

**Programme of archaeological work  
at land adjacent  
Forge Cottage,  
58 Winchcombe Road,  
Sedgeberrow,  
Worcestershire**

Martin Cook BA MIfA

16th November 2014  
Revised 20th November 2014

WSM 66224

The School House  
Church Lane  
Tardebigge  
Worcestershire  
B60 3AH

07850 918755

# **Programme of archaeological work at land adjacent Forge Cottage, 58 Winchcombe Road, Sedgeberrow, Worcestershire**

## **Introduction**

A programme of archaeological work was carried out at land adjacent to Forge Cottage, 58 Winchcombe Road, Sedgeberrow, Worcestershire (SP 0252 3834; Fig 1) at the request of Paul Cartwright of Carstone Developments Ltd. This work was undertaken in compliance with a brief from Mike Glyde of Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service (dated 1st October 2014, planning ref W/13/0751) and according to a written scheme of investigation provided by Martin Cook BA MIfA and approved by Mike Glyde of Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service.

The programme of archaeological work was to comprise an evaluation:

The definition of archaeological field evaluation is a limited programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.

The aims of the project were to determine the:

- presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts

and if such archaeological remains were present to:

- define their character,
- extent,
- quality
- preservation, and
- to enable an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context.

Should the trial trenching indicate the presence of significant archaeological deposits which would warrant more detailed and extensive recording then the area of the proposed development (or part of as agreed prior to works) will be stripped under close archaeological supervision using a toothless bucket to a depth where significant archaeological deposits are exposed, typically at the subsoil/natural boundary. All features of archaeological significance will be planned at a suitable scale and sampled.

## **The documentary material**

### **Historic mapping**

The earliest available map was the Sedgeberrow inclosure map of 1813. At this time the area of the site was known as Lower Field. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885 (Fig 2.1) shows that the eastern part of the evaluation site was once a narrow strip of land, presumably associated with Forge Cottage. No detail is shown regarding the area of the site to the west. By the time of the Ordnance Survey map of 1938 (Fig 2.2) the narrow strip of land on the eastern side of the site appears to have remained unchanged but the area to the west is now occupied by an orchard. This map also shows that Roman remains had been discovered to the south-east of the site at a distance of about 200m. Presumably this discovery was made when the land was prepared for the planting of the orchard.

### **The Worcestershire Historic Environment Record**

Of primary interest is the evaluation report from John Moore Heritage Services (JMHS 2012) who conducted an archaeological evaluation in advance of new planning proposals on land to the rear of

Main Road, Sedgeberrow, Worcestershire (centred upon SP 02312 38336; WSM 47415). The results of this evaluation formed the primary justification for the current evaluation (Glyde 2014):

*Extensive remains are known from land immediately to the north-west of the application area and the full extent of this site is not known.*

This archaeological evaluation followed a geophysical survey (Stratascan 2012) and metal detector survey of the site. Six trenches were excavated to the underlying natural geology or uppermost surface of the archaeology. The evaluation confirmed suspected archaeological anomalies in all of the targeted trenches. The earliest dating evidence recovered from the evaluation was considered to be mid to late Romano-British pottery. The latest dating evidence were post-medieval finds within the backfill of boundary ditches uncovered in Trenches 4 and 5. A probable Romano-British building of unknown function was discovered within Trench 4. A well preserved Romano-British corn dryer, with collapsed flue roof and sides was discovered within Trench 3.

Enclosure ditches of Romano-British date were adjacent to a postulated trackway or road. A human skeleton and Roman roof tile were found within the backfill of the roadside ditch. This ditch was also traced on earlier excavations undertaken in 1999 to the immediate west of the site (Buteux, Hunt and Glyde 1999). Other ditches in Trenches 1, 2, 5 and 6 probably represent the remains of simple field boundaries associated with the Romano-British settlement. After the departure of the Romans the village of Sedgeberrow was then settled by new migrants during the Saxon period. However, no Saxon remains were apparent within the trenches.

The majority of the heritage assets recorded by the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record lie to the north and west of the site, at distances of between 100 and 200m. Unstratified finds have been reported at Lower Portway Farm, Sedgeway (WSM 34500). The greater number of these heritage assets are buildings. These date from the 11th century (Manor House; WSM 06993), include the church of St Mary the Virgin (14th century; WSM 06991), a number of 16th or 17th century timber framed buildings (eg WSM 38117, WSM 39364, WSM 39548, WSM 39550 and WSM 39936) and a considerable number of 18th, 19th and 20th century structures. The majority of these lie within the core of the village, to the north and north west but one, Forge Cottage (WSM 39930), lies immediately to the north of the site and its curtilage seems to have once included the eastern part of the current site (see above: **Historic mapping**).

A recent evaluation to the south (Cook 2014) identified that there were no significant archaeological deposits present on the site of the proposed development but that there was some slight evidence for ridge and furrow agriculture, superseded in the 19th century by a more intensive agricultural regime which required the sub-surface draining of the land.

The area has been subject to an historic landscape characterisation project and is designated as an area of post 1880s orchard (HWR 1121).

## The fieldwork

### General

Fieldwork took place between the 27th and 30th October 2014. It comprised the excavation of three trenches, of 12m, 34m and 23m in length; 1.6m wide in the positions shown on Fig 3, with records (drawing, written description and photographs) made as appropriate. A minor extension to one of the trenches was carried out immediately before backfilling on the 6th November 2014 in order to throw more light on a gently curving narrow linear cut. A full description of the contexts is given in Appendix 1; a summary being employed below.

### Description and interpretation: excavation

#### Trench 1

No features were identified in Trench 1. Typical deposits in this part of the site comprised a dark grey brown clay sandy loam (context 00; topsoil) which overlay a light grey brown sandy clay (context 010; subsoil) which in turn overlay a light buff orange sandy clay (context 011; natural subsoil, Fig 4.4, section 4).

### *Trench 2*

A dark grey brown clay sandy loam (context 013; topsoil) overlay a mid green grey sandy clay (context 014; subsoil). After removal of this layer a sub-rectangular feature was apparent against the western side of the trench (Figs 4.1 and 10). This had two distinguishable fills: an upper layer of mid green grey sandy clay (context 016), filling a broader part of the feature (context 025) and a lower layer of mid green grey sandy clay with occasional medium angular stone (context 017) filling a narrower part of the cut (context 026; Fig 4.4, section 5). This was not bottomed as near where the base of this layer might have been expected to be was a clay drain pipe marked 'ENSOR', which still appeared to be active (Fig 10). Context 026 was cut into the natural subsoil, a light buff orange sandy clay (context 015). This feature was interpreted as being a soak-away, possibly for the existing farm to the west, towards which it appeared to run.

Three other features were identified in Trench 2. These were two sub-circular or oval features and a gently curving linear feature.

Of the two oval features, one had two fills, a mid grey brown sandy clay (context 018) which had a pronounced lean from north to south (Fig 4.4, section 6) and a mid green grey sandy clay (context 019) which together filled an oval steep sided cut (Figs 4.2 and 8, context 020). This was cut into the natural subsoil, a light buff orange sandy clay (context 015).

