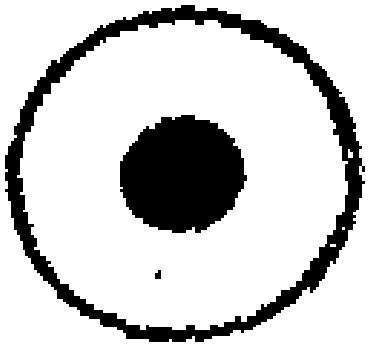
Pr. 531 BRADING ROMAN VILLA



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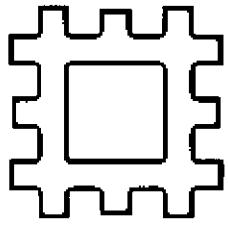
FSU Written Report

CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE



English Heritage

Fieldwork Report
for an Evaluation on the line
of a Proposed Land Drain to protect
BRADING ROMAN VILLA, Isle of Wight (SAM 35)
(Isle of Wight Site Code 1017, CAS Project Code 531),
carried out by the
Central Archaeology Service

by
P A Busby

The author gratefully wishes to acknowledge contributions by

Jon Humble and Sarah Jennings	*Artefact reports*
David Tomalin	*Project brief*
Vincent Griffin and John Vallender	*Graphics*

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express thanks to all members of the project team for their commitment, David Tomalin and his staff for their support, and last but not least, the Oglander family and the custodial staff at the villa for helping to make the excavation such a pleasant experience.

SUMMARY

Brading Roman villa, Brading, Isle of Wight was discovered and excavated in the nineteenth century, and little or no archaeological work has been undertaken on the site since. It was acquired by the present owners, the Oglander family, shortly after its discovery and its fine mosaics displayed to the general public from 1900 onwards.

The site has been subject to periodic flooding as a result of water running off the Downs, to the north of the site. In recent years this appears to have become more frequent and has lead to in the severe deterioration of the mosaics and many of the walls of the main villa building. As a result English Heritage has encouraged the Oglander family to create a charitable trust for the future management of the site and is committed to grant aiding the large scale conservation works needed to stop further flooding episodes, and restore the damage to the site which has occurred in recent years.

One of the primary tasks in the conservation programme for the site is to stop the periodic flooding by water running off the Downs and across the site. This will be achieved by the insertion of a land drain close to the villa, between it and the Downs, which will take the water away harmlessly from the site. As the proposed line of this drain is close to the main villa building and runs across the villa's courtyard, an assessment was required of its likely impact on the archaeological remains along its line.

The results of this assessment suggests that there are pre-Roman soils, sealed below demolition rubble, to the west and north of the main villa building, and that this soil may be the source of the substantial quantities of utilised flint observed on the surface of the surrounding fields.

The Roman evidence strongly suggests that there was zoning of activities around and possibly within the villa buildings, and the main villa building appeared to have been terraced into the natural slope of the site, with no contemporary external surfaces to the north, west and south of this structure.

Post-Roman activity was very elusive and was confined to a layer of rubble (possibly resulting from the demolition of the villa) to the north of the main building and some soil

horizons to the west of the villa, which were possibly accumulating until the 1880s excavations.

The next identifiable phase of activity on the site was the Victorian (1880-1895), excavations. These appear to have been limited to the area of the buildings identified in Figure 2.

The foundation of the modern/1900s building covering the main villa building was probably constructed entirely within the area of Victorian excavation, against the walls of the Roman building. In addition, the area of the villa courtyard appears to have been modified by the deposition of substantial quantities of rubble to make the hard standing of the current car park.

INTRODUCTION

LOCATION

The site is located (fig. 1) on light sandy soils derived from the underlying ferruginous sands of the Lower Greensand Series (Osbourne White 1975), at national grid ref SZ 60000 86300. It lies at the southern foot of the central chalk ridge of East Wight, at a height of 35m OD. It is sheltered by Brading Down, with an uninterrupted view of Sandown Bay and Brading Creek (a largely silted-up estuary and historic anchorage), across gently sloping ground.

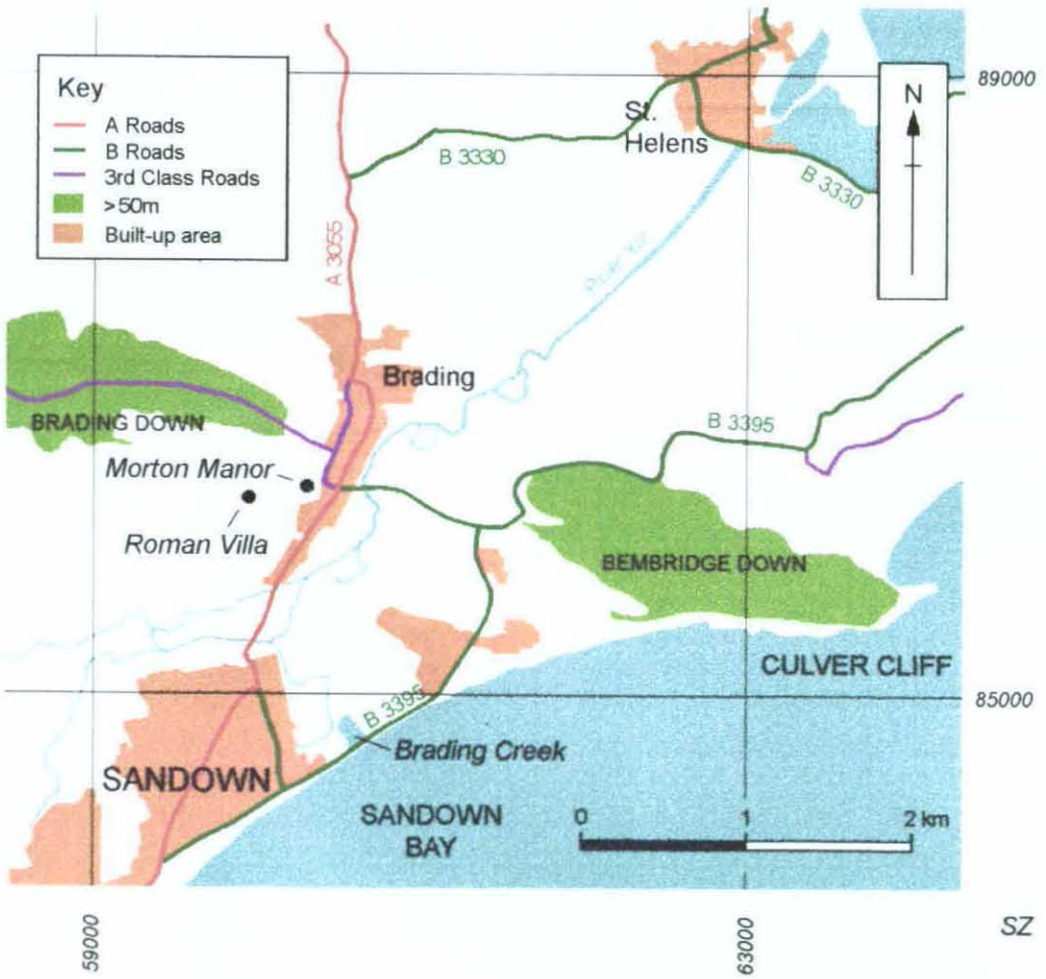

Figure 1. General location of Brading Roman villa

CAUSE FOR ACTION

The remains of the Roman villa at Brading, Isle of Wight, have been subject to periodic flooding by water running off the Downs, to the north of the site. This has caused considerable deterioration in the fabric of the villa and its nationally important mosaics. It is hoped that the flooding episodes will be stopped by construction of a land drain close to the villa to take the water away harmlessly from the site. This work will be part of an English Heritage grant aided Conservation programme. As the proposed line of the drain is close to the main villa building and runs across the villa's courtyard, it required an assessment of its likely impact on the archaeological remains along its line.

MONUMENT HISTORY

Nothing is known about the history of the villa until its discovery by Capt. J Thorp in 1879 (Rule and Sturgess 1974). In 1880, the site was acquired by the Oglander family (present owners) and excavated between 1880 and 1895 by Mr J Oglander FSA. Since this excavation little or no archaeological work was carried out on the site until the current programme of restoration as a result of recent flood damage to the mosaics. Therefore, the sequence of villa development outlined below is based almost entirely upon the Victorian evidence.

The heyday of the villa would appear to have been around 3rd/early 4th centuries AD (*ibid*). It apparently comprised three units arranged around a central courtyard (Fig 2), a winged corridor house on the western side, with a number of fine mosaics and painted walls, an aisled farmhouse with apartments on its northern side, and a range of agricultural buildings on the southern side of the courtyard. In addition there were two bath houses, one associated with the aisled farmhouse and the other at the eastern end of the agricultural building range.

By the late 4th century, or later, the villa was apparently being used for more mundane activities (*ibid*), as a corn dryer was cut through the mosaic in the front hall. Also the tessellated pavement in room iii had been extensively burnt by a central hearth suggesting that, because of apparent accumulation of refuse in these rooms, the southern portion of the villa was no longer used for its original domestic purposes. It has also been suggested that the northern wing of this structure was the only portion still inhabited by the villa owner.

In 1900 the remains of the main villa building were covered by a timber and corrugated

iron building which still stands today, and the site was opened to the public for a charge of 3d.

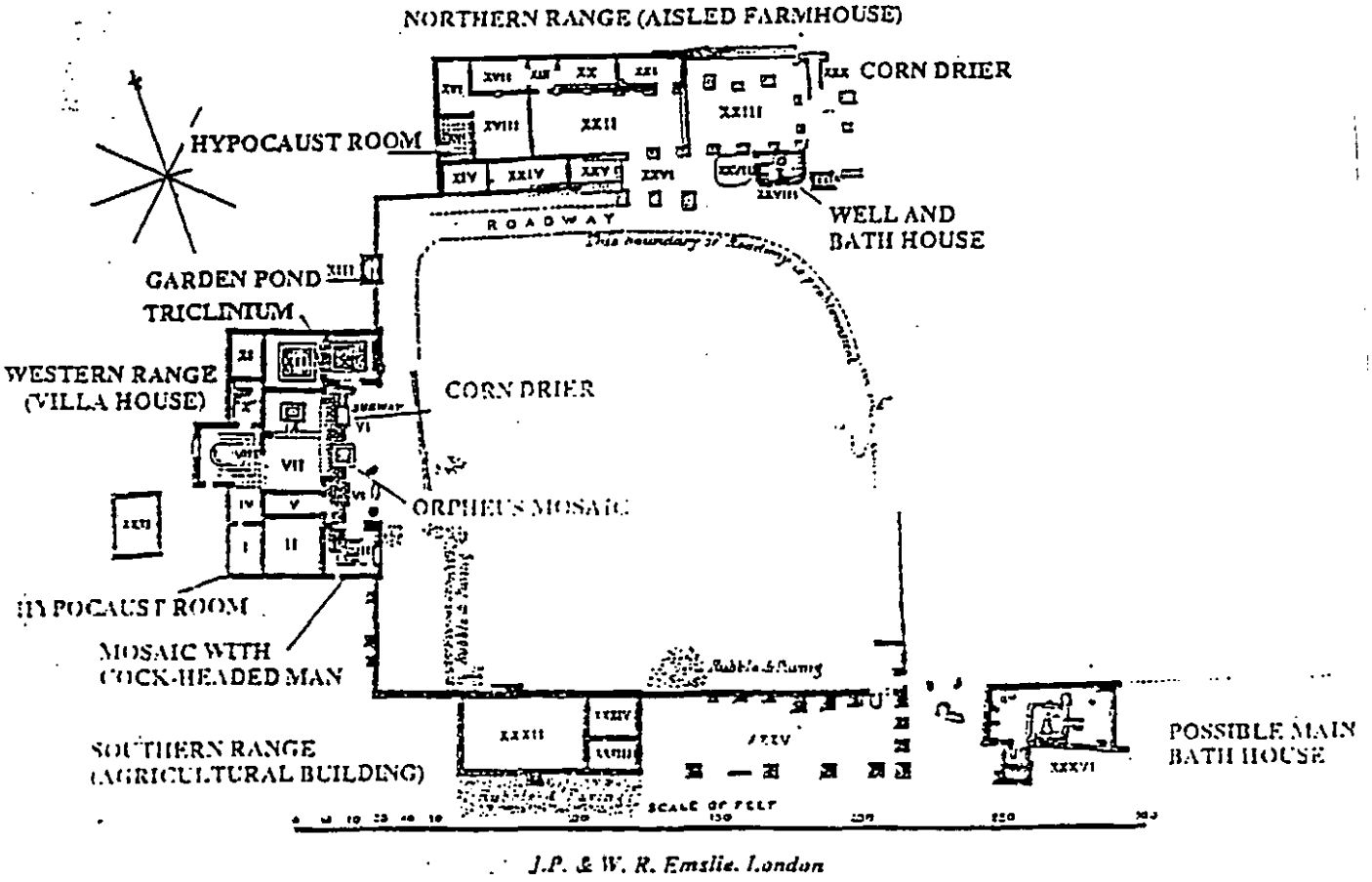

Figure 2. Victorian plan of the excavated remains of the villa (taken from a current short guide to villa, author unknown)

Since this time the villa and its mosaics have been occasionally inundated by water, but no action was taken to limit the damage this caused. However, in recent years this intermittent flooding has increased in frequency (the last incident was just prior to this investigation). This has led to a rapidly increasing deterioration of the mosaics and an urgent need to limit the potential damage of future episodes of flooding.

At present the Oglander family, owners of the villa, are forming a new Charitable Trust

to manage the villa and are acquiring extra land around the villa. English Heritage are actively encouraging the creation of this Charitable Trust and are committed to grant aiding the renovation of the remains once the trust is established. An initial stage in this conservation programme is the excavation of a land drain to take flood water away from the villa.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim :-

To characterise the nature of any archaeological deposits along the line of the land drain (Fig 3), and to assess the likely impact of the proposed land drain upon them.

Primary objectives :-

Taken from the brief, see appendix 3, produced by the IoW Archaeology Unit (Tomalin 1994).

1) To lay out a permanent site bench mark at OS point SZ 60000 86300 and the initial points of a site grid (based on the OS grid).

2) To locate previous site grids within the new OS based grid.

3) To evaluate and characterise the archaeological deposits along the line of the land drain by archaeological excavation and fieldwalking (Fig 3).

4) To characterise anomalies along the line of the land drain, identified during the magnetometer and soil resistivity surveys of the area (Payne 1994), by archaeological excavation.

5) To assess the likely impact of the proposed drain upon the archaeological resource of the site.

6) To report on the above.

