AN EARLY AND MIDDLE SAXON SETTLEMENT AT QUARRINGTON, LINCOLNSHIRE

Volume I
The Excavations, Figures and Plates

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL
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AN EARLY AND MIDDLE SAXON SETTLEMENT AT QUARRINGTON, LINCOLNSHIRE

Volume I
The Excavations, Figures and Plates

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1. Non Technical Summary

In advance of substantial housing development over 13ha, archaeological investigations were conducted during the period 1992-95.

Much of the area appeared devoid of archaeology but to the southwest corner Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon ditch/gullies were recorded by means of trial trenching and geophysical survey. Within one trench a quantity of rare Early Saxon metalworking debris was found, including mould and crucible fragments.

Excavation revealed numerous pits, postholes and gullies forming part of a settlement spanning the 5th-9th centuries AD. Among the features could be recognised lines of postholes, some indicating the location of former buildings. Associated with the buildings was a fence demarcating the eastern end of the site.

Additional to the metalwork, a major assemblage of Early and Middle Saxon pottery was retrieved, one of the largest excavated in Britain (over 2000 sherds). Other finds included an animal bone assemblage which demonstrated a change in farming preferences through the Saxon period.

Non-Saxon finds included a near-complete Neolithic vessel, probably a lone cremation, and a post-medieval stone building, the purpose of which could not be fully determined, but which was most likely for drying agricultural produce.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background (Figs 1 and 2)

In advance of housing development at Quarrington, Lincolnshire, North Kesteven District Council imposed a set of archaeological conditions. A brief prepared by the District's Community Archaeologist, the archaeological curator, set out the requirements of the planning authority in respect of Planning Policy Guidance 16.

Initial expectations were that site development might impinge on the peripheral area of the shrunken medieval village. A series of investigations commenced in October-November 1992 with a field evaluation. This took the form of excavation of 34 linear trenches laid out over 13ha of the development area (Fig. 3). Archaeological features and artefacts were recorded including 56 ditch/gullies, several postholes and pottery dated to the Early-Middle Saxon periods; these concentrated chiefly towards the southwest of the area. Foremost amongst the artefacts was widespread pottery and, confined to one trench, metalworking slag, mould and crucible fragments dating to the 6th-7th centuries AD. Metalworking debris from this period is extremely rare (Bayley 1991, 125). Moreover, in Lincolnshire, few settlements of the Saxon period had previously received any sub-surface investigation. Notable exceptions were at Osbournby (Mahany 1977), Nettleton Top (Field 1988, 85) and Cherry Willingham (Field 1981, 70), where an iron smelting furnace of probable Saxon date was excavated. Far commoner were discoveries of cemeteries belonging to the period. These have been summarised in Thompson (1956), Leeds (1970) and most recently, Atkin and Healey (forthcoming).

The significant discoveries made during the evaluation and the subsequent geophysical survey necessitated the introduction of a more detailed programme of excavation in advance of development. Fieldwork was conducted on behalf of Chartdale Homes Ltd by *Archaeological Project Services* and its forerunner working to briefs devised by

the planning authority's curator.

Excavations took place in phases between October 1992 and July 1995.

2.2 Topography and Geology (Fig. 4)

Quarrington is located 16.5km northeast of Grantham and *c.* 2km southwest of Sleaford, North Kesteven District, Lincolnshire. Situated in the civil parish of Sleaford, the area of investigation lies immediately north and east of the present day village of Quarrington.

The site lies on the southeast slope of a low hill, bounded by the Slea valley to the north and a canalised stream, now called the Moor Drain, to the south. Heights vary from 25m OD in the northwest of the site to just above 15m OD in the southeast. Centred on National Grid Reference TF05814457, the development covers a total area of *c.* 13 hectares.

A solid geology of Jurassic cornbrash and Lincolnshire Limestone are recorded for the vicinity (Wilson 1958). Local soils are of the Quarrington series, brown calcareous sands (George and Robson 1978).

2.3 Archaeological Setting (Fig. 4)

Quarrington is located within an area of moderate background archaeological activity. Evidence of the presence of early communities in the region is scattered but the continued expansion of Sleaford has resulted in a cluster of find spots in the town.

Prehistoric activity is scarce but represented by occasional finds from surface deposits. A flint axehead was discovered 500m to the northwest of the site (NK57.22) and a pebble hammer with a hour-glass perforation was found 400m to the south (NK57.46). In the southern suburbs of Sleaford, an unlooped palstave, two Neolithic stone axes and a flint hammer were found, although the actual location is not known (NK57.4).

Romano-British occupation of the area is recorded *c.* 2km to the northwest, where a possible villa site with associated field systems has been identified from cropmarks and is now a scheduled monument (NK57.28, NK57.29). Roman activity has also been found in 'Old Place', Sleaford at the crossing point on the river Slea of the Roman road, Mareham Lane. Excavations here have revealed a Roman settlement partially overlying an Iron Age site. The Iron Age element is well known for the discovery of some 3000 coin mould fragments, the largest number from any site in Europe (Brown and Simmons 1985, 31). Some 150m to the south of Old Place a Middle Iron Age palisaded enclosure has been partially excavated.

Occasional finds constitute the remaining evidence for Roman occupation. A coin of Constantine II was found 1km to the northeast (NK57.30) and a coin of Hadrian was located a further 200m to the north (NK57.2). Situated 1.8km to the northwest, near the site of the supposed Roman villa, surface finds of Roman pottery and a coin of Constantine have been found (NK59.12,NK59.21). Fieldwalking 500m to the south of the site has produced pottery of this period (NK57.58) which may be related to a rectangular enclosure, identified as cropmarks, 300m to the north (NK57.27).

Early Anglo-Saxon activity is represented in the area by two cemetery sites, of which either or both may have been used by the people at Quarrington. The nearest is situated 1.3km to the northeast (NK57.14) and produced around 250 inhumations and 6 cremations. It is estimated that this cemetery may have held up to 600 graves

(Thomas 1882). Finds from excavations on the site included fibulae, keys, iron spearheads and a number of reused Roman artefacts, including coins perforated to form a necklace. A second cemetery (NK57.19), *c.* 1.5km to the west, may have had its origins in the Roman period but was certainly still in use during the Anglo-Saxon period (Trollope 1868).

Farther afield, Anglo-Saxon cemeteries are also known from Heckington 9km to the east, Ruskington, 7km to the northeast and Ancaster 8km to the west. All of these cemeteries have a date range from *c.*500-700AD. A further single burial was discovered in 1916, the exact position is unclear but known to be along the course of Mareham Lane and may be an outlier to the cemetery in Sleaford.

None of the cemeteries have demonstrable adjacent settlement, though excavations in the centre of Sleaford revealed early Anglo-Saxon features and finds as well as later Anglo-Saxon material (Mahany 1979). The function of the features and a relationship with the cemetery site could not be ascertained.

An early Anglo-Saxon site was investigated at Osbournby, *c.* 6.5km to the south of Quarrington. Excavations revealed the remains of a small post-built structure similar to those found at West Stow in Suffolk (Mahany 1977).

Pottery of Anglo-Saxon date was found during fieldwalking 400m to the south of the site adjacent to the Moor Drain and more was discovered during excavations in 1933 at Butt's Hill, a round mound in Silk Willoughby, *c.* 1.5km south of the Quarrington site (Phillips 1934).

The nearest churches with Anglo-Saxon style architecture, albeit Late Saxon, are Wilsford *c.* 5km to the west, Cranwell *c.* 6km north and Osbournby *c.* 6.5km to the south of Quarrington.

Quarrington is mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086. Referred to as both *Corninctune* and *Corninctone*, the village was said to have two churches and a mill (Foster and Longley 1976). The presence of a mill is reflected in the place name, 'Quarrington' being a derivation of the Old English word *cweorn* meaning 'mill' and *tun* meaning 'homestead' and hence probably means the miller's homestead (Ekwall 1974). Greenval & Cenlices (1909) speculated that the two churches may be indicated by the remains of two crosses, one near Tellgate on the Sleaford-Folkingham Road and the other about half a mile nearer to the village at Stump Cross Hill . However, recent analysis by Roffe (1979) suggests that the second church is that of St. Giles in Old Sleaford

Within the parish a separate village called *Millthorpe* was also recorded. No archaeological evidence has proved its existence and the similarity of the name may suggest an alternative naming of Quarrington.

Known medieval sites in the area are few with only the 13th century church of St Botolph, in Quarrington representing anything structural from this period.

2.4 Aims and Methods

Primary aims of the investigation were outlined in the Brief prepared by the archaeological curator. Summarised, these were to locate and determine (if present) the extent, date, spatial arrangement and depth of any archaeological deposits. A set of criteria, issued by the Secretary of State (DoE 1990), provided an outline for assessing the significance of the archaeology at Quarrington. These were used to determine state of preservation,

period, type, rarity, diversity and vulnerability of the deposits encountered and their relationship to the general area (see Section 6)

As preservation *in situ* of the surviving archaeology was not an option, the significance of this site could only be ascertained through a detailed written and drawn record before destruction occurred (preservation by record).

A geophysical survey, by Bradford Geophysical Surveys, was undertaken in three separate areas, using a Fluxgate Gradiometer (Geoscan FM36) and a Resistance Meter (Geoscan RM4 or RM15) (Fig. 6). Results from this survey are presented in Appendix IV.

Initially, an evaluation was carried out in 1992 on the northern part of the site. A total of 34 trenches were excavated, nominally 30m x 1.8m in size. Results of these excavations established that Early to Middle Anglo-Saxon features were present.

Subsequently, a series of trenches was opened using a mechanical excavator. Trench depth was determined by the point at which features became visible. The main access road to the development, Red Area was first to be excavated. At the same time two further areas, Pink and Green, were opened up. Black and Orange Areas were stripped of topsoil during October 1994. Following topsoil stripping a local metal detectorist scanned the spoilheaps and machined excavation areas. On the latter, labels were pinned in areas where signals were identified. Where possible, these signals were investigated by archaeological excavation in order to maximise dating potential of the site and minimise the risk of damage to the site and loss of finds to unauthorised detectorists.

Prior to cleaning, a 10m grid was established across the excavation area. Pre-excavation plans were prepared at a scale of 1:100. Features and their fills were allocated their own unique (context) number. Vertical sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and plans at 1:20. A photographic archive was compiled using both black and white prints and colour slides, all in accordance with *Archaeological Project Services* standard practice.

As an aid to post excavation analysis, appropriate contexts (eg primary fills, secondary fills) were grouped together and 'group matrix numbers' used to describe whole features. Group matrix numbers reduce the quantity of figures required to represent the same feature. It is these, rather than context numbers that appear on plans of the site.

Outside specialists were given the raw data or artefacts/ecofacts before groupings could be made and their reports and section drawings use the individual context number. The concordance of the context numbers and group matrix numbers can be found in the site archive table (Appendices I and II).

2.5 Post excavation analysis

The site records were checked and ordered to ensure that they constituted a complete level II archive and a stratigraphic matrix of all identified contexts was produced. Finds recovered from those deposits excavated were examined and a period date assigned where possible. Phasing of the stratigraphic matrix was assigned based on this artefact dating.

Thereafter, to assist analysis, 'context groups' were created. These context groups comprise collections of individual contexts that possess recognisable functional relationships. Thus, a 'rubbish pit' and the

material that infills it will consist of at least two individual context numbers but these are functionally related - the pit was dug to allow the disposal of the rubbish - and therefore constitute one context group. Conversely, a boundary ditch and its fills will also comprise multiple individual contexts but these are functionally disparate - the ditch would cease to be a boundary when filled in - and therefore also constitute multiple context groups.

A matrix of the context groups was created, incorporating the stratigraphic evidence embodied in the primary context record. The context group matrix allowed phasing provided by the artefact dating to be clarified. Thereafter, analysis was based on identifying functionally- and spatially-related contemporary context groups. This process enabled the recognition of areas of specific activity within the site and also patterns of site development and formation through time. The results of these analytical procedures are given below.

2.6 Layout of the report

The size of excavation, density of features and quantity of artefact/ecofacts has resulted in a wealth of data. This is presented in three volumes. Volume One contains a description, interpretation and phasing of the excavations, along with a discussion of the results and assessment of the importance of the site. In addition, all the figures and plates are assembled at the back of the first volume.

Volume Two contains all the context and Group Matrix data while the specialist's reports on the artefact and ecofact assemblages appears as Volume Three.

In the description of the excavations the site is dicussed by Area. A sequence of phase plans is presented for each area and composite phase plans for the Early and Middle Saxon are presented as Figures 31 and 32. Figure 5 also represents a composite plan of all features excavated, including those later deemed to be non-archaeological.

3. Excavation and Phasing

Introduction

Excavations in advance of housing at Quarrington spanned three years. Because development was undertaken in stages the archaeological work was also sequential. For ease of reference and identification during excavation, each new block of work was identified by a colour code designation (see Figure 3 for locations). These colour codes have been maintained during the post-excavation analyses and throughout this report.

A note on the phasing

Phasing and dating of the features recorded during the excavation has not been straightforward, due in part to a relative paucity of intercutting features. Moreover, even where features were intercutting, a number of relationships did not survive, particularly where feature fills had become homogenised by earthworm action.

Nevertheless, a broad phasing has been suggested by means of a combination of artefact identification, direct stratigraphic relationships (intercutting ditches, pits etc.) where these survived, and indirect relationships (eg spatial conformity, parallel orientation or similarity of fills). The means by which individual contexts and features were phased is shown in Appendix I. None of the stratigraphic sequences are long, a situation common on cultivated rural sites. Moreover, the relatively lengthy occupation of the site has resulted in a high level of artefact residuality, diminishing the value of some chronologically attributable artefacts in terms of feature dating and phasing.

Within the phasing any feature with solely Early Saxon artefacts, particularly if quantities are large, has been regarded as Early Saxon on the grounds of probability. However, a number of lengths of ditches yielding solely Early Saxon style pottery showed recuts, either along the same line or slightly off-centre. Some of the fills of the recuts contained Middle Saxon wares, perhaps implying maintenance over long periods. Some of this maintenance and re-cutting, particularly deepening and widening, may have resulted in the complete destruction of initial ditches. Moreover, some ditches may have been first cut in the earlier part of the Saxon period, but evidence for subsequent recuts may have been lost due to more recent agricultural activities and erosive agencies. As a final comment on the difficulties of phasing the ditches it is worth remembering the observations of Jane Young (Appendix VII) in respect of the pottery, in particular the statement that 'it is possible that both Early and Middle Saxon styles were in use contemporaneously'. Whilst this is accepted, there is also a recognisable pattern of features or groups of features, containing solely Early material. This indicates that a genuine sequence exists and that the site spans the use of solely Early Saxon ceramic types, a period of mixed usage, followed by a period when the ceramics were solely Middle Saxon in character.

Dating

Within this section of the report, interpretation of the main features in each of the individual colour coded excavation areas has been attempted. For uniformity, each excavation will be discussed within the series of chronological parameters (periods) listed below.

PREHISTORIC	UP TO AD 50
ROMAN	AD 50 - AD 450
EARLY SAXON	AD 450 - AD 650
MIDDLE SAXON	AD 650 - AD 900
UNDIFFERENTIATED SAXON	AD 450 - AD 900
LATE SAXON	AD 900 - AD 1150
MEDIEVAL	AD 1150 - AD 1500
POST MEDIEVAL	AD 1500 - AD 1750
MODERN	AD 1750 - PRESENT
UNDATED	UNKNOWN

Table 1. Concordance of archaeological periods and calendar dates

Period plans have been prepared for each of the colour coded areas where warranted by feature density. Most areas have separate plans for Early Saxon, Middle Saxon and post-Saxon features. In cases where features have been ascribed to the Saxon period, but not specifically to either Early or Middle Saxon, these are classified as Undifferentiated Saxon and appear on plans for both the Early and the Middle periods. Isolated features for which no dating evidence is present are termed 'Undated' and also appear on plans of both phases. Most of these are believed to be of Saxon date.

Red Area (Figs. 7 and 8)
Red Area encompasses a linear swathe aligned north-south and measuring some 145m long by 7m wide. This represented the area of potential disturbance during construction of the main access road to the development. Excavation commenced in Red Area in September 1993.

Prehistoric:
No features present.

Roman:
No features present.

Early Saxon (Fig.7)
Three features (20002, 20018, 20013) produced pottery of this period. The most northerly dated feature (20002) was much truncated by a later north-south ditch to the extent that the original form and function cannot be determined. The same can be said of 20013, most of which was under the baulk. An irregular linear gully (20018) produced early pottery but not enough of the feature was exposed to ascertain its purpose.

Middle Saxon (Fig.8)
Three ditch/gullies appear to have formed part of a long standing pattern delimiting Middle Saxon land parcels. All three ditches produced pottery of Middle Saxon date. Of the two aligned east-west (20003, 20004), the former was the latest. All three ditches continued into Green Area where they combined with ditch lengths of similar phase. Middle Saxon pottery was also recovered from an elongated depression (20016) of unknown function.

Late Saxon
No features present.

Medieval
No features present.

Post-medieval
No features present.

Modern
Two modern features were recognised on the west spur road, one a northeast-southwest aligned ditch of unclear purpose, the other a tree bowl.

Undated features:
A large proportion of the undated features in Red Area, indeed the site, are most probably of Saxon date. Four such features were located in Red Area. None bore clear stratigraphic relationships with any of the dated features elsewhere. One was a solitary post-hole (20014). Feature 20007 represented the eastern terminal of a linear feature. The other two were isolated ditches/gullies, the northernmost (20012) some 0.5m deep. Lack of major cut features demonstrates that Red Area is on the periphery of the main activity.

Green Area (Fig. 9, Plate 6)
Green area comprised a sub-rectangular block of land, 105m x 40m, extending between the western boundary of the excavation and the north end of the access road. Work commenced in November 1993. Three of the 1992 trial trenches were re-located, along with in the region of 20 lengths of ditch/gully, 15 pits and *c.*50 small pits or postholes. Glacial features were present and initially proved difficult to isolate from those created by human activities. Likewise, some animal disturbance had the appearance of being archaeologically formed. Therefore, some glacial and some faunal disturbances underwent limited excavation until the characteristics of the phenomena had been understood.

Prehistoric:
No features present.

Roman:
Small quantities of Roman pottery sherds were recovered. None were in primary contexts and the sherds probably derive from the scattering of manure during limited ploughing in the Roman period.

Early Saxon (Fig. 10):
Ten sections cut through ditch 20191 (Fig. 34, Section 100) in Green Area yielded only Early Anglo-Saxon pottery. Given the quantity of features and pottery discovered on the site the homogeneity of the finds suggests strongly that the feature was open only during the Early Saxon period and was infilled by the time Middle Saxon pottery styles appeared. The alignment of this feature is also at odds with the majority of others identified. Together, both strands of evidence suggest that this ditch is Early Saxon and one of the few features to which a chronological attribution can be stated with confidence.

Other isolated lengths of ditch/gullies indicate Early Saxon activity but are generally shorter than 20191 and have been investigated less extensively. There is a possibility that ditch 20169 (Fig. 34, Section 75) may have once formed a southern boundary to the main concentration of pits in Green Area (Pit Group A, Fig. 11, 36. Plate 3). Dating for this group of pits is comprehensively Early Saxon. Among the finds are several moulds, crucibles and hearth linings, indicators of non-ferrous metalworking. These occurred in pits 20083 (Fig. 35, Section 152. Plate 4), 20197 (Fig. 35, Section 49) and 20098 (See Bayley, Appendix VIII). By themselves, the hearth lining fragments could have indicated either ferrous or non-ferrous working, but

such close proximity to the other non-ferrous working materials would suggest an association. Small fragments of crucible and lumps of slag were also found just to the south of the pits in ditch/gully (20204).

Other artefacts deposited with the metal working material in Pit Group A included an abundant, exclusively Early Saxon ceramic assemblage. Pottery from pits 20082 and 20083 suggests a date from 6th to early 7th century. A small but significant number of sherds whose date range could fall anywhere in the 5th-9th centuries, had been affected by intense heat causing the fabric to semi-vitrify. These, again were concentrated within Pit Group A, further indicating localized industrial activity. The remaining finds in the pits were chiefly domestic refuse, with some indicators of other industries in the form of three loomweight fragments and a spindle whorl. The pits containing the metalworking debris were not burnt, and were not, therefore, directly part of the metalworking process.

The loomweights are of annular form characteristic of the 5th-10th centuries. Personal effects were also recovered from the pits. These included a decorated glass bead (Fig. 46,a), a toilet spoon/ear scoop and a copper alloy composite fitting which was probably a strap end. The pits tended towards an ovoid shape in plan with the longest axis *c.* 1.5 - 2m and were 0. 2 - 0.3m deep (Figs. 36, Section 140; 37). The majority of slag found on the site came from Green Area. Some was simple fuel ash slag that could have derived from any heating/burning activity but there was also quantities of smithing and smelting slags.

Unlike Pit Group B in Black Area (Figs. 13 and 16), there were no clear cut structural remains associated with Pit Group A, other than the possibility of a 'C'-shaped posthole setting (Structure 8, Fig. 11) immediately to the west of the intercutting pits. The presence of so many other apparently unconnected and unrelated postholes in Green Area may suggest that other buildings had once existed but their remains are now ploughed beyond recognition. It is even possible that some of these may have included the Sunken-Featured Buildings so noticeably lacking on the site as a whole, or zonal divisions by fence lines. Since no associated diagnostic material was found or survived in the vicinity of the postholes the function of the posts remains debatable. They could have formed fences/windbreaks, although the size of the post holes would suggest something less temporary.

Middle Saxon (Fig. 12):
The quantity of Middle Saxon artefacts in Green Area is significantly lower than those of the earlier period. For instance, of the 630 sherds of post-Roman pottery no more than 15% was of Middle Saxon origin while 77% belonged to the earlier period. Nevertheless, it would appear that the majority of ditch/gully lengths belong to the Middle period. Apart from the northern ditch of Enclosure 1 (Fig. 38, Section 82), which continues south into Black Area, none of the remaining lengths have a proven function. Some probably facilitated localized drainage whilst others sub-divided parcels of land perhaps forming stock pens, crop storage or specialised activity zones. The east-west orientation of ditches 20189 and 20138 fits with the broader prevailing pattern of Middle Saxon ditches. Many of the ditches had been recut, indicating long standing boundaries regularly maintained (eg Fig. 38, Section 138).

Unlike in the earlier period few Middle Saxon pits were present. Those that were recorded on Green Area were widely dispersed. One aspect common to pits

20125, 20121, 20131, 20136 and 20169, but unexplained, is that they are cut into or are adjacent to ditches/gullies. Furthermore, their dimensions are less than the Early Saxon pits. All but one contained artefacts, chiefly sparse Middle Saxon pottery and bone, but 20121 contained an annular loomweight fragment.

Post Saxon:
No post-Saxon features were recorded in Green Area.

Undated:
The majority of undated features comprised 58 randomly scattered post-holes or small pits. No relationships or associations with other dated features were apparent but, given the absence of later material, it seems certain that these features belong with the Saxon occupation.

Black Area (Fig. 13)
This roughly rectangular trench (87m x 35m) formed a north-south aligned strip along the western edge of the development, connecting Pink Area at the south and Green Area on the north.

Work here took place between February and July 1995. Black Area lies towards the heart of the Saxon activity. It produced the greatest number of features overall, the greatest number of structures, the greatest quantity of post-Roman pottery (1251 sherds, including the unstratified material), and the complex post-medieval stone structure.

Prehistoric:
No features present.

Roman:
There were no features of this period in Black Area, although Romano-British pottery did occur as residual material in later features or as surface finds, during cleaning.

Early Saxon (Fig. 14):
The bulk of features assigned to this period (having exclusively Early Saxon pottery from their fills) are ditch/gullies and these are located predominantly in the northeast corner. In the main they form isolated lengths, although 20659 is a continuation from Green Area of 20191 and represents the longest unbroken ditch length of certain Early Saxon date. However, little or nothing survived of its relationship with 20673. Some relationships between ditches were apparent and indicated re-alignments within the Early phase. The Early Saxon ditches formed no recognisable organised land layout. However, two parallel linear ditches (20394 and 20416) may define the southern limit of the zone containing the majority of the post-built structures (the 'Residential Zone').

Numerous postholes were found north of these ditches (Plate 7). Some translate easily into structures others more tenuously so (Fig. 15). No floors survived nor were any internal features present to fully confirm grouped postholes as structures but from the ground plan seven possible buildings have been singled out (Fig. 15). Two of the clearest (Structures 1 and 2) appear to abut a fence/palisade. No definite dates can be attributed to any of the buildings and no stratigraphic relationships were present to assist the formation of a chronological sequence. Clearly the buildings represent repeated use of the same plot of land. Two basic structural shapes were present, sub-circular and rectangular. No Sunken Featured Buildings (SFBs) were evident among the structures. This area is perhaps the best preserved on the site and, if present, sunken featured buildings would have survived. Elsewhere on the site survival of shallow SFBs may not have been so certain.

Of the sub-circular, or 'horseshoe-shaped' buildings, Structure 3 is the most complete.

The suggestion that this may be Early Saxon stems from is its resemblance (identical in ground plan and size) to a posthole structure on the exclusively Early Saxon site at Dowsby, 15km to the southeast. Structure 6 is rather tenuous as a sub-circular structure and may be no more than a porch/annexe to Structure 1, for its possible entrance coincides with that of Structure 1.

No more than a small proportion of the postholes was excavated. Where datable material was present it was mainly Early Saxon but the amounts were so small as to be insignificant in terms of dating the structures. Four hearths (20506, 20637, 20516, 20504) were identified in the vicinity of the buildings. They took the form of oval depressions, the long axis varying between 1m - 1.3m. In each, natural deposits forming the hearth-bed was heat affected. None were obviously within a structure although the southern wall of Structure 1 and hearth 20637 share locations. The two easternmost (20506 and 20504) were located outside the putative fence/palisade thought to demarcate the building cluster. This implies that they operated prior to the creation of that division and probably belong to an early stage of site development (see below).

To the north of the structures lies a second agglomeration of pits (Pit Group B, Fig. 16). Their proximity to the buildings (*c.* 10m to the north of Structure 2) suggests association with the buildings and their activities. Certain of the pits are intercutting indicating repeated use (Fig. 40, Section 452; Fig. 41 Section 410). The pottery assemblage from Pit Group B spans the Early and Middle Saxon periods. Individual pits yielded Early Saxon only, whilst others contained mixed dated assemblages including Middle Saxon. Unlike Pit Group A, few personal items were retrieved, apart from a fragment of bone comb from pit 20530 and a knife from pit 20642. Nevertheless, the pits did contain domestic waste in the form of animal bones. In contrast to Pit Group A, in Green Area, this group lacked evidence of metalworking waste, confirming the zonation of activities within the site. However, initial surface cleaning of the site had revealed an unstratified loomweight and bone weaving tool.

To the south of the southern limits of the buildings zone lay an associated pit and gully (20632 and 20629). The gully appeared to feed or drain the near rectangular pit. From the pit fill came two possible mould fragments. No other material was present to date the moulds although they resembled those dated to the early period in Pit Group A.

Middle Saxon (Fig. 17):
The continuation of Enclosure 1, from Green Area, is evident in the northeast corner. Middle Saxon pottery was retrieved from its fills. The term 'enclosure' is descriptive rather than wholly interpretive for the feature continues into the unexcavated eastern part of the site and its original form can not be traced. The original purpose of the 'enclosure' is likewise masked. It displays geometric form and at *c.* 0.45m deep is more substantial than the nearby ditches/gullies (eg Fig. 41, Section 448 in comparison to 20427 Fig. 42, Section 440). The enclosure ditch shows signs of recutting and maintenance (Fig. 42, Section 389).

Farther south two Middle Saxon ditches (20585 and 20688) cross the site on the same east-west orientation as Enclosure 1.The former and southernmost yielded a significant group of almost entirely Middle Saxon sherds including an Ipswich Ware jar rim. The assemblage appears to date to the second half of the 8th century. However, the mould fragments present may

well be residual and date to the earlier period, as in Pit Group A.

Ditch 20688 lies just south of and perpetuates the Early Saxon ditch 20394 which, it was suggested, defined the southern limit of the buildings zone. The north-south linear posthole alignment (the fence/palisade) is parallel and 3m to the west of Enclosure 1. This precise conformity of alignment implies contemporeity. In turn this would link Structures 1 and 2, which abut the fence, with Enclosure 1, thereby suggesting a Middle Saxon date for them.

Pit Group B (Fig. 16) has been discussed in the Early Saxon section. Pit 20540 yielded a pottery assemblage dated to the late 7th-early 8th century.

Late Saxon.
No features present.

Medieval (Fig. 18):
Little survived to indicate obvious medieval usage of the landscape in Black Area. In the north, feature 20490 was probably a furrow associated with the north-south ridge along the western boundary, the proximity to the modern boundary ensuring its preservation. Similarly, an east-west ridge approximately central to Black Area is a former headland associated with medieval ridge and furrow (Fig. 30). This landscape feature is the prime reason for enhanced preservation in Black Area.

Post-medieval (Figs. 18, 19 and 20)
The only post-medieval structures form part of a cluster of related features in the southwest corner. The earliest recognised features were three ditches (20623, 20622, 20620) the last two being cut by an elongated pit (20590), *c.* 7.4m long by 2.4m wide by 0.3m deep. Contained within the pit were charcoal, ash and a mixed assemblage of pottery sherds of Middle Saxon, Medieval and 17th century date. Apart from the pottery, a copper Nuremberg jetton also indicated a 16th-17th century date for the deposits. Also present in the pit were bones of cow and sheep along with burnt seeds (grain and bean) and a piece of a clay pipe. Together the finds suggest a rubbish disposal function for the pit. A layer with large stones sealed the pit's lower organic fills, indicating the pit was deliberately backfilled.

It is assumed that the pit was totally infilled and inconspicuous by the time sub-square stone building (20606) was constructed, for its southern wall overlies the northern end of the pit (Fig. 20). The building encompassed an area 8m by 5m and was associated with a north-south track (20594) metalled with cornbrash identical to that occurring naturally in the vicinity Fig. 19; Plate 8). In total some 20m x 2.5m of the metalled track survived south from the stone structure but it is assumed that it originally continued south to the junction of the present road.

The curve of the exterior northwest corner of 20606 coincided with the east-west medieval headland and the north-south metalled track. The headland may have been used as a yard or turning area for carts for the outside corners of the stone walls were rounded, a common method of limiting damage to walls in area of restricted traffic manouverability.

Any features internal to the building would have been removed during the construction subsequently of a second stone structure (20608) (Fig. 20). This appears to represent some form of kiln or dryer. It took the form of a 0.5m thick stone wall, situated within the confines of the earlier structure and mirroring its plan. However, the south side had a different layout with

two separate stone 'walls', 1.2m thick, abutting the east and west walls of the earlier building. A 1m wide 'entrance' was centrally positioned on the south side. These second phase walls delimited a sunken area, 0.52m deep, at the bottom of which lay burnt ashy fills covered by stone slabs (Fig. 43, Section 519). Stone rubble, probably remains of the collapsed walls of the first phase building, butted up to the thick southern phase 2 walls. Cart tracks (20595) orientated north-south and *c.* 1.5m apart (Fig. 43, Section 529) veered northeast towards the entrance. These were not observed on the rubble yard (20616) which may have undergone at least one phase of remetalling and repair.

Proximity of the two stone buildings to the nearby manor house (*c.* 120m to the west) implies that the two are connected. The Enclosure map of Quarrington, dated 1794, (LAO Kesteven Award 67) (Fig.33) shows the general area of the site but the scale is such that it is not possible to confirm the precise location of individual buildings shown thereon. However, a single isolated building in the general area may be the stone structure on Black Area. If so, the fact that it existed and was mapped sometime prior to 1794 would fit in with the general date proposed for the structure in Black Area.

Though its date may be reasonably determined the purpose and precise function remains elusive. The amount of ash and burnt material suggest a drying facility, almost certainly for agricultural produce, but the form of the second phase stone structure has yet to be parallelled. Samples from within the second phase structure yielded evidence of charcoal and ash, as well as seeds (grain and bean) and a few bones of sheep, cow, cat and amphibian fauna, but nothing in quantities sufficient to indicate beyond doubt the primary function.

Following complete abandonment the stone superstructure of the buildings may have been robbed and it is thought that little could have showed when the same location was chosen for the excavation of a grave pit (20621)(Fig. 22; Phase 4) into which was interred a horse. The pit fill contained small quantities of pottery of 17th and 18th century date.

Undated Features:
By far the largest number of features in Black Area were those that were unphased. These included ditches, pits and post holes. Most were believed to be Saxon, but not closely dateable within the period.

Pink Area (Fig. 21)
Pink area encompassed a roughly rectangular block of land, 105m x 35m, extending westwards from the south end of the access road along the southern perimeter, adjacent to Town Road, to the development boundary on the west side. At the northwest it abutted Black Area. Work commenced in October 1993 and revealed thirty 'features', of which at least seven were subsequently attributed to glacial activity. The latter were sited chiefly in the eastern and central part of the trench whereas the archaeology was concentrated on the west side.

Prehistoric:
No features present.

Roman (Fig. 22):
A northwest-southeast gully (20045) produced a large number of Romano-British pottery fragments, mostly from two vessels (see Davies, Appendix VI). Although the fragments were very small, they were generally fresh and unabraded and probably represent a primary deposit of rubbish. In close proximity to this gully and sharing the same alignment were two similar features. Of these, 20046 produced

two sherds of Romano-British pottery and one of post-medieval blackware, the latter probably intrusive. The remaining gully (20044) produced no dating material but the parallel orientation suggests it belonged with those adjacent and was, therefore, Roman.

Early Saxon (Fig. 22):
A highly truncated ditch (20049), on the western end of pink area, produced Early Saxon pottery from one section. None of the remaining sections revealed any finds. The ditch was truncated by an east-west linear gully (20033, Fig. 23) which contained Middle Saxon material. The results of the magnetometer survey (Fig.6) show the continuation of 20049 sweeping round in an arc before deviating back to the northwest. Other magnetometer anomalies in the unexcavated parts north of pink area may be continuations of ditch 20049 but the lengths recorded are discontinuous.

Middle Saxon (Fig. 23):
Three ditch/gullies produced Middle Saxon pottery. Ditches 20032 and 20033 are on alignments common to other Middle Saxon ditches on the site, whereas the northwest-southeast orientation of ditch 20031 suggests it did not form part of the regular Middle Saxon pattern and may be chronologically disparate.

Late Saxon:
No features were present.

Medieval:
No features were present.

Post medieval (Fig. 24):
Ditch 20023, aligned with the southern boundary of the development, may be no more than an earlier limit of the road linking the A15 and the present day village. Its western terminal and the southern terminal of ditch 20040 together may have represented the site of a field entrance. North-south ditch 20040 may have formed part of the eastern boundary to a track leading to the stone structure in Black Area.

Modern (Fig.24):
The north-south post alignment immediately to the east of ditch 20040 is known to have been modern, the fence posts were *in situ* prior to excavation. Other modern features were a series of linear plough gouges to the southeast of the area.

Undated features (Fig. 22):
These comprised three unrelated postholes of which 20042 and 20043 were 1.4m apart and of a similar depth and diameter.

Orange Area (Fig.25)
Orange Area lay to the west of Green Area and formed an inverted L-shaped area measuring 76m by 28m north-south and 58m by 32m east-west. Work commenced in October 1994 and excavation revealed ditches/gullies, pits, a few postholes and seven medieval plough furrows.

Prehistoric (Fig. 26):
Pit (20357) contained a near complete inverted pot of prehistoric date (Fig. 60). The base was missing, presumably plough damaged, and the full profile was not retrievable. From the style of decoration and form of the remainder of the vessel the base is likely to have been rounded. The fragility of the vessel necessitated its removal within a block of soil and therefore the precise dimensions of the pit in which it was placed could not be determined. The intact contents of the vessel may have been contaminated due to the damaged base.

Following excavation within a block of the surrounding matrix, the vessel was removed to a Conservation Laboratory

where it was consolidated, reconstructed and the internal contents excavated and examined. The pot was identified as Neolithic in date (3000BC) and of the Peterborough Ebbsfleet type (C. Allen, Appendix V; Fig.60).

On the subsoil near to the broken base lay sparse burnt bone fragments of unidentified species. Given their proximity to the vessel and the nature of the deposition of the vessel, *ie* complete and inverted, it could be suggested that the bone fragments represent a human cremation interred within the pot. However, only a few grams of burnt bone were retrieved from excavation of the vessel contents in the laboratory. The Neolithic pit is the only one of its type found on the site and seems to represent a single, isolated event.

Roman (Fig. 26):
One possible Roman rubbish pit (20247), was identified towards the southwest corner of Orange Area. Contained within it were mainly cow-sized rib bones and a piece of unworn Roman pottery. Lack of abrasion on the sherd would suggest that it lay in an original context rather than being a residual piece.

Early Saxon (Fig. 26):
The presence of furrows from ridge and furrow ploughing is an indicator of later damage to the site. However, the fact that these were recorded only on Orange Area does not necessarily indicate that this area has suffered greatest from plough damage. Conversely, the presence of relict furrows was matched by the presence of the accompanying low protective ridges. Therefore, the overall paucity of Early Saxon dated features on Orange Area is probably an accurate reflection of the actual distribution of features and marks a genuine fall off of Early Saxon activity.

With the exception of isolated pit (20361), which contained large quantities of animal bone, an amber bead (Fig. 46,b) and exclusively Early Saxon pottery, the remaining features dated to this period were lengths of ditch (20255, 20254, 20337, 20325 and 20236). All of these continued in use into Middle Saxon and will be further discussed in the next section.

Ditch 20236 contained one fragment from a mould, while the Middle Saxon ditch 20349 (Fig. 27) produced a crucible fragment.

Middle Saxon (Fig. 27):
The Middle Saxon ditches may perpetuate a system laid out in the Early Saxon period. Evidence is strongest in the southern part where better preservation has provided a fuller record. East-west ditch (20259) appears to have been regularly recut (Fig. 44, Section 277 and Section 280). Magnetometer survey beyond the limits of excavation showed this ditch sweeping north where it emerged as ditch 20326 (Fig. 6). After continuing north for *c.* 10m 20236 turns towards the southeast. There was a general northeast-southwest trend for the ditches in the northern part of Orange Area. However, the cuts are irregular in plan and overall do not form coherent geometric parcels of land.

In the angle of ditch 20236 (Fig. 28) a series of postholes may have represented a Saxon structure (Structure 9). A shallow slot (20308), *c.* 4m long connected two postholes but at the southern end a medieval furrow had destroyed any relationship between the slot and the southeastern posthole. The feature may have been a beam slot, representing a structural style hitherto unrecognised on the Quarrington site. The evidence for the structure is not overwhelming but it is interesting to note its proximity to a linear cut 20331 (Fig. 45, Section 312) inserted

into 20236. The fills of 20331 yielded a group of 140 sherds chiefly Middle Saxon in character and probably dating to the 8th century.

In addition to the pottery were large quantities of bone representing cow, sheep, pig, horse and chicken, in descending order of frequency. Within the bone finds there were pieces from six bone combs and a burnt piece of worked bone that may have been from a comb. The other finds included a copper strap end, an iron nail and pieces of degraded quern stone. Apart from the material finds a soil sample was examined for small faunal and floral remains (Appendix XII). This added the remains of rodent, amphibian, fish and egg shells, to the faunal record, and a large number of cereal grains and some seeds, to the floral. The possibility exists that 20331 is, itself, a sunken featured building, or even two adjacent or partially superimposed SFBs. However, it is longer and narrower than those found elsewhere and more likely represents no more than a ditch recut. Unfortunately, a medieval plough furrow bisected the feature destroying its integrity. Whatever its origins the feature indisputably contained a domestic assemblage belonging to the 8th century.

In the southwestern corner of Orange Area a build up of topsoil some 1m thick was possibly due to disposal/clearance activities from the adjacent manor house farm *c.* 50m to the south. In the tradition of the site the southernmost curving ditch (20227) was recut extensively including a short length 0.3m deep, with vertical sides uncommon on the site (Fig. 29; Fig. 45, Section 344).

In the extreme southwest corner, sealed beneath up to 0.8m of soil build up (20246), an area of criss-cross score marks was recorded, Given the depth of overburden and the form of the medieval plough methods, these score marks must be Saxon or earlier in date. They resemble the pattern of ard marks sometimes seen on prehistoric sites (eg Fowler 1983, 113) but their precise date is undetermined.

To the north of the score marks were two intercutting pits (20249, 20251). The former 20249 may have formed the access to the roughly circular, *c.* 1m diameter and 0.45m deep, pit 20251. Within the pit were quantities of burnt and heated stones. It resembled features identified elsewhere as cooking pits (Plate 10). Such features are relatively common and their form, and the nature of remaining evidence, changes little through time. In Lincolnshire examples are known from the Neolithic period in the Bain valley (Chowne, 1988) and Saxon period at Nettleton Top (Field and Leahy 1993, 18). Another example, at Dowsby was undated but believed to be either Bronze Age or Early Saxon (Lane 1994, 18).

Late Saxon:
No features were found.

Medieval (Fig 29):
Medieval activity comprised the remnants of ploughing (Fig. 30). The other medieval feature was a mound of soil (20246) in the southwestern corner of the trench. The plot of ridge and furrow (Fig. 30), suggests that the build up did not originate as a headland.

Post-medieval (Fig. 29):
This period is represented by continued use of the north-south aligned ridge and furrow farming system. The remaining feature was a burial pit (20292) complete with a sherd of post medieval Blackware and recent looking calf skeleton (Plate 11).

Undated:
The majority of the undated features were

postholes. Of these, seven lay within the angle of ditch 20326 and possibly formed a building (Structure 9; Fig. 28). The remaining undated features were two unassociated pits and short lengths of gullies/ ditches.