The other was filled with a mid grey brown sandy clay with occasional flecks of charcoal (Fig 4.4, section 8, context 027). This filled a steep sided, flat bottomed, oval cut (context 028, Figs 4.1 and 11) which was also cut into the natural subsoil, a light buff orange sandy clay (context 015).

Both of these features were interpreted as post holes with one (context 020) possibly being originally inclined. These post holes are not thought to be of great antiquity and the inclined one may have been a straining post for a post-and-wire fence.

The remaining feature was linear and slightly curving (Figs 4.2 and 9, contexts 022 and 024). The limits of this feature were not easy to identify in plan and accordingly it was box-sectioned (Figs 4.4, section 7 and 9). It was then apparent that it comprised an original cut (context 024), a steep sided flat bottomed cut, cut into the natural subsoil (context 015), filled with a light buff grey sandy clay (context 023) and a re-cut, a steep sided, round bottomed cut filled with a dark green grey sandy clay (context 021). Further excavation of this feature prior to backfilling confirmed its shape and configuration and located a terminal about a metre to the west of the original trench (Fig 4.2). This feature is thought to be an earlier field boundary.

### *Trench 3*

Across the whole of the trench was a dark grey brown sandy clay loam (context 001; topsoil, Fig 4.4, section 1). At the south-west end of the trench it overlay a light buff orange sandy clay (context 002). This appeared to be an upper level of context 003, but lighter in colour and lacking the latter's charcoal flecks. Context 003 was a mid grey brown sandy clay with common charcoal flecks and common small angular stones. These layers filled what is probably a linear, irregular but stepped cut (context 004, Figs 4.3 and 5). This was adjacent to the road and was probably a quarry. It was cut into the natural, a light buff orange sandy clay (context 012).

There were two other features to the north-west. A mid grey brown sandy clay (context 005, Fig 4.4; section 2) filled an oval, shallow, steep-sided cut (context 006, Figs 4.3 and 6) and a yellow pinkish sandy clay (context 007, Fig 4.4; section 3) filled another oval, steep-sided cut (context 008, Figs 4.3 and 7).

Both of these features were cut into a light buff orange sandy clay (natural) and interpreted as post holes.

### **Finds**

The full finds report is included as Appendix 2

#### *Roman*

Material of Roman date consisted of six fragments of imbrex tile from context 016. Although none of the fragments join, the five largest pieces appear to represent a single tile. The fabric of this tile is

distinctive being of poorly mixed fine sandy clay which is oxidised to a pale orange with distinctive buff banding. The inclusions are also distinctive with rounded ironstone and occasional white clay pellets. The tile is 19mm thick and is sanded on the underside.

A further possible fragment of imbrex was retrieved from context 003. This piece was of a coarser sandy fabric which was oxidised throughout. Upon excavation, it was thought to be a piece of medieval field drain. However, in light of the imbrex from context 016 and the location of the site in the edge of known Roman settlement, the possibility that this could be an imbrex cannot be ruled out.

#### *Modern*

All remaining finds were of 19th to 20th century date and included fragments of ceramic building material, domestic china and bottle glass. The china included a transfer decorated sherd from a plate which was stamped with 'WEDGEWOOD' on the underside.

The clay drain marked ENSOR comes from the Ensor Building Products company which has been in business since 1929 (<http://www.ensorbuilding.com>). This fits well with the 20th century *terminus post quem* of the rest of the finds.

#### **Summary**

All contexts had a *terminus post quem* of the 20th century but artefacts could be dated from the Roman period onwards. The earliest of these finds, the imbrex tiles, although residual in a later context, may provide some artifactual indication of the limits of Romano-British activity associated with the Iron Age/Romano-British settlement to the west (WSM 34924). The boundary of the monument to the east is currently coincident with Winchcombe Road and the results of this project support this.

#### **Significance**

Of the features that could be dated, none of them was earlier than the 20th century. The finds were as early as the Roman period but were all residual in later contexts. The features found during the evaluation at 58 Winchcombe Road, Sedgeberrow can only achieve a very low significance.

#### **Depositional and post-depositional processes**

The site is located just off the edge of the flood plain near the confluence of the Carrant Brook and the River Isbourne and has probably been under an agricultural regime at least since medieval times and probably from the Iron Age and Roman periods. The most recent agricultural use was the establishment of an orchard between 1884 and 1938.

#### **Summary**

A programme of archaeological work was carried out at land adjacent to Forge Cottage, 58 Winchcombe Road, Sedgeberrow, Worcestershire. The project identified that there were no significant archaeological deposits present in the area of the proposed development. However, the presence of Romano-British roof tile, although residual in a later context, suggests that the limits of the monument (WSM 34924) to the east are located appropriately.

#### **Bibliography**

Buteux, V, Hunt, C, and Glyde, M, 1999 *Salvage recording at Trebor, Main Street, Sedgeberrow*. Archaeological Service - Worcestershire County Council

Cook, M, 2014 *Archaeological evaluation at land off Winchcombe Road, Sedgeberrow, Worcestershire*

Glyde, M., 2014, *Requirements for a programme of archaeological work at Land Adjacent, Forge Cottage, 58 Winchcombe Road, Sedgeberrow, Worcestershire*, Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council

JMHS, 2012 *An archaeological field evaluation on land off Main Road, Sedgeberrow, Worcestershire*

Stratascan 2012 *Geophysical Survey Report; Land off Main Street, Sedgeberrow, Worcestershire;*  
Ref: J3200

#### **Internet sources**

<http://www.ensorbuilding.com>

#### **Acknowledgements**

The author would particularly like to thank Paul Cartwright of Carstone Developments Ltd and Mr Mike Glyde of Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology Service for their kind cooperation. Assistance on site was provided by Suzanne MacLeod and Amos and Stuart of Henson Plant Hire, Evesham.

#### **Archive**

The physical archive consists of:

- 2 Context index sheets
- 28 Context sheets
- 1 Level sheet
- 2 Drawings
- 1 Hard copy of the report
- 1 Hard copy of the brief
- 1 Hard copy of the WSI

It has been deposited at Hartlebury Museum.