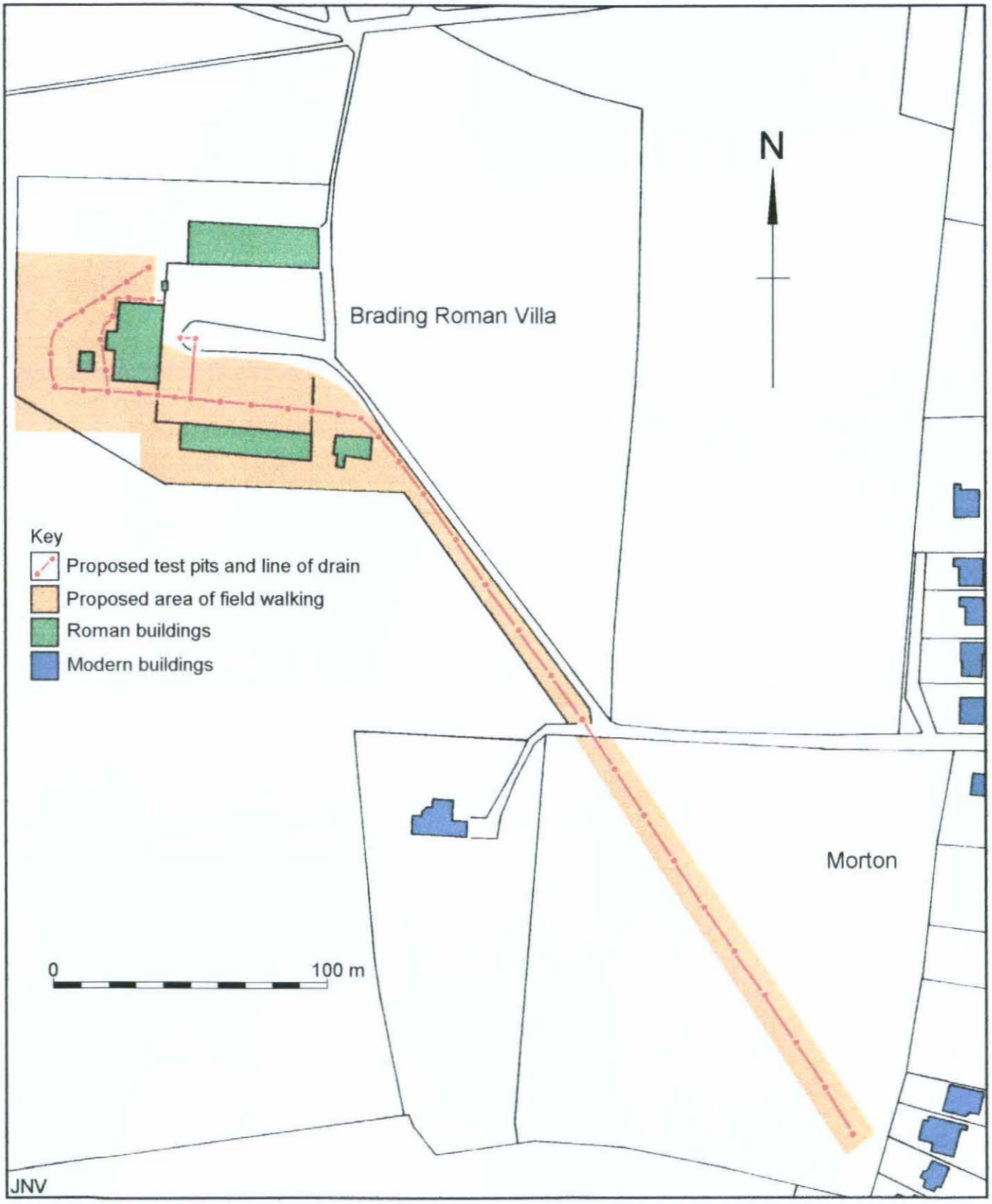

Figure 3. The line of the proposed land drain, after Tomalin 1994

FIELDWORK

METHOD STATEMENT

All recording was conducted according to standard CAS methodology, on CAS recording materials, except for the use of the Isle of Wight County Council Archaeological Section pens and pencils. As the project consisted of a large number of individual components (test pits and fieldwalking areas), they were given Site Subdivision numbers, blocks of context numbers, and plan numbers in advance to avoid confusion during the fieldwork stage of this project and to create an easily referenced archive.

Note on the use of Site and Project codes

CAS Project Code

The CAS project code 531 was used on this project as a CAS administration code only.

Isle of Wight Site Code

All project archives carried the Isle of Wight SMR number for Brading, 1017.

Survey

A site datum point at SZ 60000 86300 was laid out using a Total Station Theodolite (TST), standard survey methodology and OS reference points supplied by the County Archaeological Officer Dr David Tomalin. Also, a second point at SZ 60000 86268 was laid out to form the primary component of an OS based site grid.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to give either of these points a real height above sea level, because the nearest usable OS Bench Mark, behind Morton Manor, was found too late to transfer its value to the permanent points. Therefore the permanent point SZ 60000 86268 was given the temporary Z value of 100m. However during post excavation it

proved possible to calculate a hight above sea level to within ±500mm for the drawings below.

Using these permanent reference points, the previous site grids, fieldwalking grids and the excavated test pits were all located using the TST and the data plotted at Fort Cumberland using AutoCad. In addition supplementary points were also taken in and around the villa complex to enable a crude contour plan (Fig 5) to be drawn up of the area.

Fieldwalking

The fieldwalking element of this project was initially to have been along the whole length of the planned land drain (Fig 3), with the area immediately to the west of the villa taking the highest priority. At the time the fieldwalking was carried out the area to be investigated was under autumn sown cereal. This was starting its spring growth effectively reducing ground visibility from 80% to 20%. Therefore the field walking was abandoned as impracticable after the first three days when the area to the west of the villa had been walked.

Fieldwalking was undertaken before the excavation of test pits 13 and 16. An area 48 by 60m to the west of the villa (Fig 4) was field walked using the standard Isle of Wight methodology.

A series of grid points at 4m intervals was established based on the OS grid. A circular walk of 2m radius was then made around each grid point and each of these 'walks' was given a separate context number from the site sequence. **All** artefacts and possible building materials, regardless of age, were collected in a single bag and sent to Fort Cumberland for initial processing and identification.

Test pits

Initially, it was proposed that a total of 49 test pits, average size 1.5 x 1.5m, would be dug along the line of the proposed land drain (Fig 3). These were to be located in five discrete groups.

5 pits alongside main villa building

10 pits to the west of the main villa building

9 pits across the courtyard of the villa

7 pits around the southern range of the villa

18 pits to south of villa buildings

The exact siting of the test pits was determined by two factors a) location of anomalies in the geophysical survey of the area (Payne 1994) and b) the need to provide an equal coverage of the whole line of the proposed drain. Each of the proposed test pits was given a site division number, to maintain a logical sequence in the final site record.

The resources available during the field work phase of this project and the greater than envisaged depth of some test pits, meant that the number of proposed test pits had to be reduced after consultation with David Tomalin (County Archaeologist) and Stephen Trow (Inspector of Ancient Monuments, South East Conservation Team). Eight test pits were selected from the originally planned 48 pits (Fig 4), to answer specific questions about the archaeology in and around the immediate area of the villa buildings. In addition the dimensions of the test pits were also varied with, for example 2 x 1m trenches used to locate the wall line of the eastern wall of the court yard and any wall extending east from the south range of the villa.

By the end of the field work phase, 8 test pits had been hand dug using standard CAS excavation methodologies. The archaeological deposits within each test pit were only to be exposed. However, the largely homogenous soils in test pits 6, 7, 9, 13, and 16 were excavated in an attempt to determine their origin.

The test pits were photographed, planned at 1:20 and their most informative section drawn at 1:10. The exceptions to this methodology were test pits 16 and 31. The section of test pit 31 was not drawn as the excavation was halted after the removal of the plough soil. The plan and section drawings for test pit 16 were not done as the pit yielded no archaeological information. All artefacts and building materials from the test pits, regardless of age, were collected from each excavated context and placed in a single bag and given the appropriate number and sent to Fort Cumberland for initial finds processing. The exceptions to this were the amorphous lumps of plaster from test pits 6 and 7 of which only the largest pieces were retained as a sample.

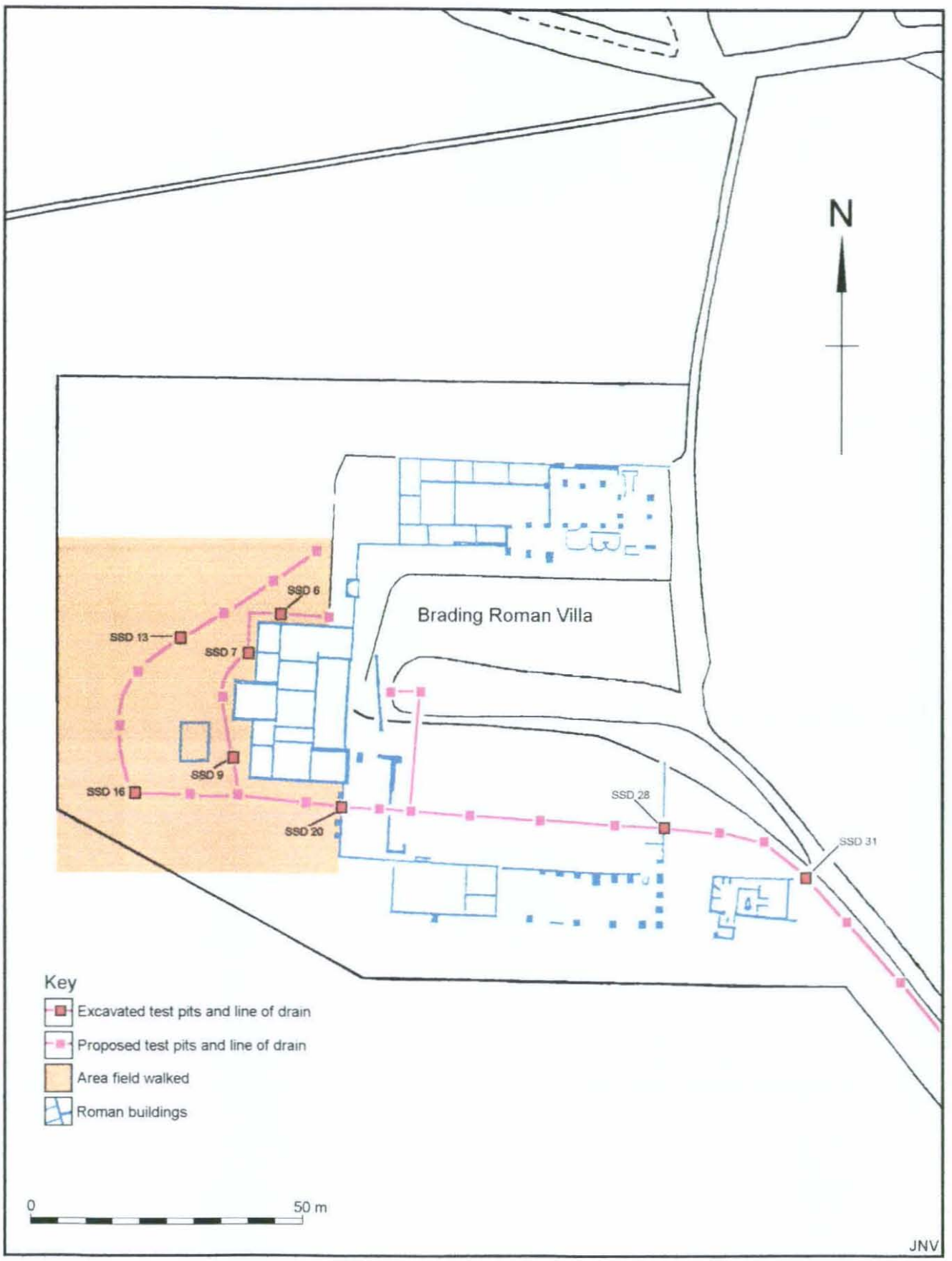

Figure 4. Location of the area field walked and the excavated test pits

SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK

(A full account of the fieldwork is contained within Appendix 1)

The results of the fieldwork suggest that the prehistoric occupation of the immediate environment of the villa was quite extensive. Evidence for Neolithic and Early Bronze Age activity was retrieved from the fieldwalking immediately to the west of the villa. A rapid walkover survey of the fields surrounding the villa suggests that during the prehistoric period activity extended over a large portion of this area.

There is also a strong possibility that there are undisturbed pre-Roman soils immediately to the north and west of the villa lying below Roman horizons, for example contexts 2032 and 2121 in test pits 6 and 9 (pp 27 and 33, Appendix 1). These soils have probably been accumulating since the last ice age, as they lie directly on the natural subsoil and the flint artefacts are found only in their upper portion. It may be these soils are being disturbed by modern ploughing, providing some of the artefactual material retrieved during the fieldwalking to the west of the villa.

Unfortunately the test pits have demonstrated that any excavation of the prehistoric archaeology is likely to be extremely difficult. Artefacts are trapped at different levels within an accumulating soil horizon and any associated features are likely to be filled by material identical to the soils through which they are cut. This situation is not unlike those encountered during the excavation of, for example, a Mesolithic site in the brick earth of the Lea Valley or the 'black earths' sealing many Roman towns.

The evidence of the Roman period from the test pits suggests that the main villa building may have been terrace into the natural slope of the hill-side. There are differences in intensity and/or use in the areas within an enclosure identified by geophysical survey (Payne 1994), beyond those already recognised for the villa and its two ranges. These differences in use manifest themselves in terms of relative finds densities and the clarity of the Roman horizons within a particular test pit.

It would seem that the area to the west of the main villa and its southern range is relatively devoid of contemporary finds, and the contemporary horizons are extremely difficult to identify. This would seem to suggest that this area was either little used and/or

it contained activities that did not contribute to the archaeological resource, i.e. meadows, orchards, etc.

In stark contrast to this was the evidence from the area east of the southern range (test pit 31, Appendix 1). Here the ploughsoil contained a relatively large quantity of Roman artefacts and the underlying archaeology contained evidence for a Roman post-hole

structure, cutting a dumped layer consisting of tile fragments, mortar flecks and charcoal. This would seem to imply that this area was relatively intensely used and contained previously unrecognised buildings. The logical interpretation of this evidence is that there is an extension of the building to the west, possibly forming a subsidiary complex, adjoining the main villa courtyard.

In four places, test pits 6, 9, 20, and 28 (Fig 4), attempts were made to investigate elements of the Roman buildings exposed during the Victorian excavations. In test pit 6 there was no evidence to suggest that the north-south wall dividing the main villa building had ever extended beyond its recorded limits. However, test pit 9 did not resolve the question of whether the east-west walls of a small rectangular building to the west of the main villa building, extended to the main building. This was because it was impossible to locate the subsidiary building and therefore be sure that the test pit was located on a projected wall line.

Two test pits (20 and 28), were designed to investigate elements of the courtyard wall. In test pit 28 there was good evidence in the form of rubble 2694 (p 43, Appendix 1), suggesting that the eastern courtyard wall may have been unmortared. However, in test pit 20, a north-south robber trench 2462 (p 39, Appendix 1) was located. It had apparently been emptied by the Victorian excavators and backfilled with spoil. As this feature was 1.2m wide by 650mm deep it would suggest that it had been occupied by a much more substantial courtyard wall than 2694 in test pit 28. A strong alternative may be that it is a robber trench belonging to a previously unidentified structure, occupying the space between the main villa building and the southern range of buildings.

The subsequent phase of activity recognised during this phase of field work was the undated disuse of the villa building. The evidence for this was confined to the suggestion that the Victorian excavator may have emptied an earler robber trench 2462, along the line of a hypothesised court yard wall between the main villa building and the southern range. In addition, the substantial rubble layer 2031 (p 27, Appendix 1) in test pit 6 (Fig 4), may be a demolition layer, rather than part of a Victorian spoil heap, as it lies below the top of the surviving villa wall just to the west.

