RPS Planning, Transport and Environment

INDEX DATA	RPS INFORMATION
Scheme Title Scole-Dickleburgh Road Improvement.	Details Rep!- Archaeological Evaluation.
Road Number	Date June 1992
Contractor Norfolk Archaeological Unit.	
County Norfolk (South)	
OS Reference TM17	
Single sided ✓ Double sided A3 0 Colour 0	

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

REPORT OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF THE SCOLE-DICKLEBURGH ROAD IMPROVEMENT

by

Phil Emery
Project Manager

June 1992

Frontispiece: The village of Scole from the south in 1976, including the Scheduled Ancient Monument (No.403) at left centre. (Photograph by D.A. Edwards of the Norfolk Landscape Archaeology Section, Norfolk Museums Service - reproduced by kind permission).

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following have all assisted or contributed to the production of this report. Their contributions have been gratefully received.

The Suffolk Archaeological Unit, especially John Newman and Andrew Tester

Dr. Tom Williamson of the Centre of East Anglian Studies, University of East Anglia

Andrew Rogerson and Derek Edwards of Landscape Archaeology Section

Trevor Ashwin and Hoste Spalding of the Norfolk Archaeological Unit

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Norfolk Archaeological Unit was commissioned by the Department of Transport in April 1992 to conduct an archaeological evaluation of the proposed route of the Scole-Dickleburgh road Improvement. The purpose of this report is to provide evidence for the Department of Transport to present to the Inspector at the Public Inquiry.

1.2 The proposed road scheme forms a southward continuation of the Dickleburgh bypass which opened on 12th October 1990 (see Fig.1). From its northern extremity, immediately south of Dickleburgh Manor, the proposed alignment curves around the east of the village of Thelveton and then runs down the western side of the current A140 route for some 900 metres. Thereafter, the proposed Improvement diverges from the present A140 to bypass the village of Scole on its western side. Finally, the new road crosses the River Waveney into Suffolk and rejoins the existing A140 some 250 metres south of Scole Bridge. The total length of this Improvement road (including associated works) is some 3.8 kilometres in Norfolk and about 750 metres in Suffolk.

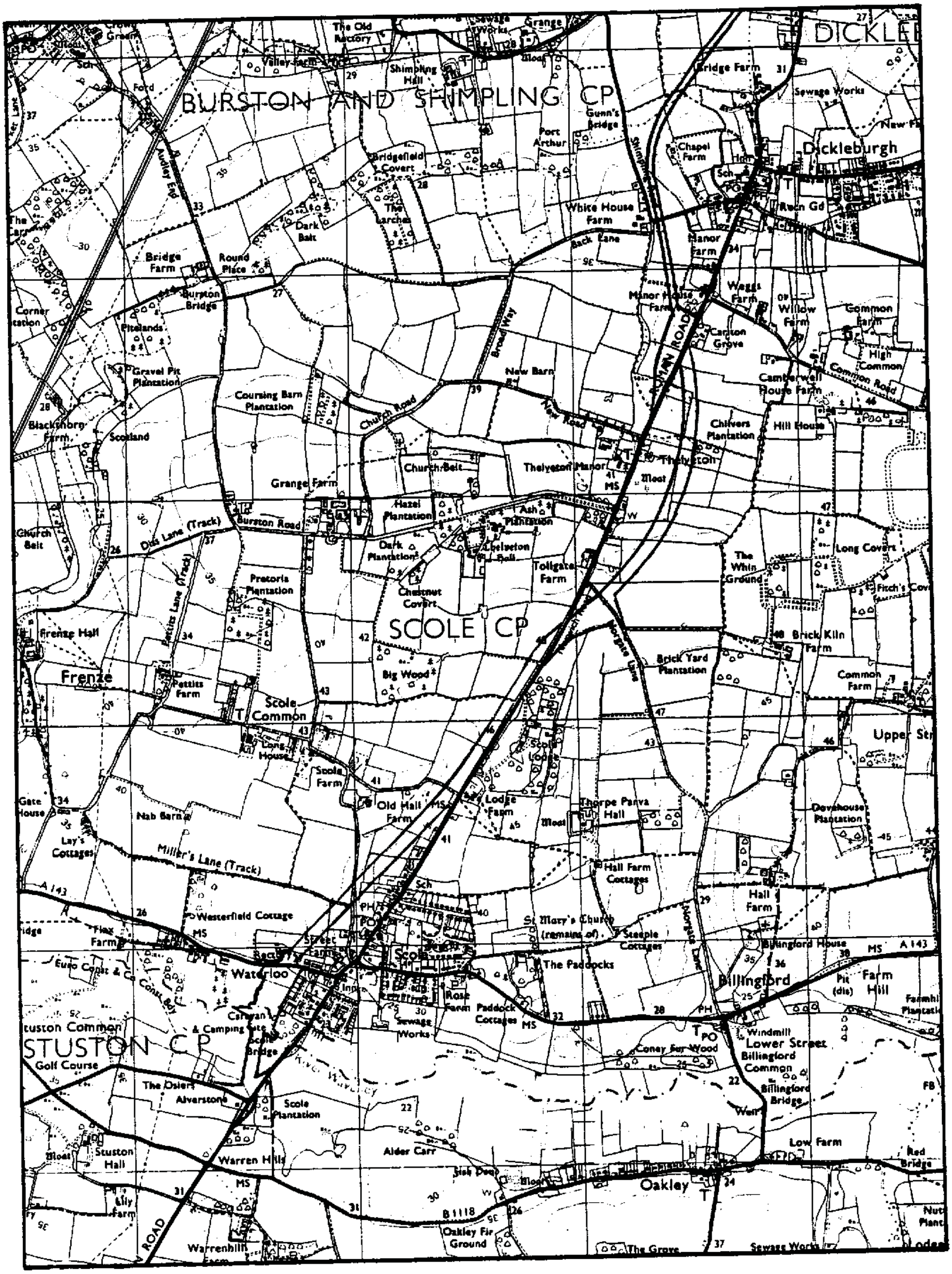
1.3 Most of the area to be affected by the proposed route has never been systematically surveyed for archaeological evidence. However, the presence of an important Roman settlement at Scole has long been recognised. Records of both chance finds and archaeological work on this site go back to 1855. Some 6.1 hectares of the site north of the River Waveney were scheduled as an Ancient Monument in 1988 (see Fig.2).