The digital archive consists of:

- 1 DVD-ROM
  - digital copy of the report
  - digital copy of the brief
  - digital copy of the WSI
  - digital copies of the report component files

It has been deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

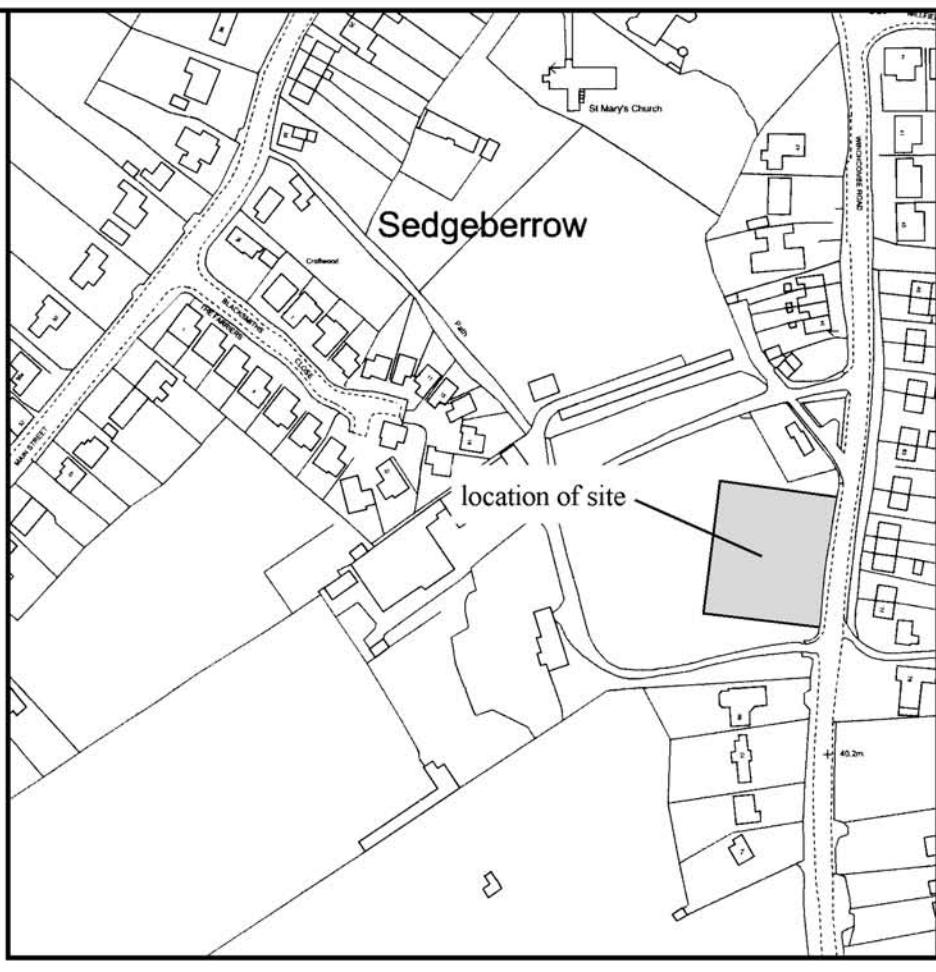
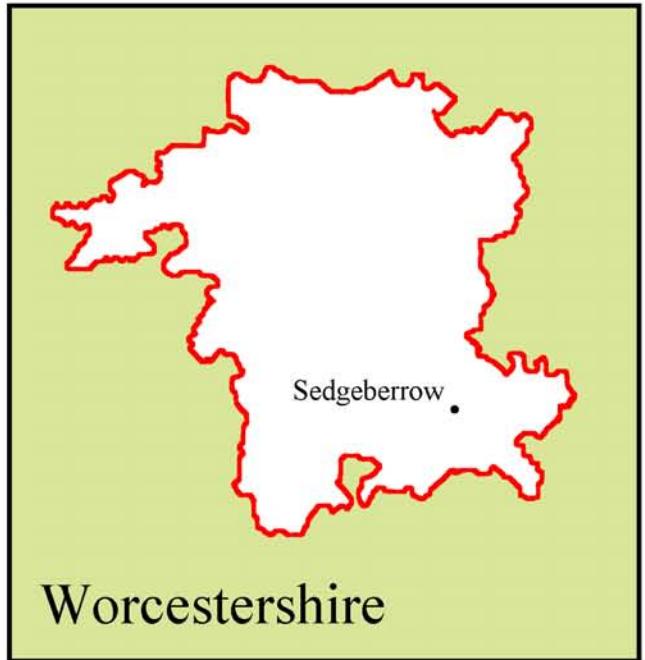


Fig 1: Location plan

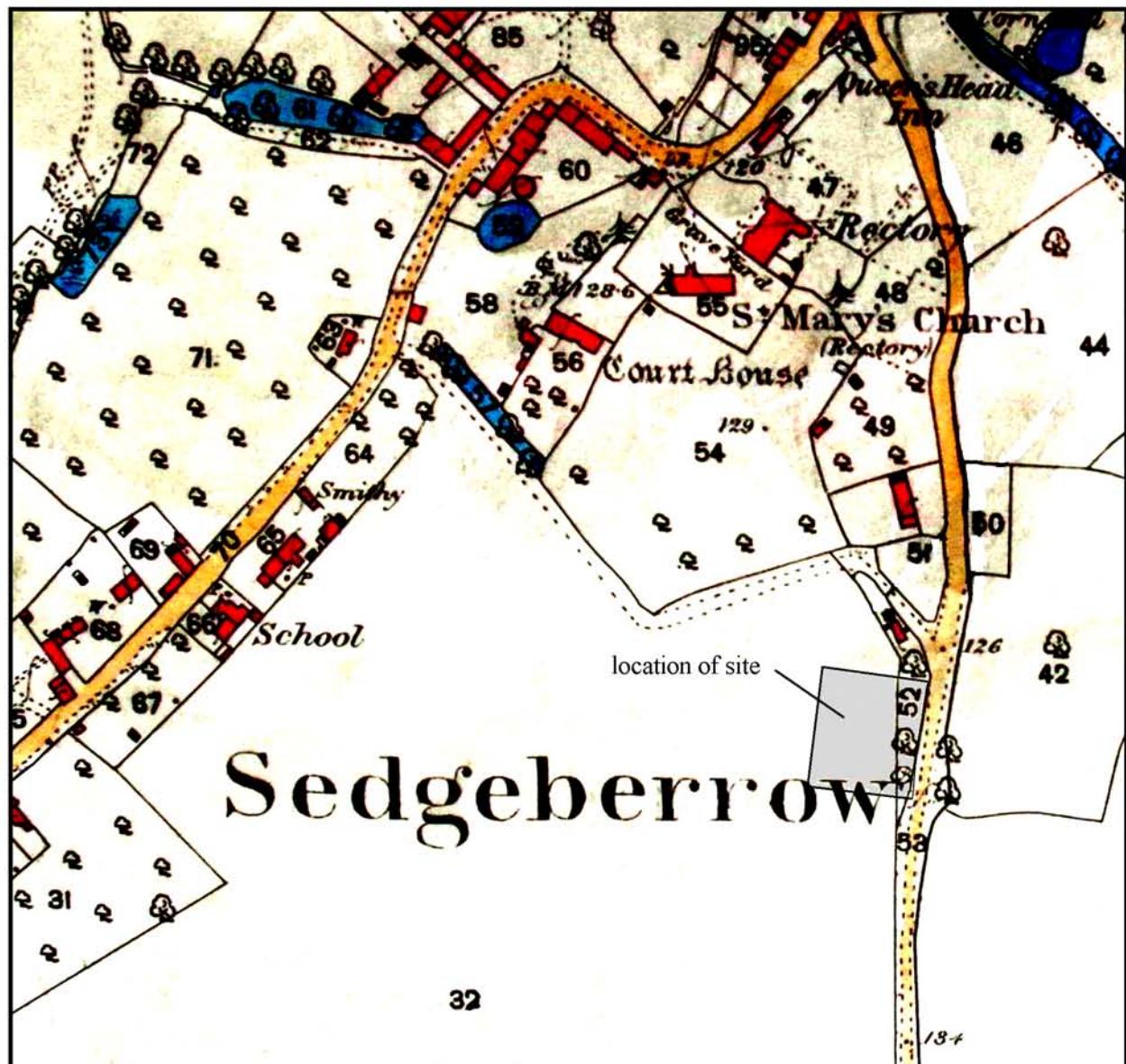


Fig 2.1: Historic mapping; 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884

