

# Humberside Archaeology

## An Archaeological Evaluation At Home Farm, Sewerby



AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

HOME FARM, SEWERBY

At the request of East Yorkshire Borough Council, the Humberside Archaeology Unit undertook an archaeological evaluation in advance of the construction of a golf course at Home Farm, Sewerby, to determine the extent of surviving archaeological features and assess the threat posed to them by the development. Several areas of archaeological interest were located, the most significant of which was an enclosed Romano-British settlement site of the 1st century AD, made more important by the survival within it of buildings and their associated occupation deposits.

The results of the evaluation allowed the development to proceed, with minor alterations to the golf course design ensuring the continued preservation of the archaeological deposits.

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## Introduction

In autumn 1990, the construction of a golf course at Home Farm, Sewerby, three kilometres north-east of Bridlington (Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference TA 2100 6950), was deemed a possible threat to any surviving archaeological sites, and as a result the developers, East Yorkshire Borough Council, commissioned the Humberside Archaeology Unit to carry out an archaeological evaluation. This initially took the form of geophysical survey work, carried out in specific locations selected on the basis of existing knowledge of local archaeology contained in the County Sites and Monuments Record; the report detailing the results of that survey has been reproduced below. The survey identified several areas with clear archaeological potential, where limited trial excavation was deemed necessary to discover the nature of the features revealed; in particular, knowledge of the state of survival and depth of features below the plough-disturbed topsoil would be necessary in determining any potential threat. The results of these excavations follow those of the survey.

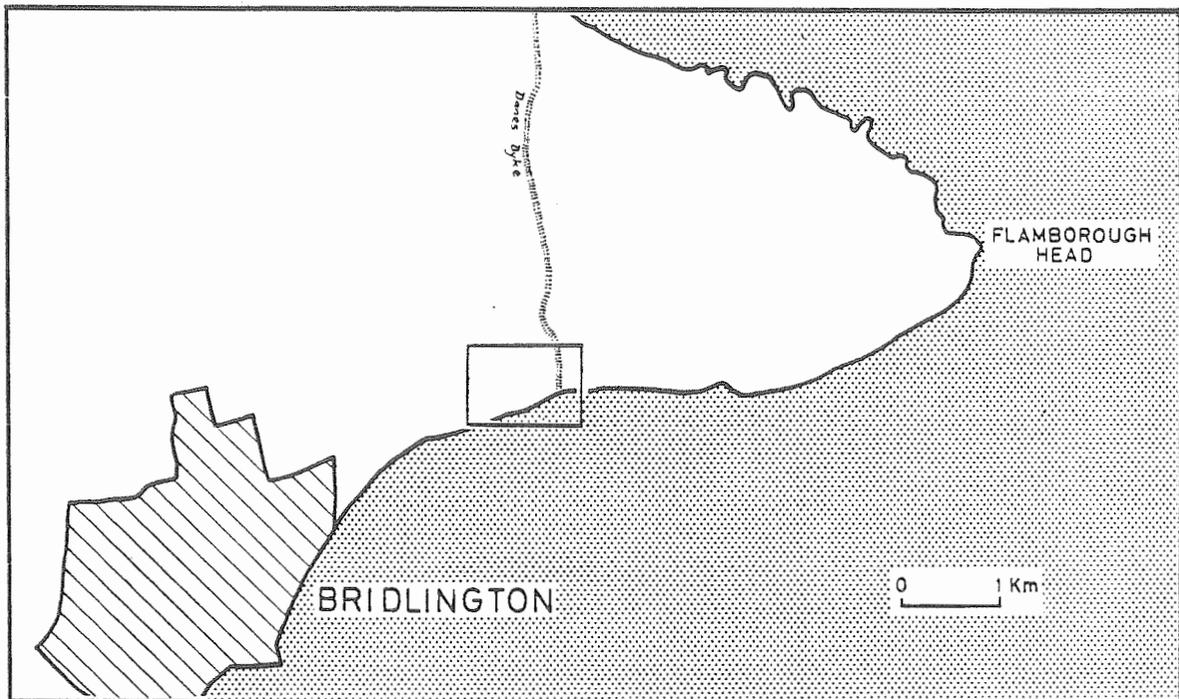


Fig 1: Bridlington Bay. The rectangle indicates the approximate area of the evaluation.

## The Geophysical Survey

Report by Geophysical Surveys, Thornton, Bradford (Report 90/65)

The geophysical work in this report was commissioned by the Humberside Archaeology Unit, who were carrying out an archaeological evaluation in advance of a new golf course complex. It was decided that a magnetometer survey of sample blocks would help to assess the nature of the archaeological remains, in an area where there are well documented archaeological records.

Five survey areas (A-E; Fig 2) were originally identified by the Unit as requiring magnetic survey, but these had to be modified as a result of complications on the ground. A sketch plan shows the relationship of the areas which were eventually investigated in detail. The tie-in information for these grids has been lodged with the Unit.

The fieldwork was carried out by two teams of operators over the course of two visits to the site. The results are displayed as dot density plots and X-Y traces, with an overview of Area E as a grey scale image. With the exception of the latter, all the plots are at 1:500, and the vertical scale on the X-Y traces is 10mm:10nT.

For ease of reference the five survey areas will be considered separately.

### Area A

(Figs 3 and 4)

#### Anglo-Saxon cemetery (SMR 492)

The work in this field was hindered by the presence of hay stacks, but apart from these obstacles, conditions were ideal for survey. However, the magnetic responses are far from clear, though inhumations and cremations are often very difficult targets for geophysical techniques. Despite the practical and interpretative difficulties, the survey has produced several anomalies of potential interest.

Perhaps of most interest are the series of broad, almost sub-rectangular magnetic anomalies, some up to five metres across, which are scattered across the field. It is tempting to see these as some form of occupation scoop or hollow, or possibly midden deposits. However, it is difficult to place the features in a wider archaeological context.

There are a few poorly defined, curving anomalies, which could be associated with ditches. However, they are rather weak and distorted. It is possible that if the anomalies have an archaeological origin, the features may have suffered from plough damage. A natural/geological origin seems more likely.

One area of magnetic noise (P), particularly clear on the X-Y traces, is presumed to be associated with a filled-in pond shown on the Ordnance Survey map.

REPRODUCED FROM THE ORDNANCE  
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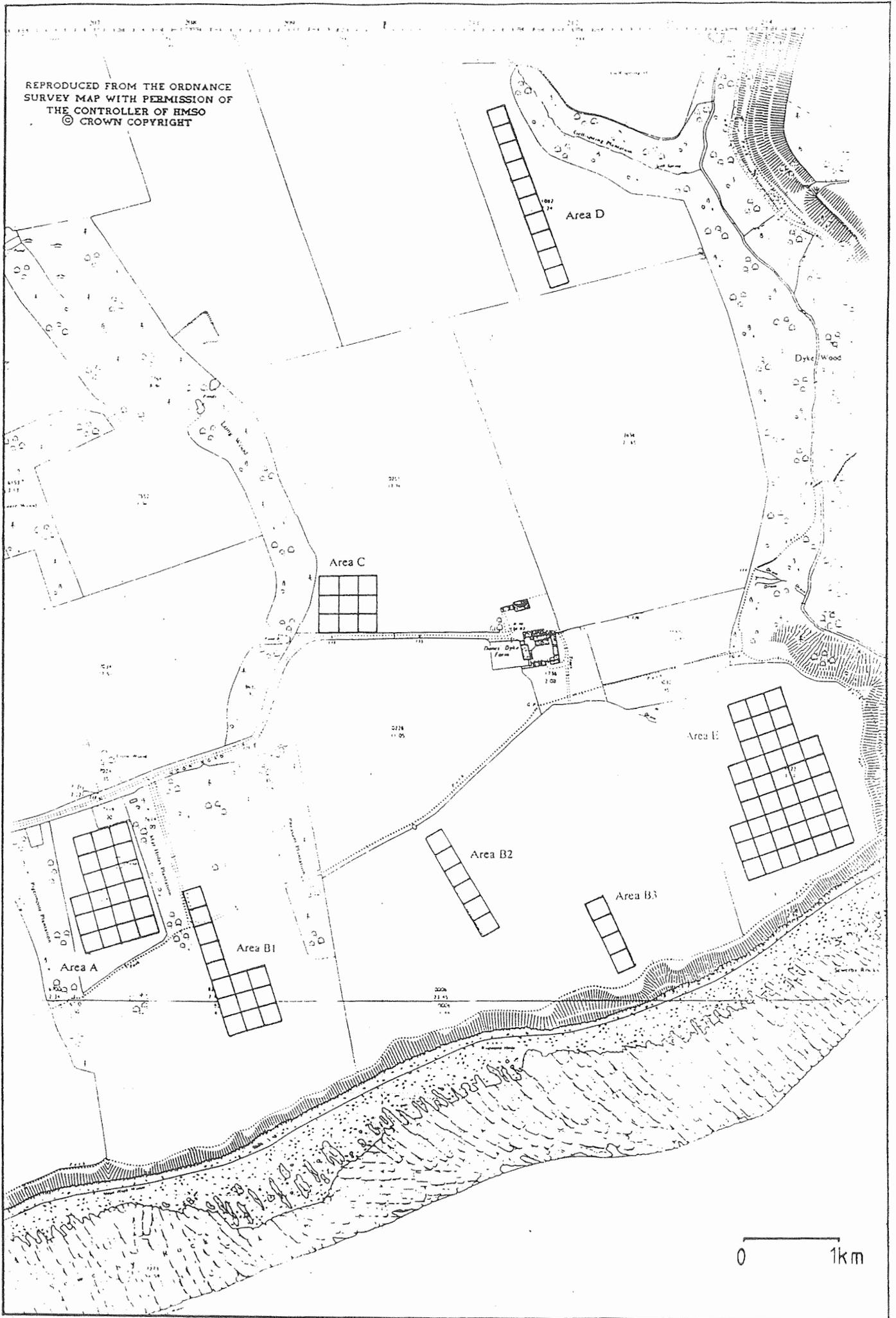


Fig 2: Location of the geophysical survey areas.

Area A



0 25m

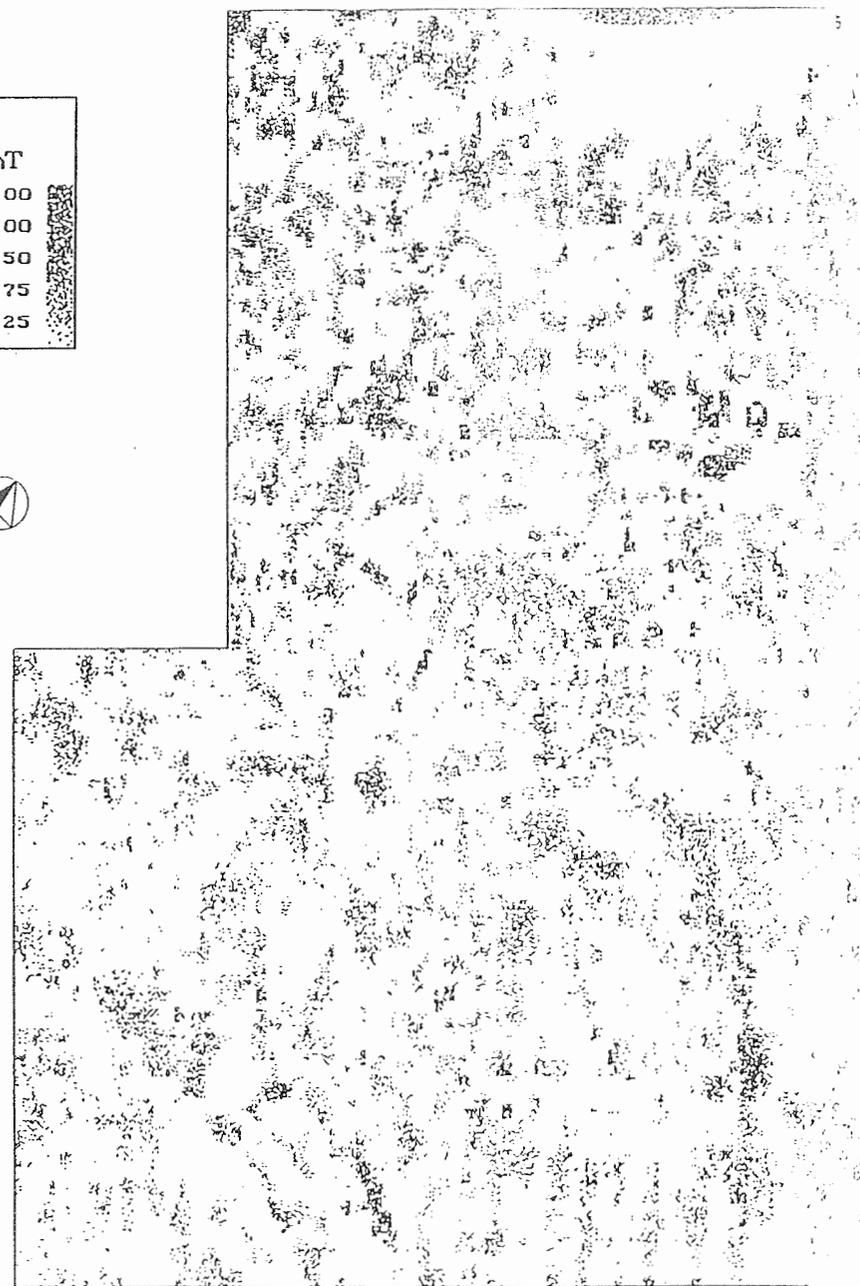
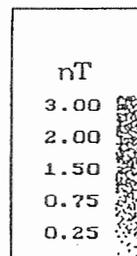
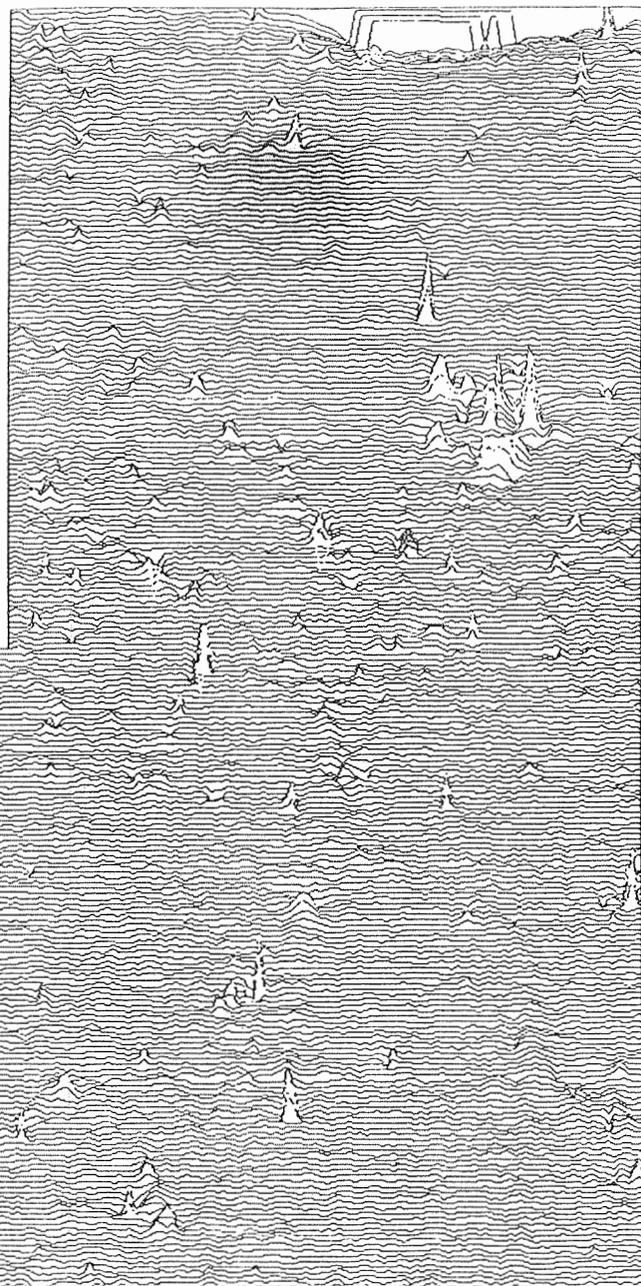


Fig 3: Area A X-Y trace and dot density plot.

