AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE STAGE 2 LAND AT FARNHAM QUARRY (RUNFOLD FARM), SURREY, IN MAY AND SEPTEMBER 2003

SURREY COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

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Summary

In May and September 2003, staff of the Surrey County Archaeological Unit (SCAU) carried out an archaeological field evaluation of land at Farnham Quarry (Runfold Farm), Surrey, on behalf of Hanson Aggregates. A total of 48 trial trenches examined the archaeological potential of an area forming part of the Stage 2 quarry area.. The evaluation led to the discovery of a number of parts of ditches or gullies which probably belong to an ancient field system. They seem likely to be related to the area of Iron Age settlement, with associated enclosures and fields, that lay principally to the north of this area. Further evidence of Iron Age and Roman date is known to the south. It is recommended that controlled stripping of several areas of ground around these features is undertaken in order to clarify their date and character.

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NGR	SU 8724 4837 (centred)
Client	Hanson Aggregates

1 INTRODUCTION

An evaluation of land at Farnham Quarry was originally intended to be carried out as a single programme of work, but was split into two stages for operational reasons. Reports on the two stages are presented separately below, although there is a single set of illustrations.

2 AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF LAND AT FARNHAM QUARRY (RUNFOLD FARM) IN MAY 2003 by J Robertson

2.1. Introduction

On 29th-30th May 2003 staff of the Surrey County Archaeological Unit (SCAU) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Farnham Quarry (Runfold Farm), Surrey (fig 1). This work examined the archaeological potential of a strip of land (part of Stage 2) which lay to the east of an area (also part of Stage 2) evaluated in 2002 (Hayman 2002) which proved largely negative, and to the south of an ancient field system revealed during archaeological investigations in 1998 (Marples 1998).

SCAU were commissioned to undertake the work by Hanson Aggregrates.

2.2. Methodology

A total of thirteen trial trenches were excavated within the designated area using a tracked mechanical excavator with a 1.5m toothless bucket (fig 2). The trenches were an average of 22m long and 1.6m wide and were between 0.30m and 1.10m deep depending on the stratigraphy encountered (see below). They were located in such a way as to provide a balanced sample of the area, and in order to intercept any linear features associated with the ancient field system to the north that may have extended southwards into the area. The machining was carefully watched for the occurrence of any features or artefacts of archaeological interest which might indicate the presence of ancient activity on site. All features of potential archaeological interest were sampled by manual excavation in an attempt to produce material by which they could be dated.

2.3. Results

The stratigraphy encountered in most of trenches consisted either of 0.25-0.30m of ploughsoil over the undisturbed natural geology of orange-yellow sandy clay with occasional flint gravel, or of a comparable depth of ploughsoil with up to 0.25m of mid/dark brown sandy-clay subsoil between the ploughsoil and the natural.

Exceptions to the norm were trenches 5 and 7, both of which partially sampled topographical hollows. The western end of trench 5 cut the edge of a hollow which was filled by up to 0.30m ploughsoil, over 0.40m heavy clay, over 0.20m loamy clay, over 0.20m of brown peaty soil over natural grey clay. Trench 7 sampled a shallow hollow filled by 0.20m

topsoil, over 0.30m dark brown clayey subsoil, over 0.20m brown peaty soil overlying the natural brickearth. Similar topographic features were sampled during the 2002 evaluation of Stage 2 to the west of the present area (Hayman 2002, 1), and near West Farm to the south when the Blackwater Valley Route was under construction (Hayman 1991), both of which investigations concluded that such features have a geological origin.

Four features of potential archaeological interest were identified within four of the thirteen trenches and were sampled by manual excavation. They included two shallow gullies (100 and 101), a ditch (102), and a possible pit (103). The results are summarised below and the feature dimensions and profiles are illustrated on fig 3.

Trench 1

Gully 100 was a revealed running approximately north-south across the eastern half of trench 1. Upon excavation the gully was revealed to reach a depth of 0.22m with a bowl-shaped profile, and contained a homogenous fill of brown silty clay. No finds were recovered by which to date the gully.

