VIABLES TWO (V2), JAYS CLOSE, BASINGSTOKE, HAMPSHIRE

An Archaeological Excavation

Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust

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HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST
Report No. 582

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An Archaeological Excavation

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SUMMARY

In August and September 1999 the Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust undertook two open area excavations to the east and west of Jays Close, Basingstoke, Hampshire. The areas had previously been sampled by the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society in the 1970's prior to the construction of the road. Three sides of an Iron Age enclosure ditch were investigated in addition to internal and associated external pits, ditches and gullies. A large number of pottery sherds were retrieved, dating principally from the Late Iron Age - Early Roman period. Other finds included a small quantity of animal bone, a carved piece of antler, metalworking slag and a substantial quantity of burnt flint. The features were truncated by agricultural activity, although actual disturbance was minimal.

1 INTRODUCTION (Figs. 1&2)

1.1 During August and September 1999, the Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust (HAT) carried out an archaeological excavation of land to either side of Jays Close, Basingstoke, Hampshire (SU 6320 5005; Figs. 1&2). The investigation was commissioned by Roger Fidler Project Management on behalf Summit Property Ltd. (west side), and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (east side), prior to the development of the site with offices and industrial units.

1.2 The archaeological excavation was conducted in accordance with the specification compiled by HAT (02/08/99), and approved by David Hopkins (Hampshire County Council County Archaeology Officer). In addition it complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations* (1994).

1.3 The principal aims of the excavation were to determine the date, nature, extent and character of the Iron Age/Roman enclosure which exists on the site and is liable to be destroyed by the proposed development.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE Figs.1&2

2.1 The site lies on the south side of Basingstoke, *c.*2 km from the town centre, in an area known as Viables. It is comprised two areas either side of Jays Close: the smaller to the east owned by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council; and the main V2 development area to the west owned by Summit Property Ltd. Both areas are grassed and lie on a slight north west facing slope at a height of 105-112.5 m AOD. They are recessed from Jays Close behind a landscaped grass verge with a long row of low wooden posts to prevent unlawful vehicular access. The western area is further bounded by an earthen bank. Overgrown woodland lies to the south east while a disused railway line forms the south west boundary of the site. The M3 motorway is situated less that 0.15 km to the south east.

2.2 The site lies at the interface between two soil types: to the east the Andover 1 soil association (343h), and to the west the Carstens soil association (581d). The former comprises shallow well-drained calcareous silty soils over chalk on slopes and crests, deep calcareous and non-calcareous fine silty soils in valley bottoms, over chalk parent material. The latter comprises well-drained fine silty over clayey, clayey and fine silty soils, often very flinty, over parent material of plateau drift and clay with flints (Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The development site encompasses an Iron Age/Romano British enclosure which was first revealed during construction of the southern section of Jays Close in 1973. The outline of the enclosure was then determined by a magnetometer survey carried out by the Ancient Monuments Laboratory, and partial excavation undertaken by the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society between 1974 and 1976, prior to the construction of the new road (Millett & Russell, 1984).

3.2 These investigations revealed a sub-rectangular ditched enclosure, 50 m x 42 m, with a possible entrance in the south-west corner, a drove way to the south, and many internal features. The general scatter of worked flint indicated that the site was used from the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age (*Period 1*). Analysis of the pottery revealed subsequent, probably unenclosed, occupation from the 3rd C. BCE (*Period 2*). The main enclosure was dug in the 1st C. BCE - 1st C CE (*Period 3*) and was filled with rubbish as late as the 4th C. CE (*Period 4*). Internal features included post holes, pits and gullies, thought to represent a number of timber buildings from Periods 3 and 4 (*ibid*).

3.3 During the excavations a two-metre diameter pit towards the centre of the enclosure contained human burials. The two adult female inhumations were found with a large quantity of sheep, cattle and horse bones, and overlay a cist containing carved antler artefacts. The burial group has been provisionally dated to the 3rd-1st C. BCE (Millett & Russell, 1982; The Willis Museum of Basingstoke Town and Country Life, 1999).

3.4 The enclosure with associated droveway is typical of late Iron Age sites in Hampshire, such as nearby Ructstalls Hill, occupied from the 5th C. BCE down to 3rd-4th C. CE (Oliver & Applin, 1979) and Oakridge, occupied from the 6th C. BCE until 4th C. CE (Oliver, 1992).

3.5 In 1988 an evaluation was undertaken prior to development of the area to the east of the enclosure, adjacent to the M3 motorway. These investigations uncovered a single ditch and two gullies, tentatively interpreted to be a droveway and field system boundaries associated with the enclosure (Trust for Wessex Archaeology, 1988).

4 METHODOLOGY (Fig. 2)

4.1 The two areas were excavated with a 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a smooth-bladed ditching bucket, in locations agreed with David Hopkins (Hampshire County Council County Archaeology Officer). The overburden was mechanically-excavated under

close scrutiny until the underlying natural deposits were visible. This was then cleaned by hand and all deposits recorded using *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. In addition, the spoil was checked and scanned for finds with a metal detector.

4.2 The larger Western Area comprised 1400 sq. m and was located as agreed with David Hopkins. The smaller Eastern Area comprised a total of *c.*200 sq. m, smaller than originally envisaged. This alteration was due to the practicalities of avoiding modern service trenches and limitations due to the tree line and extant boundary. Both areas were aligned NE/SW, parallel with the southern line of Jays Close.

4.3 It was agreed with David Hopkins that the focus of the excavation was to be the enclosure ditch and associated internal features. However in conjunction with the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society external features in the Western Area were also sampled with hand-dug sections. Where this was not possible features were recorded and surface finds retrieved to enable basic dating to be undertaken.

5 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Individual descriptions of the areas and features are presented below (Figs. 2-4):

5.1 Western Area

Northern corner
Sample section (0.00 = 107.98 m AOD)
0.00 - 0.15 m L1002. Topsoil. Mid brown silty clayey loam, not compact but moderately cohesive. Diffuse boundary with L1006 below.
0.15 - 0.26 m L1006. Subsoil. Light orange/brown silty clay with occasional small flint and chalk fragments. Not compact. Slightly diffuse boundary with L1001 below.
0.26 m+ L1001. Natural. White chalk and flint nodules with orange/fawn silty clay filled runnels.

Eastern corner
Sample section (0.00 = 110.19 m AOD)
0.00 - 0.80 m L1000. Redeposited material. Mid brown clayey loam with moderate flint fragments and frequent lenses of chalk. Clear boundary with L1006 below.
0.80 - 1.19 m L1006. Subsoil.
1.19 m+ L1001. Natural.

Southern corner
Sample section (0.00 = 110.60 m AOD)
0.00 - 0.92 m L1002. Redeposited material.
0.92 - 1.34 m L1006. Subsoil.
1.34 m+ L1001. Natural.

Western corner
Sample section (0.00 = 109.42 m AOD)
0.00 - 0.22 m L1002. Topsoil.
0.22 - 0.34 m L1006. Subsoil.
0.34 m+ L1001. Natural.

Description A large number of pottery sherds (110; 695g) and burnt flints (38; 2300g) were recovered from the subsoil, L1006, during machine stripping. Archaeological features were immediately visible, in addition to Evaluation Trenches 1, 2 & 5 (HAT, 1999a), the approximate location of the 1970's Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society investigations, and other previously unknown modern trenches and pits. The latter probably geological test pits and gypsy or farm activity. Other anomalies were determined to be caused by root disturbance or animal action.

The main feature was a large curvilinear ditch, F1015, which started out of the southern corner of the stripped area on a NNE/SSW alignment for *c.* 35 m, curving rapidly for *c.* 10 m round to a SE/NW alignment for *c.*15 m, before continuing into the baulk on the south east side of the excavation. The southern NNE/SSW line of the ditch (Sections 'a'-'e'; width 1.7 - 2.7 m, depth 0.85 - 1.06 m) had parallel sides with many irregular bulges along its length and associated linear features (F1013, F1017, F1019 & F1024) running into it (see below). Where the feature curved it widened out substantially and there was very irregular and extensive disturbance to the south east side (Section 'f'; width 4.03 m, depth 1.29m). The ditch was most regular with parallel sides along the SE/NW alignment, although the depth varied substantially (Sections 'g' & 'h'; width 2.24 - 2.4 m, depth 0.61 - 1.18 m).

No two sections through the ditch reveal the same profile. Although the sides had a sharp break of slope, they varied from 35 - 70° to the horizontal, and were generally either straight or slightly concave but were occasionally also slightly stepped. The base was largely flat although in places it was little more than a narrow slot. There seemed to be no pattern to these variations which may have been due to minor recutting, differential erosion, or simply unregulated excavation of the primary ditch cut. This feature is the main ditch defining the enclosure.