4. Discussion

The importance of the site at Quarrington lies in its size/extent, longevity and in that its main period of operation lay firmly within the Anglo-Saxon period. This allows not only insight into an ill-understood period in archaeological study but, more significantly, to changes within that period. Excavated sites of the period, especially those where both Early and Middle Saxon archaeology is present and largely uncontaminated by later development, remain rare both regionally and nationally, and, despite recent advances, the 'Dark Age' tag for the Saxon period remains as appropriate now as ever.

Quite naturally, the early excitement regarding the site at Quarrington centred on the metalworking debris discovered during initial evaluation. Moulds and crucibles are almost unknown in Early Saxon Britain (Bayley, 1991). However, in terms of the metalworking, the results of the later excavations at Quarrington are perhaps, overall, not as exciting and informative as initially hoped for. The metalworking element, though extremely rare, proved to be concentrated only in the area where first found during the evaluations and to be single period, leaving the development of metalworking through the Saxon period still poorly understood. It may be said that relatively little additional data on Saxon metalworking has been recovered since that initial evaluation. Moreover, preservation of some features has not been as good as expected from the initial work.

However, those aspects, important though they may be, have almost been overshadowed by other elements of the site record. In particular, the ceramics represent one of the largest excavated assemblages in Britain and demonstrate wide ranges of forms and stylistic developments and trading contacts. The hand-made Anglo-Saxon material includes a wide range of fabric types utilizing quartz, sandstones, oolitic limestone, fossil shell, igneous rock ironstone, chaff and muscovite as tempering agents. It may be worth comparing the quantities of stratified Saxon pottery from Quarrington with the quantities retrieved from other regional rural Saxon sites or even with major urban or ecclesiastical sites.

SITE	*ESTIMATED SHERD TOTAL*
FLIXBOROUGH, N.HUMBERSIDE	5500
QUARRINGTON, LINCS	**1974**
REPTON, DERBYSHIRE	900
FISHERGATE, YORK	800
BOURN BRIDGE, CAMBS	413
MAXEY, NORTHANTS	311
PINCHBECK, LINCS	224
GOSBERTON (GOS92), LINCS	187
HINXTON, CAMBS	143
DOWSBY, LINCS	114
GOSBERTON (GOS93), LINCS	62
GOSBERTON (GBT93), LINCS	53

Table 2. Estimated sherd totals from Anglo-Saxon sites in Eastern England

The extent of features indicated during the magnetometer surveys was impressive and has been largely confirmed by excavation. Structural remains are rare in Anglo-Saxon archaeology. Such was the density of postholes in Black Area at Quarrington that several alternative structures have been postulated (Fig. 15). Moreover, the animal bone record (Appendix XIII) has provided a rare insight into the developing rural economy and given a hint at the widespread changes taking place. Finally, the site may be a genuine and rare example of the beginnings of a present day village, an uncontaminated example of the genesis of a living community spanning some 1500 years.

Typically for a rural site, cultivation has damaged the integrity of the archaeological record; stratigraphic sequences were usually short and isolated. Nevertheless, what was lacking in depth was compensated for in area and the spatial configurations within the excavated area have proved useful in reconstructing Quarrington's Saxon activities.

The preservation issue, though, remains paramount and an initial statement outlining state of preservation/condition precedes the remainder of this section in order that the discussions and descriptions which follow may be considered and reviewed in their appropriate context.

Survival and Preservation

1) Stratigraphic/Structural

Like many sites of this magnitude, differential survival and preservation has affected the archaeological record. Survival of pre-medieval features has been affected adversely by the ridge and furrow style of medieval agriculture, with the furrows scouring out earlier archaeology in linear

bands. This was especially prevalent in Orange Area in the northwest of the excavations.

Conversely, whilst destructive in certain parts of the site, this same agricultural system served to protect and preserve good quality archaeology beneath 'headlands', such as the westernmost strip of Black Area and a second west-east linear band along the centre of Black Area. A build up of topsoils over the southernmost part of Orange Area also provided some protection for ancient features from modern agriculture . Beneath this 'mound' the density of ditch/gully type features is significantly greater than in adjacent parts of Orange Area.

It may be no coincidence that the density of 'slight' or shallow features, in particular postholes, is greatest in the better protected zones within Black Area. Whether post built structures were confined originally only to that part of the site in the Saxon periods cannot be known. Unquestionably, the centre of Black Area is a 'residential' zone but, near-total erosion of similar structural remains elsewhere on the site is a possibility.

That some features are lost to agricultural attrition is confirmed by the results of the magnetometer survey (see Fig. 6 and Appendix IV) which indicates lengths of ditches continuing beyond the extent of those found during excavation.

2) Artefacts

Artefacts appear to have survived in moderate quantity and condition. Pottery of the Early period in this region is chiefly sandy, hard fired and robust, enabling good rates of survival. The shelly Middle Saxon wares may be expected to have a slightly reduced chance of long-term survival but, nevertheless, are present in quantity. Much of the ironwork was, as expected, severely corroded.

Not surprisingly, given the calcareous nature of the surrounding soils, animal bones survived in quantity. Their condition varied, with those from shallower features subject to greater erosion and surface corrosion. It was noted also that, for a number of reasons, the material recovered may have demonstrated a bias towards mature, larger bones and/or species. While bones are in the ground those of younger animals, being unfused and more segmented, are prone to more rapid deterioration, reducing their chances of survival and later recovery. Similarly, species of smaller invertebrates may also be under represented in the overall assemblage. Cats and dogs were represented in the bone assemblage from Quarrington, indicating the likelihood of gnawing/breaking up and even consumption of bones from smaller species during the life of the site.

3) Ecofacts

With the exception of bones (considered above) and possibly molluscs, site conditions were such that almost all of the organic record would have been erased. The mollusc assemblage indicated intrusive burrowers and, given the general shallow nature of the features, the potential contamination of mollusc samples rendered their retrieval unviable. No wood or pollen survived in the shallow fills, although some macrofossils, both charred and uncharred, were recovered. However, the shallow nature of many of the fills increased the risk of the presence of modern contaminants to the extent that environmental potential, and therefore the scale of environmental sampling, was not great. Moreover, resolution within feature fills was adversely affected by homogenisation, due in the main to earthworm activity, and this reduced further the potential for charting any

changes within either the environment or Saxon farming/crop practices and preferences.

Site history and development

Before discussing the archaeology it is worth considering as a group the 'features' investigated during the excavations which were eventually interpreted as being of natural origin. These varied from the 'polygonal ice wedges' described by Coupland (1994, 1) and most prevalent in Green Area, to amorphous depressions (eg 20011 in Red Area), possibly representing tree bowls. 'Natural features' occur commonly on many types of geology and, until excavated, are often not discernable from anthropogenically derived ('man-made') archaeological features. On the Plan of Features (Fig. 5) these excavated natural features are included in order that a full record of all the work undertaken is presented. However, only 'man-made' features are presented in the following phase plans.

Pre-Saxon phases

Sites of many periods are known from the environs of Quarrington and there is no specific reason why the Quarrington site should not have seen some human use before the Saxon occupation. Quantities of material and features representing pre-Saxon activity on the site are relatively limited. Pink Area contained three severely truncated Roman features containing highly fragmented sherds of first century AD pottery and a possible Roman pit was recorded in Orange Area. Elsewhere on the site Roman pottery was spread thinly. Its date-range spanned the first to fourth centuries with a high proportion belonging to the third century. Function of the pottery was chiefly domestic/culinary and, despite an apparent lack of abrasion on many sherds, the collection is suggestive of midden-dumped domestic breakages subsequently distributed on the fields of Quarrington during manuring of arable land.

Unsurprisingly, a number of residual pre-Roman sherds were also present and scattered widely, probably by the same (manuring) process. These suggest pre-Saxon use of the site for crop production.

The Neolithic pottery vessel discovered inverted in Orange Area most probably held a cremation. Fragments of soft calcined bone were noted in the immediate vicinity of the vessel during its removal from the ground but, somewhat surprisingly, no more than a few flecks were found during excavation of the contents in the laboratory. Whether the burial, for that is what it seems to represent, was as isolated as it appears is not certain, for any vessels in shallower pits would have been plough-damaged. There was no evidence to confirm that the vessel had been deposited within a burial mound or enclosure, in any case the style of deposition was not common in the long barrows of the period. If the interment of humbler Neolithic citizens followed cremation and was in pots buried in isolation it is unsurprising that such evidence is not a commonly encountered facet of Neolithic culture. On the whole the Neolithic vessel from Orange Area appears to represent no more than a chance find from a very limited episode of Neolithic activity. A fragment of stone axe and a few isolated flints confirm the low-level Neolithic presence without suggesting occupation of the site.

Of the larger sites of pre-Saxon origin near to Quarrington perhaps the best known is that at Old Sleaford, 2.3km to the northeast. Here developed a settlement of some status during the Iron Age, its importance signified by the vast numbers

of coin mould fragments (by far the largest assemblage from any site in Europe [Brown and Simmons 1985,31]) discovered during salvage excavations in the 1960s. Old Sleaford developed into a small town in the Roman period (Harris 1979a,6). It may be no coincidence that excavation of a car park adjacent to the church of St. Denys in New Sleaford, no more than a kilometre west of the Roman town, revealed traces of Early and possibly Middle Anglo-Saxon occupation (Mahany 1979, 23). Given the presence and location of the large Early Saxon cemetery in Sleaford (0.5km south of St.Denys') it could be argued that Sleaford, Old and New, represented the major settlement in the locality over a long period, with the Saxon settlement focus having drifted somewhat from the Iron Age and Roman centre but still representing the acknowledged main town. If this were the case it may be significant in determining the status and function of Quarrington's Saxon settlement, perhaps as a satellite settlement to Sleaford.

The Saxon Occupation

As stated previously, Anglo-Saxon activity at Quarrington was represented chiefly by ditches, pits, gullies, hearths and postholes. Associated artefacts, most commonly ceramics, are almost exclusively Early/Middle Anglo-Saxon in origin. Within this section of the report the overall evidence from the site will be considered and discussed within the context of the known pattern of local Saxon activity.

Chronological Parameters

Dating resolution for the Earlier Saxon period is still relatively imprecise. The earliest Saxon pottery from Quarrington is thought to be 5th-6th century AD. Such a date would suggest that either of the known cemeteries, sited *c.* 5km northwest and 1.3km northeast of the excavations, may have served the population of the Quarrington settlement. As far as can be ascertained the date range of both cemeteries is 6th to early 7th centuries (Harris 1979b, 10). On topographical grounds the Sleaford cemetery might have been a preferred choice, for it just about lies in view of the site whereas the northwest cemetery would have been obscured by a low hill.

That the settlement continued in the 7th-8th centuries AD is suggested by the style, form and range of pottery recovered (Young, Appendix VII). Presence of imported vessels in both periods confirmed trading contacts and suggests the site was not an insular backwater community but susceptible to at least regional influences. Therefore, the absence of identifiable Late Saxon pottery suggests that the excavated part of the site at least had been abandoned by this period. It must be emphasised that abandonment of this part of the site does not necessarily indicate the total demise of the community. Indeed, in this instance, it is unlikely to represent no more than intra-site dynamics or settlement drift, perhaps a nucleation/consolidation nearer to the centre of the present village.

That the excavated part of the site had gone out of use by the Late Saxon (9th-10th centuries) is near certain. It would be most unlikely that, having demonstrated wide-ranging contacts in the Middle period, the site would be oblivious to and unaffected by developments in Late Saxon ceramics and merely continue with 'old-fashioned' pottery. Therefore, it may be proposed with some confidence that settlement had ceased on the excavated area by the 9th century.

Layout of the site

As stated previously the possibility that both the Early and Middle style ceramics

may have been in contemporary use at some time inhibits positive phasing of some features. Truncation of features and homogenisation of fills have diminished the potential for establishing intra-site developments. Notwithstanding this, some of the layout of ditches/gullies (fields/enclosures) exhibits a distinct pattern with chronological implications. Moreover, it is believed that at least one 'habitation' zone has been identified (in Black Area) and that the metalworking areas were on the outskirts of the settlement.

Structures clustered in one area of the site and the ceramic assemblages indicate that this general area was used for habitation during both Early and Middle periods. Dateable pottery was densest in Black Area (702 sherds compared with 630 in Green Area and 587 in Orange Area). In Orange Area the percentages of sherds dateable to Early- and those dateable to Middle- Saxon is equal at 44% of the assemblage, whereas in both Black and Green Areas the Earlier material dominates with 78% and 68% respectively.

Earlier Ditches/Gullies (Fig. 31)
The combined plan of linear features recorded during excavation and magnetometery (Fig. 6) reveals a complicated series of overlying ditches/gullies. Several orientations are apparent, most notably NE-SW (eg Ditch 20049), NW-SE (eg Ditches 20659 and 20191, Fig. 31)) and, most prominently, variations on the east-west alignment typified by Enclosure 1 (see Figure 32). Whilst the Middle period ditch/gullies are orientated broadly on the cardinal points the earlier ditches are less regimented.

The densest concentration of Early period gullies appears at the north end of Black Area. Their location might hint at activity taking place immediately to the east of Black Area, beyond the limit of excavation. The orientation of ditch 20659/20191 does not conform to the general pattern and might support an argument for a short-term abandonment of the site at some point prior to the setting out of land parcels defined by gullies and possibly forming the basis of the pattern of enclosures/fields which carried on into and through the Middle period.

Three ditches, pits and structures recorded may generally be assigned to the Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon period even when associated finds are absent, given the general lack of demonstrably earlier and later features in the excavated areas (with the exception of the readily distinguishable late- or post- Anglo-Saxon ridge and furrow, and the post-medieval building and associated ditches in the southern half of Black Area and in Green Area). An overall scheme of the development of the ditch system cannot be postulated as insufficient area has been excavated and ditch lengths are often incomplete, providing few stratigraphic relationships.

However, some trends may be discerned. At an early stage, in Green and Black Areas a large enclosure with funnel shaped entrance, possibly from a trackway, is suggested by curvilinear ditches 20191/20659 and 20169, while a second enclosure, containing Pit Group A, may have been attached to its north side, defined to the east by an early Anglo-Saxon ditch pre-dating 20121. A second possible trackway orientated east-west lying some 40m to the south may be indicated by the parallel ditches 20394 and 20416, while a further possible curvilinear enclosure is hinted at to the south (20049). Despite its Early Anglo-Saxon date from the pottery a still earlier phase is indicated by an L-shaped length of ditch (20663) with Early Saxon pottery that is cut by ditch 20671, again with Early Saxon wares.

2) Later ditches/gullies (Fig.32)
The most complete of the surviving lengths of ditch/gully appears to mark three sides of an Enclosure 1. Whether a fourth (eastern) side ever existed cannot be certain, although magnetometery recorded a likely candidate in the unexcavated zone east of Black Area (Fig. 6). Several reasons could explain why the northern length appears to terminate to the east; perhaps any continuation was shallow and subsequently ploughed away; perhaps there existed a (northeastern) corner entrance, an explanation which would favour a stock control function (Pryor, 1996); perhaps a fourth side did once exist but took the form of a hedge or fence. No evidence for any specific function was recovered for Enclosure 1, although less than 30% of its projected area was exposed. There was certainly no evidence for structures within that part examined.

Of the remaining Middle period ditch/gullies a number in the southern part of Black Area are aligned east-west and might be expected to fall within the essentially rectilinear pattern of Middle period features. The least formal and most puzzling bisects Orange Area in a northwest-southeast line but is not picked up on the magnetometer plot of the adjacent land to the east. Contained within this length is one possible structure (Fig. 28). Neither does this linear feature match the orientation of the majority of Middle period linears nor maintain a straight course. Whilst the temptation is to pass the feature off as an element of a field system, the irregularity of its course, idiosyncratic character and lack of obvious function, along with the presence of ?Structure 10, deems it unusual and it may have had a greater significance than can be demonstrated by current evidence.

Pagan Anglo-Saxon settlements excavated on any scale have so far failed to produce evidence of contemporary ditch systems although some settlements are superimposed on systems of an earlier date (Bishopstone, Sussex, Bell 1977, Fig. 86, with dating p.238; Mucking, Essex, Hamerow 1993,19). At Chalton, Hampshire (6th and 7th centuries, Addyman and Leigh 1973, Fig.3) and Cowdery's Down, Hampshire (Early/Middle Anglo-Saxon, Millett and James 1983), regular rectilinear yards with abutting buildings were defined by post built fences, but there was no indication of an extensive ditched enclosure and trackway system similar to that at Quarrington.

Ditched systems have, however, been identified at the pagan Anglo-Saxon settlement at West Stow, Suffolk (West 1985, Vol I 54-5, Vol II Fig. 7), although introduced late in the life of the settlement. At Maxey, Northants, a Middle Saxon settlement, related ditches have been claimed, but firm evidence for contemporeity is lacking (Addyman 1964, 37). Probably the most striking parallel to the Quarrington arrangements is at Catholme, Staffs., where ditches defined trackways and enclosures of a size and layout comparable to Quarrington, many recut and redefined over several phases. The ditches were shallow and U-shaped in section, generally up to 0.8m deep and between 0.6 and 1.5m wide (Losco-Bradley and Wheeler 1984, 103). It is unclear whether the fenced enclosures of the Hampshire sites are equivalent to the Quarrington and Catholme ditched enclosures. There is too much diversity among too few examples to determine whether these differences are chronological, geographical, functional, or simply related to survival of the evidence.

Buildings and Settlement Form
One of the problems with confronting the

evidence for Early and Middle Saxon homesteads and fields is that the evidence from the remainder of the country is singularly poor. Therefore, it is hard to gain any sense of what might typically be present on the site. Excavations on Early and Middle Saxon sites on the Fenland of Lincolnshire and Norfolk were generally small scale and failed to provide full details of ground plans. In any case, fundamental differences in the contemporary environment and landscape between the Fenland sites and Quarrington, and therefore, likely differences in site function, may have destined that site layouts would not have been comparable. Nevertheless, it is known from aerial photographic evidence that the Early and Middle Saxon Fenland site at Chopdike Drove, Gosberton, lay within a system of ditched fields which could be traced over at least 30ha. These appear to have been more geometric and ordered than the parcels of land delimited by the Quarrington ditches. The Fenland sites also grew arable crops alongside their more pastoral farming with six-row hulled barley *(Hordeum vulgare)*, horsebean (*Vicia faba var minor*) and pea (*Pisum sativum*) being prominent and flax/linseed (*Linum usitatissimum*) occurring consistently (Murphy 1994, 76).

Nearer to Quarrington, the limited excavations at Osbournby, 6.5km to the south, provided evidence for the posthole structures and ditches but not enough was exposed to understand the settlement morphology (Mahany, 1977)

Fragmented they may be, but the ditches at Quarrington hint a considerable activity in the area. None, however, appear directly associated with structures, and it is the structural remains, rather than copious ditches, that confirm the actual occupation of the Quarrington site.

Structures

With the exception of one possible beam slot and a possible sunken featured building, both in Orange Area, all that remains of the actual structures is the postholes, only a portion of which have undergone excavation. Floor levels and any internal features such as hearths have been ploughed away. On sites such as Quarrington, where settlement stretched over several generations, the extent of the renewal of existing structures, often on the same piece of ground, and just general maintenance has resulted in a bewildering jumble of postholes. Whilst posts in Black Area do form some coherent patterns, the quantity and density of post holes doubtless masks identification of other structures, particularly the flimsier constructions.

None of the individual postholes in Black Area are themselves dated. A few contained single sherds which may have been residual. However, the forms and shape described by posthole groups can give some indication of chronological succession. Consideration of the ground plan has led to the putative structures highlighted in Figure 15.

Before considering the suggested structures individually, possible limits to the occupation zone are worth noting. To the south, a recut and remade east-west aligned ditch/gully appears to delimit the densest distribution of postholes while a north-south aligned fence, extending for *c.* 26m and filling a gap between lengths of shallow ditch similarly demarcates the eastern limit. Buildings 1 and 2 (Fig. 15) appear to abut the fence, a situation recorded recently on the Fenland Project excavation at Mornington House, Gosberton (Lane 1993a, 31), and at Cowdery's Down, Basingstoke buildings A1, B4 and B5 (Addyman and Leigh 1973, Fig. 3; Millett and James 1983, Fig. 27), a site where 'most of the structures stand

within, or abut palisaded enclosures' (James *et al,* 1984 184). However, Structure 1 may overlap the fenceline. Other fences may have existed at Quarrington but cannot be identified due to erosion.

No formal boundaries were recognised to the north of the localised settlement zone. If such delimiting featurse existed they were either not recognised, non-surviving or of non-retrievable character (eg a hedge).

Postholes describe two basic ground plan shapes, sub-circular and rectangular. All forms have been recognised elsewhere in Saxon contexts. Results from compilation of a data-base of measurements of known Saxon buildings has demonstrated that, in general, Anglo-Saxon structures increase in size through the period (Marshall and Marshall 1991, 42) and that rule of thumb may be applied at Quarrington.

Structures 1 and 2 at Quarrington are broadly similar in size with Structure 1, at 9.5m by 4.5m the larger. The dimensions lie within the range common for buildings of the Anglo-Saxon period (Marshall and Marshall 1991, 34). Both buildings share the same alignment and abut fence line 1. The rectangular Structure 1 resembles those commonly found on other extensively-excavated Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon settlements such as Bishopstone, Sussex (Bell, 1977), Mucking, Essex (Hamerow, 1993), West Stow, Suffolk (West 1985), Chalton, Hampshire (Addyman and Leigh, 1973), Maxey, Northamptonshire (Addyman 1964) and Catholme, Staffordshire (Losco-Bradley, 1974). Particular points of similarity include the c. 2.5:1 ratio of length to width, the long walls more heavily constructed with larger post holes than the end walls, and the location of doorways towards the centres of the long walls. These are marked by larger postholes and are often recut (compare for example Catholme Structures 16 and 17 [Losco-Bradley 1974, 12 and 15, Figs. 6 and 9]). Structure 2 appears to be an incomplete plan of the same type, consisting largely of the west end of the south long-wall, while its east end and the north long-wall are unclear.

Other rectangular post-built structures are known in the more immediate vicinity; at Osbournby the single structure identified on a small-scale excavation measured 7m by 4m (Mahany 1977, 26) and at Mornington House, Gosberton, 11m by 5m (Lane 1993a, 31). The Osbournby structure was assigned to the Early period whilst the Gosberton example is Middle Saxon. The rectangular structure at Chopdike Drove, Gosberton, 22km southeast of Quarrington, was of different construction, with posts only at the corners and beam slots defining the remainder of the structure. In total, the structure measured 14m by 6.5m. It remains undated but probably belongs within the eighth century (Lane 1993b, 40).

Structure 3 at Quarrington is reminiscent of post settings of an Early Saxon building at Dowsby, 15km southeast, along the Fen edge (Lane 1994, 16). Quarrington Structure 3 defines a sub-circular 'horseshoe' shape measuring 4m by 4m the same dimensions as the Dowsby example. No evidence for continuation into the Middle Saxon period was found at Dowsby and on that basis it is tempting to assign an Early date to Structure 3 at Quarrington. Structure 3 appears to possess a number of internal features, whilst these may be contemporary they may, equally, belong with a different period of activity.

While the attribution of specific postholes to Structure 4 is more arguable, the presence of a rectilinear structure here

(with a suggestion of an internal partition at its east end) is clear. The irregularity of alignment of the wall-post settings is also a common feature and suggests the use of thick mass walling such as mud, rather than planking, and may also indicate the use of an irregular wall-plate (Charles 1981, 12.05-12.10 and Fig. 3). Its proximity to Structure 3 argues against their contemporeity, as indeed does the relationship between 3 and 1. No function has been proven for any of the structures but Structure 4 appears more shed-like than most.

Post holes that together form the putative Structure 5 at best describe a semi-circle and may have formed a shelter for a working area or animal pen. There is some doubt as to the validity of Structure 6. A circular plan (*c.* 3m diameter) has been suggested tentatively but the northernmost post holes may be unconnected and the southernmost may have been part of a porch/annexe to Structure 1. Fragments of other structural features exist, for example, Structure 7. This appears to be an incomplete part of a rectilinear structure. The remainder could have been masked by topsoil, for a north-south strip of land north of Structure 4 was not machined far enough down to define small features, although the larger pits could be seen. Structure 7 differs from the others in having equally substantial posts in adjacent walls. Although less common, stoutly built end-walls are also known on near-square structures, for example, Chalton (Hampshire) structures A6 and A7 interpreted as ancillary to the rectangular buildings (Addyman and Leigh 1973, 10-11, Fig. 5).

Structure 8 is again putative. It took the form of a semi-circle of postholes at the western end of Pit Group A, in Green Area. It may have been an earlier sub-circular structure cut away during pit digging or, more probably another temporary shelter.

At the angle of Ditch 20326 in Orange Area, the possible Structure 9 may be of rectilinear form. Due to its fragmentary nature it is unclear whether a building or a fenced enclosure is represented. It has been interpreted on Figure 28 as having a 7m long eastern wall. The southern end may have been constructed on a beam laid into the ground with postholes at the corners, making a total length of some 4.5m. An easterly extension of postholes suggests the possibility of the north side being incorporated into a fence/palisade, resembling construction characteristics of Structures 1 and 2. No evidence was found of a west wall.

One reason to suspect that Structure 9 might have been a dwelling is the nature of the assemblage recovered from a late cut (20331) 0.35m deep made into the near-infilled ditch a few metres to the northeast. Material retrieved from the feature was largely domestic waste including large quantities of bone with cow, sheep, pig, horse and chicken in descending order of frequency, a copper strap end, an iron nail and pieces of a degraded lava quern. Among the non-ceramic finds were pieces from six bone combs and one burnt piece of worked bone, possibly another comb fragment. Bulk Samples added the remains of rodent, amphibian, fish and egg shells to the faunal record and a large number of cereal grains and weed seeds to the floral. The latter were in poor condition and not further identifiable. Clearly this was an assemblage of household waste.

During the excavations this feature had been tentatively suggested as representing a sunken featured building, although it was recognised that the dimensions (8m long by 2.3m wide) placed it outside the normal size range. No postholes were found at the

long ends. However, the area was much damaged by later ridge and furrow, leaving the possibility that the depression could represent not one single SFB but two slightly offset. However, given its proximity, it is more probable that 20331 was a disposal area associated with post built Structure 9.

Although Structure 1 may be compared in size with, for example, C9 at Cowdery's Down (10.1 by 5.4m [Millett and James 1983, Fig. 40]) there is nothing at Quarrington to compete in size and sophistication with the largest buildings there (eg C12 at 22.1 by 8.8m [Millett and James 1983, Fig. 45]) and it seems reasonable to conclude that Quarrington was not a high status site like Cowdery's Down (Millett and James 1983, 247-49), at least within the excavated settlement area. This observation is supported by the probable use of crooked timbers (maximising the yield from the timber at the expense of regularity) and of mud walling. The absence of *grubenhausen* is striking for a Middle Saxon site, but may reflect only the limited extent of the actual settlement area excavated.

Pit Groups

Two distinct groups, one north of the structures in Black Area, the other in Green Area, contain the bulk of the pits discovered. Both groups contained offset, intercutting pits, indicating that earlier pits had been infilled and presumably, their location not apparent when later pits were dug out. That the pits formed tight groups with few outliers hints at an orderliness within the settlement, with spatial configurations - in this case a zone for pits - accepted and agreed within the community.

Pit Group A, in Green Area, yielded finds that were almost entirely Early Saxon in date and covered a remarkable range of materials. In particular, the evidence for metalworking (see below) was almost entirely restricted to these features. Apart from the suggestion of a semi-circular structure (No 8) just to the west of the main body of pits, no obvious hearths or structures were associated, either of domestic or of industrial type. It seems apparent that Pit Group A represents part of an 'industrial zone' and any associated working areas could be away from the excavated areas. This spatial arrangement of industrial and domestic zones has been recorded elsewhere, for example in Middle Saxon *Lundenwic*, where 'industrial activity such as metalworking was confined to the periphery of the residential area' (Cowie and Whytehead 1989, 715). It would be prudent not to undertake activities requiring regular use of fire too near dwellings and it may be that the known buildings 65m to the southwest were the homes of the metalworkers.

Pit Group B lay some 10m north of the nearest identified building (Structure 2). In contrast to Group A, no industrial debris appeared in the fills of Group B and, whilst evidence to support the theory is not overwhelming, it seems likely that Group B served the refuse disposal needs of the households. Certainly there existed no abundance of environmental evidence to indicate a storage function for the pits and the general proximity to, yet discreteness from the buildings promotes the interpretation of household waste disposal, latrine, or both.

At Maxey, in the Welland valley, 37km south of Quarrington, some pit groups were recorded and, although some are peripheral to the site most pits appear to lie within the zone of buildings. However, the precise chronological development of the site is not clear. Some of the pits did have a domestic waste disposal function (eg P10 and P11) but some were 'not dug primarily

as rubbish pits or latrines' and it has been suggested (Addyman 1964, 33) that they may have been no more than borrow pits to provide material for house platforms. If this was the case at Quarrington it could be argued that the original function of Pit Group A was to build up ground for the putative 'C'-shaped Structure 8, with waste disposal a secondary use. However, the fact that some of the pits are clearly later than others lessens the thrust of this suggestion. Of the pits at Maxey that were interpreted as having a rubbish disposal function, P16 was surrounded by stake holes and may have been roofed, something not apparent at Quarrington. Moreover, the depths and dimensions of the Maxey pits were greater than those at Quarrington.

Excavated pits on other Saxon sites in the region have indicated various uses. Pit 029 at Chopdike Drove, Gosberton may have been used for hemp retting before infilling with rubbish (Lane 1993b, 40) while nearby at Mornington House, Gosberton, one pit had an ashy dominated fill suggesting an industrial activity, which, in that specialised location, was likely to have been saltmaking.

On-site activities

Farming

Despite the evidence for some specialisation (ie metalworking) at Quarrington the site, like most rural communities would have been heavily dependent on successful agriculture.

The presence of animal bone on any site is no proof of pastoral farming but the chances are that the bones from Quarrington are those of locally reared stock. The site has an interesting location, on the watershed of the Slea, to the north, and the canalised watercourse now known as Moor Drain. It lies broadly at a geological interface. To the west are the light, shallow, but stony soils of the Jurassic limestone ridge which in the medieval period was home to extensive flocks of sheep. Immediately east of the site are clayey loams of the Denchworth and Rowsham soil series. Recently published maps of the Soil Survey indicate that these soils have cropping limitations (George and Robson 1978, Land Use Capability maps) and these limitations would have been exacerbated before modern drainage. Prior to this, these soils are likely to have been heavy and best suited to pasture or wood/scrub. Pigs appear not to have featured prominently in the Saxon diet at Quarrington suggesting that wood/scrub was not a major element in the local landscape. Immediately south of Quarrington is a tract of soils of the Deepdales series. These are generally light and would have been more conducive to arable use in the Saxon period.

If the potential pasture on the Denchworth and Rowsham soils failed to support the Quarrington cattle and sheep, the species predominant in the animal bone record, less than 10km to the east lay the Fenland. This vast tract of lowland was renowned in the medieval period for the summer pasturing of livestock on its rich grasslands. Surprisingly few Fenland sites have received any large scale excavation but the recent English Heritage sponsored work there has revealed some animal husbandry among Saxon communities. The exceptionally large sheep from the Norfolk Fenland sites (Crowson, forthcoming) is but one example of Saxon awareness of this resource and its proven exploitation.

Faunal remains indicate changes in agricultural practices through the period. Whilst these changes may reflect a naturally developing 'industry' they also occur at a time of political pressures and manoeuverings, identifiable by the change to a more nucleated pattern of settlement,

and may in part be the result of those political pressures. Whatever the reason, the animal bone record on the site is intriguing and demonstrates a change from chiefly cattle in the Early Saxon to chiefly sheep in the Middle period. This, and the fact that a recognisable cull pattern is present in the Middle Saxon, demonstrates increased sophistication of farming through the period. Sheep in the Middle period were culled between 30 and 50 months, indicating production for meat. Pig, meanwhile became less prominent, possibly reflecting diminuation in the local wood/scrub resources. These changes indicate a transfer from haphazard husbandry associated with subsistence farming to something more akin to market agriculture. It is also clear that the focus is primarily agricultural or pastoral with little indication of status, hunting or trade with the coast.

Arable agriculture would have been practised. Seeds and remains of cereals were retrieved, albeit in small quantities and poor condition. Whilst all could have been traded in to the site the likelihood remains that they are locally grown. Locations of fields used to grow these crops were not found. The intensive parcelling of land in and around the settlement area is not necessarily the result of the creation of arable fields. More plausibly they could be suggested as stockyards or gardens, the ditches to deter stock from unwanted exit or entrance. In themselves, the ditch/gullies would not have made stock proof barriers. It is more likely that hedges accompanied many of the ditches. Unfortunately, pollen preservation, a possible method of determining the presence or absence of such features, was poor. The majority of the ditches found during the early trial trenching were within 100m of the settlement zone. The arable fields were doubtless far larger than the parcels suggested by the combined magnetometry and excavated/planned ditch plot (Fig.6). The suggestion that the Deepdales soils south of the site formed a significant part of the Quarrington arable fields has been made above.

Size and form of typical Saxon arable fields has never been demonstrated; the cropmarks clustering around the Saxon site at Chopdike Drove are chiefly sub-square in plan. Hall (1982, 53) argues for the introduction of the ridge and furrow medieval field layout as of Middle Saxon origin but the sites where this has been proved are limited.

The types of crop represented in the Quarrington record would have required some forms of processing but few indications of such activities remained. Most crops would have needed some drying and storage. Some solitary post holes may represent the last vestiges of centre poles for hay/straw stacks. Pits elsewhere on Saxon sites are said to have a hemp retting function (eg, at Chopdike Drove, Gosberton) but this process apparently produces an unpleasant stench and is often conducted away from settlements. Others are interpreted as seed or grain storage. Dryers might be expected for newly harvested cereals and legumes although none were identified at Quarrington. In excess of 150 fragments of lava quern were recovered as indicators of food preparation.

In summary, the Saxon settlement at Quarrington was sited close to a broad range of land types and therefore, economic possibilities. No doubt these were exploited widely. Like all farmers the inhabitants were at the mercy of the climate with poor harvests some years counteracted by others of surplus. No doubt ready markets existed for those surpluses and nearby Sleaford was

probably the venue for trade and exchange. The influx of a range and variety of pottery to Quarrington from outside sources implies tradeable/saleable commodities were present within the environs of the village. Of those commodities farm produce (both arable and stock related) are the most obvious candidates.

Metalworking

Metalworking appeared to be entirely Early Saxon in date and centred around the northern part of Green Area. Pit Group A and nearby ditch lengths contained the debris. Evidence of metalworking debris on Anglo-Saxon sites is not common. Discovery of such material at Quarrington during evaluation elevated the importance of the site beyond that of mere occupation.

Slags, hearth linings, mould and crucibles fragments were recovered, indicating the melting of ferrous and non ferrous metals. The ferrous materials, slag and hearth linings, were analysed by Jane Cowgill (Appendix X) and the non ferrous material of mould fragments, crucibles and hearth linings were scanned by Justine Bayley (Appendix VIII).

Hearths or fires would have been used to smelt metals, of both types but none were found near to the disposed waste. Hearth/furnace linings were recovered and one preserved a tuyere (air hole) indicating deliberate control of heat. The hearth linings could have been created during metal smelting or melting or for pottery firing, since similar methods were used for these processes. Absence of pottery wasters, on site, and the presence of mould fragments, crucibles and slag make metalworking the most likely activity, although it is not possible to determine from the hearth lining whether the use was melting of non-ferrous metals or for iron smithing. No single location was found for the metal processing, but the debris was at the edge of the excavated area and the actual place of production may have been beyond the limits. The pits containing the waste did, however, appear from the evaluation trench evidence (Fig. 15) to reflect the northern periphery of the site.

The main evidence for non-ferrous metalworking came from Early Saxon rubbish pits, with isolated finds coming from nearby ditches. Artefacts comprised fragmented moulds and crucibles, used in metal casting. Their presence, though not in vast quantities, is still an exceptional discovery, due to the Early Saxon date. Evidence for metalworking of this period is scarce, although finds are known from the Middle Saxon site at Barrow on Humber (Bayley, Appendix VIII). Nearer to Quarrington, the iron smelting furnace at Cherry Willingham is thought to be Anglo-Saxon (Field 1981, 70)

It is worth noting that the use of metalworking hearths/furnaces would demand a suitable fuel supply. Charcoal is the commonest and most appropriate fuel to fire this type of heating structure. Charcoal was found in moderate quantities with the metalworking debris, but not in sufficient quantity to confirm its use with the process. However, wood procurement and charcoal production are usually associated with metalworking and suggest another activity for the inhabitants.

Craft and industries

Whilst Early Saxon metalwork is a prominent aspect of the site record, evidence is present of the more typical and mundane household craft/light industrial procedures. The tip of an antler from one of the pits in Pit Group A displays some sign of working and is doubtless a waste piece or off-cut from local manufacture. Worked animal bone was also present in the form of the combs and a spindle whorl.

Raw materials for bone working would have been available on-site and, whilst the items could have been imported, local production is equally likely. Bone working on a large scale would have the effect of reducing the quantity of retrievable bone but quantities of worked material, in particular the waste from production, in this instance were so small as to dismiss large scale production.

Loom weights, the spindle whorl and pin beater attest to spinning and weaving. It is difficult to regard these procedures as crafts in the context of the Saxon household. In a modern-day context crafts are seen almost as hobbies but to Saxon communities the procedures were part of the normal everyday existence and the home production of woollen clothes and textiles would be a necessity. Whether the activity was conducted on a semi-industrial basis is not known, although the quantities found would argue against it. Most of the loomweights came from Early Saxon contexts. A number were found among the metalworking detritus in Pit Group A. Whether this intermingling of loomweights with known industrial debris is significant - ie it is all 'industrial' - is tenuous in the extreme but not beyond the realms of possibility.

Further evidence for weaving may have been recovered in the form of the bone combs but, from their fragmentary nature, it is not possible to ascertain whether the combs were used in the weaving process or for personal grooming.

Quantities of pottery assumed to have been produced locally are not especially large. No evidence was retrieved at Quarrington of pottery kilns or wasters (rejects), but some wares are presumed to be of local manufacture. Because the ceramic assemblage represents one of the largest excavated in Britain (in the region of 2000 Saxon sherds) a range of local and imported wares were found. The latter say something about trading links and are discussed below.

Trade and Economy

Whilst the metalworking demonstrated some potential specialisation and therefore an economic edge, much of the everyday life of Early Saxon settlement is thought to have been geared towards farming. While subsistence-style farming is a tempting interpretation of the Saxon lifestyle, traded items appear on the site in some quantities. Dependency on subsistence probably changed in subtle fashion through the period, as access to markets became greater and political control tightened.

Analysis of the pottery assemblage has provided good evidence of the distances and directions of local trade generally. It is, of course, more likely that new pots were bought in the local markets such as Sleaford rather than Quarrington residents collecting them from distant manufactories in Leicestershire or Ipswich. Nevertheless, economic surpluses were required to maintain the supply of new products such as ceramics.

During the earlier part of the Saxon period the bulk of the pottery came from sources in South, North and Central Lincolnshire, as well as the Charnwood district of Leicestershire. By the Middle Saxon period the source of the vessels was mainly the Northamptonshire area, with a smaller element from South and Central Lincolnshire as well as a few sherds from Ipswich. Some were apparently of local manufacture but these did not form a significant part of the overall assemblage. Interestingly, one sherd appeared to be of continental origin. Reasons for the change in pottery sources are undetermined. Perhaps it is merely part of the general changes widespread at the time; perhaps

political upheavals themselves forced re-alignments in trading contacts. Perhaps the re-alignment in Quarrington's produce base - the move from predominantly cattle to predominantly sheep - necessitated alternative markets for the final product and consequently affected the supply chain.

Other items of non-local origin found at Quarrington include an amber bead and over 150 fragments of quern, all shaped from lava and most probably imported from the Rhineland. None of the imports to the site are particularly remarkable, given the evidence from other sites of the period. Nevertheless, a wide-ranging trading network was in operation throughout the Saxon period and Quarrington clearly partook with vigour. Whether wool and textile manufacture, as evidenced by the loomweights and spindle whorls, or metalworking, ever contributed to more than immediate family/local needs is not proved, but it is almost certain that agriculturally derived produce was one important source of local wealth.

The end of Quarrington

One of the surprises with the artefact record at Quarrington is the late dates implied by some of the metalwork. Certain items are only known previously from Late Saxon deposits, not those of earlier date. Nonetheless, these artefacts are of simple, pragmatic design and it may be no more than the rarity of excavated Saxon sites nationally that has hindered their discovery previously in Early or Middle Saxon contexts. What is certain is that no Late Saxon ceramic material was found during the Quarrington excavations. Locally, pottery of this date is durable and there is no doubt that, if present, it would have been identified.

However, what appears to be complete abandonment in the ninth century of a site founded in the fifth-sixth may be no more than settlement shift. It has been established that the heart of the site, the Saxon 'residential' zone, lies at the western limit of the excavated area and continues into the adjacent unexplored paddocks. There appears to be no practical reason to abandon a settlement founded in a favourable location with access to a variety of landscape zones. Of course, famine, disease and the whims of local politicians are always potential causes of abandonment. Whilst the two former may possibly be identified in the archaeological record (stunted livestock; malformed human bones in the inhumation cemeteries) the latter would be impossible to detect. How would future archaeologists explain the Highland clearances in Scotland in the 18th century without documentary assistance?