After the apparent disuse of the villa the next recognisable phase of activity was in the nineteenth century. In test pits 7, 9, 20, and 28, this amounted to evidence for the Victorian excavations and also in test pit 7, a slightly earlier, but probably still Victorian, plough soil 2074 (p 30, Appendix 1). It is clear that the earlier excavations have removed all the post Roman horizons in and around the square building to the west of the main villa building (test pit 9, Appendix 1), and over the southern wall of the courtyard just to the north of the southern range (test pit 28, Appendix 1). Also they appear to have emptied the robber trench of a wall between the main villa building and the southern range (p 27, Appendix 1). Beyond this it would appear that the earlier excavations

around the main villa building did not extend beyond the limits of the cover building and its associated works.

The 1900s cover building and associated works involved the construction of a concrete wall/foundation against the outer face of the main villa wall, possibly internally within the Victorian excavations. It was these works that physically separated the main villa building from the surrounding stratigraphy, even if it had survived the earlier excavations. In addition the ground to the east and south of the main villa building appears to have been built up to create a level platform in front of the new structure, which now partially acts as a car park.

Besides the disturbance to the site over the last century by the Victorian excavations and later works, it is also obvious that the area around the building currently on display is being, and has been cultivated. The activity is exposing flint debitage over a very large area and eroding previously little disturbed soil horizons to the west of the villa. The evidence for this is the relatively unabraded nature of the flint debitage from the field walked area (Humble, Appendix 2), and the differences between the soil profiles of test pits 13 and 16 which would appear to indicate that the soil profile in test pit 16 is much more truncated. The reason appears to be that test pit 16 lies just to the south of a now missing field boundary, surviving as a slight terrace in the natural slope of the field. The implication is that there has been a loss of soil to the south of this boundary due to a possibly longer and/or more intense cultivation of the southern field.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED LAND DRAINAGE SCHEME

The original drainage scheme (Fig 3), as evaluated during this phase of field work, consisted of a French drain encircling the villa to the north and west, approximately 10m from its excavated remains. This was designed to stop surface water inundating the remains of the main villa building from the north and west. The drain would then be connected to the relaided gutter drains of the cover building, before crossing the villa courtyard, going around the bath house on the eastern end of the southern range and across the fields to link up with an existing council drain.

The evaluation carried out by the Central Archaeology Service during late March, early April 1994 produced evidence to suggest that this scheme needed reconsidering both on the grounds of the surviving archaeology along its line, but also because of the geology upon which the villa sits.

The evaluation demonstrated that the villa is on top of the junction between the ferruginous sands of the Greensand series and the much less permeable Atherfield clays.

There may also be a problem with ground water being unable to penetrate the underlying clay soils, subsequently escaping the down slope, using the villa as the route of least resistance. This theory might also explain why some of the mosaics in the porch area of the villa become noticeably damper after periods of rain, when there is no inundation of water into the villa.

However, this hypothosis is difficult to prove as there is some disagreement as to the exact bedding of the geological horizons at this point on the Isle of Wight. These range from the beds strongly dipping to the north, to the beds being approximately horizontal at this point. Also there is little understanding as to the nature of the junction between these beds. This is a particular problem as the flow of ground water in the locality of the villa may be influenced by extremely localised variations in the bedding and junctions between the geological horizons. At present there is insufficient evidence from the test pits to resolve this problem beyond suggesting it as one of the potential causes of the flooding episodes.

The evidence regarding surface water being the source of the flooding episodes is equally complex and problematic, as the soils immediately below the plough soil to the north and west of the villa seem to be extremely permeable. This would suggest that if there is surface water run off, then it is due to the poor drainage of the plough soil, rather than the underlying sediments. The obvious explanation of this is that the cultivation of these soils has significantly affected the penetration of rain water. Interestingly, this might explain why these episodes are apparently becoming more frequent, as it could be directly related to the changing agricultural use of the land around the villa this century.

There are, however, problems with this theory of surface water inundation, as there are slight ridges of soil (possibly Victorian spoil) to the north and west of the villa, which should impede the flow of water into the villa area. This is excentuated by a slight depression to the west of the northern range of the villa, which might be expected to channel surface water away to the north of the northern range, rather than into the main villa building.

Besides the potential sources of surface run off and ground water providing the water in the flooding episodes, there is also the problem of water running off the cover building roof and into blocked drains, resulting in the build up of water against the western side of the cover building prior to it breaking through into the villa remains. Here I agree totally with John Anker that this is probably a major source of the flooding into rooms iv, v and viii (Fig 2). I also agree with his suggestion that winds from a northerly direction would blow rain on to the northern end of the cover building producing a large volume of run off which has no drain to take it away, so it could collect along the northern side of the cover building before flooding room xii (the one containing the most threatened mosaics).

In summary it is probable that the blocked drains on the western side of the cover

building are possibly the sole cause of the flooding in rooms iv, v and vi, and that rain driven on to the northern face of the cover building may similarly flood room xii given the lack of a drain to take the water away. However the contribution of surface water to the flooding episodes and its route of entry are in our view questionable, although the permeability of the modern plough soil can be quite poor under some conditions, John Oglander has witnessed water running off the fields to the north of the villa (January 1994, *pers comm*). In addition, the excavation of test pits has shown that there may also be a problem with ground water, resulting from variation in natural geology under the villa.

This re-evaluation of the potential sources of flood water (by members of the conservation team), has suggested that some parts of the original scheme may need re-evaluation, especially considering the archaeological evidence of the deposits surrounding the villa. The archaeological evaluation indicated that the original proposed line of the drain would pass through an area of undisturbed archaeological deposits, including a post hole structure, to the east of the known extent of the southern range. Also the section of the land drain to the west and north of the main villa building would possibly cut through sediments containing prehistoric remains and unidentified geophysical anomalies.

The CAS believe that the archaeological deposits to the east of the southern range should be avoided and an alternative route considered to the south of the southern range. This would have the additional benefit of avoiding the southern portion of the courtyard.

Also given the potential sources of the water flooding room xii (Fig 2), it seems of dubious value to carry on with the outer land drain to the west and north of the villa, especially as the proposed drain cut through difficult to excavate archaeological remains. These include buildings (Payne 1994) and little disturbed artefact distributions dating from the Late Neolithic (Humble, Appendix 2). It seems to us that its function to entrap surface water run off might be better solved by surface landscaping ie. adding soil (a possible source is the nearby Victorian spoil heap). This would enhance the depression to the north of the main villa building and channel this water away behind the northern range of the building. Along with the use of surface vegetation to slow down the passage of surface water and improvements to the existing plough soil to improve water penetration, this should remove the need for the outer drain.

To tackle the problems of water running off the cover building the existing drains should be relaid in their trenches to minimise damage to the surrounding archaeology. To cope with the run-off from the northern end of the cover building, a drain will have to be inserted to collect this water. This should be laid in the already disturbed and archaeologically sterile zone in the area immediately against the concrete foundation of the cover building. This would also avoid unnecessary disturbance to the possible demolition layer 2031 seen in test pit 6 (p 25, Appendix 1). In addition this drain could also act as a last line of defence in case of surface water inundation, and if it was a land

drain set below the level of the mosaics in room xii (Fig 2), then it would help to elevate the threat of ground water inundation.

FUTURE WORK IN ADVANCE OF THE DRAINAGE SCHEME

There are a number of things that should probably be done to inform further the design of the proposed drainage scheme and other conservation works. The first of these is the continued investigation of the geology underlying the villa to assess the real threat from ground water. This can be achieved in several ways :-

a) Investigation of the sediments underlying the mosaic in room xii (Fig 2), by cleaning out the square archaeological sondage through the northern portion of the mosaic in this room. This would enable the underlying geology to be identified and determine the construction of the mosaic floor, information valuable to the conservation of the mosaic pavements.

b) A number of auger holes, cut deep in to the natural geology around the eastern and southern portion of the main villa building. This would enable the exact nature of the geological horizons to be plotted and the potential for ground water inundation to be properly assessed.

If the line of the proposed drain does deviate from the evaluated alignments, for example to the south of the southern range, then the new line may need evaluation test pits etc. Also, if it is deemed possible to remove the potential of surface water inundation of the villa by enhancing the existing topography using soil banks and vegetation cover, rather than the construction of a land drain, then the low level topographic survey plotted from data collected during this phase of field work will need enhancing (Fig 5).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

DETAILED FIELDWORK REPORT

by

PA Busby

CONTOUR SURVEY

To enable the topographic location of the villa to be better understood a simple contour survey was undertaken to the south and west of the villa. The data was gathered using a TST and by taking readings at large intervals (typically 5-20m) along changes in slope, with intermediate points where they were thought appropriate by the survey team.

The resultant plot (Fig 5), clearly shows that the site of the villa interrupts the general trend of the slope, by forming a slight platform. The north range appears to sit along the northern side of this platform, whilst the southern range is apparently down slope of it. This apparent exclusion of the southern range from the platform can simply be explained by the fact that the portion immediately to the south and east has possibly been created by twentieth century landscaping around the building covering the main villa building, combined with the effects of ploughing over the area of the southern range. Also, interestingly the villa buildings are apparently at a different orientation to the platform and are not neatly arranged on it, implying that the platform has nothing to do with the laying out of the villa and may therefore be earlier or later than it. This allows us to speculate that the platform might be associated with the resistivity anomalies, a possible building, in the general area of test pit 13, or that it is a natural topographic feature.

On the eastern side of this apparent platform is an east-west terrace at point A (Fig 5), which seems to cut across the southern portion of the platform. The location and orientation of this terrace would appear to match the alignment of an old field boundary (*pers comm* David Tomalin), suggesting that it may be a negative plough lynchet.

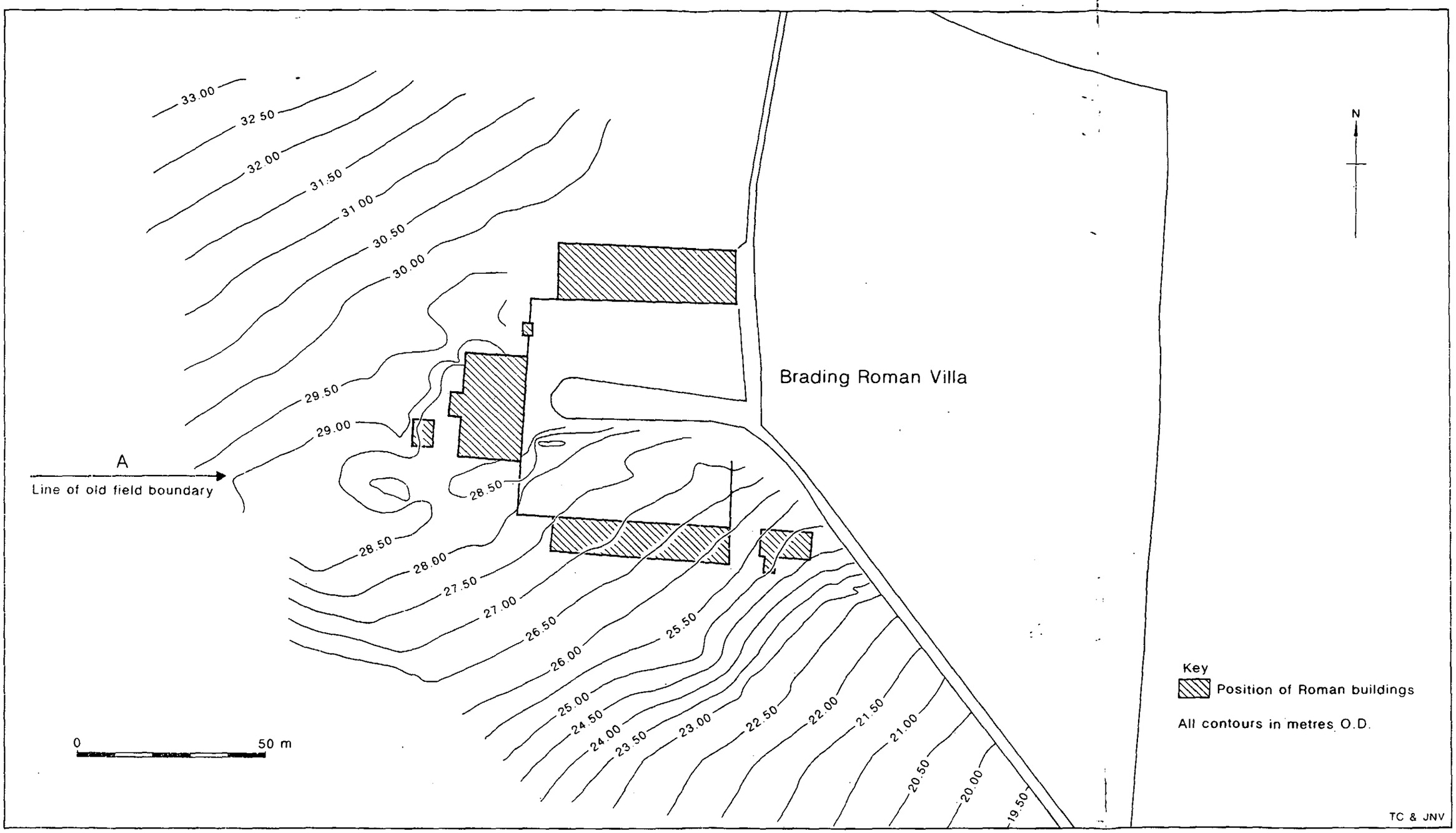


Figure 5. Plan showing contours at 0.5 metre intervals in the vicinity of the villa

FIELD WALKING

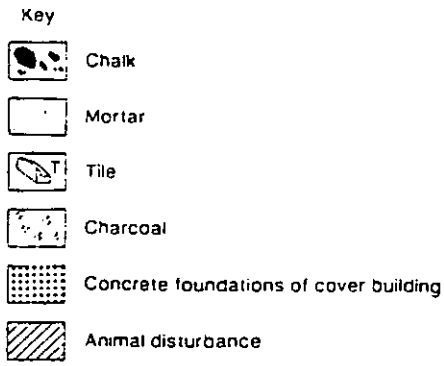
An area 48m east-west by 60m north-south, immediately to the west of the main villa building was field walked. However, only about two thirds of this area was available for walking as the eastern portion had been disturbed by Victorian excavations. The area was walked, just as the ground cover (winter cereal), was starting to exceed 25%. The method used was circular walks, of 2m radius around points on a 4m grid, with all artefacts and possible building materials being collected for later identification and quantification.

Fieldwalking results would suggest that evidence of prehistoric occupation immediately to the west of the villa is predominantly represented by up to 9 flints per walk, although the more usual number was between 3-6 flints per walk. The distribution of these flints was fairly even across the walked area and unfortunately most of the assemblage was undiagnostic with a few flints suggesting that they may be Post-Beaker Bronze Age in date.

There were too few identifiable Roman finds from the field walked area to be able to suggest any patterning to the material beyond the fact that there were surprisingly few finds of this date given that it was next to the villa. This may suggest that domestic rubbish not was being dumped on the western side of the villa and therefore this area may have been some kind of garden, orchard or open area. However, if the few lumps of glassy slag and other working debris are Roman in date it might imply that some kind of industrial process was going on near to the field walked area (Jennings Appendix 2), but given the sparse and apparently random distribution of these remains it is impossible to suggest exactly were this activity was taking place.