The fills of the ditch along the NNE/SSW alignment varied from that on the SE/NW alignment. To the south the upper fill was a mid orange brown slightly silty clay, L1016, with 0-10% chalk fragments, 2% flint nodules and generally <1% charcoal, although there were occasional patches with a higher proportion of charcoal, such as L1028 in Section 'a'. This overlay a deposit of mid fawn brown slightly silty clay, L1021, with 10% chalk and 2% flint. To the north the upper fill was a grey brown silty clay, L1029, with <20 % chalk, <1% flint nodules and <1% charcoal. The layer generally contained very little charcoal, although an area of higher proportion, L1030, was recorded in Section 'h'. Beneath this was a light fawn brown clay, L1031, with <30% chalk and 5% flint. The lower fill L1021 was comparable with L1031, although the upper fills, L1016 & L1029, were distinct. All of the deposits contained

pottery sherds, burnt flint and animal bone etc. (see the Concordance of Finds, below). A carved and bored antler artefact was recovered from L1031 (SF1), although in general the upper fills, contained far more than the lower deposits.

At Section 'd' a side ditch, F1019, split from F1015 on a N/S alignment, continuing under the north western baulk of the excavation (length >2.5 m, width 0.97 m , depth 0.49 m). It had parallel sides with a sharp break of slope giving way to a flattish base. The fill, L1020, was very similar to L1016: a light orange brown slightly silty clay with inclusions of 5% chalk fragments/flecks, 2% flint nodules. It contained 9 sherds of Late Iron Age - Early Roman pottery, fragments of animal bone (2; 4g) and burnt flint (3; 238g), struck flint (2; 10g) and an iron stud (1g). This ditch was contemporary with the main enclosure ditch.

Three adjacent shallow gullies, F1013, F1017 & F1024, were investigated on the south east side of Ditch F1015. All three ran into the main ditch; F1013 & F1017 on a roughly parallel WNW/ESE alignment, while F1024 was oriented NW/SE. F1013 and F1017 had straight sides at 40 - 50° to horizontal, curving to a flattish base, while F1024 had very shallow straight sides at 20 - 30° to horizontal, curving to an irregular base. Unlike the others, F1013 continued to the north west on the other side of the ditch. F1013 and F1024 ended with round termini 7m and 4 m away from the main ditch respectively, while F1017 continued into the bulk, >11.5 m to the south east. Each gully was filled with material similar to L1016, the upper fill of the ditch: mid orange fawn - light brown clay with 10-25% chalk fragments, 2-5% flint nodules and <1% charcoal. F1013 L1014 contained 2 sherds of Late Iron Age - Roman pottery (6g); and fragments of animal bone (5, 44g) and burnt flint (5; 302g). F1017 L1018 contained 3 sherds of Late Iron Age - Early Roman pottery (10g), 1 struck flint (2g) and burnt flint (5; 174g). F1024 L1025 contained burnt flint (2; 112g). The base of F1017 was cut by a circular feature, F1022, with near vertical sides and a flat base. The fill, L1023, was indistinguishable from that of the gully itself.

A sub-circular pit, F1026, was recorded in the southern part of the enclosure. It had a shallow break of slope with very irregular sides at 20 - 40° to horizontal, curving to an irregular pitted base. The fill was largely a light greyish clay with 10-15% chalk and <20 % flint nodules (L1027). It contained 2 sherds of Late Iron Age - Early Roman pottery (3g), fragments of tile (3; 36g), animal bone (1; 2g), and clay pipe (1; 4g), burnt flint (4; 38g) and a struck flint (27g). The recent finds occurred in the south-eastern third of the feature. It was disturbed, or may have been sampled during the 1970's investigations and backfilled.

Three adjacent features were excavated toward the north end of the enclosure:

A shallow oval feature, F1034, was recorded in association with tree hollows (length 0.53 m, width 0.37 m, depth 0.04 m). It had a very shallow break of slope with sides <20° to horizontal, curving to a shallow concave base. The fill, L1035, was a dark brown silty clay with reddish patches, plus 25% charcoal, 2% chalk flecks and 1% small flints. It contained 2 sherds of Late Iron Age - Early Roman pottery (10g) and a fragment of animal bone (2g). It contained *in situ* burnt remains and was a ?hearth. The associated tree hollows contained a small amount of pottery and burnt flint.

Immediately alongside the tree hollows was an elongated pit or ditch, F1044, aligned NW/SE, terminating to the north west (length >8.5 m, width 1.55 m, depth 0.68 m). It had ill-defined edges with stepped sides <45° to horizontal, curving to a flattish base. The fill, L1045,

comprised a light fawn clay with *c.* 40% chalk, 2% flint nodules. It contained 7 sherds of Late Iron Age - Early Roman pottery (66g), and fragments of animal bone (13; 348g), charcoal (<1g), burnt flint (55; 4319g) and slag (6; 196g).

The remaining feature identified within the enclosure was a small pit or post hole, F1038, located between F1044 and the enclosure ditch. It was 'heart shape' in plan, with straight sides at 40 - 70° to horizontal curving to a small flattish base (length 0.69 m, width 0.58 m, depth 0.23 m). It was filled with a mid brown silty clay with <2% small chalk fragments. It contained 6 sherds of Late Iron Age – Early Roman pottery (4g).

To the north of the enclosure ditch features were revealed but only a sample were investigated:

Two ditches were observed and sampled toward the north east end of the stripped area, both of which continued under the baulks of the excavation. F1040 was a linear ditch aligned NW/SE (length >22m, width 0.8 - 4.1 m). It had parallel sides which flared out toward the north west. They were concave, at 40 - 45° to horizontal and curved to a flattish base. The fill, L1041, comprised a mid brown silty clay with <1% charcoal, 2% chalk flecks, 1% small flint nodules. It contained 2 sherds of Late Iron Age – Early Roman pottery (7g), a struck flint (6g) and a burnt flint (122g). It appeared to have been disturbed by root activity along the north east side and was broadly contemporary with the enclosure. The second ditch, F1052, lay almost underneath the north-eastern baulk of the excavation. It was curvilinear, with parallel concave sides at 50° to horizontal curving to a shallow concave base. The fill, L1053, was a mid brown silty clay with 1% chalk flecks/small fragments, 1% small flint nodules. It contained a sherd of Late Iron Age – Early Roman pottery (7g). It appeared to be disturbed by root activity to the south and had an adjoining side ditch to the south east.

Four possible pits were identified, situated between the ditches and the enclosure.

Pit F1032 was an irregular, sub-circular shape (length 2.42 m, width 2.21 m, depth 0.59 m). The concave sides had a sharp break of slope at 60° to horizontal, curving to an irregular base, although it appeared to have been disturbed along its southern edge. The fill, L1033, was a mid orange brown silty clay with <5% chalk fragments/flecks, 2% flint nodules. It contained 15 sherds of Late Iron Age – Early Roman pottery (114g), a struck flint (4g), burnt flint (22, 2588g), and 36 fragments of animal bone (536g). Most of the finds were located in the upper 0.1 m of the fill.

F1046, F1048 and F1050 were not sampled, although they were recorded and the surface finds retrieved. F1046 was an ill-defined hour-glass shape orientated WNW/ESE, filled with mid brown silty clay containing 1% charcoal, 5% flint nodules, 5% chalk fragments (L1047) (length 7.5 m, width 2.5 m, depth unknown). It contained 12 sherds of Late Iron Age – Early Roman pottery (56g), and fragments of daub (1, 42g), burnt flint (6, 344g) and slag (1, 8g).

F1048 was an ill-defined ?pit also aligned WNW/ESE (length >1.5 m, width >1 m, depth unknown). F1050 was a sub-rectangular pit aligned as above (length 2.5 m, width 1.25 m, depth unknown). Both appeared to have been disturbed by roots and contained similar fills, L1049 & L1051, of mid-dark brown silty clay with inclusions of 1% charcoal and 5% chalk fragments. L1049 contained 41 sherds of Late Iron Age – Early Roman pottery (310g) and

fragments of burnt flint (2, 96g). L1051 contained 49 sherds of Late Iron Age – Early Roman pottery (416g) and fragments of animal bone (1, 6g), burnt flint (4, 298g), and slag (1, 4g).

The remaining feature, F1036, located towards the northern corner of the excavation was sampled by members of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society. It was an irregular sub-oval pit (length 6.5 m, width 4 m, depth ? m), with shallow sides at <45° to horizontal, filled with a mid orange brown very slightly silty clay with c. 25% chalk fragments (particularly on the west side), 5% flint nodules, and <1% charcoal. It contained an immature human skeleton, 175 sherds of Late Iron Age – Early Roman pottery (1550g), 3 struck flint (40g), and fragments of animal bone (44, 738g), burnt flint (45, 4188g), and slag (6, 116g) .

