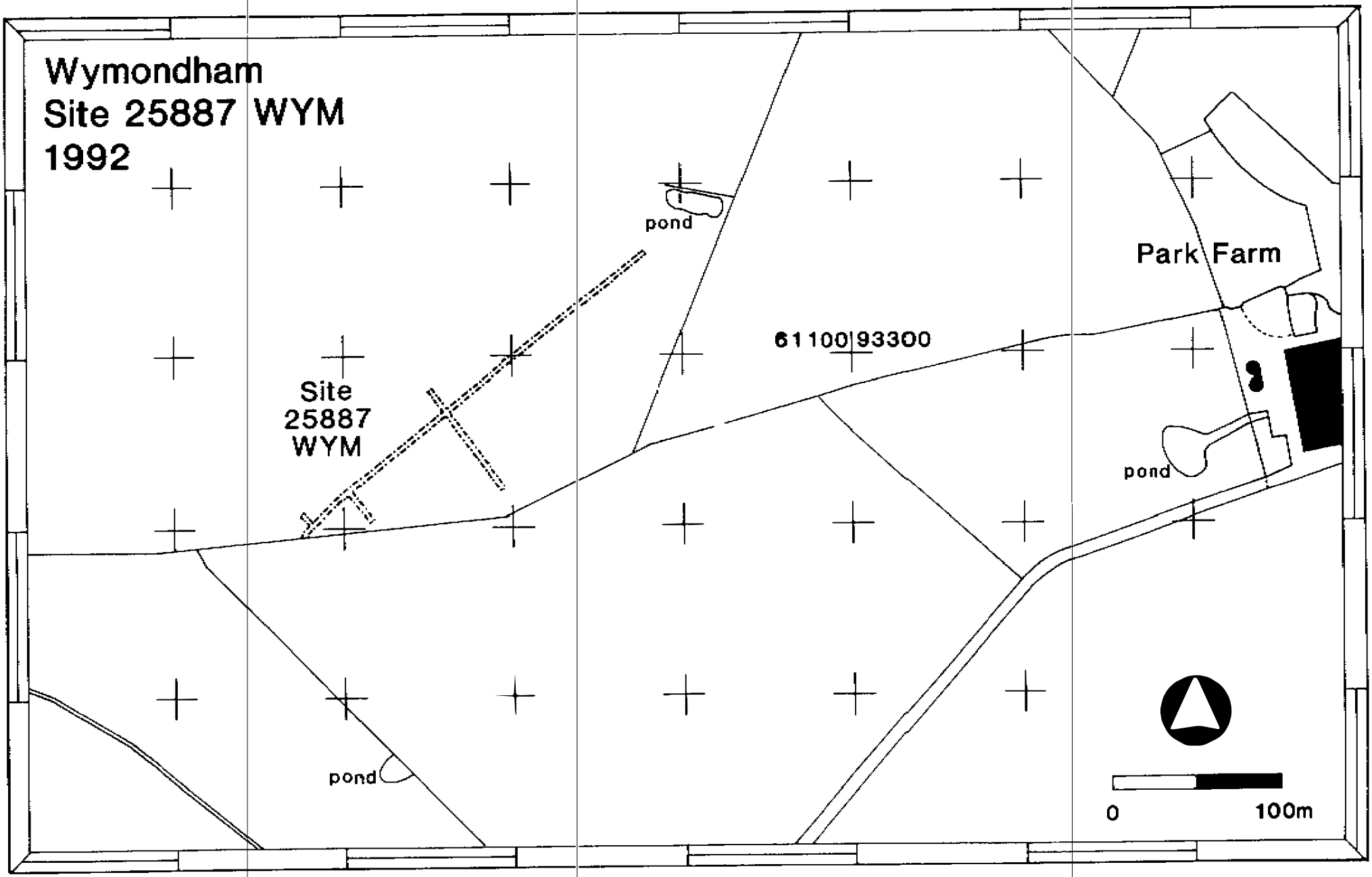


Figure 1. Location of excavation trenches on Park Farm.

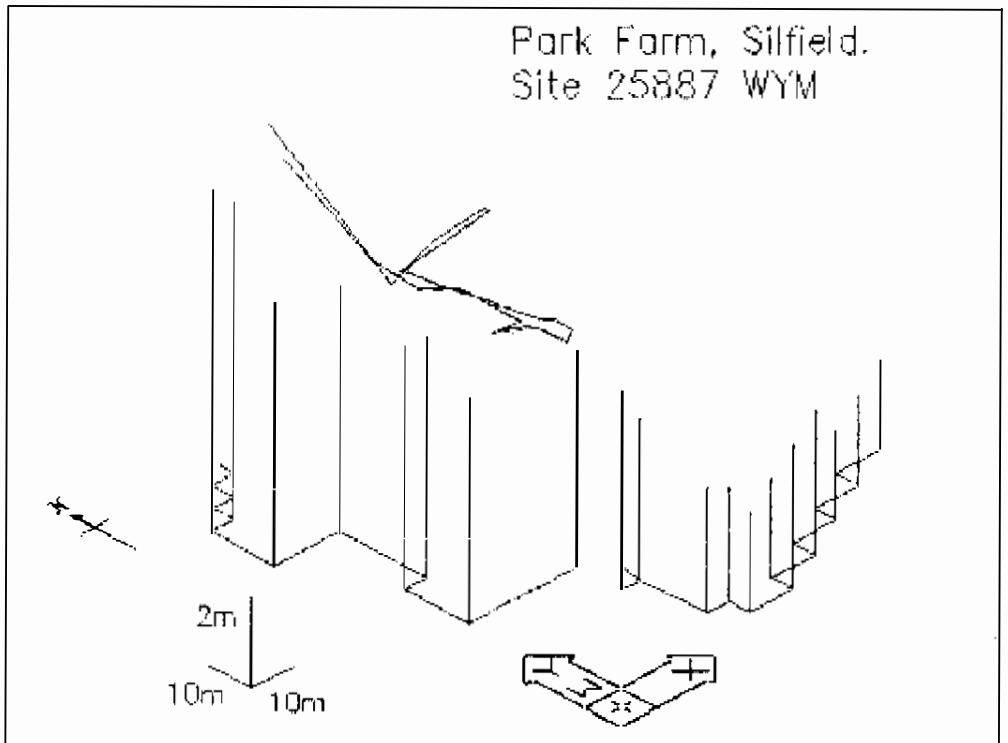


Figure 4. Topography of Southwest part of site (NB. X10 vertical scaling)

1.4 The fieldwork team comprised Myk Flitcroft (Project Manager), Julia Huddle (Finds Supervisor), Kevin Forrest, Karen Gaffney and Danny Voisey (Experienced Excavators); the report was written by Myk Flitcroft with contributions from Julia Huddle, Peter Murphy and Sarah Percival, and illustrations by Piers Wallace. The excavation archive is held by Norfolk Museums Service.

1.5 The writer wishes to thank the site landowners, John Alston & Sons Ltd, for allowing access, and gratefully acknowledges the help provided by John Davies of Norwich Castle Museum through his comments on the 'middle' Iron Age in Norfolk, and Peter Robins with his identification of the worked flint.