There are too few finds of medieval and post medieval date to draw any conclusions regarding their spatial and temporal distribution. The twentieth century was by far the most common period represented in the field walking material and as, one might expect from a tourist attraction in a rural setting, was dominated by glass bottle fragments, various plastic bags and bottles etc, besides material from its agricultural usage.

TEST PITS

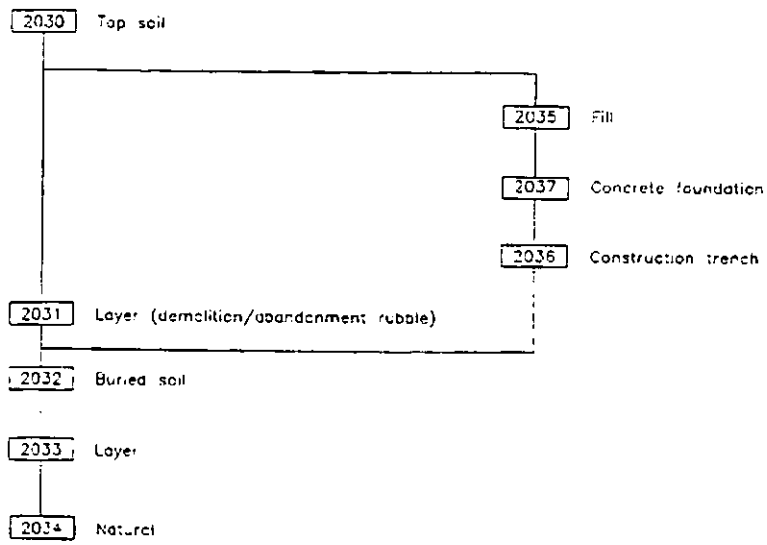


Key to drawings in this section

Test pit 6

Plans see figures 4 and 6a
Section see figure 6b
Contexts 2030 to 2037
Photographs 3505-7

Matrix



Location - test pit 6

A 1.5 x 1.5m test pit located against the northern side of the 1900s cover building, next to the north-south wall dividing the main villa rooms from the subsidiary rooms to their rear.

Objectives

1) To define the extent of the Victorian excavations and works associated with the 1900s cover building, to the north of the main villa building.

2) To identify and quantify the surviving archaeological deposits to the north of the main villa building.

3) To test the theory that the north-south wall separating the main villa rooms from the subsidiary rooms to the rear may have continued to the north behind their recorded extent.

Description

The archaeological sequence is sealed by a 200mm thick, dark humic soil 2030, representing the modern top soil. This layer lies directly upon the rubble layer 2031 and possibly also over the construction trench fill 2035.

Construction trench 2036 appeared to be a linear cut up to 300mm wide running east-west, parallel to the stepped concrete foundations 2037 of the 1900s cover building. Its soil fill was a dark yellowish brown sandy loam, containing occasional pieces of tarred roofing paper. The feature was poorly defined as its fill merged with the top soil layer 2030 and was almost indistinguishable from the layer 2032 through which it was apparently cut.

The initial step of the concrete foundations 2037 appears to fill the base of the construction trench 2036, implying the wet concrete was simply poured into the construction trench. The subsequent two steps both have smooth, slightly wood patterned outer edges implying that they were shuttered to produce a thinner foundation to protect the upstanding Roman wall on its inside edge.

Under the top soil layer 2030, there was the substantial rubble layer 2031. It was 270mm thick against the northern edge of the test pit and consisted mostly of assorted large stones and lumps of mortar, with a suggestion of horizontal layering within this deposit. The southern edge of this layer was very diffuse and lay over the northern limits of the construction trench 2036 with the rubble in the southern portion of this layer apparently dipping in to the construction trench, suggesting that this layer was later than 2036.

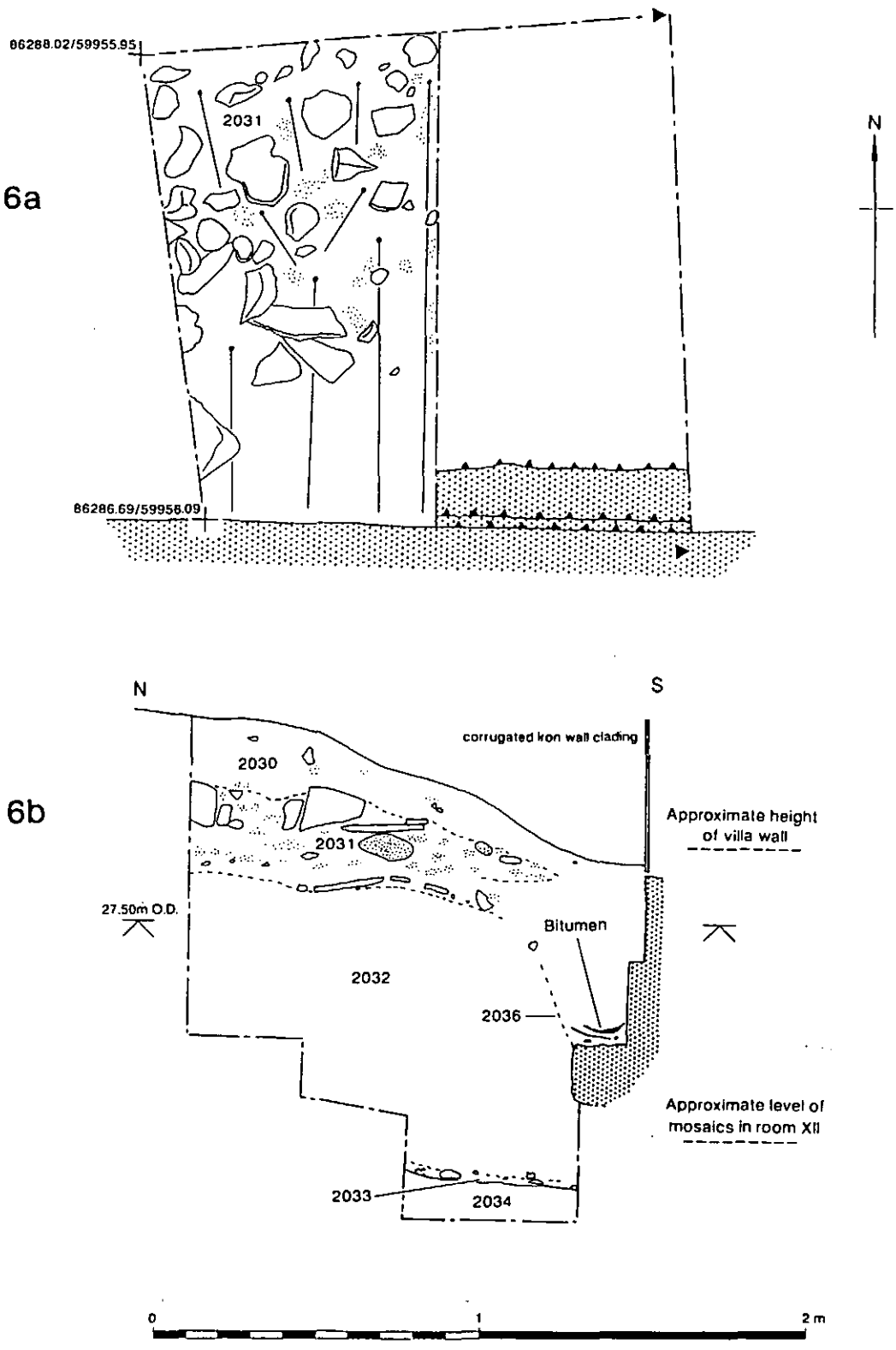


Figure 6a. Plan of test pit 6

Figure 6b. West facing section of test pit 6

However, although the above evidence would appear to suggest that the rubble layer 2031 was Victorian or later, the most likely interpretation of this layer is that it is associated with the abandonment of the villa and may be derived from the collapse and/or robbing of the adjacent wall. This is because the villa wall next to the test pit survives to a height equal to the surface of this layer (Fig 7), and there is no evidence to suggest any Victorian reconstruction of this wall. Therefore, the probable explanation of the portion of layer 2031, overlying construction trench 2036, is that it represents slumping into construction trench 2036 and the sherd of post medieval White Ware (seventeenth to eighteenth century) found below the southern fringe of this layer may be the result of disturbance during or after the Victorian excavations.

The layer below the rubble 2031 was the homogenous, inclusion less sandy loam 2032. This dark yellowish brown layer was approximately 800mm thick and had a slight graduation in colour throughout its profile, lighter at its base to its darkest just below the rubble layer 2031, where all the artefacts from this context were retrieved. It had a sharp boundary with the rubble layer 2031, but an extremely poor, more felt than seen boundary with the construction trench fill 2035.

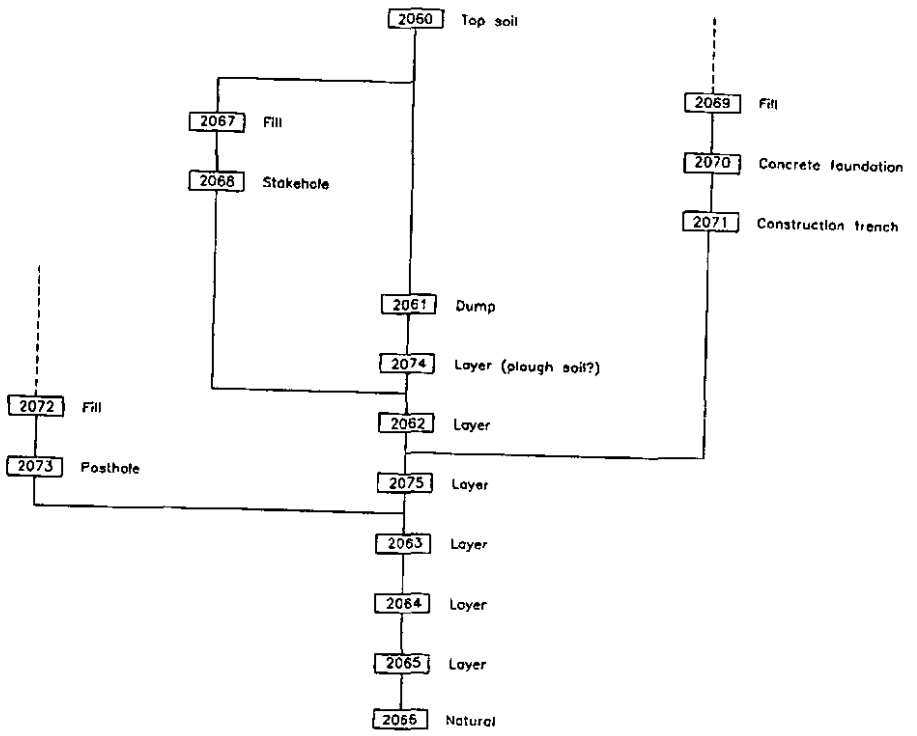
The graduation in colour through out the layers' profile and its homogenous, inclusion free nature seems to suggest that this was probably a soil formed over time in a constant environment without obvious interruption. Although the above interpretation is reasonable given the physical evidence, there are substantial problems in assigning a period to this episode of deposition. This is because the date of the sealing layer could range between Roman to Victorian. However, given that all the artefacts were retrieved from the upper 200m of this layer and that they consist mostly of flints and one sherd of Vectis Ware (third to forth century) on the surface of the layer, it would seem likely that this layer represents a soil layer that had largely accumulated before the construction of the villa, up until the abandonment of the villa.

Below this substantial layer two further sediments were recognised, the lower of which 2034 was certainly part of the natural geology of the area, Greensand. On the surface of this layer there was an ephemeral gravel horizon 2033, which could be the remnants of a surface surrounding the villa. However, as this gravel layer was seen in other test pits 7, 13, and 16, it would seem more likely that it is also part of the geological sequence of the site, before the accumulation of layer 2032.

Test pit 7

Plans see figures 4 and 7a
Sections see figure 7b and 7c
Contexts 2060 to 2075
Photographs 3500; 3512-4

Matrix



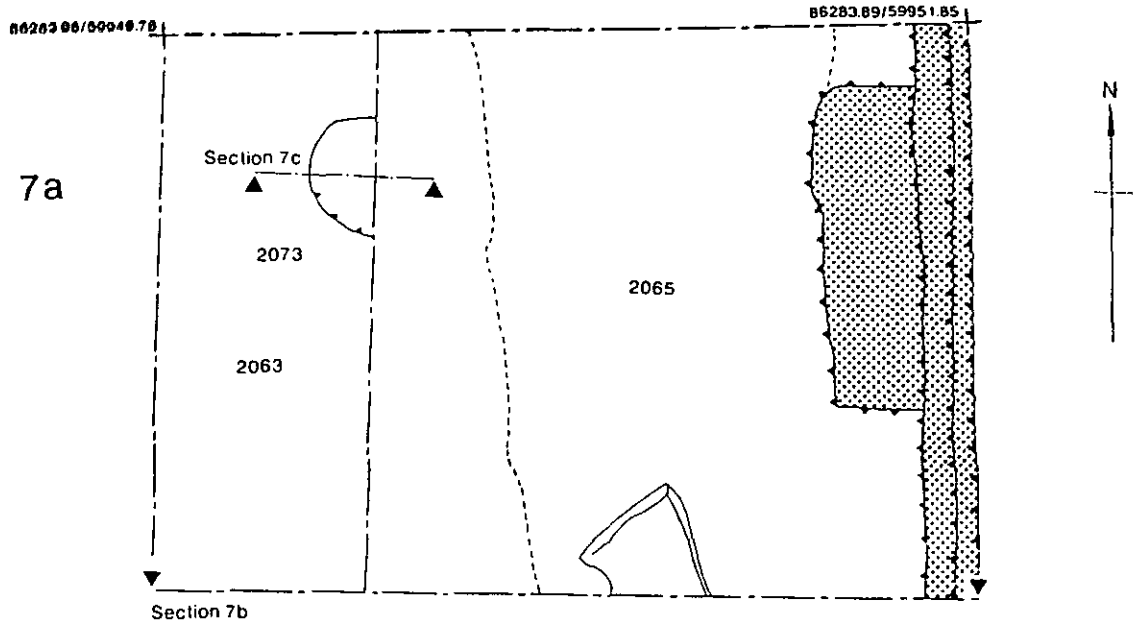
Location - test pit 7

A 2.2 x 1.7m test pit located against the western side of the 1900s cover building in an area of extreme animal and tree root disturbance.

Objectives

1) To define the extent of the Victorian excavations and works associated with the 1900s cover building, to the west of the main villa building.

2) To identify and quantify surviving archaeological deposits to the west of the main villa building.