5.2 Eastern Area

Northern corner
Sample section (0.00 = 109.83 m AOD)
0.00 - 0.23 m L1000. Redeposited material. Mid brown clayey loam with moderate flint fragments and frequent lenses of chalk. Clear boundary with L1006 below.
0.23 - 0.34 m L1006. Subsoil. Light orange brown silty clay with occasional small flint and chalk fragments. Not compact but moderately cohesive. Diffuse boundary with L1001 below.
0.34m+ L1001. Natural. White chalk and flint nodules with orange fawn silty clay filled runnels.

Eastern corner
Sample section (0.00 = 110.59 m AOD)
0.00 - 0.21 m L1002. Topsoil. Mid brown silty clayey loam. Not compact but moderately cohesive. Diffuse boundary with L1006 below.
0.21 - 0.43 m L1006. Subsoil.
0.43 m+ L1001. Natural.

Southern corner
Sample section (0.00 = 110.50 m AOD)
0.00 - 0.21 m L1002. Topsoil.
0.21 - 0.41 m L1006. Subsoil.
0.41 m+ L1001. Natural.

Western corner
Sample section (0.00 = 109.76 m AOD)
0.00 - 0.32 m L1000. Redeposited material.
0.32 - 0.46 m L1006. Subsoil.
0.46 m+ L1001. Natural.

Description A small quantity of pottery sherds (16, 50g) and burnt flints (12, 512g) were recovered from the subsoil during stripping. No features were immediately identifiable and it was only after hand cleaning and weathering of the natural surface that three features became visible. Other anomalies were determined to be caused by root disturbance.

A slightly curvilinear ditch, F1054, was investigated running diagonally through the Eastern Area on a NE/SW alignment. The ditch had parallel slightly irregular sides with a sharp break of slope at 45-55° to the horizontal, straight down to a flattish base (length >19.75 m, max. width 1.48 m, depth 0.58 m). Toward the north the upper fill, L1055, of mid/dark brown silty clay contained 7 sherds of Late Iron Age – Early Roman pottery and fragments of animal bone (1, 56g), burnt clay (11, 60g), ?crucible (6, 39g), burnt flint (6, 226g) and slag (77, 1016g). This overlay L1058, a light fawn brown silty clay with 5% chalk. It contained 21 sherds of Late Iron Age – Early Roman pottery (21, 72g), and fragments of tile (1, 26g), animal bone (14, 208g), burnt flint (21, 1611g) and worked stone (1, 216g). F1054 is the north-eastern arm of the main enclosure ditch, an extension of F1015 in the Western Area.

A curvilinear gully, F1056, lay 1 - 2 m to the south east on a roughly parallel alignment to the main ditch. The sides of the gully were generally parallel although the sides were irregular, in places <30° to the horizontal and stepped, but elsewhere at >60° to the horizontal. The base however was consistently concave. To the north the gully ended in a simple rounded terminus while it continued into the bulk to the south west (length >18.75 m, max. width 0.64 m, depth 0.18 m). The fill, L1057, was a mid orange brown silty clay with 5% chalk flecks and fragments, 2% small flint nodules and 1% charcoal flecks. It also contained 6 sherds of Late Iron Age – Early Roman pottery (62g) and burnt flint (16, 1156g).

An additional ?linear ditch, F1060, was identified in the western corner, continuing into the baulk on a NW/SE alignment. The parallel sides had a sharp break of slope at 50-70° to the horizontal, curving to a concave base (length >3.10 m, width 1.24 m, depth 0.88 m). The upper fill, L1061, a mid/dark brown silty clay with 2% chalk fragments and 5% charcoal. It contained 8 sherds of Late Iron Age – Early Roman pottery (84g), and fragments of animal bone (2, 30g) and burnt flint (37, 1612g). The lower fill comprised a similar the mid/dark brown silty clay but with 10% chalk fragments, 5% flint nodules and no finds. The exact location and form of the terminus was unclear due to extensive disturbance by animal activity or tree roots. As above it is unclear if this feature relates to the main ditch as they have no stratigraphic relationship, however it is provisionally interpreted to be broadly contemporary.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 A large number of natural features were present. The surface of the natural clay and chalk was peppered with periglacial runnels, generally aligned NW/SE, over both the Eastern and Western Areas of the site. Additionally, a large number of tree hollows were present, identified by their (largely) sterile fill of light orange brown clay with abundant flint pebbles and irregular, often ill-defined edges. These factors hindered the immediate recognition of archaeological features, but where there was uncertainty potential archaeological deposits were sampled to confirm their nature.

6.2 The enclosure first identified by the Ancient Monuments Laboratory and partially excavated by the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society was identified and defined within the boundaries of the present site (Figs.2&3). It was not possible to accurately locate the internal features revealed in the 1970's (Millett & Russell, 1984, Figs. 2&3) in relation with the current site plan. This is reasoned to be due to the confused reported location and orientation of the investigations in the report and county Sites and Monuments Record (*pers. comm.* David Hopkins).

6.3 The enclosure was defined by a ditch observed in both the Western and Eastern Areas (F1015 & F1054). There was no evidence of a former bank. The profile of the ditch varied in almost every section dug across it. The upper fills are interpreted to be largely the result of natural silting and gradual deposition of rubbish.

6.4 One section of the ditch was a great deal wider than the rest (F1015 Section 'g'). At this point the south eastern side of the ditch was stepped and very irregular, with deep, seemingly random, depressions almost to the same depth as the base of the ditch itself. It is unclear if this was the result quarrying or simply root disturbance, although it is reported to be a common feature within enclosures of this date in Hampshire (*pers. comm.* David Hopkins; Oliver & Applin, 1979, 47 & 55).

6.5 A large number of residual finds were recovered from the subsoil, L1006. Coupled with the lack of buried surfaces and absence of structural features (post holes or stake holes), it is clear that the site has suffered substantial truncation, probably the result of post/mediaeval ploughing and modern landscaping. A similar situation was noted during the 1970's excavation, while many enclosures in the area appear to have had few internal structures e.g. Ructstalls Hill, Cowdrey's Down and Brighton Hill South. It is argued that the lack of features indicates possible seasonal occupation and temporary dwellings (Fasham & Keevill, 1995, 67-8).

6.6 Even though only one ?hearth was identified, F1034, a substantial quantity of burnt flint was recovered from almost all investigated features (and from the subsoil, L1006), and slag was also recovered from many features. These finds may be indicative of the smelting of metals.

6.7 The duration of the enclosure can only be determined through specialist analysis of the pottery and other finds. However preliminary analysis of the sherds indicates that occupation spanned the Late Iron Age and Early Roman period. This compares with occupation at other adjacent sites such as Ructstalls Hill, occupied from the 5th C. BCE - late 3rd/4th C. CE (Oliver & Applin, 1979) and Oakridge, occupied from the 6th C. BCE - 4th C. CE (Oliver, 1992).

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V2 Viables, Jay's Close, Basingstoke, Hampshire **18/10/99**

Concordance of Finds (by feature)

Feature	Context	Area / Sub-division	Description	Spot Date	Pottery (very small fragments not included in count / weight)	Building material	Human bone	Animal Bone	Struck flint	Other (by material - alphabetical order)
1006	1006		Subsoil	LIA - Early Roman	4 sherds (14g)				1 (1g)	14 frags burnt flint (538g) 1 frag slag (22g)
1006	1006	East side	Subsoil	LIA - Early Roman	16 sherds (50g)	1 frag tile (44g)			1 (11g)	12 frags (512g)
1006	1006	West side	Subsoil	LIA - Early Roman	110 sherds (695g)	8 frags tile (154g)	? 3 frags (52g)	6 frags (166g)	4 (32g)	38 frags burnt flint (2300g) 1 frag glass (6g)
1013	1014	West side	Fill of gully / ditch	LIA - Early Roman	1 sherd (6g)			5 frags (44g)		5 frags burnt flint (302g)
1015	1016		Fill of enclosure ditch	1st C BC - 1st C AD	260 sherds (1902g)	4 frags burnt daub (38g)	1 frag (25g) ? 3 cremated frags (22g)	106 frags (1415g)	5 (28g)	SF 2 1 worked bone point / awl frag (10g) 143 frags burnt flint (9588g) 10 frags slag (220g) 4 frags charred wood (1g)
1015	1021		Fill of enclosure ditch	1st C BC - 1st C AD	149 sherds (1356g)			110 frags (2008g)	2 (15g)	Charcoal (5g) 224 frags burnt flint (15956g) 28 frags slag (1338g)
1015	1029		Fill of enclosure ditch	1st C BC - 1st C AD	14 sherds (254g)			22 frags (408g)		1 frag burnt flint (102g)
1015	1030		Fill of enclosure ditch					8 frags (66g)	2 (104g)	46 frags burnt flint (3322g)
1015	1029 / 1030	Section 11	Fill of enclosure ditch	1st C BC - 1st C AD	32 sherds (383g)					60 frags burnt flint (9551g)