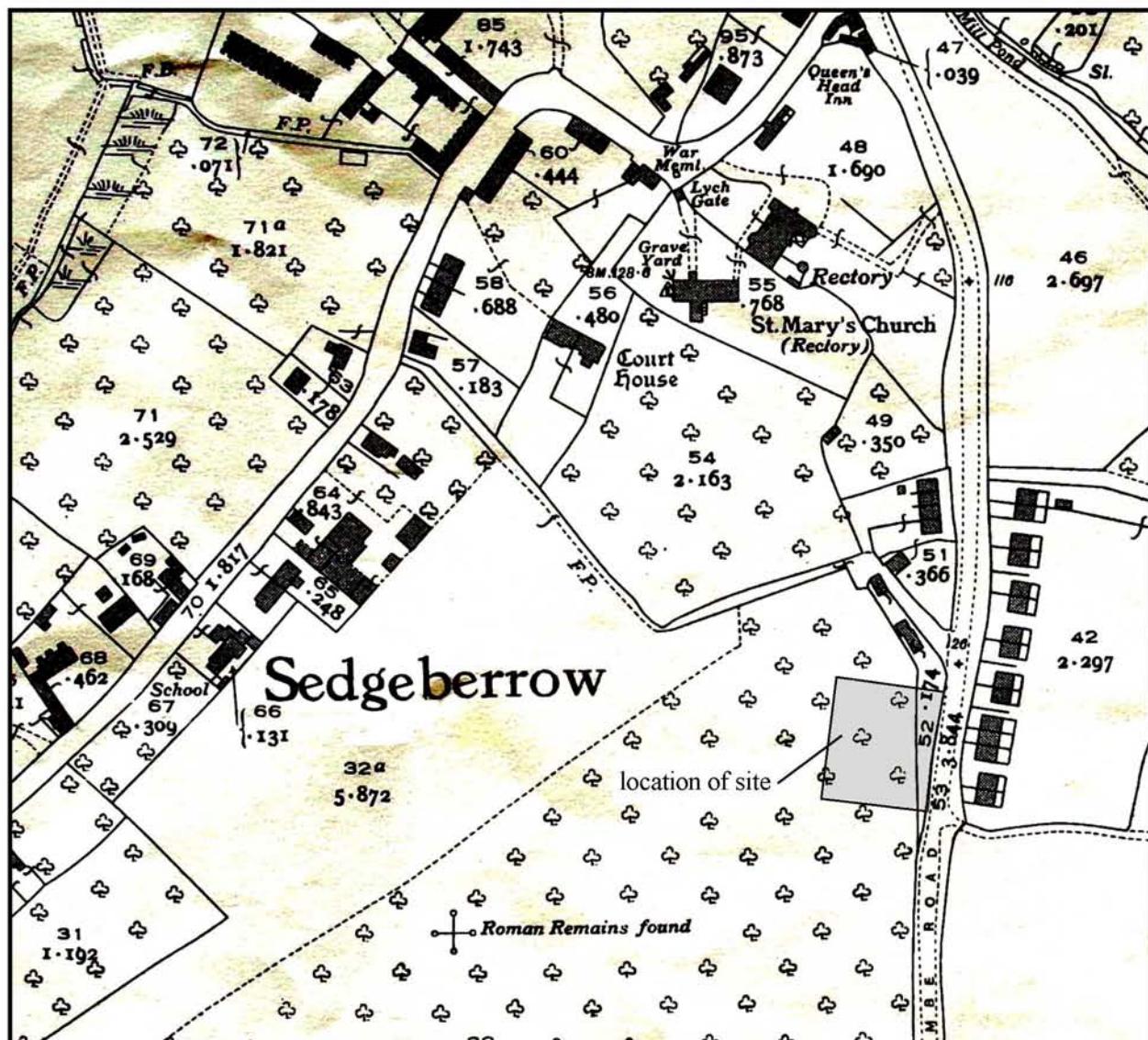
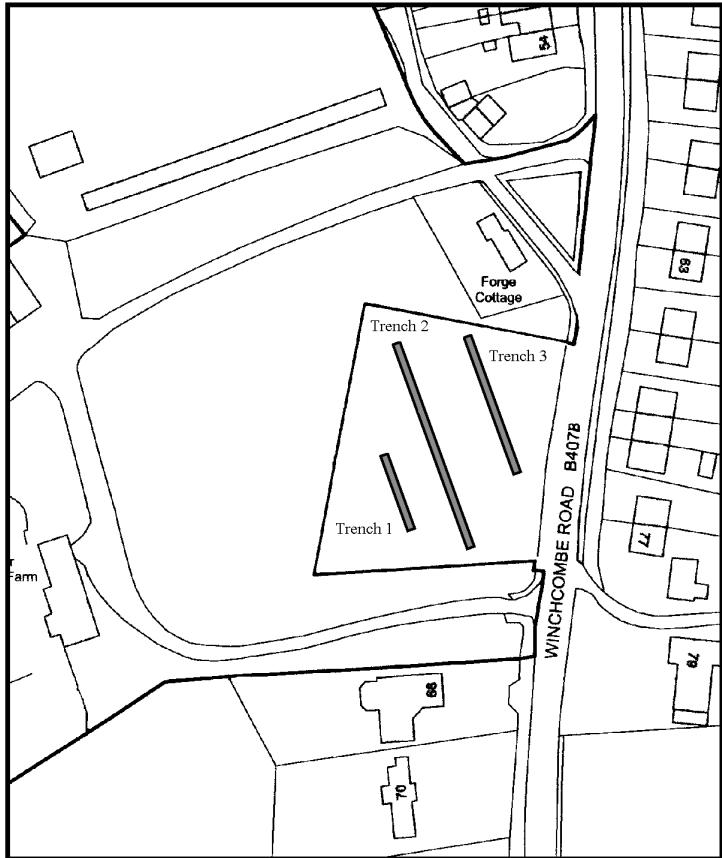