The core of the medieval village is assumed to lie around the church of St. Botolph, 400m to the west of the excavations and it does not seem unreasonable to suppose a general trend of settlement moving to the west. Certainly the discovery, during field walking, of Middle Saxon sites uncontaminated by later pottery in upland Lincolnshire is remarkably limited. There is no reason to suspect complete non-survival of artefacts and non-formation of cropmarks over negative features on these middle period sites. Whereas Early Saxon sites are generally 'dispersed', for example the sites adjacent to watercourses along the fen edge (Hayes and Lane 1992, 136), the Middle Saxon period appears to be a time of nucleation and the formation of modern towns and villages. On the fen edge no sites were found that were exclusively Middle Saxon, the only pottery of the period coming from the deserted medieval settlement at Sempringham. Out on the silt fen, however, the story was different with dispersed settlement continuing well into

the Middle Saxon (Hayes 1988). However, conditions in the fen made that a different and special environment with, consequently, equally different and special activities. Moreover, Hayes (1988, 324) has suggested different political overbears and pressures on the Fenland sites when compared to those on the upland.

The impetus behind the process of nucleation of settlement in Lincolnshire though is hazy. It is difficult to see hard evidence of the nucleation process at Quarrington although the site must have lived through it. Without the evidence from Orange Area, a re-orientation of boundaries to an alignment on the cardinal points might be argued for the Middle Saxon and it would be tempting to suggest that this was tied in with some formalisation of settlement, perhaps politically enforced or inspired. However, the ditch alignments in Orange Area remain idiosyncratic in their plan in the Middle period.

The purpose of the ditch/gullies is open to question. Clearly they have been truncated to an extent but are unlikely to have been vastly deeper. A localised drainage function is probable but the ditches would not, on their own, have penned in or alternatively excluded livestock from a 'field'. The ditch/gullies are more likely to have a dual purpose, with the spoil heaped to one side and set with a hedge. However, once a stock proof hedge has been set it becomes a long-term boundary and any re-orientation would demand almost total clearance of the landscape. Such major restructuring of an existing layout is impractical and the pragmatic farmers are unlikely to have undertaken this without severe outside pressures. Overall, the Early Saxon village and field may have been open in character, one of many 'dispersed' in the landscape. Only when the concept of village centres was introduced (by whatever means) did the agglomerative, unstructured style of settlement formalise into a more ordered pattern.

It would have been extremely useful to have seen more of 'Enclosure 1' and to determine it's function. Ditches that formed the enclosure, if that was indeed what it was, were deeper than most on the site. Whether they surrounded a higher status dwelling, or religious institution, or just formed a field/paddock, the enclosure is the most obvious geometric land parcel on the excavation plan.

End Note

The collective evidence from Quarrington hints at a settlement developed in the early Anglo-Saxon period as one of many in the vicinity. Due to a combination of factors, perhaps an agriculturally beneficial location with proximity to larger markets (Sleaford), perhaps some kin or tribal connections with Sleaford, perhaps the proximity to cemeteries, perhaps a certain wealth generated by craft diversity (including metalworking), habitation continued beyond a point where other contemporary sites fell into disuse. The site metamorphosed into, or was chosen to become, a proto-village which probably developed into the modern Quarrington just to the west.

As archaeologists we are fortunate to see at least a portion of the forerunner of Quarrington largely intact. Geophysical survey and evaluation have demonstrated that the Saxon settlement extends further toward the present village and that more is preserved under the adjacent grass paddocks. Little activity is indicated north and east of the excavations. Building development has clipped the periphery of the site.

Post built structures like those from Quarrington have inspired artists to attempt building reconstructions such as at Maxey

(Addyman 1964, Fig. 11; see West 1985 Fig. 285 for SFBs). Quarrington's buildings would be little different and to that visual representation could be added the more abstract images suggested by the hard data of scientific research at Quarrington. Chattering spinners and weavers briefly listening to the hammerings of the metalworkers and watching the smoke and sparks of their hearths in the near distance, while dogs and cats scavenge and gnaw meal waste; bobbing chickens home in on loose grain around the querns while sooted cooking pots suspended over fires heat bean stews. No doubt such images could be presented for almost any site. Nevertheless, at Quarrington they are based on fact.

5. Options for further work

In consideration of the results of the assessment, several options for further work suggest themselves as most worthy of attention.

5.1 Rescue Priorities

Many of the archaeological deposits present in the area were excavated prior to development and consequently are preserved by record. The investigation archive should be prepared in an appropriate manner for long-term storage and curation and submitted for holding in the secure and safe environment of a museum store.

Preservation *in situ* of the remaining archaeological deposits present on, and in proximity to, the development area is, perhaps, the foremost rescue priority. Consideration should be given to any necessary measures that maintain the surviving archaeological deposits intact and in good condition.

5.2 Research Priorities

Excavations at Quarrington have shown that the site is a regionally or even nationally rare example of a settlement where occupation demonstrably persists through the Early and Middle Saxon periods. Aspects of the evidence may be suitable for higher levels of analysis that may elucidate characteristics of either or both periods or, perhaps more significantly, the nature, patterns and results of change from the Early into Middle Saxon periods.

In particular, the investigations recovered a large, regionally significant assemblage of pottery. Whilst further examination and analysis of this material would doubtless throw more light on the nature of the Quarrington Saxon settlement and its trading links, the pottery has perhaps greater significance in being one of a number of collections of broadly contemporary ceramics from the region. Many of these other pottery assemblages are largely un-studied. Consolidated and cross-correlated research into these various ceramic collections is a major priority for the region and may point toward, *inter alia*, otherwise unknown Saxon settlements; the location and nature of pottery production in the East Midlands during the Early and Middle Saxon period; the identification of potters; itinerance of producers; and trade links. Although this is a most significant research priority for the region, the scope of such work goes beyond the limits of the present study.

The full extent of the Saxon settlement is unknown though clearly extends further to the west. Subject to access being obtained, and under appropriate site conditions, geophysical survey may be a useful tool for defining the density and extent of archaeological remains that constitute the Saxon settlement.

Any further archaeological work in the vicinity should have consideration not only for remains of Saxon date but also those of Neolithic and Roman date. Whilst the few prehistoric artefacts, including the neolithic pot, from the site seem to be isolated they perhaps relate to otherwise unknown contemporary activity in the area. Similarly, the quantity of Romano-British material from the site is not great though a few definable features of the period were identified. These perhaps betray the nearby presence of a Romano-British site, the size and location of which is not yet known.

6. Assessment of significance

For assessment of significance the *Secretary of State's criteria for scheduling ancient monuments* has been used (DoE 1990, Annex 4; see Appendix XIV).

Period:
Evidence of isolated to nucleated Early and Middle Saxon occupation and medieval to post-medieval manorial activity has been recovered on and in the vicinity of the investigation area. All are characteristic of the periods represented. Although a scatter of Romano-British artefacts occurred across the area and isolated remains of this date were recognised the form of the evidence is not period-specific. An isolated feature of Neolithic date, possibly a cremation burial with a pottery vessel, was also identified. This does not conform with the usual pattern of grouped Neolithic burials. However, the feature may be a regional variant in funerary practice or, possibly, a rare survival of what was a common pattern of burial.

Rarity:
An isolated ceramic vessel of neolithic date, possible a cremation burial, was found during the investigation. Such finds are rare in the East Midlands and this example is additionally unusual in lacking associations.

Romano-British activity in the form of a scatter of pottery and isolated features were identified on the investigation area. Such minor indications of Roman activity are not uncommon in the area.

Early and Middle Saxon settlements as located at the investigation site, are rare. Moreover, the settlement possesses evidence of Early Saxon non-ferrous metal working. The aspect is rare on a national level. Additionally, the Saxon ceramic assemblage is regionally rare by virtue of the large size and diversity of the collection.

Medieval and post-medieval farming activities, as identified on and in the general vicinity of the investigation, are not scarce. However, the stone building, perhaps a corn-drier, that was examined during the excavation is a large and probably rare example of the type in local terms.

Documentation:
Details of archaeological sites and finds in the Sleaford/Quarrington area are held in the Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record and the files of the North Kesteven Heritage Officer. No site-specific synopsis or synthesis of the historical and archaeological evidence relevant to the site has previously been produced. However, Sleaford itself has been the subject of several histories and archaeological considerations.

Cartographic and documentary evidence of predominantly post-medieval date survives for the area and has been consulted for the purposes of this investigation.

Prior to the present investigation the area was the subject of geophysical survey and

trial trenching, both examinations having been reported.

Group value:
Sites and findspots of prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and medieval and later date cluster in this general area. By virtue of this evidence of multi-period exploitation of the landscape the group value is moderately high.

The group value for the Saxon settlement is amplified through the conjunction of habitation evidence, in the form of structures and occupation debris, with parts of a possible field or enclosure system. Moreover, the settlement structural evidence is associated with a large, dynamic ceramic group, as well as artefactual indications of a rare example of Early Saxon non-ferrous metal-working and other industrial/craft remains. The group value is increased still further by the close proximity to two Early Saxon cemeteries and other Saxon settlement remains nearby in Sleaford.

The post-medieval building remains have moderately high group value through association with the adjacent, extant structures of Quarrington manor.

Survival/Condition:
Prior to the investigation the area was a green field site and had not seen any post-medieval development. Archaeological deposits had been degraded by ploughing though, below the level of this agricultural disturbance, remains of neolithic, Saxon, medieval and later date survived well. Archaeological deposits in the area of investigation have largely been excavated, and thereby preserved by record, and the site developed. However, undisturbed areas remain both on the site and surrounding it. In these areas it is probable that archaeological deposits of Saxon, and possibly other, date survive in a similarly good condition to those observed during the excavations.

Animal bones generally survive well. Other environmental remains are preserved differentially with some charred plant remains surviving in excellent state, though soil and burial conditions did not permit good survival of textiles, leather or pollen.

Fragility/Vulnerability:
Archaeological deposits of Neolithic, Saxon and post-medieval date were encountered at shallow depth (less than 1m below the ground surface). Any future development in proximity to the investigation site is likely to impact the area into natural strata. Consequently, any and all archaeological deposits present in the vicinity of the site are extremely vulnerable.

Diversity:
Moderately high period diversity is provided by remains of Neolithic, Roman, Saxon and medieval date on the site.

Moderately high. functional diversity is provided by the general settlement evidence of Saxon date, the contemporary industrial/craft activity, the neolithic ceremonial remains and the post-medieval agricultural structure.

Potential:
Potential is extremely high that remains of Early and Middle Saxon settlement activities, as identified on the investigation site, is more extensive than observed and occurs immediately to the west and in unexcavated and undeveloped parts of the area.

6.1 Site Importance

In summary, the criteria for assessment have established that the neolithic evidence is locally and regionally important. As

such, the apparent funerary remains not only augment the understanding of the origins and development of the Sleaford/Quarrington area but also make a wider contribution to studies of neolithic burial practices and ceramics in the East Midlands.

The Romano-British remains are of local importance in that they appear to signify the proximity of a settlement of this period. This contributes to the understanding of Romano-British occupation of the Sleaford environs, and thereby supplements the evidence for the origin and development of the town.

Use of the assessment criteria also demonstrates that the Early and Middle Saxon settlement evidence is regionally significant. In consequence, the archaeological remains of the Saxon period contribute not only to understanding the nature and patterns of settlement of this period in Lincolnshire and the East Midlands but also to the comprehension of comparable sites throughout the region.

The post-medieval building remains on the site are of particular local importance and would specifically enhance any study of Quarrington Manor. The remains might also have wider significance in the understanding of post-medieval agricultural structures.

7. Effectiveness of techniques

The methods and strategies employed in the archaeological investigation were, on the whole, effective. Trial trenching revealed a spread of archaeological features and material, much of it of Early and Middle Saxon date, across the site. These trenches indicated that Saxon remains, which included evidence of metalworking, were located from the area around Quarrington Manor in the west to the A15 in the east, with the majority of the archaeological features and finds revealed closer to the manor.

Geophysical survey identified numerous buried archaeological remains, though of unknown date, across the area. These were mostly located in the northern part of the site and were less abundant nearer Town Road in the south. The geophysical survey revealed the presence of ditches and pits and the pattern of signals suggested that possible trackways and subrectangular enclosures were located in the area. Not all of the magnetic anomalies identified during the geophysical survey were recorded in the subsequent excavation. It seems probable that the remains responsible for the geophysical anomalies had been ploughed away and only survived as otherwise undetectable bands of magnetically enhanced soil in the plough zone.

Excavation revealed many more archaeological features than had been identified by the geophysical survey. Extensive remains of part of an Early - Middle Saxon settlement, with some further evidence of metalworking, was revealed. Additionally, indications of other craft/industrial activities were recovered in the form of loom weights and spindle whorls from weaving and spinning. Moreover, remains dated to other periods were also recorded. The excavation successfully recovered large, informative assemblages of ceramic and animal bone of the Early and Middle Saxon periods and also identified part of the main zone of habitation within a more extensive and diverse settlement area.

8. Conclusions

Archaeological investigations at Quarrington were carried out in advance of housing development and followed a brief set by the District Archaeologist.

Following Trial Trenching, geophysical survey and excavations features and finds dating to the Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon periods concentrated in the southwest corner of the development are known.

Despite damage to the site through medieval and modern agriculture up to 10 post-built structures and numerous ditch/gullies were recorded. The structures identified clustered in the westernmost limit of the development and clearly continued into the unthreatened paddock beyond.

Two distinct groups of pits had contrasting characteristics. Pit Group A contained industrial waste in the form of mould and crucible fragments, and iron working slags. This was sited some 80m northeast of the structures. Pit Group B, containing chiefly domestic rubbish, was sited much closer to the structures.

Sometime around the 9th century AD the area exposed was abandoned as a settlement and became incorporated into the contemporary fields. Until the recent housing development the only subsequent structure on the site was a post medieval stone-built agricultural facility, probably with a crop drying function.

Some of the finds from the excavations are rare. In particular, prior to the investigations at Quarrington, evidence of metalworking in the Early Saxon period was almost non-existent. Similarly, the pottery assemblage is one of the largest recovered for the period. Structures of the Saxon period are moderately uncommon and those from Quarrington identify the site as being of at least regional significance.

Unfortunately for archaeologists the abundant pits and ditches are generally shallow minimising the opportunities for recovering waterlogged environmental data. However, burning and industrial processes around the pits in the north enhanced the prospect of preservation of plant material by charring.

A substantial assemblage of animal bone has provided economic data. Study of the Saxon pottery has shown it came to the site from several different sources to give an initial insight into patterns of trade and exchange. Due to the paucity of excavated sites in Lincolnshire this aspect of Saxon archaeology was previously little understood.

One of the most significant aspects of the site at Quarrington is that it was unlikely to have been 'special' in terms of its function, status and/or wealth. The excavated area displayed all the signs of a typical rural community where ordinary people went about their ordinary business. It was sites like this that were doubtless home to the vast majority of the population. The site may have 'special' qualities in certain areas, for instance, few if any, Early Saxon sites in the whole of Britain have produced evidence of metalworking (Bayley 1991, 121); the size of the excavated area made Quarrington 'special' in that it was large enough to detect intra-site spatial variations and to identify industrial and residential zones. However, it is the very 'ordinariness' of the site which is important, enabling some insight into our humbler ancestral communities.

Excavation at Quarrington has enabled the

preservation by record of one part of a site that is crucial to Saxon studies. Furthermore, the adjacent paddock is now recognised as an important continuation to that site and worthy of future archaeological attention.

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10. The Archive

The archive for QTR92 consists of:

185 Context records
11 Photographic records (Films)
5 Scale drawings
3 . . Boxes of finds

The archive for QCH93 consists of

1567..Context Records
766....Group Matrix Sheets
(Incorporating QTR96)
146....Photographic Records
778....Scale Drawings
5.....Stratigraphic Matrices
5.....Group Matrices
40.....Boxes of Finds

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington

Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

City and County Museum, Lincoln
Accession Number for QCH93: 50:94

City and County Museum, Lincoln
Accession Number for QTR92: 77:94

11. Acknowledgements

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Gavin Kinsley read and contributed to the first draft of this report adding greatly to the content

12. Personnel

The following list comprises all periods of archaeological investigation, including the initial evaluation.

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Project Manager (Post Excavation):
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Site Assistants:
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Finds Illustration: Denise Buckley
Cartographic Production:
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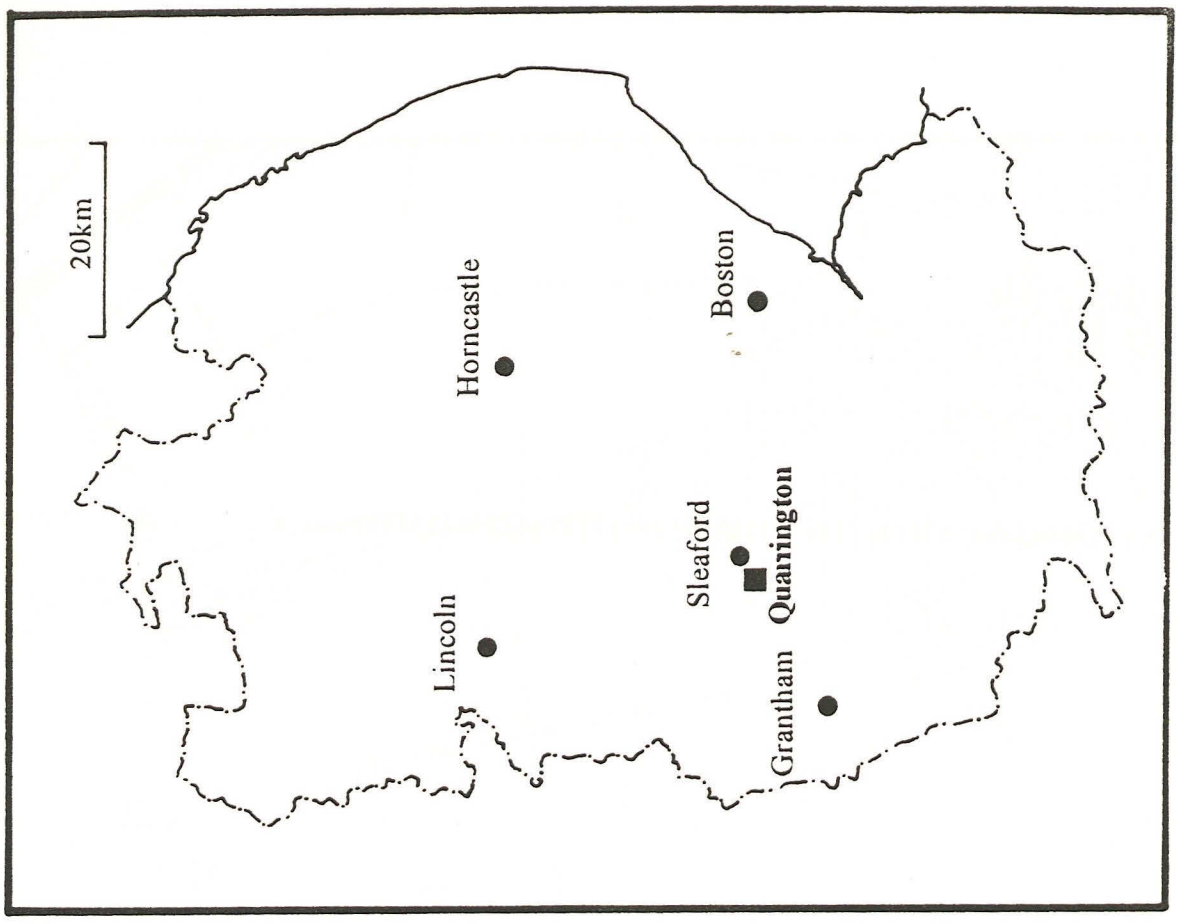
Paul Cope-Faulkner, Fiona Walker
Post-Excavation Manager:
Gary Taylor

Specialist Contributors:
James Rackham, Jane Cowgill, Jane Young, John Gater, Justine Bayley, Carol Allen, Barbara Davies, Val Fryer, Tessa Roper, Carol Palmer

Fig. 1 GENERAL LOCATION PLAN



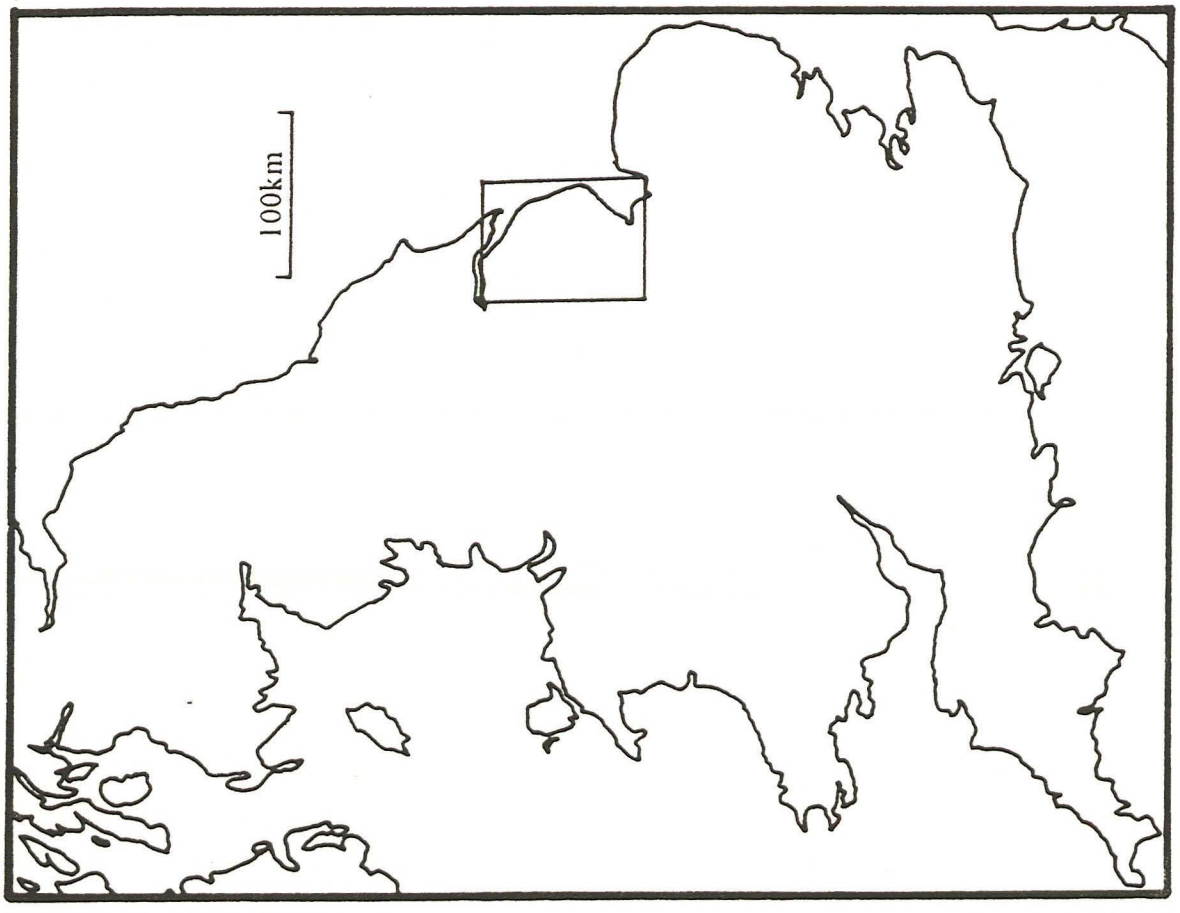
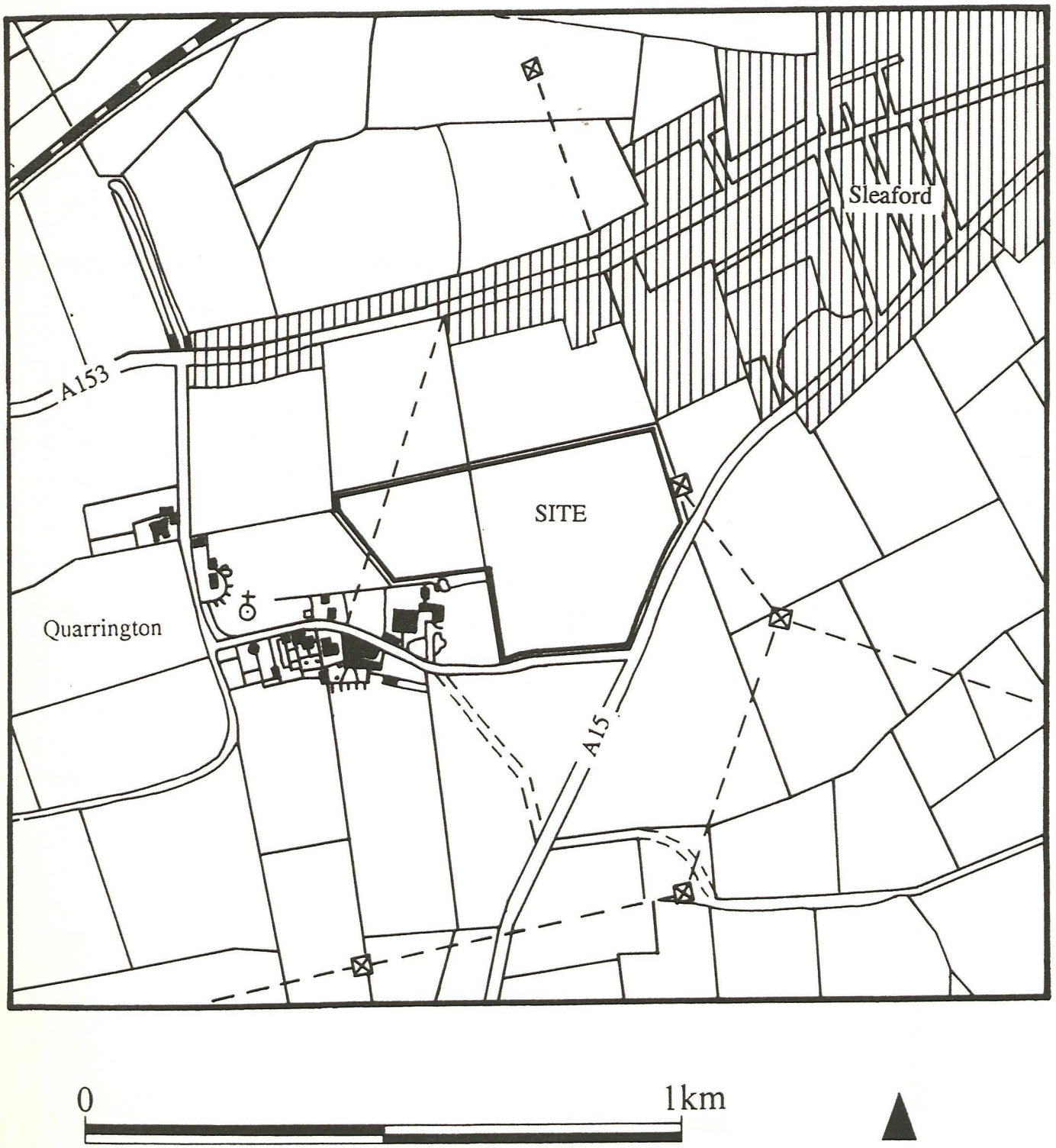