Feature	Context	Area / Sub-division	Description	Spot Date	Pottery (very small fragments not included in count / weight)	Building material	Human bone	Animal Bone	Struck flint	Other (by material - alphabetical order)
1015	1031		Fill of enclosure ditch	1st C BC - 1st C AD	2 sherds (38g)			23 frags (641g)		SF 1 Worked bone object (32g) 4 frags burnt flint (166g)
1017	1018		Fill of gully / ditch	LIA - Early Roman	3 sherds (10g)				1 (2g)	5 frags burnt flint (174g)
1019	1020		Fill of ditch	LIA - Early Roman	9 sherds (43g)			2 frags (4g)	2 (10g)	1 Fe stud (1g) 3 frags burnt flint (238g)
1024	1025	West	Fill of gully / ditch							2 frags burnt flint (112g)
1026	1027		Fill of pit	LIA - Early Roman	2 sherds (3g)	3 frags tile (36g)		1 frag (2g)	1 (27g)	1 frag clay pipe (4g) 4 frags burnt flint (38g)
1032	1033		Fill of pit	LIA - Early Roman	15 sherds (114g)			36 frags (536g)	1 (4g)	22 frags burnt flint (2588g)
1034	1035		Hearth fill	LIA - Early Roman	2 sherds (10g)			1 frag (2g)		
1036	1037		Fill of ?pit	LIA - Early Roman	175 sherds (1550g)			44 frags (738g)	3 (40g)	45 frags burnt flint (4188g) 6 frags slag (116g)
1038	1039		Fill of pit	LIA - Early Roman	6 sherds (4g)					
1040	1041		Fill of ditch	LIA - Early Roman	2 sherds (7g)				1 (6g)	1 frag burnt flint (122g)
1042	1043		Fill of unidentified feature			1 frag tile (16g)				1 frag burnt flint (174g)
1044	1045		Fill of ditch	LIA - Early Roman	7 sherds (66g)			13 frags (348g)		Charcoal (<1g) 55 frags burnt flint (4319g) 6 frags slag (196g)

Feature	Context	Area / Sub-division	Description	Spot Date	Pottery (very small fragments not included in count / weight)	Building material	Human bone	Animal Bone	Struck flint	Other (by material - alphabetical order)
1046	1047		Fill of unidentified feature	LIA - Early Roman	12 sherds (56g)	1 frag daub (42g)				6 frags burnt flint (344g) 1 frag slag (8g)
1048	1049		Fill of pit	LIA - Early Roman	41 sherds (310g)					2 frags burnt flint (96g)
1050	1051		Fill of pit	LIA - Early Roman	49 sherds (416g)			1 frag (6g)		4 frags burnt flint (298g) 1 frag slag (4g)
1052	1053		Fill of ditch	LIA - Early Roman	1 sherd (7g)					
1054	1055		Fill of ditch	LIA - Early Roman	7 sherds (80g)			1 frag (56g)		11 frags burnt clay (60g) 6 ?crucible frags (39g) 6 frags burnt flint (226g) 77 frags slag (1016g)
1054	1058		Fill of ditch	LIA - Early Roman	21 sherds (72g) 9 78 14 100	1 frag tile (26g)		14 frags (208g)		21 frags burnt flint (1611g) 1 frag worked stone (216)
1056	1057		Fill of gully	LIA - Early Roman	6 sherds (62g)					16 frags burnt flint (1156g)
1060	1061		Fill of ditch	LIA - Early Roman	8 sherds (84g)			2 frags (30g)		37 frags burnt flint (1612g)

Pottery from Viables Two, Jays Close, Basingstoke (HAT 373)
by
Jonathan Last

Introduction

The assemblage from Jays Close represents a relatively large group of Late Iron Age-early Roman potsherds, which is comparable with material recovered from previous work at the Viables site and from other sites in the Basingstoke area.

Fabrics and Forms

The assemblage consists of 1029 sherds, including many tiny fragments. Three major fabric groups were identified:

Group F: pottery predominantly tempered with varying densities of generally poorly-sorted crushed flint, sometimes combined with smaller amounts of sand, grog and iron ore.

F1 - moderate/common fine-very coarse flint
F2 - sparse fine to very coarse flint
F3 - moderate/common fine to coarse flint

Group S: pottery predominantly tempered with quartz sand.

S1 - common fine/medium sand
S2 - common very fine sand
S3 - common fine to coarse/very coarse sand and quartz
S4 - sparse fine sand only

Group G: pottery predominantly tempered with fine to coarse rounded red, brown or grey particles of grog/clay pellets, frequently with other inclusions at sparse/moderate density. The pastes varied considerably and no clear sub-groups were apparent.

Minor inclusions found occasionally include vegetable matter (V) and calcareous material, probably chalk (C). However, the latter is almost entirely restricted to non-vessel fired clay or daub.

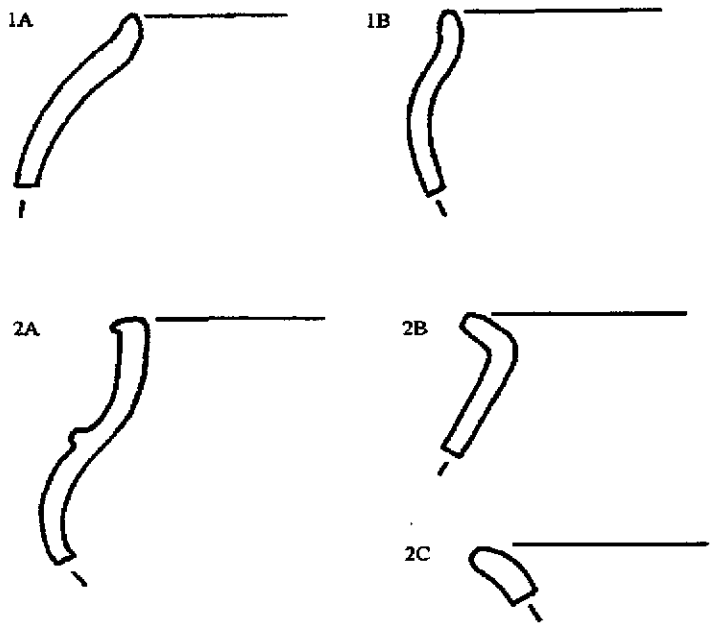
Technology appears to be strongly correlated with fabric in that most if not all of the flint-gritted pottery is handmade, while many of the sand and grog-tempered vessels were wheel-turned. The handmade pottery varies from completely oxidised to completely unoxidised, though the wheelmade sherds are predominantly dark grey or grey-brown in colour.

A number of diagnostic elements (rim and base sherds) were recovered from the major features and provide information on vessel forms. From the rims, three basic shapes are apparent:

form 1 - a globular jar with short upright rim, about 70% of which are in fabric F; usually handmade. 1a has a holemouth form while 1b is more upright.

form 2 - a necked jar with everted rim, sometimes forming a flange, and frequent elaboration of the shoulder; at least 80% in fabric S or G; usually wheelmade. 2a has an upright neck, while 2b is a more closed form. 2c is an everted rim with uncertain neck form.

form 3 - a simple upright bowl/jar rim; few occurrences, all in fabric F.



Slight variations in wall thickness were noticed, with form 1 vessels (7 mm) slightly thicker on average than form 2 (6 mm). This may reflect differences in manufacturing techniques or simply relate to vessel size; mean mouth diameters are 180 mm for form 1 and 160 mm for form 2.

Bases are either simple or (rarely) have a low foot-ring; the latter group are all grog-tempered. The angle of the wall junction can be shallow, indicating an open or globular pot, or steep, indicating a straight-sided or cylindrical vessel. Mean base thickness is 7 mm; mean diameter is 90 mm.

Two other elements of note are a possible handle fragment in a grog-and-flint-tempered fabric, and several pieces of a flint-gritted pot lid. Both of these came from subsoil L1006 (West).

Decoration was absent except for horizontal grooves and cordons on the shoulder or below the rim of some of the wheelmade form 2 jars, and a single handmade fabric S rim of uncertain form from ditch F1054 which was decorated with fingernail impressions. A few sherds have carefully smoothed or burnished surfaces.

Distribution

The majority of the ceramics derived from subsoil L1006 (132 pieces) and five other features:

Ditch F1015: fills L1016, L1021, L1029, L1030, L1031 (495)
Ditch F1054: fills L1055, L1058 (50)
Pits F1036 (191), F1048 (45) and F1050 (49)

Small quantities of pottery (*c* 10 sherds or less) came from a number of other contexts: gullies F1013, F1056, ditches F1019, F1040, F1052, F1060, pit/ditch F1044, pits F1026, F1032, F1034 and F1046, and pit/post-hole F1038.