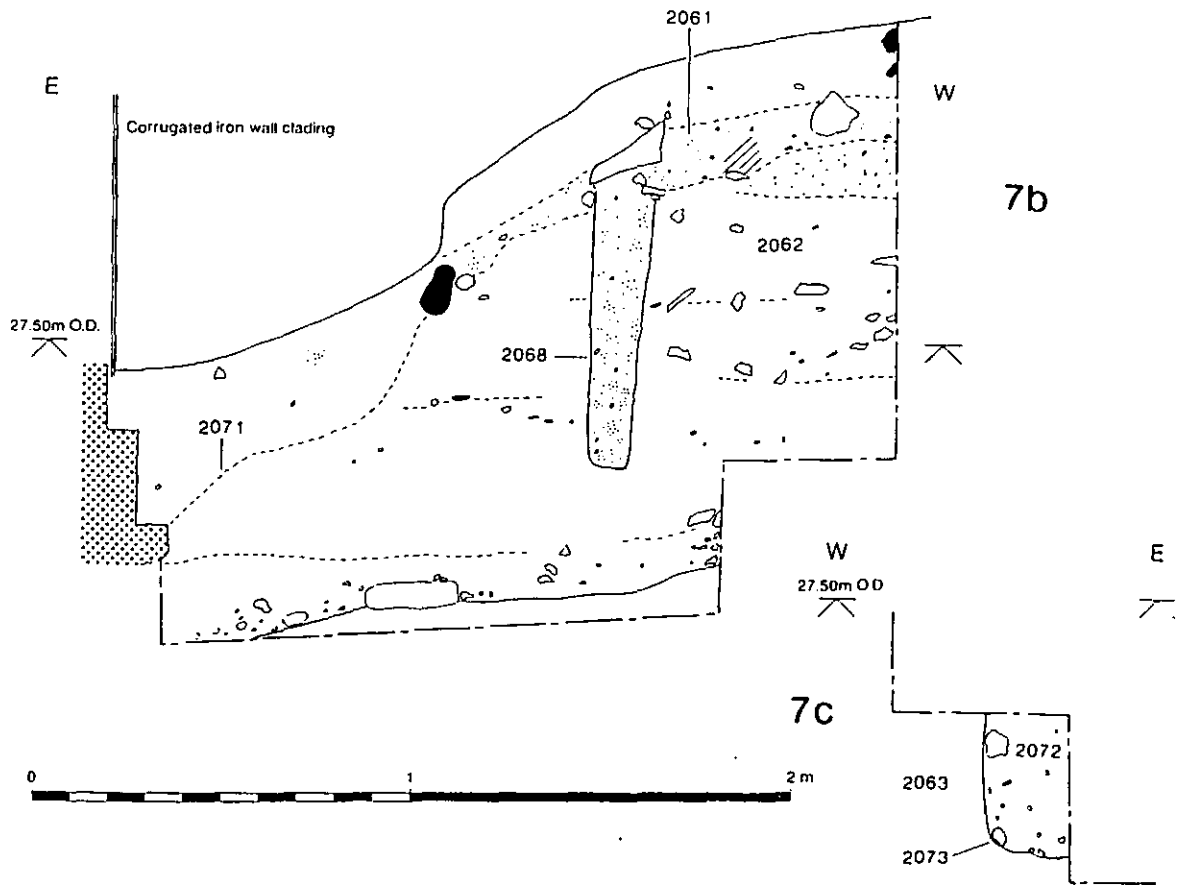


Figure 7a. Plan of test pit 7
Figure 7b. North facing section of test pit 7
Figure 7c. South facing section of post hole 2073

Description

The archaeological sequence is sealed by a 160mm thick, dark humic soil 2060, representing the modern top soil. This layer lies directly upon the rubble layer 2061, also it does not appear to extend over the fills of construction trench 2071.
Construction trench 2071 appeared to be a linear cut up to 750mm wide, running parallel to the stepped concrete foundations 2070 of the 1900s cover building. It was a poorly defined cut, because its fill was a dark yellowish brown sandy loam, merged with the surrounding layers.

The initial step of the concrete foundations 2070 appears to fill the base of the construction trench 2071, implying the wet concrete was simply poured into the construction trench. The subsequent two steps both have smooth, slightly wood patterned outer edges implying that they were shuttered to produce a thinner, possibly prettier foundation to protect the up standing Roman wall on its inside edge. In addition there was a fourth step, below the main foundation in the north eastern corner of the test pit, which would appear to be the concrete foundation for one of the uprights of the iron frame of the 1990's cover building.

Under the top soil layer 2060 there was the substantial rubble layer 2061. It was 100mm thick and consisted mostly of assorted large stones and lumps of mortar. The southern edge of this layer was very diffuse and lay against the northern limits of the construction trench 2071. The interpretation and the dating of this rubble layer is extremely problematic, given the lack of dating evidence, and may equally be either the remains of a Victorian spoil heap or a continuation of the rubble layer 2031 seen in test pit 6 whose origin is the abandonment/destruction of the villa.

There is a strong possibility that the substantial 120mm wide by 720mm deep stake hole was inserted through this rubble layer. It was a vertical sided flat bottomed feature, with a light, mortar rich fill, seen in the southern section of the test pit. The most likely interpretation for this stake hole is that it belonged either to a revetted spoil heap to the west of the villa, or a viewing platform erected to allow people to have a grandstand view of the excavations.

Below the rubble layer 2061 there was a layer of sandy loam some 1.2m thick, which was divided into five ephemeral but nonetheless real layers using variations in stoniness. The upper of these layers 2074, was approximately 150mm thick, contained relatively frequent chalk flecks, and had a flat and reasonably well defined boundary with the underlying layer 2062, which was largely devoid of inclusions.

Layer 2062 was 280mm thick and separated from the relatively stonier layer 2075 by a denser stone horizon. The layer 2075 was up to 300mm thick and had the appearance of being a mixed layer because of the varying dip of the flatter inclusions. It had a

well-defined boundary with the underlying layer 2063 which was almost inclusion free. It was noted that at the boundary between these two layers there were a number of lighter, sandier patches, no more than 20mm thick and 90mm long. Layer 2062 was approximately 400mm thick and faded into the slightly lighter layer 2064, which was 110mm thick and overlay the gravel layer 2065.

It is probably reasonable to view layers 2064 and 2063 as a naturally accumulating soil horizon, broadly equivalent to layer 2032 in test pit 6, with the sandy patches in the surface of layer 2063 being the result of weathering. The process of gradual soil accumulation appears to have been halted by layer 2062, which, because of its mixed nature, may be a dump of sediment. The layer 2062 above this apparently dumped material is fairly similar to the layer 2063 and therefore it may also represent an accumulation of soil over time. The final layer of the sequence 2074, possibly being the remains of a cultivated field, as the small lumps of chalk are suggestive of a 'marled' soil, dating to some time before the Victorian excavations. However, given the limited information upon which the interpretation of these five layers is based there must remain a strong possibility that one or all of the upper three layers may be the remains of a Victorian spoil heap.

There was one ephemeral feature contained within these layers, post hole 2073. It was apparently cut through layer 2063 and was a circular, vertically sided, flat bottomed cut containing a fairly stony fill, which was excavated more by feel than sight. In spite of the ephemeral nature of this feature it probably represents the remains of a substantial post hole structure cut into the layer 2063.

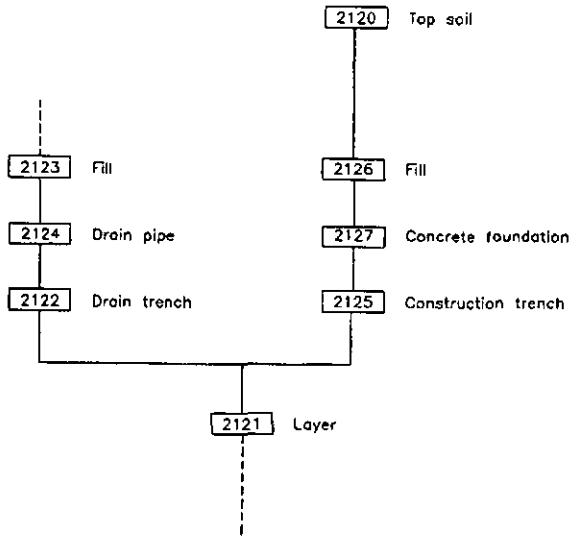
Underlying the lower of the five sediments there was an ephemeral gravel layer/surface 2065, which appeared to form a broad, irregular band running north-south across the eastern portion of the test pit. It sat directly upon the natural geology (Greensand) and seemed to rise up towards its western limits. The most likely interpretation of this layer is that it is a natural gravel horizon, given that it is common for the natural Greensand to be sealed by an ephemeral layer of gravel, before the development of a soil and there was no artefactual evidence from this layer or 2063 and 2064. An alternative and probably extremely unlikely interpretation, given the lack of artefacts and subsequent sedimentary sequence, is that it is a gravel surface to the west of the main villa building.

It is possible to suggest that the Victorian excavations disturbed very little beyond the immediate area of the concrete foundations. However, it is impossible given the present level of data to determine exactly how much of the 1.3m of stratigraphy is Victorian spoil heap, beyond saying it is probable that layers 2063 and 2064 are pre Victorian. Also it is equally difficult at present to define the horizons contemporary to the villa. Because of this ambiguity, it is difficult to suggest formation processes for most of the layers within this test pit.

Test pit 9

Plan see figure 4
Section see figure 8a
Contexts 2120 to 2127
Photographs 3509-11

Matrix



Location - test pit 9

A 2 x 1.5m test pit located against the western side of the 1900s cover building, between it and a rectangular structure, some elements of which could still apparently be seen in the rough ground just to the west of the villa.

Objectives

1) To define the extent of the Victorian excavations and works associated with the 1900s cover building, to the south west of the main villa building.

2) To identify and quantify surviving archaeological deposits to the south west of the main villa building.

3) To test the theory that the walls of the small rectangular building to the west of the main villa, may have continued to the east, behind their recorded extent.

Description

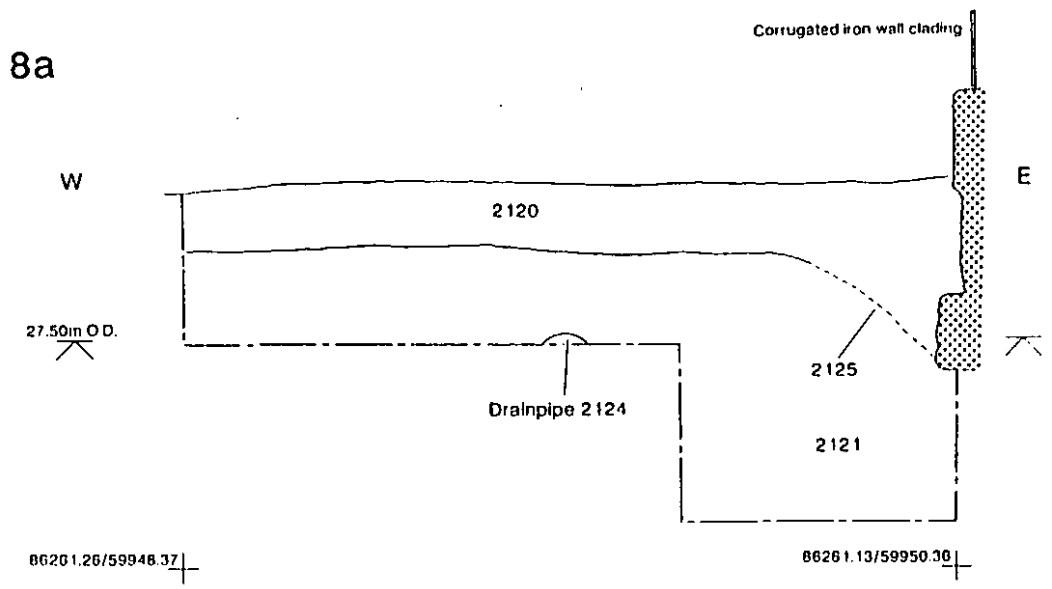
The archaeological sequence is sealed by a 180mm thick, mixed, humic soil, containing large quantities of late twentieth century debris. This layer overlay an apparently homogenous and clean layer 2121 and the similar lower fills of the construction trench 2125.

The construction trench appeared to be a linear feature, up to 400mm wide and 220mm deep, parallel to the concrete foundation of the cover building over the main villa building and, as in the test pits 6 and 7, the initial step of the concrete foundation of the cover building fills the base of the foundation trench. However, although the other two steps of the foundation were constructed in a similar way, the other face of the second step is extremely rough and this section is apparently largely constructed of rubble with little concrete.

Underlying the topsoil layer 2120 was a yellowish brown, homogenous sandy clay loam 2121. It had relatively clean and well-defined boundaries with the construction trench 2125 and the top soil layer 2120. However it was impossible to identify the cut and fill of the twentieth century drainage pipe trench 2122, which may have been cut into the upper portion of this layer.

Layer 2121 was very similar to layer 2032 in test pit 6, all the artefacts (flint debitage broadly dated to the Late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age), all being retrieved from the upper portion of this layer. This would seem to imply that this layer is probably a continuation of 2032. However, as natural was not reached in this test pit it can only be surmised that the lower portion of the stratigraphic sequence would be similar to test pit 6 as well.

There was no evidence from this test pit to indicate that the wall lines of the small rectangular structure to the west of the main villa building extended to the east, although it is more than possible that the test pit was to one side of a possible continuation. On the last day of the fieldwork it was suggested (*pers comm* the Custodian), that many of the linear rubble lines and other lumps and bumps in the area were largely the result of John Oglander (grandson of current owner) constructing stone 'long barrows' etc. Also it would appear that the archaeological sequence is truncated vertically to a point probably comparable to the surface of layer 2032 in test pit 6, ie. all Roman and later deposits have been removed from the area of the test pit by the excavations to the west of the main villa building. The foundations for the cover building and its associated drains have cut in to the pre Roman soil 2121 in a more localised way.



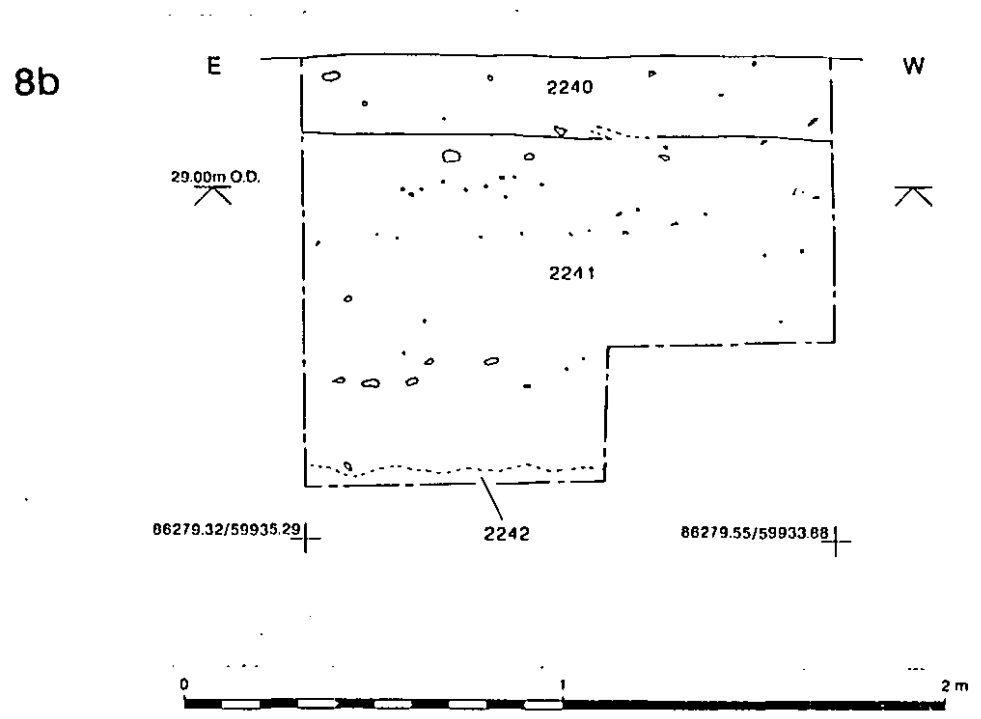
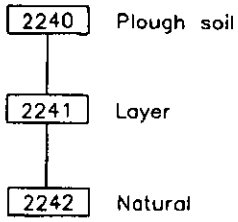


Figure 8a. South facing section of test pit 9
Figure 8b. North facing section of test pit 13

Test pit 13

Plan see figure 4
Section see figure 8B
Contexts 2240 to 2242
Photographs 3515

Matrix



Location - test pit 13

A 1.5 x 1.5m test pit located in the cultivated field to the north-west of the 1900s cover building, on the line of the proposed outer land drain at a point were it crossed a linear anomaly (a possible wall line) identified in the resistivity survey of the area.