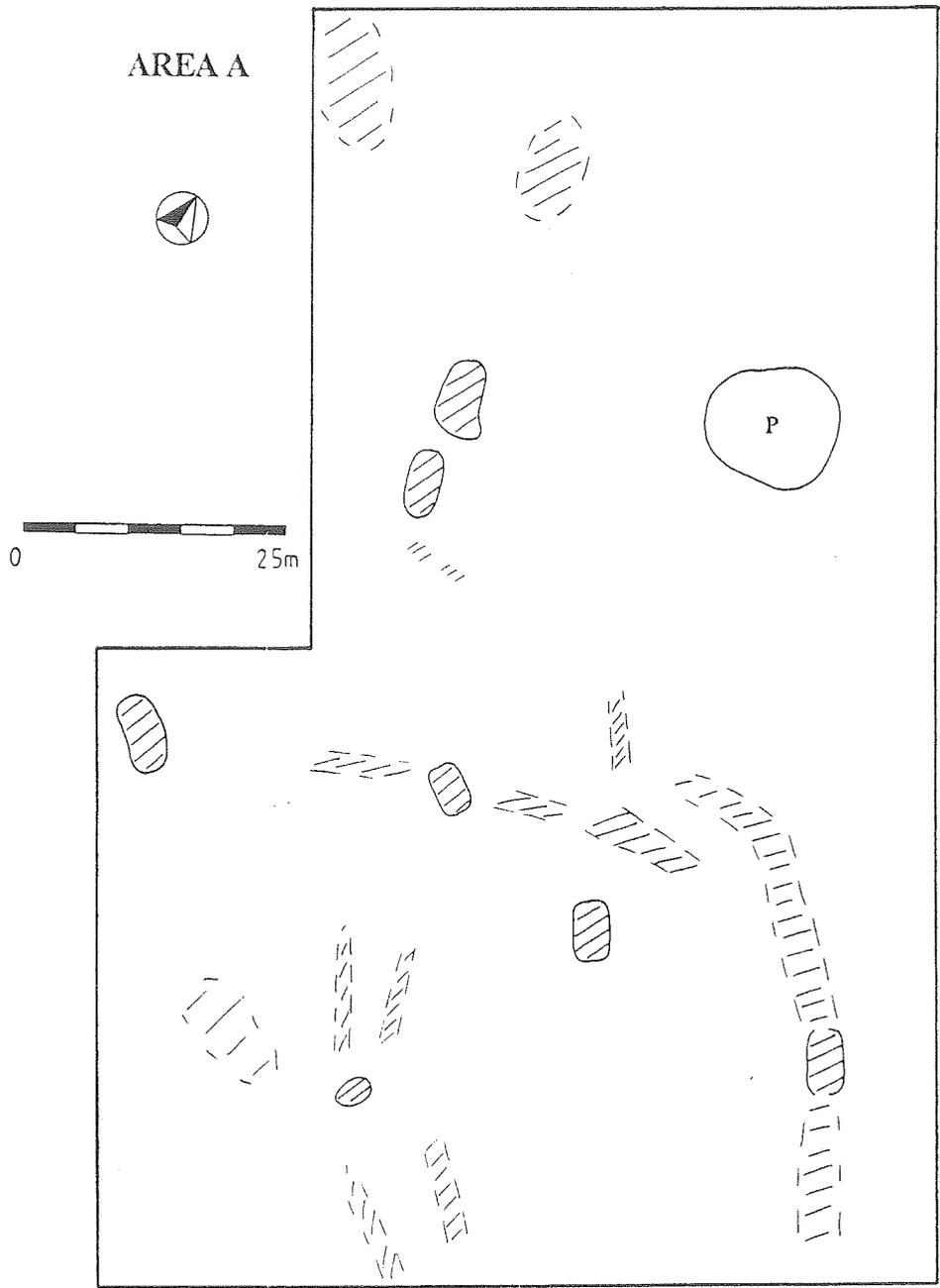


Fig 4: Area A interpretative sketch.

## *Area B*

(Figs 5-7)

Romano-British finds (SMR 528)

Scanning with the magnetometer suggested a complex of anomalies, the nature of which was difficult to ascertain. As a consequence, nine detailed grids were analysed initially, and a further five were added to investigate specific features. Subsequently, two further areas were surveyed in an attempt to verify the extent of archaeological activity. The three areas have been labelled B1, B2 and B3 respectively.

Area B1 produced a group of anomalies which appear archaeological in origin. The magnetic evidence suggests the presence of ditches, pits and small-scale "industrial" type activity. The anomalies at (K) could be a small kiln/furnace/hearth, whilst the peculiar responses at (L) may be associated with waste material of archaeological origin. Clearly we are looking at a small sample of a much larger archaeological complex, and in such circumstances it is easy to misinterpret the significance or scale of the results.

A 100-metre transect was added to the north of Area B1, in an attempt to verify whether there is any geophysical evidence for the present trackway being on the line of a former Roman road. Unfortunately, although there are anomalies of archaeological potential, the situation with regard to a possible road has not been resolved. A much larger sample would need to be investigated.

Two further transects (B2 and B3) were then surveyed and once again several anomalies of interest were pinpointed. A major ditch was found on the western edge of Area B3 and scanning confirmed that it continued over at least a 20-metre stretch. Once more, it is difficult to fully assess the archaeological potential of the area on the basis of such a small sample.

## *Area C*

(Fig 8)

Site of club house

Nine grids were examined over the northern half of the proposed club house. Overgrown vegetation prevented survey of the southern half.

Apart from a possible ditch and one or two other minor anomalies, compared with the other survey areas there appear to be few anomalies of "major" archaeological potential.

## *Area D*

(Fig 9)

Mesolithic/Neolithic activity (SMR 8793)

It was intended that a 50% sample of this area would be investigated magnetically. However, poor ground conditions and low magnetic responses resulted in large areas being unsuitable for detailed work. A sample strip 200 metres by 20 metres was investigated, therefore, in an attempt to ascertain if there were major changes of significance within the field.

# Area B1

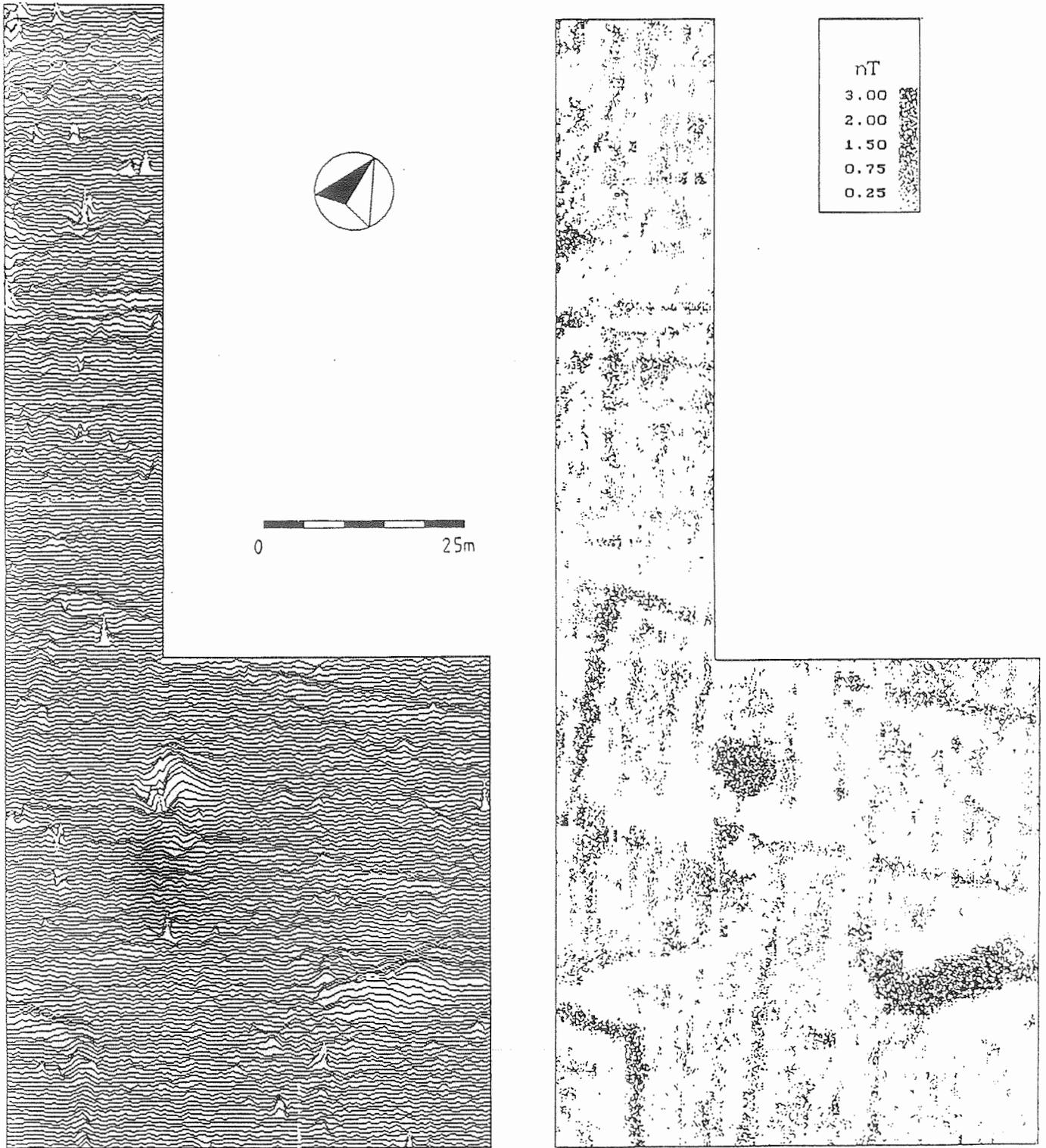


Fig 5: Area B1 X-Y trace and dot density plot.

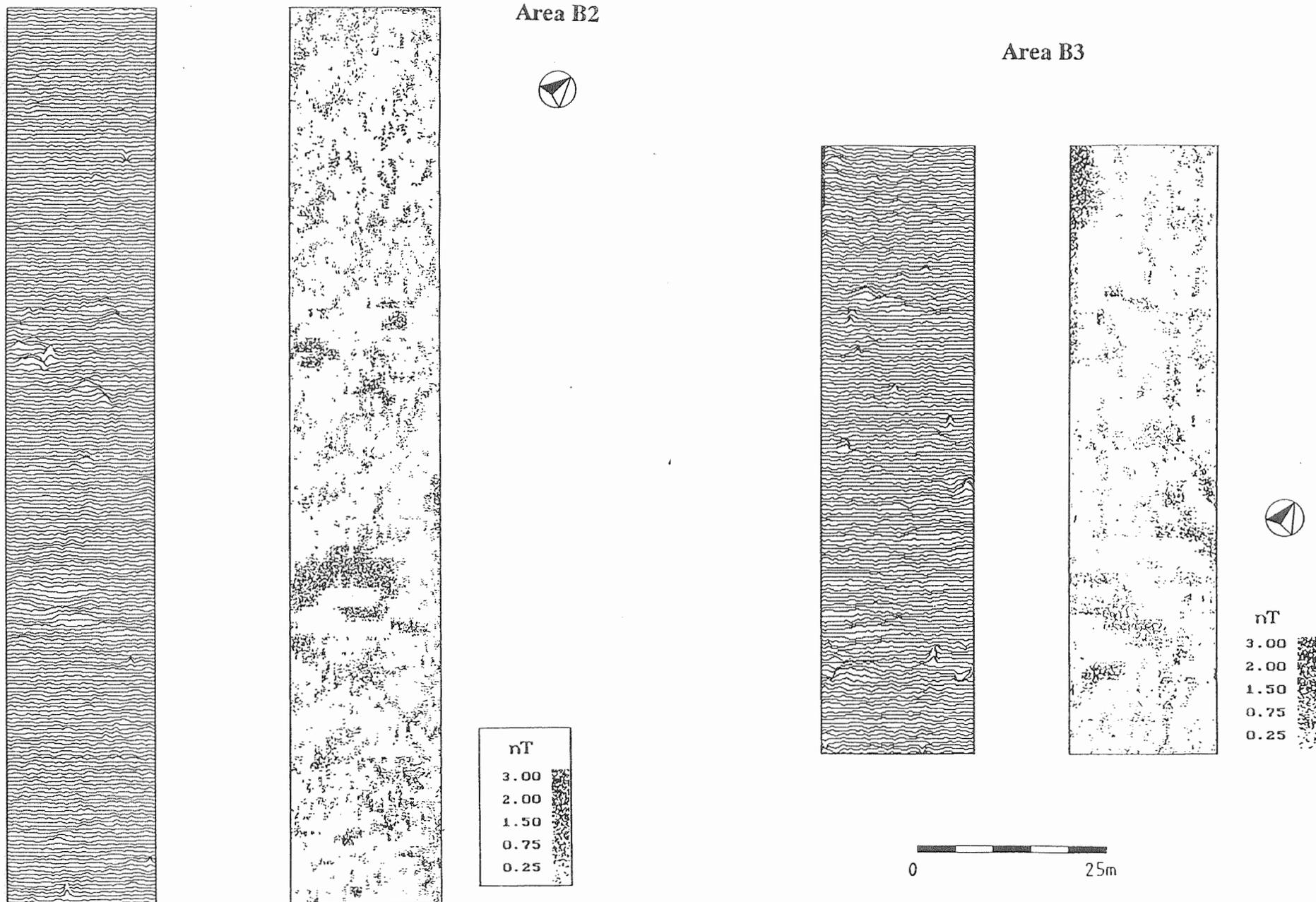


Fig 6: Areas B2 and B3 X-Y traces and dot density plots.

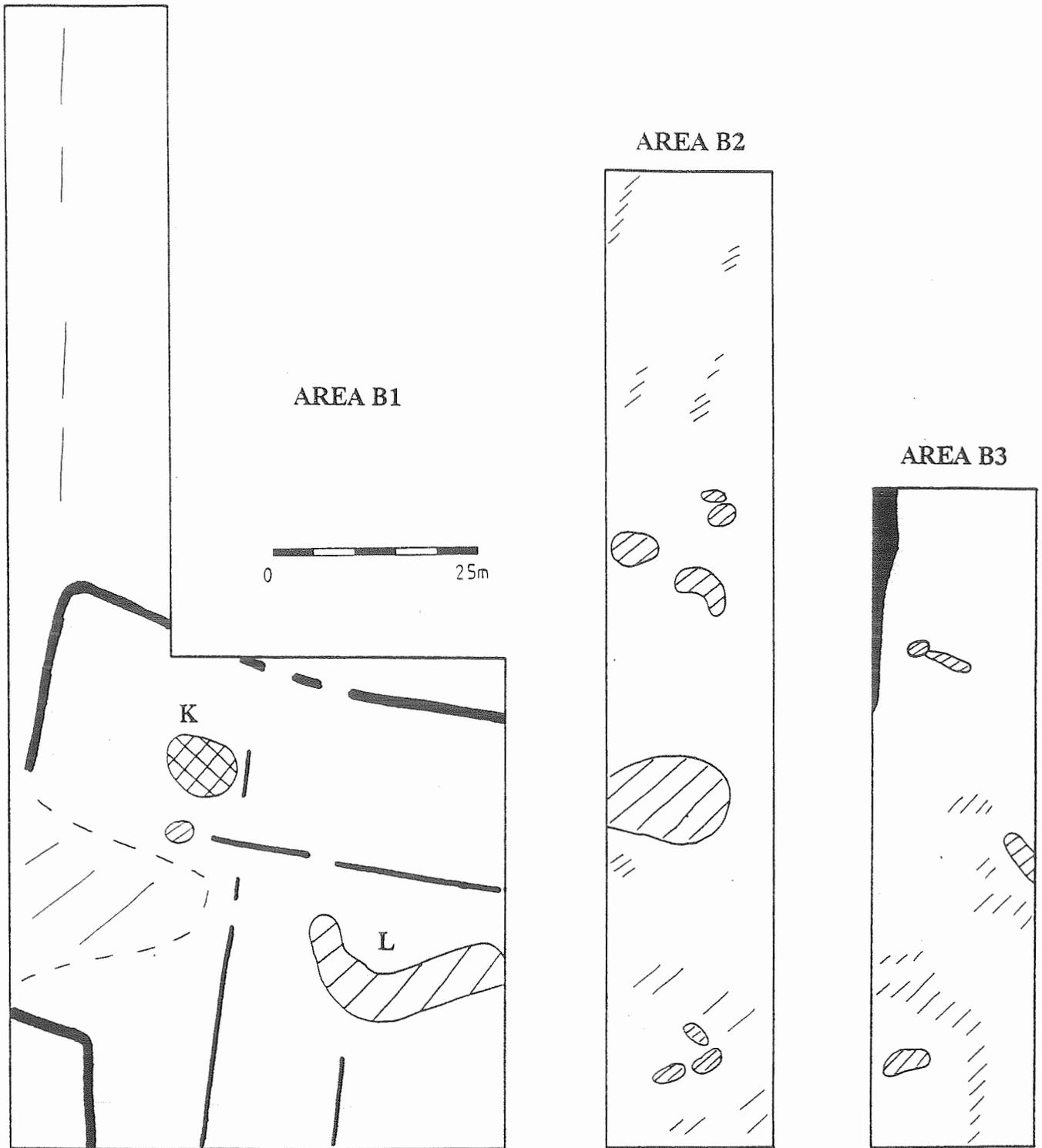
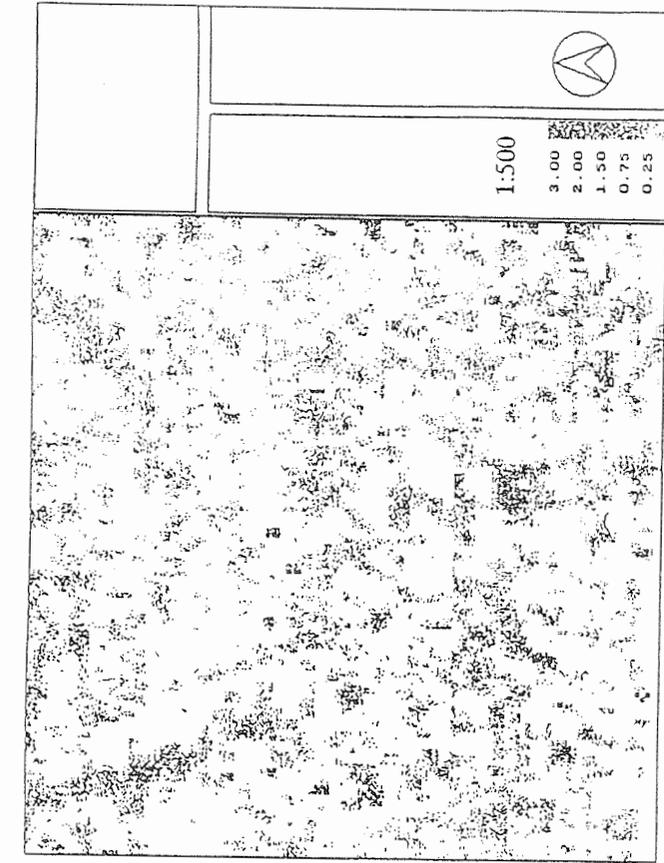


Fig 7: Areas B1, B2 and B3 interpretative sketches.