Variations in the proportions of the different forms and fabrics across the site may indicate functional or chronological variation. Note however that the figures below are based on sherd counts rather than estimated vessels and may therefore be biased by the presence of large parts of single vessels in certain contexts, notably L1016 (form 2, fabric G) and F1036 (forms 1 and 2, both fabric S).

The proportion of fabric F sherds within each assemblage varies from *c* 20-30% by count in the discrete features F1036, F1048 and F1050, to *c* 50% in subsoil L1006, ditch F1054 and the lower fills L1021/L1031 of F1015, and >60% in the upper fills of F1015 (L1016, L1029, L1030). Fabric S pottery shows almost the opposite distribution, with high values in the pits (50-70%) and the subsoil, slightly less (*c* 40%) in F1054, and lower values in F1015 (30% in the lower fills; 10-20% in the upper). Meanwhile fabric G shows less clear trends, being relatively frequent (*c* 30%) in L1016 (see above) and F1048, but less so (< 10%) in all other deposits. However, the proportion of sherds containing some grog (i.e. including minor components) shows three groups, comprising *c* 10% or less in L1006, F1036 and F1050, *c* 20% in L1029/1030 and F1054, and 30% or more in F1048, L1016 and L1021.

In general, therefore, the ditches have more coarse (fabric F) pottery and the pits less, with the subsoil assemblage somewhere in between, fitting its mixed origin. Within the pits fabric S predominates; fabric G is common in F1048 but this includes a number of joining sherds.

Approximately 49 vessels were identified from the presence of rim sherds (further work may indicate some of these are the same). They comprise 23 of form 1, 23 of form 2 and three of form 3. Two of the latter come from F1036, the other from L1021. Forms 1 and 2 are evenly distributed across all features.

Discussion and Dating

Previous work at Viables Farm (Millett and Russell 1984) distinguished a period with a saucepan pot assemblage (form 3?), dated to the 3rd-1st century BC, followed by a period dominated by handmade bead rim jars (form 1) dated to the 1st century BC-1st century AD. The main enclosure ditch belongs to this latter period. In terms of pottery fabrics group F above clearly correlates with Thompson's fabrics B (F1-2) and A (F4), while fabrics C and F cover group S (perhaps S1 and S3 respectively) and

fabrics D and E presumably represent the group G material (*ibid.*, 58). Her phase 2, "assemblages dominated by handmade bead rim jars, with occasional wheel-thrown vessels, dating to the first century AD", sums up the present assemblage too, especially that from enclosure ditch F1015.

Another useful comparison is with Brighton Hill South (Rees in Fasham and Keevill 1995, 35-46), also on the south side of Basingstoke, from where an assemblage of 10,000 sherds was recovered. Group F is here termed fabric 1 (F3 may be the same as fabric 4) of Iron Age type, while Group G is equivalent to fabric 7 ('Belgic grog-tempered ware') and Group S to fabrics 2 (handmade) and 5 (wheelmade). A few sherds from Jays Close seem to be true grey wares (fabric 10). In the 'Middle-Late Iron Age' group, fabric 1 and the saucepan pot are predominant, followed by the rounded jar (form 1). However, many of these vessels are decorated, which is not the case at Jays Close. The 'Late Iron Age-early Roman' group, on the other hand, includes plain everted-rim and rounded bead-rim jars in fabric 1 along with cordoned jars (form 2) in fabric 7; it is clearly with this group that the better parallels lie. Rees notes the continued use of Iron Age fabric 1 for cooking and storage wares into the early Roman period and suggests centralised production. The change from sandy to flinty fabrics in the later Iron Age of this region (the reverse of the pattern in eastern England) may reflect deliberate selection of materials for particular properties, such as resistance to thermal shock.

The assemblage from Jays Close therefore corresponds with material previously excavated from the site, and dates the major features to the 'Late Iron Age-early Roman' period of the 1st century AD. It remains possible that the differences in assemblage composition discussed above, between the pits and the major ditches, means they are not precisely contemporary but since the fabric groups are thought to reflect specific technological choices, functional differences seem an equally likely explanation of assemblage variability.

Recommendations

Further work is recommended to refine the fabric groupings and compare them more precisely with those established for other sites; also to enhance the descriptions of vessel forms, principally by refitting and illustrating the appropriate material.

References

Fasham, P.J. and Keevill, G., 1995. Brighton Hill South (Hatch Warren): an Iron Age farmstead and deserted medieval village in Hampshire. *Wessex Archaeology Report* 7.

Millett, M. and Russell, D., 1984. An Iron Age and Romano-British site at Viables Farm, Basingstoke. *Proc. Hampsh. Field Club Archaeolo. Soc.* 40: 49-60.