Trench 2

Gully (101) was revealed running diagonally across the western end of Trench 2 on the same approximate north-south alignment as gully 100 in trench 1 (fig 3). The gully was 0.20m deep with a similar profile and brown silty clay fill as gully 100. No finds were recovered by which to date the feature.

Trench 3

A ditch (102) was revealed running east-west across the northern half of trench 3 (fig 3). Upon excavation, the dark loose soily fill of the ditch and the recovery of a sherd of late 19th century pottery, and fragments of modern brick and tile, from the ditch fill provided a late 19th/20th century date for the feature.

Trench 8

A possible pit (103) was revealed cutting the western side of trench 8 near its southern end. Upon sampling, the roughly oval shaped feature was seen to reach a depth of 0.45m with two steeply sloping sides, and a more gently sloping northern side. The upper 0.25m of fill (103A) was a mid-grey/beige silty clay, over a 0.05m thick band of black peaty material (103B), over the 0.15m thick basal layer of grey silty clay (103C). No finds were recovered from this feature. The character and fill of the feature suggest the possibility that it may have been a naturally occurring feature, possibly associated with tree clearance.

Very few stray finds were recovered during the evaluation: they included three pieces of burnt flint, a few fragments of undateable roof tile, and a few sherds of late 19th pottery.

2.4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The evaluation revealed two gullys, a possible pit and a modern ditch. Gullys 100 and 101 are probably part of the same feature, but it is not possible to date them due to the absence of finds. The gullys appear to be on the same approximate north-south alignment as the principal field boundary of the ancient field system revealed *c*30m to the north in 1998 (fig 1) during an archaeological watching brief (Marples 1998, 3-4), and may represent the southern continuation of one of its ditches. Gullys 100 and 101 had a slightly darker fill than that of the ancient boundary ditches 106 and 107 (ditches 106 and 107 had an upper fill of orange-brown silty clay and a basal fill of pale to mid grey sandy clay silt (Marples 1998, 4)).

'Pit' 103 is of dubious origin; the character and fill of the feature suggest the possibility that it may have been a naturally occurring feature, possibly associated with tree clearance. Modern ditch 102 is likely to have been either a drainage ditch and/or an agricultural boundary.

Gullys 100 and 101 may represent the southern continuation of the ancient field boundary, but the lack of other features of archaeological interest and absence of finds suggests that it is unlikely that they are closely associated with an ancient settlement area. It would, nevertheless be of some value to clarify their southern extent and suspected westward return, so as to obtain a fuller picture of the ancient field system.

It is recommended, therefore, that area south and west of features 100 and 101 is opened up as part of a controlled strip to ascertain the nature and extent of any coexisting features, to enable the courses of this ditch to be established, and to provide opportunity for the further sampling of features so that the dates of each can be confirmed and/ or determined. A methodology for this work is given as part 4 of this report. Area F on fig 2 shows the approximate area suggested for further investigation, though the exact size and shape may vary depending on the course of the ditch and the nature and extent of any additional features that are discovered.

2.5 Bibliography

Hayman, G, 1991 *An archaeological evaluation of part of the A31 Runfold Diversion and Blackwater Valley Route, 1991* (SCAU limited circulation report)

Hayman, G, 2002 *An archaeological evaluation of part of the stage 2 area at Farnham Quarry (Runfold Farm), Surrey in May 2002* (SCAU limited circulation report)

Marples, N, 1998 *An archaeological watching brief at Runfold Farm, near Badshot Lea* (SCAU limited circulation report)

3 AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE STAGE 2 LAND AT FARNHAM QUARRY (RUNFOLD FARM), SURREY, IN SEPTEMBER 2003 (SU 8716 4833) by G N Hayman