AREA C

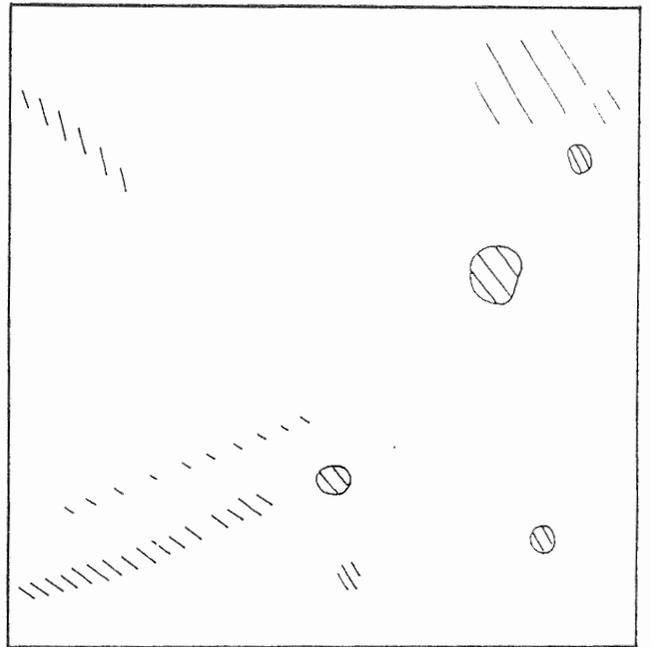
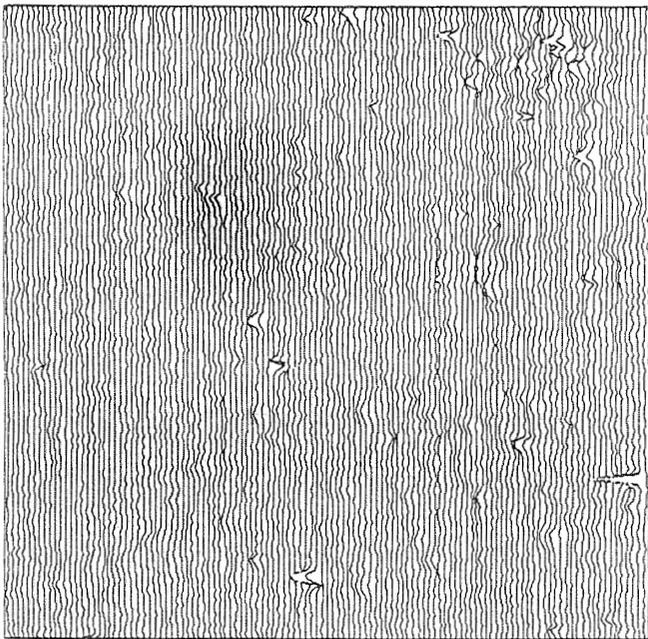


Fig 8: Area C X-Y trace, dot density plot and interpretative sketch.

The results are far from conclusive. There are a few anomalies of potential interest, particularly in the southern half of the survey area, but the responses are much weaker than in Areas A and E (see below). However, it should be noted that in general the magnetic responses associated with Mesolithic/Neolithic features will normally be low.

### Area E

(Figs 10-12)

#### Enclosure (SMR 557)

A ditched double enclosure is recorded on aerial photographs and the aim of the magnetic survey was to confirm the presence of the site and provide any additional information on the archaeological remains. As the various plots show, remarkably clear results were obtained.

The main ditches of the enclosures produced anomalies of strengths up to 20nT, suggesting that there has been intensive occupation on the site. The central area dividing the two main enclosures is particularly interesting. A double ditch is separated by a series of very large pits/short lengths of ditch running down the middle. There is only one clear break in the northern ditch, whereas a second ditch appears interrupted.

In the middle of the southern enclosure is a large (c.17m diameter) "causewayed" enclosure. Internal features are also discernable - probably pits and slots. Other pits and features are present within the main enclosure, but the density of anomalies is much less than in the northern half.

There are two clear breaks in the ditch which forms the northern enclosure. One in the south-east corner leads into what could be described as an annex. The other, which appears to have internal defensive features, probably formed a gateway/main entrance to the whole complex.

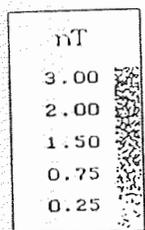
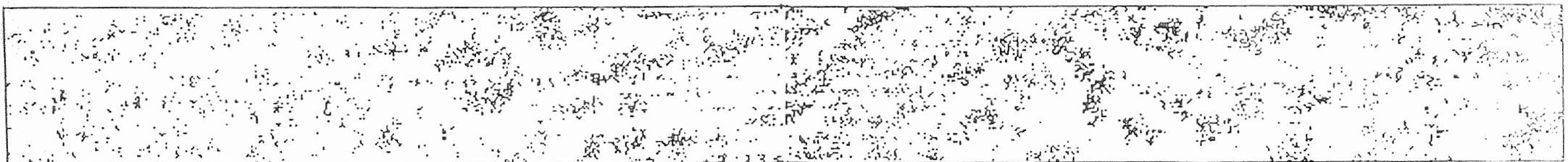
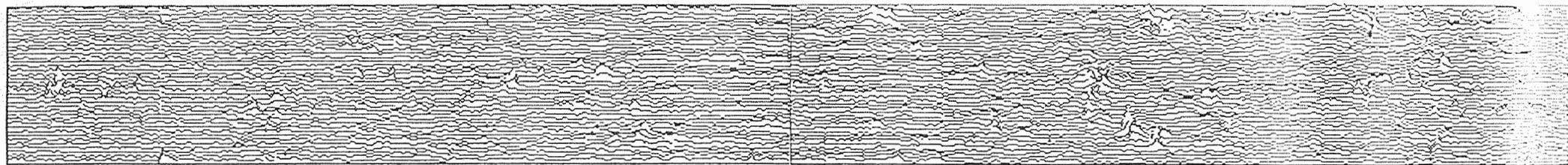
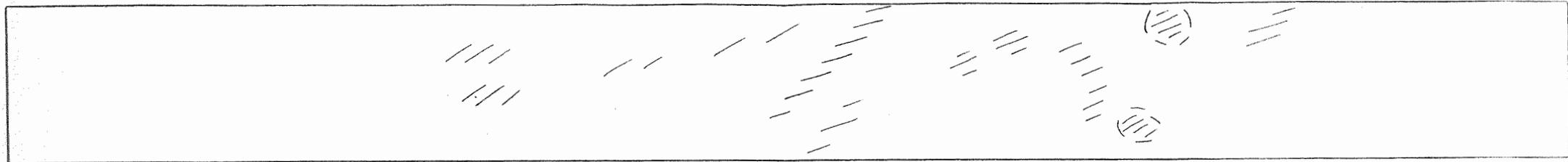
At least one "roundhouse" is visible in the south-east of the enclosure, and there are suggestions of others within the complex of anomalies. There appears to be some form of ditch sub-dividing the northern enclosure into an eastern and western half.

The western ditch of the double enclosure follows closely the present day topographic contours. The site occupies a fairly level plateau bounded by cliffs on its southern and eastern sides, and a fairly pronounced slope which falls away to the west. Only the northern side appears undefended, but it is likely that further ditches are sites beyond the current survey area.

In fact there are suggestions of ditches running in a north-south direction outside the main enclosures, but these may be associated with land-drains. Numerous fragments of tile were noted in the topsoil, though it was not certain whether they were modern or Roman in date.

A far clearer picture exists for the southern half of the area investigated. A series of further enclosures are attached to the main double enclosure. Although the picture is incomplete, the southernmost of these does not appear to have an entrance into the main double enclosure. It is sub-divided by small lengths of ditches, and several anomalies suggests pits.

By contrast, the "annex" to the east of the double enclosure, produced a totally different magnetic picture. The X-Y trace show very strong magnetic anomalies, which are typical of responses normally associated with fired or ferrous remains. The evidence points towards an area of "industrial" activity, perhaps metalworking or pottery production. Unfortunately the magnetic picture is confused, so it is not possible to say whether kilns and or hearths are in situ, or whether we are seeing the residues within a waste dump.



Area D

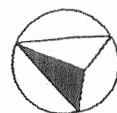
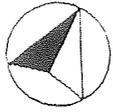


Fig 9: Area D X-Y trace, dot density plot and interpretative sketch.

Area E



0 25m

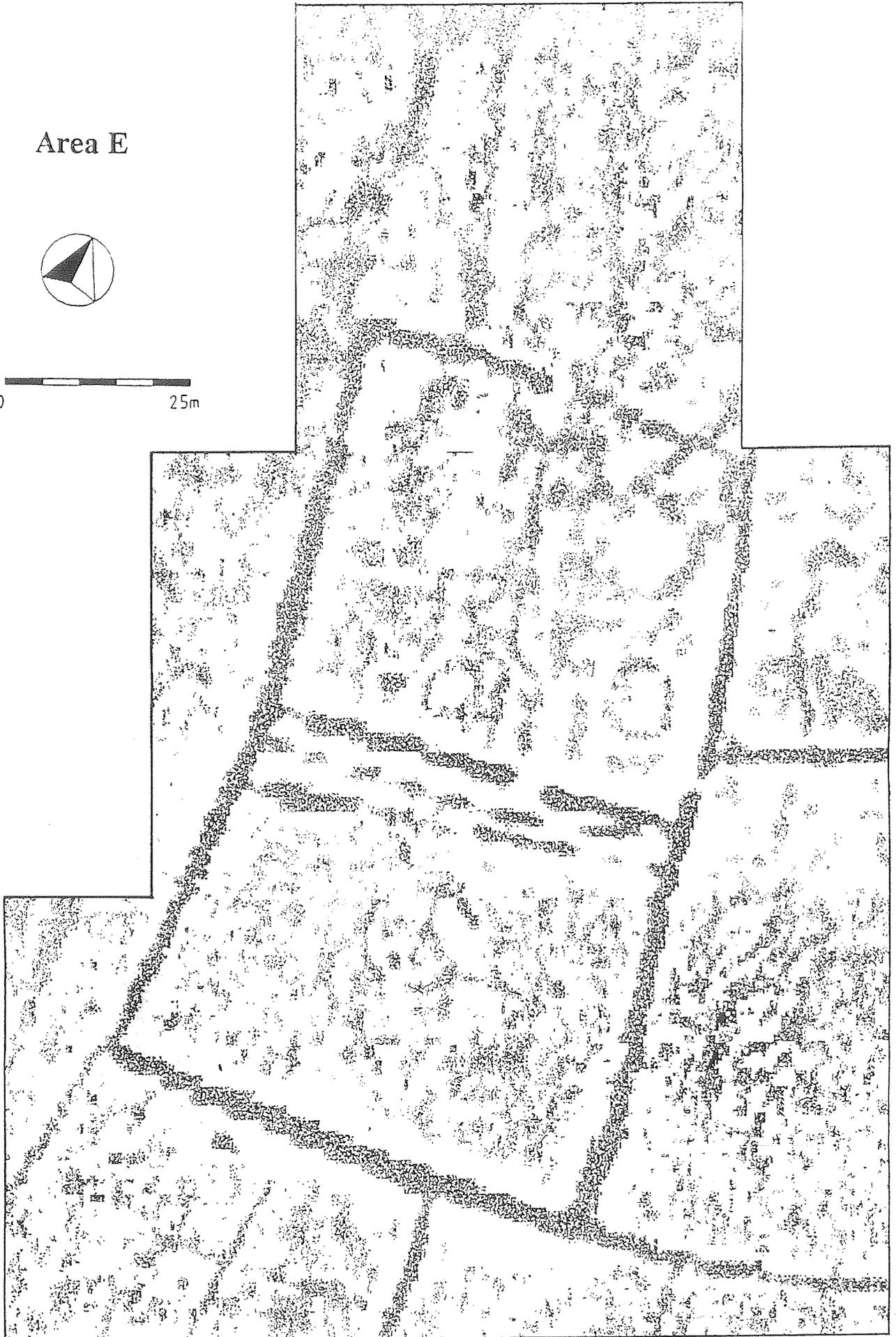
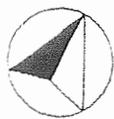


Fig 10: Area E dot density plot.

Area E



0 25m

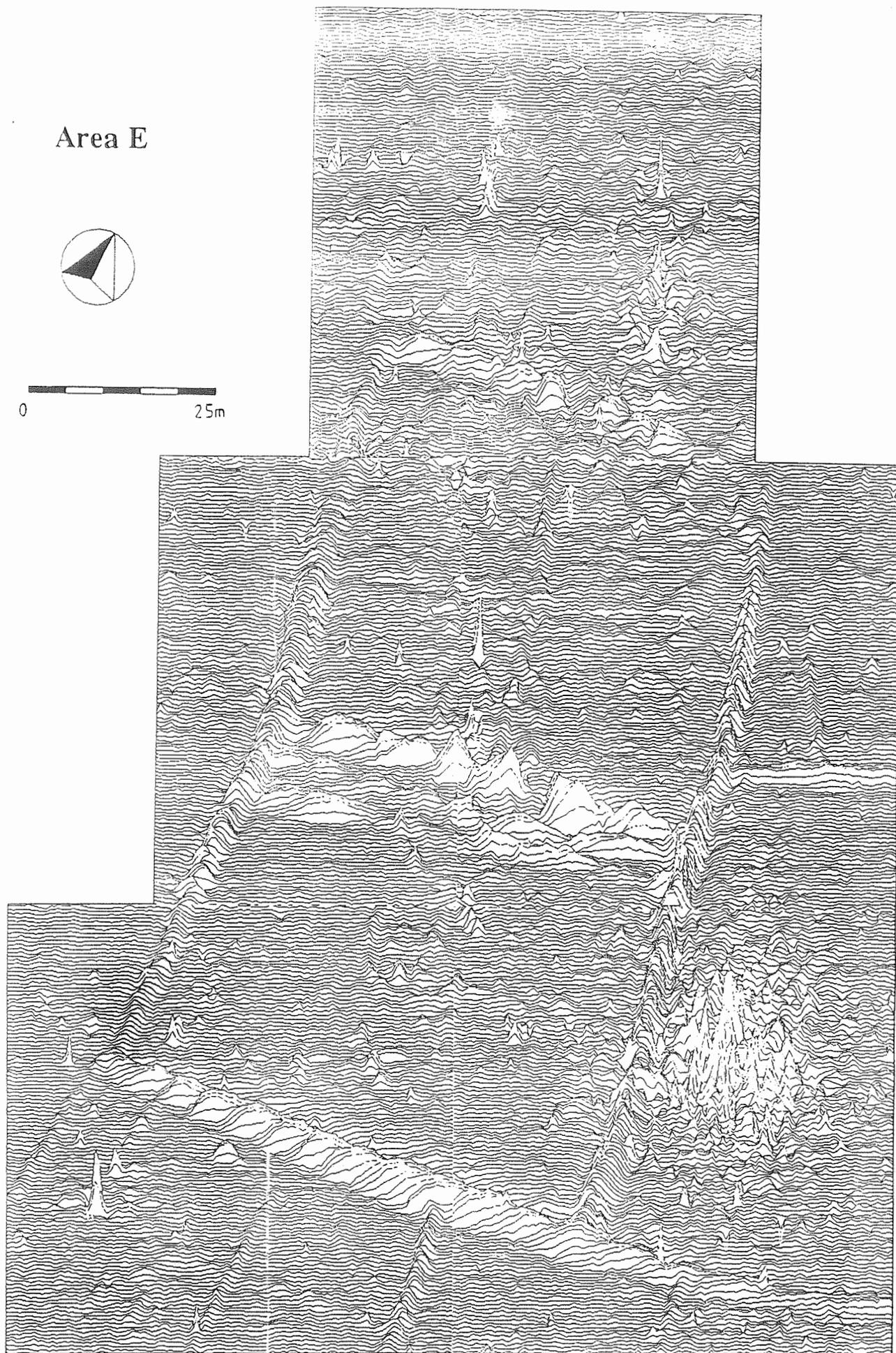
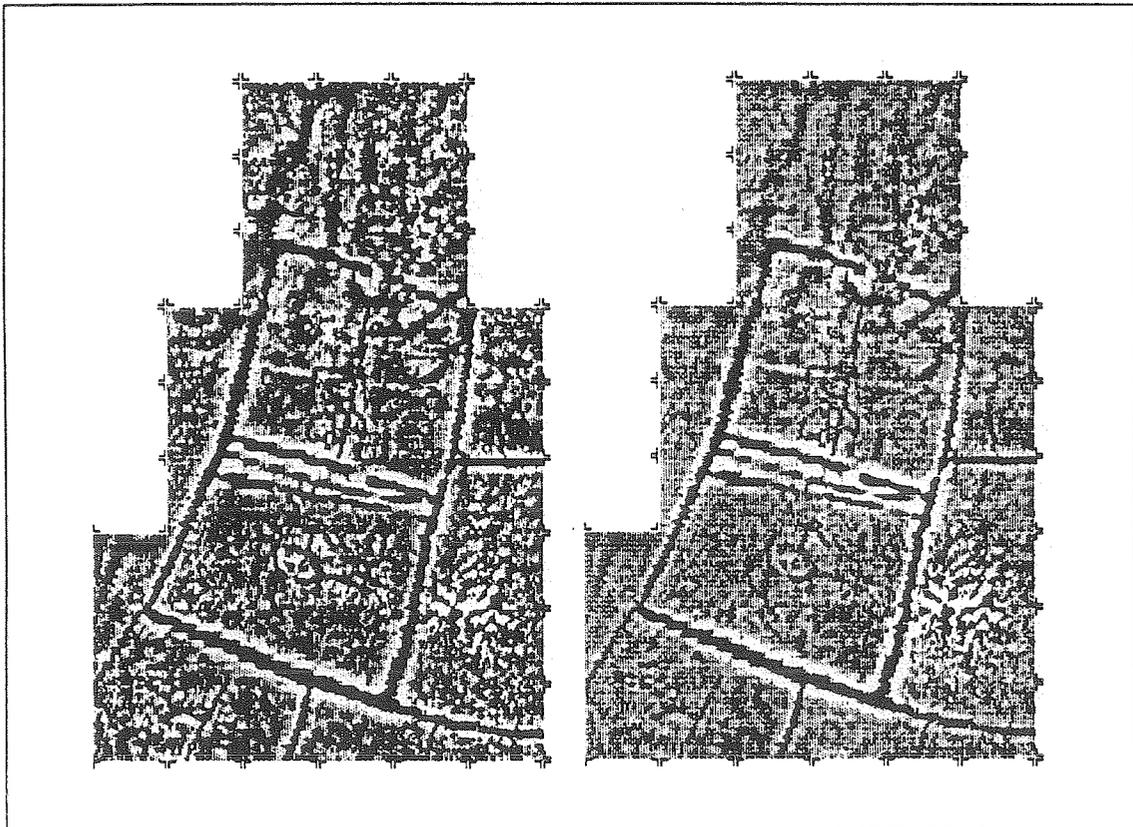


Fig 11: Area E X-Y trace.