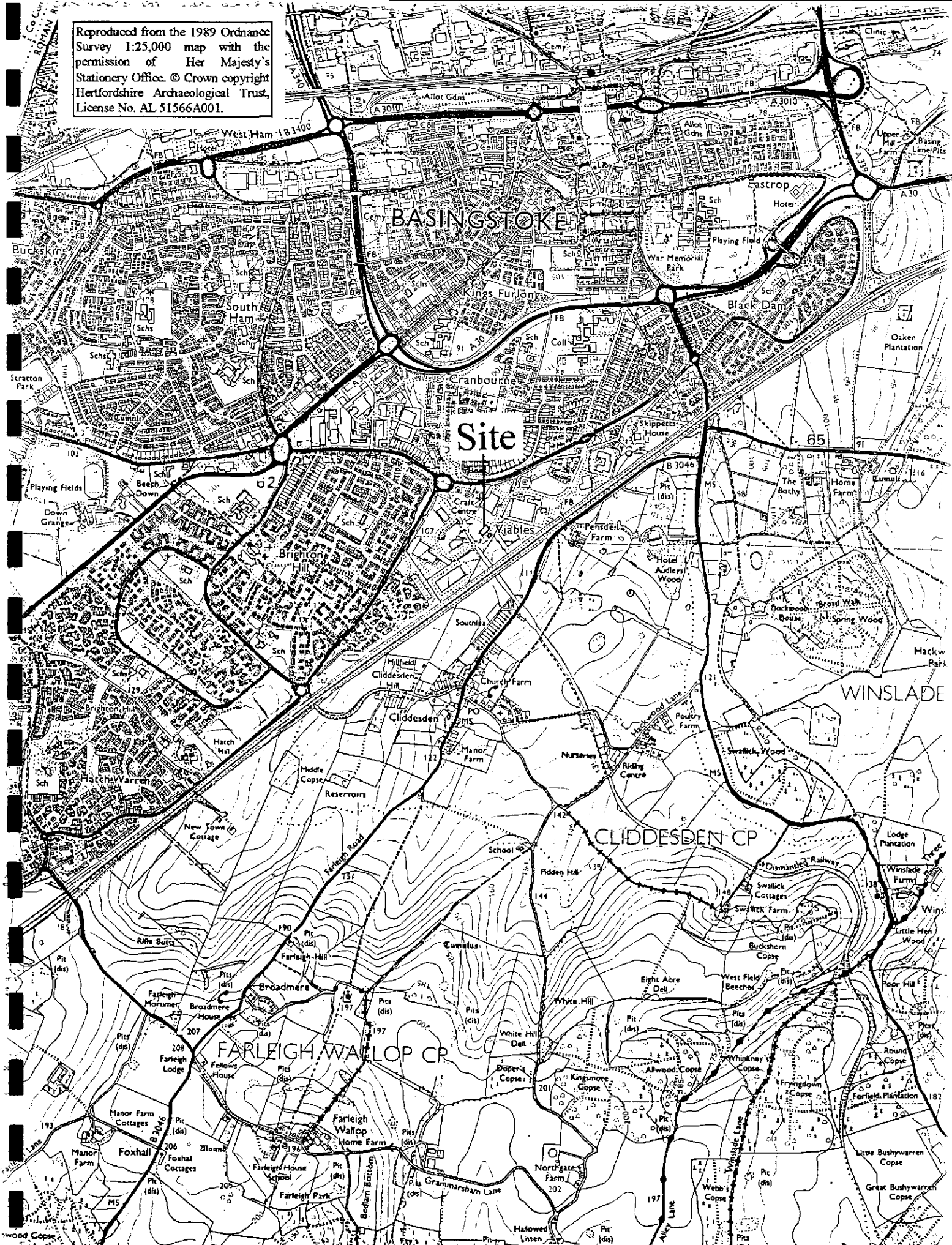


Fig. 1 Site Location Plan

Scale 1:25000

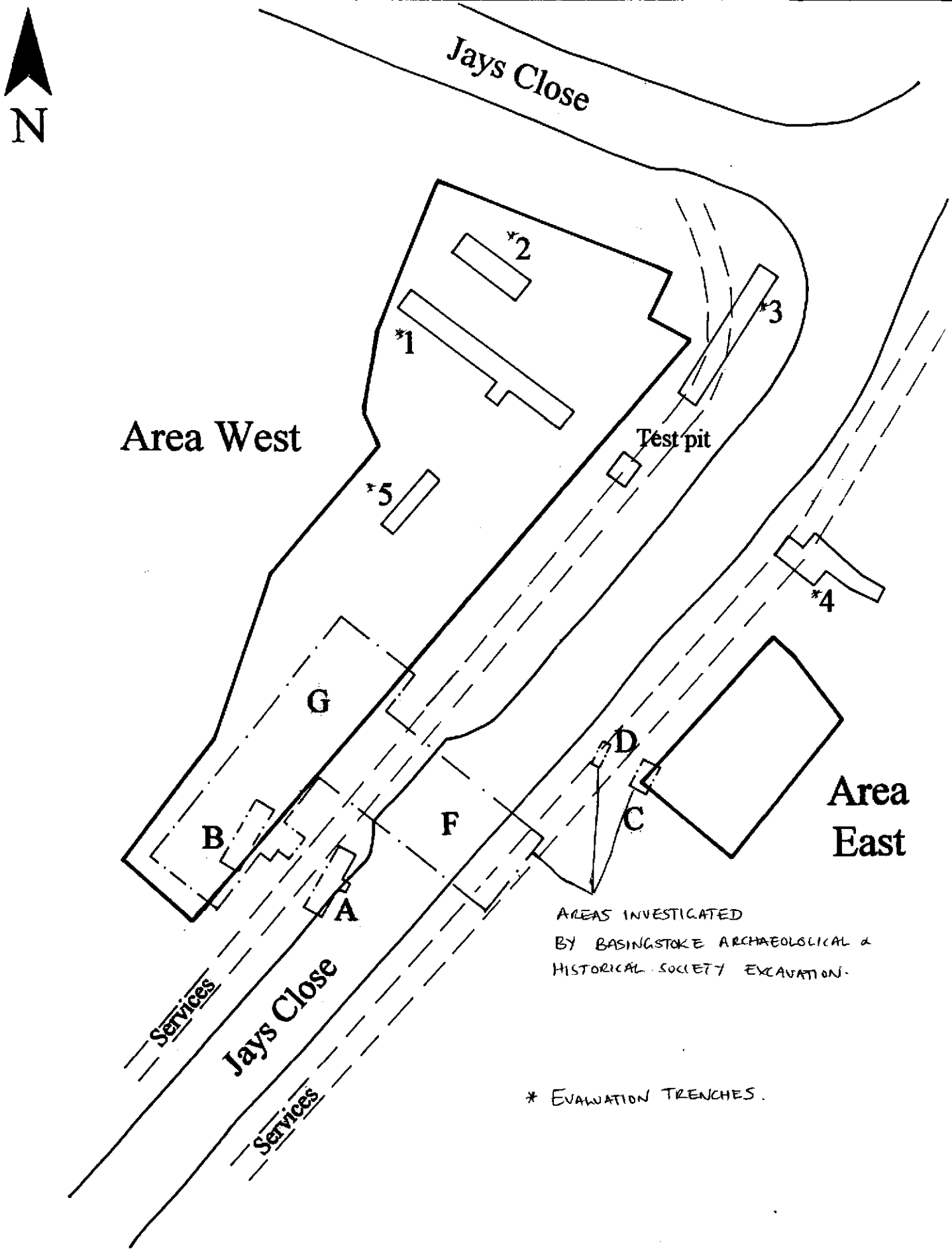


Fig. 2 Trench Location Plan

Scale 1:500

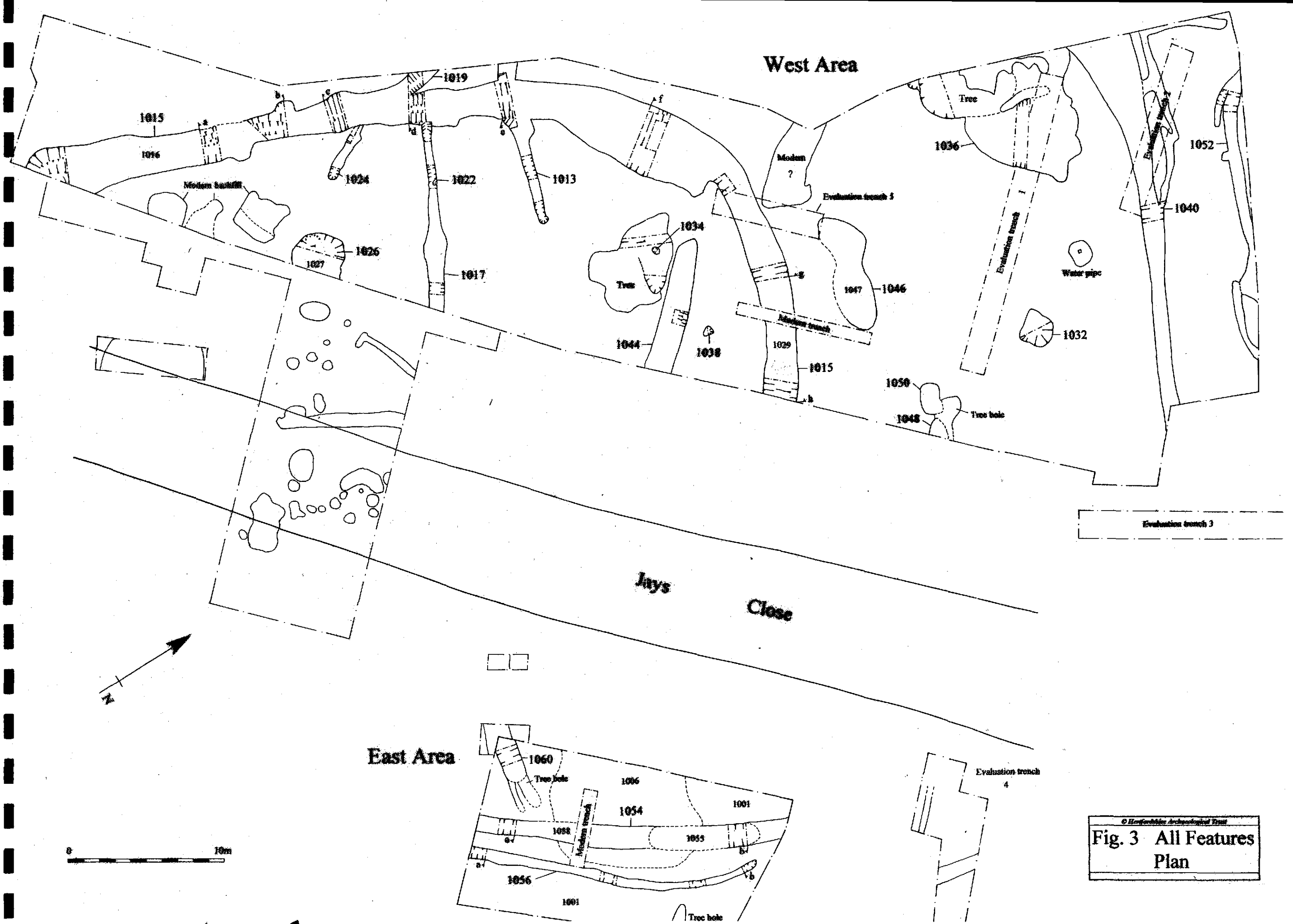


Fig. 3 All Features Plan

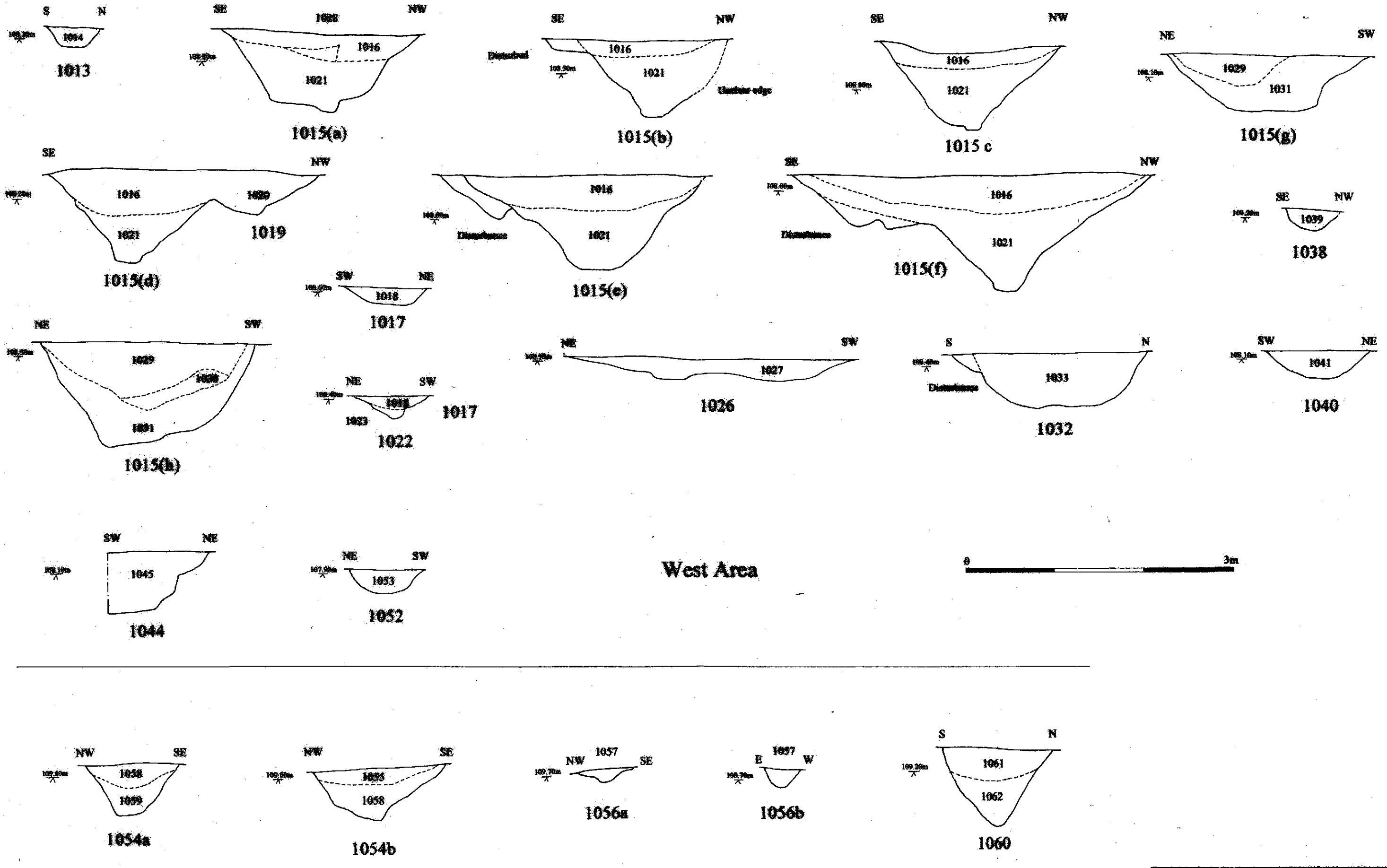


Fig. 4 Sections in Areas West and East

Scale

(4)

SITE V2 JAYS CLOSE VIABLES, BASINGSTOKE, HAMPSHIRE

An Archaeological Evaluation

Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust

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HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST
REPORT NO.515

SITE V2, JAYS CLOSE, VIABLES, BASINGSTOKE HAMPSHIRE

An Archaeological Evaluation

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May 1999

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SITE V2 JAYS CLOSE, VIABLES, BASINGSTOKE, HAMPSHIRE AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 During May 1999, Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust (HAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation of an enclosure within Site V2, on land adjacent to Jays Close, Viables, Basingstoke, Hampshire (centred on SU 6318 5050) (Figs.1-2). The investigation was commissioned by The Borough of Basingstoke & Deane and Summit Property Ltd.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The V2 site occupies a broadly triangular plot bounded to the north, north-east and south-east by Jays Close, and to the south-west by industrial development. The site is further bounded by a substantial earthen bank and a row of low wooden posts. Both the bank and posts are set back from the road to a landscaped grass verge. The evaluation extended south-east of the V2 site, on the opposite side of Jays Close. This part of the investigation comprises a wide landscaped verge, partially wooded to form a boundary with properties to the south-west (Fig.2).

3 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

3.1 Site V2 is generally flat meadow land on a slight north facing slope at *c.*110m OD, except where landscaping has occurred beyond the earthen bank by the side of the road. Here the land surface has clearly been raised. The area of investigation to the south-west is a landscaped verge but with a slope from the south-west down to north-east.

3.2 The soils of the immediate area are unclassified but those immediately to the south belong to the Andover 1 association consisting shallow well drained calcareous silty soils over chalk on slopes and crests. Deep calcareous and non-calcareous fine silty soils in valley bottoms (BGS Drift Sheet 239).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The focus of the evaluation was a known Iron Age - Romano British enclosure partially excavated by the ~~Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society~~*, between 1974 and 1976, in response to industrial development in the area, principally the construction of a new road (Millett, M. & Russell, D. 1984).

4.2 The enclosure was discovered during road construction and defined by a magnetometer survey carried out by the Ancient Monuments Laboratory. The survey and excavations revealed a square ditched enclosure, 40m x 34m, with an ?entrance in

* Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society.