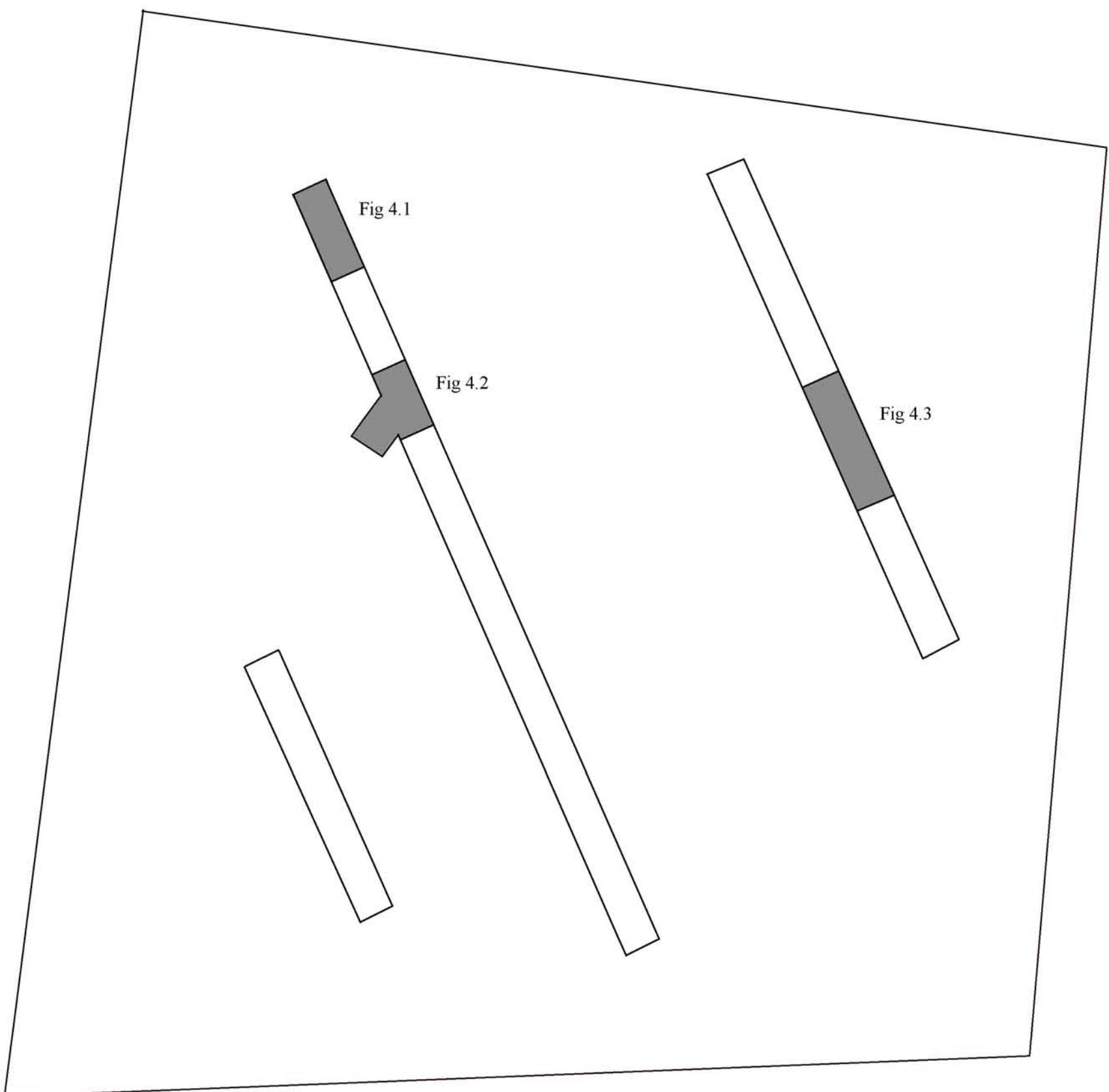