1.4 The work was undertaken in Norfolk by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit and, in Suffolk by the Sufffolk Archaeological Unit. The project was co-ordinated by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVE OF EVALUATION

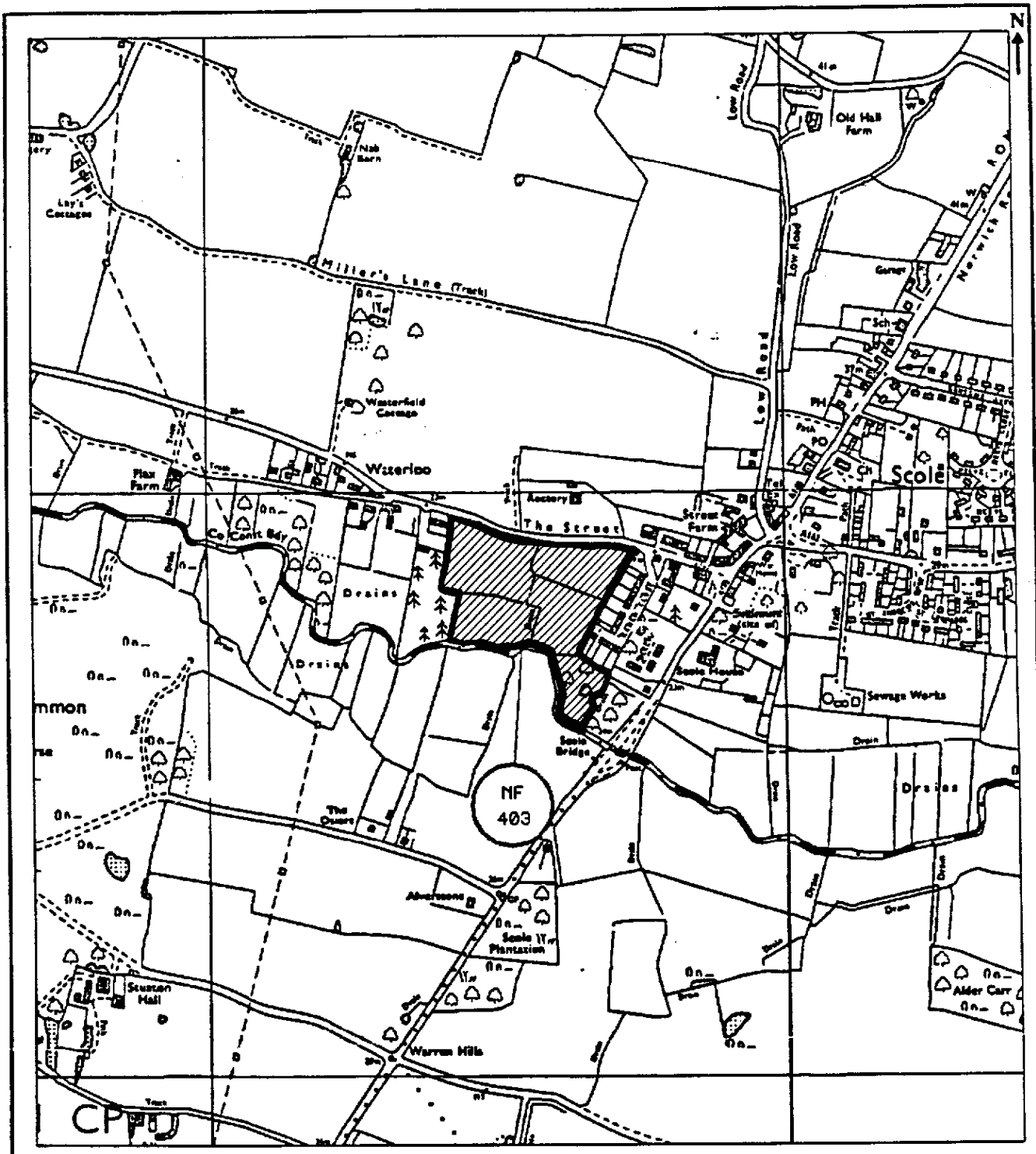
2.1 The aim of this evaluation project is to define sites of archaeological significance in order that the impact of the proposed scheme on the historic environment can be assessed.