## AREA E



Contrast equalisation

Min -5nT to max 10nT

Fig 12: Area E grey scale images.

### *Conclusions*

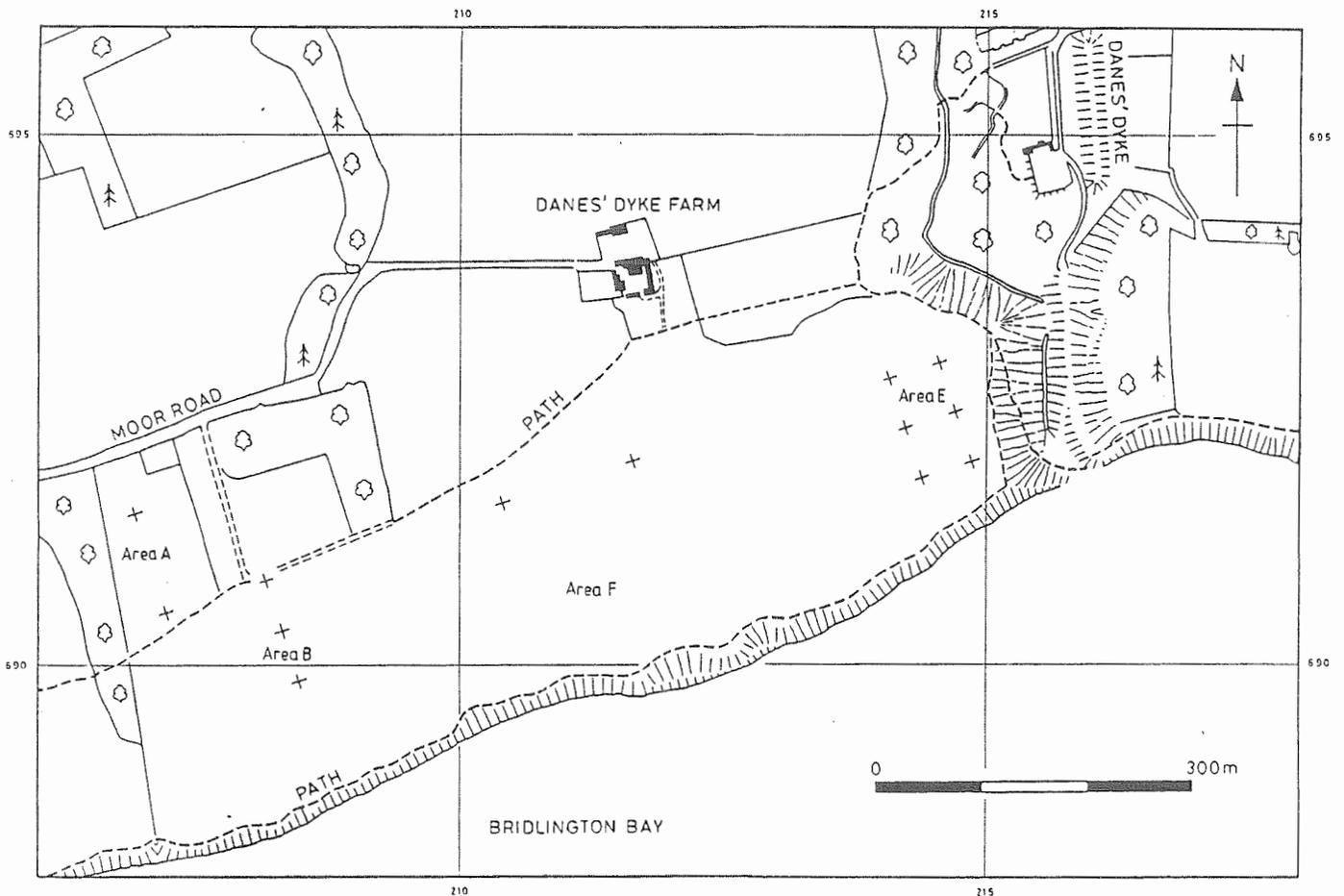
The magnetometer survey has succeeded in identifying areas of high potential archaeological interest, which will clearly benefit from further investigation. Areas B and E have produced major complexes of archaeological features. Unfortunately it has not been possible to map the full extent of the remains within the current brief.

In general, the remarkably clear results from Sewerby serve to demonstrate the quantity and quality of archaeological information that can be recovered using geophysical techniques on responsive sites.

Field work: J Gater, C Gaffney, S Manifold and D Shiel  
Report: J Gater and C Gaffney

## The Excavations

A three-week programme of trial excavation was mounted with four staff from the Archaeology Unit, aided by occasional use of a mechanical excavator. Trenches were sited to encounter and investigate features previously located by the geophysical survey, and following careful stripping of the topsoil by machine, the areas were cleared by hand to reveal any distinctions in the exposed soil surface which would betray the existence of archaeological features. The features were, in most instances, excavated by hand, though in the case of wider, deeper, ditches, use of the machine greatly reduced the amount of hand digging required. The excavated soil was subsequently searched for finds. In addition, a further week of work was necessary to monitor two areas stripped of topsoil in advance of golf course landscaping.



**Fig 13:** Location of the excavation areas A, B, E and F. Ordnance Survey grid co-ordinates shown, main excavation grid points indicated.

In all, four different areas of the site were investigated by excavation (Fig 13); geophysical survey areas A, B, and E, and a fourth, referred to here as Area F, which lay near geophysical survey areas B2 and B3. The different excavation areas were related to each other using a single

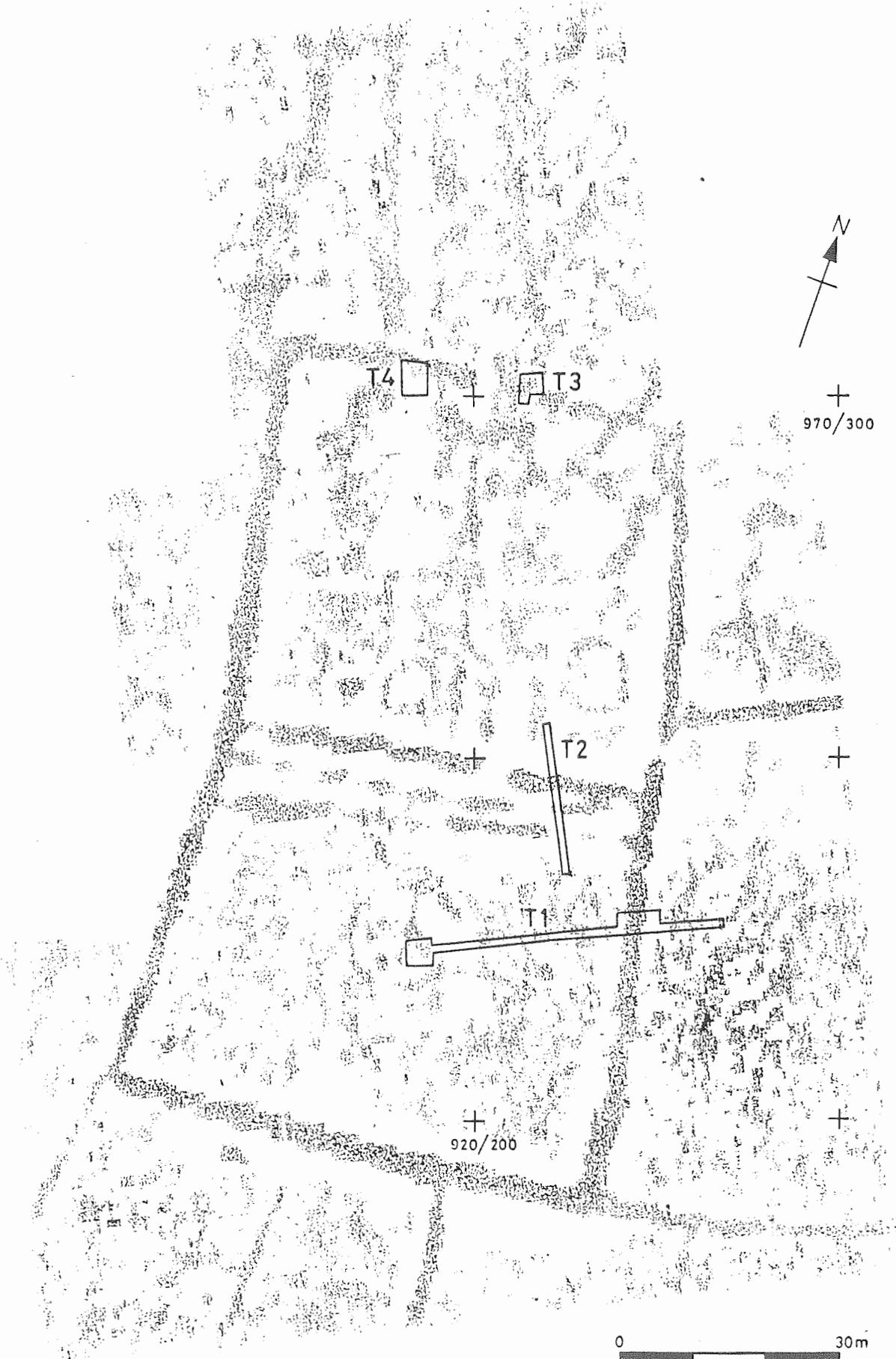


Fig 14: Area E Position of excavation trenches superimposed on the dot density plot of the geophysical survey.

surveying grid, laid out by the Land Surveyors of the Property Services Department, Humberside County Council. The various features encountered were recorded under standard procedures used by the Humberside Archaeology Unit. Each was assigned a context number, with written descriptions made on *pro forma* sheets, plans and sections being drawn on punched drafting film sheets, and photographs taken as necessary. This report is based upon these primary excavation records.

### Area E

This was the first area investigated, and it was by far the most productive archaeologically. A large ditched enclosure, measuring about 100m N-S by 70m E-W, had previously been located on aerial photographs (Ref. NMR SF 222, taken on 17/7/70), and it was revealed in extraordinary detail by the geophysical survey (see Figs 10-12). This detail made possible the sampling of specific points during the evaluation, in particular the large enclosure ditches. Four trenches were opened (Fig 14).

#### Trench 1

Trench 1 was positioned with the intention of observing areas both inside and outside of the main enclosure, and to determine if any traces remained of internal or external banks associated with the ditch. To the east of the enclosure ditch, in an area outside of the main enclosure but delineated by ditches to both north and south, the geophysical survey had recorded high magnetic readings, seen on Fig 10 as a pattern of swirling lines with two points of particularly high intensity. These were of a character consistent with the buried remains of industrial activity such as metalworking or pottery production, but although Trench 1 entered this area of high magnetic activity, nothing of an archaeological nature was apparent then, or later, when a larger area was stripped for construction of the 14th green. An unusual concentration of iron-rich rocks in the underlying geology must have produced these anomalies. No trace was seen of an external bank.

The trench was widened where it crossed the main enclosure ditch (19), and 3.50m of the ditch was exposed, about half of this portion being excavated to its full depth (Plate 1). The ditch was 2.60m wide and 1.40m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a fairly sharp, "V-shaped", profile (Fig 15, no.1). The lowest fill was natural clay and gravel which must have slumped into the ditch after it had been dug, and this was overlain by a soft dark brown loam containing occasional rounded beach pebbles, some of which were burnt, and sherds of late Iron Age pottery and flint fragments. The nature of the fill would suggest that it had accumulated over a protracted period and there appears to have been no attempt to recut the ditch, rather it had been allowed to infill naturally throughout occupation of the enclosure and beyond.

The continuation of the trench westwards gave no hint as to the existence of an internal bank beside the ditch, nor a palisade. Further west, the trench was again expanded, about 3.50m by 4.00m being stripped to allow detailed examination of features within the area of several intercutting circular linear anomalies indicated on the geophysical survey; these were taken to indicate the positions of large circular buildings or "roundhouses". Although the trench did not actually cross the line of one of these circles, instead passing through a possible entrance gap, it was hoped to investigate the area enclosed by it. In fact, the excavation revealed the existence of three smaller buildings (Fig 16, and Plate 2), none of which had previously been detected, implying a more complex sequence of occupation than that seen on the survey. The surviving elements of the buildings lay within a 0.10-1.15m thick band of soil between the natural subsoil and plough-disturbed topsoil. The evidence for the earliest, Building 1, consisted of two lengths of a curving clay wall, about 0.30m wide, set upon layers of cobbles and chalk blocks within shallow construction trenches, and standing up to 0.10m above the subsoil; the building would

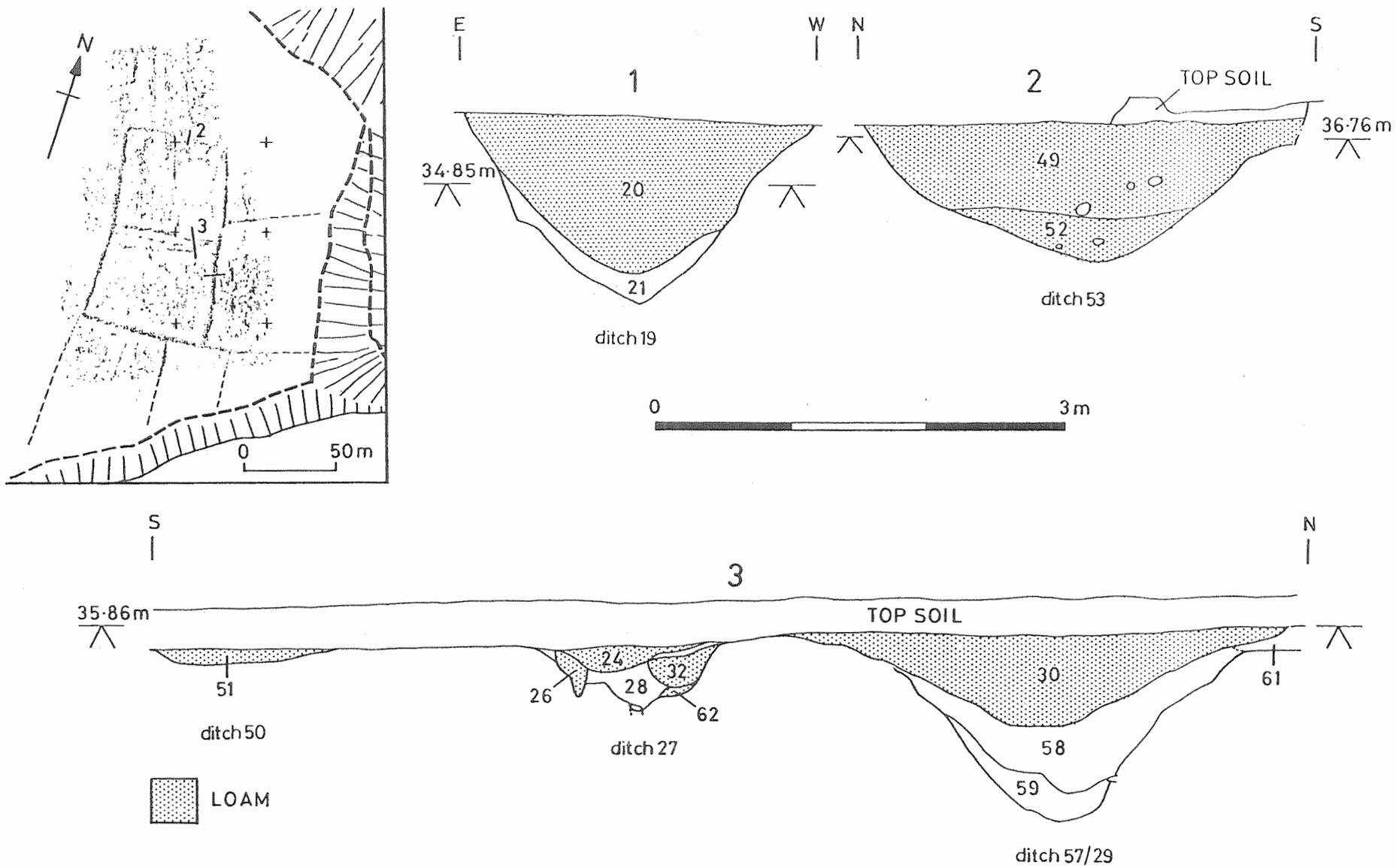


Fig 15: Area E Sections across the enclosure ditches, with inset showing their locations in relation to the enclosure as a whole.

originally have had an external diameter of about 5.90m. Whilst one end of the surviving wall was cut away by construction of Building 2, the other end was a stopped end, presumably one side of an entrance. Occupation of the building was evidenced by a thin layer of soft brown loam with inclusions of charcoal and a few small fragments of pottery and flint, contained by the clay wall and extending a short way out through the doorway. This must have represented material which had accumulated during the use of the building, the surface of the underlying subsoil having served as the floor.

Building 2 was significantly larger than its predecessor, having a diameter of around 10.80m externally. It too had clay walls, slightly wider than those of Building 1, and surviving to a similar height; in this case, however, the wall was without foundation and rested directly on the subsoil. Where necessary, the remains of the earlier structure had been cleared, though a small portion of the earlier wall was retained in use. A thin layer of loam, containing pottery and flint, represented occupation within the building, whilst a spread of pebbles in a clay matrix, extending north from the gap between two surviving wall fragments, may have been the remnants of a path and could imply the existence of a doorway in that position.