Fig 2.2: Historic mapping; Ordnance Survey map of 1938



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no AL 100016585

Fig 3.1: Location of trenches



area of detailed recording

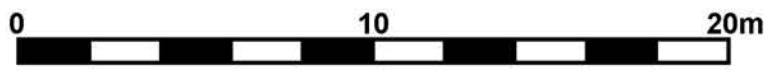


Fig 3.2: Location of detailed recording

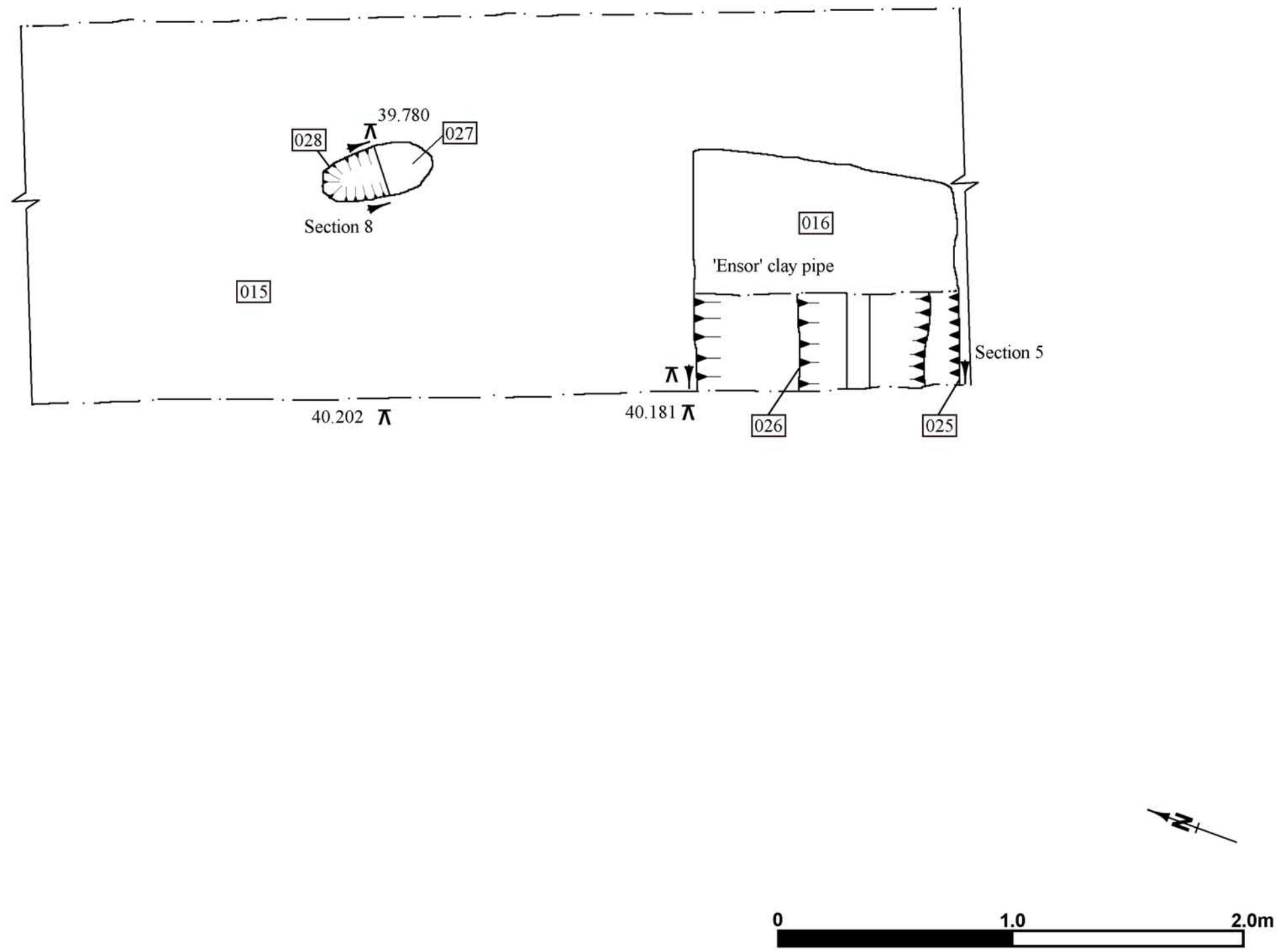