3.1. Introduction

Between 8th - 10th September, 2003, staff of the Surrey County Archaeological Unit (SCAU) carried out an archaeological field evaluation of land at Farnham Quarry (Runfold Farm), Surrey (fig 1). This work examined the archaeological potential of a strip of land which lay to the east of an area, also within Stage 2, that was evaluated during May of this year (Robertson above), and to the north of the Stage 3 area examined during 2001 (Hayman 2001). The May evaluation led to the discovery of two stretches of ditch which seem likely to belong to an ancient field system, discovered in 1998 (Marples 1998), that lay principally to the north of this area, while the 2001 evaluation led to the discovery of several features of ancient, or probable ancient origin and resulted in recommendations being made for the controlled stripping of two areas of ground within Stage 3 (Areas B and C, fig 2).

The evaluation work was undertaken on behalf of Hanson Aggregates.

3.2. Methodology

The evaluation was achieved using a tracked mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket to excavate thirty five trial trenches within the designated area (fig 2). The trenches varied between 18.5m and 21m in length, were approximately 1.6m wide, and were between 0.25m and 0.65m deep depending on the stratigraphy encountered (see below); their location provided a balanced sample of the area under investigation. The machining was carefully watched for the occurrence of any features or artefacts of archaeological interest which might relate to ancient activity in the immediate vicinity. All features of potential archaeological interest were sampled by manual excavation in an attempt to produce material by which they could be dated.

3.3. Topography

Much of the evaluation area was gently undulating due to the presence of numerous topographical hollows. Similar hollows have been sampled during previous evaluations at the site and are believed to be of naturally occurring (geological) origin; they are prone to waterlogging during periods of wet weather.

3. 4. Results

The stratigraphy encountered in most trenches consisted of 0.25-0.30m of ploughsoil over the undisturbed 'natural' geology of orange, yellow or green sandy clay with some areas of flint

gravel and loose chalk. Elsewhere the ploughsoil was generally seen to overlie a single deposit of subsoil which reached up to 0.35m thick and was, at different locations, either a brown clay or a black humic clay soil, though in trenches 32 and 33 which partially sampled two of the deeper topographical hollows present, two layers of subsoil were encountered, a dark humic soil over a brown silty clay.

No unstratified finds of archaeological interest were recovered from any of the trenches excavated, but five of them revealed features which required investigation. These features are summarised below and their dimensions and profiles are illustrated on fig 4

Trench 1

Ditch 200 ran in a roughly east-west direction across the northern half of this trench and was approximately 1.40m wide and 0.60m deep where sampled. It contained four layers or lenses of fill, a dark grey-brown to black humic clay soil (200A), a dark brown clay soil (200B), a green-grey sandy silt (200C), and a grey-brown silty clay (200D), which produced several small fragments of undiagnostic brick or tile and several lumps of chalk. The ditch could not be dated by its excavation, but the chalk recovered suggests that it is most probably of medieval, post-medieval or later origin as this material has only very rarely (if at all) been recovered from the features of Roman or earlier date that have previously been excavated at the quarry.

Trench 4

Ditch 201 ran in a roughly north-west to south-easterly direction across the eastern part of this trench, and appeared to turn towards the south close to the southern edge. It was approximately 0.70m wide and 0.32m deep where sampled, and contained a fill of dark grey-brown to black silty clay. A shallower shelf on the eastern side of the feature indicated that it may have been recut at some stage. Several fragments of post-medieval or later brick were recovered from the upper fill, and these finds seem likely to broadly date the ditch even if they belong to the final stages of infilling or if they accumulated in a slightly later subsidence hollow above it.

Trench 10

Feature 202 was in all likelihood the terminal of a ditch which most probably ran westwards from the trench, but may possibly have curved towards the north from this point. It measured approximately 0.52m in width and was between 0.18m and 0.34m deep where sampled, the basal profile being quite irregular. It contained two layers of fill, an orange-grey silty clay with charcoal (202A) and a mid to dark grey silty clay (202B), which together produced several pieces of calcined flint (often a by-product of primitive cooking practices) and an

animal tooth. The appearance of the fill and the finds recovered suggest that that this ditch is unlikely to be of post-medieval or modern date, and work completed previously within the quarry suggests that there is every chance it is of Roman or earlier origin.