Fig. 2 Site location



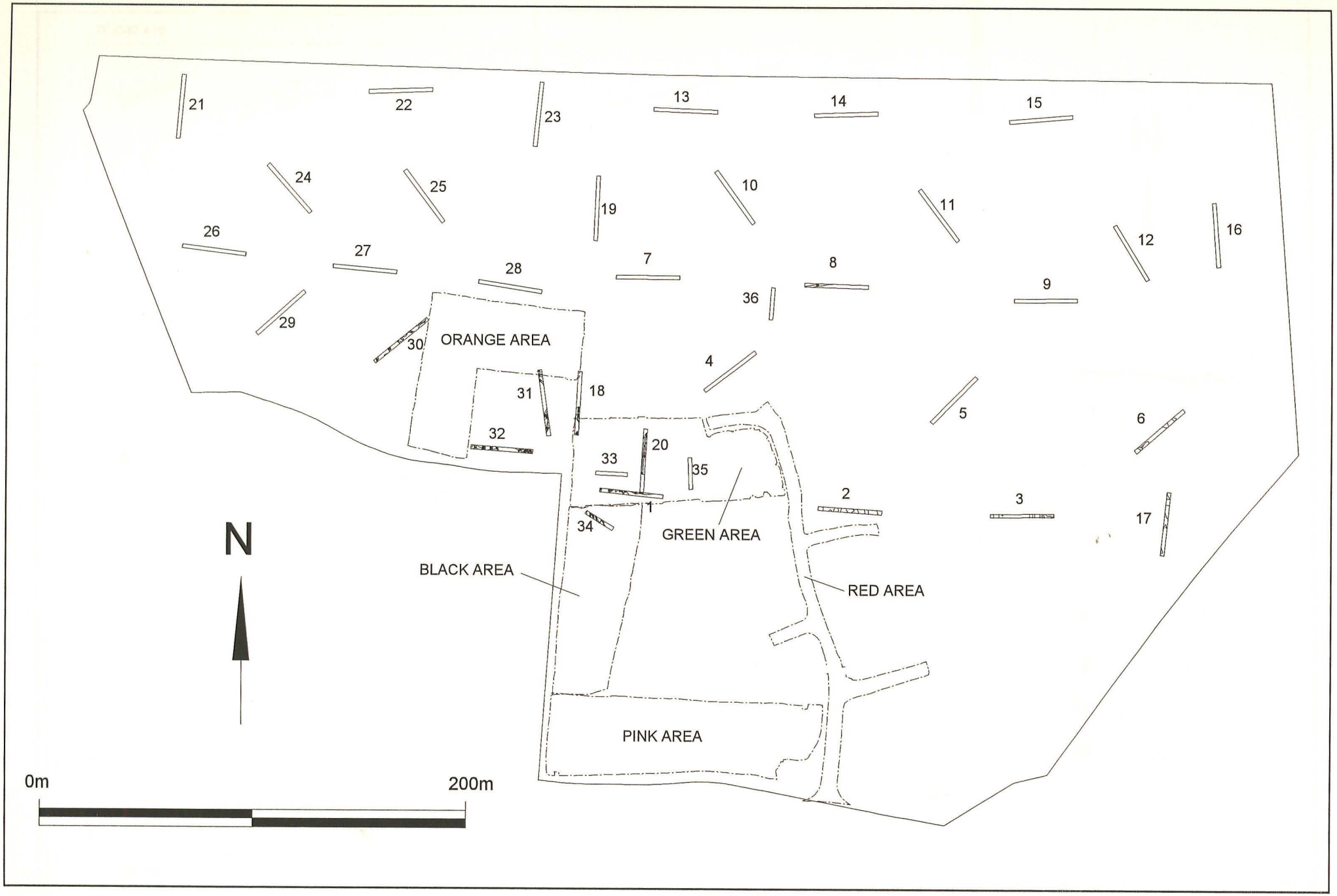


Figure 3 Location of Trial Trenches and Excavated Areas

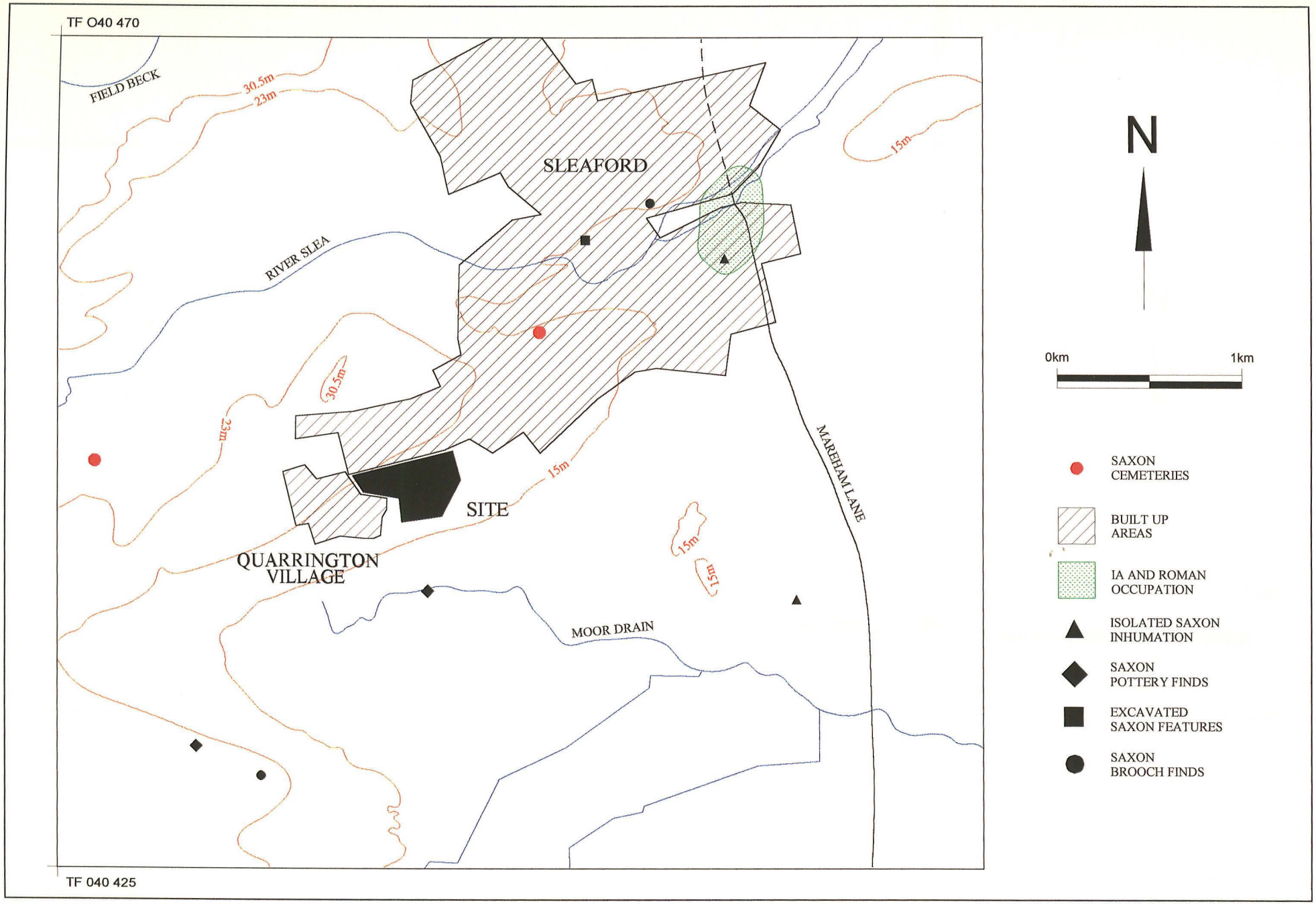


Figure 4 Saxon Finds in the Locality

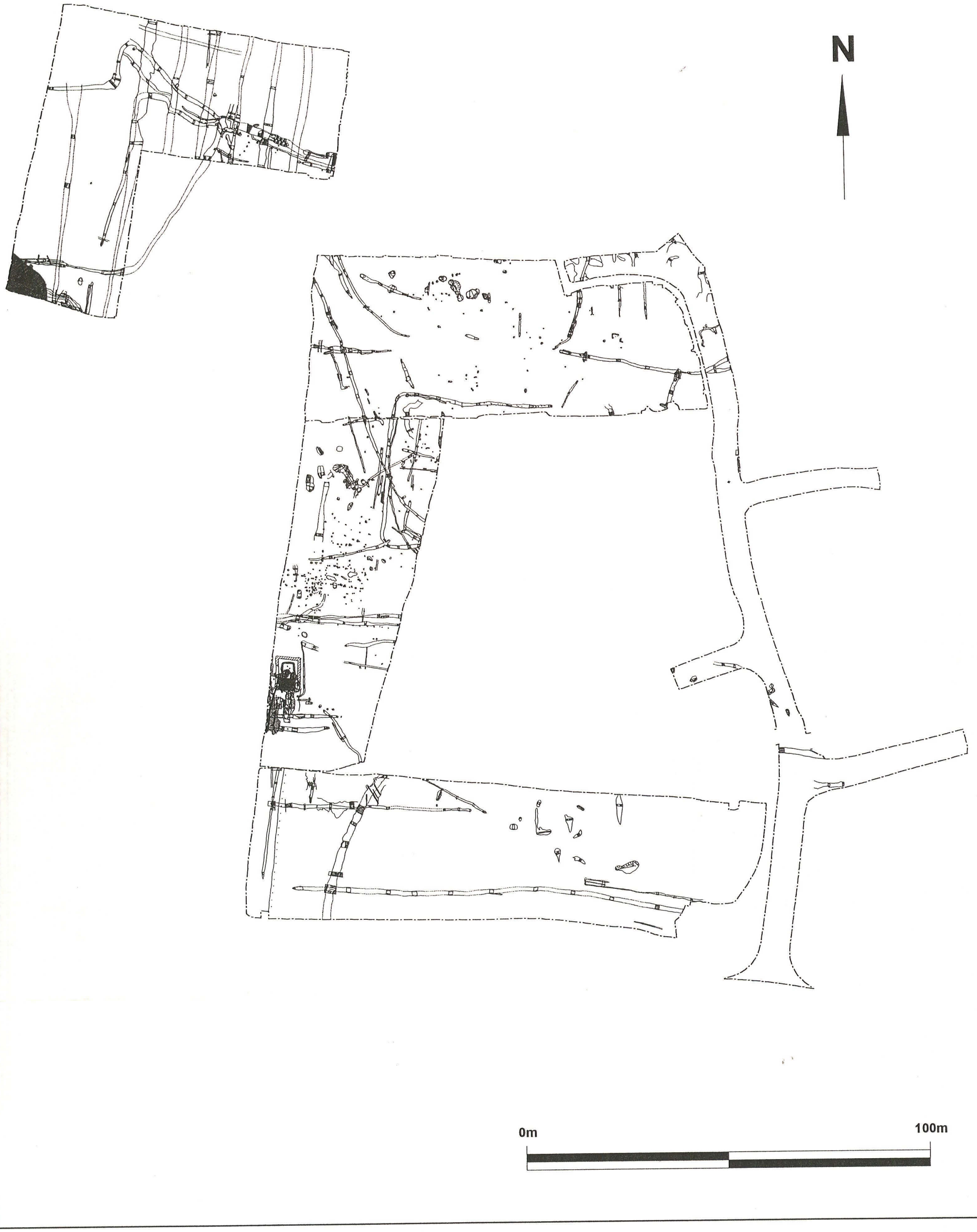


Figure 5 All Periods

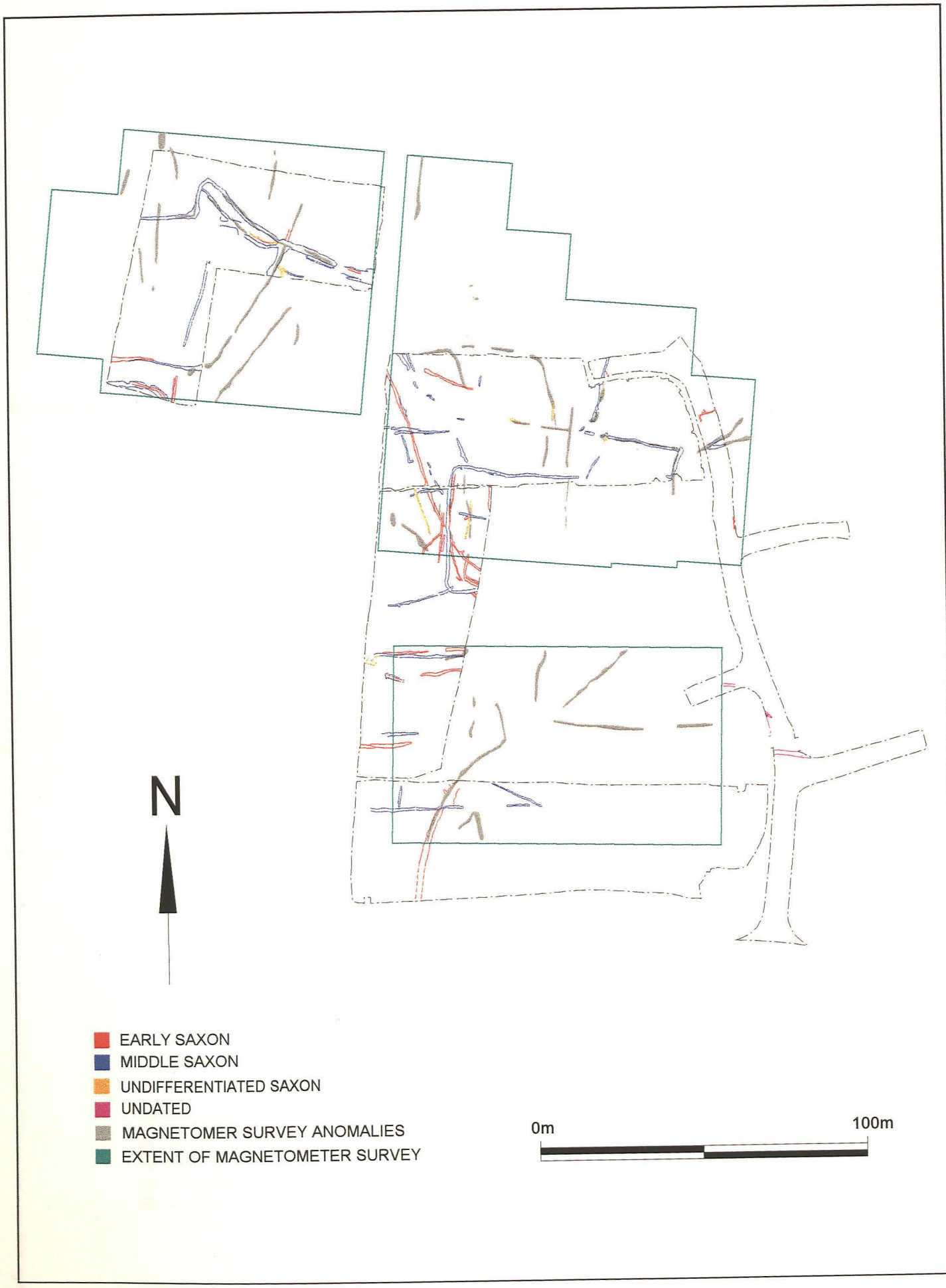


Figure 6 All Areas - Magnetometer Plot Overlaid on Saxon Ditches

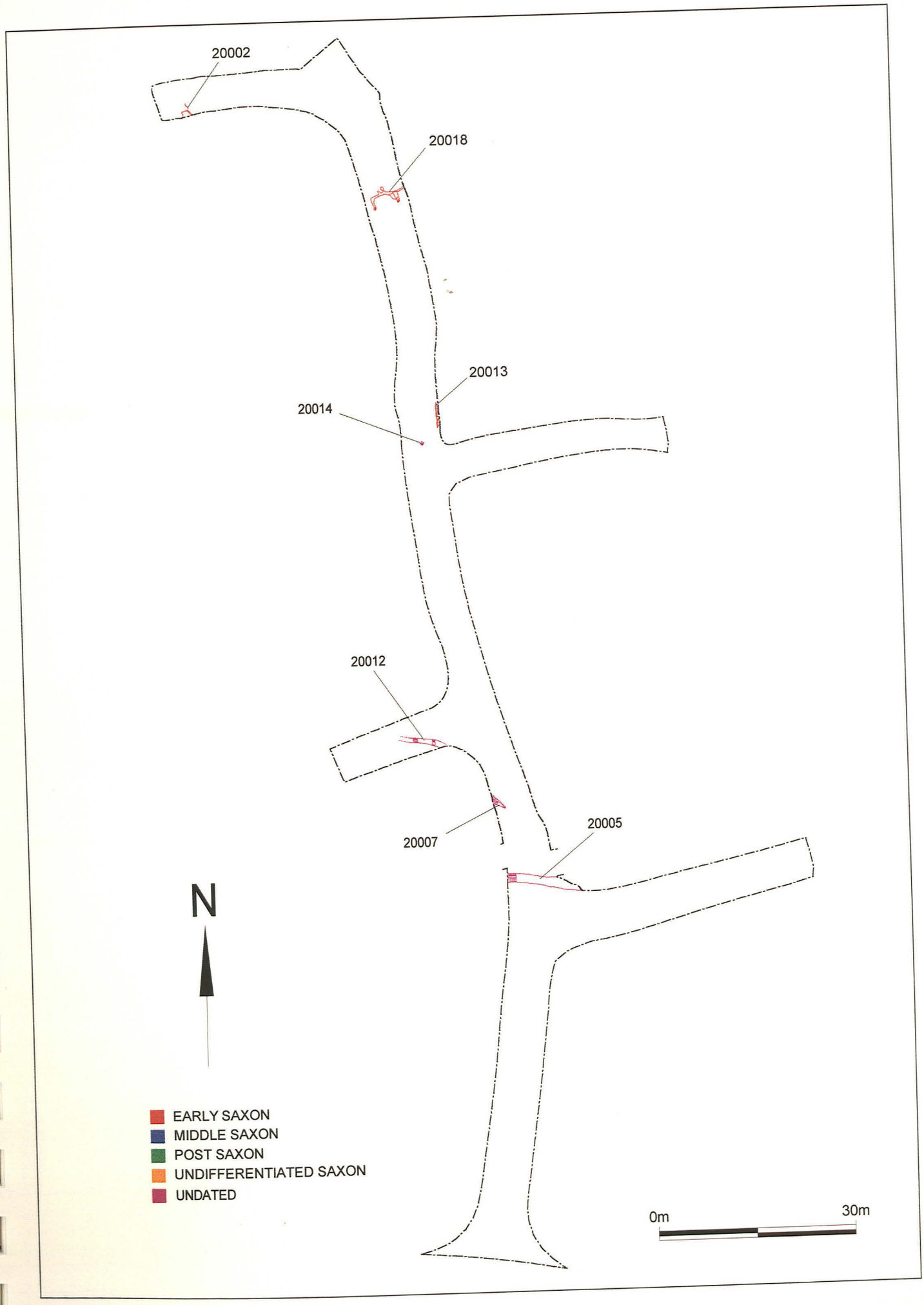


Figure 7 Red Area - Early Saxon

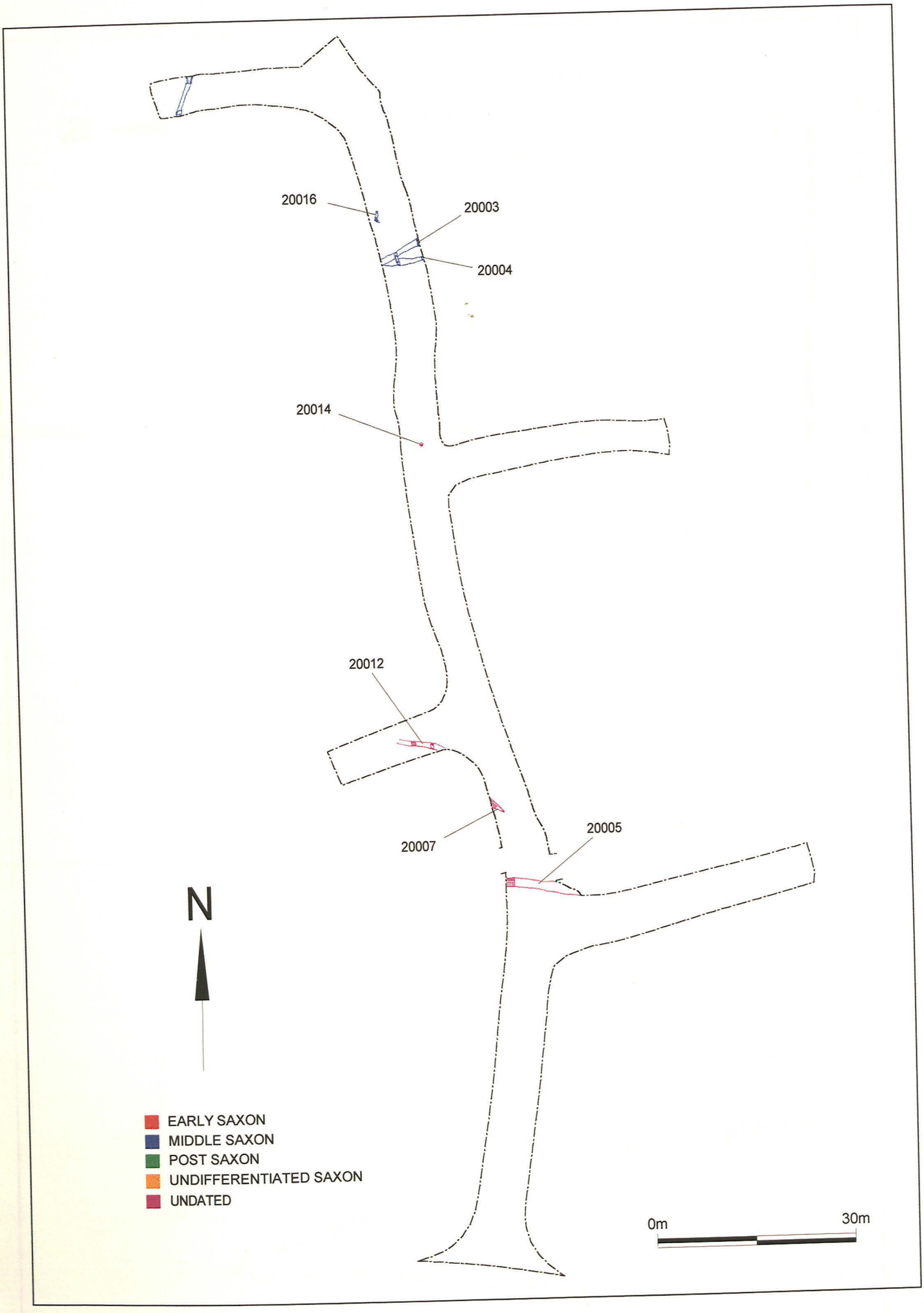


Figure 8 Red Area - Middle Saxon

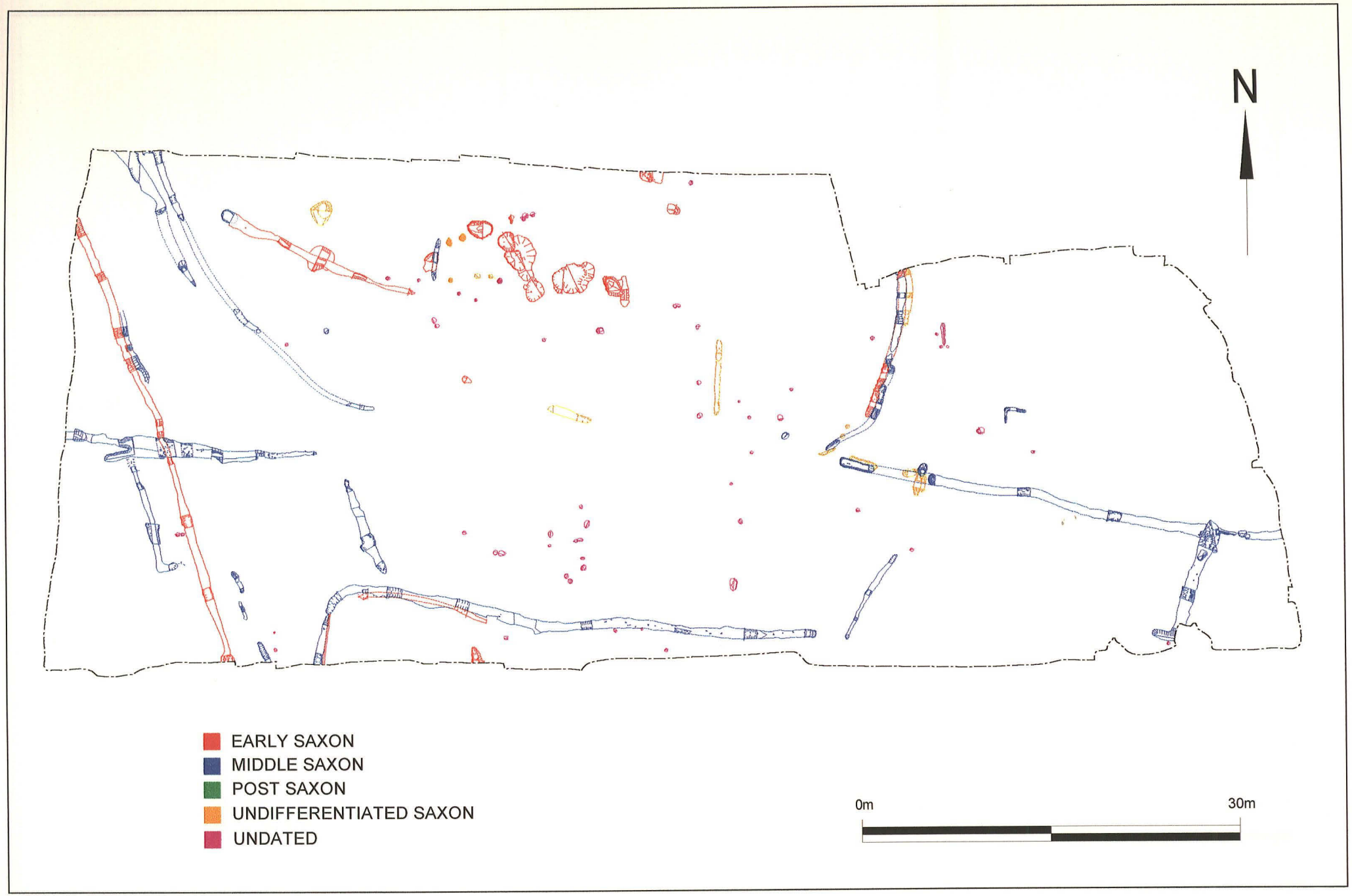


Figure 9 Green Area - Early, Middle and Undifferentiated Saxon

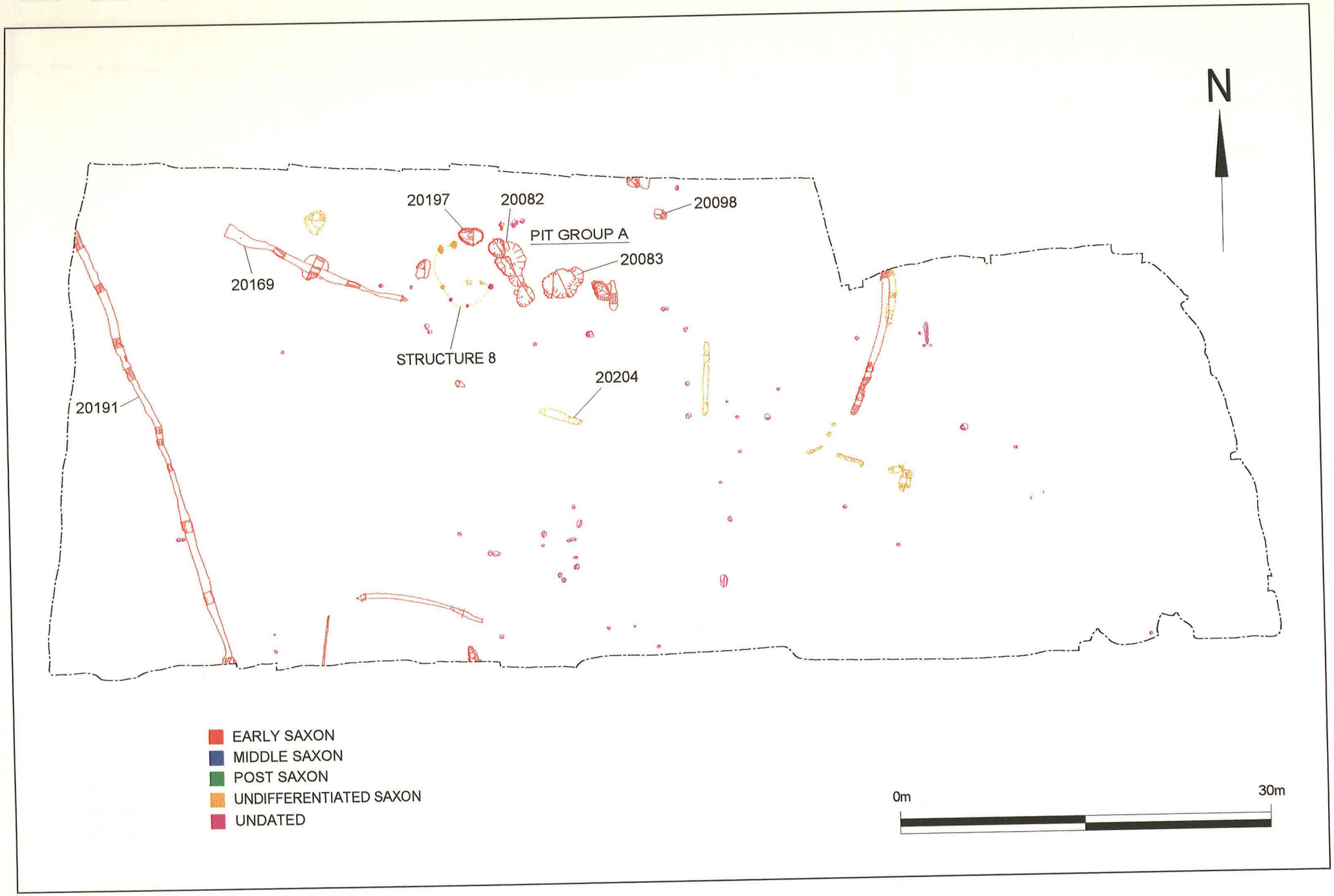


Figure 10 Green Area - Early Saxon

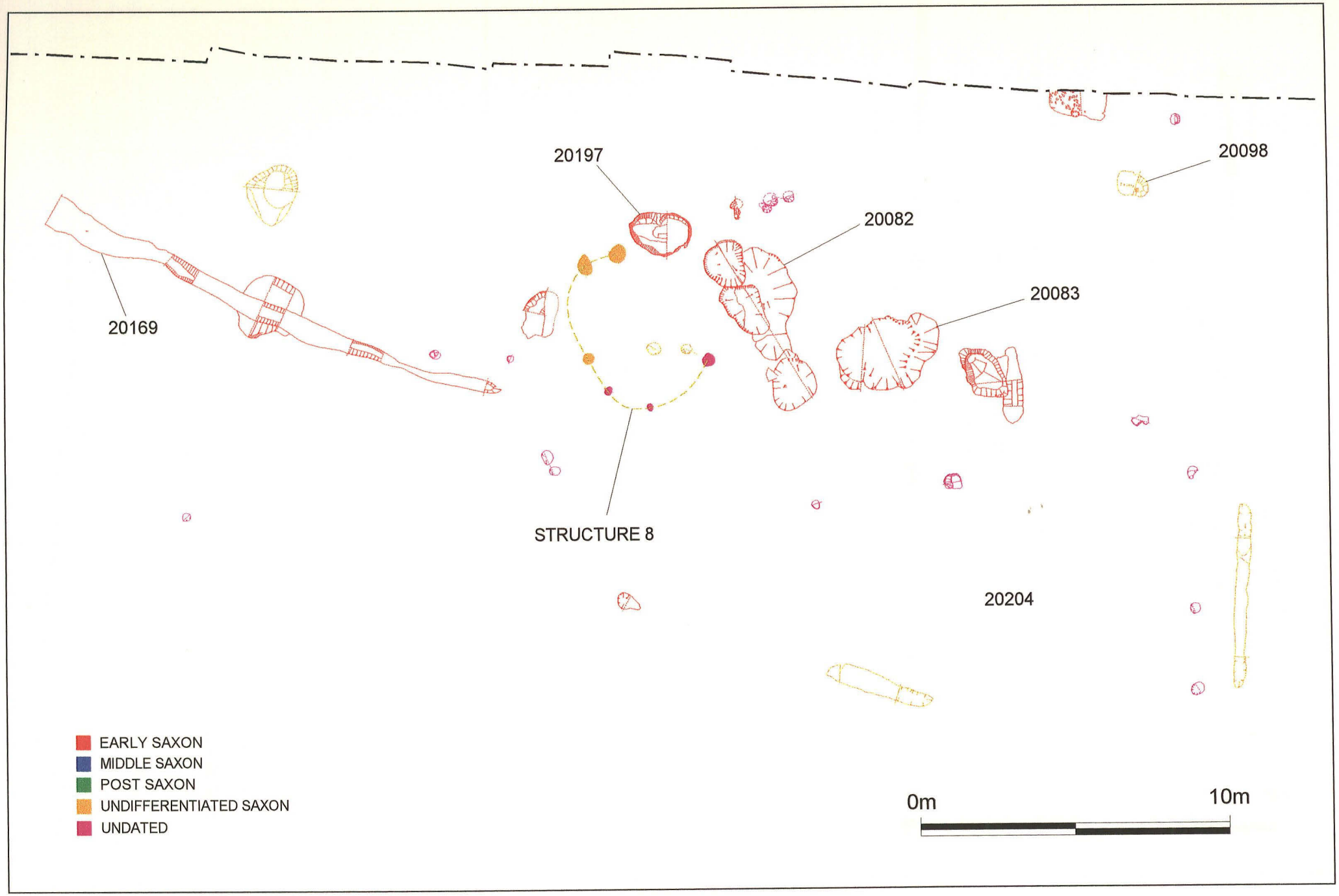


Figure 11 Green Area - Pit Group A

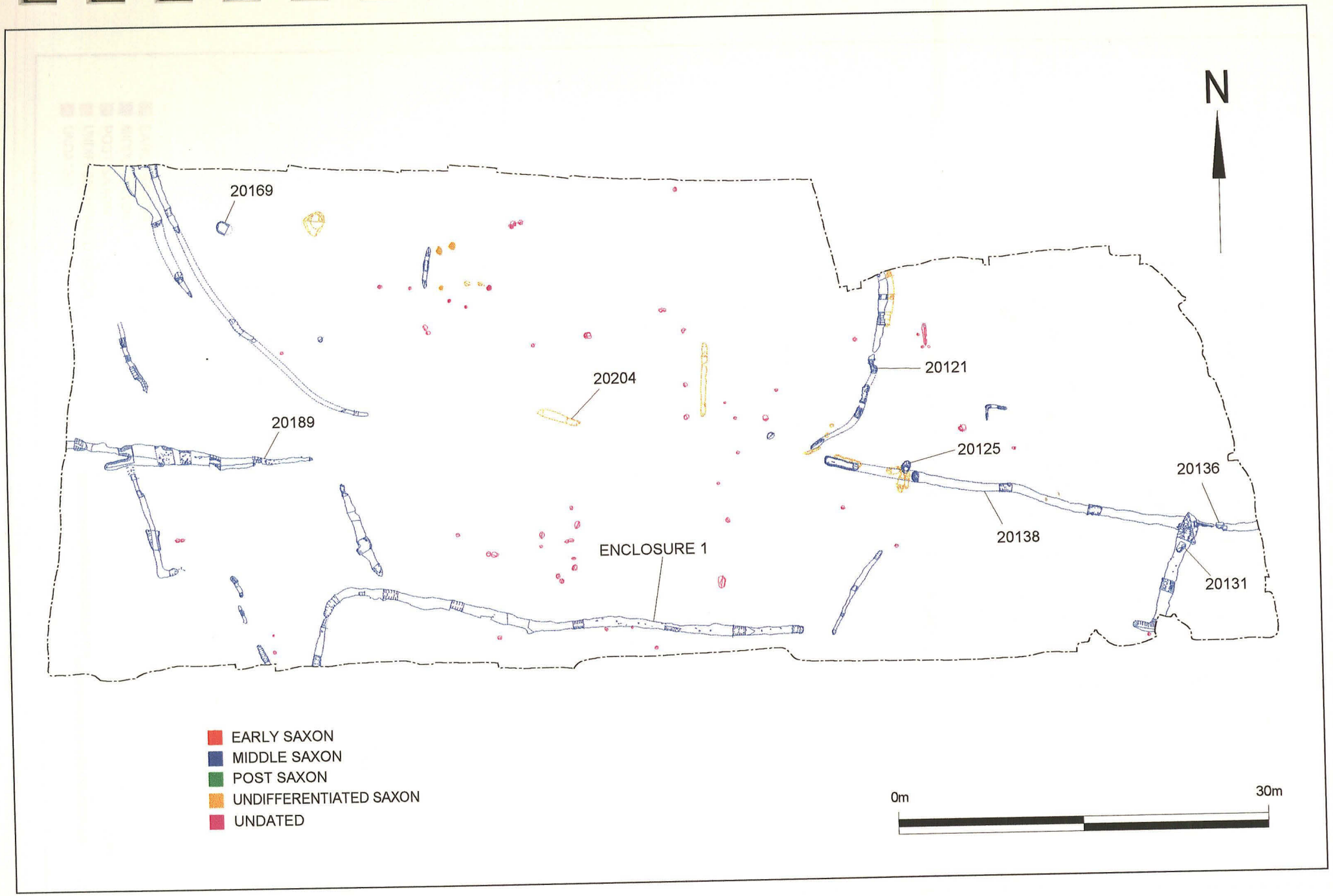


Figure 12 Green Area - Middle Saxon

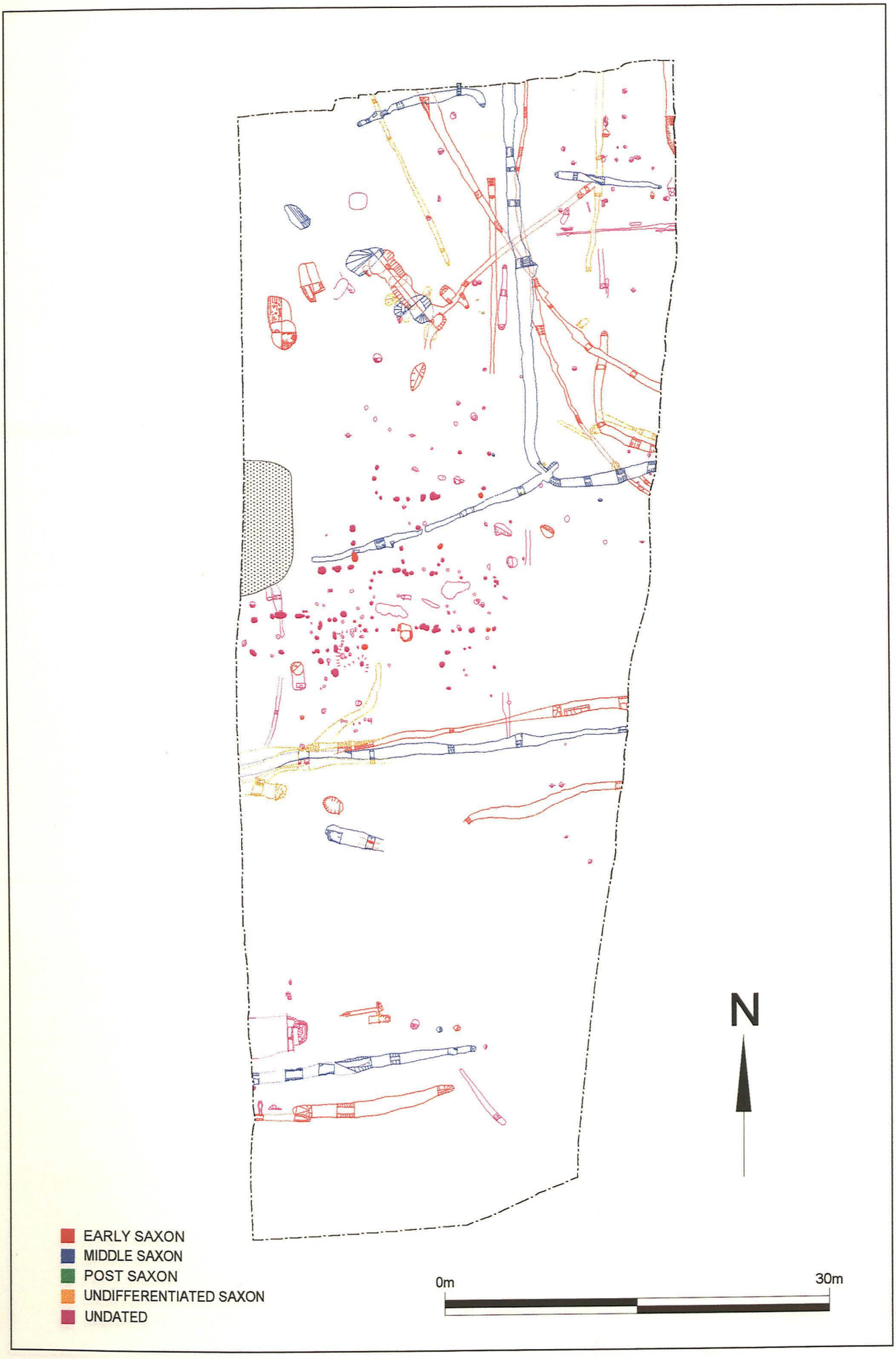


Figure 13 Black Area - Early, Middle and Undifferentiated Saxon

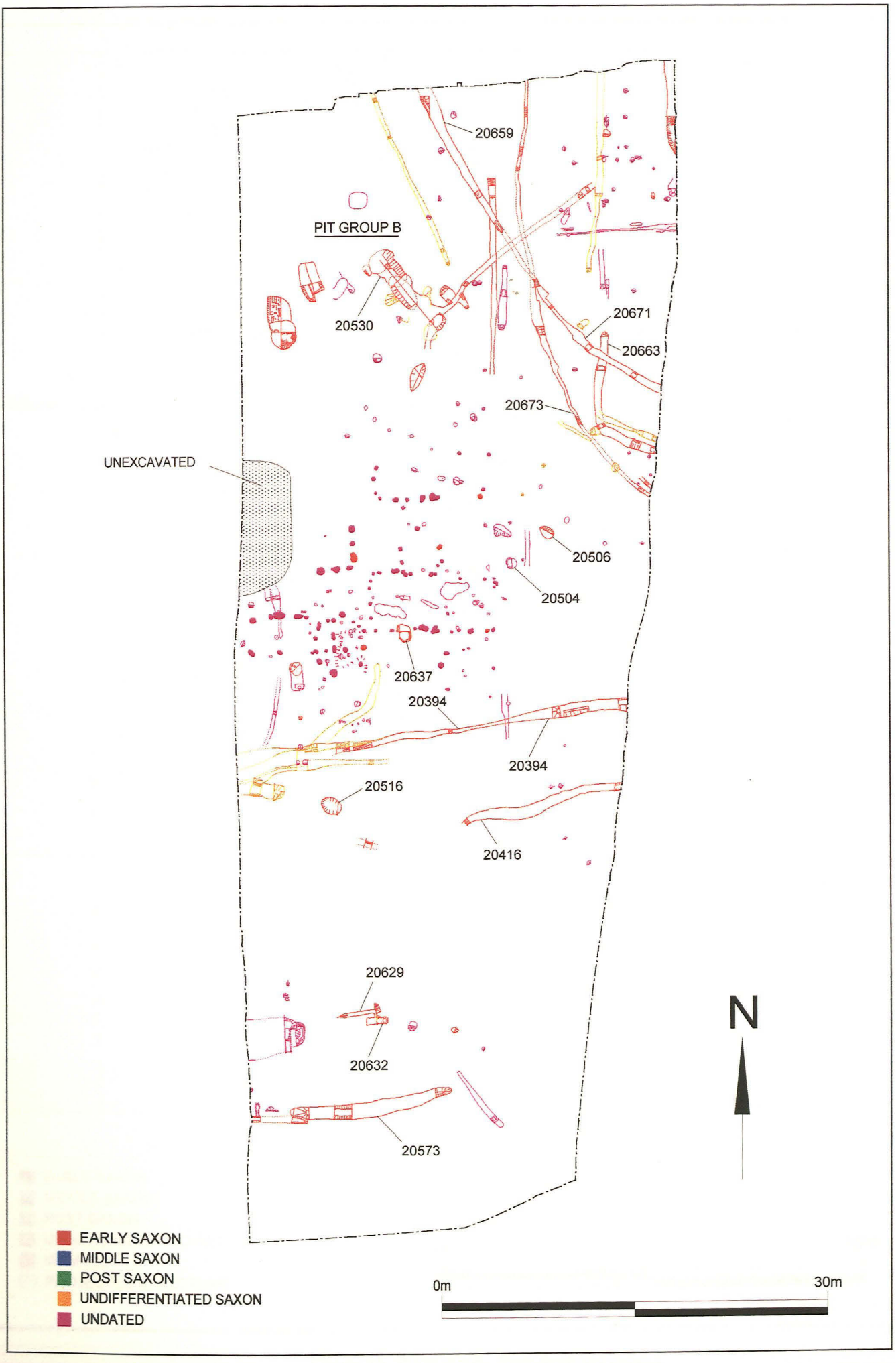


Figure 14 Black Area - Early Saxon

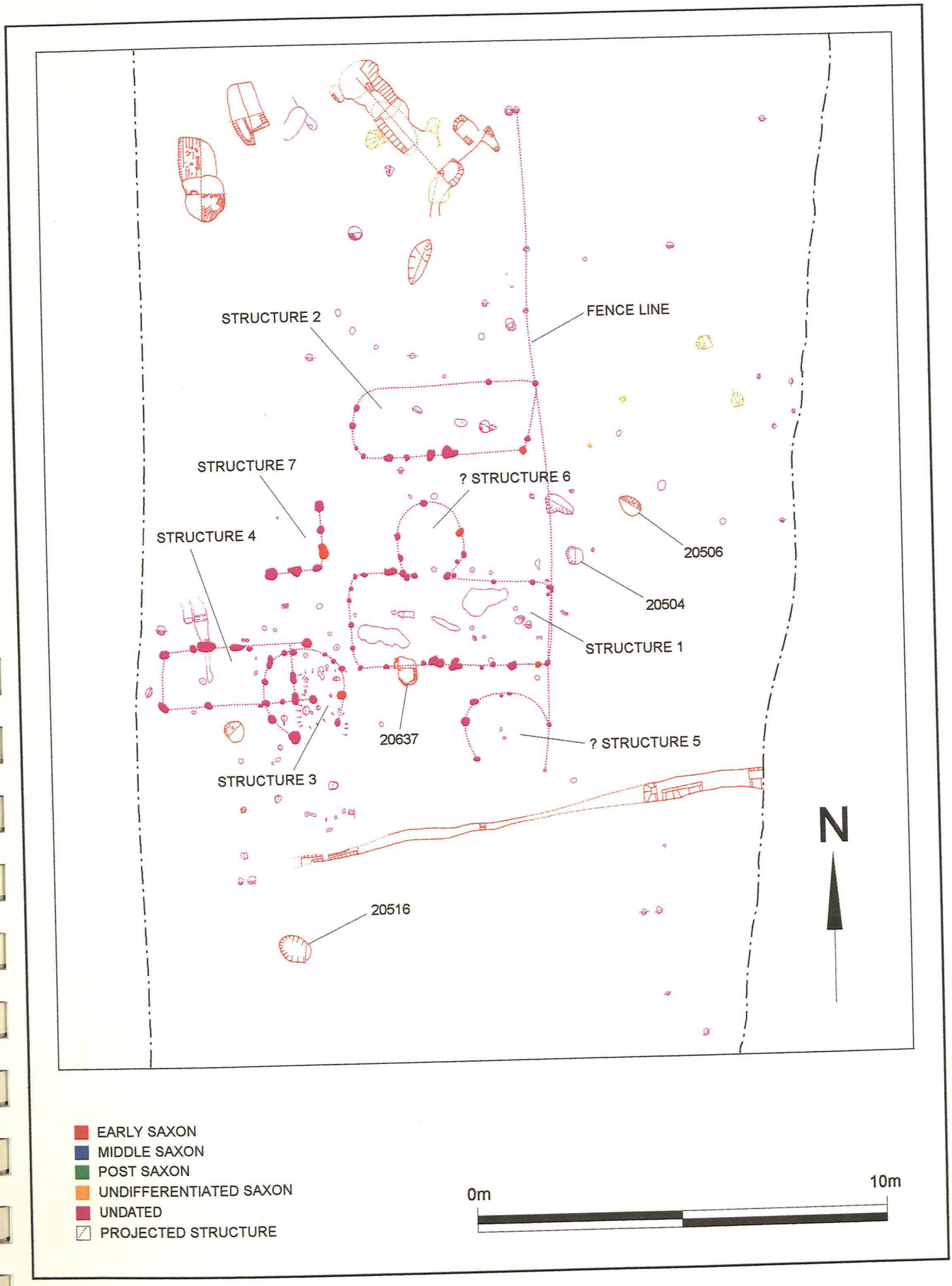


Figure 15 Black Area - Post-Built Structures

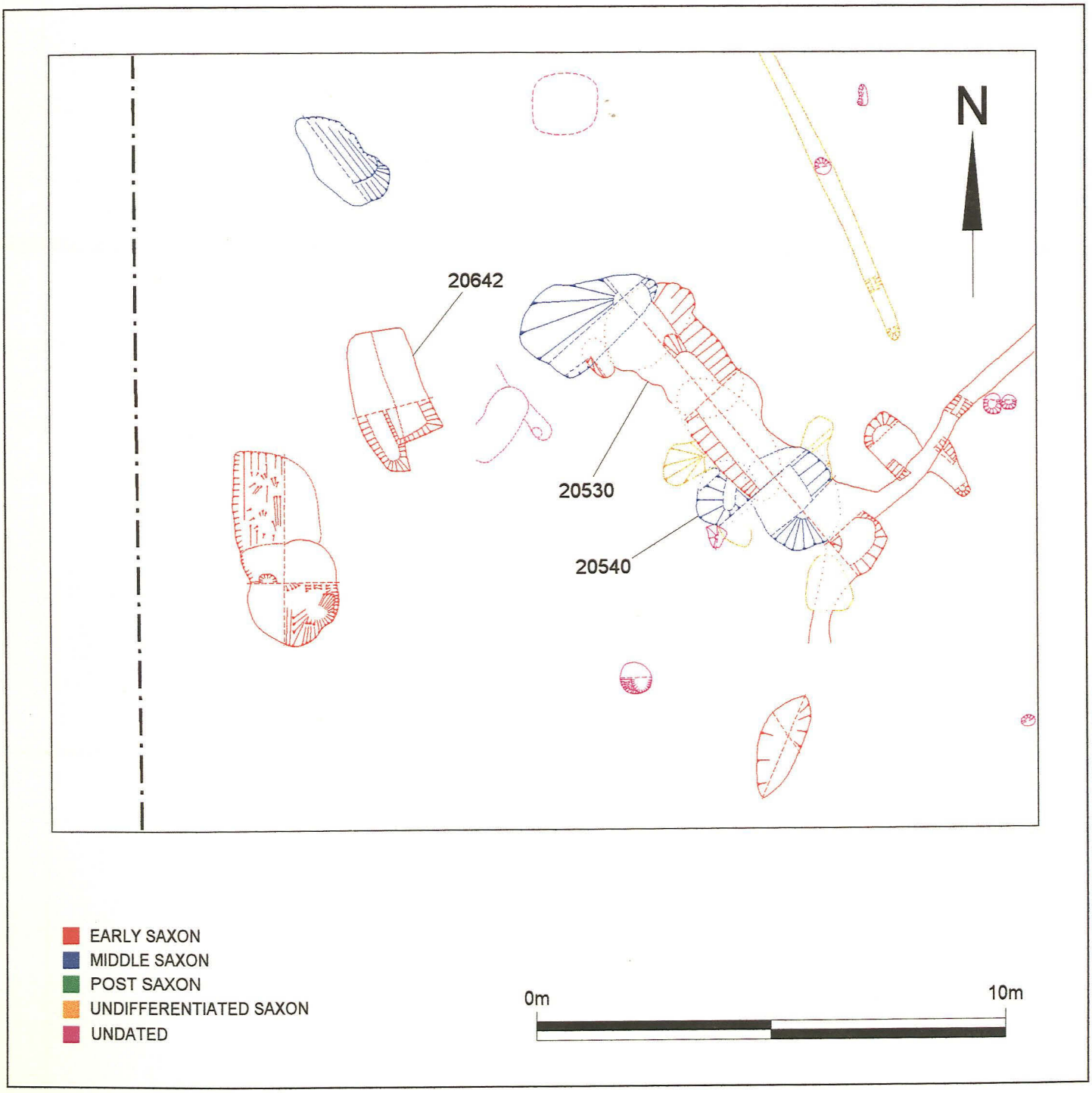


Figure 16 Black Area - Pit Group B

Figure 17 Black Area - Middle Saxon

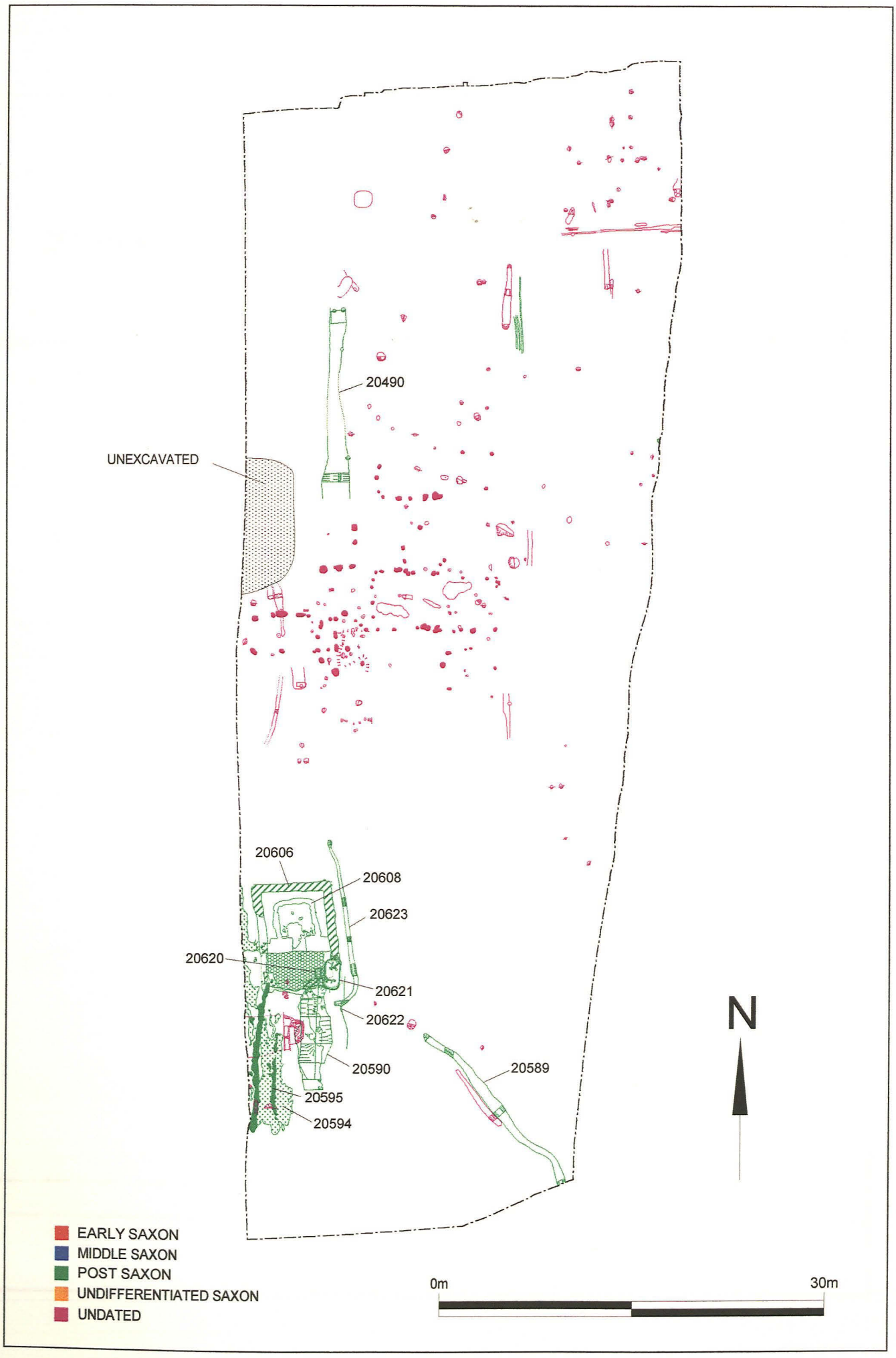