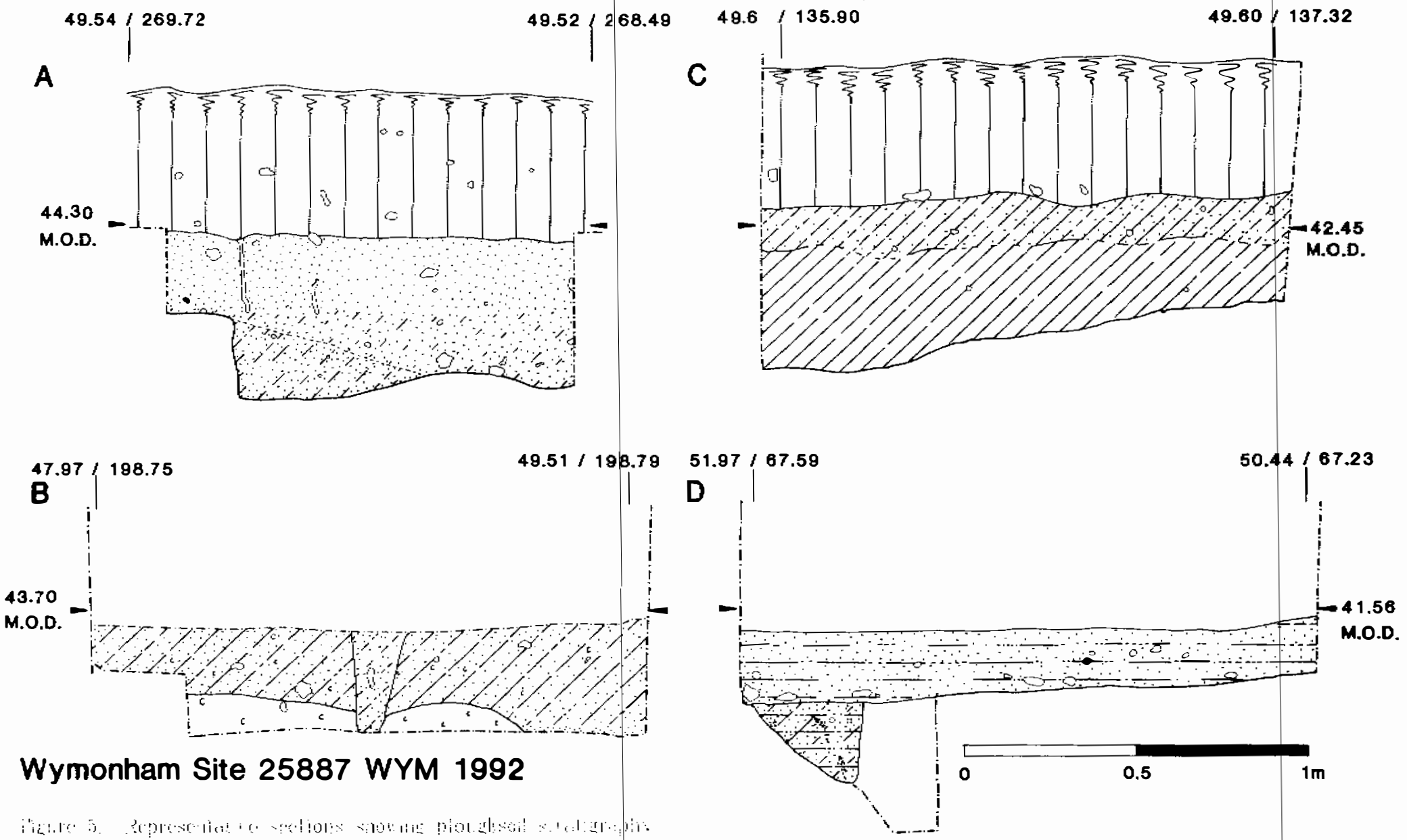
2 SUMMARY OF EXCAVATION METHODS

2.1 Four trenches were excavated during the evaluation (Trenches 1-4). The main trench (Trench 1) was aligned northeast-southwest and positioned to provide a longitudinal sample along the proposed bypass line; subsidiary trenches were excavated at right angles to this trench to evaluate the width of the road.

2.2 Trenches 2 and 3 were positioned to investigate the limits and subsurface nature of the 1990 fieldwalking spread, and Trench 4 was excavated to evaluate the extent of the stratified features identified in this part of Trench 1. These subsidiary trenches were extended beyond the edges of the roadline in order to ascertain more fully the limits of the archaeological remains. The locations of the trenches are shown on Figure 3.

2.3 Initial topsoil removal was made by JCB excavator with a 2m flat-bladed bucket. Mechanical excavation was continued until either archaeological deposits were identified or the 'natural' yellow clay was encountered. The ploughsoil was subdivided into 20m units prior to removal, and all unstratified finds collected by these units. A 2x1m sample of soil was isolated during the machining of each 20m unit and stored separately. This sample was hand-sieved through a 6mm mesh and acted as a control for the less intensive collection of artefacts in the rest of the unit.

2.4 Identified archaeological deposits were additionally cleaned by shovel, hoe, and trowel to record their plan more clearly. All major features were investigated to assess their preservation, form and function and to recover artefacts which could assist in the interpretation of the site. Linear features had a minimum 1m section removed, and features of greater importance were fully excavated; at least 50% of each pit or post-hole was removed with the fill retained for flotation-sieving to maximise artefact and ecofact recovery. Recording was undertaken using standardised NAU systems. Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20, and sections at 1:10



Wymonham Site 25887 WYM 1992

Figure 5. Representative sections showing ploughsoil stratigraphy

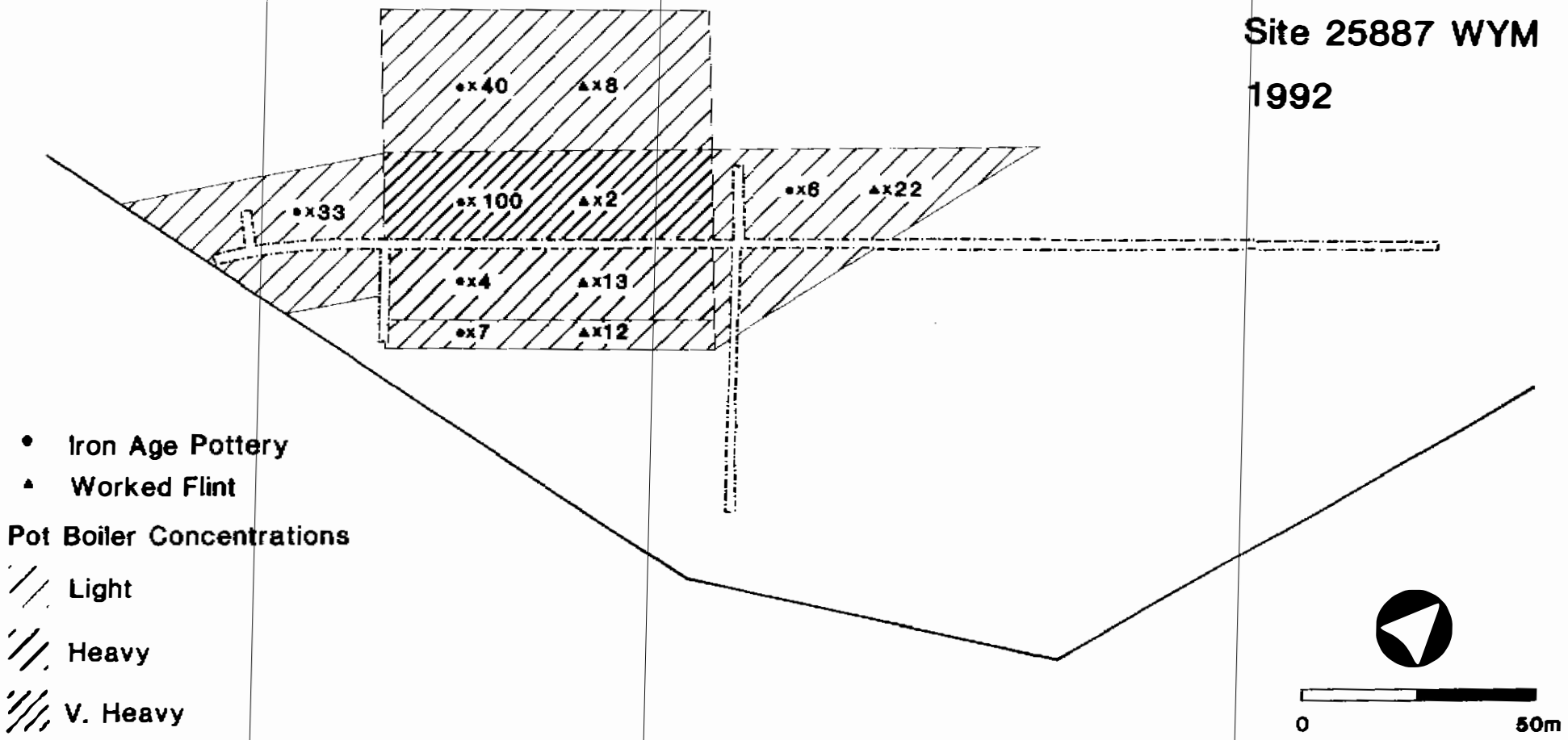


Figure 6. Location and results of 1992 fieldwalking.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The route of the A11 Wymondham Bypass was fieldwalked by Roger Bellinger, a local amateur archaeologist in the winters of 1989-1990 and 1990-1991. His surface collection programme identified significant quantities of prehistoric material in the area of the 1992 evaluation.

3.2 The initial survey in February 1990 identified a concentration of material in the western part of the field, and this area was rewalked more intensively the following year. For this second phase the southwestern 120m of the bypass line in this field was divided into six units; five covered the bypass line itself; the sixth covered the area immediately northwest of the road line. A spread of worked flints, Iron Age pottery, and 'pot boilers' (stones showing signs of thermal shock, interpreted as being a result of use in heating water) was recovered extending up the slope of the field from the southern hedgeline, with its densest concentration on the edge of the bypass line at around TM 1072 9926 (this approximately equates to the area between 30/100 and 45/170 using the grid established for the evaluation). Figure 6 shows the fieldwalking collection units, and summarises the findings.

3.3 The areas adjoining this concentration were less productive. No further scatters of material were recorded on the higher parts of the field (further northeast); the field immediately southwest (SMR No 25888) produced further quantities of pot-boilers, concentrated on the higher ground towards the evaluation site, a few pieces of Iron Age and Roman pottery, and traces of two areas of iron-working.

3.4 The pot-boiler concentration on Site 25888 may represent a continuation of the scatter observed in the evaluation site, but the sparse amounts of pottery suggest less intense activity in this area. The iron working remains could not be dated but are not considered to be associated with the pot-boiler and Iron Age pottery scatters.

4 TOPSOIL SURVEY

4.1 Soil removed from the evaluation trenches was recorded in 20m units in order to assess variability within the unstratified artefact population, with a 2 x 1m sample from each unit dry sieved to act as a control. The ploughsoil comprised a grey to mid-brown sandy clay loam containing a small number of medium-sized flints, and existed as a layer around 0.3m deep across the whole site with the bottoms of deep plough furrows visible in the surface of the underlying soil.

4.2 Removal of the ploughsoil revealed a lighter clay-sand layer in most of the excavation area; the different soil stratigraphy at the southwest end of the site is considered separately below. Although this clay-sand layer appeared to be a natural deposit of peri-glacial origin a small number of artefacts were recovered from its surface, and it was decided to excavate trial pits through it to confirm its natural origin. 2m x 2m pits were hand-excavated centred at 51E/68N, 49E/137N, 49E/198N, and 49E/268N, which revealed that this layer was between 0.2m and 0.4m thick and overlay a convoluted yellow clay deposit containing chalk pebbles, interspersed with lenses of coarse sand. All three deposits appear to have formed through natural processes. Figure 5A-D shows representative sections of the stratigraphy revealed in these trial pits. As a final investigation of the upper clay-sand layer, it was decided to remove it mechanically to confirm that no archaeological deposits underlay it. No further remains were encountered and the layer's natural origin can be assumed.