Building 3, the latest of the buildings, was also the largest, having originally had an external diameter of about 14.50m. Evidence for this building comprised a length of curved ditch or gully, 0.20–0.30m deep and 0.50m wide, with steep or near vertical sides (Plate 3). It is unlikely to have been a drainage gully or eaves' drip surrounding a building of which no structural trace remained, there being no indication from the nature of its backfill that it had ever contained water; the two earlier buildings had certainly had no such provision. Instead, it seems probable that it was a "robbing trench", dug to dismantle the building following its disuse, perhaps removing structural elements, such as timber ground beams and uprights, for use elsewhere; irregularities in its line may indicate the former positions of uprights. The projection of its course further east would have crossed the line of Trench 1 and, as it was not observed, it must be assumed that an entrance lay there. No occupation layers remained from this building, though the material used to backfill the robbing trench did contain some pottery and flint.

The original height of the clay walls is difficult to guess. Though it is likely that they had originally functioned as sills or dwarf walls for a timber superstructure, their narrow width and shallow foundations would have limited their load-bearing capabilities. Additional upright posts, positioned towards the centre of the building, may have helped support the roof (usually supposed to have been of thatch), though there are numerous excavated examples from other sites, such as North Cave in Humberside (Dent 1989), Dalton Parlours in West Yorkshire (Wrathmell and Nicholson eds 1990), and Thorpe Thewles in Cleveland (Heslop 1987), where this was certainly not the case, a "ring-beam" arrangement at roof level removing the need for central support in all but the largest structures. The centre point of Building 1, as reconstructed, actually lay within the excavated area and so it is clear that it would have had a roof supported entirely on its walls. The remaining two buildings had centres which lay well outside of the small area excavated, so that we cannot be certain of their construction or plan. The small proportion of the internal areas of each building which lay within the trench meant that although it is likely that each would have originally contained a hearth and other minor structural features, none was seen.

### *Trench 2*

This one-metre wide trench was sited across the lines of three roughly parallel E-W ditches revealed by the geophysical survey. They appeared to divide the main enclosure into two fairly equal parts, the three buildings discussed above having lain in the southern "compartment". All the ditches were excavated to their full depths and sections drawn; Fig 15, no.3 is a section across all three. Plate 4 shows the two northernmost.

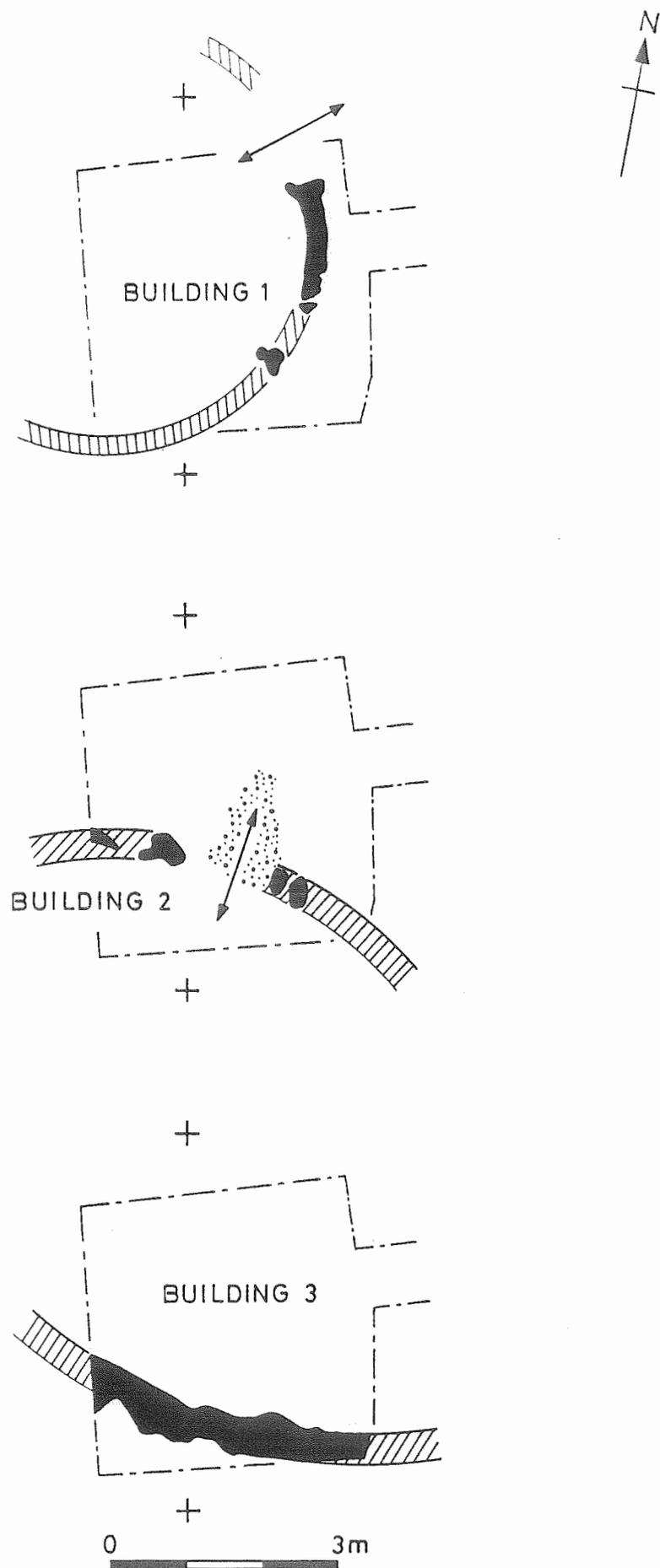


Fig 16: Area E, Trench 1 Buildings 1, 2 and 3 in plan. The surviving parts of the walls are shown black, with hatching indicating their conjectured continuations. The double-headed arrows mark the positions of doorways, Building 2 having a pebble and clay "path" leading from its entrance.

The survey seemed to indicate that the southernmost ditch was fading out as it neared the line of the trench (see Fig 14), and indeed the ditch (50) was only 0.10m deep where seen, and visibly narrowed as it crossed the trench. This lessening of the ditch at this point may be due to proximity to a point of access between the two compartments.

The central ditch appeared to be non-continuous on the survey, providing numerous points of access from north to south, and excavation revealed at least two phases of ditch on the same line. The earliest (27) was c. 1.50m at its widest, with steep irregular sides dropping to a narrow slot at its base, and a total depth of just over half a metre. Although it may have functioned as an open ditch, there is a strong possibility that it may have been a palisade trench; there were certainly traces of the positions of at least two upright posts within the fill, stones within the slot may have been packing. The feature was deliberately infilled with clay, perhaps a packing to support posts, or backfill and consolidation after its disuse. Succeeding it was a shallower feature (23), at least 0.40m deep, the eastern end of which lay within the trench. It is possible that this represented one half of a pit, though its position on the line of the earlier ditch makes it likely that it was the end of another ditch, with a rounded terminal.

The third ditch (57) lay about a metre further north. It had a steep "V-shaped" profile and, at 1.40m deep and up to 3.70m wide, it was closer in size to the main enclosure ditch than were its two neighbours. Following disuse of the ditch, most of it was filled with dumps of clay mixed with gravel. This was undoubtedly deliberate backfilling, as none of this material could be supposed to have arrived in an open ditch through natural agencies. There was no evidence of silting at the base of the feature, which could imply either a short period of use, or that such deposits, usually soft and relatively uncompacted, had been cleared prior to backfilling to improve consolidation. A dark loam containing pottery and animal bone fragments accumulated in the upper parts of the infilled ditch, perhaps because the partially backfilled ditch had remained as a linear hollow (29), much like a shallow ditch, which collected material while occupation of the settlement continued.

It is unlikely that all three ditches were contemporary, and they must represent successive delineations of the enclosure compartments; their interpretation will be discussed further below.

### *Trench 3*

Trench 3 was positioned across the main enclosure ditch a short distance east of the northern entrance gap, and a 3.50m length of ditch (53) was revealed in plan (Fig 15, no. 2; Plate 5). It was nearly 3.00m wide and where sectioned was seen to have had a "bowl-like" profile and a depth of around one metre. In the western half of the trench, the northern ditch edge ceased to run parallel to the southern edge, and was observed to turn away to the north-west, hinting at the existence of an enlarged ditch terminal flanking the entrance. Both the fills of this ditch were essentially loams; large amounts of pottery and bone in large fragments came from the lower fill, suggesting that it was the result of rubbish disposal contemporary with occupation, whilst the overlying darker material, containing fewer finds, could have resulted from gradual infilling of the ditch through natural processes during or after the life of the settlement.

### *Trench 4*

This trench was, to some degree, intended to be a counterpart to Trench 3, sampling the enclosure ditch which ran west of the entrance, though due to lack of time only the topsoil was stripped off. However, one side of the ditch (63) was seen for 3.50m in plan, enough to confirm its existence and to corroborate the geophysical survey.

## *Discussion*

At first glance, both the aerial photographs and the survey seem to indicate a single ditched enclosure, divided into two roughly equal parts by up to three parallel ditches. However, the excavation of short sections of these ditches suggests that the two areas may in fact have been enclosed on separate occasions, and closer study of the plan reveals that both the eastern and, especially, the western sides of the enclosure run on slightly different lines either side of the central dividing line. The dimensions of ditch 57, the northernmost of the three excavated in Trench 2, seem excessive for an internal division, and were more akin to ditch 19, the length of main enclosure ditch seen in Trench 1. Furthermore, although the differences in depth and profile between ditch 53 (the main enclosure ditch in Trench 3) and ditch 19 may only be irregularities along the length of a single ditch, it is possible that the differences reflect their having been dug at different times, the southern "compartment" having preceded the northern. Ditch 57 would have been the original ditch on the north side of an enclosure measuring 65m by 55m, with a single entrance gap clearly visible on the survey plan. The ditch was of sufficient size to have had a defensive function, though there were no traces of an internal bank or palisade; remains of such a bank could have been ploughed away. When the enclosure was extended, this ditch was infilled, and a fence or palisade (in ditch 27) was built as an internal division, perhaps in conjunction with ditch 50, further south. Presumably occupation of the southern part continued after this and it is not possible to correlate a particular building seen on the survey, or excavated, with a particular phase of enclosure layout.

## *Area B*

A find of Romano-British pottery and other artefacts in this general area earlier this century, led to part of the geophysical survey being targetted here (see Fig 5) and several ditch-like anomalies were encountered. Three trenches were excavated to investigate some of these anomalies (Fig 17).

### *Trench 5*

This one-metre wide E-W trench, 30m long, with two south-running offshoots, picked up traces of a ditch which dog-legged within the surveyed area. Although soil conditions made recognition of the soil distinctions very difficult, a combination of leaching in the past and very dry conditions during excavation, it was possible to identify the ditch in some places, and a single sherd of pottery, reminiscent of types recovered in Area E, was found in its fill. Where sectioned, the ditch (78) was seen to be just over 0.85m wide and 0.30m deep, with gently sloping sides and a flat base (Fig 18, no.4). Due to the lack of colour differentiation, the fill appeared very similar to the material through which the feature had been cut; it was not clear whether the ditch had been allowed to infill naturally or had been deliberately backfilled. It may have performed a drainage function, running around an area of settlement, though if it had acted to delineate an enclosure of some sort, it is likely that it would have originally functioned along with a fence or hedge; on its own it would have presented little obstacle to wayward animals.

### *Trench 6*

Geophysical survey had highlighted a possible hearth, or evidence of industrial activity, and this trench was positioned to investigate it (see Fig 17). An area measuring 4m by 6m was stripped

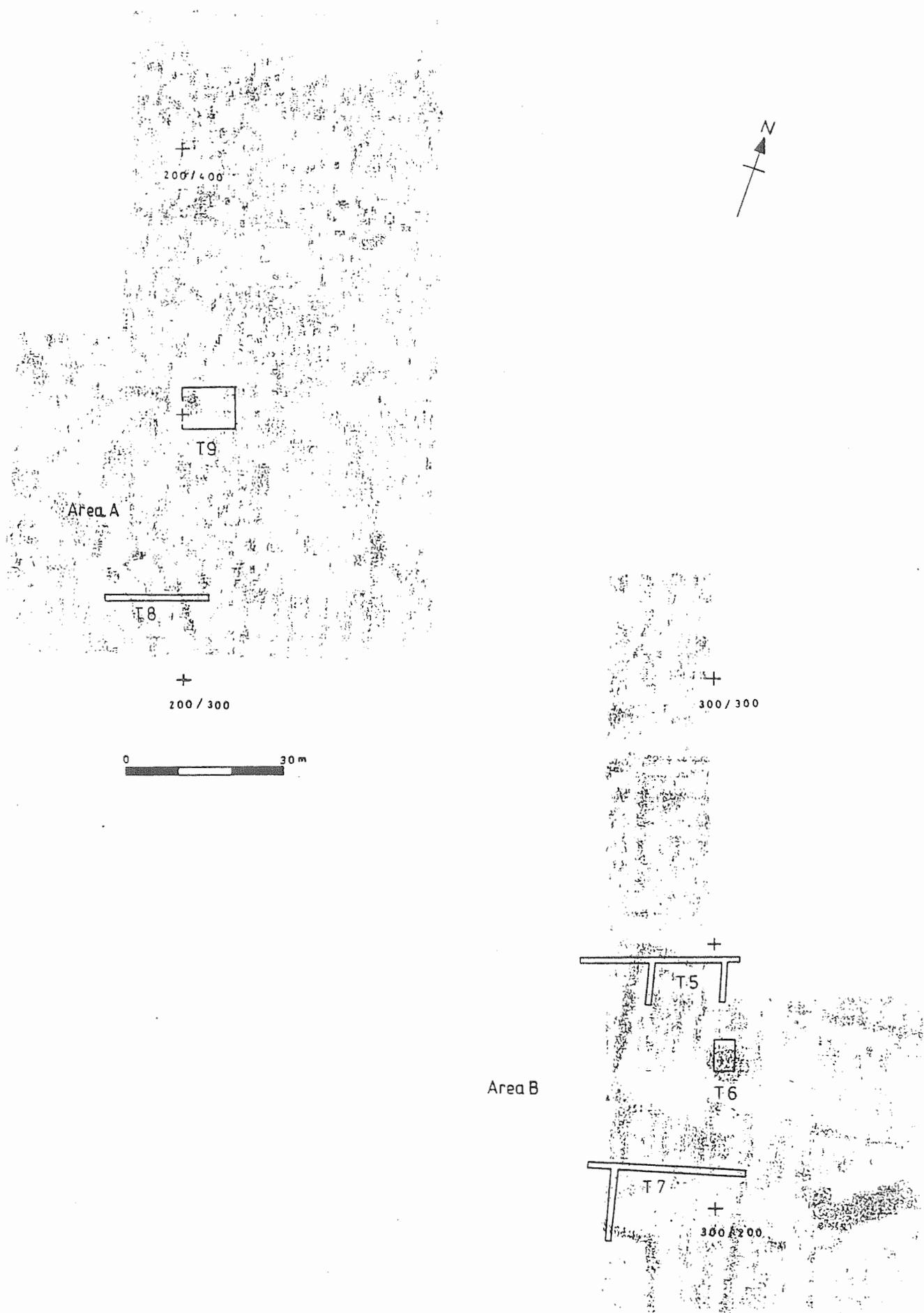


Fig 17: Areas A and B Position of excavation trenches superimposed on the dot density plot of the geophysical survey.

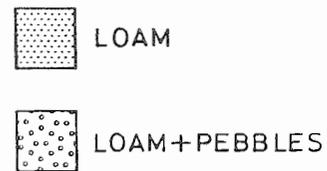
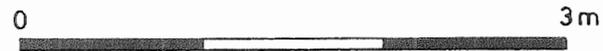
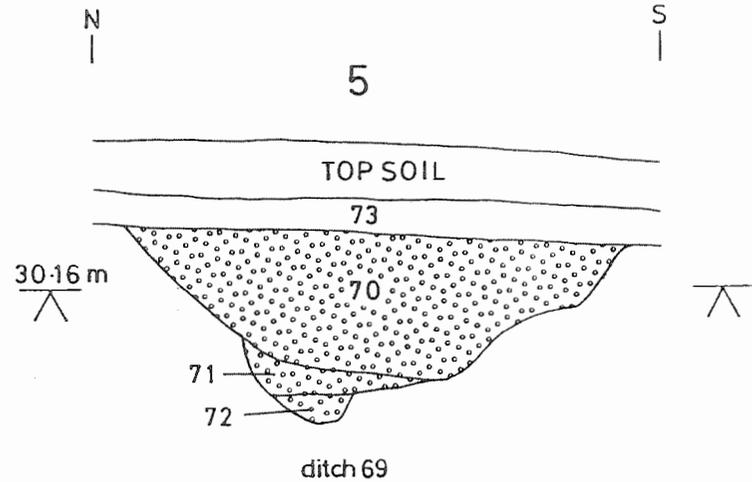
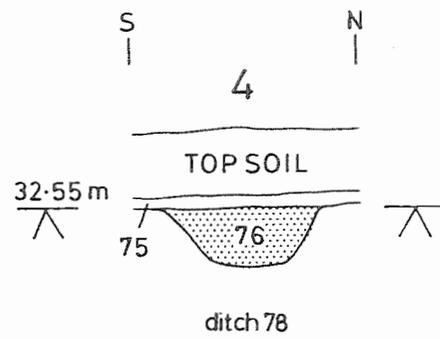
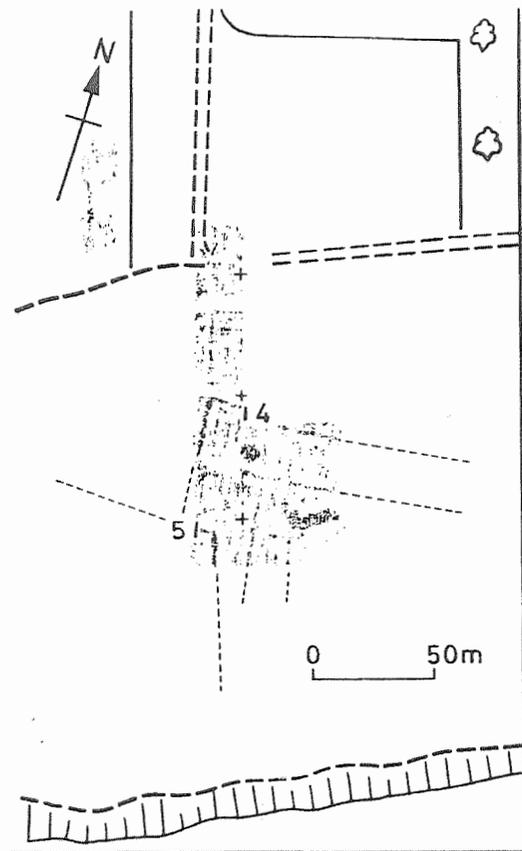


Fig 18: Area B Sections across the ditches, with inset showing their location in relation to the geophysical survey.

of topsoil, but nothing corresponding to a hearth or similar structure was revealed. Discontinuities in the subsoil, containing some small flecks and fragments of stone and clay which appeared burnt, must have given rise to the anomalies detected, though there was nothing which clearly pointed to human activity at this spot.