the south-west corner, a drove way to the south, and many internal features. The investigations indicate that the site was used from the 3rd century BC, with some evidence for Neolithic activity from a general scatter of worked flint, to as late as the 4th century AD,. The main enclosure is almost certainly dated to 1st century BC - 1st century AD with the suggestion of a precursor, circular enclosure, dated to the 3rd - 1st century BC. Internal features included post holes, pits and gullies and a burial group dated to the 3rd - 1st century BC (Fig. 2).

4.3 The site compares to many enclosures in the area, the square enclosure with associated droveway being typical of the later Iron Age in Hampshire (Champion, T. & S., 1981 reported in Millett, M. & Russell, D. 1984).

5 METHOD OF WORK

5.1 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken to determine the exact location of the enclosure and assess its preservation following the construction of Jays Close.

5.2 The project complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (1994).

5.3 Five trenches were excavated (Figs.2-3). A 180 degree machine (JCB 3X), fitted with a smooth-bladed ditching bucket was used to open the trenches.

6 DESCRIPTION OF WORKS Figs.2 & 3

Trench 1 20.4m x 1.5m

Sample section

0.00 - 0.26m *L1002* Topsoil. Mid-brown silty clayey loam, not compact, moderately cohesive.

0.26 - 0.42m *L1006* Subsoil. Pale orange/brown silty clay with occasional small flint and chalk fragments. Not compact.

0.42m+ *L1001* Chalk with runnels filled with buff silty clay. Natural geology.

Description The trench revealed a linear ditch, F1004, 2.70m wide, orientated NE-SW. It is filled with a pale yellow/brown, silty clay (L1005) and several pottery sherds were apparent on the surface.

F1009 (2.6m+ x 1m) is a broad linear ditch or gully, orientated N/S, slightly curving to the SW, with a suggestion of a terminus to the south-west. Its fill is identical to L1005.

F1010 (0.8m x 0.4m) is either a linear gully or an elongated pit, obscured by the north baulk and terminating to the SW. Its fill is identical to L1005.

Trench 2	7.5m x 1.5m
Sample section	
0.00 - 0.24m	*L1002* As Trench 1.
0.24 - 0.34m	*L1006* As Trench 1.
0.34m+	*L1001* As Trench 1.

Description The trench revealed a ditch (up to 2.8m wide), orientated E-W, clearly a continuation of Tr.1 F1004.

Trench 3	15.4m x 1.5m
Sample section	
0.00 - 0.25m	*L1000* Mid-brown clayey loam with frequent chalk fragments moderate flint fragments. Dumped topsoil for landscaping of side verges.
0.25 - 0.28m	*L1003* Dumped and compacted chalk with occasional flint fragments and concrete/brick/tarmac rubble.
0.28 - 0.50m	*L1012* Disturbed original top and sub soils, mixed L1002 and L1006 with rubble and tarmac intrusions.
0.50m+	*L1001* Natural geology as Trench 1, but disturbed.

Description ?Two linear ditches in close proximity were revealed in the NW end of the trench. F1007 (0.4m wide) is orientated NW-SE with a fill of buff silty clay. F1008 (0.35m wide) is orientated NNW-SSE with an identical fill to F1007. Both are truncated.

The remainder of the trench revealed a large service trench, broadly on the same alignment as the trench itself. This service trench cut deeply into the natural horizon L1001 and was backfilled with rubble and tarmac.

Trench 4	10.8m x 1.5m
Sample section	
0.00 - 0.27m	*L1000* As Trench 3.
0.27 - 0.49m	*L1012* As Trench 3.
0.49m+	*L1001* As Trench 3.

Description The trench revealed a single linear ditch, F1011 (0.65m wide) orientated N/S. The ditch was much truncated by several modern service trenches. Trench 4 was curtailed because of the presence of services.

Trench 5	7.4m x 1.5m
Sample section	
0.00 - 0.23m	*L1002* As Trench 1.
0.23 - 0.35m	*L1006* As Trench 1.
0.35m+	*L1001* As Trench 1.