Figure 18 Black Area - Post Saxon

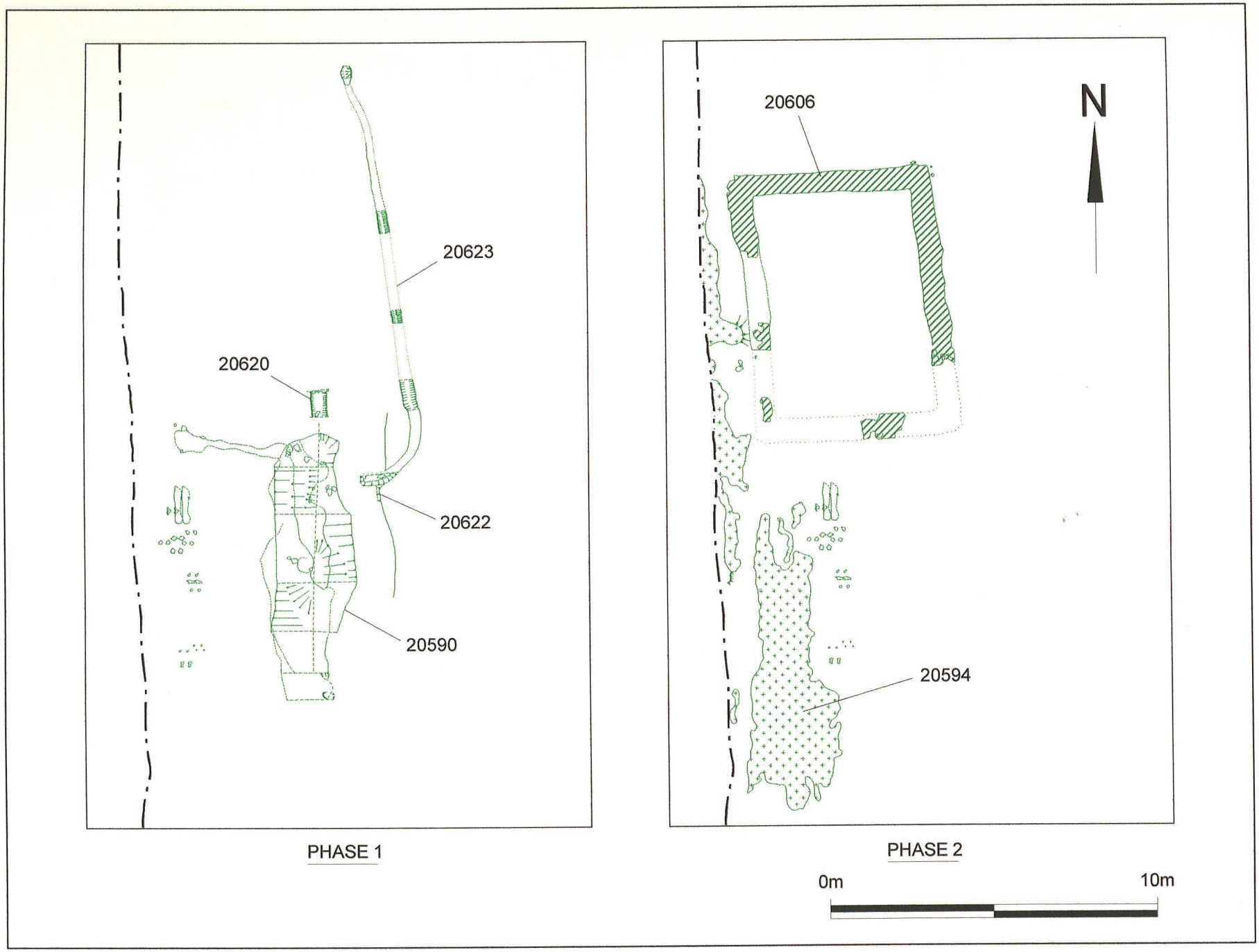


Figure 19 Black Area - Post Medieval Phases 1 and 2

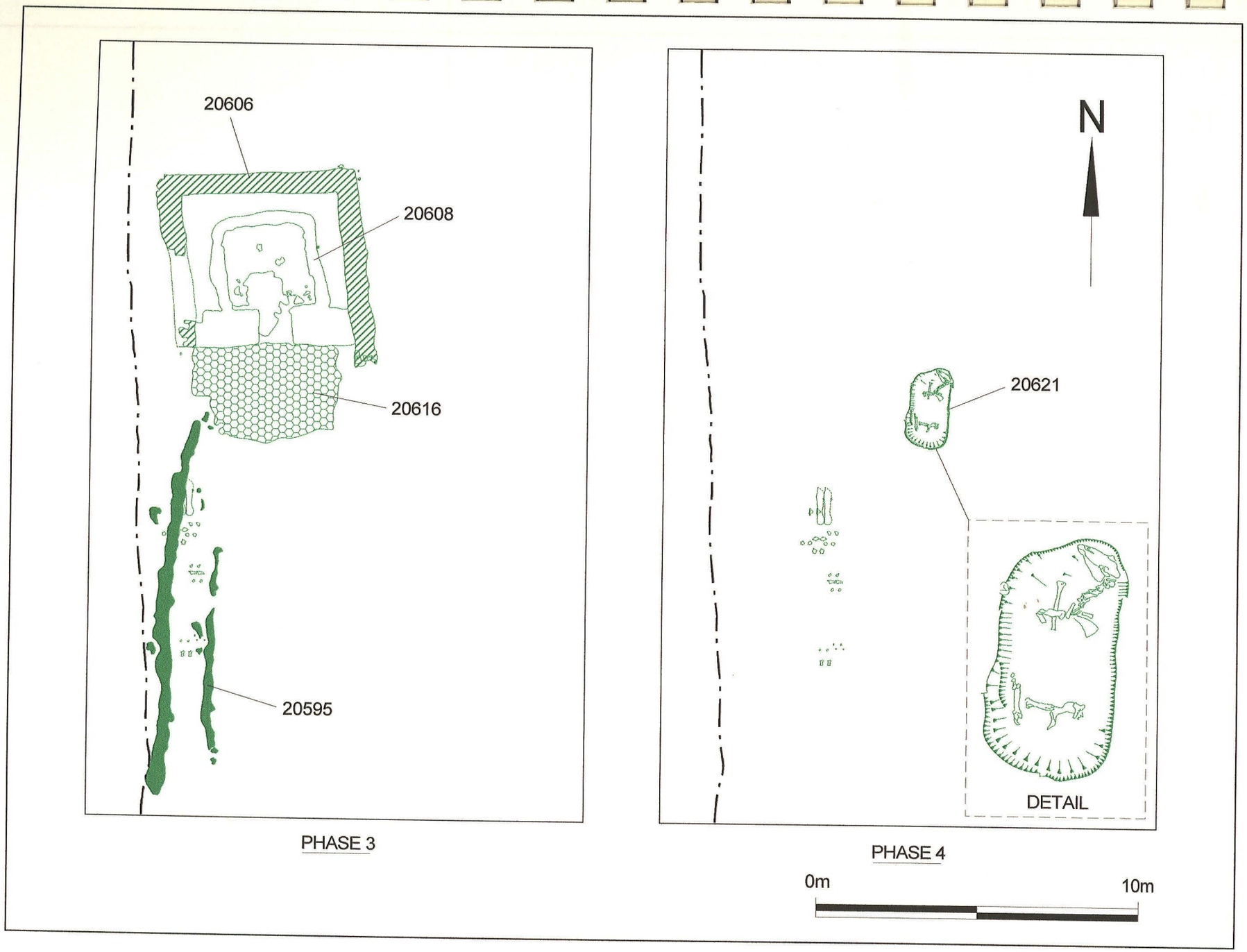


Figure 20 Black Area - Post Medieval Phases 3 and 4

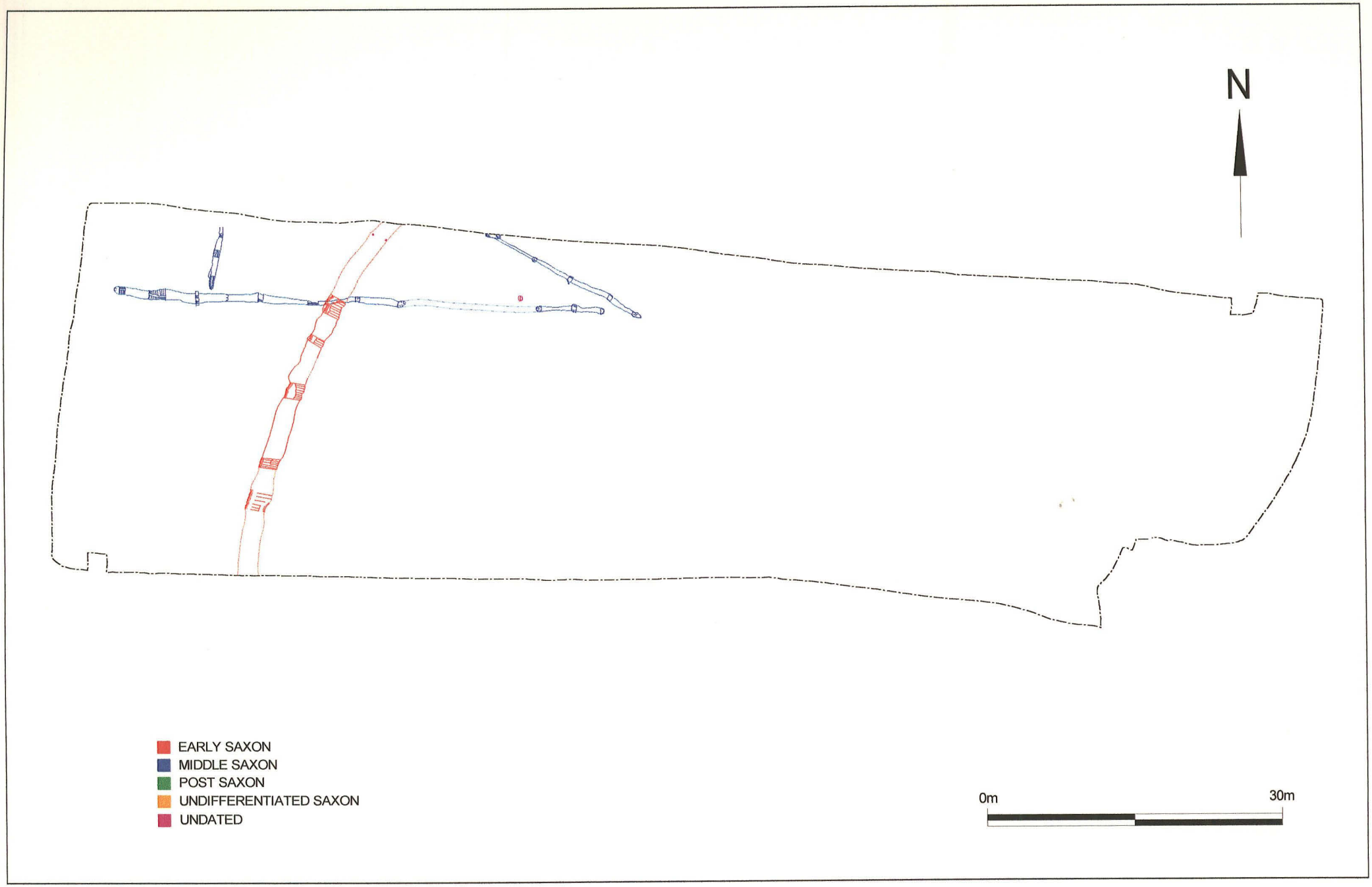


Figure 21 Pink Area - Early and Middle Saxon

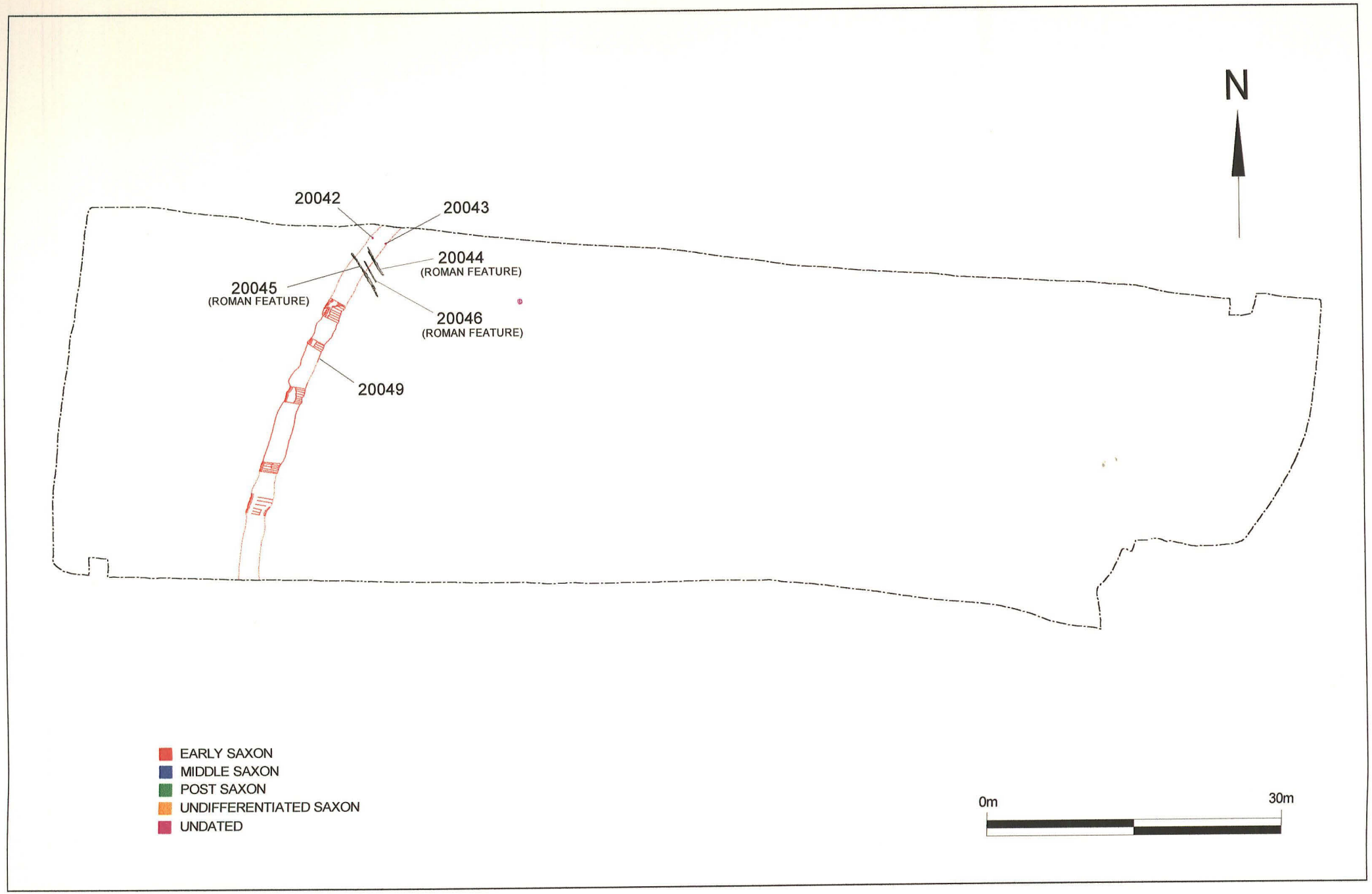


Figure 22 Pink Area - Early Saxon

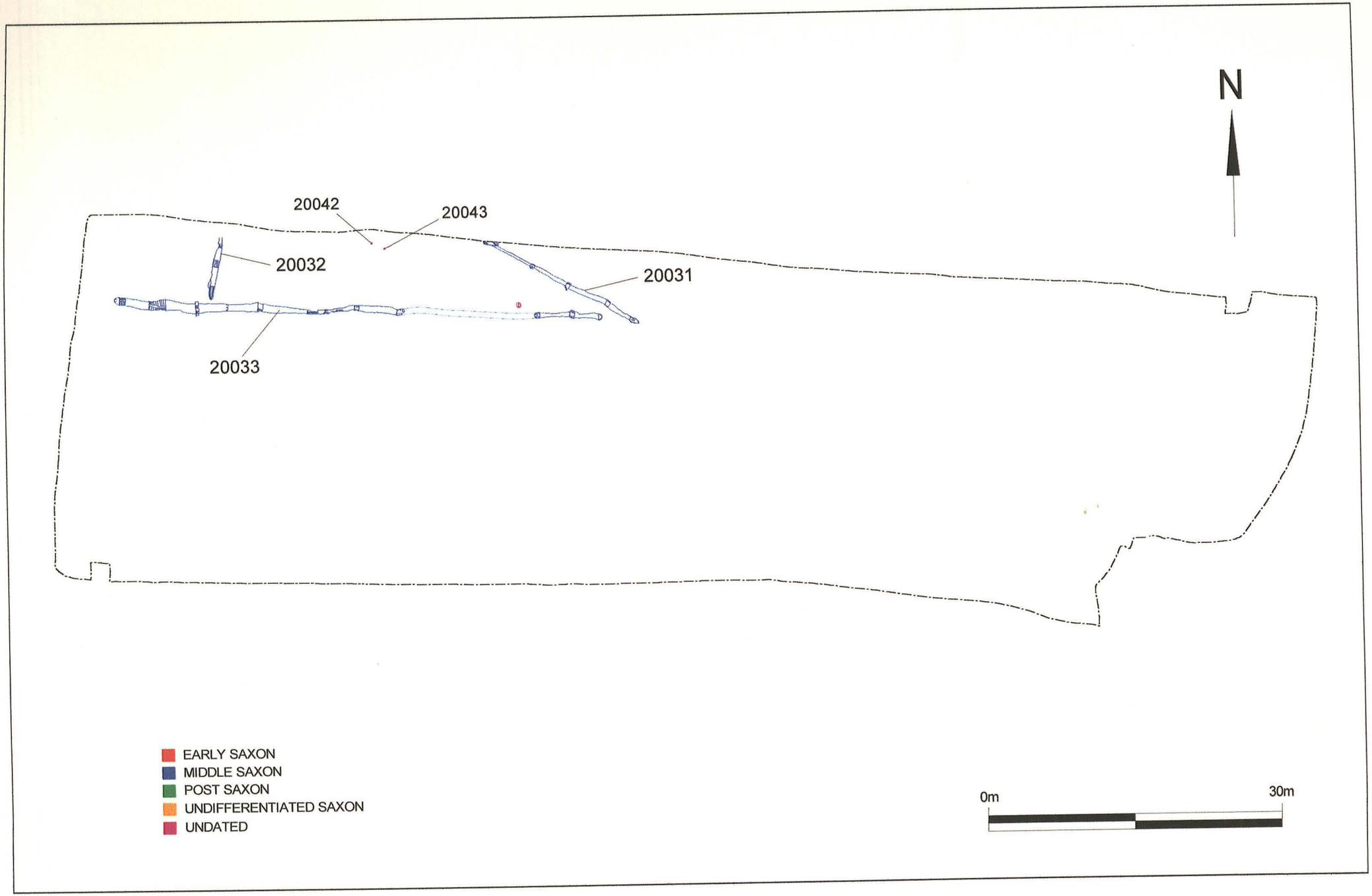


Figure 23 Pink Area - Middle Saxon

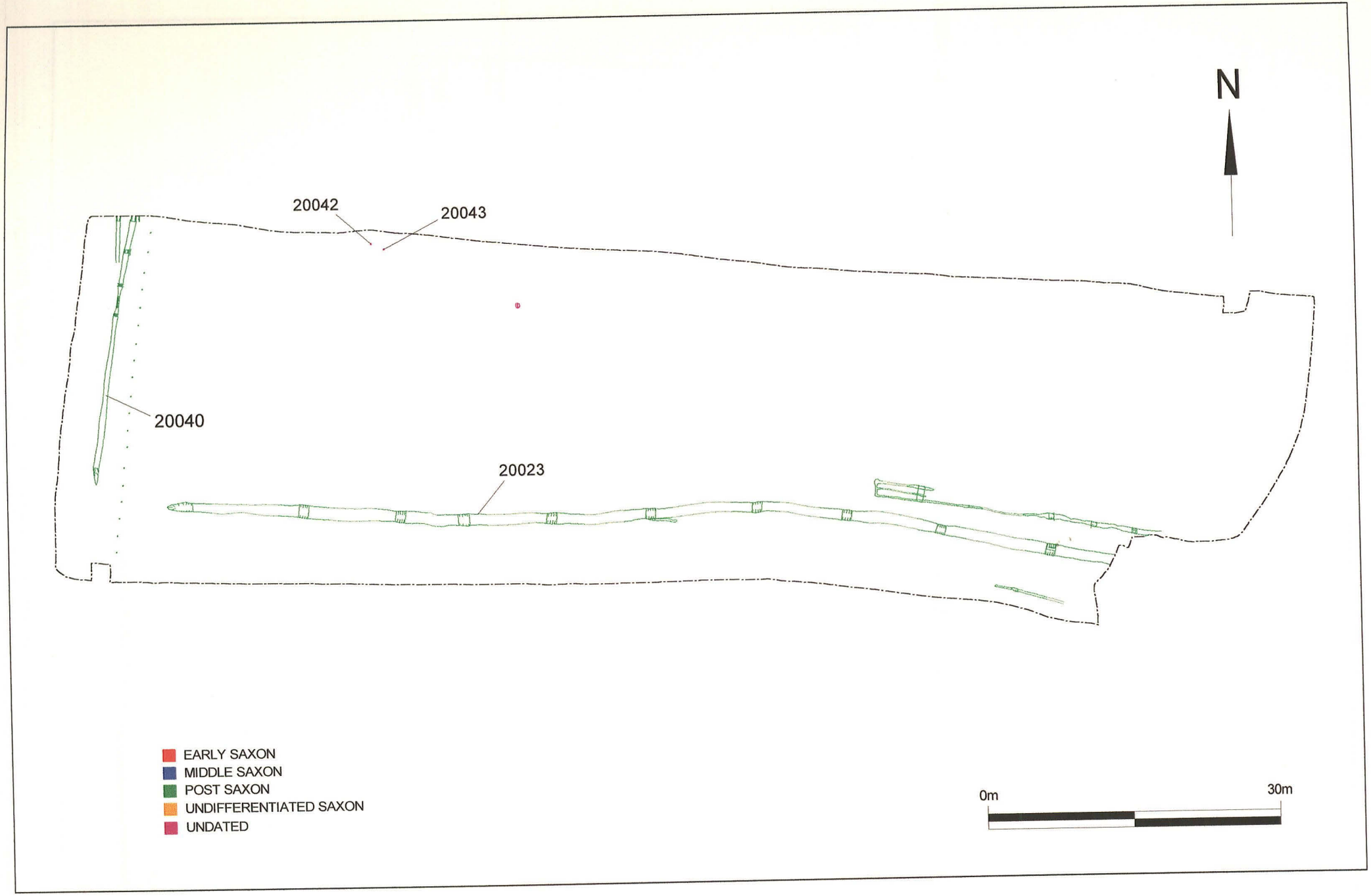


Figure 24 Pink Area - Post Saxon

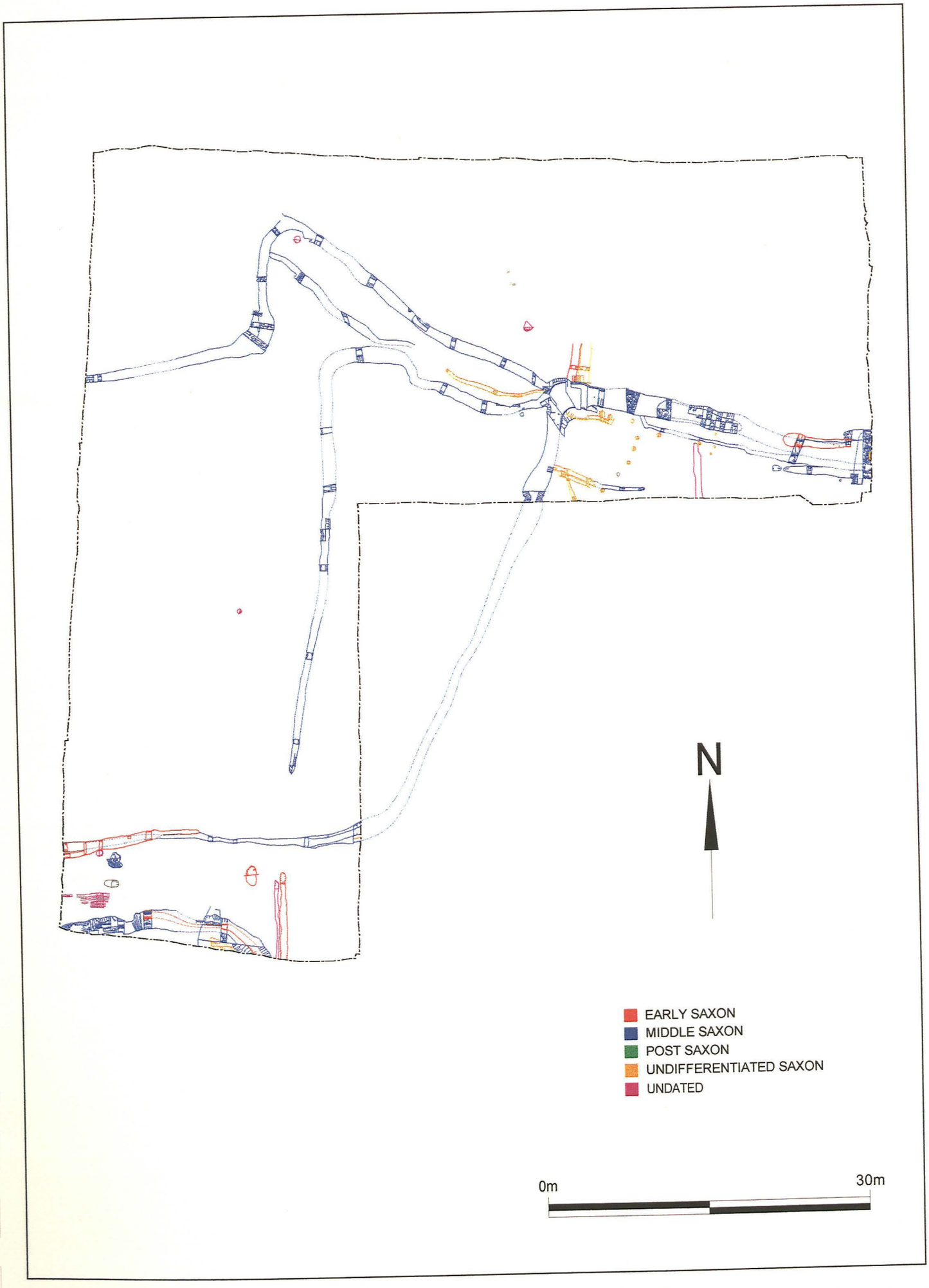


Figure 25 Orange Area - Early, Middle and Undifferentiated Saxon

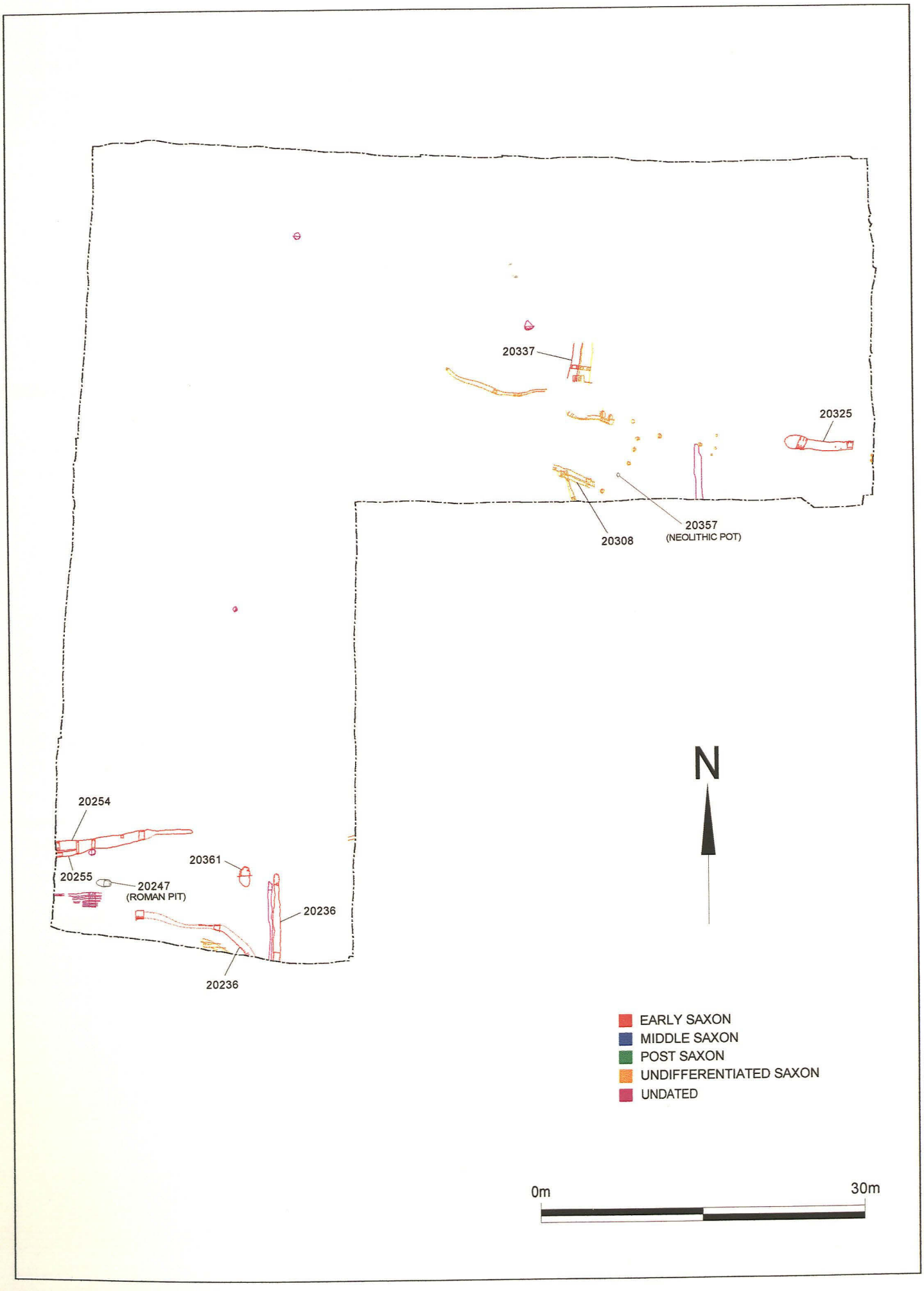


Figure 26 Orange Area - Early Saxon

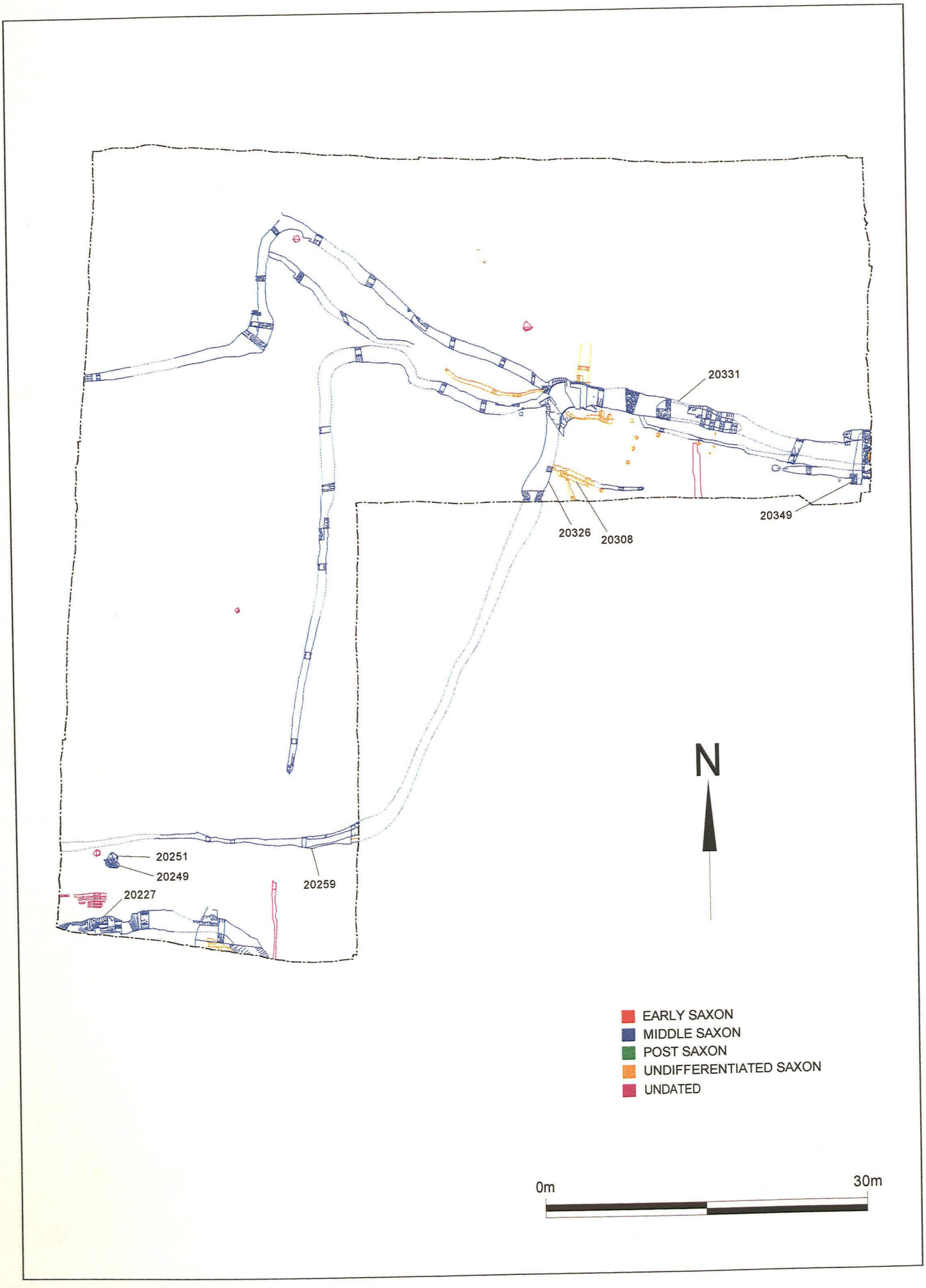


Figure 27 Orange Area - Middle Saxon

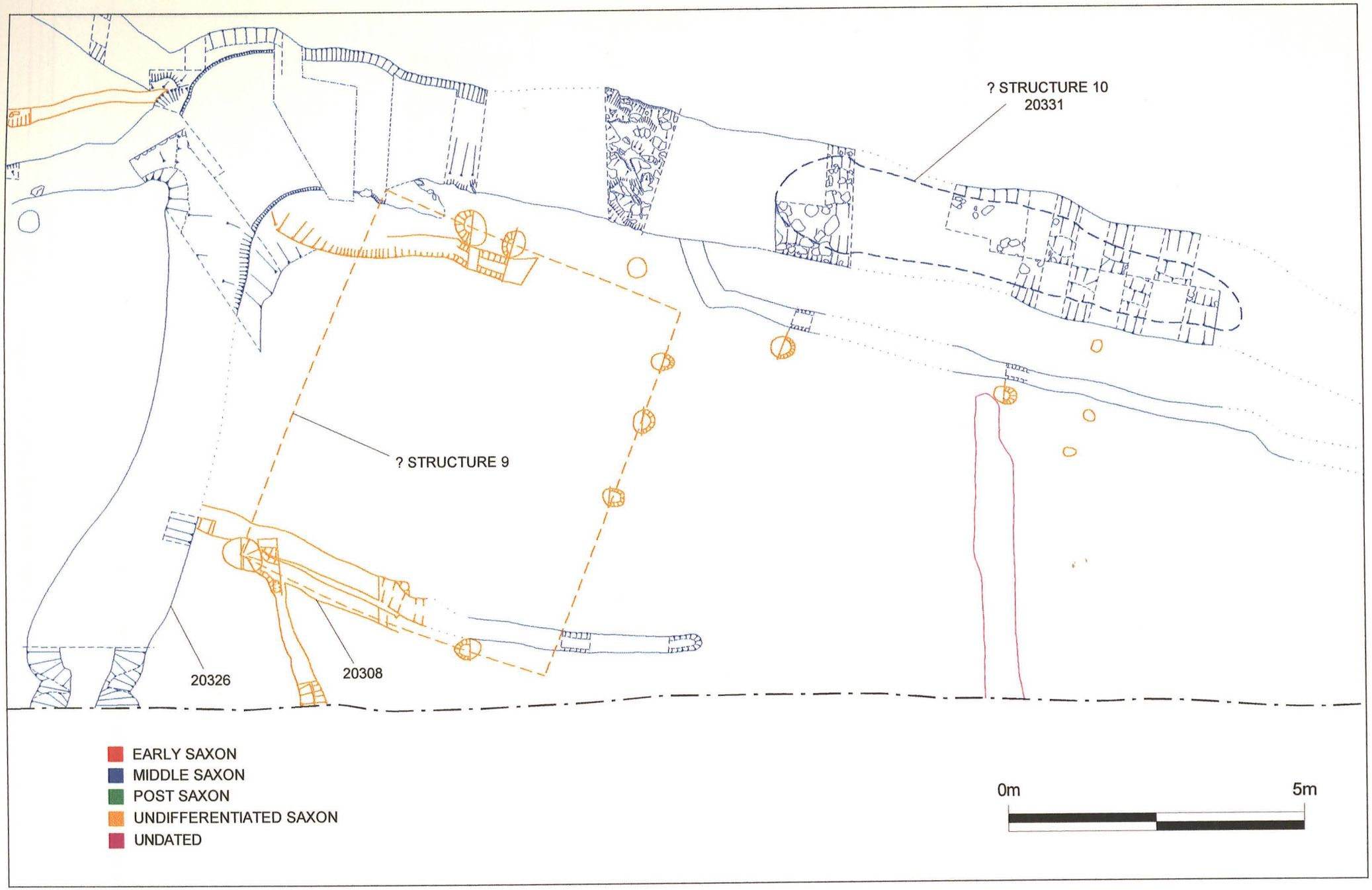


Figure 28 Orange Area - Possible Structures

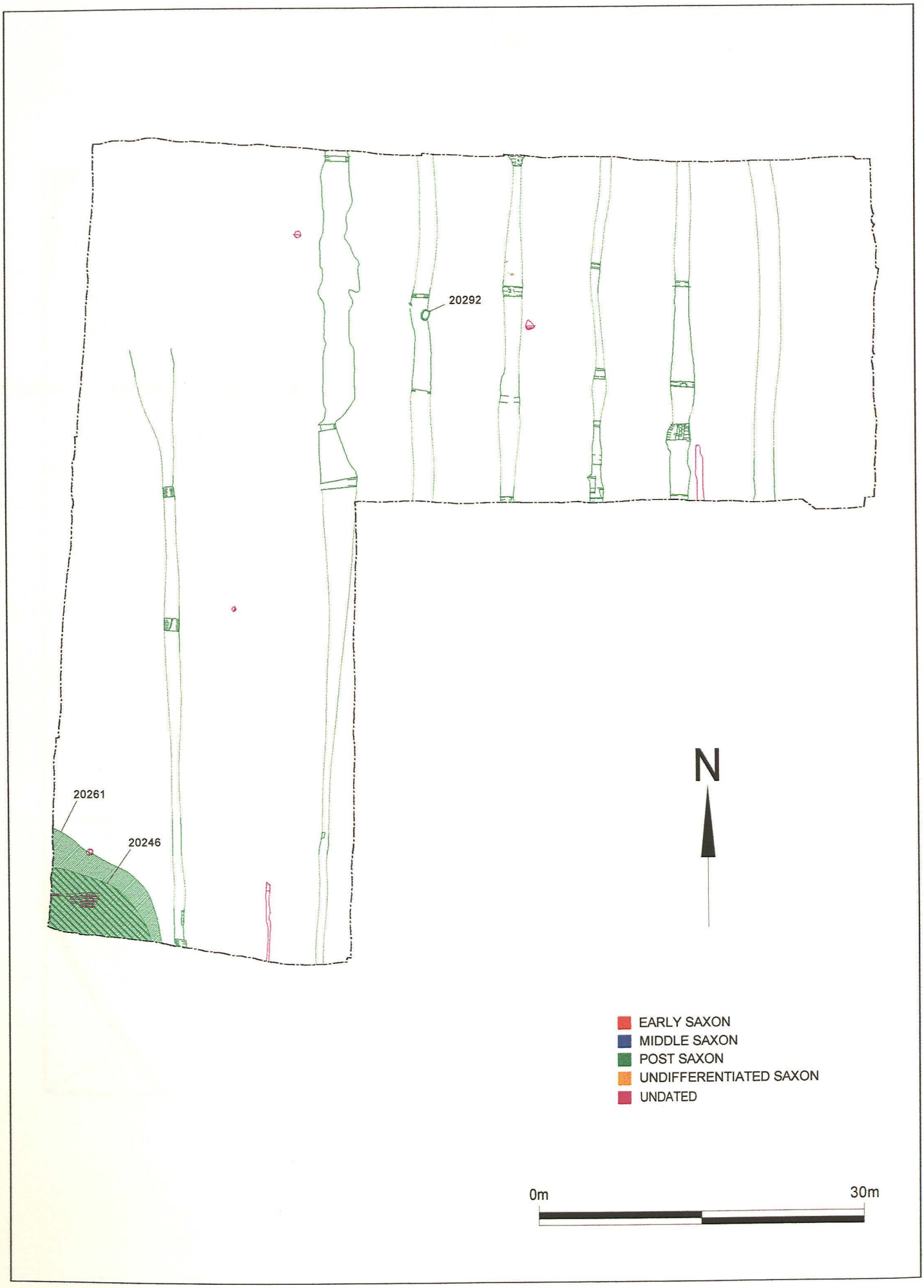


Figure 29 Orange Area - Post Saxon

Fig. 30 Location map of Medieval ridge and furrow around Quarrington

Figure 31 All Areas - Early Saxon

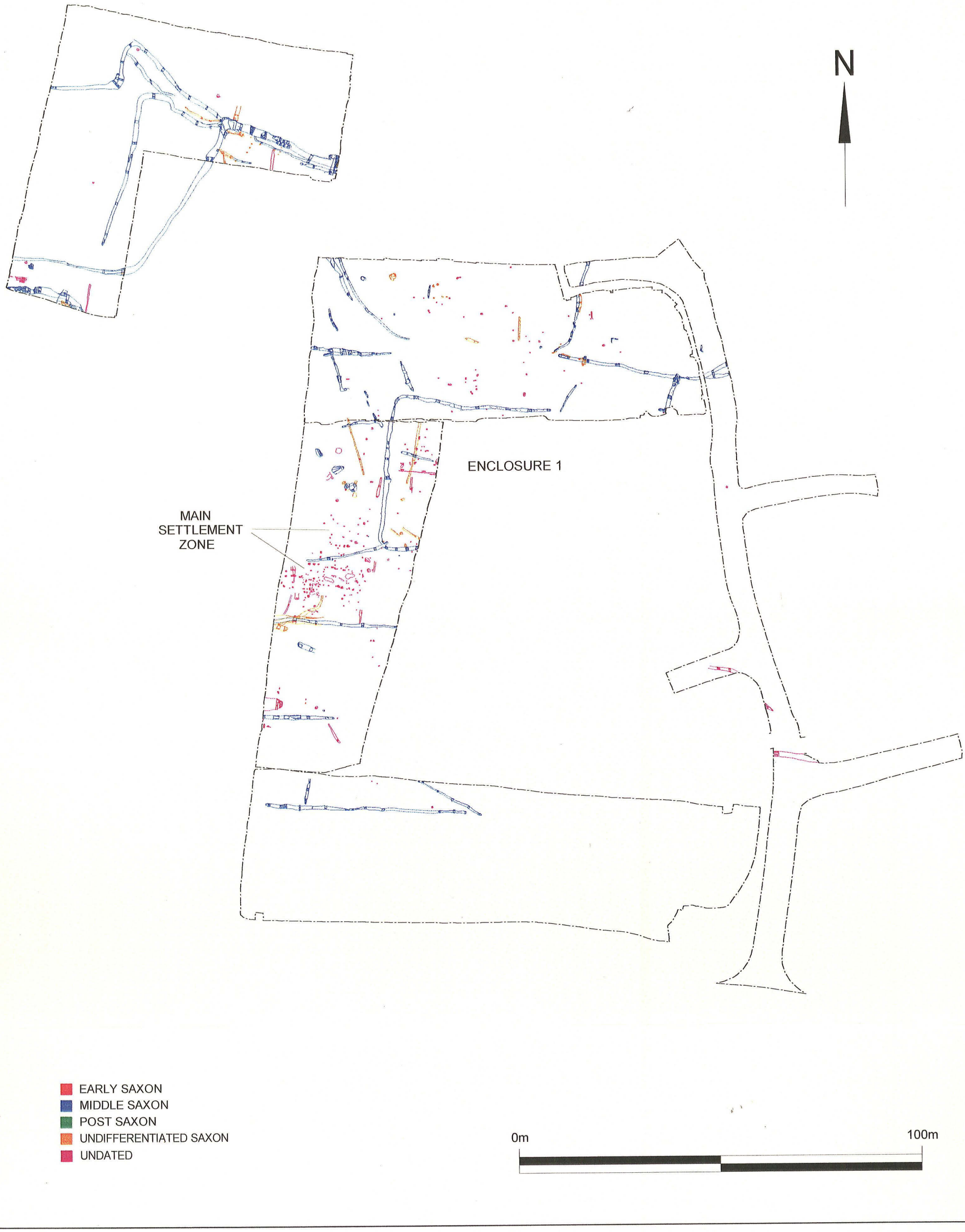
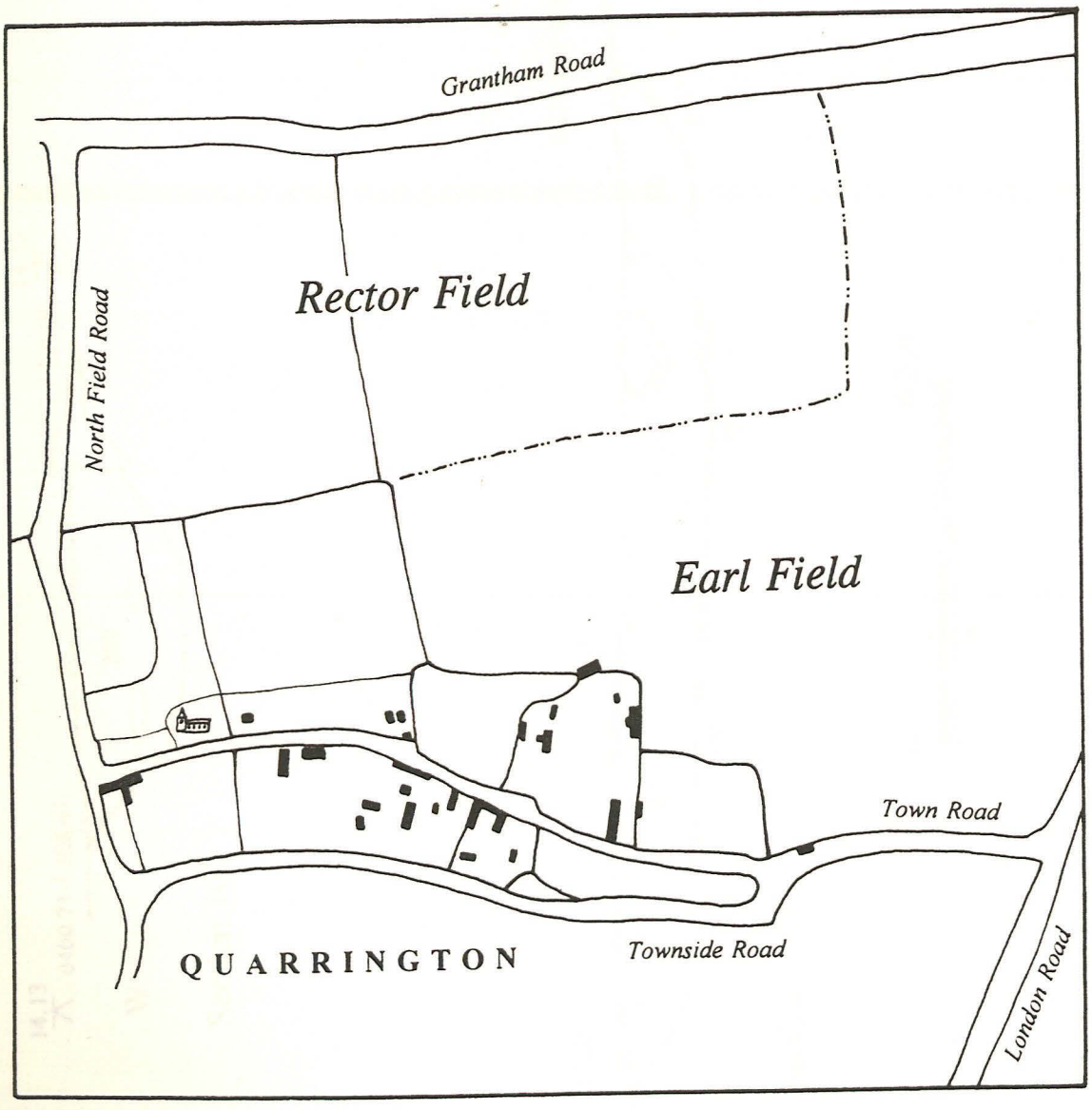
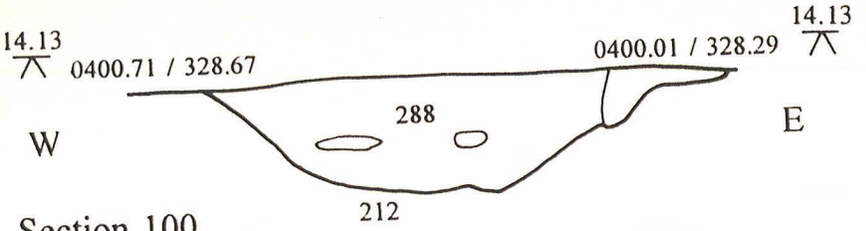


Figure 32 All Areas - Middle Saxon

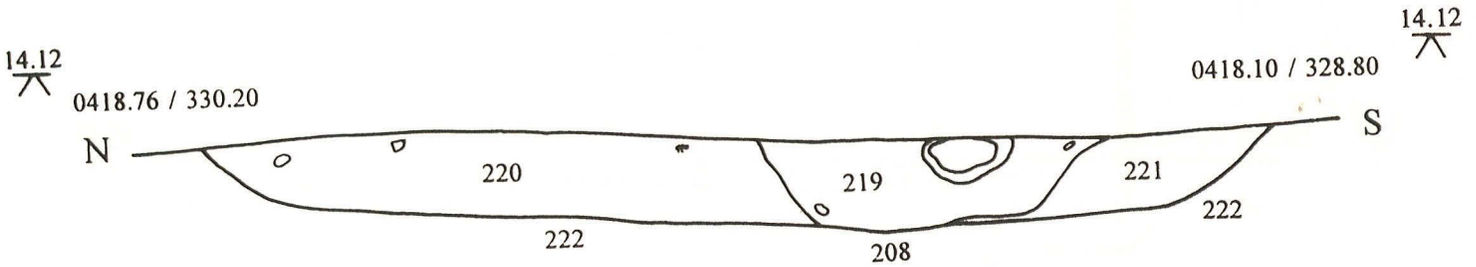