Trench 11

Ditch 203 ran in a roughly north-east to south-westerly direction across the eastern end of this trench and was approximately 0.58m wide and 0.25m deep. It contained an unconsolidated fill of black humic soil that produced no finds. This fill feature was entirely unlike that of the nearby feature 202 (Trench 10), and, even though this may be partly explained by the fact that it was cut through marginally lower lying ground and may have been prone to waterlogging, it was felt at the time that it was probably of relatively recent origin.

Trench 26

This trench revealed parts of two ditches, 204 and 205, and a chalk rubble field drain, 206. 204 was approximately 1m wide and 0.40m deep and contained a main fill of dark grey-brown silty clay (204A) and a lens of silver-grey sand (204B), while 205 was roughly 0.64m wide and 0.30m deep and contained a fill of loose, mid brown soil. Three sherds of pottery were recovered from 204, one of which may belong to the middle Iron Age while the other two were probably of similar origin, but, alternatively, could be of earlier date.

No finds were recovered from 205 but the character of its fill suggested a relatively recent origin, and 206, most of which was removed during the machining of the trench, was almost certainly of similar date.

3.5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The evaluation revealed a limited number of features of archaeological interest though ditch 204 in Trench 26 is most probably of Iron Age origin, and ditch 202 in Trench 10 may be of broadly similar date. 204 is of particular interest as the sherds recovered emanate from at least two, possibly three separate vessels, all of which may be Iron Age. If so, they seem more likely to result from primary deposition close to an area of contemporary activity, than to occur residually in, say, a field system ditch which, even if of similar date, may lie some distance from other contemporary material. The latter possibility may be more appropriate for 202 which produced no datable material, though negative evidence of this sort does not rule out the possibility that associated features may lie nearby.

It is recommended, therefore, that areas around features 202 and 204 are opened up as part of a controlled strip to ascertain the nature and extent of any coexisting features, to enable the courses of these ditches to be established, and to provide opportunity for the further sampling of both features so that the dates of each can be confirmed and/ or determined.

Areas D and E on fig 2 show the approximate areas suggested for further investigation, though the exact size and shape of these may vary depending on the nature and extent of any additional features that are discovered.

3.6 References

Hayman, GN, 2001 *An Archaeological Evaluation of the Stage 3 Area at Runfold Quarry* (SCAU limited circulation report)

Marples, NJ, 1998 *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Runfold Farm, near Badshot Lea* (a SCAU limited circulation report)

4 METHODOLOGY OF STRIP, MAP AND SAMPLE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

4.1 Where a detailed specification is not given below it is to be assumed that all work should be carried out within high professional standards, with the scope and level of different aspects of the work defined by reference to the advice and practice of English Heritage and the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

4.2 The overall aim of the project will be to clarify the nature and character of the archaeological evidence revealed within the areas B, C, D, E and F marked on fig 2.

Machine excavation

4.3 The controlled strip should take place under the control of a qualified archaeologist who will determine the precise level at which stripping stops, so as to ensure the clear identification of all features of archaeological interest within the areas.

4.4 Excavation of soils should be undertaken using a 360° excavator equipped with a wide (1.8m or greater) toothless bucket. Vehicles shall not cross the exposed surface until authorised by the archaeologist in charge.

4.5 Sufficient time should be allowed after stripping for the excavation and recording of an appropriate sample of the archaeological evidence.

Hand Excavation

4.6 The purpose of this section is to outline the strategy and methods of hand excavation. Four aspects of this may be identified.

4.7. The mapping of surface evidence

After site stripping plans will be prepared showing all the surface evidence (at a scale of 1:50 or larger). All contexts will be numbered, record sheets created and surface finds collected.