Objectives

1) To identify and quantify surviving archaeological deposits to the north-west of the main villa building.

2) To identify the linear anomaly identified the resistivity survey and postulate why it did not show up in the magnetometer survey of the same area.

3) To provide excavated data to help with the interpretation of the field walking results

Description

The archaeological sequence is sealed by a 210mm thick modern plough soil. It was a slightly sticky (in comparison to the underlying layers), silty sand loam with a wavy (plough scars) but very well defined boundary with the underlying layer 2241.

Below the plough soil was soil layer 2241, a 850mm thick yellowish brown loamy sand. It showed little in the way of vertical differentiation apart from some subtle stony lenses, and all the artefacts were retrieved from the upper, slightly more gravelly 300mm of the layer. This makes 2241 similar to 2032 in test pit 6 in a number of respects.

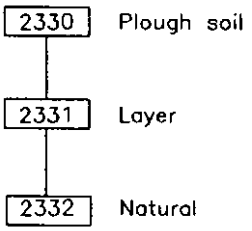
Underlying this largely homogenous layer was the natural Greensand 2242. However, unlike test pits 6 and 7, there was no ephemeral gravelly layer on the surface of the natural. In addition, the boundary between 2241 and 2242 was very broken and irregular with circular patches of the natural sand in the lower portion of layer 2241. This might suggest that this boundary had been subject to animal and/or root action at some point.

It has been possible to demonstrate from this test pit that there are at least 850mm of deposits below plough soil, to the west of the villa. Also, given the broad similarity between this layer and 2032 of test pit 6, to suggest that their origin was similar and that they may therefore, be part of the same sequence of events.

Unfortunately there was no archaeological deposit encountered during the excavation of this test pit that may equate to the anomaly identified during the resistivity survey. However, because of the size of the test pit, it could easily lie just outside the excavated area. Also, given the depth of deposits below plough soil, it is possible to theorise that the apparent discrepancy between the magnetometer and resistivity results may be simply that each is detecting anomalies at different depths of the soil profile.

Test pit 16
Plan see figure 4
Contexts 2330 to 23233
Photographs 3523

Matrix



Location - test pit 16

A 1.5 x 1.5m test pit located in the cultivated field to the south-west of the 1900s cover building, on the line of the proposed outer land drain at a point where it turned sharply to the east.

Objectives

1) To identify and quantify surviving archaeological deposits to the south-west of the main villa building.

2) To provide excavated data to help with the interpretation of the field walking results.

3) To increase our understanding of the subsoil, given its variation between test pits 7 and 20.

Description

The archaeological sequence is sealed by a 240mm thick modern plough soil 2330. It was a brown sandy clay loam with a wavy (plough scars) but very well defined boundary with the underlying layer 2331. This layer was very similar in character to layer 2241 in test pit 13, being a yellowish brown homogenous loamy sand. Although in this case it was only 350mm thick and had a higher clay content.

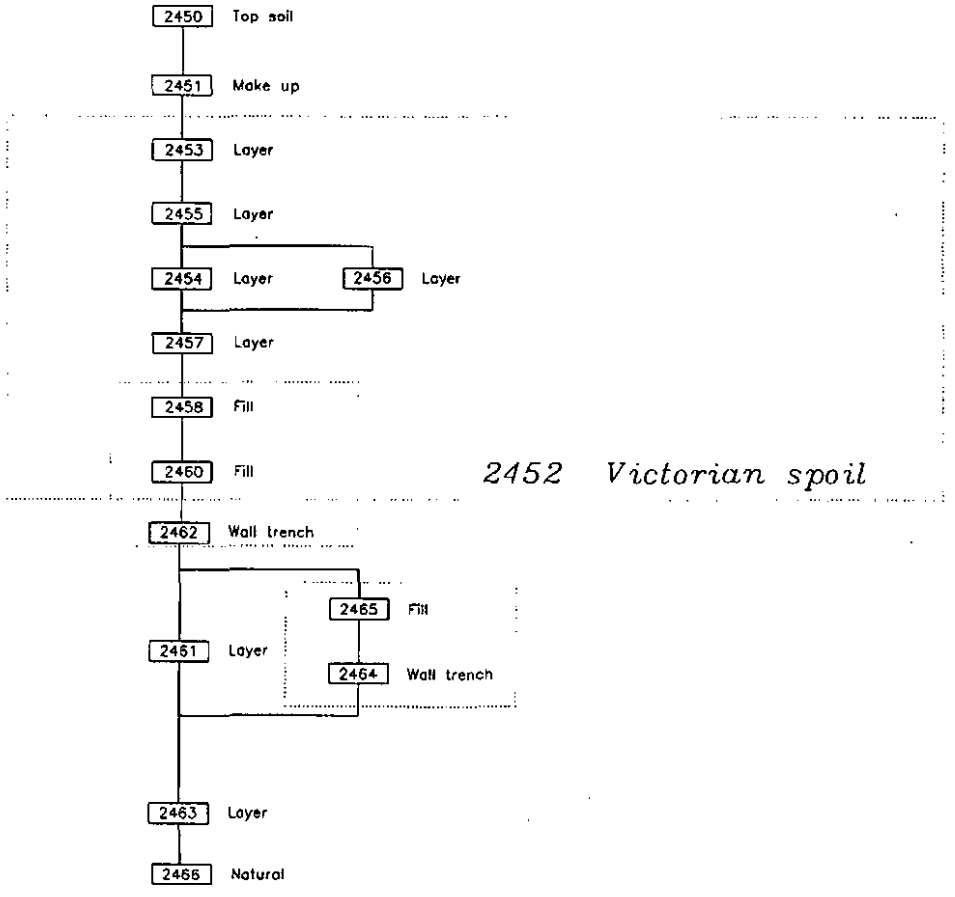
Underlying layer 2331 was the natural geology 2333. It had a clearly defined, almost horizontal, boundary with the above layer 2331 and consisted of swirling, intertwined lenses of sandy gravels, yellow sandy clays, and Greensand forming an extremely mixed layer unlike the other exposures of natural in the area.

It would appear that the archaeological sequence in this test pit is similar to test pit 13 although 500mm shallower, representing either a greater truncation of the archaeological sequence by ploughing, or less of an accumulation in sediments before the commencement of modern cultivation. The mixed nature of the natural sediments in this test pit would seem to imply that this test pit may lie close to a junction between the ferruginous sands (Greensand) to the north and Atherfield clays to the south, and that it has been subjected to periglacial mixing.

Test pit 20

Plans see figures 4, 9A and 9B
Section see figure 10
Contexts 2450 to 2466
photographs 3516-8

Matrix



Location - test pit 20

This was a more irregular test pit than the others, as it needed to be widened both to the east and south during its excavation, until it eventually become an L shaped area 2.5 x

2m. It was located just to the south-east of the 1900s cover building, on the edge of the platform surrounding the building.

Objectives

1) To define the extent of the Victorian excavations and works associated with the 1900s cover building, to the south east of the main villa building.

2) To identify and quantify surviving archaeological deposits to the south-east of the main villa building.

3) To locate the remains of the courtyard wall between the main villa building and the southern range.

Description

The archaeological sequence was sealed by 200mm thick, rough, humic top soil. Its removal revealed a substantial (200mm thick), layer of rammed chalk 2451, which was found to fade out along its southern limits. The investigation of this layer concluded that it was part of a substantial rubble dump used to make a level area around the eastern portion of the 1900s cover building and the area of the villa courtyard used as a car park.

Underlying this rubble layer were a number of brownish yellow sandy clay loams (contexts 2453-2459), with varying amounts of small inclusions, forming dump 2452, both sealing and filling the two linear features 2462 and 2464. Linear feature 2462 ran north-south along the expected line of the courtyard wall between the main villa building and the southern range. It had an almost vertically sided, flat bottomed profile, 1.20m wide and 650mm deep, and contained no structural remains in the excavated portion. The other linear feature ran east-west, across the line of 2462. It was only partially excavated and had a more irregular profile, 790mm wide and 450mm deep, with its eastern end giving the impression that it undermined the surrounding layers slightly. Also its fills appeared to have been cut by 2462, although this was by no means certain given their similarity.

The most likely interpretation for these sediments would appear to be Victorian back fill, with the linear feature 2464, in our view, being a prospection pit for the courtyard wall This explains why its sediments appeared to have been cut by 2462. This linear feature on the other hand would appear to be the wall trench for the courtyard wall, which had been emptied by the Victorian excavators, implying this wall had been robbed out prior to the Victorian excavations.

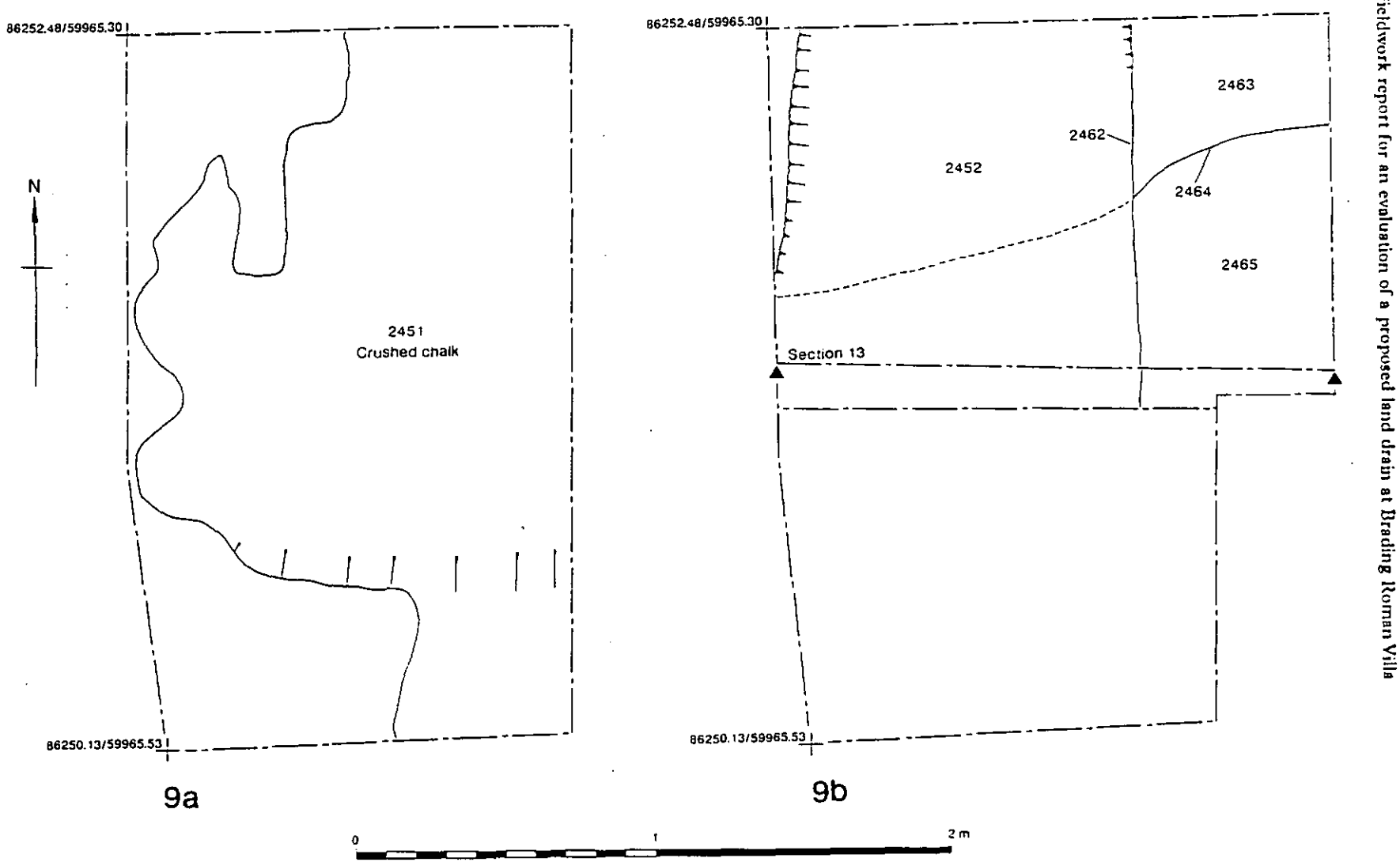


Figure 9a. Plan of crushed chalk layer 2451, test pit 20

Figure 9b. Plan of fully excavated test pit 20

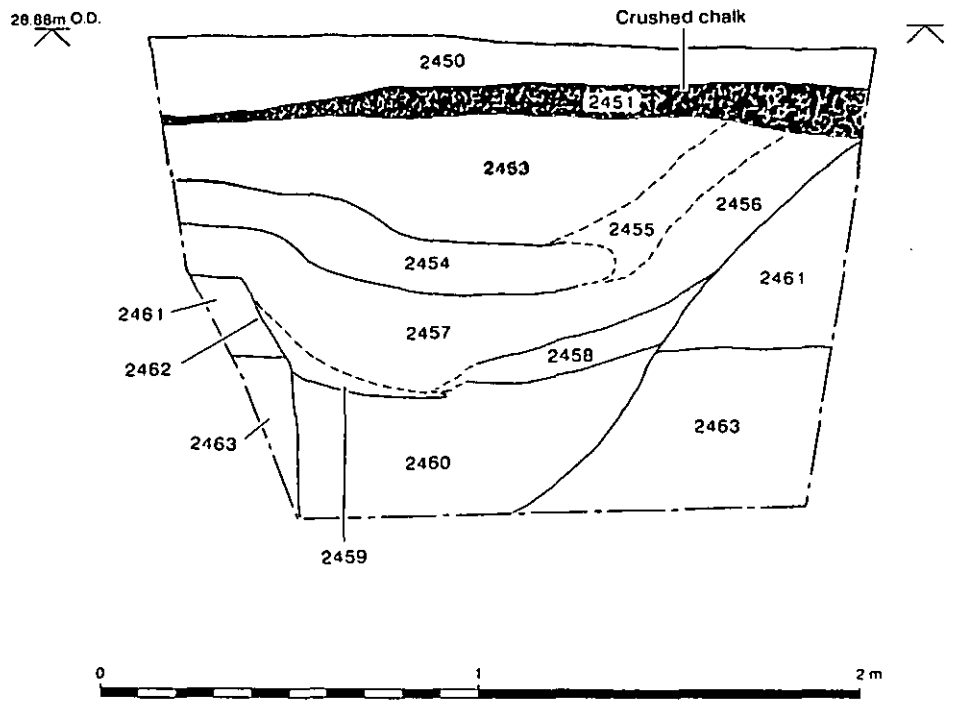


Figure 10. South facing section of test pit 20

These linear features appeared to cut a dark yellowish brown, homogenous inclusion free sandy clay loam 2463. It was 450mm thick and left unexcavated. Because it was so similar to the homogenous layer 2032 in test pit 6, it may have a similar origin.