Map of the Lordship of Quarrington in the County of Lincoln
Surveyed in 1794
by
WM Attenburrow



No Scale Available



Section 100



Section 75

Fig. 34

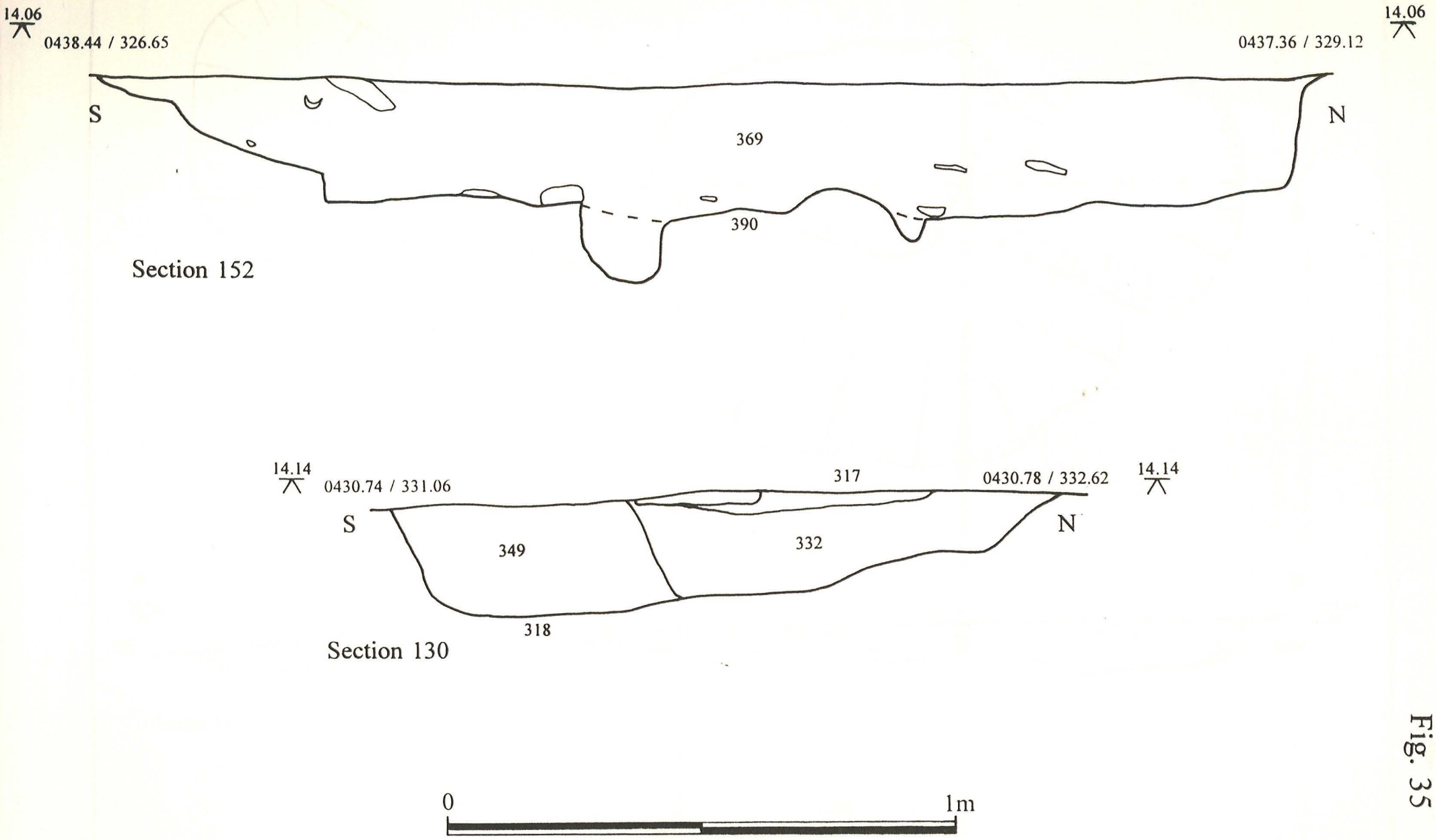

14.06
0438.44 / 326.65
14.06
0437.36 / 329.12
S
N
369
390
Section 152
14.14
0430.74 / 331.06
317
0430.78 / 332.62
14.14
S
N
349
332
318
Section 130
0
1m

Fig. 35

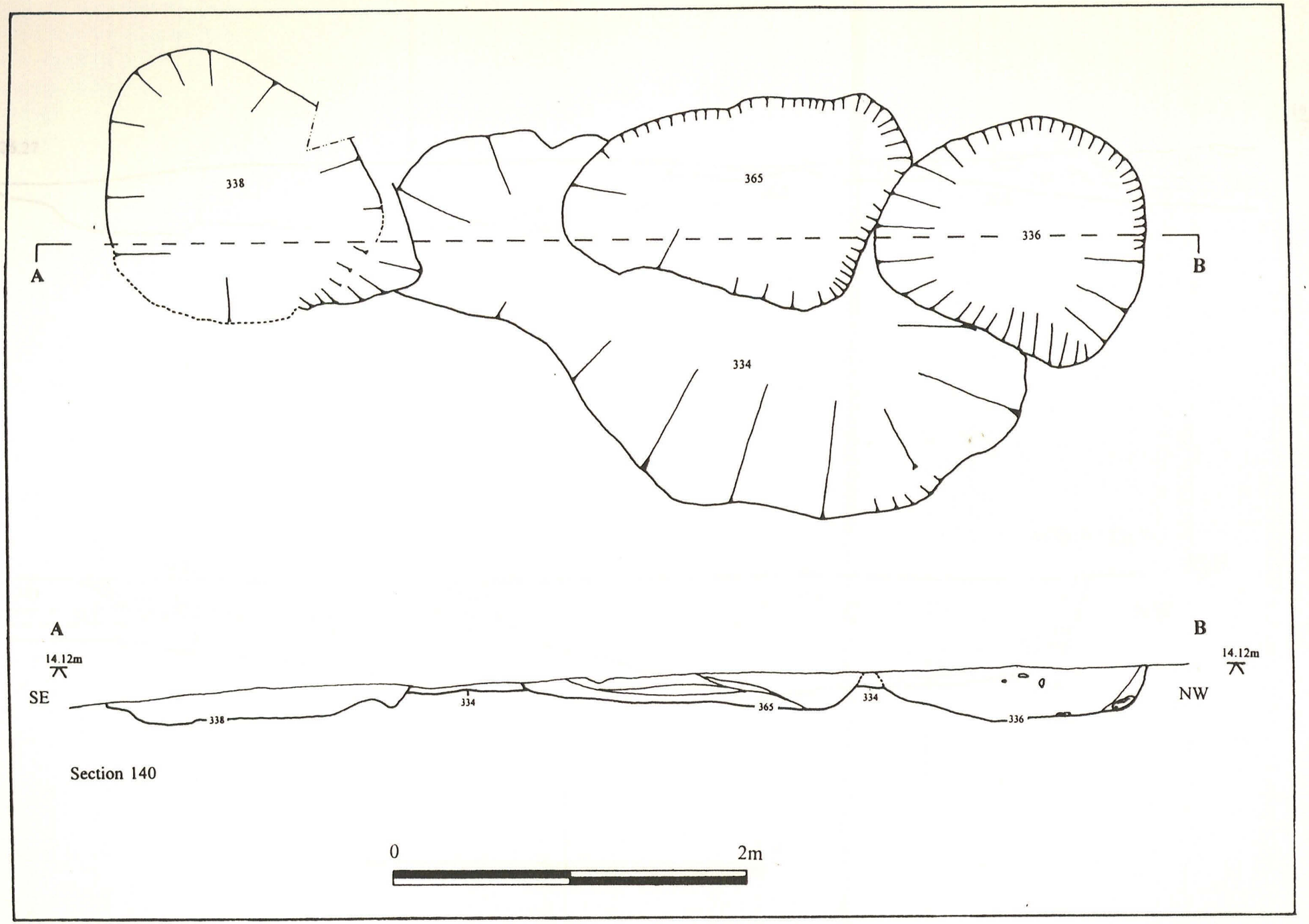


Figure 36 Pit Group A. Plan and Section

Fig. 36

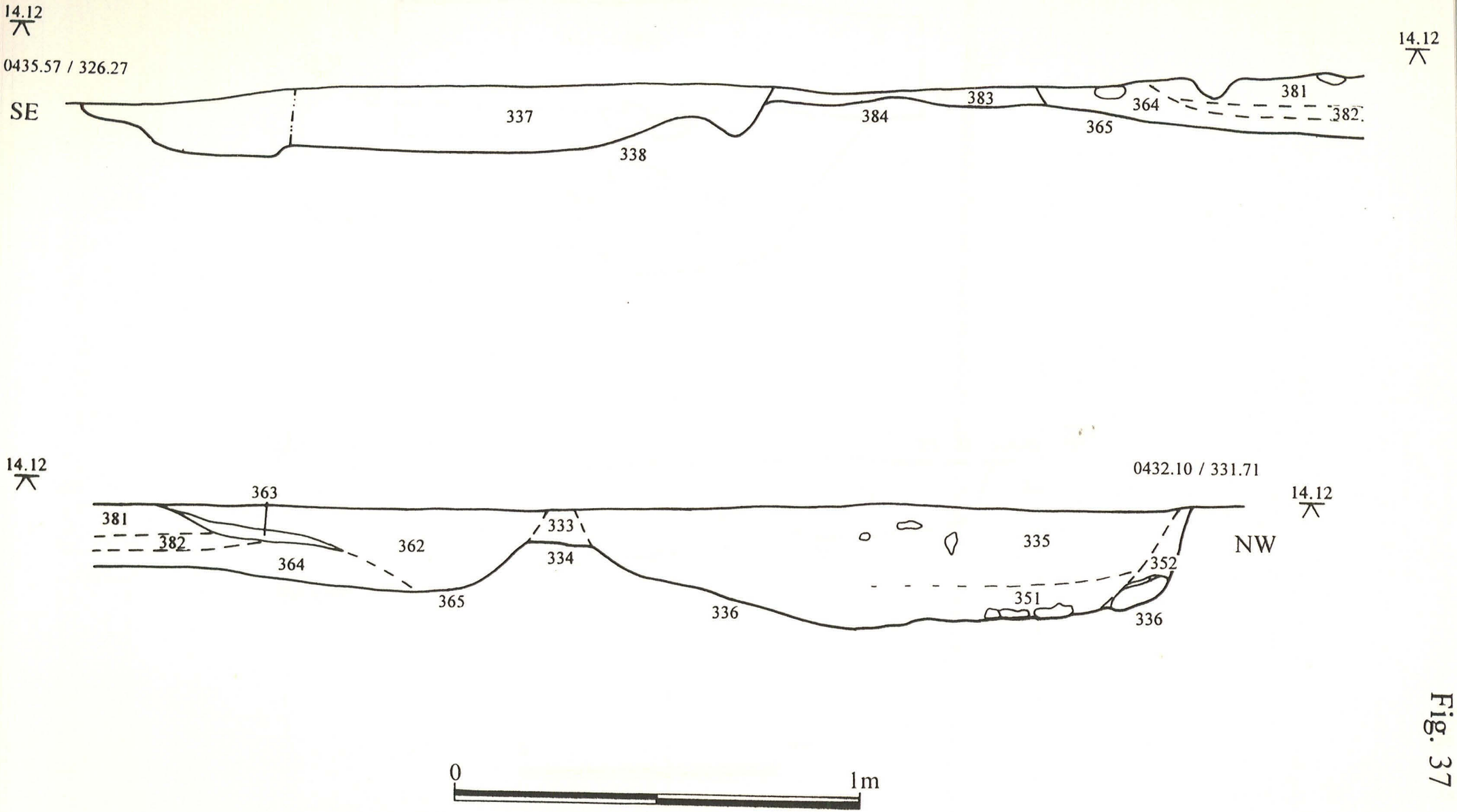
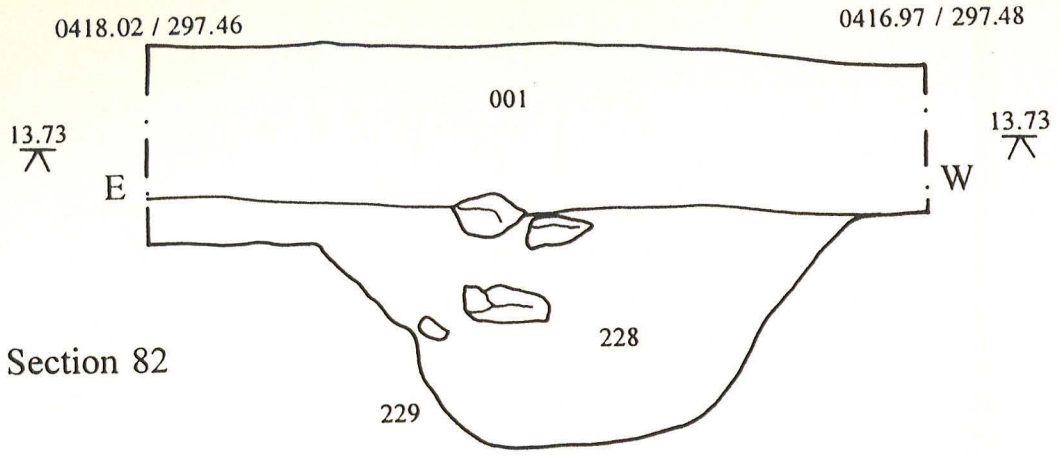
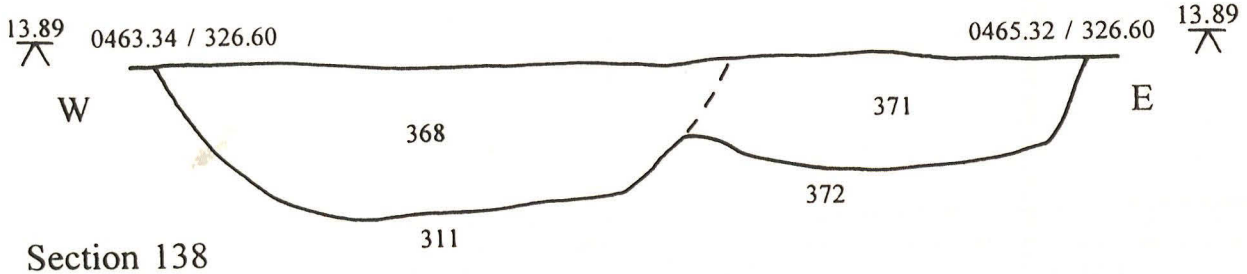

14.12
0435.57 / 326.27
SE
337
338
384
383
365
364
381
382
14.12
14.12
363
381
382
364
362
365
333
334
336
335
351
352
336
0432.10 / 331.71
14.12
NW
0
1m

Fig. 37



Section 82



Section 138

Fig. 38

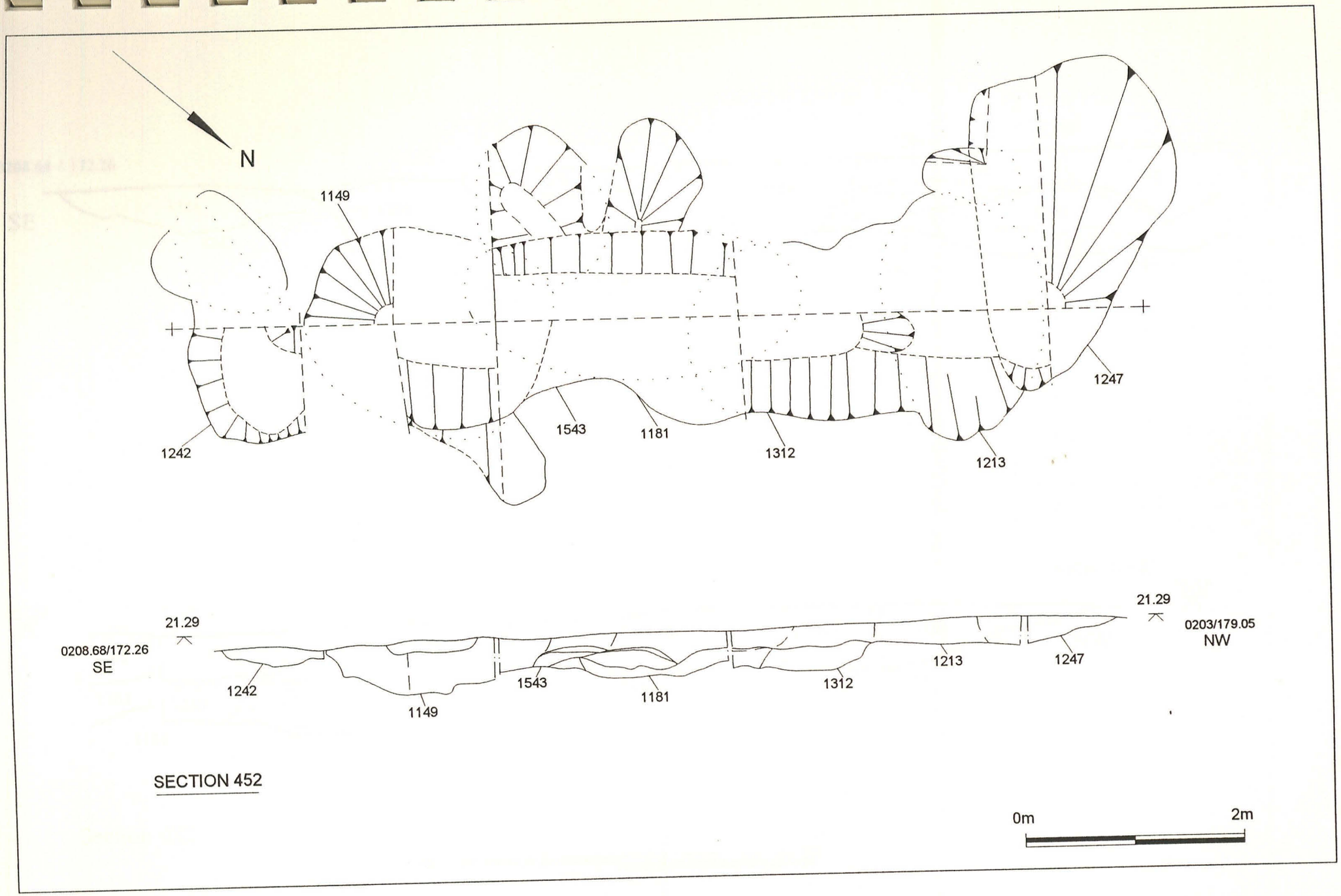
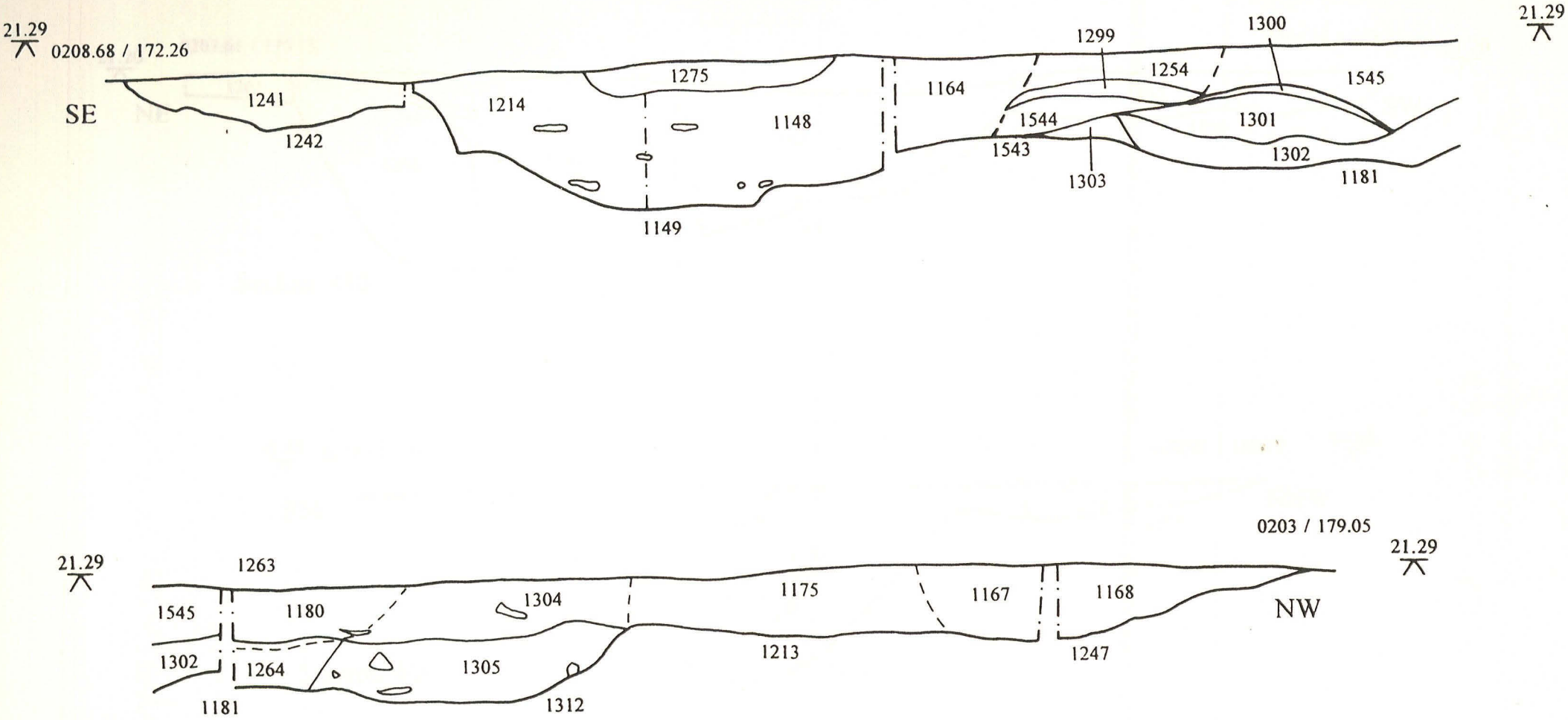


Figure 39 Pit Group B, Black Area, With Associated Section



Section 452

0 2m

Fig. 40

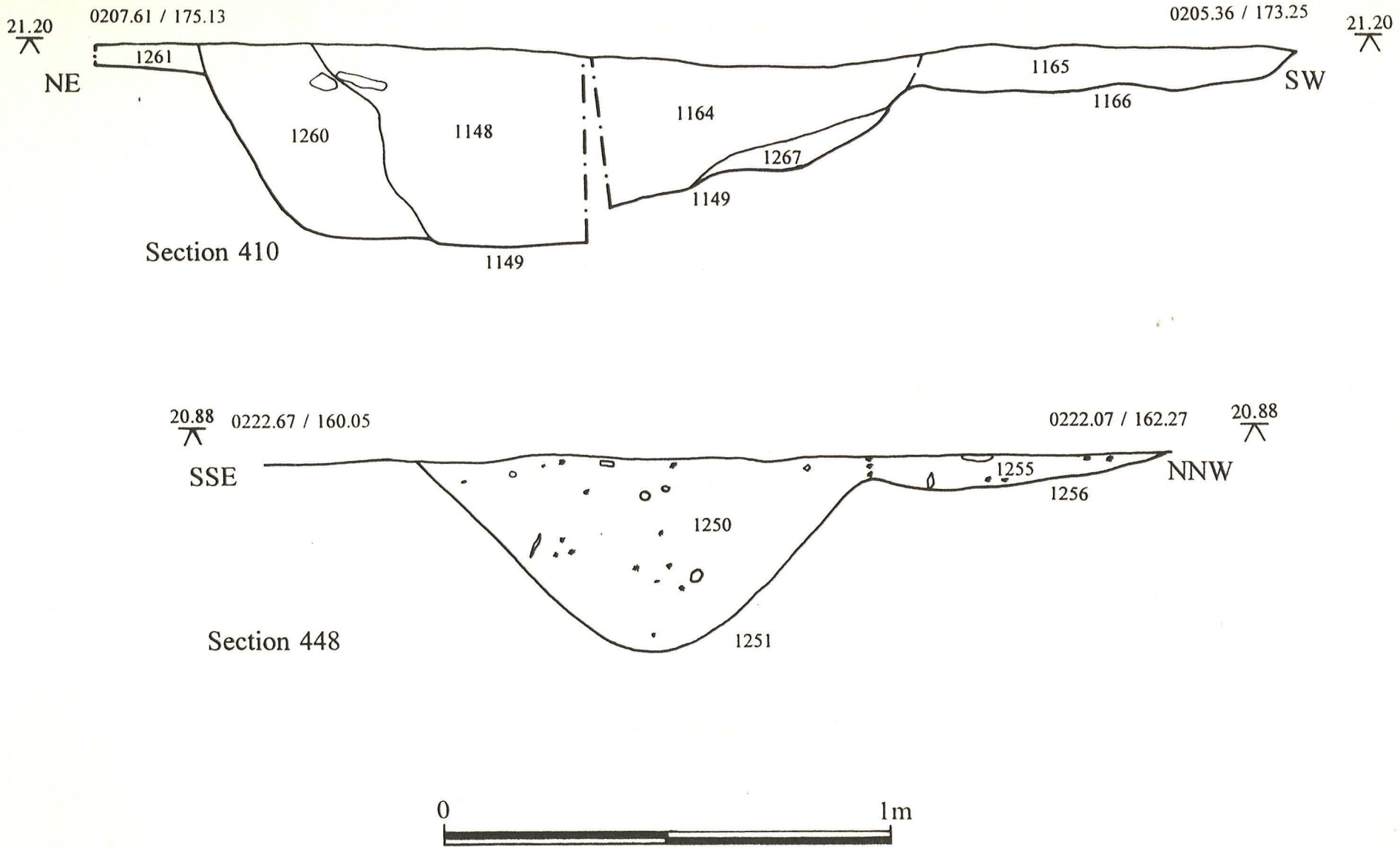
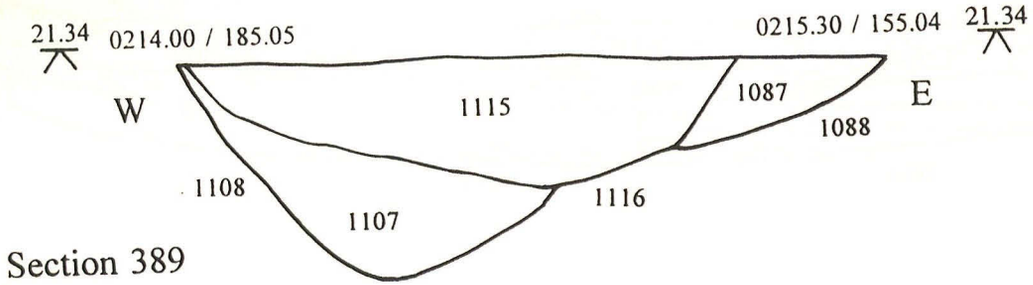
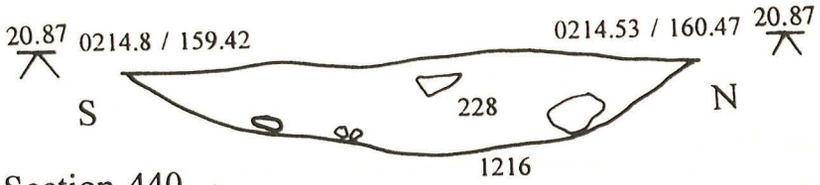

21.20
0207.61 / 175.13
0205.36 / 173.25
21.20
NE
SW
1261
1165
1166
1164
1260
1148
1267
1149
1149
Section 410
20.88
0222.67 / 160.05
0222.07 / 162.27
20.88
SSE
NNW
1255
1256
1250
1251
Section 448
0
1m