4.8. A hand excavated sample of all features

The minimum level of sampling will obviously vary with the type of feature and its perceived capacity to contribute towards the objectives of the excavation. Some minimum levels of excavation for different types of feature may be indicated:

- *Linear features: enclosure ditches* At least a 20% sample of exposed lengths should be fully excavated, resulting in a minimum of a 5m length of excavation

- *Linear features: ring gullies* At least a 40% sample of exposed lengths should be fully excavated
- *Linear features: other or field boundaries* At least a 5% sample of exposed lengths should be fully excavated, resulting in a minimum of a 3m length of excavation
- *Pits:* All to be half-sectioned, unless form or size suggest an alternative approach. A more selective approach may be appropriate if the features are numerous and repetitive, but this must be agreed with Surrey County Council's Archaeological Officer (Tony Howe)
- *Post-holes:* All to be half-sectioned, unless form suggests an alternative approach. Excavation to 100% of feature will follow.
- *Industrial features:* Complete excavation, bearing in mind the needs of environmental and scientific sampling, and with the advice of appropriate specialists (unless excavation director and specialists agree a lesser sample adequately serves the objectives)
- The above covers the principal types of feature likely to be found. Other types of features if found will be excavated according to good professional practice and their capacity to meet the project objectives.

4.9 Selective further hand excavation

Sampling as at 2 above may lead to the conclusion that further sampling is required to meet the project objectives. Reasons for this include

- *Acquisition of further dating evidence:* Further excavation is needed to clarify stratigraphic sequences or to acquire more finds to date a feature.
- *Identification of function, status:* Further excavation will help establish, by the form of the feature or the nature of finds within it, the function or status of occupation at a particular period.
- *Meeting of specialist needs:* In the light of on-site advice there may be a need for further sampling to meet the needs of environmental and other specialists.

4.10 The methods of hand excavation

In general terms the more rapid the excavation method is, the less refined the evidence produced. The site director will need to use his/her discretion in this, adopting the method which will most economically achieve the desired aim. Mattock and shovel will generally provide the best approach to substantial volumes of undifferentiated fill; at the other extreme fragile articulated bone may require delicate tools and enormous care. There is no perceived advantage to general sieving of deposits to aid recovery of artefactual evidence. Sieving will occur on a selective basis, largely for environmental purposes.

Recording and Processing

5.11 Recording should be undertaken as follows:

- All structures, deposits and finds are to be recorded according to accepted professional standards.
- Plans indicating the location of areas examined and the location of all archaeological features are to be drawn at an appropriate scale. Plans at an appropriate scale should be related to the National Grid. All plans and sections are to be drawn on polyester based drafting film and clearly labeled.
- All archaeological contexts are to be recorded individually on record context sheets. A further more general record of the work comprising a description and discussion of the archaeology is to be maintained as appropriate.
- A full black and white and colour (35 mm transparency) photographic record of the work is to be kept. The photographic record is to be regarded as part of the site archive.

- All artifacts recovered during the work on the site are to be suitably bagged, boxed and marked in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, Conservation Guidelines No 2.
- Where appropriate conditions are encountered, environmental samples should be taken.

Report Preparation

4.12 A short summary of the results of the work, even if negative, will be bound into the client report for submission to the Planning Authority and the Sites & Monuments Record. Copies should be supplied to Hanson Aggregates and to Tony Howe, Archaeological Officer, Surrey County Council.

The site summary should be a non-technical summary that will enable the archaeological officer to inform local societies and press about the results of the archaeological investigations.

The client report should include:

- A copy of the location plan of the areas examined at an appropriate scale together with a plan of the main archaeological features identified, if applicable, together with more detailed plans as appropriate and relevant section drawings.
- A descriptive summary and interpretation of the archaeology of the site.

4.13 A full report on the work, containing a level of detail appropriate to the importance of any discoveries made, must be made available for publication in a publicly available journal, within two years of completion of any fieldwork.

Finds and Archive Deposition

4.14 Finds will need to be retained by the archaeological contractor until an appropriate level of study has been completed, and it is anticipated that they will then be placed in the nearest suitable Public Museum.