4.3 At the base of the hill slope a circular depression, provisionally interpreted as a glacial pingo, was investigated through a series of auger samples and a machine-cut section. The section proved unsuccessful as it filled immediately with water that had collected on the hollow surface of the feature, but the auger samples showed that the feature survived as a rounded cut with a maximum depth of 2m below the modern ground surface. The lower fill of this depression comprised a dark brown silt-clay containing apparently well-preserved organic material; this was overlain by a red-brown sandier clay which produced a few pot boilers, fragments of Iron Age pottery and a small fragment of brick/tile, tentatively datable to the Roman period. This layer appeared to overlie the light brown subsoil seen in other parts of the evaluation trenches. A sample of the organic material from the lower layer was submitted to Peter Murphy at the University of East Anglia, and his assessment is included in Section 11.

4.4 The depression appears to have formed as a pingo at the end of the last Glaciation. The heat-shattered flint retrieved from the organic fill sample studied by Peter Murphy indicates that it remained an open hollow at a time when the surrounding area was utilised by humans, and the scraps of pottery and further heat-affected flints from the later soil fill suggest that it was not finally levelled until after the Iron Age. It is uncertain from

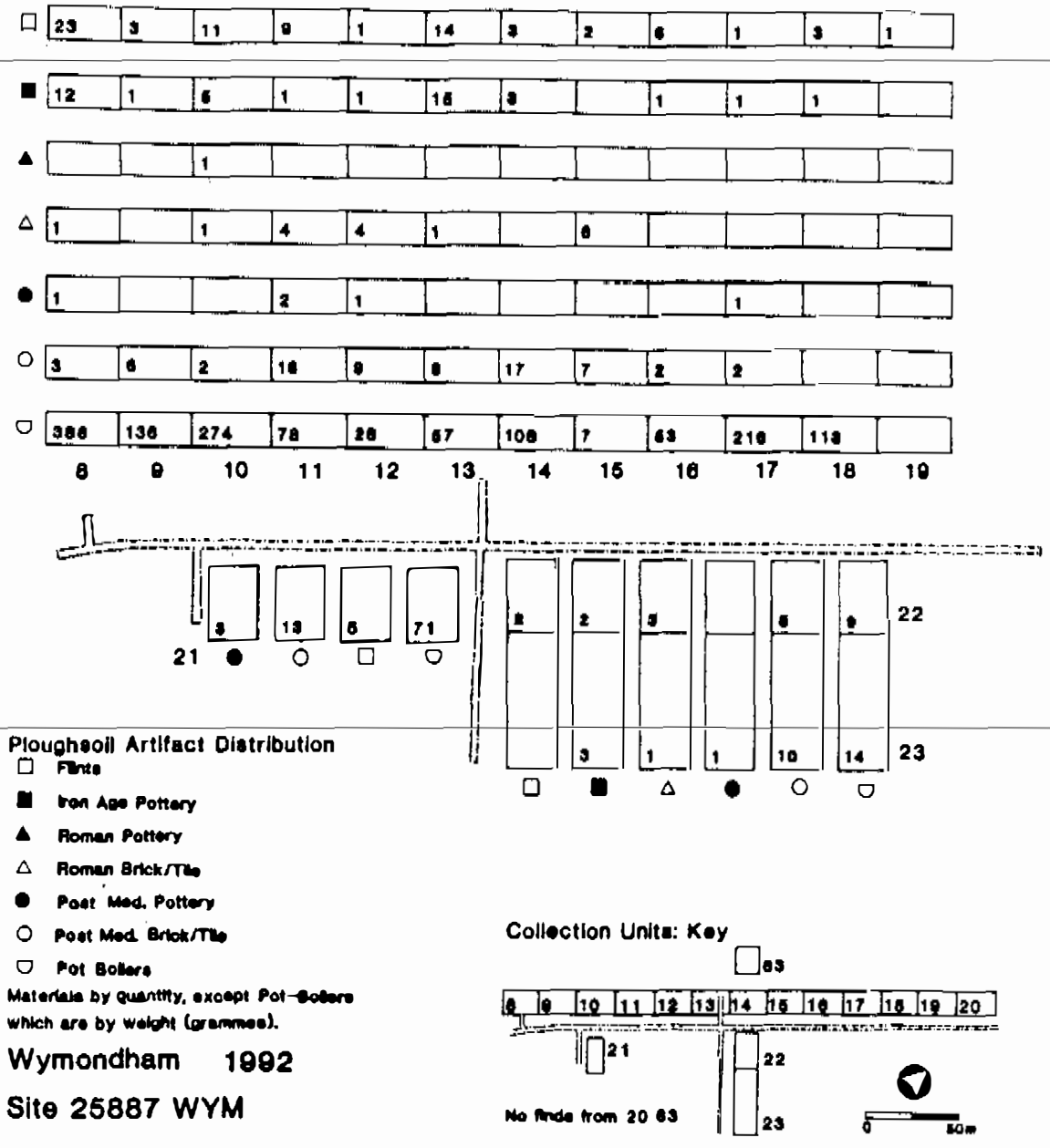


Figure 7. Distribution of unstratified finds in evaluation trenches

the evaluation evidence whether the depression is wholly natural.

4.5 The soil stratigraphy in the area south-west of the glacial pingo differed from that observed in the remainder of the site. In this area removal of a grey-brown ploughsoil revealed a mid-brown clay-silt layer which produced significant numbers of artefacts during hand-cleaning. This layer was also investigated by means of a trial pit which showed that it overlay and sealed archaeological features (Figure 5D shows a representative section through this layer). An orange-red clay deposit underlay the archaeological features in this area, and the yellow clay with chalk pebbles seen in the remainder of the evaluation trenches was not observed.

The Ploughsoil Artefact Distribution (Figure 7)

4.6 The ploughsoil finds consisted of pottery and brick/tile fragments, burnt flint 'pot-boilers', and worked flints. Figure 7 shows the distribution of these classes of material over the evaluation trenches. A small number of metal finds were also made, but these were all considered to be of relatively recent date and have not been included in Figure 7.

4.7 It is apparent that the greatest general concentration of material is located at the southwestern end of the site, in the first three collection units (contexts 8-10); though the greatest quantities from a single collection unit came from Context 13 (between 48/161 and 50/180).

4.8 Full quantification details and identification of material are included in the site archive.

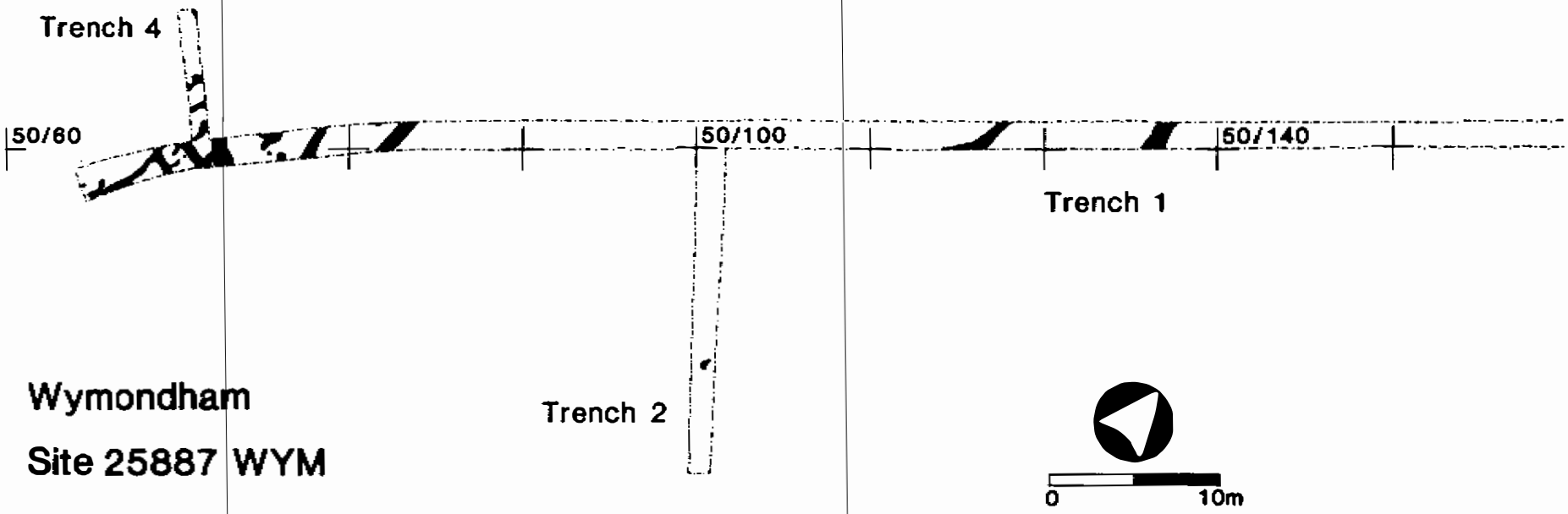


Figure 8. Site plan, showing all excavated features (modern land drains omitted).

5 EXCAVATED FEATURES

5.1 Removal of the ploughsoil revealed very few archaeological features in much of the evaluation area; the surviving features were concentrated at the southwestern end of Trench 1 and Trench 4. The trenches are considered separately in Sections 6-9, though the cluster of features around the junction of Trenches 1 and 4 are all discussed in the account of Trench 1. All features other than modern land-drains are shown on Figure 8, with the concentration of prehistoric remains shown in greater detail on Figure 9.