#### *Trench 7*

Another narrow trench, 30m long and a metre wide, was cut further south to pick up further geophysical anomalies. A roughly triangular area of moderately high reading turned out to have been a natural pond or hollow at some distance below the subsoil surface. An offshoot of the trench to the south picked up a short length of another ditch (69) which turned a corner within the survey area. Although on the survey it appeared similar in size to that recorded in Trench 5, when located and excavated it turned out to be of significantly larger dimensions, being 2.70m wide and 1.05m deep (Fig 18, no. 5; Plate 6) Gently sloping sides led down to a stepped base, with a steep-sided slot at the lowest point. The fills were generally clayey loams with a high gravel content, fairly homogeneous in appearance, and no finds were recovered from the area of fill sampled. It was clearly meant to serve as a major barrier defining an enclosure, whether for defensive reasons or as a means of controlling domesticated animals. Whilst the irregularities in its profile may be the result of recutting of the ditch in an effort to maintain it, they could equally well have been deliberate features to enhance its capabilities as a barrier.

#### *Discussion*

The limited amount of excavation carried out in this area has confirmed the presence of ditches revealed by survey, and recorded their dimensions. While this can give some idea as to their original functions, little can be said beyond that. For instance, it is difficult to guess at the extent of the enclosure defined by ditch 69. Something on the scale of that recorded in Area E cannot be ruled out, given the size of the ditch, though to judge by the lack of finds which found their way into the enclosure ditch there was unlikely to have been the protracted period of use seen there. The relationship between this enclosure and the smaller ditch 78 *et al* to the north is unknown (they may not even be contemporary), though it is conceivable that they were part of an annexe or associated field system.

#### *Area A*

Two trenches were cut in this field, originally surveyed because of its proximity to the Anglo-Saxon cemetery excavated in the area beneath and beside the farmhouse at Home Farm in 1959 and 1974 (Hirst 1985). A series of sub-rectangular anomalies were identified, as well as some ill-defined linear features, though nothing that could be identified as a burial. While it was the opinion of Geophysical Surveys that most of the anomalies were geological/natural in origin, it was decided to confirm or deny this through trial excavation, and two trenches were opened (Fig 17).

#### *Trench 8*

This narrow trench was positioned to cut across two parallel linear anomalies, though only one was in fact observed. The short length seen comprised 2 large irregular stones within the subsoil,

adjacent, but without any clear structural function. They did not appear to have been set within any sort of cut feature, and unless they were part of a land drain, it must be concluded that they were a natural feature.

### *Trench 9*

An area measuring 10m by 7.5m was stripped over one of the sub-rectangular anomalies. The area of high magnetic reading corresponded to a spread of sand and gravel within the natural subsoil, with no clearly defined edges. It was certainly not a structural feature, and must have been natural in origin.

### *Area F*

Work on the construction of the golf course continued after the initial three-week period on site (in which the nine trenches described above had been excavated) and preliminary results were presented to the developers. Initial post-excavation analysis and close study of the geophysical survey, led to the definition of various zones of potential archaeological interest along the strip of land between the public footpath leading from Sewerby Hall to Danes'Dyke and the sea cliffs, with the recommendation that any landscaping in connection with green or tee construction within those zones, especially if it involved excavation below the level of the topsoil/subsoil interface should be avoided or minimised. Necessary stripping of topsoil for the 15th green and the 16th tee lay within an area which, to judge by the nearest geophysical survey areas (B2 and B3), was likely to contain archaeological features, and the decision was made to use the second week of time allotted to post-excavation analysis to return to site to record any features which had been exposed.

It quickly became apparent that the stripped areas were far in excess of what could be cleaned off and satisfactorily examined in one week by three staff, especially since much of the exposed surface of the subsoil had been repeatedly driven over by the stripping machinery, causing it to be heavily disturbed and compressed. Although all of the area was subjected to some scrutiny, and a reasonable number of worked flints were recovered from disturbed soil, examination following hand cleaning was restricted to the few undisturbed areas, presumably with a commensurate loss in the number of features located.

One pit was recorded in the trench stripped for the 15th green; it was irregular in shape, measuring about 2.30m by 2.00m, with a depth of 0.20m. Its fill of black loam contained burnt stone fragments, though little else in the way of finds. Several other possible features were investigated in the same trench, and although fragments of pottery were recovered from within the subsoil in their vicinity, it appears that they were the result of tree root disturbance of earlier archaeological features, and little sense could be made of them in the time allowed.

Only a very small part of the trench stripped for the 16th tee was looked at in any detail, though an interesting, if enigmatic, feature was found there. Cut into the natural subsoil surface was a shallow sub-rectangular hollow, measuring approximately 3.00m by 2.20m, with a maximum depth of just 0.2m. Set into the virtually horizontal base of this feature was a series of smaller cuts, totalling nineteen (Plate 7). Nine of these were small flat-bottomed rectangular or sub-rectangular pits, measuring on average around 0.40m by 0.30m and 0.14m deep. The remainder were smaller and roughly oval, around 0.20m by 0.10m, having sides which tapered to rounded points at a depth of about 0.15m. All were filled with a similar fill of dark grey-brown or black silty fine sand, with only occasional inclusions of small or medium pebbles. While it is possible that the smaller cuts could have been the result of sharpened timbers being driven into the

ground, then later removed, it is not so easy to arrive at an explanation for the rectangular pits; layout did not provide any clue to the function of either category. Most of the cuts were overlain by what appeared to be a continuous layer of pebbles set in a matrix of clay, though it was decidedly patchy in places, and merged into the underlying fills. This had the appearance of a floor surface, though this would tend to imply that the hollow itself comprised a building, or part of one. Some pottery, similar in character to that from Area E, came from above this surface, as well as some bone fragments. Sealing the surface were a collection of large flat stones, of various geological types and up to 0.80m in length, carefully laid with rounded beach pebbles set in the gaps between (Plate 8). What was remarkable about the arrangement of the stones was that each one directly overlaid one of the cuts below, in many cases closely matching it in size and orientation, this despite the presence of the pebble surface which seemingly obscured the cuts. Either, the pebble surface was not as continuous as it appeared and it had merely been added to as each cut was backfilled, sealed by pebbles and capped by a large stone, or the positions of each cut had been somehow marked to allow placement of the stones at a later time. Either way, the reason for such effort being taken to seal the cuts so carefully, with no clear structural interpretation, must lead one to the conclusion that some ritual or ceremonial activity had given rise to it. Analysis of a sample taken from one of the lower cuts may yet give some clue as to this activity.

#### *Observation of other areas of the site*

When time allowed, the opportunity was taken to observe earthmoving and landscaping in other parts of the golf course development. This included the area to the north-east (Area D in the Geophysical Survey) where evidence of the production of numerous Neolithic and Bronze Age flint tools had been found during fieldwalking in recent years. Topsoil stripping for construction of the 4th green, 5th tee, 12th green and 13th tee was monitored, but no features were seen cutting into the subsoil which might have been connected with this profusion of flint; it must be concluded that the focus or foci of this prehistoric activity lay beneath an unstripped area, or that the ploughing which had released the flint into the topsoil had also removed any trace of features relating to it.

## The Finds

The majority of finds came from Area E, the large ditched enclosure, and fall into three main categories; pottery, flint and bone. Each category will be discussed separately. In addition, a single quern fragment has been described and illustrated. Authorship of each section is as stated.

### *The Pottery*

Peter Didsbury

A total of 319 sherds of pottery, weighing 4717g, were examined from these excavations, of which 303 sherds (4531g) came from 16 stratified contexts. The condition of most of the pottery was fairly good, with few sherds showing signs of much pre-depositional wear, though sherds which had originally been tempered with calcareous material (accounting for almost half of the assemblage) were almost entirely leached out, possibly due to acidic soil conditions. The low average sherd weight and sherd to vessel ratios (the number of individual vessels represented by the sherds) for the assemblage as a whole suggest that much of the material had undergone some degree of dispersal before final deposition, however, and function as a place of primary rubbish disposal is scarcely indicated for any of the features which produced pottery, though substantial portions of some vessels may have been deposited soon after breakage in ditches 19, 29 and 53.

The maximum amount of any vessel which could be reconstructed was c30% rim circuit and c30-50% profile.

The material can be divided into three main fabric categories, according to the main tempering agent employed:

- Category A corky, vesicular sherds leached of their original temper. Voids are generally less than 4mm, and in every case where original tempering material remained (6 of the 42 vessels in this category), it proved to be crushed calcite.
- Category B in which the main tempering agent is quartz in varying quantities and sizes.
- Category C tempered with non-soluble stone grits other than quartz. The category includes only two vessels, one tempered with crushed sandstone and the other with unidentified stone grits.

The material from the site as a whole is divided in almost equal proportions between calcareous- and quartz-tempered fabric types. Given the quality of the data, the assemblage being relatively small, no statistical significance can be attached to the differing ratios of Categories A and B from context to context. There is nothing to suggest, on grounds of either fabric or form, that these assemblages are not broadly contemporaneous. It may also be worth mentioning here that the only vessel from Area B, from ditch 78, is in a quartz-tempered fabric that also appears in many contexts in Area E, and there are therefore no ceramic grounds for supposing that the two areas of the site are of different date. Similarly, the few sherds from Area F (not as yet subjected to detailed examination) appear similar.

Only one vessel, a possible fragment of Roman greyware, showed any signs of having been wheel-thrown.

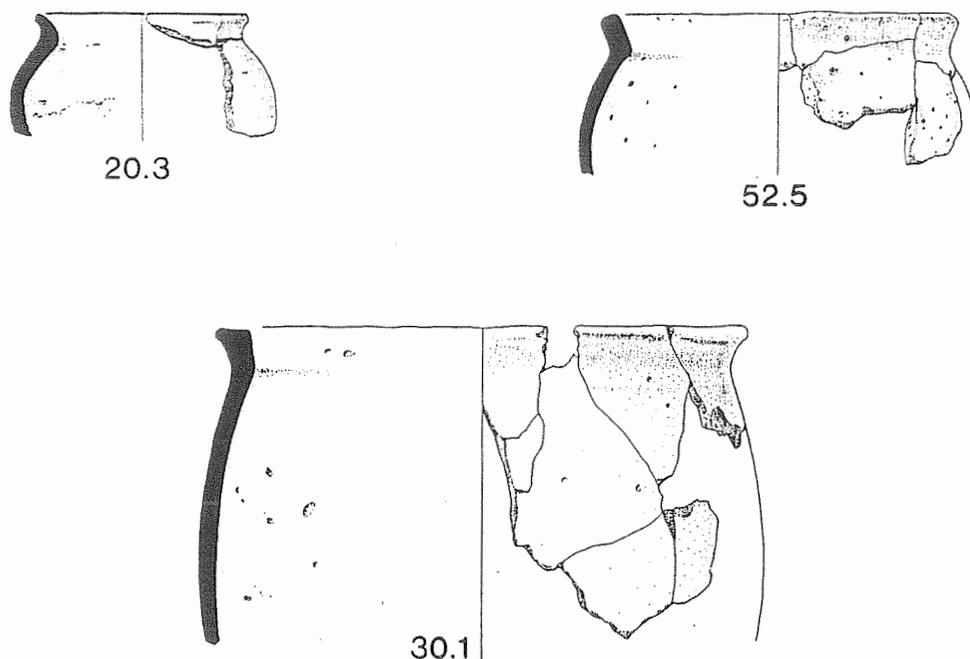


Fig 19: *The Pottery* Examples of the pottery vessels recovered from ditches in Area E. They have been illustrated in the standard manner used in archaeological publication; the vessel is drawn in elevation with the front quarter on the left side cut away, showing the exterior on the right and the interior and profile on the left. Scale 1:4.

#### *Forms and dating of the assemblage*

Twenty-four different vessels were represented by rims; only about a third of these, however, survived as far as the shoulder or below, and many were so fragmentary or damaged that correct orientation for drawing purposes was impossible to decide with any degree of confidence. Despite these limitations, it was possible to find convincing parallels for over half these vessels in Late La Tene III (late Iron Age) assemblages from East Yorkshire, most of the forms appearing in assemblages from sites conventionally held to have been occupied into the 1st century AD.

Challis and Harding (1979, 96) isolate three major rim/vessel forms in late Iron Age East Yorkshire, as follows:

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| Form 1 | S-shaped vessels with everted rims, of medium to large size, and profiles varying from fairly straight to almost globular;   |
| Form 2 | Similar to the above, but with sharply everted rim;  |
| Form 3 | Rims less "flared", but "markedly thickened and heavy", including the related "upright rim, also thickened". "Perhaps the commonest of Yorkshire's late Iron Age forms". |

Challis and Harding's categorisations are very broad, and scarcely amount to a typology, but they do have the advantage of allowing vessels to be matched against numerous published

examples of each form. Many of the vessels from Sewerby can be accommodated within these three categories, and an example from each has been illustrated here (Fig 19):

- Form 1 vessel 20.3 from ditch 19, cf C&H fig 41, no.7 (from Saltshouse Rd, Hull)
- Form 2 vessel 52.5 from ditch 53, cf C&H fig 33, no.10 (from Garton Slack) and fig 40, no.6 (from Faxfleet A)
- Form 3 vessel 30.1 from ditch 29, similar to those vessels included in Form 3, but with marked external thickening of its upright flat-topped rim, noted by C&H at Saltshouse Rd, Hull

Of the sites mentioned above, Challis and Harding regard both Faxfleet A and Saltshouse Rd as probably belonging to the later 1st century AD (*op cit*, 97).

Some vessels appear to be particularly late. A rim from ditch 53 was in a fabric which suggested Roman influence, while a burnished rim fragment from ditch 19, although not certainly wheel-thrown, appears similar to an example from Rudston, from a group deposited after cAD 120 (Stead 1980, no.45). There were also two possible bowl forms (from ditch 53) which may possibly suggest Romanising influences.

Of local interest is the small group of pottery excavated from a ditch at Kirkgate, Bridlington in 1980-81 (Earnshaw and Watkins 1984, 19). Most of the vessels were similar to types seen at Sewerby, both in terms of form and fabric.

An interim conclusion must be that the Sewerby assemblages are composed almost entirely of forms and fabrics that suggest a date in the closing stages of the Iron Age and the early years of the Roman period. Given the persistence of many similar forms at Rudston, a date for the latest Sewerby material in the late 1st (or even early 2nd) century AD seems feasible.

*Introduction*

A total of 106 fragments of flint were collected from the site, 54 from the excavations in Area E, and 52 from subsoil surface collection and excavation in Area F. Much of the flint was in a remarkably good state of preservation, with very little evidence of post-depositional damage or abrasion. The assemblage was also remarkably unpatinated, patination being a very common condition occurring due to chemical changes in the flint; although most flints had some specks, there was not one fully patinated piece.

*Source*

All of the flint was derived from local sources (eg Flamborough Head, an olive coloured flint), with a distinct preference for till material, despite the close proximity of the beach. The immediately local material (Sewerby, brown orange in colour) was little used.

*Tool types and manufacture*

Methods of flint tool manufacture can be understood from study of the waste material, or debitage, produced during knapping, as well as the core from which the tool itself was struck. Preparation of the core, and the manner in which it was struck, allowed for production of specialised tool types.

All the flints from this site show signs of hard hammer utilization, probably a quartzite beach pebble, and a very high proportion of battered striking platforms would indicate random bashing and haphazard knapping; this is further borne out by an extremely high incidence of hinge fractures on the flint. The high incidence of primary reduction material, coupled with the degree of secondary material, would imply on-site knapping of lumps of flint, as opposed to semi-dressed pieces; this would suggest that the material had not been carried any great distance from its source. Further evidence comes from the occurrence of cores and core rejuvenating flakes; these flakes are the result of a blow, usually at right angles, to remove the striking platform of a core (*ie* rejuvenate it) because of impurities in the flint or because the striking angle was too acute.

The cores from this site have a late Neolithic character, and it would appear that the majority of the debitage is from the reduction of cores into small squat flakes, common in the late Neolithic and Bronze Age. An exception comes from Area F, where a core trimming flake was coupled with 2 fine bladelets, possibly from the same core, showing skillful knapping and quality core preparation.

Aside from the multitude of flakes, only two tool types were present. The commonest found were scrapers, a tool usually used for scraping hides. Eight were found in all; two from Area E, five from Area F (15th green) and one from above the stone feature in Area F. The two bladelets already mentioned above, would have functioned much as would a modern penknife, being a portable general purpose cutting tool.