Fig 4.1: Trench 2; recorded features

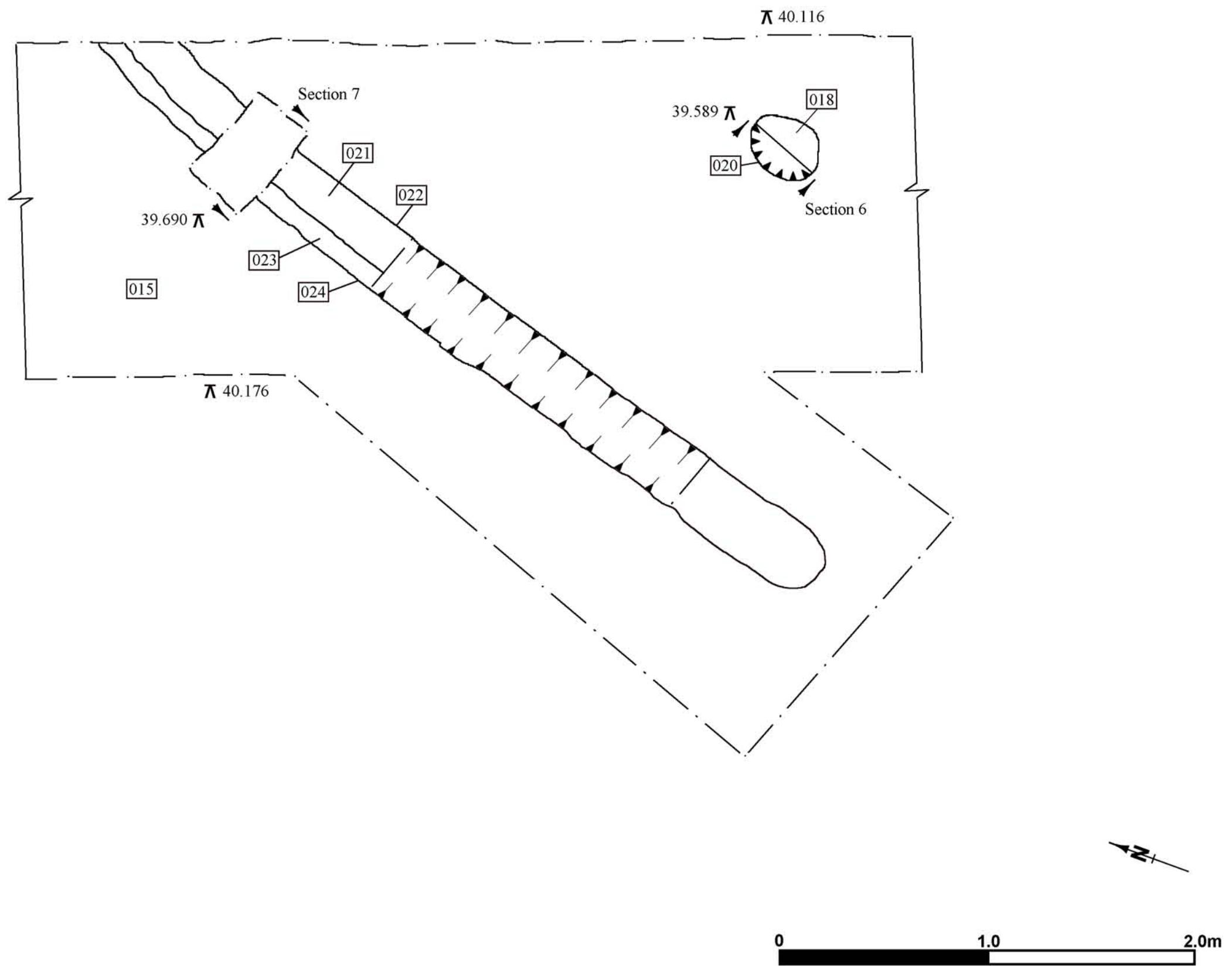


Fig 4.2: Trench 2; recorded features

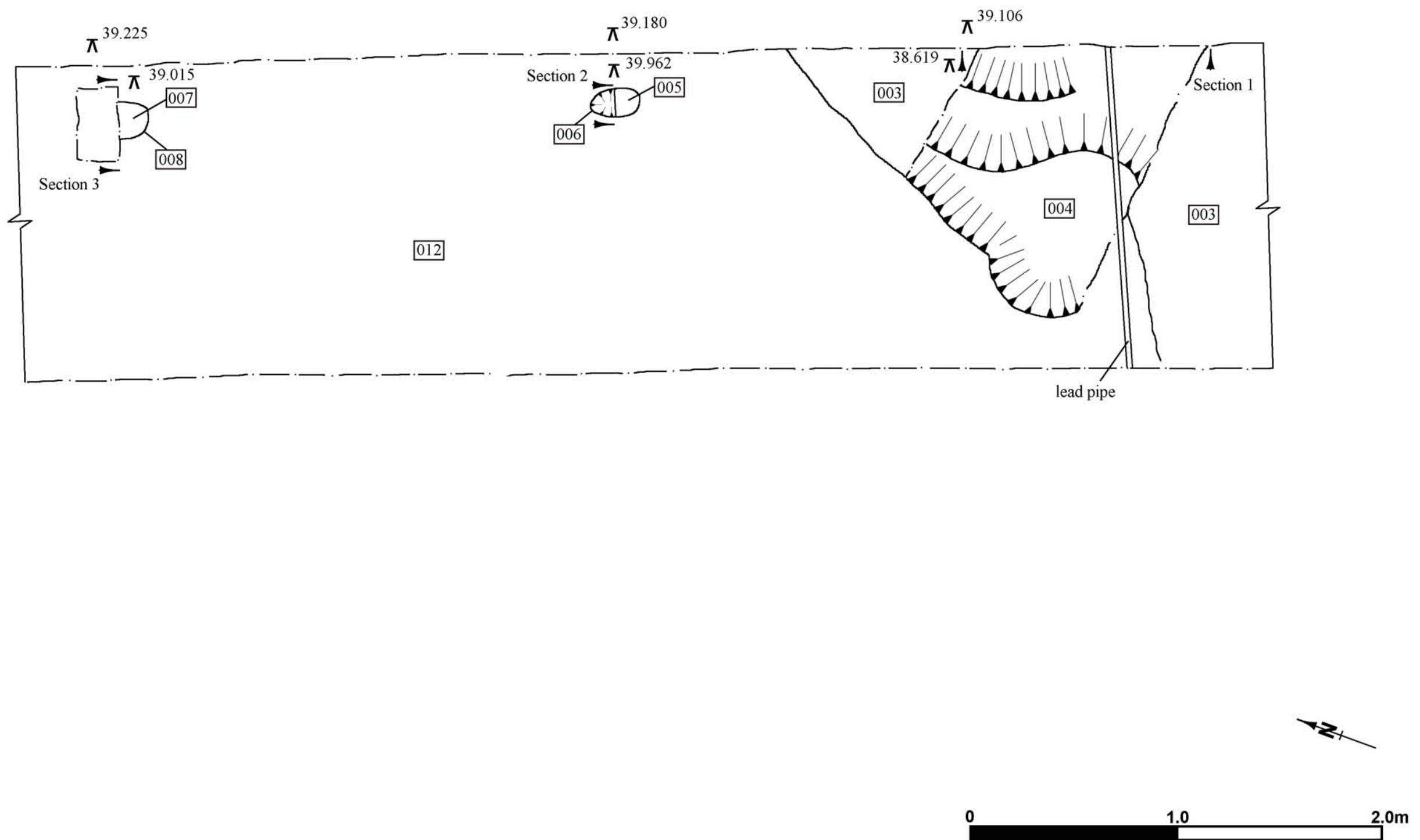
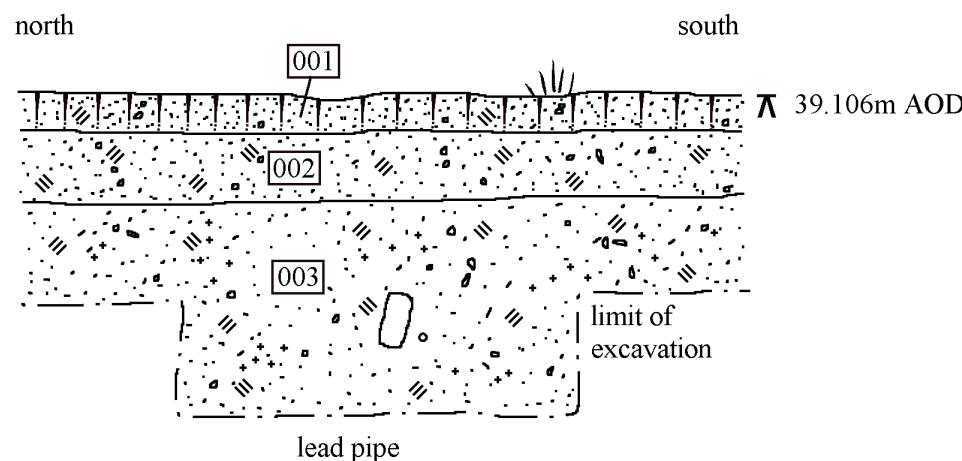
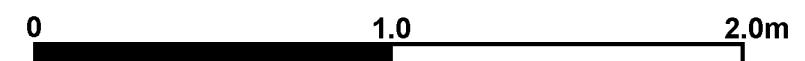
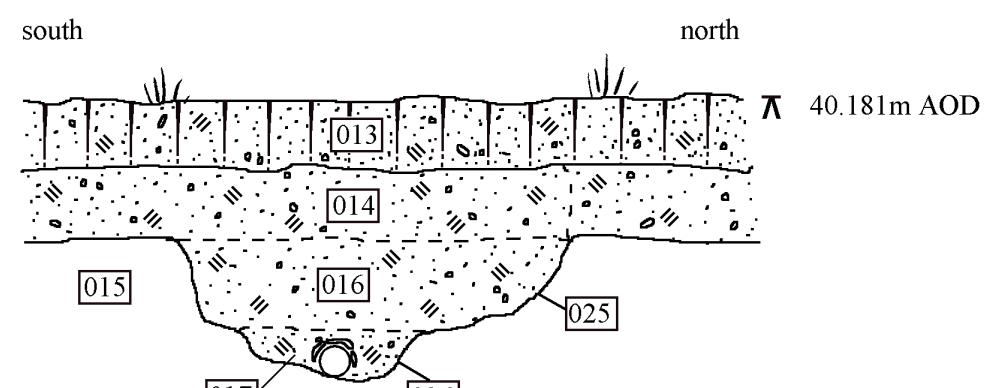