6 TRENCH 1. (2 x 225m)

This main trench was aligned to run along the length of the bypass line. It was extended well beyond the expected limit of the Iron Age settlement (as identified by the 1990-1991 field-walking and by unstratified finds during ploughsoil removal itself) in order to assess fully the northeastern extent of archaeological deposits.

6.1 Archaeological remains of any antiquity were only encountered in the southwestern 65m of the trench, situated on the lower parts of the hill slope. In this area the truncated remains of an Iron Age settlement were identified. Northeast of these features (beyond c. 49E/130N) virtually no cut features were recorded, the only signs of previous human activity being two fairly modern narrow mole-drains aligned south-southwest ([25] recorded in the trial pit at 49E/198N, and [42] visible on the subsoil surface between 48E/170N and 48E/176N). Because of this lack of archaeological features, the detailed Site Plan (Figure 8) does not include the part of Trench 1 lying beyond 49E/150N.

6.2 The northeastern limit of the Iron Age activity in the evaluation trenches was formed by a ditch ([75]) running south-southwest across Trench 1 at 48E/125N. Although this feature was only identified fully after removal of the clay-sand subsoil it could be seen in section to cut the subsoil, and extended a further 0.28m into the yellow clay natural. The fill of this ditch consisted of a mid-brown sand-clay containing occasional flecks of charcoal and pieces of Iron Age pottery; with increasing depth the fill became yellower and more clay-like, which made precise identification of the cut difficult. The base of the ditch produced several well-preserved snail shells, but the species represented were not sufficiently diagnostic to warrant further analysis (Peter Murphy, pers comm.).

6.3 A similar ditch was identified 7m further south. Ditch [39] was more clearly visible and survived to a width of 1.05m and depth of 0.4m. The grey-brown fill was more silty and contained quantities of pot-boilers and frequent lenses of unburnt clay. This ditch may have formed a drain or boundary ditch and showed some signs of partial silting and recutting. These two ditches formed outliers to the main area of Iron Age activity on the

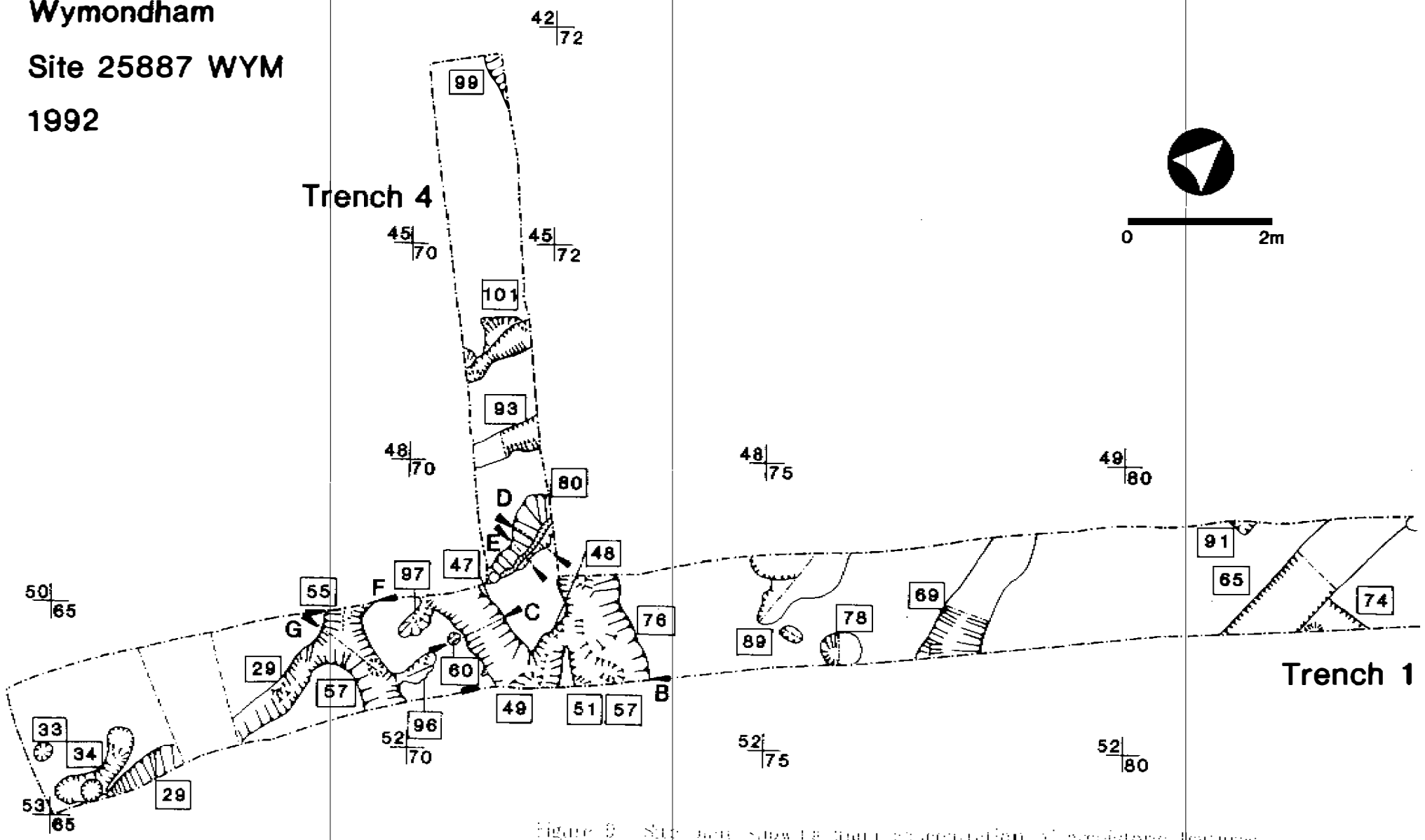
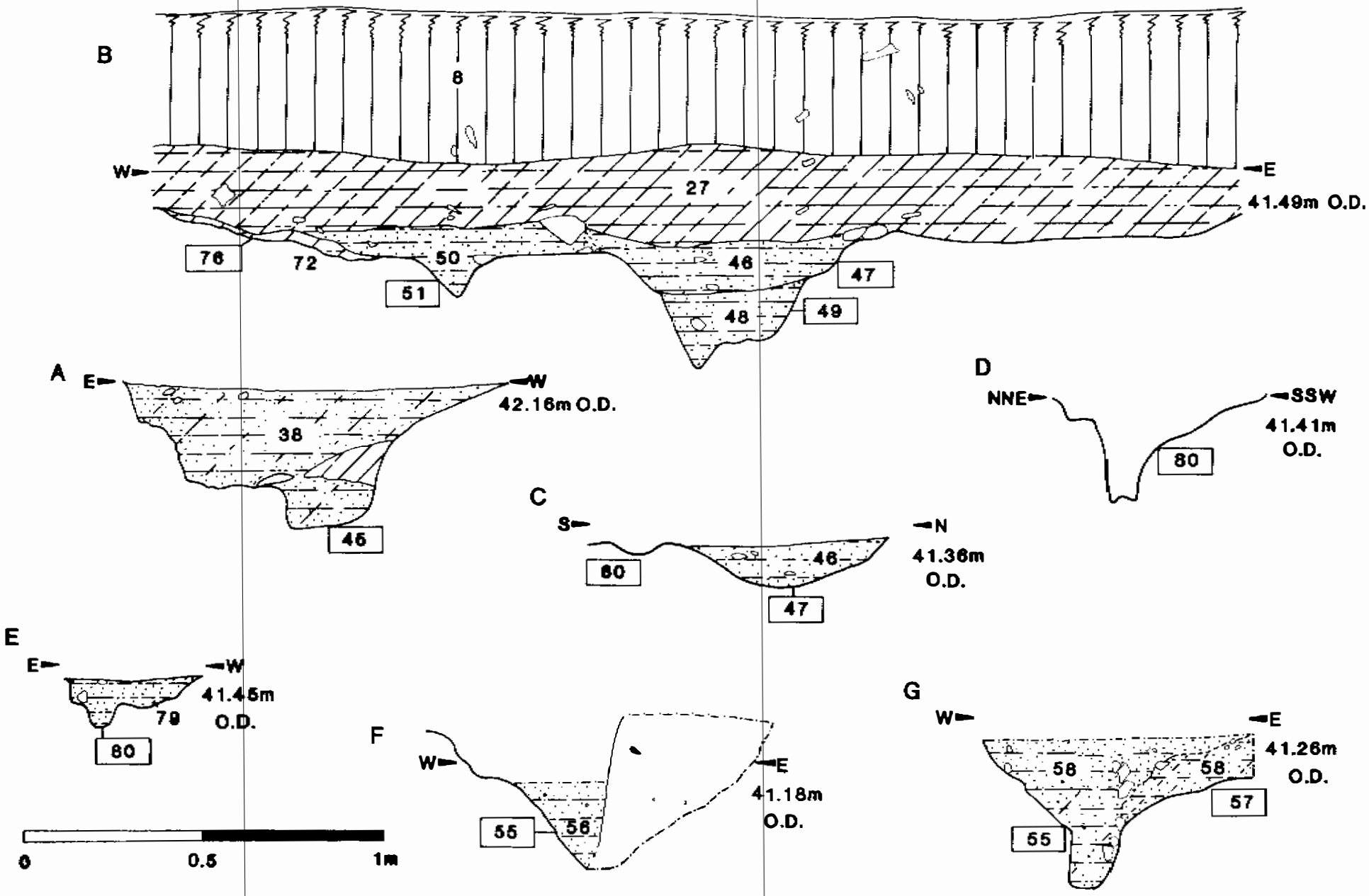


Figure 9 Site plan showing the location of archaeological features.