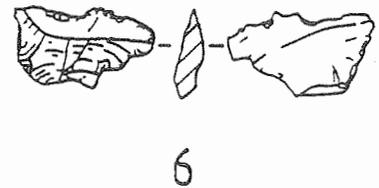
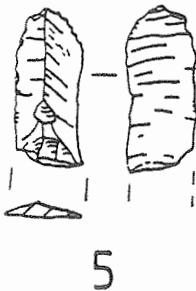
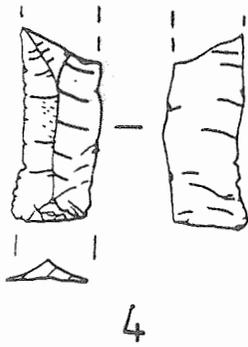
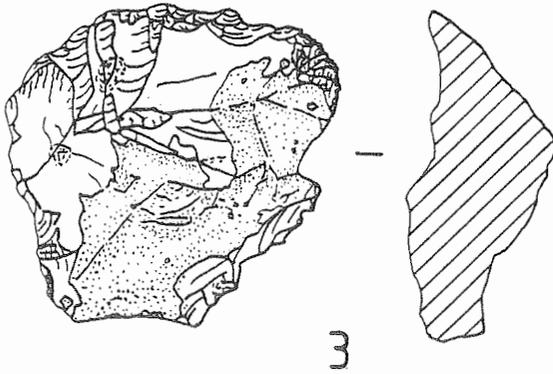
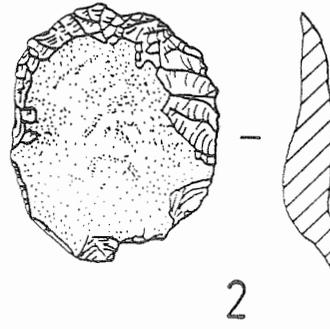
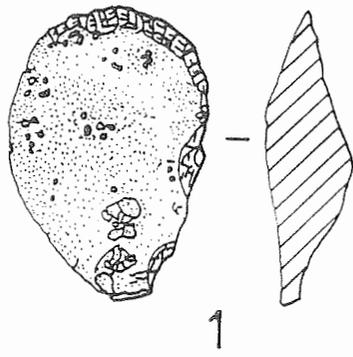


Fig 20: *The Flint* A selection of the flint tools from Areas E and F. The numbers refer to entries in the catalogue.

## Catalogue

(Fig 20)

- 1 Ripple-flaked end scraper. Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age. Similar to example from Boulevard, Bridlington (Earnshaw 1973, No.66). *From fill of ditch 53.*
- 2 Ripple-flaked side end scraper. Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age. *From Area F (15th green).*
- 3 Broad end scraper. Neolithic or Bronze Age. *From above stone feature in Area F.*
- 4 Bladelet, broken at tip. Probably late Neolithic/early Bronze Age. *From Area F (15th green).*
- 5 Bladelet, broken at base. Probably late Neolithic/early Bronze Age. *From Area F (15th green).*
- 6 Core trimming flake, probably from rejuvenating a two-platform core. *From Area F (15th green).*

## Chronology

Chronology is problematic with mixed lithic scatters. Much of the waste material could belong to any period, although a late Neolithic or early Bronze Age date would seem to encompass the majority of the assemblage. Diagnostic examples of tools included two very fine examples of ripple-flaked flint scrapers of a type normally associated with Woodlands-style grooved ware (a late Neolithic/early Bronze Age pottery type); one came from the subsoil surface in Area F and another from ditch 53 in Area E, the latter closely paralleled by one found at Boulevard, Bridlington (Earnshaw 1973, No.66). It is clear from the dating attributed to the flints on stylistic grounds that most of it was residual in its excavated context, reflecting earlier occupation in the same general area. It should be noted, however, that there are certain tool types from elsewhere in the region, generally using relatively low-grade flint, which are usually supposed to be Iron Age in date, and one possible serrated edge scraper from Area F is reminiscent of material from Gransmoor (unpublished material in Grantham collection).

## Jet Object

One small fragment of jet, showing signs of having been worked, was recovered from ditch 53, and it is possible that it represented a soft scraper for the finishing of hides. Unworked pieces of jet have been found on other excavated sites, including nearby Carnaby (Manby 1974, 31). The jet from Sewerby was probably collected on the nearby beach, it having been washed down the coast from Whitby.

*Introduction*

A total of 132 fragments of bone were recovered, with the largest proportion (93.7%) coming from a single ditch (ditch 53). All the material was hand-collected, with no sieving carried out to recover small bones, such as those of fish or mammals. Much was of a fragmentary nature, being predominantly composed of small pieces of long bone; these fragments represented some 83% of the material recovered. It was possible to assign all but 10% of this to broad species groupings, though it has not been possible to make any inference regarding the sex of the animals or the season of bone deposition. The small size of the sample makes any valid statistical analysis impossible, though a few broad statements can be made with regard to the economy of the site, such as species presence and the age of death of the animals represented. The minimum number of individuals (MINI) was achieved by pairing off diagnostic skeletal elements (such as legs) from each species (Fig 21a). Age of death was achieved primarily by studying tooth eruption (Table 1). The small area of the site sampled means that the number of animals identified must represent only a tiny fraction of the number originally present, but they do give an idea of relative numbers. It must also be stressed that bones found on an archaeological site do not necessarily indicate stock maintained on the site, but more often the remains of food consumed by its occupants.

Table 1: *Bone* Estimate of the age at death of the animals, where determinable.

	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-30 months	30+ months
Cattle	1			3	1
Pig	1				
Sheep			1		
Red deer			1		

*Species present*

Of the bones identified, there was evidence for the following suite of fauna; cattle, pig, sheep, red deer and bird. In total the excavation produced evidence for a minimum of 14 individual animals.

Cattle: Iron Age cattle were probably of a type known as *bos longifrons*, now extinct, slightly smaller than modern cattle. They not only provided the economy with meat; they were also valuable sources of milk, manure, leather and traction.

Consideration of dairying is inhibited by our inability to sex the bone remains from this site, though the age of death of the few excavated individuals would discount this possibility (see Table 1).

- Pig:** It is not known exactly what breed of pig was native in the British Iron Age, though it is probable that it bore some resemblance to the European wild boar (*sus scrofa*) and a Tamworth sow, the oldest remaining type of British pig (Reynolds 1977, 34). Unlike most other animals, almost all of the value of pigs lies in their provision of meat and lard. It was quite normal in the Iron Age for large numbers to be killed young, between two and three years of age (Maltby 1981, 183). Age of death could only be determined for one of the two examples recovered in this excavation, but it fitted into this age range.
- Sheep:** Iron Age sheep are generally thought to be similar in size and fleece to present day Soay sheep, not unlike small goats in appearance. These are known to yield about 1 kg of wool per year (Reynolds 1983, 36), picked rather than sheared. Typically many young sheep would be killed in an economy in which their use for meat was the main consideration, whereas the presence of more mature sheep is normally indicative of wool exploitation, useful by-products of which are milk and manure. However, flocks are not generally kept for a single product in subsistence economies. The individual from Sewerby was nearly two years of age. It must be stressed that there is a possibility that bones identified as sheep may in fact be goats, since the two species are skeletally very similar, though the number of goats from Iron Age contexts nationally has so far been small; the fairly local site of Grimthorpe (Jarman *et al* 1968, 182) produced no certain examples.
- Red deer:** These animals (*cervus elapus*) are not an uncommon occurrence on Iron Age sites, where their presence is usually attributed to hunting activities rather than husbandry. This may have entail hunting for food or to protect crops; the single tooth recovered precludes any discussion.
- Bird:** There is little evidence for the eating of poultry in the Iron Age, but it is thought probable that they would have contributed both eggs and feathers to the economy; as to whether they were domesticates or not, little is known (Maltby 1981, 160). The single bird bone probably came from something akin to a chicken or bantam. Commonly on Iron Age sites this is the *Indian Red Jungle Fowl*, a variety which is still extant (Reynolds 1985, 36).

#### *Species contribution to the site economy*

The contribution of individual species to the diet of a particular site cannot be compared on a one-to-one basis, as a single member of each species will provide different amounts of meat. For comparative purposes, it is more useful to convert individual animal numbers to meat weights (Fig 21b). Once this approach is applied to the Sewerby material, the meat values of the four most frequent Iron Age site species can be compared to ones recovered from other local sites (Table 2). Excavated Iron Age sites with published bone reports are a rarity in this region, the single major site report being Grimthorpe (Jarman *et al* 1968), an early Iron Age hillfort on the western scarp of the Wolds, overlooking the Vale of York, though this type of site may not be readily comparable with a small settlement site like Sewerby. Comparisons can however be made with unpublished material from the excavations by C and E Grantham of Iron Age pits within smaller settlement sites near Burton Agnes.

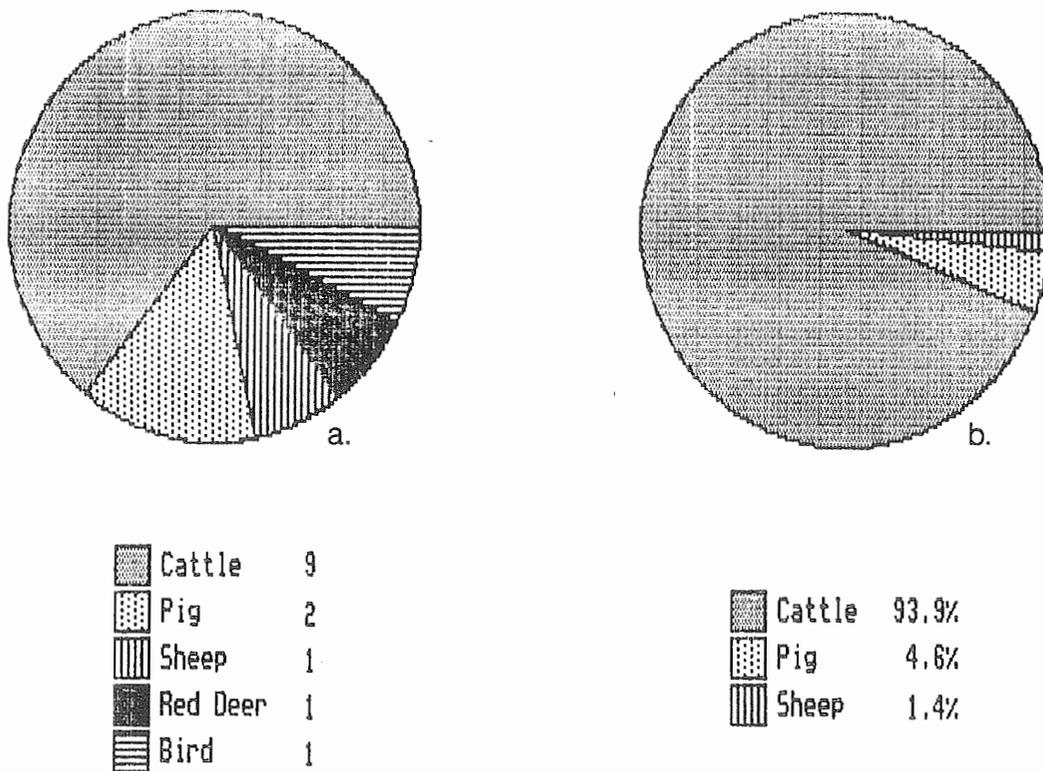


Fig 21: *The Bone* a. Minimum number of individuals of a particular species present (excluding unidentified bone fragments) b. The contribution of individual species to site meat, using relative meat weights.

Cattle are clearly the prime species, comprising a higher percentage of site meat than seen elsewhere, though the relative proportions of species is reminiscent of Grimthorpe, given the absence of horse. Evidence of livestock management is also similar at the two sites; of the cattle for which it was possible to make some determination of the age at death, 80% of those at Sewerby would appear to have been overwintered twice, comparing favourably with the figure of 75% from Grimthorpe. It would appear that pig was of greater significance in the immediate locality than at other sites further afield, supplanting the sheep in importance. Certainly, pig and cattle are known to have been the predominant faunal elements since Late Neolithic times, as sites such as Rudston and Boynton would suggest (Manby 1974, 103-108). It appears that the view of Iron Age farmers being primarily sheep breeders does not apply to the Sewerby area, given our present, limited, state of knowledge. To some extent this may be due to the very close proximity of the coast and other ecological factors; the variation in pig numbers could be related to the proximity of woodland, the most suitable habitat for the pigs of that period.

Table 2: *Bone* Meat weight percentages compared with other sites. The figures in brackets represent the individual species importance ranking in terms of their relative contribution of meat to the economy of sites. These figures have been calculated using the same arbitrary carcass weights adopted by Jarman *et al* (1968). It must be stressed that the small size of the Sewerby assemblage means that these figures are highly speculative, but this is a reliable way of making comparisons with other sites. A typical site from Southern England has been included for comparison.

	Sewerby	Burton Agnes West Field*	Grimthorpe Yorks**	Corpse Farm Sussex***
Cattle	93.9 (1)	25.8 (2)	82.4 (1)	54.0 (1)
Pig	4.6 (2)	40.3 (1)	2.6 (4)	7.4 (4)
Sheep	1.4 (3)	10.8 (4)	5.3 (3)	8.4 (3)
Horse	-	23.0 (3)	9.8 (2)	29.9 (2)

\* from unpublished excavations by C and E Grantham

\*\* from Jarman *et al* 1968

\*\*\* from Bedwin *et al* 1985

### *Butchery practices*

There is very little physical evidence of butchery marks on the bones themselves, though the assemblage would appear to show some degree of selective preference for the hind quarters of cattle. Most fragments were of limb bones, with a proportionately low amount of vertebrae, ribs and the total absence of cranial material; it would normally be expected for rib and vertebrae to far outnumber limb bones. It is reasonable to assume that much of the bone was refuse from the cooking of meat, and 18% showed varying degrees of burning, the majority of these being cattle bones.

### *Deposition*

In addition to the fragmentary nature of the bones, a large proportion showed signs of etching, attributable to chemical actions in the surrounding soil or weathering; this feature is not present on the bones which have been burnt, the burning obviously affording them a degree of protection from this decay.

Approximately one third of the upper stone of a beehive quern of "Yorkshire" ("unpierced") type was found in the topsoil at the west end of Trench 1, Area E, in the vicinity of the roundhouses. As the reconstruction drawing shows (Fig 22), it would have had an original height of c180mm, and a basal diameter of c330mm. These dimensions are well within the respective ranges of 122-250mm and 256-360mm recorded for this class of object at Dalton Parlours (Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990, 108).

The quern has been made from a fairly fine-grained, well cemented, non-calcareous quartz sandstone. Its weathered exterior is greyish buff with several red-tinged areas, whereas freshly fractured surfaces, presumably plough damage, are whitish in colour. A high degree of care has been shown in its manufacture, resulting in a well-formed, symmetrical object. The exterior surface and the interior of the hopper have been shaped by pecking.

Signs of wear occasioned by use are evident in the smooth surfaces of the feed-pipe, and a circumferential band of high polish c20mm wide around the edge of the grinding surface. The "slot" shape of the handle-hole cross-section, and its worn interior surface suggest that it originally accommodated an iron handle. The grinding surface and the top edge of the hopper are in parallel planes and the lack of any sign of differential wear suggests that there may have been an opposed second handle-hole on the missing part of the stone.

Production of beehive querns in the north of England had probably started by the 2nd century BC, and, although flat querns became available during the early Roman period, it appears that beehive types may have continued in use through to the 4th century. For present purposes it is sufficient to note that a quern of this type could have been in use at the same time as the bulk of the pottery recovered from the site.

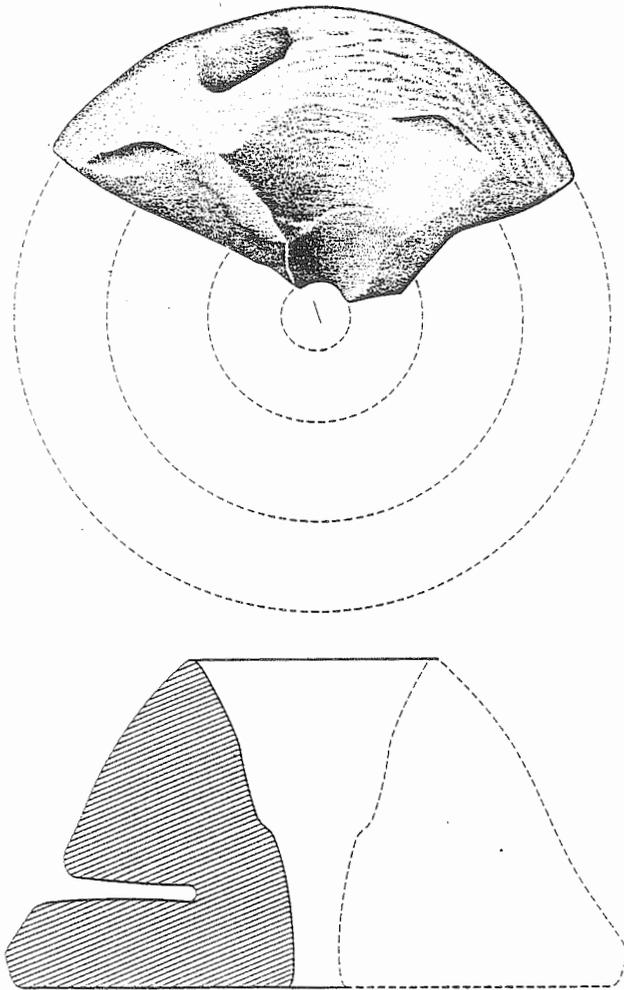


Fig 22: *The Quern* The beehive quern fragment in plan and cross-section, with reconstructed profile and circumference. Scale 1:4.

## Conclusions

These trial excavations were, by definition, limited in their extent, having been carried out only to evaluate the survival of archaeological features rather than to fully understand and interpret them, and even in combination with geophysical survey, our knowledge of the archaeology over most of the development site extends little beyond its actual existence. The exception to this is Area E, where the extraordinary detail recorded by the extensive geophysical survey has allowed evidence revealed by trenching to be considered in terms of a specific archaeological site with definite geographical boundaries. Although only four small trenches were excavated, they provided a valuable complement to the information derived from the survey with, most importantly, the finds providing a chronological dimension.

In its initial phase, the enclosure at Area E conformed in plan to what appears to be a relatively common form for a late Iron Age farmstead in northern Britain and particularly East Yorkshire, namely a rectangular ditched enclosure containing at least one roundhouse, with a ditch deep and wide enough to have a defensive potential. Its subsequent expansion and attendant field system are elaborations which are also well attested elsewhere. The finds would seem to confirm its interpretation as a farmstead and settlement site. Normal domestic activities such as the grinding of corn, baking and cooking, are testified to by the beehive quern and the burnt and fire-cracked beach pebbles, which may have been used as "pot-boilers". The pottery types are those associated with normal domestic use, some having clearly been used for cooking and others for storage. The small sample of animal bones found implies access to a variety of meat sources, though the implication is of mixed husbandry with a particular emphasis on cattle rearing. Cereal production is also likely to have been local.