Fig 4.3: Trench 3; recorded features

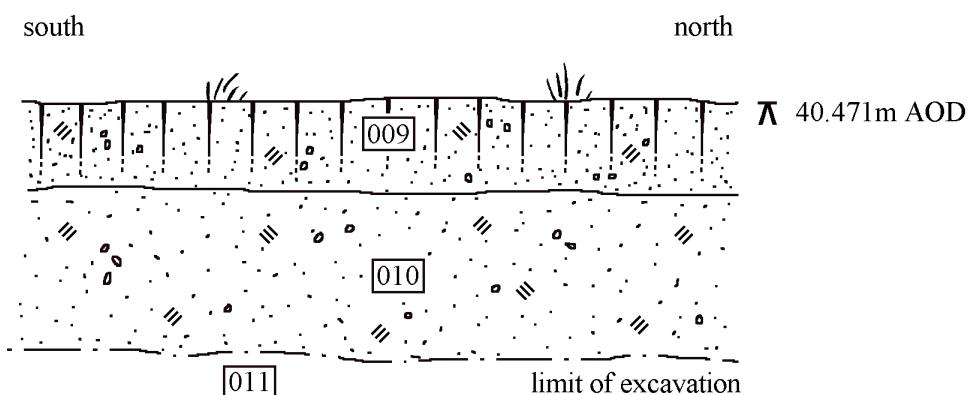
Section 1; trench 3



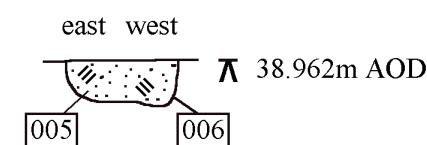
Section 5; trench 2



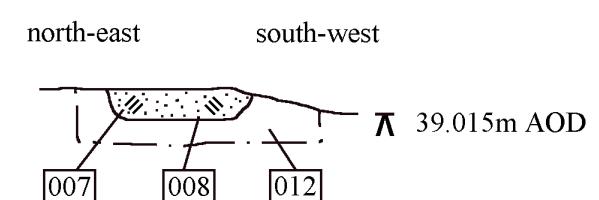
Section 4; trench 1



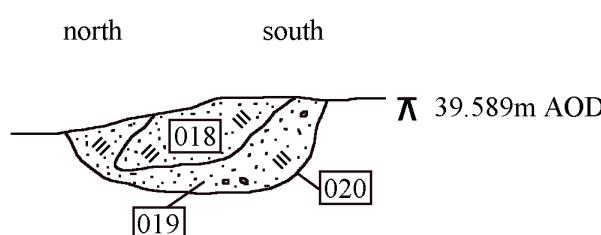
Section 2; trench 3



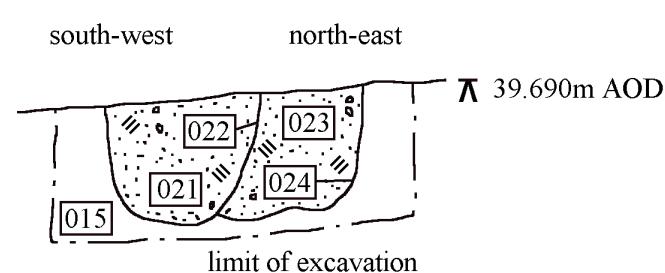
Section 3; trench 3



Section 6; trench 2



Section 7; trench 2



Section 8; trench 2

south-west north-east



Fig 4.4: Sections

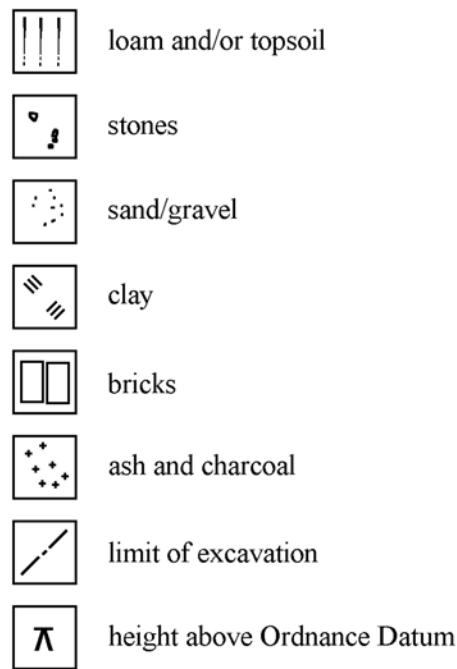


Fig 4.5: Key to sections



Fig 5: Context 004



Fig 6: Context 006



Fig 7: Context 008



Fig 8: Context 020



Fig 9: Context 022



Fig 10: Context 025



Fig 11: Context 028

## Appendix 1: List of the contexts

Context number	Description	Interpretation
001	Dark grey brown sandy clay loam	Topsoil
002	Light buff orange sandy clay	Upper level of 003, lacking charcoal flecks
003	Mid grey brown sandy clay with common charcoal flecks and common small angular stones	Fill of 004
004	Shallow steep-sided cut – not bottomed	Pit/quarry
005	Mid grey brown sandy clay	Fill of 006
006	Oval, shallow, steep-sided cut	? posthole; filled with 005
007	Yellow pinkish sandy clay	Fill of 008
008	Oval, steep-sided cut	Post hole – only identifiable in box section – filled with 007
009	Dark grey brown clay sandy loam	Topsoil
010	Light grey brown sandy clay	Subsoil
011	Light buff orange sandy clay	Natural
012	Light buff orange sandy clay	Natural
013	Dark grey brown clay sandy loam	Topsoil
014	Mid green grey sandy clay	Subsoil
015	Light buff orange sandy clay	Natural
016	Mid green grey sandy clay	Fill of 025
017	Mid green grey sandy clay with occasional medium angular stone and clay drain pipe	Fill of 026 – pipe marked ENSOR
018	Mid grey brown sandy clay	Fill of 020
019	Mid green grey sandy clay	Fill of 020
020	Oval steep sided cut	Post hole
021	Dark green grey sandy clay	Fill of 022
022	Steep sided, round bottomed cut	Slightly curving linear slot; filled with 021, cuts 023
023	Light buff grey sandy clay	Cut by 022; fill of 024
024	Steep sided flat bottomed cut	Slightly curving linear slot; filled with 023
025	Steep sided flat bottomed cut	Filled with 016
026	Steep sided cut – not bottomed	Filled with 017
027	Mid grey brown sandy clay with occasional flecks of charcoal	Fill of 028
028	Steep sided, flat bottomed, oval cut	Post hole

## **Appendix 2: Finds report**

## **The Artefacts by Laura Griffin**

### **Aims**

The brief required an assessment of the quantity, range and potential of artefacts from the excavation.

The aims of the finds assessment were:

- a) to identify, sort, spot date, and quantify all artefacts
- b) to describe the range of artefacts present
- c) to preliminarily assess the significance of the artefacts

### **Method of analysis**

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. They were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* date range was produced for each stratified context. All information was recorded on a Microsoft Access 2007 database.

The pottery was examined under x20 magnification and recorded by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service (Hurst and Rees 1992 and [www.worcestershireceramics.org](http://www.worcestershireceramics.org)).

### **Results of analysis**

The artefactual assemblage came from four stratified contexts and totalled 20 finds weighing 1123g (see tables 1 and 3). The standard of preservation was generally good, with finds displaying low levels of abrasion.

All contexts had a *terminus post quem* of 20th century but artefacts could be dated from the Roman period onwards.

### **Discussion**

The discussion below is a summary of the artefacts and associated context by period. Where possible, dates have been allocated and the importance of individual finds commented upon as necessary.

#### *Roman*

Material of Roman date consisted of six fragments of imbrex tile from context 016. Although none of the fragments join, the five largest pieces appear to represent a single tile. The fabric of this tile is distinctive being of poorly mixed fine sandy clay which is oxidised to a pale orange with distinctive buff banding. The inclusions are also distinctive with rounded ironstone and occasional white clay pellets. The tile is 19mm thick and is sanded on the underside.

A further possible fragment of imbrex was retrieved from context 003. This piece was of a coarser sandy fabric which was oxidised throughout. Upon excavation, it was thought to be a piece of medieval field drain. However, in light of the imbrex from context 016 and the location of the site in

the edge of known Roman settlement, the possibility that this could be an imbrex cannot be ruled out.

#### *Modern*

All remaining finds were of 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century date and included fragments of ceramic building material, domestic china and bottle glass. The china included a transfer decorated sherd from a plate which was stamped with 'WEDGEWOOD' on the underside.

#### **Significance**

The occurrence of Roman imbrex within this assemblage was not unexpected due to the location of the excavation on the periphery of the area of known Roman settlement and activity in Sedgeberrow.

#### **References**

Hurst, J D, and Rees, H, 1992 Pottery fabrics; a multi-period series for the County of Hereford and Worcester, in S G Woodiwiss (ed), Iron Age and Roman salt production and the medieval town of Droitwich, CBA Res Rep, 81, 200-9

Material	Total	Weight (g)
Modern pottery	6	44
Roman tile	6	701
?Roman tile	1	304
Vessel glass	1	13
Modern tile	1	20
Brick/tile	2	21
Modern drain	3	20

*Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage*

Context	Material	Total	Weight (g)	Date range	TPQ
3	drain	3	20	19-20C	20C
3	pot	3	8	19-20C	
3	vessel glass	1	13	20C	
3	?imbrex	1	304	?M1-4C	
17	pot	2	29	19-20C	20C
21	pot	1	7	19-20C	20C
16	imbrex	6	701	M1-4C	20C
16	tile	1	20	L19-20C	
16	tile/brick	2	21	Undated	

*Table 2: Summary of context dating based on artefacts*