Wymondham Site 25887 WYM 1992

Figure 13. Sections across main structural and enclosure ditches.

evaluation site.

6.4 The main zone which preserved traces of prehistoric activity lay to the south of the glacial hollow, between it and the field edge. None of the Iron Age ditches appeared to cut the upper fill of the pingo which may suggest that this feature had not become completely infilled by this time. As mentioned in Section 4.5 the soil deposits in this area differed from the higher parts of the site and the archaeological deposits were sealed by a layer of mid-brown silt-clay soil (27). Removal of this soil revealed a series of cut features extending from the southwestern end of the trench to 49/84, including a dense concentration of intercutting boundary ditches and building foundation trenches between the southern end and 50/74. This whole area is shown on Figure 9.

6.5 Stratigraphically, the earliest feature is the curved Gully [80], visible at the junction of Trench 1 and Trench 4. This survived as a steep-sided cut up to 0.3m deep, filled with dark brown sandy silt, and would appear to have formed a wall foundation trench; that virtually no finds were retrieved from the fill of this gully supports this interpretation. The gully contained a series of adjacent post-holes which is consistent with a known style of Iron Age house construction 'ring-groove construction' (Harding, 1974, p41); Gully [87] in Trench 1 may mark a continuation of this feature. The broader Gully [49] followed the curvature of the wall trench gully [80] and may have acted as a drain to catch water from the eaves of this house. Sections across both these features are shown in Figure 10 (D,E). Unfortunately, the short segment seen in the evaluation makes it impossible to attempt a reconstruction of the original dimensions of such a building.

6.6 After this structure went out of use, a shallow boundary or drainage ditch ([76]) was created, running northwest-southeast and cutting the backfilled Gully [49]; this feature survived to a width of 1.1m and a depth of 0.2m. The intersection of this ditch and the ring-groove gully itself was not seen in the evaluation trenches, but their alignments make it impossible that they could have co-existed. This ditch appears to have been in use for some time and was recut as Ditch [51]. It later silted up with a mid grey-brown sandy silt.

6.7 This shallow ditch was itself overlain by a similar gully ([47]) measuring 0.55m wide and 0.14m deep, filled with a lighter brown sandy silt.

6.8 A deeper gully ([57]) crossed the site a little further south. Its alignment suggests it may have been associated with Ditches [76] and [51], but the small segment visible in the evaluation trenches make any further interpretation impossible. It was later overlain by a narrow linear gully ([29/55]).

6.9 Gully [29] (continued as Gully [55]) ran north to south

across Trench 1 to the south of these other features. It survived as an irregular, steep-sided cut up to 0.45m deep filled with a grey-brown sand silt mixture; a vertical-sided slot was visible in parts of the base. Its plan was not entirely certain from the evaluation trench and it is possible that it formed the arc of a circle with a diameter of around 8m. This may be evidence for a second circular house, with Gully [29/55] either forming the wall-trench itself, or acting as an encircling drain. An angled post-hole ([61]) was recorded in the base of this gully, but no other traces of posts were recorded.

6.10 Gully [101] in Trench 4 may have formed a continuation to Gully [29/55], if this latter feature formed a linear fence boundary rather than a circular structure. It survived as an irregular cut 0.45m wide, filled with mid-brown sand silt. In profile it resembled Gully [55].

6.11 Further ditches were recorded to the north-east of this concentration of features. Ditches [69] and [65] ran across Trench 1 at 77mN and between 81m and 83mN respectively. Ditch [69] had a V-shaped profile filled with grey-brown sandy loam; Ditch [65] had a sharply-defined U-profile with near vertical straight sides. The uniformity of the sides and the mixed nature of its infill suggest that this ditch was deliberately backfilled soon after its construction, but its purpose could not be identified. Ditch [65] cut across the backfill of a shallow linear feature ([74]); this feature had been badly damaged by deep ploughing and its exact nature could not be recovered.

6.12 A number of post-holes and small pits were also identified in the southwest part of Trench 1. In general they survived as isolated cuts and could not be related to particular phases of the site's history, though an Iron Age date seems probable for all of them. One group worthy of special note comprised Post-hole [33] and the curved Gully [34] centred around 52/66 at the south-western end of the trench. These features were clearly related to each other and possibly to Gully [29] and seem to have had a structural function, but a precise interpretation was impossible from the evaluation sample.

7 TRENCH 2. (2 x 20m)

Removal of the ploughsoil in this trench showed that the red clay natural deposit seen in the southwestern part of Trench 1 was also present at the southeastern half of this trench. The upper surface of the clay was scarred by plough-marks and no archaeological deposits were recorded. The part of the trench closer to Trench 1 contained the fill of the glacial pingo (71). In the mixed clay and loam zone around the edge of this feature a small hollow was recorded and sectioned ([37]) at 62/100. This irregular cut measuring 1.2 x 0.8m appeared to follow the edge of the natural clay, and may have been dug to extract ironstone, concentrations of which were visible around the hollow. No other cul-

tural features were recorded in this trench.

8 TRENCH 3. (2 x 75m)
No features of prehistoric date were identified in either arm of this trench. A Post-medieval or modern land drain ([52]) was seen to run southwest across the trench at 99/172. Interestingly, the northwestern arm of this trench, which extended into the area of the initial fieldwalking concentration, produced no evidence for either stratified features, or for concentrations of unstratified finds.

9 TRENCH 4. (1.2 x 7m)
The prehistoric features identified in this trench are discussed with those in the southern part of Trench 1, as they form part of the same group. A further Post-medieval or modern drain ([93]) was sectioned in this trench at 48E/71N; an undated feature ([99]), possibly a ditch, was also recorded at the extreme northwestern end of the trench.

10 FINDS ASSESSMENT compiled by Julia Huddle

10.1 Methodology

Bulk finds were cleaned, marked and bagged by material type and context number. All metalwork was x-rayed at the Conservation Department, Norwich Castle Museum. The Norfolk Archaeological Unit Bulk Find, Small Find, Finds Summary, Flotation and Wet Sieving record sheets have been completed, and these are included in the site archive. All material has been weighed and counted, with the exception of pot-boilers which were solely quantified by weight due to the large quantity of small pieces recovered.

10.2 Small Finds

During the evaluation a total of 27 small finds were recovered. Of these 17 were metal detected, 4 were from dry sieving and the remainder recovered during hand excavation. All were from Trench 1 and mostly from the ploughsoil or subsoil. The metalwork consists mainly of iron nail fragments, though two large bolts, one horseshoe fragment, a copper alloy stud, one lead sheet fragment and a small lead shot were also recovered. A mother-of-pearl button was also found. All these artefacts are believed to be post-medieval in date.

10.3 Animal Bone

Only four small pieces of animal bone, weighing 2g in total were recovered all from Trench 1; three pieces are from the ploughsoil and one from the subsoil in a trial pit. They are too small to identify but are probably from small mammals.

10.4 Brick and Tile

The evaluation produced 750g of brick and tile from 19 contexts. It has been identified on fabric alone since no recognisable forms exist. Small fragments of Roman brick/tile weighing 83g were recovered from 9 contexts. The fabric is orange, streaked with light yellow and grog tempered. Those contexts that produced Roman brick/tile also contained post-medieval brick/tile with the exception of (71), the upper fill of the glacial pingo. Post-medieval brick/tile was recovered from 16 contexts, weighing 667g. The fabric is orange to deep red and sandy. This appears to be common in Norfolk, remaining so until the 19th century (for a discussion on Norwich post-medieval brick/tile, see Drury forthcoming).

10.5 Pot-Boilers

A total of 3704g were recovered from 38 contexts and therefore pot-boilers were the predominant material from the evaluation. There are many suggested and varied interpretations of pot-boilers; for cooking, steam-baths, woodworking or leather working (Gregory. A, 1991). The retrieval of pot-boilers from stratified prehistoric contexts may shed some light upon their use in a rural settlement or farmstead.

10.6 The Lithics

The flints were examined by Peter Robins. A total of 85 flakes, 16 spalls, 2 scrapers, 2 blades and 2 cores were recovered from 21 contexts. Apart from two scrapers, no recognisable implements are present and this makes dating difficult. The flakes and spalls are relatively few in number, small and noticeably unpatinated. No further comment could be made from this assemblage.

11 POTTERY ASSESSMENT by Sarah Percival

11.1 179 sherds weighing 0.547kgs were recovered from 36 contexts. The pottery was divided into fabrics and quantified by form and fabric within each context. All the pottery was studied.

11.2 The pottery is fragmentary and mostly highly abraded. There are only five rims; the condition of the pottery and the lack of diagnostic sherds prevented detailed analysis.

Quantitification of the pottery by fabric.

	Quantity.	Weight (g)
Fabric 1.	54	114
Fabric 2.	45	160
Fabric 3.	61	144
Roman.	4	4
Post-medieval.	15	125
Total	179	547

11.3 Fabrics.

The fabrics are typical of Iron Age fabrics from Norfolk, which tend to be either flint or quartzite gritted or 'finer' containing quartz sand. All the fabrics from Wymondham are coarse wares and contained quartz sand. Generally it has been assumed that the heavily gritted Iron Age fabrics represent the early vessels and the sandier fabrics a later tradition. Recent work in Norfolk and in Suffolk indicates that this may be misleading and can only be applied as a very general guideline (E. Martin pers, com.).