4.15 If the applicant (as legal owner of the finds) wishes to make alternative arrangements for the curation of all or part of the archive such arrangements (including details of storage arrangements) will be agreed in writing with the planning authority. Where the place of deposition is not a Public Museum, a comprehensive record of all materials will need to be made for deposition in the nearest suitable Public Museum.

Health And Safety

4.15 SCAU operate within the Health and Safety guidelines established by Surrey County Council and the Sustainable Development Department, adapted specifically for the form and type of work undertaken by the archaeological unit.

4.16 Departmental and Archaeological Unit safe working procedures relating to working both away from the office and on site will be followed, in addition to any additional Health and Safety procedures imposed by the main site contractor.

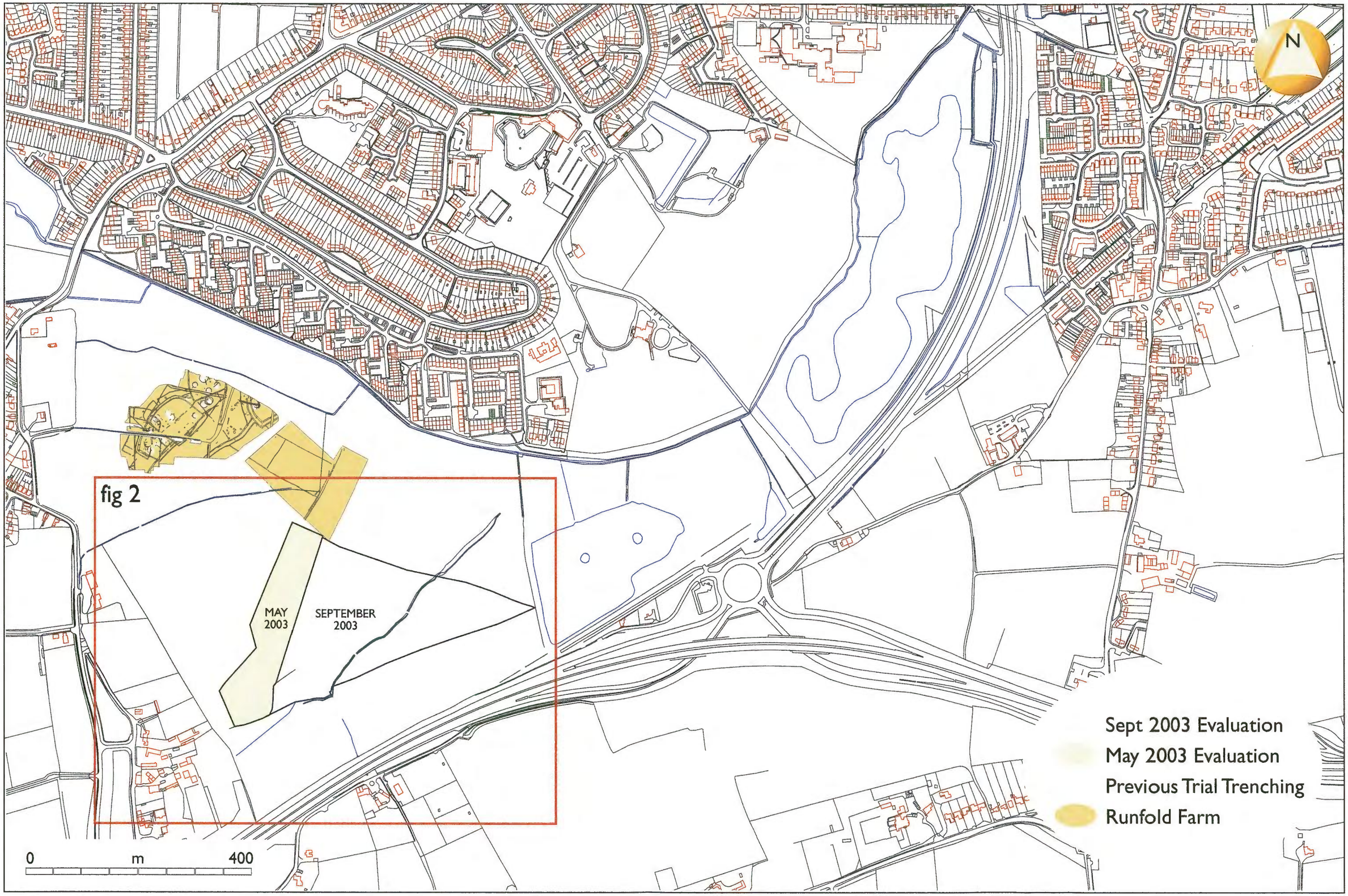

fig 1 Farnham Quarry: location of evaluation of Stage 2 area in 2003.

fig 2 Farnham Quarry, evaluation of stage 2 area: location of trenches.

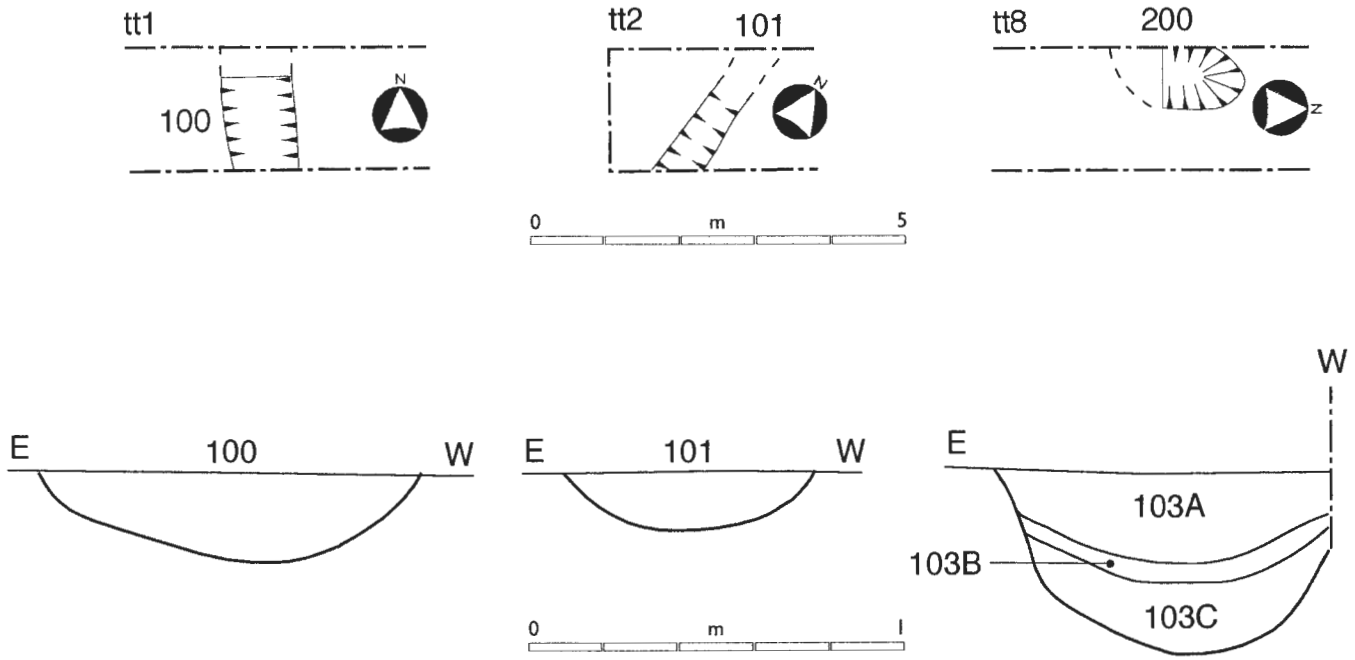

fig 3 Farnham Quarry: plan of features revealed in trial trenches, May 2003.