The survival beneath the plough of upstanding structural elements of roundhouses, together with their associated occupation deposits, makes this site extremely important, when so often the evidence for buildings of this period comprises only below-ground features. In addition, the full extent of the site can be seen to have survived in plan, and the work so far has provided a date and a functional interpretation.

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The tenant farmer of Home Farm, Mr Wood, was helpful in allowing Geophysical Surveys access to certain areas during harvesting, and in one instance went out of his way to clear straw to facilitate their surveying.

Arrangements for the evaluation were completed by Ed Dennison, Sites and Monuments Officer for the Archaeology Unit. Geophysical Surveys of Bradford carried out the geophysical survey. The excavation team worked under some very unpleasant weather conditions with efficiency and good humour: Andrew Desforges, Mike Frankland, Ruth Head, Peter Makey and Dave Marchant. In addition, Sewerby Hall Museum's Employment Trainee, Jack Fielding, helped with some finds washing and excavation. Administrative support throughout the project was provided by Zena Ahmed and Mike Endall.

Specialist finds reports were prepared by Peter Didsbury and Peter Makey (mostly in his own time). The bulk of the plans and sections reproduced here are by Dave Marchant, with Peter Makey and Mike Frankland providing some finds illustrations. Les Turner, Phil Marshall and Ian Beck of the Unit's Employment Training scheme illustrated the pottery. Final paste-up of the report was by Linda Smith. The photographs were taken by the author.

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February 1991

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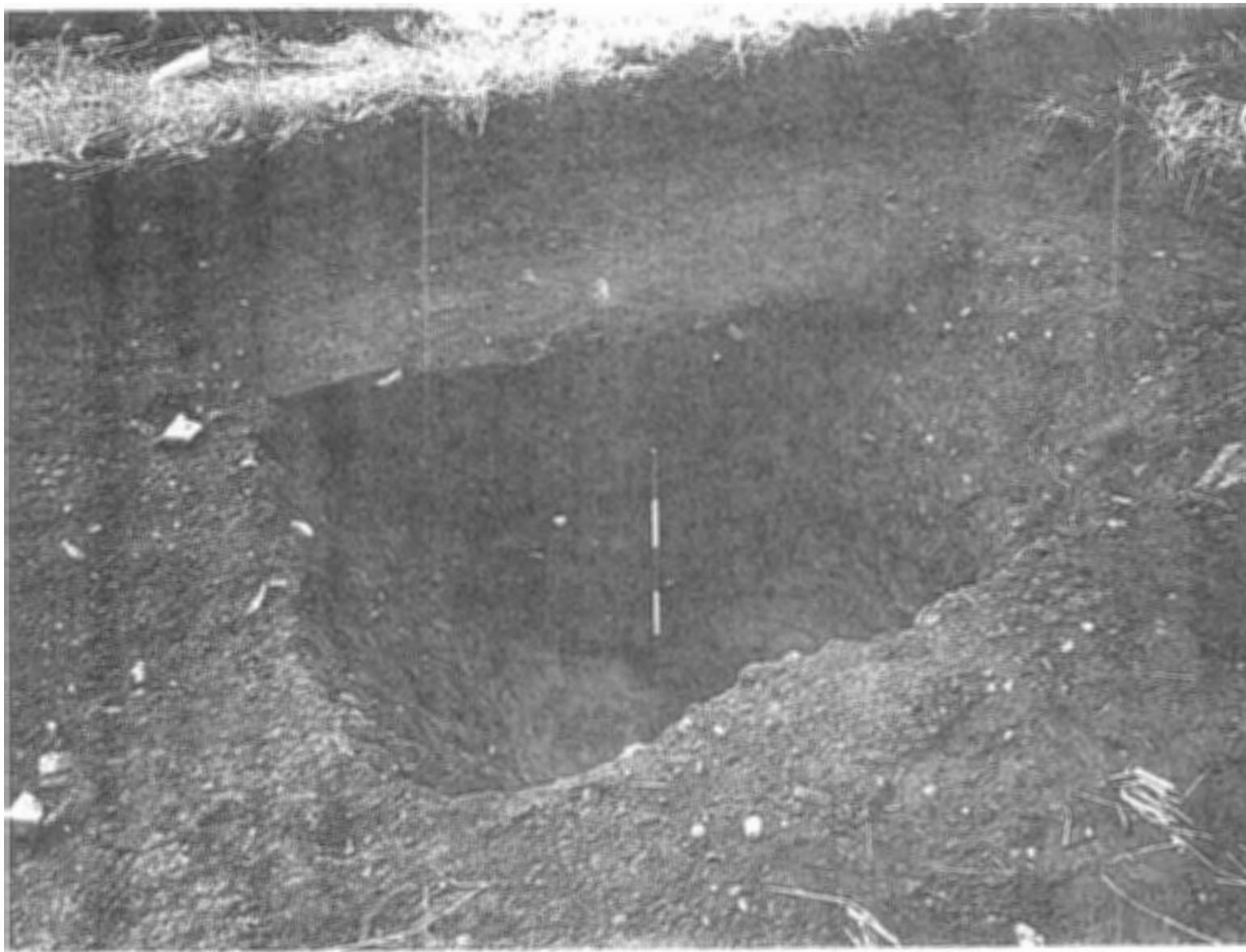


Plate 1: *Area E, Trench 1* Ditch 19, looking south. Its sharp "V-shaped" profile is clear, and the unexcavated ditch fill can be seen in plan as an area of relatively stone-free soil beyond the section face. One-metre scale.

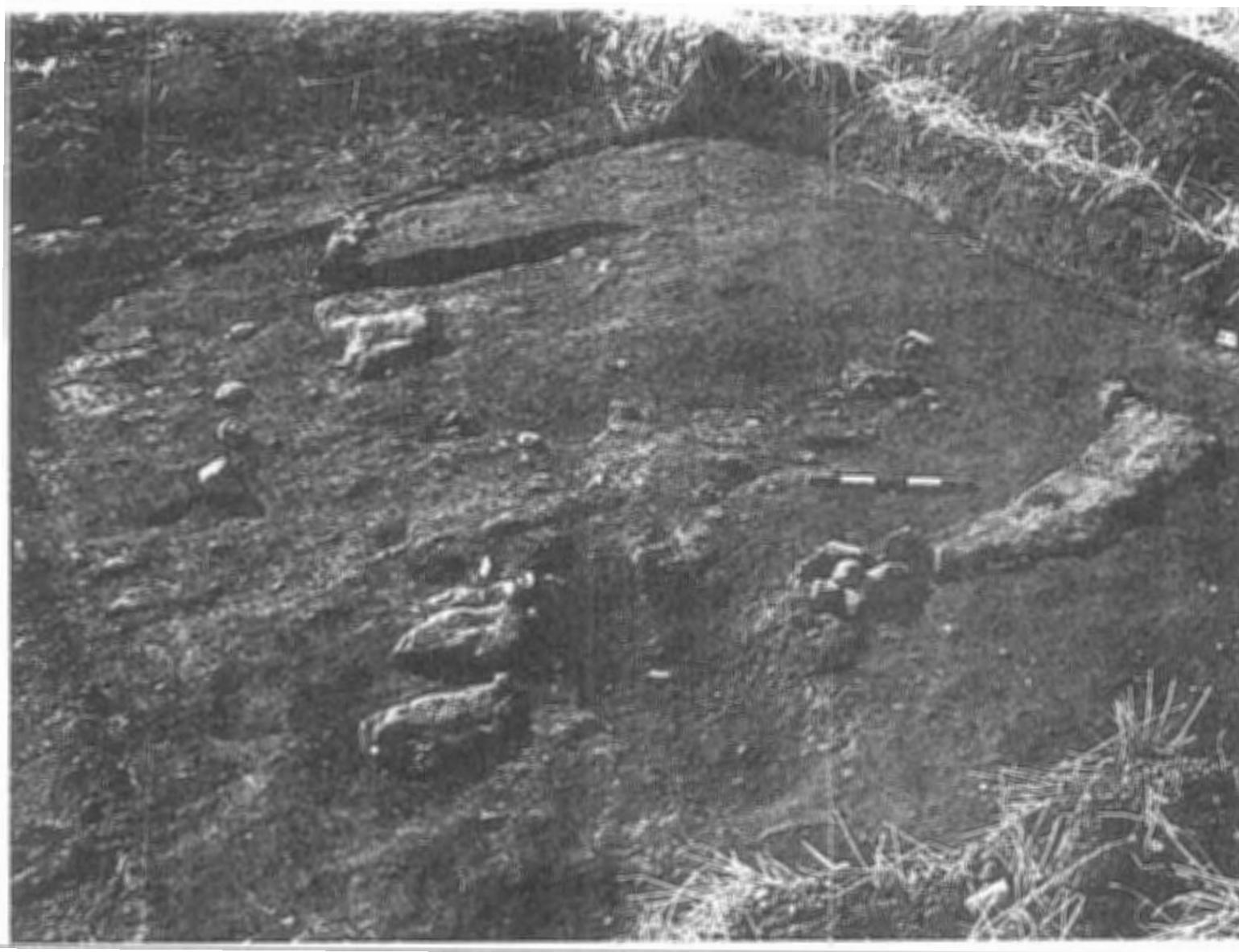


Plate 2: *Area E, Trench 1* Surviving structural features of Buildings 1 and 2, looking west; the curving clay wall of Building 1 can be seen to the right, while the four separate fragments comprising the wall of Building 2 can be seen to curve away to the left. The pebbles in the centre are traces of a "path" running north from the entrance into Building 2. Half-metre scale.



Plate 3: *Area E, Trench 1* The surface of the natural clay following the excavation of all the features, looking east. The curving "robbing trench" marking the position of the wall of Building 3 is visible on the right with, to the rear, the shallow construction cut for the wall of Building 1. Half-metre scale.



Plate 4: *Area E, Trench 2* Ditches 27 and 57, looking north. The narrow slot at the base of ditch 27 may have held the upright posts of a fence or palisade. Half-metre scale.

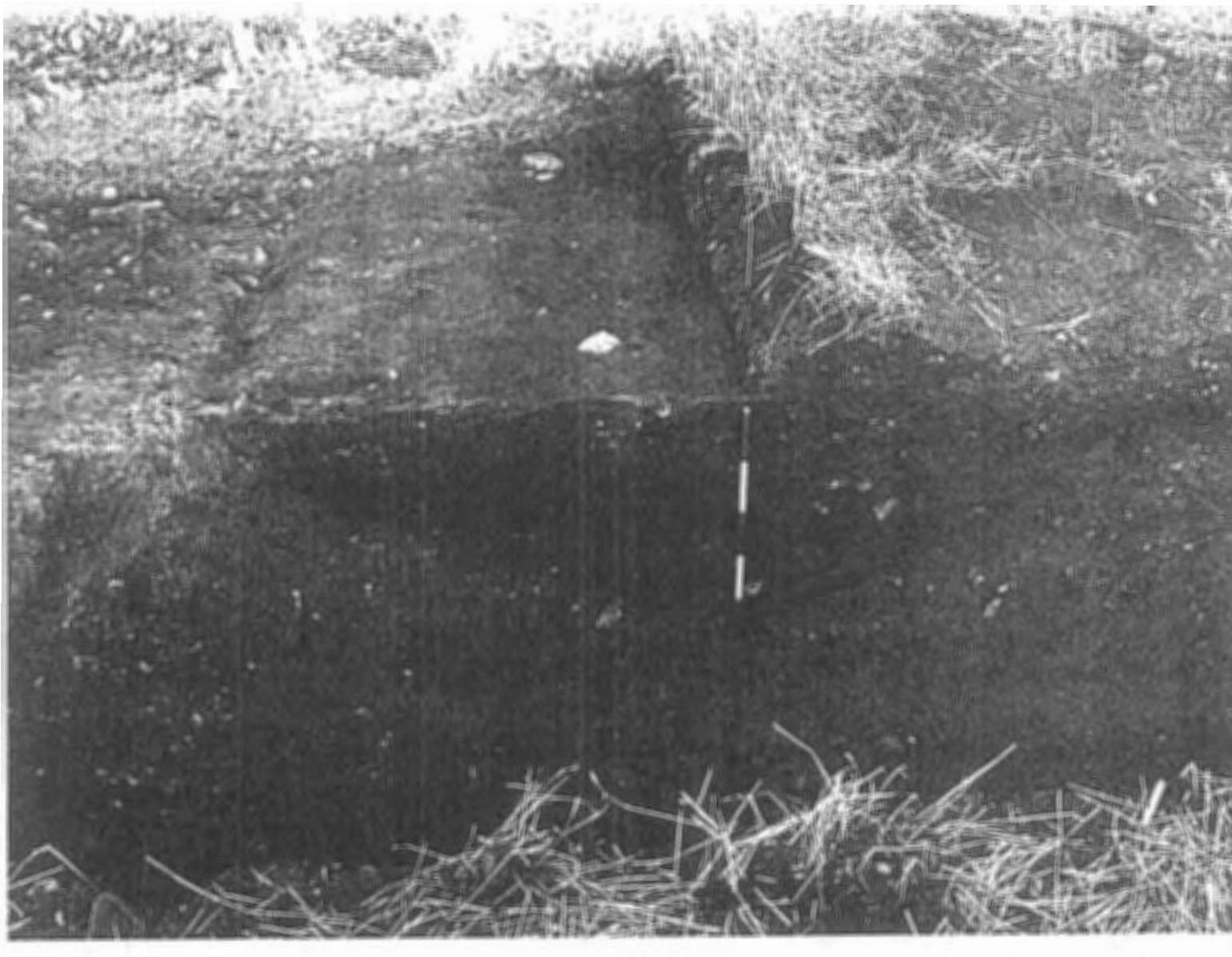


Plate 5: *Area E, Trench 3* Ditch 53, looking east. The course of the ditch can be seen continuing as a relatively stone-free area behind the section. One-metre scale.



Plate 6: *Area B, Trench 7 Ditch 69*, looking south-east. The "stepped" profile of this ditch is clear, with a steep-sided slot at the base. One-metre scale.

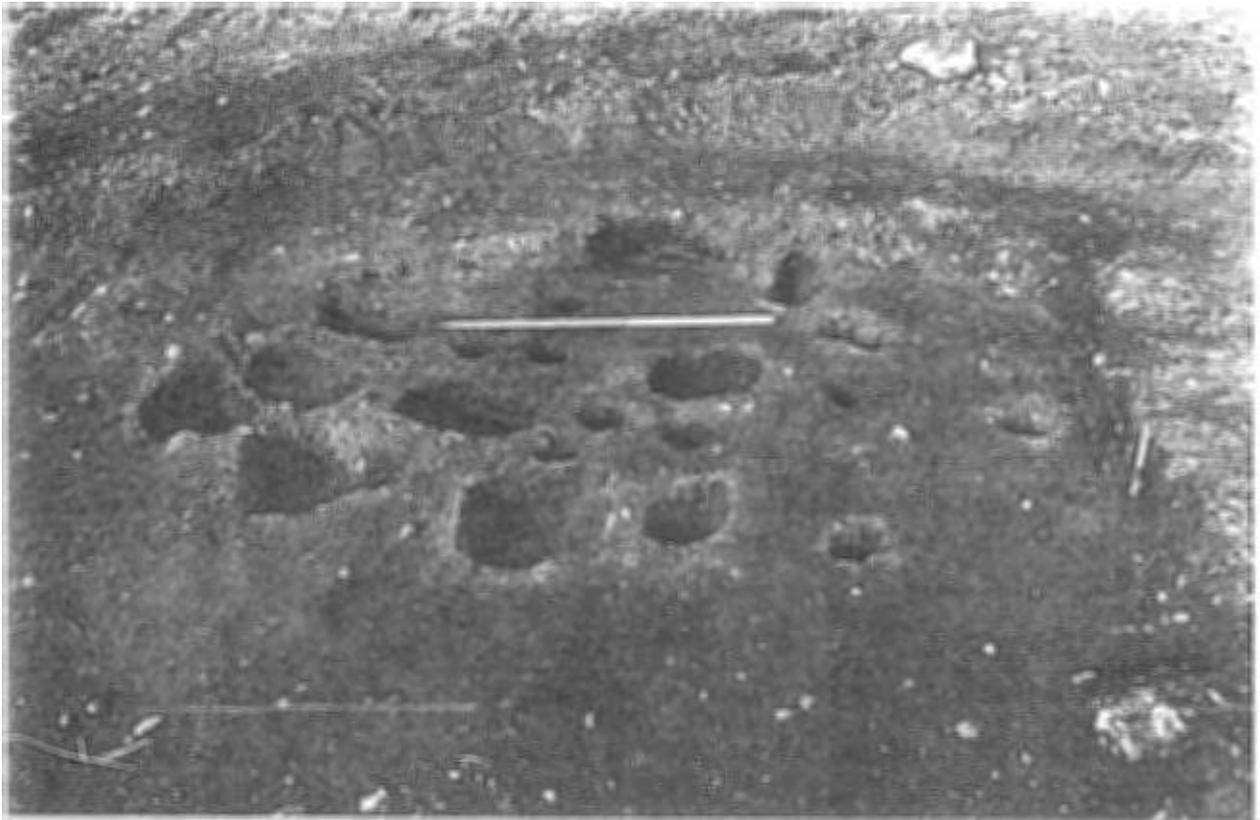


Plate 7: *Area F* The various sub-rectangular and oval cuts in the base of the shallow feature, looking north-west. One-metre scale.



Plate 8: *Area F* The arrangement of large flat stones set within the shallow feature, viewed from a similar position as Plate 7. Each of the large stones directly overlay one of the earlier cuts, often matching it precisely in size and orientation. One-metre scale.