Fig. 41



Section 389



Section 440

Fig. 42

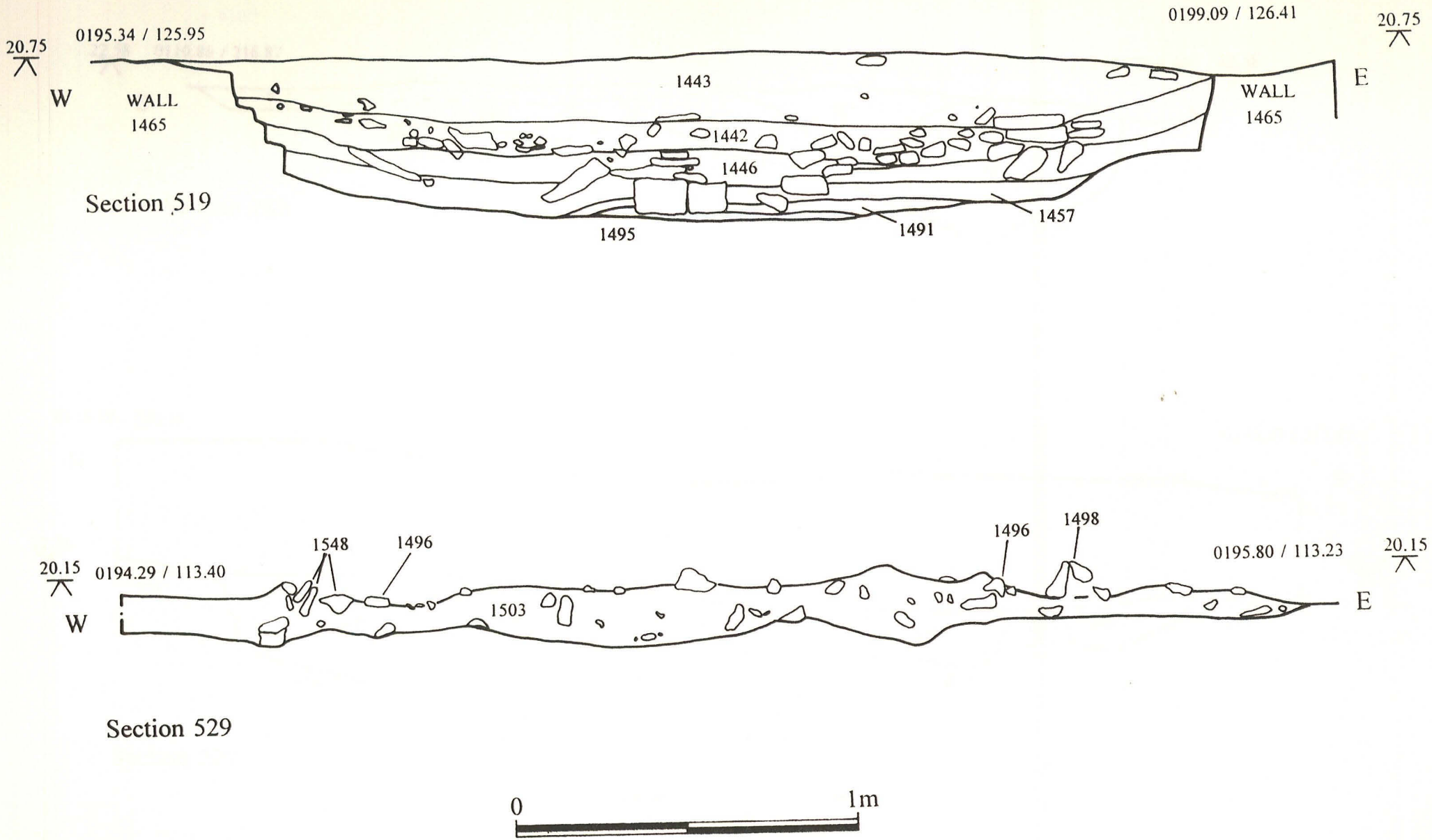
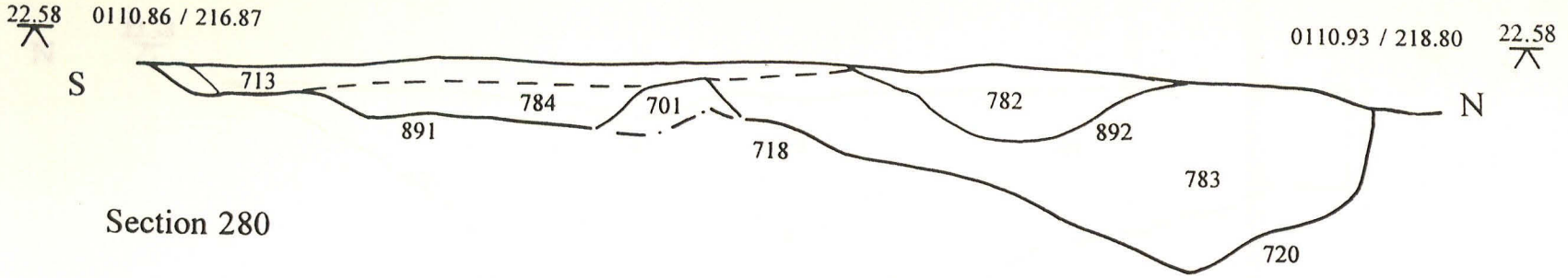
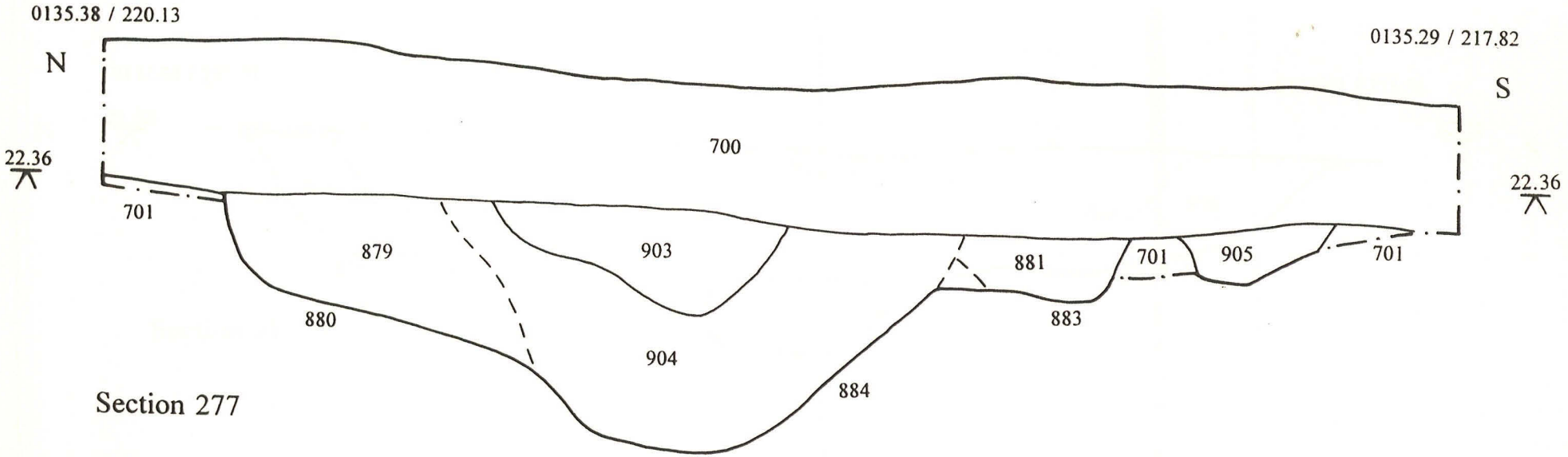

20.75
0195.34 / 125.95
W
WALL
1465
1443
1442
1446
1495
1491
1457
0199.09 / 126.41
20.75
E
WALL
1465
Section 519
20.15
0194.29 / 113.40
W
1548
1496
1503
1496
1498
0195.80 / 113.23
20.15
E
Section 529
0
1m

Fig. 43



Section 280



Section 277

Fig. 44

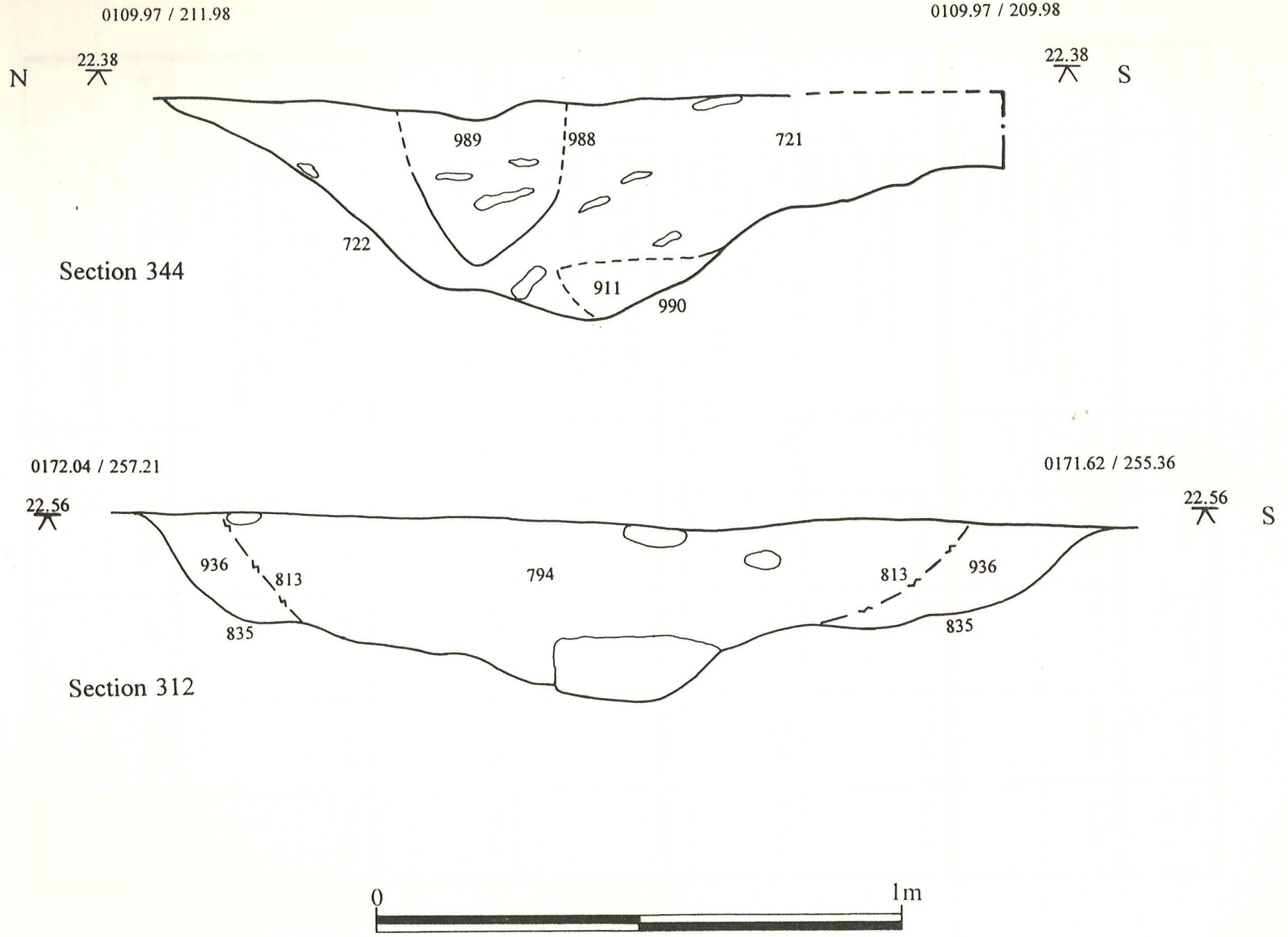

0109.97 / 211.98
0109.97 / 209.98
N
22.38
22.38
S
989
988
721
722
911
990
Section 344
0172.04 / 257.21
0171.62 / 255.36
N
22.56
22.56
S
936
813
794
813
936
835
835
Section 312
0
1m

Fig. 45

Catalogue of illustrated small finds

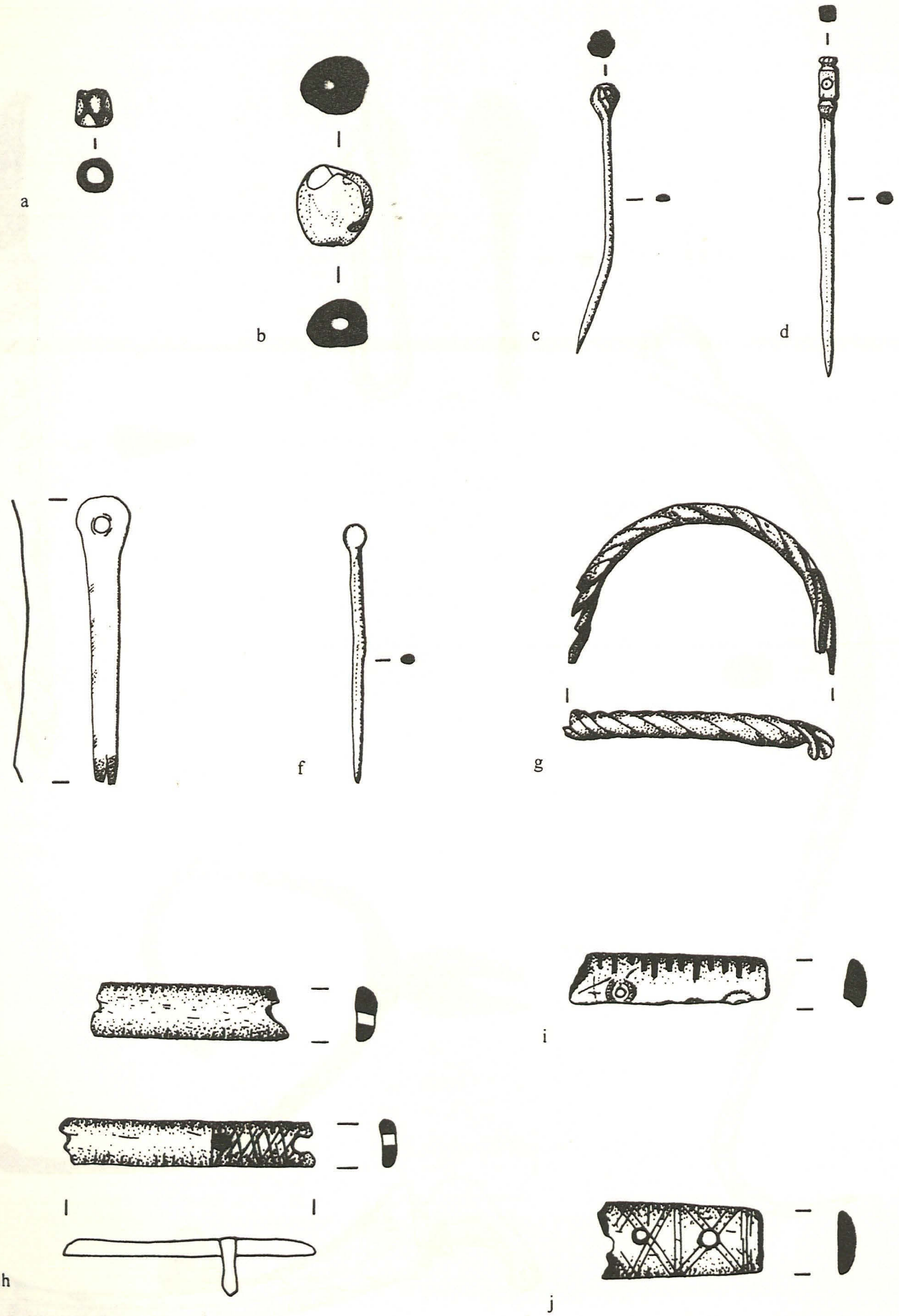
Figure No.	Description	Small find No.	Area	Context No.	Group matrix No.	Site phase
46.a	BEAD. Complete glass bead, white with blue/green 'trailed' decoration. Large central perforation. **Undated.**	35	Green	335	20074	E.Sax
46.b	BEAD. Complete amber bead. Irregular shape and section. **Undated.**	70	Orange	822	20362	E.Sax
46.c	PIN (complete). Bi-conical head with radiating incised lines. **Probably Roman.**	79	Orange	713	20261	P.Med
46.d	PIN (complete). Square section head with incised dot in circle on each face. Incised collars above and below. **Probably Roman.**	50	Orange	700	20336	Mod
46.e	NAIL CLEANER. Beaten sheet. Flattened terminal with punched perforation. **Undated.**	54	Black	987	20370	?Mod
46.f	NAIL CLEANER/TOOTH PICK and ear scoop. circular section shaft tapering to point at one end with flattened terminal at other. **Undated.**	94	Black	1036	20586	M.Sax
46.g	BRACELET. Copper alloy cable twist bracelet. 4 strands. Broken both ends. **Undated.**	97	Black	1281	20404	?

Figure No.	Description	Small find No.	Area	Context No.	Group matrix No.	Site phase
46.h	COMB. 19 frags, probably of one comb. 2 connecting plate frags; one with cross hatch zone, one iron rivet in situ and two part holes surviving; one plain with two part holes surviving. Surviving teeth not illustrated. Possibly similar to a West type 1B. **Undated.**	68	Orange	794	20332	M.Sax
46.i	COMB. Connecting plate frag. Broken longitudinally. 2 part rivet holes surviving, one with one circle and other with double concentric circles around hole. Comb type unknown. **Possibly 11-12th Century.**	76	Orange	714	20246	Med
46.j	COMB. Connecting plate frag. zoned cross and linear decoration. Square end. 3 rivet holes surviving. First cut marks appear *circa* 13mm in from the end. **Undated.**	117	Black	1036	20586	M.Sax
47.a	KNIFE (complete). Bent at junction of blade and tang. Angled back. straight cutting edge. Blade length 92mm. West type D. **Undated.**	15	Green	201	20189	M.Sax

Figure No.	Description	Small find No.	Area	Context No.	Group matrix No.	Site phase
47.b	HASP (probable). Iron hasp, clasp or similar fitting comprising an oval headed short shanked nail fixed through the looped terminal of a tapering square sectioned 'rod'. Both rod and nail shank are bent to meet at the rear. Slight figure-of-eight profile. **Undated**.	26	Green	397	20160	E/M. Sax
47.c	LATCH LIFTER. Possible part of an iron latch lifter. It had a looped terminal, curved square section stem and a sharply upturned tip. **Undated.**	120a	Black	1050	20586	M.Sax
47.d	SPUR. Copper alloy rowel spur. Rowel missing. D section sides curved under ankle with figure-of-eight terminals. Short neck angled downwards. Flat rowel bosses. Incised and punched linear and foliate decoration. **Possibly 14th Century.**	89	Black	987	20370	Mod
48.a	LOOM WEIGHT. Frag baked clay loom weight of annular or intermediate type. **Undated.**	31	Green	381	20078	E.Sax

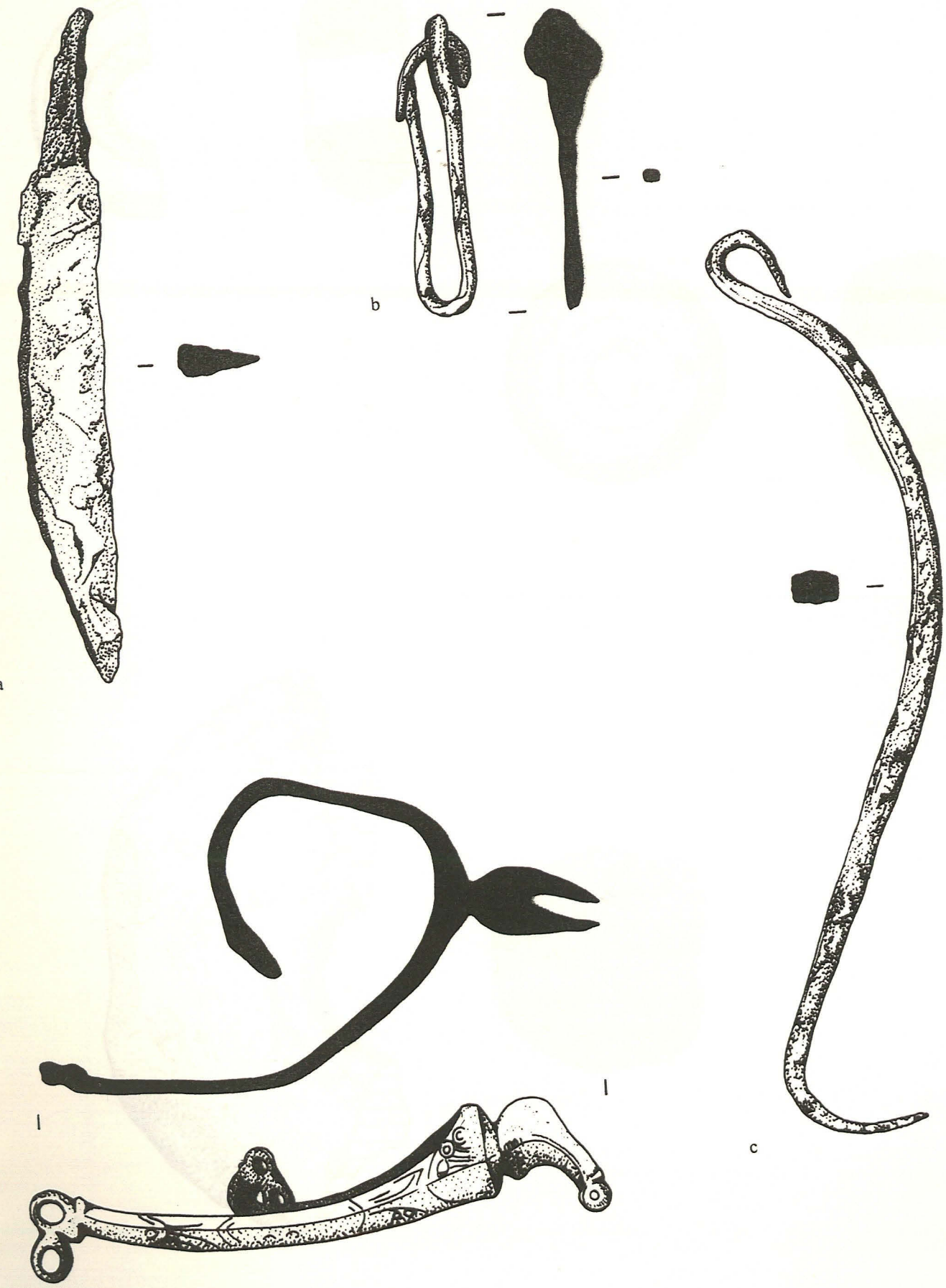
Figure No.	Description	Small find No.	Area	Context No.	Group matrix No.	Site phase
48.b	SPINDLE WHORL. Frag rounded bi-conical whorl. Possibly antler. Zones of fine incised turned linear decoration. Whole weight *c.* 30g. **Undated.**	33	Green	369	20083	E.Sax
48.c	SPINDLE WHORL. Complete turned sub-hemispherical stone whorl. Tapering central perforation. Crude turned linear decoration. Weight *c.* 60g. **Undated.**	95	Black	1107	20677	E/M. Sax

Fig. 46 Small Finds



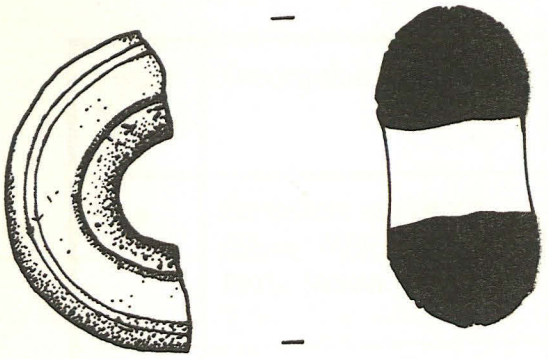
Scale 1:1

Fig. 47 Small Finds

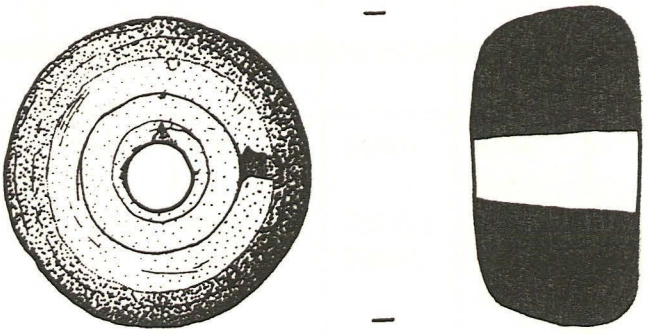


Scale 1:1

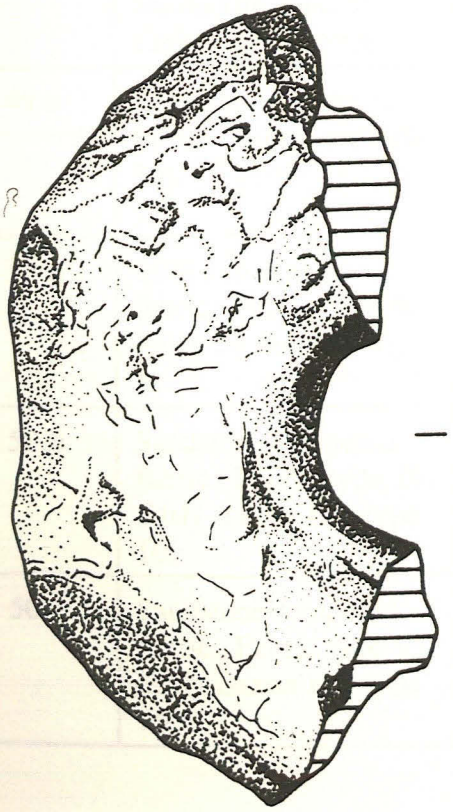
Fig. 48 Small Finds



a



b



c

Scale 1:1

Catalogue of illustrated pottery

Figure No.	Description	Drawing No.	Area	Context No.	Group matrix No.	Site phase
49.a	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Fabric 21. Early Saxon rim type 3.	4	Orange	839	20328	E.Sax
49.b	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Fabric 7: stamp A4AI and incised decoration.	5	Red	029	20003	M.Sax
49.c	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Large round based vessel. Vessel type 2, fabric 22. Early Saxon rim type 18. Conjoining sherds from different contexts.	7	Green	407; 409; 418.	20001; 20122; 20001.	E/M. Sax; M.Sax E/M. Sax.
49.d	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Small bowl or lamp. Fabric 78. Early Saxon rim type 26. Carbon on interior.	12	Black	1195	20666	E.Sax
49.e	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Fabric type 89. Early Saxon rim type 19.	18	Green	369	20083	E.Sax
50.a	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Fabric type 66. Early Saxon rim type 1.	19	Green	369	20083	E.Sax
50.b	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Fabric type 19. Early Saxon rim type 10.	20	Green	369	20083	E.Sax
50.c	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Fabric type 95. Early Saxon rim type 14.	21	Green	369	20083	E.Sax

Figure No.	Description	Drawing No.	Area	Context No.	Group matrix No.	Site phase
50.d	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Vessel type 3. Fabric type 98. Incised vertical decoration. Conjoining sherds from different contexts.	26	Green	362; 382.	20077; 20078.	?E. Sax
50.e	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Fabric type 9. Early Saxon rim type 3.	27	Green	357	20082	E.Sax
50.f	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Fabric type 49. Early Saxon rim type 4.	31	Black	1032	20497	E.Sax
51.a	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Fabric type 128. Early Saxon rim type 21. Very burnt, slightly rounded base.	32	Black	1038	20495	E.Sax
51.b	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Fabric type 129. Early Saxon rim type 3. Semi burnished exterior.	33	Black	1169	20508	E.Sax
51.c	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Vessel type 6. Fabric type 125. Early Saxon rim type 5. Round based. Conjoining sherds from different contexts.	34	Black	1164; 1165; 1167; 1175; 1264; 1302; 1305.	20543; 20541; 20535; 20525; 20530; 20530; 20523.	M.Sax M.Sax M.Sax E.Sax E.Sax E.sax E.Sax

Figure No.	Description	Drawing No.	Area	Context No.	Group matrix No.	Site phase
51.d	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Vessel type 7. Fabric type 5. Early Saxon rim type 4. Round based bowl. Conjoining sherds from different contexts.	35	Black	1164; 1545.	20543; 20531.	M.Sax ?E. Sax
52.a	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Vessel type 8. Fabric type 35. Early Saxon rim type 21. Burnished exterior. Conjoining sherds from different contexts.	36	Black	1167; 1168; 1175.	20535; 20535; 20525	?M. Sax; E.Sax
52.b	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Vessel type 10. Fabric type 61. Early Saxon rim type 4. Round based bowl. Conjoining sherds from different contexts.	38	Black	1168; 1175; 1304.	20535; 20525; 20525.	?M. Sax; E.Sax
52.c	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Fabric type 19. Early Saxon rim type 3. Burnish on exterior.	39	Green	333	20081	E.Sax
52.d	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Fabric type 86. Early Saxon rim type 4. Subjected to heat.	41	Green	303	20150	?Sax
52.e	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Vessel type 12. Fabric type 118. Early Saxon rim type 4. Stamp decoration A4AI.	43	Green	233	20169	E.Sax

Figure No.	Description	Drawing No.	Area	Context No.	Group matrix No.	Site phase
53.a	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Swallows nest lug. Fabric type 155. Early Saxon rim type 4.	44	Green	221	20170	E.Sax
53.b	Sandstone-tempered fabric. Vessel type 13. Fabric type 172. Early Saxon rim type 22. Conjoining sherds from different contexts.	46	Green	377; 379.	20069; 20070.	E.Sax
53.c	Sandstone-tempered fabric. (In grid square 0195/179.)	52	Black	1826	20370	Mod
53.d	Sandstone-tempered fabric. (In grid square 0205/174.)	53	Black	1826	20370	Mod
54.a	Early Saxon local fabric. Fabric include clay pellets. Stamp decorations A4AVII and other; incised horizontal and chevron decoration.	6	Red	021	20013	E.Sax
54.b	Early Saxon local fabric. Fabric type 16. ?Crucible.	22	Green	369	20083	E.Sax
54.c	Early Saxon local fabric. Fabric type 11. Early Saxon rim type 11.	23	Green	369	20083	E.Sax
54.d	Early Saxon local fabric. Fabric type 17. Early Saxon rim type 11.	24	Green	369	20083	E.Sax

Figure No.	Description	Drawing No.	Area	Context No.	Group matrix No.	Site phase
54.e	Early Saxon local fabric. Small vessel. Early Saxon rim type 1. Round base.	25	Green	369	20083	E.Sax
54.f	Early Saxon local fabric. Bowl. Vessel type 9. Fabric type 29. Early Saxon rim type 4. Pre-fired perforation 60mm below rim. Conjoining sherds from different contexts.	37	Black	1175; 1302.	20525; 20530.	E.Sax
55.a	Charnwood fabrics. Early Saxon rim type 3.	16	Green	369	20083	E.Sax
55.b	Charnwood fabrics. Early Saxon rim type 20.	17	Green	369	20083	E.Sax
55.c	Charnwood fabrics. Fabric included common oolite; T-S. Early Saxon rim type 2.	29	Black	1241	20545	M.Sax
55.d	Charnwood fabrics. Stamp decoration A1BI.	40	Orange	822	20362	E.Sax
55.e	Charnwood fabrics. Early Saxon rim type 1. Incised chevron lines. Stamp decoration K1BI?	47	Green	315	20194	Mod
55.f	Ironstone ore-tempered fabric. Lugged. Fabric included slag.	1	Pink	079	20033	M.Sax
55.g	Ironstone ore-tempered fabric. (In grid square 0195/174.)	51	Black	1826	20370	Mod

Figure No.	Description	Drawing No.	Area	Context No.	Group matrix No.	Site phase
56.a	Southern Maxey-type ware. Bucket shaped vessel. Middle Saxon rim type 10. Soot on internal base and externa body, but not the base.	8	Black	1050	20586	M.Sax
56.b	Southern Maxey-type ware. Middle Saxon rim type 10. Slightly curved sided vessel. Lugged and had wiped decoratin. Was sooted internally and externally.	9	Black	1050	20586	M.Sax
56.c	Southern Maxey-type ware. Middle Saxon rim type 11. Incised decoration and circular on rim top.	11	Black	1150	20677	E/M. Sax
56.d	Southern Maxey-type ware. Middle Saxon rim type 1.	13	Black	1025	20601	?Mod
57.a	Southern Maxey-type ware. Lugged vessel. Middle Saxon rim type 10.	14	Black	1036	20586	M.Sax
57.b	Southern Maxey-type ware. Incised decoration.	15	Black	1036	20586	M.Sax
57.c	Southern Maxey-type ware. Middle Saxon rim type 1.	30	Black	1164	20543	M.Sax
57.d	Southern Maxey-type ware. Middle Saxon rim type 1. Pre-fired hole below rim.	48	Orange	721	20228	M.Sax

Figure No.	Description	Drawing No.	Area	Context No.	Group matrix No.	Site phase
57.e	Southern Maxey-type ware. Middle Saxon rim type 11. Pre-fired hole below rim.	49	Orange	721	20228	M.Sax
58.a	Ipswich-type ware. Jar type vessel. Ridged rim.	10	Black	1050	20586	M.Sax
58.b	Ipswich-type ware. Jar/pitcher type vessel. Coarse fabric. Ridged shoulder.	45	Green	484	20138	M.Sax
58.c	Ipswich-type ware. Bowl. (In grid square 0190/119.)	50	Black	1826	20370	Mod
58.d	Middle Saxon Local fabrics. Fabric type 1. Middle Saxon rim type 5.	2	Pink	087	20032	M.Sax
58.e	Middle Saxon Local fabrics. Fabric type 1. Middle Saxon rim type 7.	3	Orange	737	20273	M.Sax
58.f	Central Maxey-type ware. Fabric type 1. Middle Saxon rim type 10.	28	Black	1165	20541	M.Sax
58.g	Central Maxey-type ware. Fabric type 1. Early Saxon rim type 3.	42	Green	500	20138	M.Sax
59.a	Mould fragment.	-	Green	369	20083	E.Sax
59.b	Mould fragment.	-	Trench 20	T037	20083	E.Sax
59.c	Mould fragment.	-	Trench 20	T037	20083	E.Sax
59.d	Mould fragment.	-	Green	369	20083	E.Sax

Figure No.	Description	Drawing No.	Area	Context No.	Group matrix No.	Site phase
59.e	Native cook pot. South Lincolnshire fine shell tempered ware. Middle-late 1st century	-	Pink	090	20033	M.Sax
59.f	Plain rim vessel. South Lincolnshire fine shell tempered ware. Late Iron Age to Middle-late 1st Century.	-	Pink	117	20045	Rom
59.g	Native cook pot. South Lincolnshire fine shell tempered ware. Late Iron Age to Middle-late 1st Century.	-	Pink	117	20045	Rom
60.a	Possibly Peterborough Ebbsfleet type vessel. Irregularly fired small bipartite bowl. Fabric soft and sandy with grog crushed pottery temper, probably locally produced. Internal decoration diagonal finger-nail impressions with fine twisted cord in the opposit diagonal below. A second upper row of twisted cord was below the rim on the inside. On the outside of the vessel- 3 rows short diagonal decoration made by a shell edge, 1 row just below rim and other 2 above and below the slight shoulder.	-	Orange	746	20357	Neo

Fig. 49 Saxon pottery

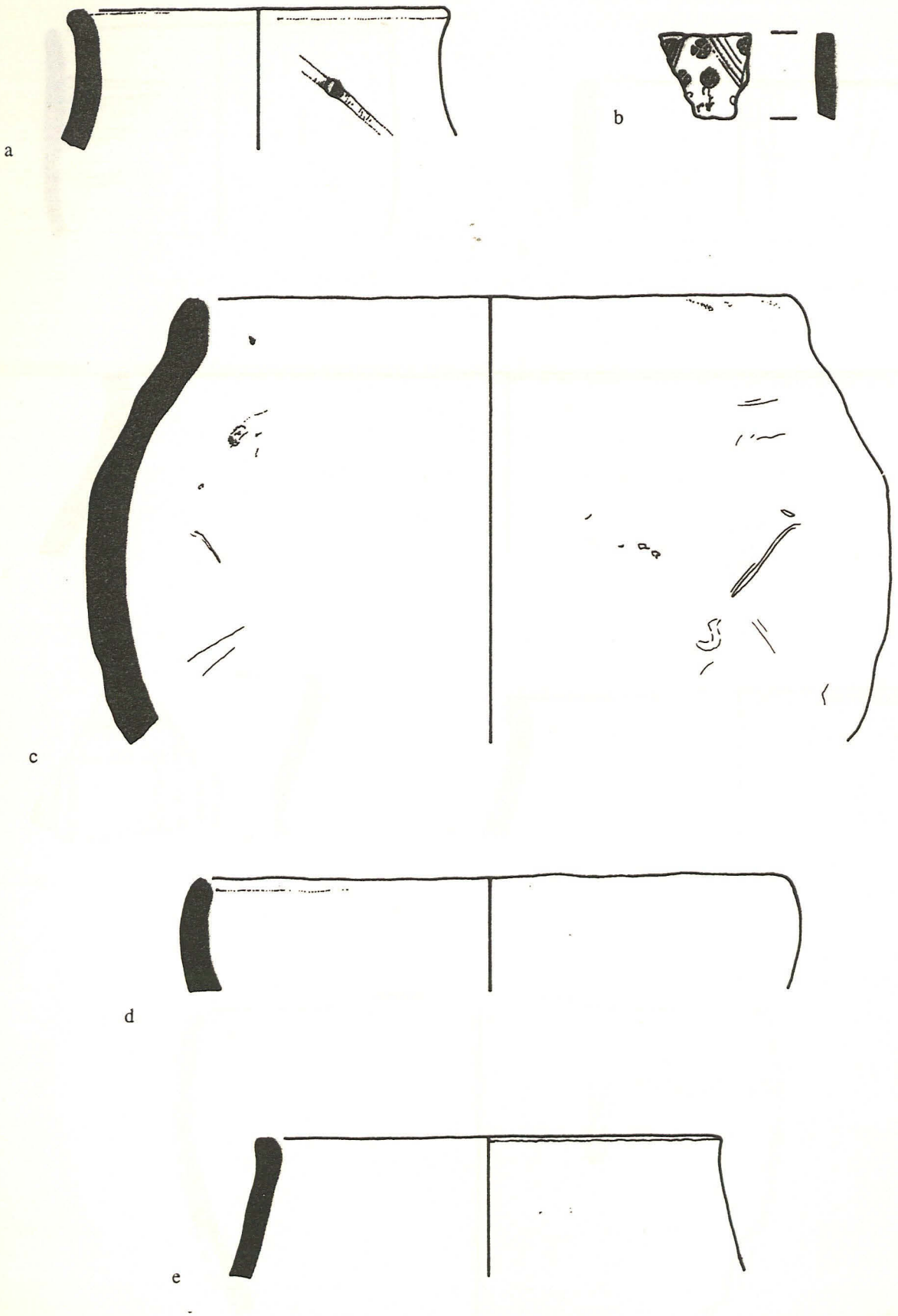


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Fig. 50 Saxon pottery

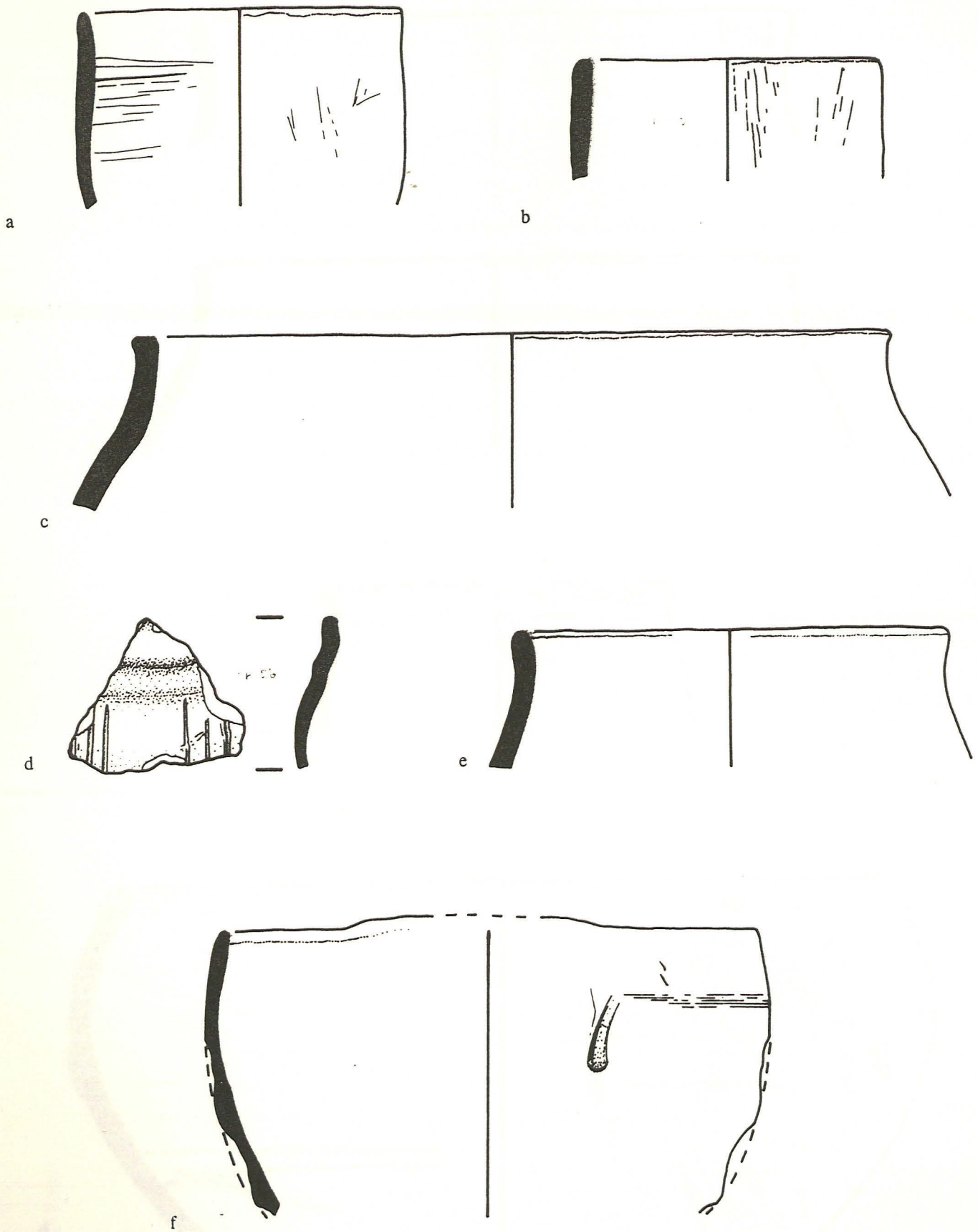

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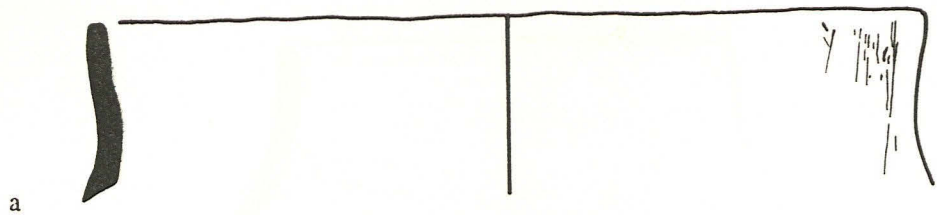
Fig. 51 Saxon pottery



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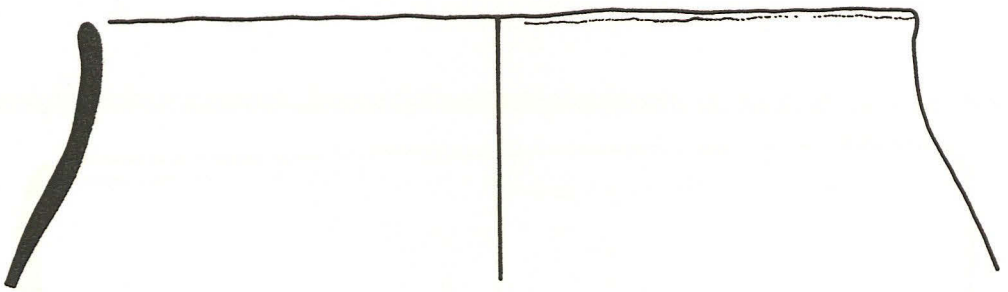