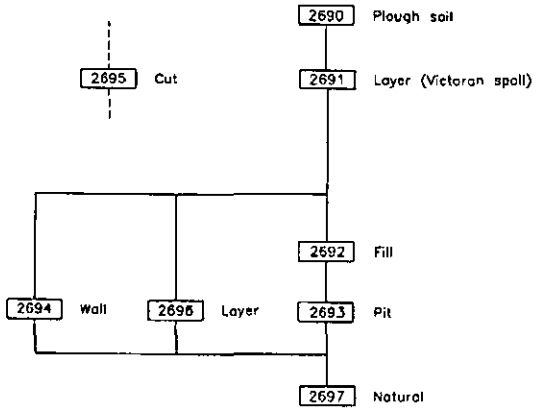
Underlying layer 2463 was a mixed layer of stiff, yellow and grey/blue sandy clays 2466. They had a clear and well-defined boundary with 2463. This would appear to be the natural geology (Atherfield clays) in this particular part of the site and are very different to the Greensands of test pits 6, 7, and 13.

It would appear that the ground immediately to the east and south of the cover building has been made up during this century with a dump of rubble to form a flat level area. Underlying this make up layer were substantial quantities of Victorian spoil. This both sealed and filled the wall trench of the courtyard wall, which appeared to have been robbed out, and the robber trench emptied by the Victorian excavators. The wall trench appeared to cut a homogenous soil similar to the one in test pit 6, implying that this soil might be quite extensive in the area of the villa. However, in this case it seems to overly Atherfield clay rather than the Greensand.

Test pit 28

Plans see figures 4 and 11a
Section see figure 11b
Contexts 2690 to 2697
photographs 3519

Matrix



Location - test pit 28

A 2.1 x 1m test pit located across the line of the eastern courtyard wall, just to the north of the southern range.

Objectives

1) To determine the extent of the Victorian excavations in the area.

2) To identify and quantify surviving archaeological deposits on the line of the eastern courtyard wall, just to the north of the southern range.

3) To locate the eastern wall of the courtyard last seen during the Victorian excavations.

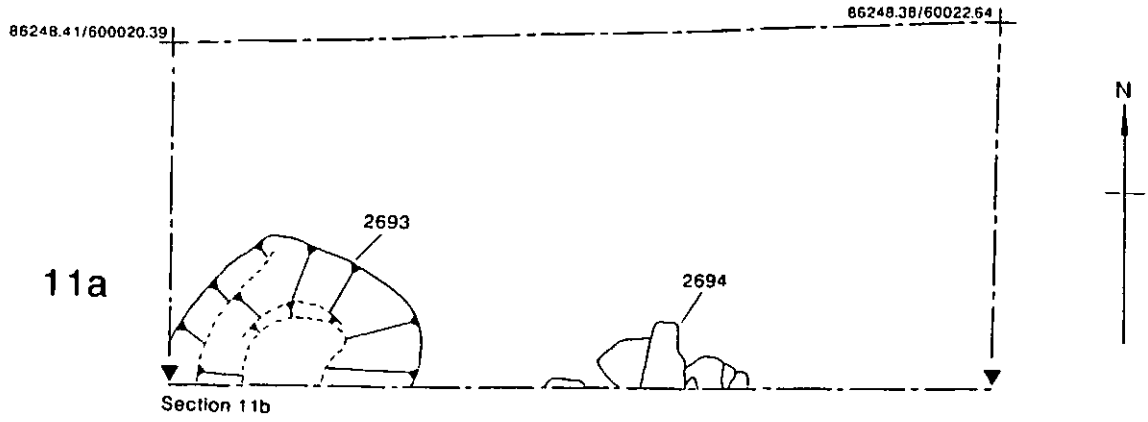
Description

The archaeological sequence was sealed by a 300mm thick modern plough soil 2690. It was a dark yellowish brown sandy loam with a wavy (plough scars), but very well defined boundary with the underlying deposits. The underlying layer 2691, was a slightly lighter sandy loam with common small chalk stones and ephemeral lenses of stones, giving it the overall appearance of the Victorian back fill in test pit 20, which may suggest its origin.

Layer 2691 had an extremely poor boundary with the underlying soils due to their similarity. However, this layer did seal a patch of dense rubble 2694, just protruding from the southern section of the test pit. Although there was little structure to this patch of rubble, it was close to the predicted location of the eastern wall of the courtyard implying that it was the remains of this wall, and that its foundations may have been unmortared.

To each side of the remains of the courtyard wall there was the 190mm thick, homogenous layer 2696, identical to the overlying layer 2691 except that it contained fewer inclusions. This similarity to the overlying layer meant that the boundary between the two was extremely poor. Also its relationship with the remnant of the courtyard wall 2694 was indeterminable.

A likely interpretation of layer 2696 is that it represents the remains of a soil contemporary to, or earlier, than the courtyard wall. An interpretation corroborated by the functionless pit 2693, which appears to have cut the lower portion of this layer. However it is possible that this layer is also Victorian back fill, like the overlying layer 2691. The pit had an irregular cut approximately 700mm in diameter and 320mm deep,



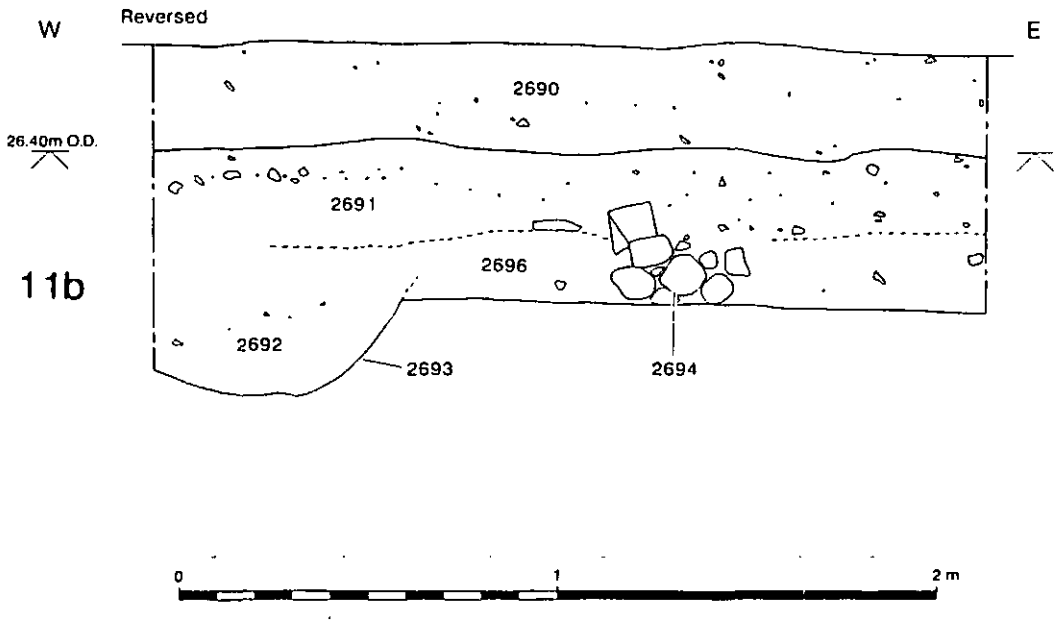


Figure 11a. Plan of test pit 28

Figure 11b. North facing section of test pit 28

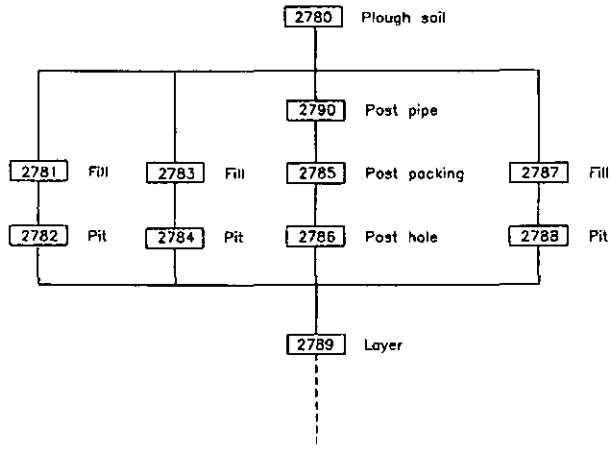
containing a dark yellowish brown sandy loam and one sherd of Grey ware of unknown origin (second to forth century). The fill was very similar in many ways to the underlying natural sediments, making it a fairly difficult feature to excavate.

The natural sediments exposed in the base of this test pit were olive coloured silty sandy loams, containing common small, weathered flint stones, very different to the other exposures of natural during this phase of field work at Brading.

It is possible to suggest that the layers sealing the remains of the courtyard wall are spoil, possibly filling the remains of the Victorian excavations. The courtyard wall was, at least regarding its foundations, a dry stone structure surviving to the south of the test pit. Also it is possible to suggest that there was a soil layer 2696, broadly contemporary to, or earlier than, the courtyard wall and that this layer may have been cut by a functionless pit, located just inside the courtyard.

Test pit 31
Plans see figures 4 and 12
Contexts 2780 to 2790
photographs 3522

Matrix



Location - test pit 31

A 2.6 x 1m test pit located just beyond the eastern limits of the southern range of the villa.

Objectives

1) To determine whether the Victorian excavations had extended this far to the east.

2) To identify and quantify surviving archaeological deposits to the east of the southern range of the villa, beyond the courtyard area.

3) To test the theory that the walls of a possible bath house at the eastern end of the southern range of the villa may have continued to the east, behind their recorded extent.

Description

The archaeological sequence is sealed by a 280mm thick modern plough soil 2780. It was a brown sandy clay loam with a wavy (plough scars), but very well defined boundary with the underlying deposits. In comparison with all the other contexts excavated during this phase of field work at Brading villa, this layer was relatively rich in artefacts, mostly fragments of tile.

Once the plough soil had been removed it was obvious that there had been little recent disturbance to the deposits below, which had been cut by three large pits 2782, 2784, and 2788 of uncertain function. These three pits all contained similar dark yellowish brown, inclusion poor, loamy fills in stark contrast to the layer 2789, which the pits cut.

In addition to the pits, layer 2789 had also been cut by a post hole 2786. It was some 300mm in diameter and contained a clearly defined post pipe and tile packing. This evidence would suggest that at least one post hole structure survives to the east of the known archaeology of the southern range of the villa.

Layer 2789, into which the post hole 2786 and the pits 2782, 2784 and 2788 have been cut, is composed of a dark brown loam with tile, chalk and charcoal rich patches, giving the layer the overall impression that it is a series of ephemeral dumps of material, rather than a purposely laid surface. The slight linear depression in its south-western quarter may be the result of plough damage, or possibly the result of this layer slumping into an underlying feature.

It would seem likely that the Victorian excavations did not extend this far to the east, although the archaeological deposits do. These represent at least three phases of activity, all of which were exposed after the removal of the modern plough soil.

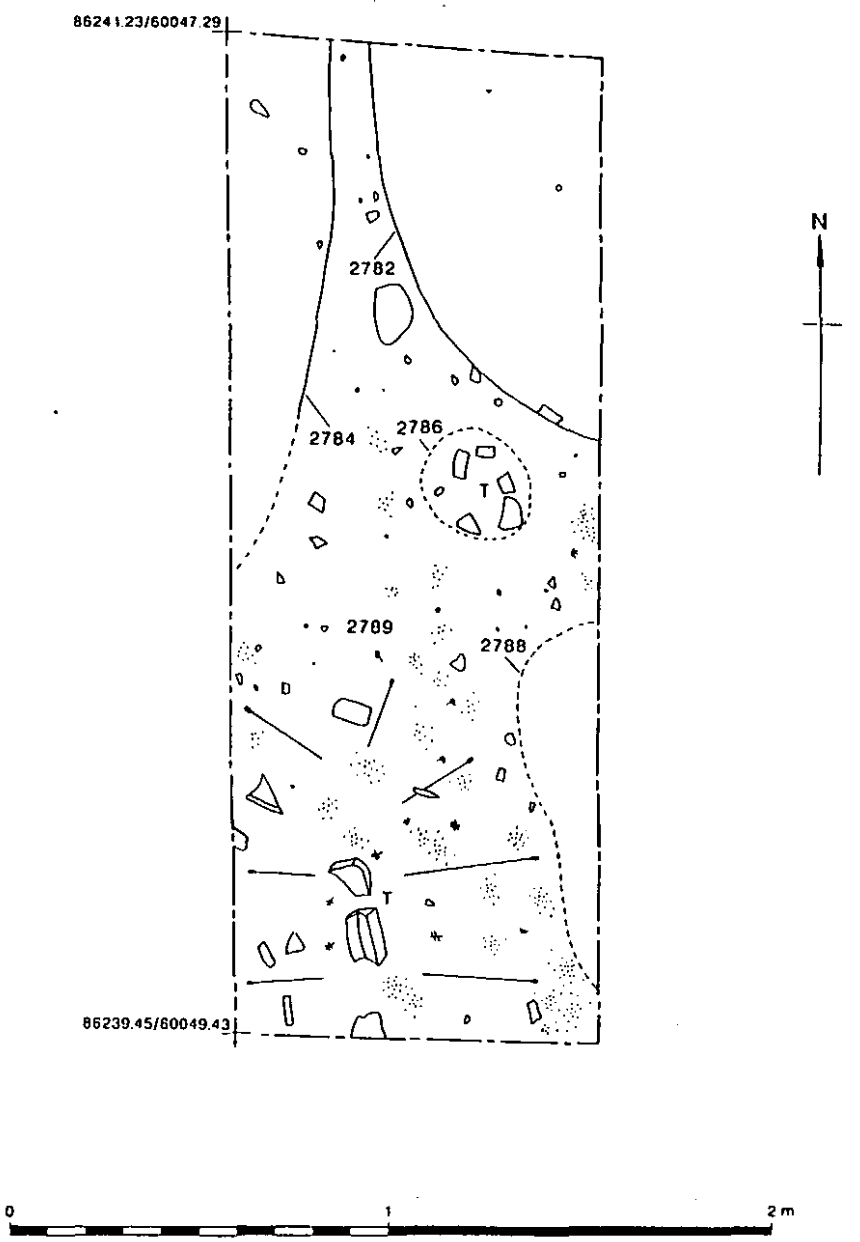


Figure 12. Plan of test pit 31

The most recent phase of activity probably consists of three undated pits, with an unknown function. This would appear to be preceded by a post hole structure of unknown size and shape, which in turn cuts a dumped layer, forming the final phase of activity recognised within in this test pit. However, as the dumped layer was not removed, it need not be the base of the archaeological sequence in the area and it may conceivably obscure any eastward continuation of the walls of the bathhouse, located at the eastern end of the southern range of the villa.

Note

Test pits 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47 and 48 were not excavated.