Fabric descriptions.

Fabric 1. Very hard. Coarse texture.
Crushed white quartzite and flint, common, coarse, ill-sorted, angular.
Quartz (clear and coloured), common, fine, ill-sorted, rounded.
Ext. orange; core grey; int. brown.

Fabric 2. Hard.
Quartzite, white; common, medium, ill-sorted, angular.

Wymondham Site 25887 1992

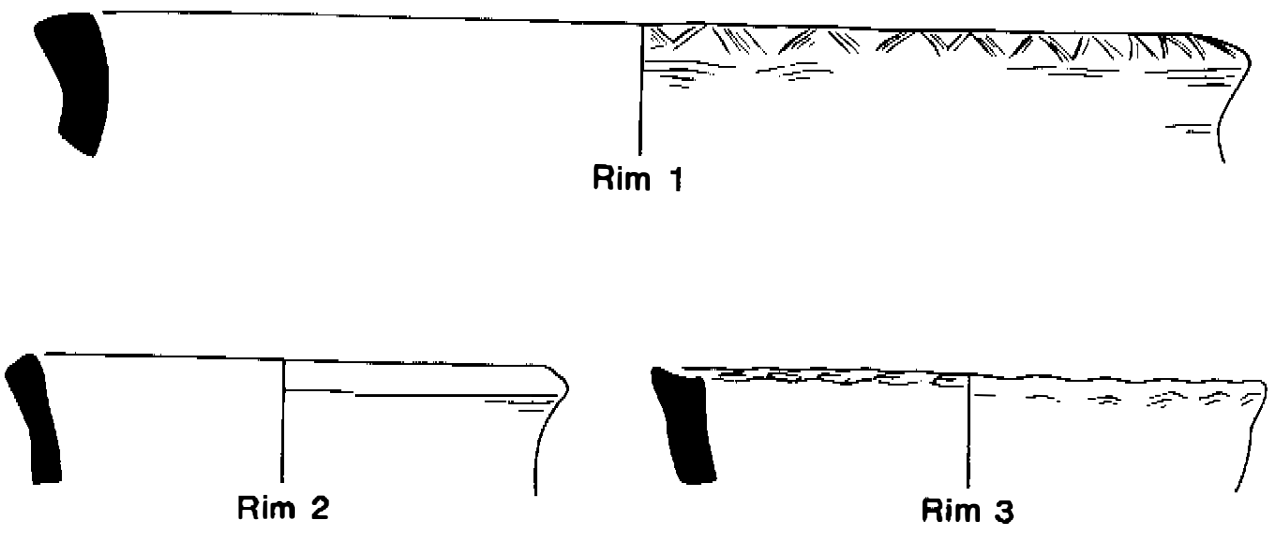


Figure 11. Diagnostic pottery forms.

Clear and coloured quartzite; common, fine, ill-sorted, rounded.
Ext. orange; core brown; int. orange.

Fabric 3. Very hard.
Quartz, common, medium, ill-sorted, sub-rounded.
Quartzite, white, moderate, medium, ill-sorted, angular.
Ext. black; core black; int. black.

11.4 Forms.
The body sherds are mostly too small to indicate the shapes of the vessels but where identifiable they appear to be rounded in profile rather than angular. This suggests that the material is of mid Iron Age date.
There are five rim sherds representing five vessels, illustrated in Figure 11.

Rim 1. Fabric 2. Everted with impressed decoration around the inside.
Rim 2. Fabric 2. Simple everted.
Rim 3. Fabric 1. Upright rim with internal finger tip impressions.
Rim 4. Fabric 4. Everted rim, slightly thickened externally.
Rim 5. Fabric 1. Flattened rim with external lip.

11.5 Discussion.
In Norfolk the early Iron Age or 'ultimate' Bronze Age period is represented by the pottery from West Harling, probably dating to the sixth century B.C. (Clarke,J.G.D. and Fell,C.I., 1953). The end of the Iron Age is defined by the Aylesford-Swarling tradition, also known as 'Belgic ware'. This wheel thrown pottery was named after two cemetries in Kent where it was first identified and has been dated to the first century B.C. (Birchall,A.,1965). There is no site type to enable the accurate dating of material which falls between these identified traditions (Gregory, A., 1991.).

11.6 The dating of the pottery from Wymondham is problematic. The fabric types are evenly divided between the quartz gritted and the sandier fabrics suggesting that chronologically the pottery falls somewhere between the Harling snd Belgic traditions. The abraded condition and small size of the sherds and the lack of diagnostic sherds is also unhelpful. Rim types 2 and 4 are very common in 'middle' Iron Age assembleges. Examples of rim type 4, rim type 2 and rim 5 were found at Fison Way, Thetford (Gregory, A., 1991, Fig. 144: 130, Fig. 144: 120 and Fig. 141:32 respectively). Rim type 3 is also clearly Iron Age; finger-tip impressions along the top of the rim are a common form of decoration. Examples of this were found at Harford Farm (Ashwin, T., et.al. forthcoming), Burgh (Martin, E., 1988) and Little Waltham (Drury P.J., 1978). Rim type 1 is unusual and no parallels were found.

12 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT by Peter Murphy

12.1 Introduction

During evaluation excavations at this site deposits infilling an apparent fossil periglacial feature were partly removed by a JCB. They were not seen *in situ*, nor could a section through the feature be inspected. However an organic layer (85) was evidently sealed by a layer containing flint and Iron Age pottery. A sample of this organic deposit was submitted for assessment by the excavator.

12.2 The sample

A 2kg bag of dark brown coarse detritus mud (85) was received. a 0.2kg sub-sample was disaggregated and the fraction >0.5mm partly scanned to assess macrofossil preservation and determine the main types of macrofossil present. The organic fraction was composed of amorphous plant tissue, with rootlets, rhizome fragments, monocotyledonous stem fragments and occasional degraded twigs. The mineral component was silt-sand with small flint pebbles and a scrap of heat-shattered flint. There were also patches of unfired clay and flecks of vivianite. Plant macrofossils included charophyte oogonia with fruits/seeds of *Ranunculus* subg. *Batrachium*, *Urtica dioica*, *Polygonum* sp, *Oenanthe* cf *fistula*, *Anthriscus sylvestris*, *Lemna* sp, *Potamogeton* spp and Graminae. Mollusc shell fragments were common and there were intact shells of *Armiger crista* and *Planorbis planorbis*. Arthropod remains included cladoceran ep hippia, beetles and caddis larval cases.

12.3 Conclusions

The sediment was deposited in base-rich shallow water, apparently with an open surrounding catchment. It was clearly a Flandrian deposit but none of the macrofossils present can be dated closely. Charcoal was not observed, though the heat-shattered flint fragment points to nearby human activity.

12.4 Preservation conditions were clearly very good for macrofossils and it is probable that pollen would be similarly well preserved. Whether further analysis is justified would depend:

1. on cutting a good section through the feature to check its interpretation as a periglacial feature (might it, in fact, be artificial?);
2. on establishing its date range by artefactual or radiometric means;
3. on determining whether the organic sediment could be related to human activity at the site.

In short, further work will be needed to establish whether this deposit is of any archaeological significance.

13 SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL

13.1 The evaluation has demonstrated the survival of features belonging to a small, apparently unenclosed, domestic settlement datable to the middle part of the Iron Age. This period is poorly represented in the current archaeology of Norfolk, with settlement sites being particularly ill-understood.

13.2 Stratigraphically well preserved deposits were only encountered in the southwestern part of the evaluation site. Evidence was found in this area for at least one round house and for broadly contemporary land divisions, all datable to the middle part of the Iron Age. Virtually no archaeological features were recorded in the other parts of the trenches.

13.3 The stratigraphical and horizontal relationships recorded in this southwestern part of the site indicate a sufficiently extended period of occupation in the immediate area for at least two major reorganisations of layout to have occurred. An initial period of domestic occupation was succeeded by an apparent clearance of the area and the excavation of boundary ditches, which in turn were replaced by a fence line (or possibly a second building). It is likely that these changes in use would be more fully demonstrable through open area excavation.

13.4 The evaluation has shown that the large quantities of prehistoric material recovered on the edge of the proposed bypass line during the 1990 fieldwalking do not relate to an extensive area of stratified features in the evaluation trenches, although a concentration of unstratified finds was identified in the area (between 48/160 and 50/200). This would suggest that any stratified remains associated with the fieldwalking finds are spatially restricted to the area north and west of the 1992 evaluation trenches and must lie largely outside the proposed bypass line.

13.5 The finds assemblage is small and generally poorly preserved. The quantity and range of worked flint recovered is not considered to be above the typical background scatter which could be obtained from any field in Norfolk; the brick and tile is similarly unexceptional. The pottery assemblage does have greater research potential.

13.6 Although the ceramic assemblage from the evaluation is small and abraded the site is potentially very important due to the shortage of stratified sequences of this period from Norfolk. There is a growing collection of Iron Age pottery from the county but no secure chronological framework for its study. The lack of dating evidence, particularly for domestic sites, is due to the lack of excavated sites where pottery has been recovered from stratified contexts. Full excavation of the site might significantly increase knowledge of the ceramics of the period and enable the increasing quantities of Iron Age pottery recovered by surface collection to be dated usefully.

13.7 Although no waterlogged cultural features were encountered on the evaluation, the preservation of plant macrofossils in the organic layer of the glacial pingo was very good and it is probable that pollen would be similarly well preserved. This raises the possibility of relating the adjacent Iron Age settlement to its surrounding environment, and the the chance that organic artefacts derived from the settlement may be preserved in this feature.