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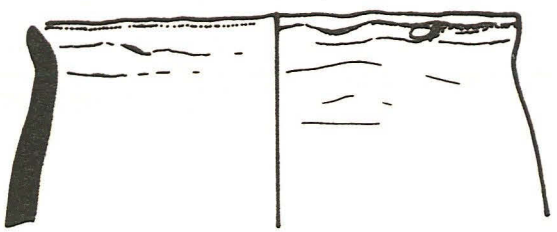

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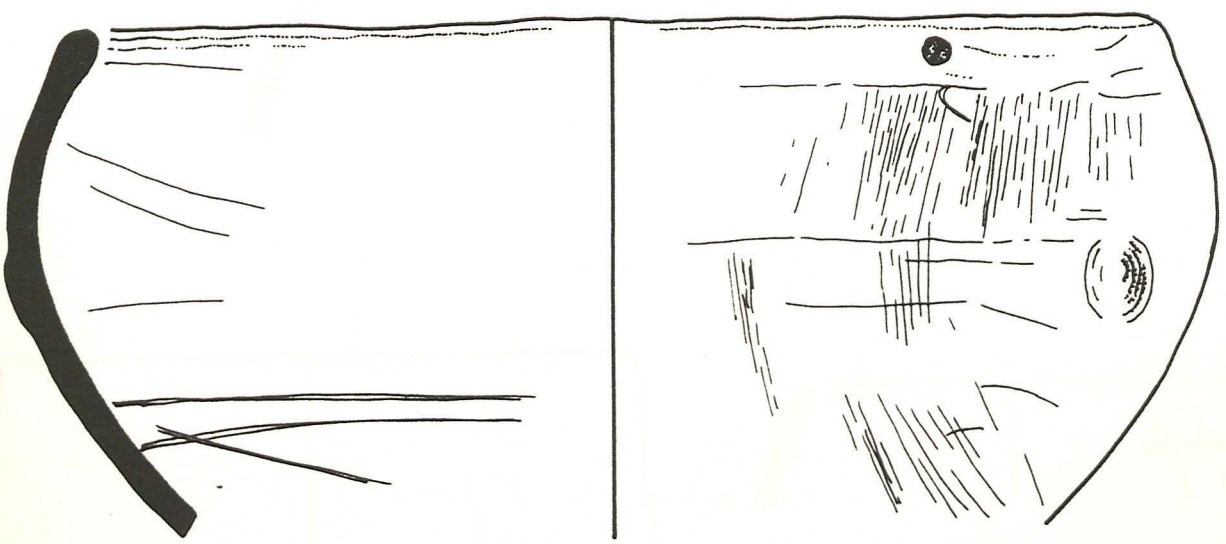

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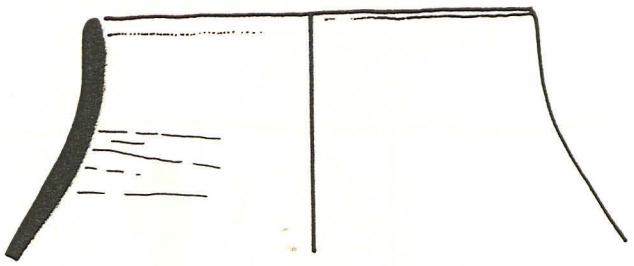
Fig. 52 Saxon pottery



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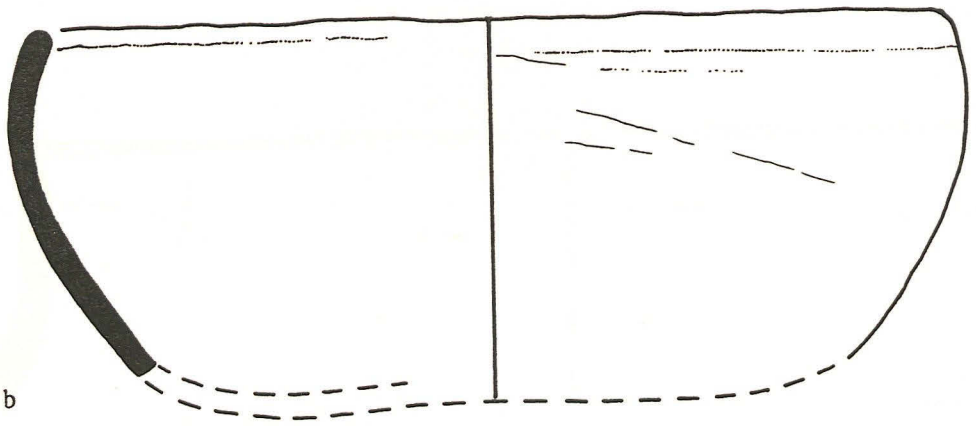

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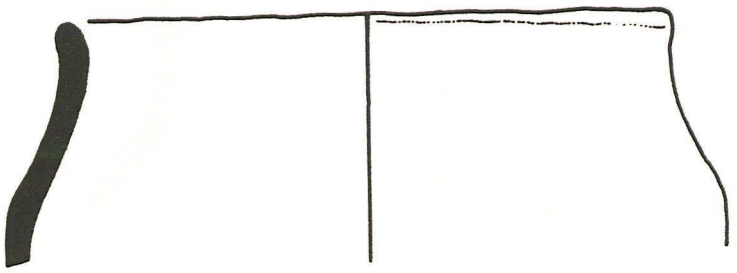

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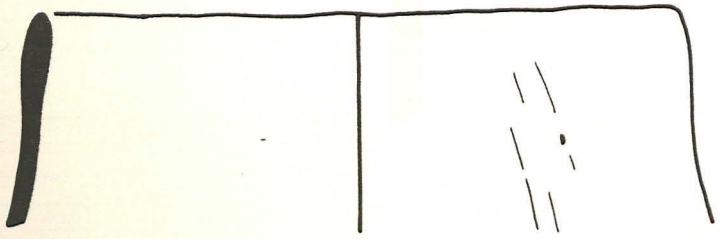

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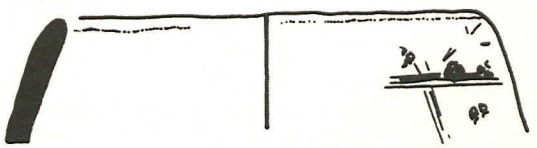

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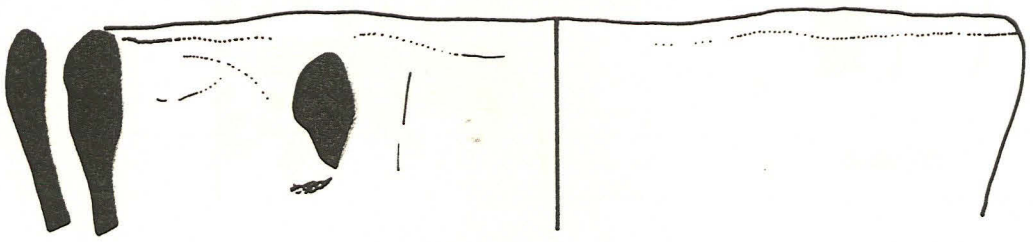
Scale 1:2

Fig. 53 Saxon pottery



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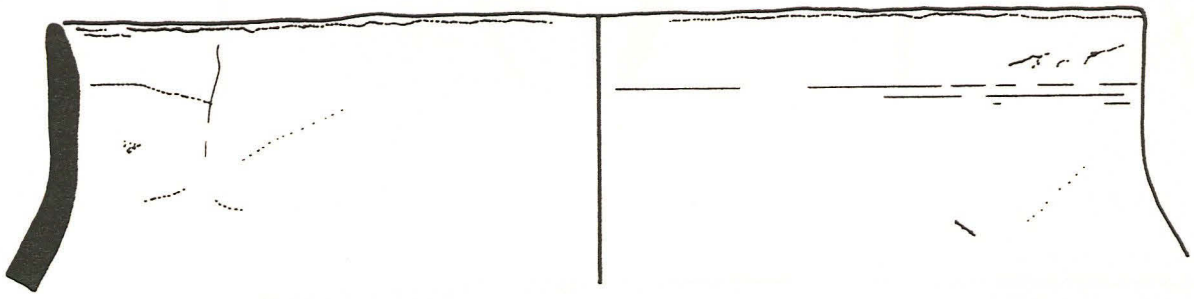

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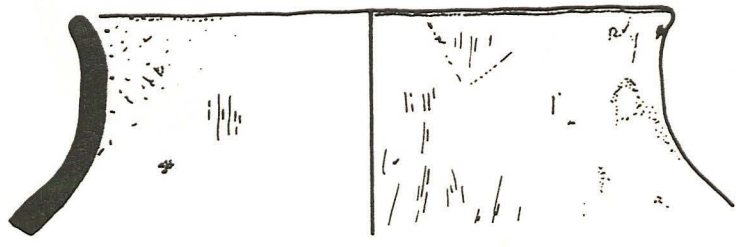

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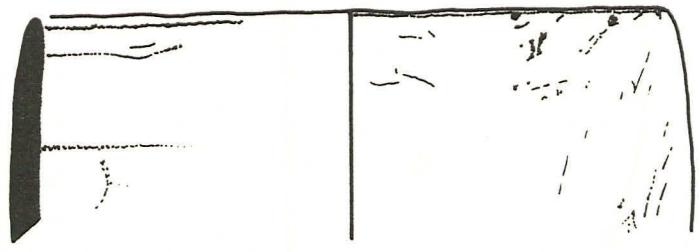

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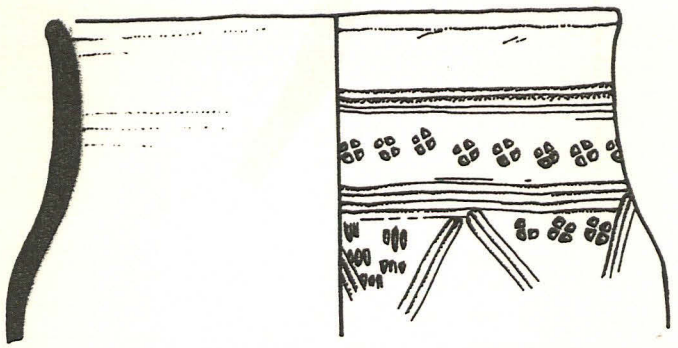
Scale 1:2

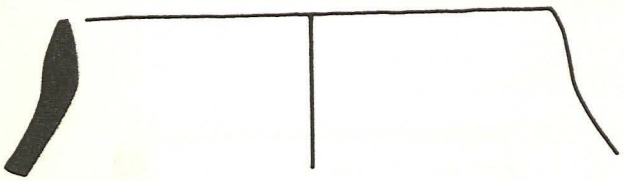
Fig. 54 Saxon pottery



a

b

Scale 1:1



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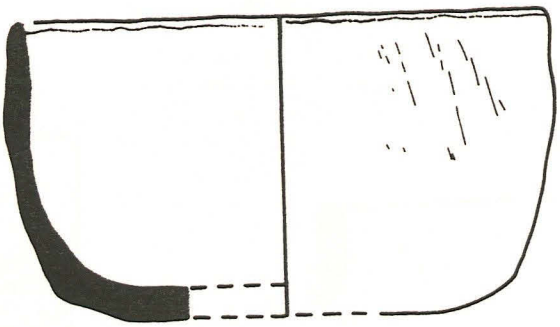

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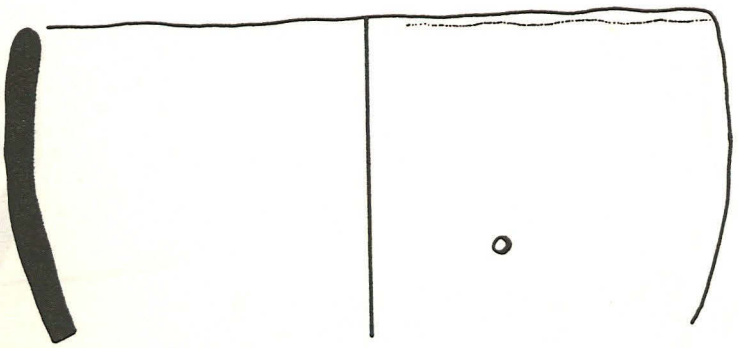

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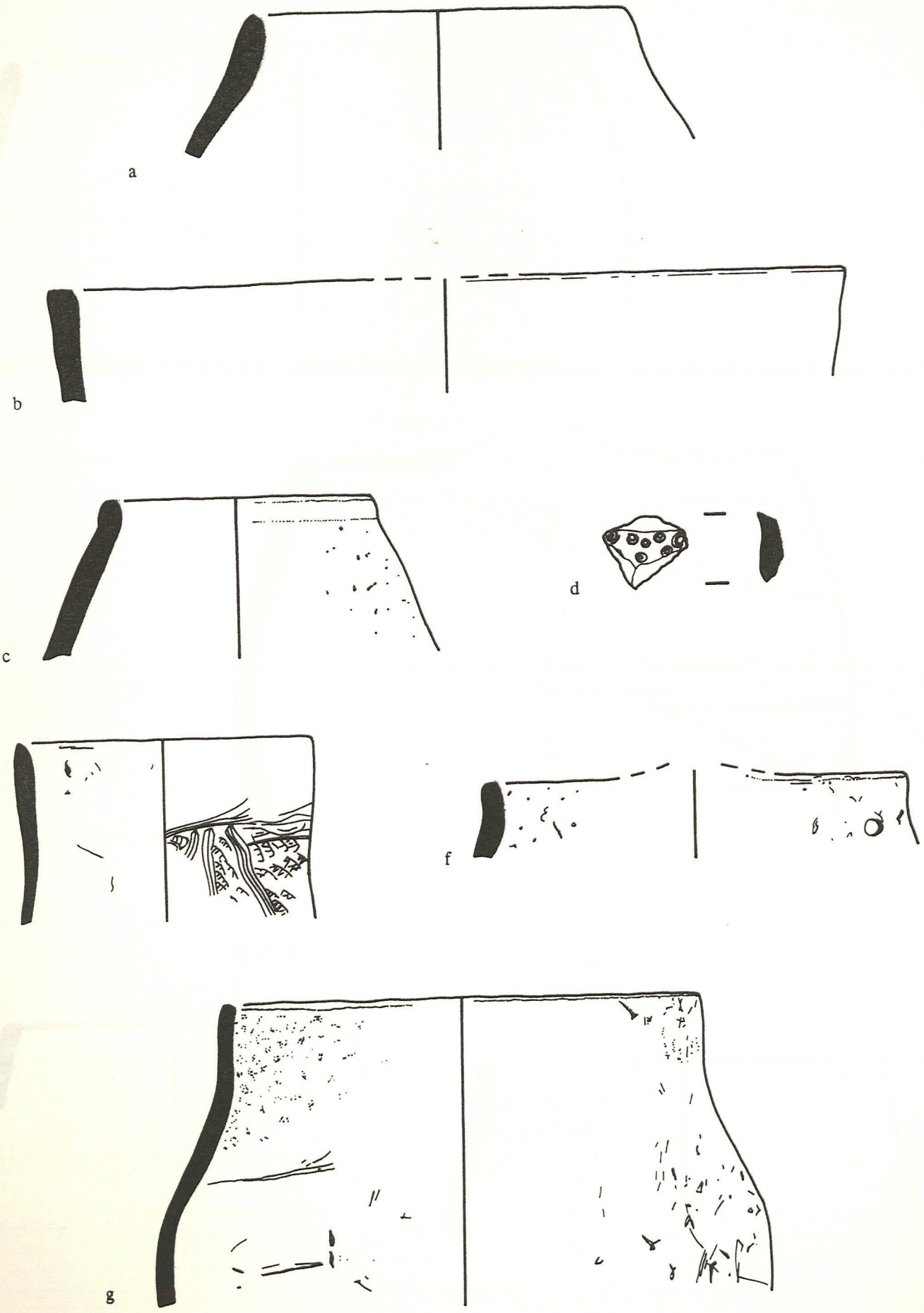
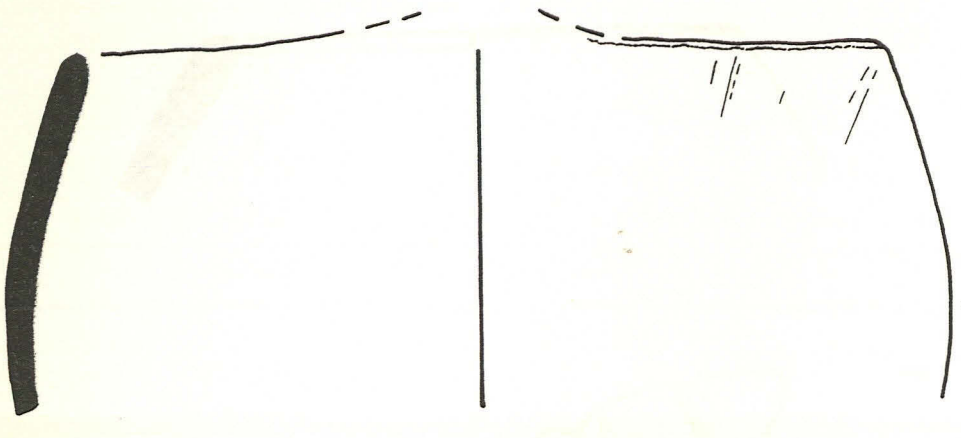
Scale 1:2

Fig. 55 Saxon pottery



Scale 1:2

Fig. 56 Saxon pottery



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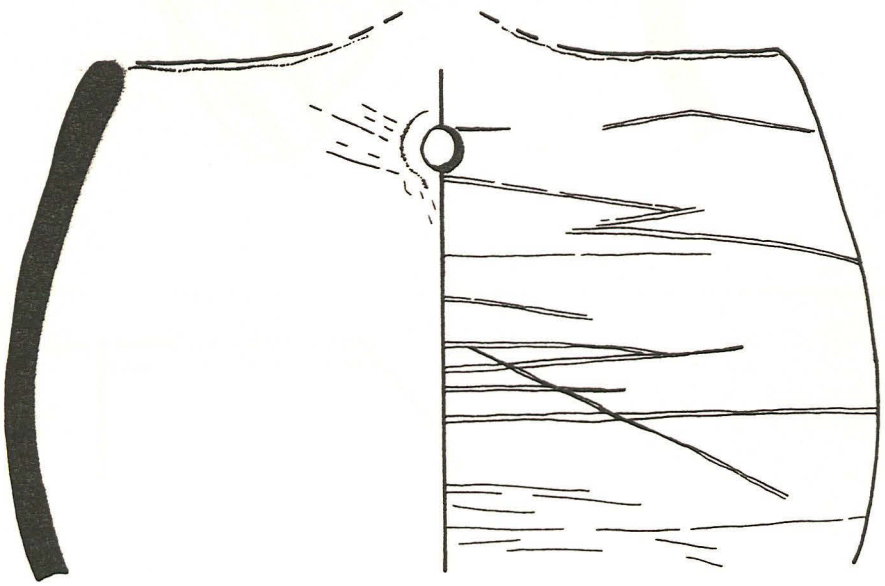

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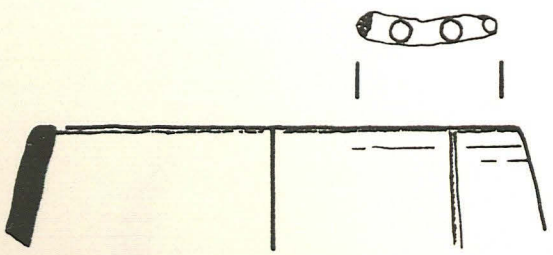

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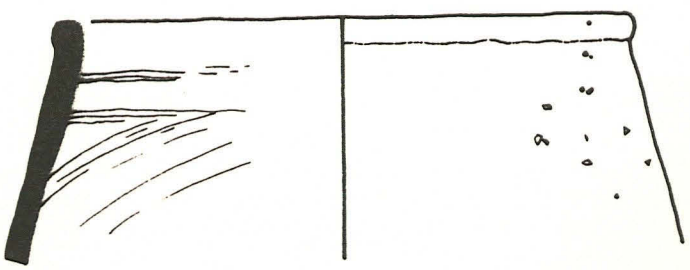

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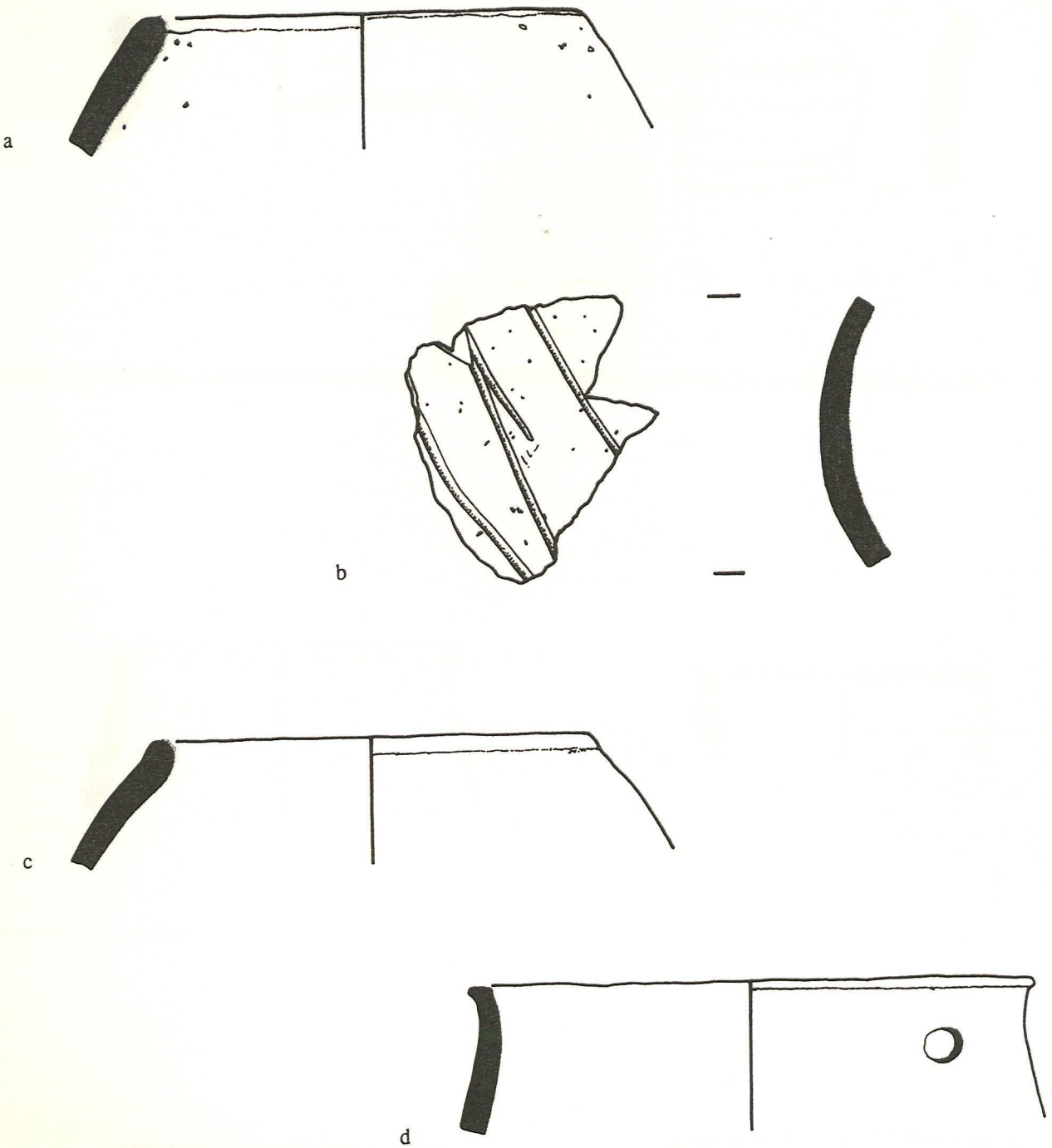
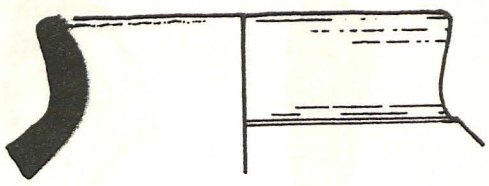
Scale 1:2

Fig. 57 Saxon pottery



Scale 1:2

Fig. 58 Saxon pottery



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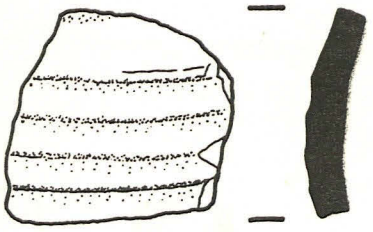

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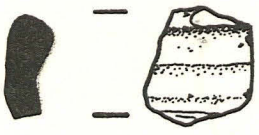

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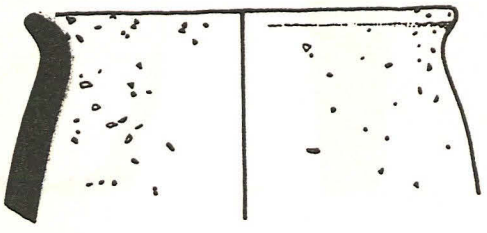

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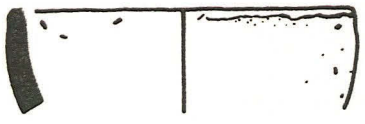

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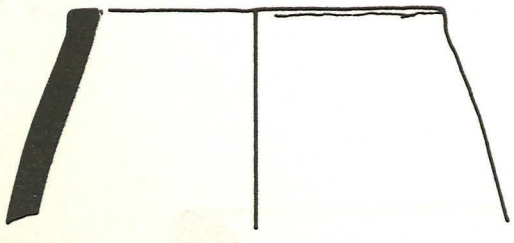

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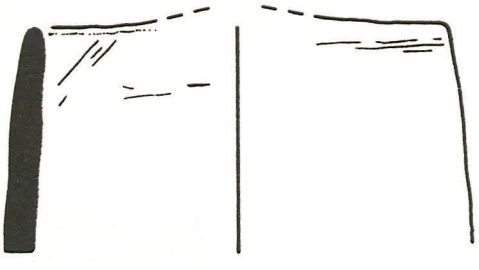
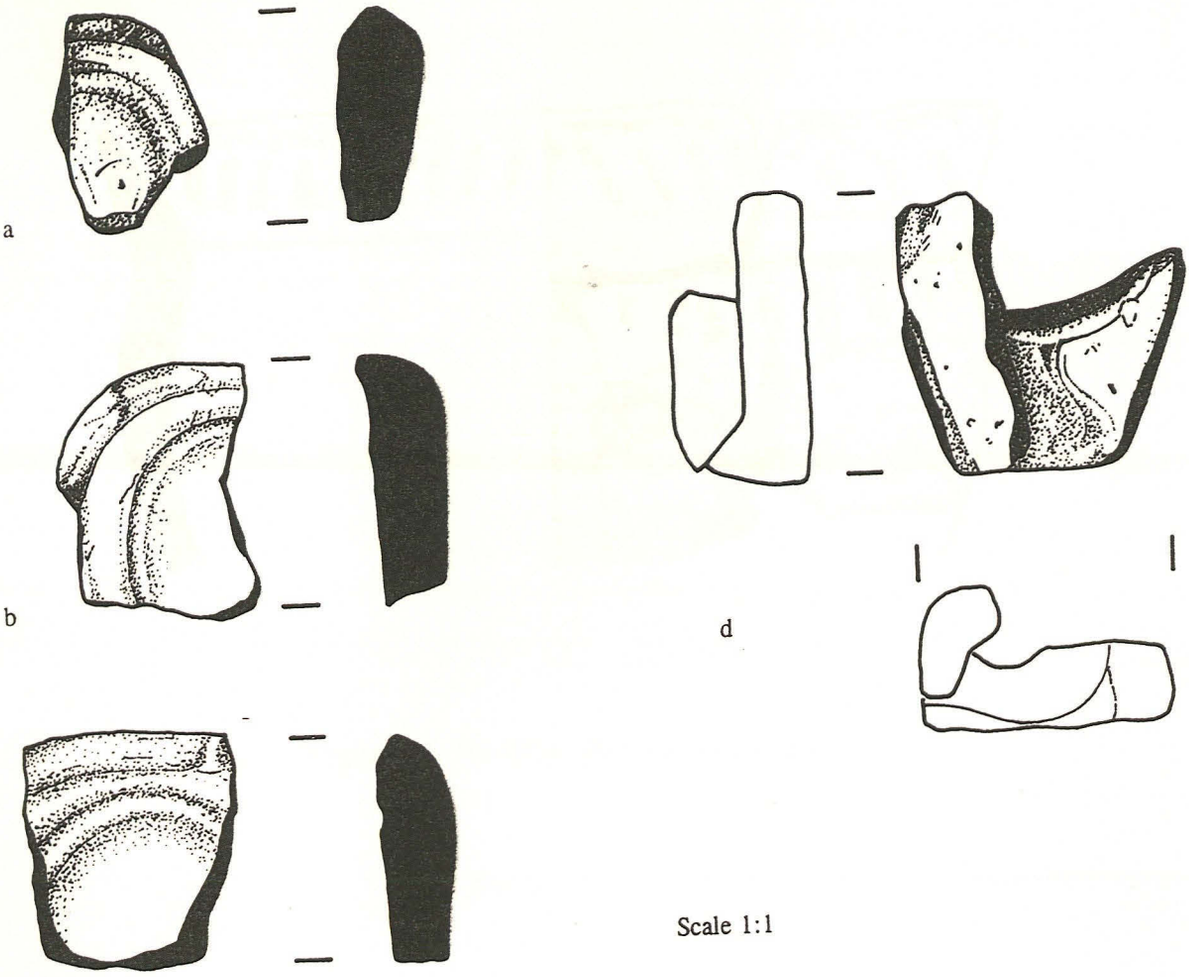


g

Scale 1:2

Fig. 59 Mould fragments and Roman pottery



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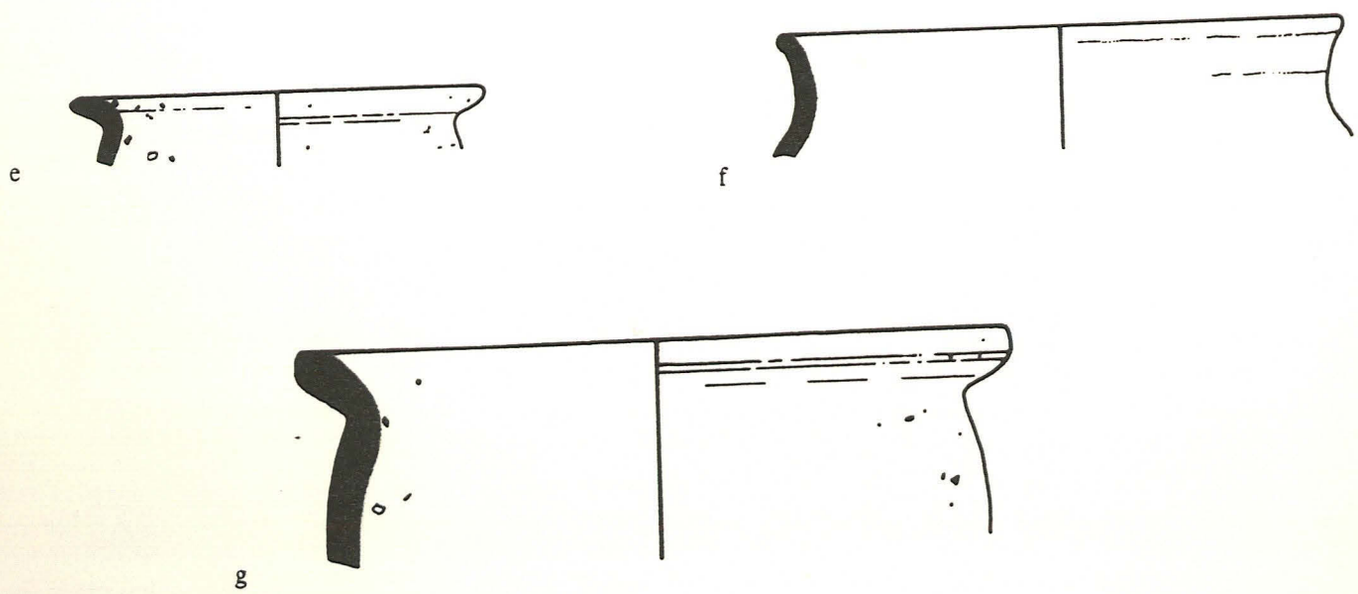

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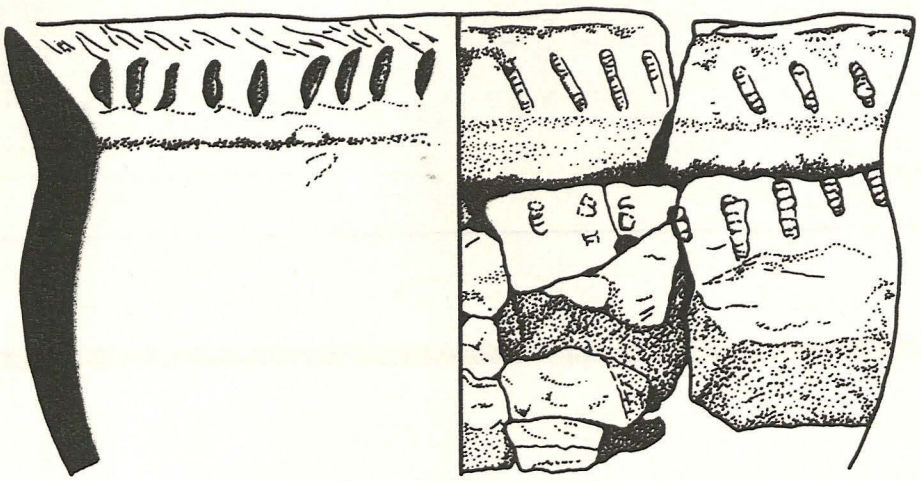

Figure 60. Neolithic Pot. Orange Area

Scale 1:1

Plate 1 General Working Shot

Plate 2 Geological and Archaeological Features

Plate 3 Pit Group A

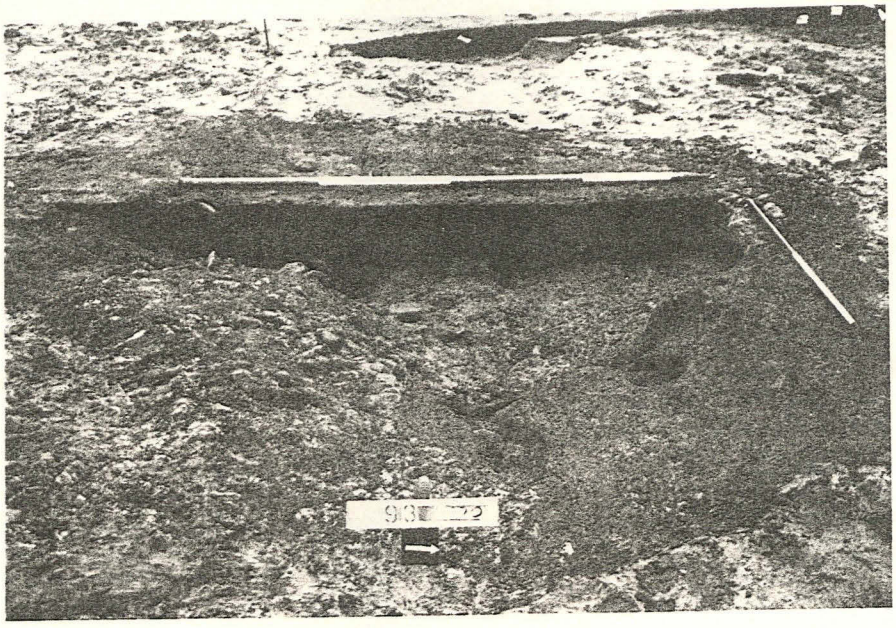

Plate 4 Pit (20083) that contained metalworking debris

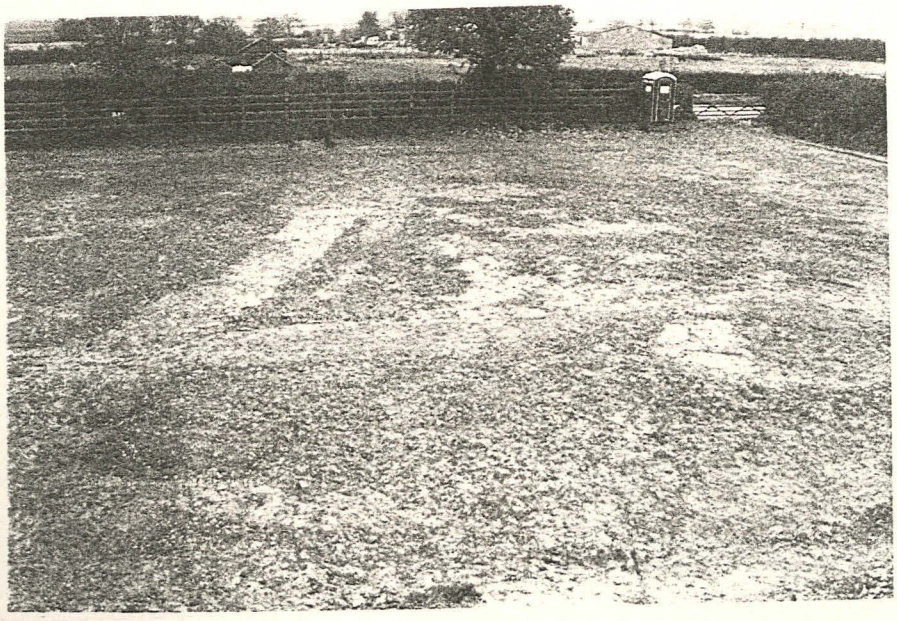

Plate 5 Pink Area: Pre-excavation view of Early Saxon ditch (20049) crossing left to right, and Middle Saxon ditches

Plate 6 Green Area, showing Enclosure 1 and Middle Saxon ditches

Plate 7 Traces of Post-built Structures in Black Area

Plate 8 Post-medieval foundations (20606 and 20608)
and tracks (20594 and 20595)

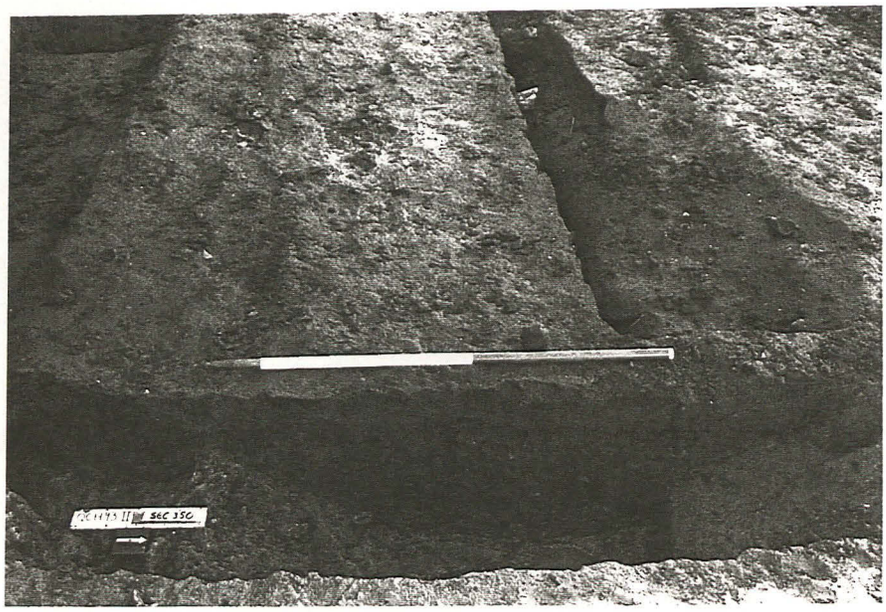

Plate 9 Orange Area: Intercutting Early and Middle Saxon ditches

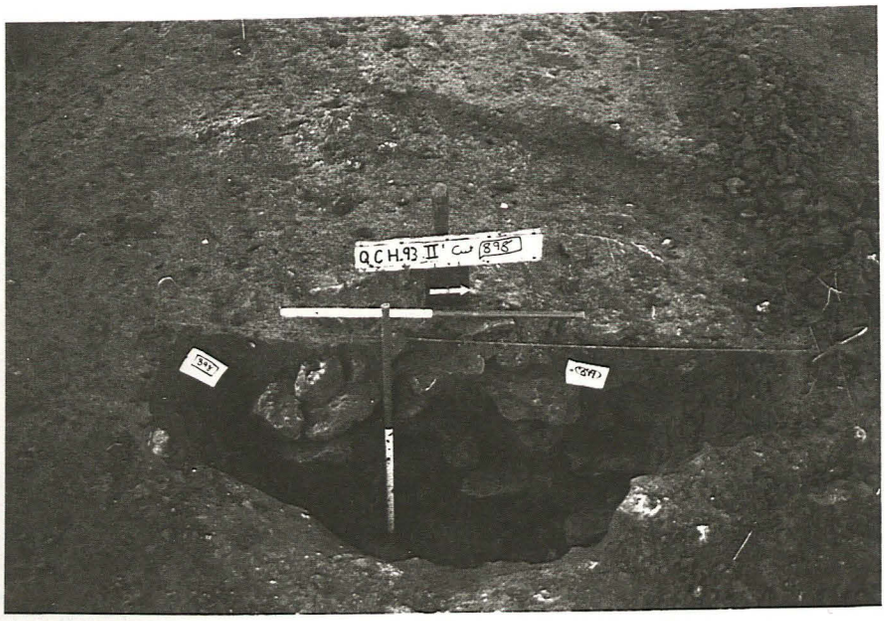

Plate 10 Middle Saxon Cooking Pit (20251)

Plate 11 Excavation of Post-medieval Calf Burial (20292)