APPENDIX 2

SPECIALIST REPORTS

PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF LITHIC ASSEMBLAGE

by
Jon Humble

Introduction

A total of 494 flint artefacts was recovered by fieldwalking (n=416) and test-pitting (n= 77 + 1 from a column sample from test pit 7) at Brading villa on the Isle of Wight. This material attests to pre-Roman activity on the site of the villa. No earlier prehistoric pottery was found.

Provenance

At the time of writing there has not been the opportunity to consider the horizontal distribution of the material, although it is anticipated that the distribution will prove to be

fairly uniform without significant variation in density across the walked and pitted area.

Method of Evaluation

The assemblage was examined and listed by provenance, by category of artefact (e.g. core, flake). Cores and retouched forms were ascribed to type (e.g. unclassifiable core, extended scraper). A full listing is appended. In addition, the nature of the raw material, the condition and the technological characteristics of the artefacts were considered, but were not recorded in detail.

Unstuck flint, including numerous thermoplastic and plough-shattered pieces, was discarded.

Raw Material

The quality of the raw material is variable and comprises mainly medium-grained nodular flint with a thin cortex. Some artefacts have been struck from pebble flint. At the time of writing the likely source of the raw materials and comparisons with other assemblages from the Isle of Wight have not been researched.

Condition

Surfaces are mostly fresh, but in some instances slightly corticated. As a consequence of cultivation damage, edges are typically abraded and chipped, and a high proportion of flakes and other forms have been fragmented. A minority of artefacts are in relatively undamaged condition, suggesting that they have been in the plough-soil for a comparatively short period of time.

Typology

Fieldwalked

Parent Material

Cores	13
Core Fragments	14

Debitage

Flakes	120
Broken Flakes	79
Blades	1
Irregular waste	161
Burnt fragments	20

Retouched

Scrapers	5
Other retouched forms	3

Test Pits

Parent Material

Cores	1
Core Fragments	1

Debitage

Flakes	38
Broken Flakes	14
Blades	2
Irregular waste	15

Retouched

Scrapers	2
Other retouched forms	3

Dating

The fieldwalked assemblage is characterised by unclassifiable cores, poorly struck small

and squat flakes, a high proportion of irregular workshop waste, and a limited range and number of retouched forms comprising crudely-worked scrapers and points and notches. Individual artefacts that are distinctive of a particular period are absent. In conjunction, however, with recurrent technological traits such as a high prevalence of hinge fractures and undetached cones of percussion resulting from mis-hits, the material from surface collection is compatible with the acknowledged characteristics of the post-Beaker Bronze Age tradition of flintworking.

The group from the test-pits contains less irregular waste, and in general the flakes are larger and have been systematically struck from cores with more carefully prepared platforms, but narrow flake and blade forms are largely absent. Consequently, it is possible that this group contains a more significant proportion of material which can be broadly ascribed to the later Neolithic and early Bronze Age periods.

The differences between the surface-collected and excavated assemblage might be explained by the original circumstances under which the material was deposited. It is also possible that some of the irregular waste, particularly notable within the fieldwalked material, results from post-prehistoric agricultural or building activity which required the fragmentation of flint nodules.

Function

The relative proportions of parent material, debitage and retouched forms is not distinctive of a particular activity or range of activities. The cores and the core rejuvenation flake indicate that some knapping activity took place locally. The low proportion of retouched forms suggests an expedient technology in an area rich in suitable raw material, and/or the common usage of flakes and other forms without further modification.

OTHER MATERIAL CLASSES

by

Sarah Jennings

Ceramic

Limited amounts of pottery were recovered from the field walking, this ranged in date from early Roman to late post-medieval (20th century). There were a few sherds of medieval pottery -13th/15th century, and some dating to the 16th/17th century, in addition to the late post-medieval and Romano-British sherds.

None of the fragments was particularly significant and there did not appear to be significant clustering.

Other finds

Most of the metal finds are of relatively recent origin and comprise mainly fragments of agricultural implements or bullet cases. One marble from a Victorian 'pop' bottle was recovered.

There is a small amount of evidence for some type of industrial activity in the area. A few lumps of pumice like material were found along with a stone with glassy slag adhering to it, and some sherds which might be crucible coating.

Storage

All the metal finds, regardless of age, have been extracted from both the field walking material and from the test pit context because of their different storage requirements. These have been given 'archaeological object' record numbers and listed separately.

The remainder of the material has been bagged as individual contexts.

APPENDIX 3

PROJECT BRIEF
by
Dr David Tomalin

BRADING ROMAN VILLA

Archaeological Assessment for a proposed land drainage scheme.
Information and brief prepared by the Isle of Wight County Archaeological Unit.

Setting

Brading Roman Villa (SAM 35) stands at the southern foot of the scarp face of the central chalk ridge of East Wight. It is situated at a height of 35m on gently sloping farmland. The soil is light and sandy being derived from the underlying ferruginous sands of the Lower Greensand Series.

The portion of the villa, currently open to the public, is housed beneath an ageing cover building amid arable fields. The cover building encloses the main villa house; a winged corridor building facing east. The house faces onto a courtyard or precinct flanked to the north and south by subsidiary ranges of buildings. These buildings were partially excavated in 1880 - 1882. The north range comprises an aisled building with a small attached bath house at the east end. The south range was interpreted by its Victorian excavators as a barn. The courtyard or precinct is seemingly closed on its eastern boundary by a simple stone wall. A detached building on the southern range lies beyond this wall. The Victorian records are poor but they intimate that this detached building may have been a bath house or perhaps an industrial building with furnace, suitable perhaps as a pottery.

Current situation

Ownership of the site is complicated. The exhibited areas of the villa, its house, north range and courtyard, are privately owned but are currently in the process of transfer to a new charitable Brading Roman Villa Trust. Prompted by the current owners, the Trust is anxious to secure a new and improved management plan for the whole of the site. This includes the purchase of the south range which currently lies under arable land.

Recent damage

A disastrous flash flood occurred at the villa in 1990 when excess ground water, entering from the north, engulfed the mosaics with sediment. In January 1994 a similar flood occurred. This time the effects were more severe. The principal mosaics in room 12 were buckled and weakened by the flood water and the wall plaster of this room became saturated, softened and stained. Other mosaics in the house were also affected by flood water.

Present tasks

Advised by English Heritage, the Trust is urgently seeking a means to avert further flood damage. For this purpose a new drainage scheme has been proposed by Mr J Anchor of HBMC. The scheme proposes the draining of land to the north west of the villa and the laying of a main drain through the villa courtyard. The existing rainwater drains will be modified and linked to the new system. A soakaway of no less than 4 cubic metres capacity may be sited at an appropriate distance to the south east. Alternatively the drain may be extended to a municipal drain in the south east corner of the new car park field.

THE BRIEF

1. The object of the appraisal and site work will be:-

   a. To appraise the Trust's advisors of the archaeological impact of the proposed drainage scheme including pipe-laying and the cleaning out of the silted drainage cutting against the north wall of the cover building.

   b. To identify areas of latitude and to identify any archaeological constraints in the siting and laying of the new drainage system and in modifying the existing system.

   c. To advise on perceived options and constraints posed by the results of the current geophysical survey and a localised fieldwalk associated with this survey.

   d. To provide a permanent bench mark and site grid for future archaeological work.

   e. To record localised fieldwalk information in the proposed purchase area before the cessation of arable land-use on this portion of the site.

   f. The work will be carried out by the Central Archaeological Service as part of a Class VI consent under the Ancient Monuments And Archaeological Areas Act of 1979.

Field tasks

2. In the environs of the villa house, courtyard and south range, the proposed course of the drain will be assessed by non-destructive hand cut archaeological test pits cut either through sterile soil to bedrock or to the undisturbed surface of significant archaeological features.

3. The size of the test pits in the close vicinity of the villa shall be no less than 1.5 x 1.5 m. Their interval on the drain line will be no less than every 10m in the close vicinity of the villa. Their provisional position is shown as stars on the enclosed plan. Similar test pits should also be cut at the proposed man-hole locations. Alongside the approach road and in the new car park field the test pit interval may be increased to 20m and their size may be reduced. The interval should be modified and adjusted to assess any geophysical or crop mark anomalies on the proposed line of the drain.

4. In the courtyard area, test pits will be required to assess an optional course for a new linking drain set no less than 8m east of the frontage of the cover building.

5. The cutting of test pits should commence on 21 March and should be back-filled as work proceeds unless features are revealed which should be inspected at a site meeting scheduled for 6 April.

6. Two permanent datum points should be installed for future site work. One should be sited and levelled at SZ 52600 86300. A second should provide for a convenient sight line through the door of the cover building.

7. Points for a permanent base line should be installed for future survey work and should be conveniently compatible with the national grid. They should also relate to key points of reference established by the English Heritage Photogrammetric Unit and by the Archaeometry Branch of the Ancient Monuments Laboratory.

8. Localised fieldwalk. This should be carried out within a 20m corridor along the line of the drain. Retrieval should be restricted to the need to identify and describe. The results should be available prior to finalising the test pit positions.

Site archiving

9. The field archive should follow CAS standard archive policy and should include the specific provisions listed below. A copy of the machine-based record is acceptable to the County SMR and County Museum and Heritage Service on a Delilah data-base. It is understood that a decision on the deposition of the field archive will be made after further discussion has been pursued between the site owners, the Brading Roman Villa Trust and the Isle of Wight Museum and Heritage Service [IWCMHS].

10. Boxing. The standard object storage boxes should be those used by IWCMHS. These are BS acid-free boxes with brass wire stitching. External dimensions, length 410mm, width 360mm, depth 155mm. Full depth lid.

11. The site number should be 1017. [Isle of Wight SMR number for Brading villa].

12. Context numbers should commence at 40. The first context number should be used for unstratified material.

13. Archaeological object numbers and sample numbers should be a single running series. In the case of bulk items that are retained, labelling and marking should be restricted to the packaging of these objects.

14. Marking of artefacts should be restricted to the object number only and should not include the site and context number. The marking should however leave sufficient space (8 digits) for the later prefixing of a museum accession number. On the enclosing bag the site number then context number then object number should be given. For archival purposes we recommend that Staedtler Pancolour Permanent Liner 303 is used for polybags boxes plastic labels etc. For paper records and labels we recommend Staedtler Marsgraphic Pigment Liner 308.

Publication of summary

15. At the completion of the assessment, provision should be made for a short summary client report with appropriate illustration. It is anticipated that further field work will be carried out by the Isle of Wight County Archaeological Unit after which the work carried out by CAS will be integrated and identified in a published report.

Brief prepared by The Isle of Wight County Archaeological Unit

61, Clatterford Road, NEWPORT, Isle of Wight, PO30 1NZ.

NB.

It is recognised that many guidelines and standards for finds and archive preparation are embodied in the working practices of the Central Archaeological Service. Any copies of finds and archive processing manuals currently in use would be gratefully received.

A copy of the Collection Policy for the IWCMS can be made available if required.

Further information is contained in:

Walker, K., 1991, Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage, UKIC/MGC.

English Heritage, 1991, MAP 2. In particular sections; 4.9, 4.10, 6.4, Appendix 3, A4.3, and Appendix 6.

Museums & Galleries Commission, 1992, Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections.

Society of Museum Archaeologists, 1993, The Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections.

Watkinson, D. (ed), 1987, First Aid for Finds, UKIC.

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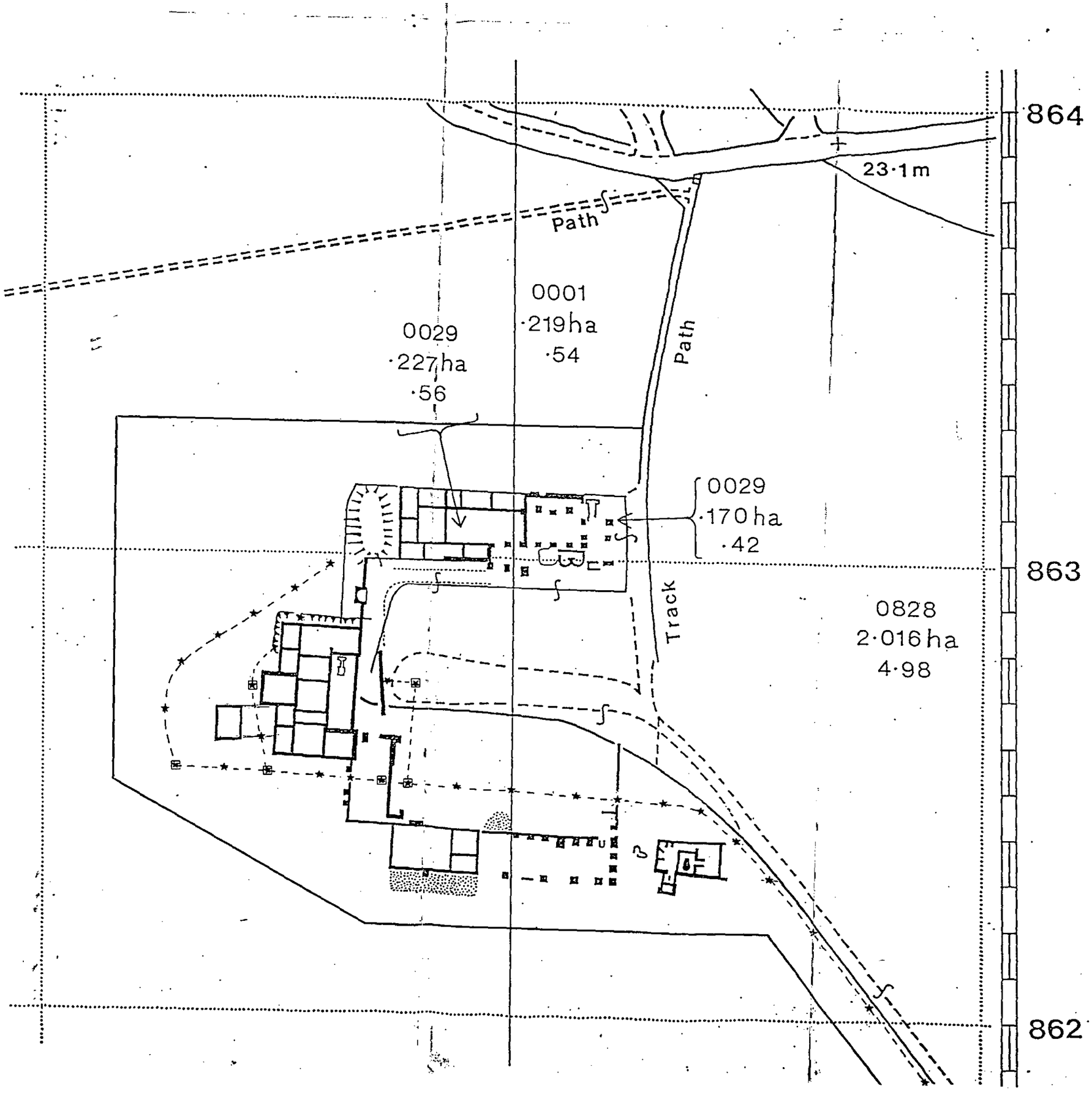
March 1994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Southworth
Yenton
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White
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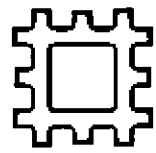

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