Description The trench revealed a continuation of Tr.1 Ditch F1004 (2.6m wide) orientated NW/SE.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 The square enclosure, partially excavated by the ~~Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society~~ Basingstoke Archaeological & Historical Society, was identified and defined within the bounds of Site V2 (Fig.2).

7.2 Within the earthen bank of Site V2 the preservation of the archaeological features is good. Features are sealed beneath a well developed subsoil, L1006.

7.3 Beyond the earthen bank i.e. either side of the Jays Close, the preservation of archaeological features is poor and the features are much truncated by modern services. Furthermore, excavation of trenches either side of Jays Close is extremely hazardous with many services flanking the road.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Trust would like to thank The Borough of Basingstoke & Deane and Summit Property Ltd for their co-operation and funding of the archaeological evaluation.

The Trust is also pleased to acknowledge of Mr Dave Hopkins of Hampshire County Council County Archaeology Office.

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Millett, M. & Russell, D. 1984 Iron Age and Romano-British Site at Viables Farm, Basingstoke. *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society* Vol.40 49-60.

Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983: 1:250000 Soil Map of Great Britain (and Accompanying legend) Sheet 6.

Fig.1 Site Location Plan

Scale 1:136898/ 2 Miles to 1 Inch

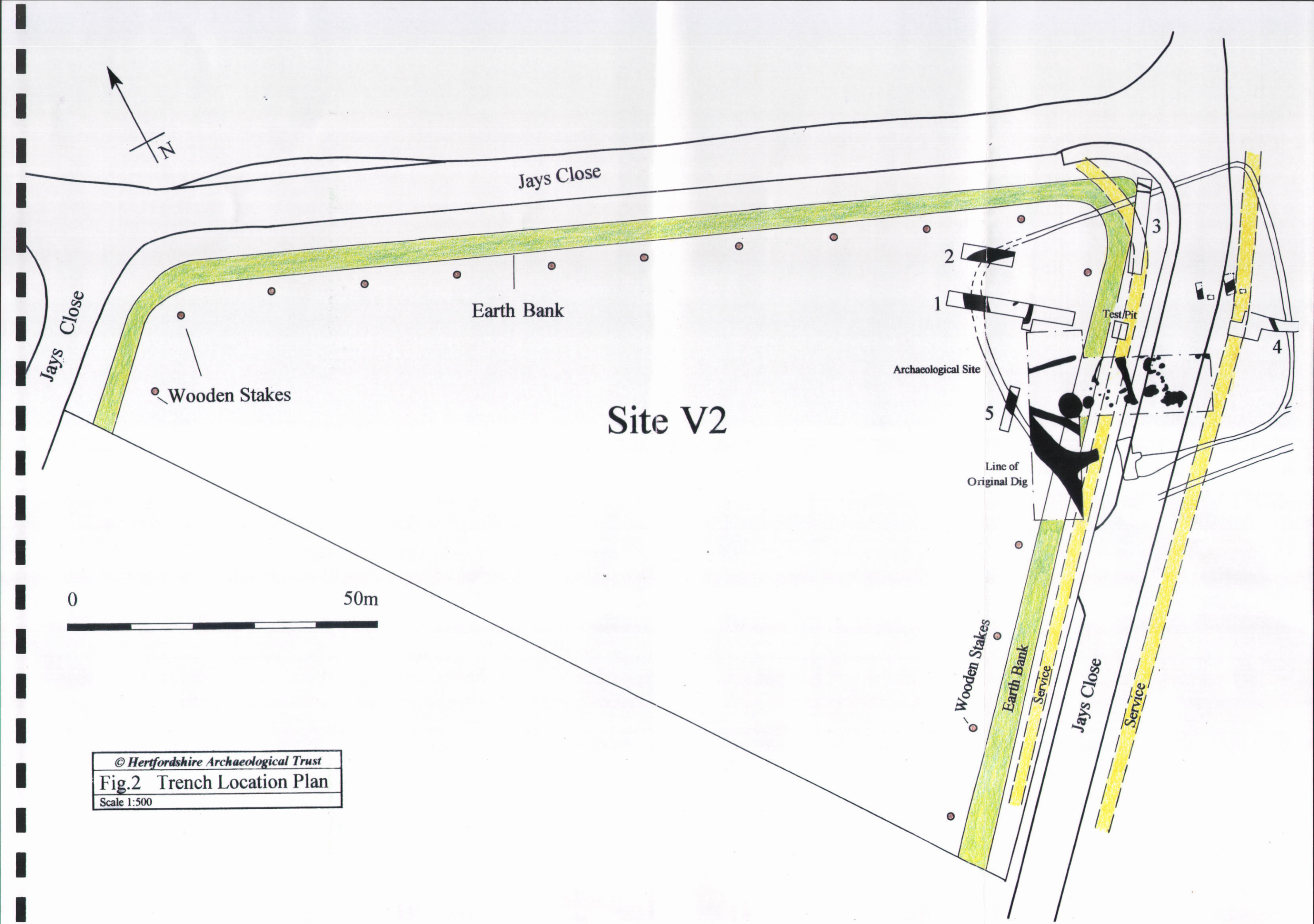
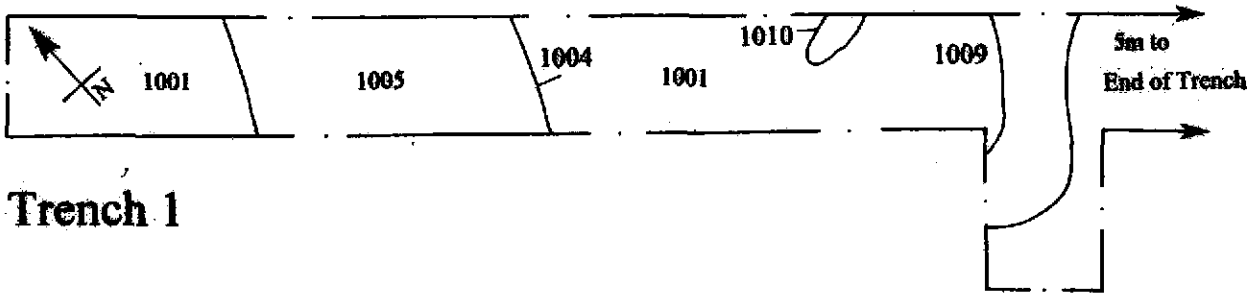
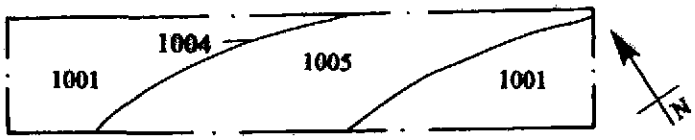


Fig.2 Trench Location Plan

Scale 1:500



Trench 1



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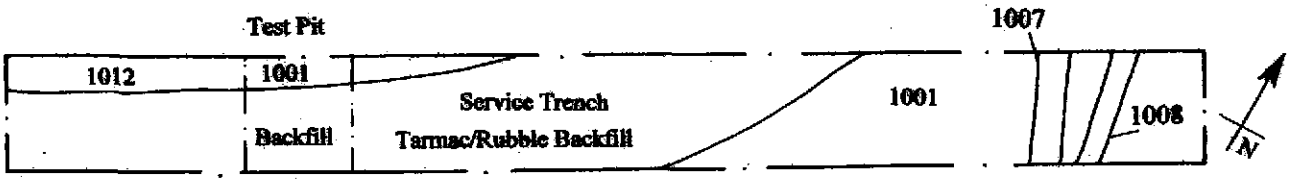
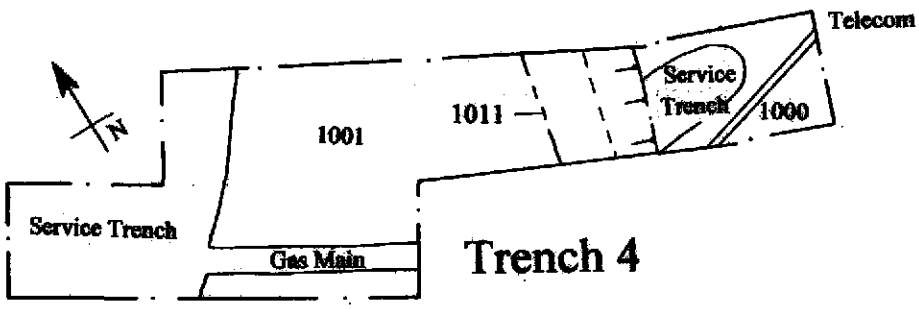
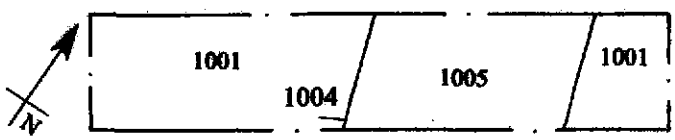


Trench 3



Trench 4

Trench 5



0 5m

Fig.3 Trench Plans