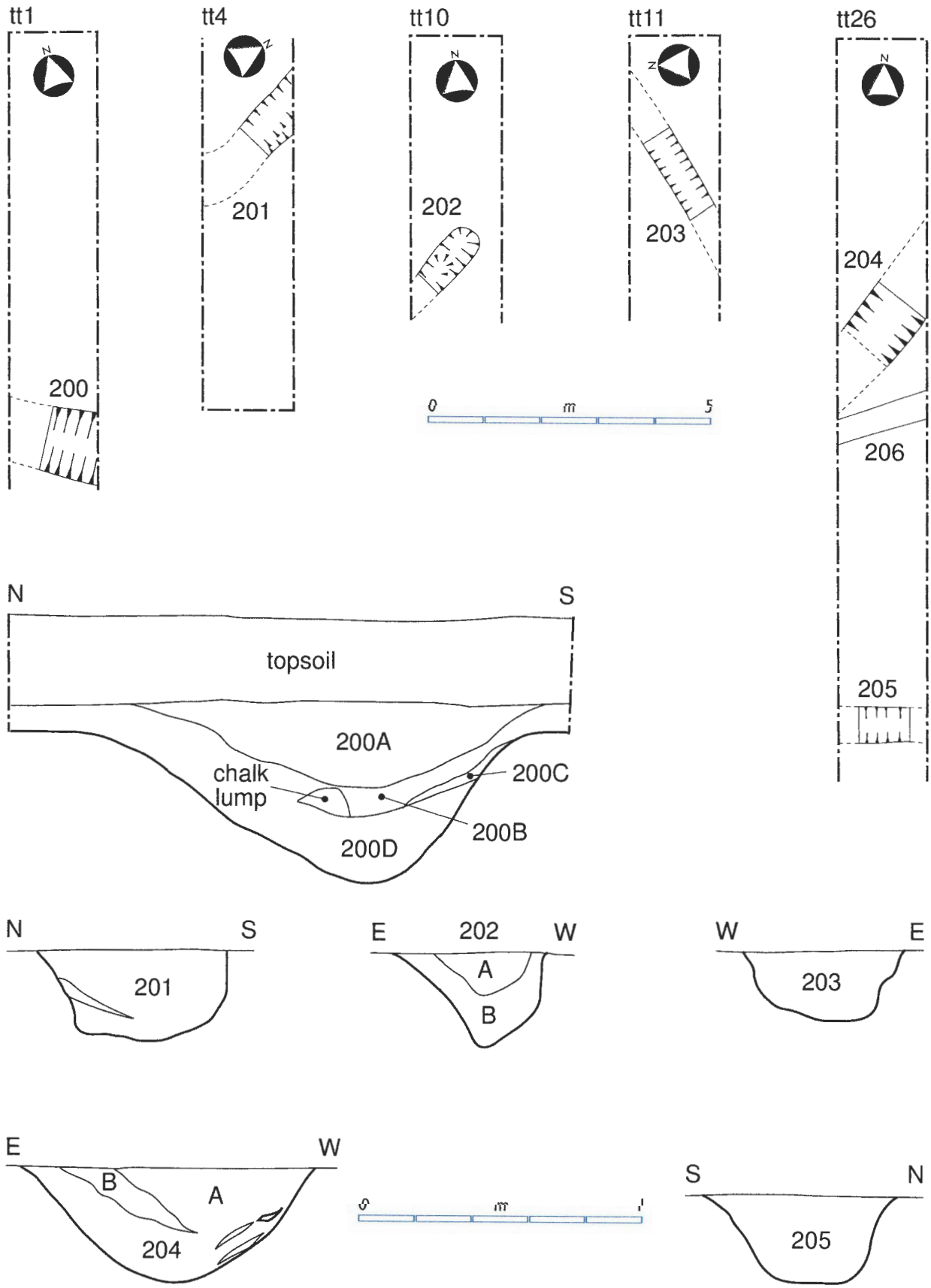

fig 4 Farnham Quarry: features identified in trial trenches, Sept 2003.