13.8 The significance of the evaluation site lies largely in the scarcity of comparative material. The evaluation has identified the remains of a small domestic site of the size which, it may be assumed, originally made up the majority of Iron Age settlements but which has previously not been excavated. Full excavation of the site would complement the information from earlier sites such as West Harling or Harford Farm, and the larger hilltop sites which became important in the later Iron Age (recently collated in Davies, J, et al. 1992), and would allow progress to made in establishing a ceramic type-series to cover the whole of the Iron Age in Norfolk.

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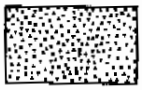
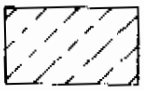
Conventions for sections and plans in the field and for publication drawing where appropriate.

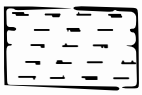
These conventions should be merged together to form mixed deposits. see page 4.
The lines of loam and clay should be broken to cater for flints and other inclusions


topsoil and root disturbance

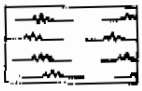

sand


clay

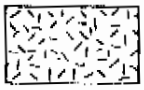

loam

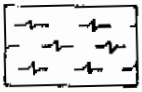

silt


burnt clay

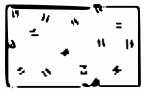

peat

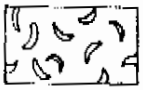

river washed pebbles

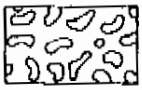

burning other than clay


organic material


gravel


soot, charcoal lumps and flecks

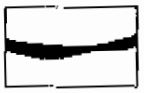

shell


flints


ash


bone


limestone

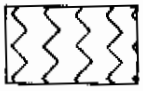

soot, charcoal layer.


wood elevation

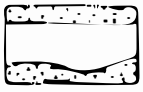

sandstone

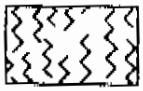

iron slag


wood section

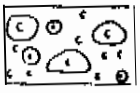

concrete

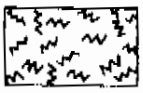

brick


chalk layer

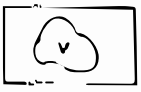

hard core


tile


chalk lumps and flecks


destruction debris dumps


pot

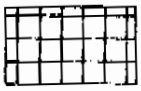

void

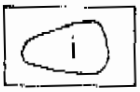

solid mortar


clay lump

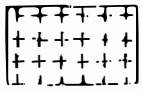

outline of animal disturbance


mortar lumps

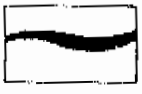

solid plaster

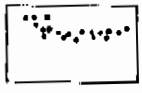

ironstone

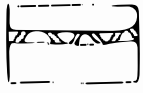

bituminous aggregate


plaster lumps

conventions for sites where iron pan is present


iron pan


iron pan flecks


soot/charcoal layer

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF THE WYMONDHAM BYPASS
BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

SMR SITE 25887

BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Summary

A recently-located Iron Age settlement on the bypass route requires evaluation by trial trenching to assess the extent and condition of archaeological features.

Background

Since the consultation process in 1986, fieldwalking on the bypass route early in 1990 and a year later in 1991 has produced evidence of an Iron Age settlement in the area edged red on the attached plan. This is on the line of the proposed bypass and will be destroyed by construction of the bypass.

The initial fieldwalking in 1990 recovered 63 flints (including 5 mesolithic), 41 Iron Age sherds, 11 Roman sherds, 1 medieval sherd, 1 post-medieval sherd and a 16th-century bronze button. The additional fieldwalking in 1991 recovered a further 62 worked flints, 169 Iron Age sherds and 2 Roman sherds. In both years, large quantities of potboilers were noted.

This surface evidence indicates that the bypass will cross an area of Iron Age settlement. There have been very few opportunities to examine Iron Age settlements in Norfolk, and evidence of the period is largely dominated by limited research on the larger fortified sites, by research on the coinage and by finds of metalwork. Little is known about the development of Iron Age pottery, or indeed about the nature and economy of small settlements, farmsteads or enclosures. This is therefore a rare opportunity to examine what appears to be a small Iron Age settlement, which may prove to be representative of many such sites across the county represented by surface scatters of pottery and potboilers.

An evaluation by trial trenching is required to determine the extent, date and state of preservation of archaeological deposits and features so that, if necessary, application can be made to English Heritage for funds for the excavation of the site.

Brief

The Detailed Project Specification or Method Statement should:-

1. Provide a clear statement of the project's aims and objectives.

2. Indicate what geophysical or geochemical site surveys have been considered and which if any will be employed.

3. Present a strategy to assess the artefact content of the topsoil by fieldwalking, metal-detecting or other surveys.

4. Include a scale plan showing the proposed locations and extent of any survey and trenches.

5. Indicate how the trenches will be excavated (i.e. by hand or by machine) and if hand-excavated control areas are proposed.

6. Indicate what levels of sampling are anticipated in the excavation of various types of contexts which may be encountered e.g. buried soils, structures, pits, post-holes, ditches.

7. Include details of:-
   i) projected duration on site
   ii) numbers of staff involved and structure of team
   iii) details of the appropriate knowledge, experience and skills of the project team.

8. Indicate how, as much information as possible will be collected on the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of archaeological deposits within the application site. Proposed data collection methods must be described.

9. Indicate that all archaeological contexts and artefacts exposed or examined will be adequately surveyed, sampled, cleaned, planned, excavated and preserved by record on appropriate context, finds and sample sheets, by the production of plans, sections and elevations, and by black and white and colour photographic record. Describe the proposed recording strategy.

10. Provide a provisional programme outlining post-excavation analysis, specifying what staff and time resources have been provisionally allocated to the project. This programme may be subject to review when the excavation results are assessed.

11. Indicate what opportunities are proposed for project monitoring within the project's stages of:-
   i) fieldwork/excavation
   ii) assessment
   iii) analysis and report preparation
   iv) completion of archive, deposition of archive and finds and dissemination of results
   so that monitoring officer(s) are able to examine and discuss work in progress to ensure that all work is being carried out to appropriate professional standards.
   Proposed monitoring points should be specified in any timetable submitted.

12. Include an estimate of the time and resources required for the completion of the project Level 3 archive and for the production of an Evaluation Report for the client (and for inclusion in the SMR (see Results 5.

below) and for submission to the planning authority if appropriate).

13. Show what provision has been made for the identification of artefacts, including specialist reports if appropriate.
Include a list of specialist consultants who might be required to advise or report on finds or other aspects of the investigation.

14. Show what provision will be made for inclusion of the results of the project in the County SMR.

15. Indicate that all Site and Context numbering used will be compatible with the Norfolk SMR.

16. Show what provision has been made for conservation.
Specify the number of conservator days/weeks allocated to the project and what facilities will be available.

17. Show what provision has been made for environmental assessment of the site.
Specify the number of environmentalist days/weeks allocated to the project and what facilities will be available.
Describe the proposed environmental sampling strategy.

18. Provide a summary of agreements reached with:-
i) the landowner
ii) an appropriate museum
over the donation and deposition of cultural material and project records in a permanently accessible form and in an acceptable form.
Account must be taken of any reasonable requirements the museum may have regarding the conservation, ordering, organisation, labelling, marking and storage of excavated material and the archive.
In this instance, deposition with the Norfolk Museums Service is appropriate.
The finds and archive should usually be deposited within one year of the completion of the project.

19. Indicate that provision has been made for the microfilming of the excavation archive by the RCHME.

20. Indicate if publication is envisaged, and confirm that the cost implications of editorial and reprographic work on the Level 4 report have been adequately built into the project.

21. Indicate what contingency arrangements have been made to deal with the unforseen.

The Evaluation Report

1. Style and format of the Evaluation Report may be determined by the archaeological contractor.

2. A plan at an appropriate scale showing trench layout and features must be included.

3. For each trench, the Evaluation Report should include comprehensive details of features and finds, their state of preservation and interpretation.

4. A scale plan of actual and where possible predicted archaeological deposits should be included.

5. A copy of the Evaluation Report will be supplied to the Norfolk SMR within six months of the completion of the project on the understanding that this will become a public document after an appropriate period of time (generally not exceeding six months).

6. The Evaluation Report should not give an opinion on whether preservation or further investigation is considered appropriate.

The Norfolk Museums Service Landscape Archaeology Section will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project. The archaeological contractor will give the Landscape Archaeology Section not less than two week's written notice of the commencement of the work so that arrangements for monitoring the project can be made.

Archaeological contractors are strongly advised to forward any 'Detailed Project Specification' or 'Method Statement' to the Norfolk Museums Service Landscape Archaeology Section for approval before any proposals are submitted to potential clients.

Any subsequent variation to the Detailed Project Specification or Method Statement must be agreed with the Landscape Archaeology Section prior to its implementation.

David Gurney
Principal Landscape Archaeologist
19 February 1992

Landscape Archaeology Section
Norfolk Museums Service
Union House
Gressenhall
Dereham
Norfolk NR20 4DR

Tel: (0362) 861187
Fax: (0362) 860951

LE 1:10 000 TM 19 NW

Road — Track — Path

Where unfenced shown by pecked lines

RS

Embankment

Multiple track

Road over

Road under

Level crossing

Foot Bridge

Single track — Standard gauge

Siding, tramway or mineral line

Narrow gauge

TION

Bracken, rough grassland

Marsh

Coppice

Orchard

Scrub

Saltings

Coniferous trees

Heath

Reeds

Non-coniferous trees

Bracken, rough grassland are shown separately

L FEATURES

Antiquity site etc.

Boulders

Building

Electricity transmission line

Glasshouse

Triangulation station

Lake, loch or pond

Sloping masonry

Chalk pit, clay pit or quarry

Gravel pit

Sand pit

Refuse or slag heap

Direction of flow of water

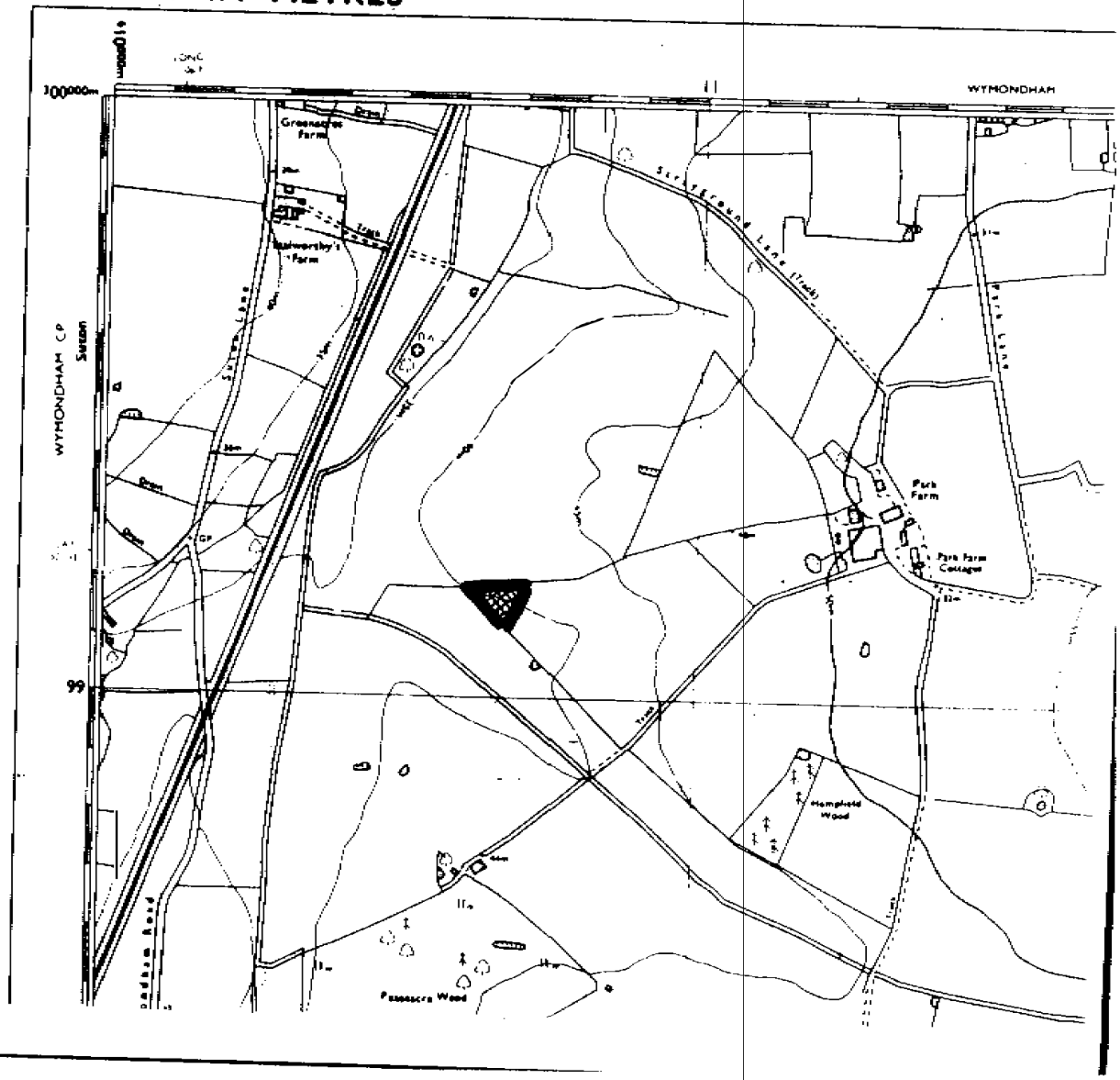
Shingle

Sand

RIES As notified to 1.3.79

County, England and Wales, Region or Islands Area (Scotland)

HEIGHTS IN METRES



NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF THE WYMONDHAM BYPASS
BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
SMR SITE 25887

METHOD STATEMENT FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

1. The evaluation of this area, which has been identified through field walking as an important prehistoric site, is intended to provide details of extent, date and state of preservation of all archaeological deposits. Significant numbers of flints have been recovered, including 5 of the Mesolithic period. A large amount of Iron Age pottery may suggest a small settlement of this period and it is intended that through trial trenching it will be possible to establish whether a larger excavation may be required to understand fully the nature and extent of any settlement patterns which are forthcoming.

2. Geophysical survey is considered inappropriate for this site.

3. Pre-excavation fieldwalking and metal-detecting, which will be recorded on a 10m grid, will establish the density and location of surface finds and, in conjunction with the previous surveys, should enable the areas of highest incidence to be targeted with trial trenches.

4. Trial trench location will be established following the work outlined in paragraph 3. It is intended that such trenching will follow one of two patterns as follows:

either a) a cruciform trench enabling cross-sections to be cut through each of Areas A to F as identified on Roger Bellinger's sketch (Fig 1 attached);

or b) employing the evaluation system currently being used on some sites in the Fens (see discussion paper by Robin Boast and Chris Evans - Appendix 1 attached).

5. Top soil stripping will be done by machine with 1 metre samples of soil being coarse sieved every 20 metres to act as a control for site identification. Hand excavation of identified trenches will then be undertaken.

6. Sampling will be undertaken as advised by Peter Murphy of CEAS but <u>all</u> buried soils will be box sectioned for micromorphological analysis. At least 50% of all pits will be sampled for coarse seiving and some pits and post holes will be sampled for flotation analysis.

7. i) The fieldwalking, stripping and trench excavation of the site is intended to last 5 weeks.

ii) The staff structure will consist of:
A Project Manager
A Finds Assistant/Experienced excavator
3 other Experienced excavators

iii) The Project Manger will have experience of interpreting rural settlements and knowledge of sampling strategies. The Finds Assistant will be supported by the NAU Finds Officer (a Project Manager grade). The excavator staff will all have experience of NAU recording and surveying procedures.

8. Minimum recording will include:

fieldwalking distribution map of all finds;
detailed recording of all visible archaeological features;
recording of natural extant landscape;
linear features will be sectioned to determine form and relationships;
pits will be initially half-sectioned;
modern and post-medieval features will be dealt with circumspectly.

9. The site will be located within the Ordnance Survey grid using appropriate technology. Recording of features and deposits will be undertaken with the aid of proformas (examples attached). Finds, both hand-collected and sieved, will be processed and recorded during the course of the excavation as far as possible to enable speedy assessment of the material. Overall plans were be made at a scale of 1:50, with provision for 1:20 and 1:10 drawings as appropriate. All sections of small features will be recorded at 1:10, others at 1:20 depending on detail considered necessary. Photographs will be taken for the following reasons:

a) to record archaeological relationships
b) to record the specific nature of archaeological features
c) to record spatial relationships
d) to record regular progress of the excavation.

10. See attached chart for programme.

11. The NAU has a policy of following the procedures outlined in the HBMC publication Management of Archaeological Projects (1991). Monitoring opportunities will therefore be in line with those procedures (see attached chart).

12. Resources will be allocated to enable completion of the archive and the production of a report (see attached programme chart).

13. Provision will be made for specialist reports (subject to the agreement of the named individuals) as follows:

a) Iron Age pottery and other finds (to be determined)
b) soils/micromorphology (Richard Macphail/C. French
c) environmental (Peter Murphy)
d) flints (John Wymer/Peter Robins)

A small contingency sum will be set aside for any further reports which become necessary.

14. A copy of the report will be sent to the County SMR together with an AM107 form. This will include a reference to the archive and the intended place of deposition of the archive.

15. Note will be taken of any contexts already used by the SMR. All further numbering of the site and individual contexts will be compatible with the SMR.

16. Conservation will be undertaken within the Conservation Department at Norwich Castle Museum. The NAU maintains liaison with the Department and allocates resources to conservation within each of its budgets according to a formula agreed with the Conservation Department. This ensures that all necessary conservation will be undertaken using the facilities available at Norwich Castle Museum. Any additional conservation costs necessitated by the use of specialist facilities elsewhere is also covered by the available budget.

17. Environmental sampling is summarised above (Paragraph 6). Resourcing of the environmental work is provided by formula in a similar way to that outlined for conservation (Paragraph 16).

18. The NAU will be undertaking work on behalf of the Department of Transport. It is proposed that details of access, timing, funding and issues such as crop compensation (if necessary) and backfilling will be determined between the NAU and the DoT. Further agreement with the landowner will seek donation of the finds to the Norfolk Museums Service. Donation and deposition of such cultural material and the archive will be to the Norfolk Museums Service, to the standards of the Service at the time of deposition.

19. The excavation archive will be prepared in such a form that it can be microfilmed by the RCHME.

20. Budgetary provision will be made for an evaluation report which will be produced with appropriate figures drawn to

appropriate scales. Multiple copies will be produced as appropriate for distribution to the client and the Landscape Archaeology Section. Copyright will be retained by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit.

21. Contingency arrangements will be included within the budget to allow for unforeseen additional excavation costs and additional report costs as outlined above in paragraph 13.

Jez Reeve
Senior Field Archaeologist
11th March, 1992