2.2 The work was undertaken within the context of archaeological briefs which had been issued for the line of the proposed Improvement in both Norfolk (Appendix I) and Suffolk (Appendix II). The Norfolk Archaeological Unit drafted a Method Statement (Appendix III) in order to demonstrate how it proposed to comply with the briefs.



BURSTON AND SHIMPLING CP
SCOLE CP
STUSTON CP
Dickleburgh
The Old Rectory
Shimpling Hall
Bridge Farm
Sewage Works
Gunn's Bridge
Port Arthur
Chapel Farm
Bridgefield Covert
The Larches
Dark Belt
White House Farm
Back Lane
Manor Farm
Bridge Farm
Round Place
Burston Bridge
Manor House Farm
Waggs Farm
Willow Farm
Common Farm
Carlton Grove
High Common
Common Road
Broad Way
New Barn
Camberwell House Farm
Pitelands
Gravel Pit Plantation
Coursing Barn Plantation
Church Road
New Road
Chilvers Plantation
Hill House
Blackthorn Farm
Scotland
Church Belt
Thelveton Manor
Thelveton
Moat
Grange Farm
Hazel Plantation
Ash Plantation
Burston Road
Diss Lane (Track)
Church Belt
Dark Plantation
Thelveton Belt
Tollgate Farm
The Whin Ground
Long Covert
Pretoria Plantation
Chestnut Covert
Frenze Hall
Pettits Lane (Track)
Brick Kiln Farm
Brick Yard Plantation
Frenze
Pettits Farm
Big Wood
Common Farm
Scole Common
Long House
Scole Lodge
Upper St
Scole Farm
Old Hall Farm
Lodge Farm
Thorpe Parva Hall
Dovehouse Plantation
Gate House
Nab Barn
Lay's Cottages
Miller's Lane (Track)
Hall Farm Cottages
A 143
Westerfield Cottage
Hall Farm
Flax Farm
St Mary's Church (remains of)
Steeple Cottages
Billingford House
A 143
Farm Hill
Waterloo
Scole
The Paddocks
Billingford
Rose Farm
Paddock Cottages
Sewage Works
Caravan & Camping Site
Windmill
Lower Street
Billingford Common
Stuston Common
Golf Course
Coney Fur Wood
The Osiers
Alverstone
Scole Plantation
Billingford Bridge
Low Farm
Red Bridge
Stuston Hall
Warren Hill
Alder Carr
Oakley
Lily Farm
B 1118
Oakley Fir Ground
ROAD
Warrenhill Farm
The Grove
Sewage Works

Figure 1



 For identification purposes only

Site Name: Scole Roman Settlement

County: Norfolk	**District:** South Norfolk	**Parish:** Scole

Notes:

English Heritage
Historic Buildings & Monuments Commission for England
Fortress House, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 2HE
Telephone 01-734 6010

Key: Location/extent of site

Extract from OS sheet: TM17NW	**NGR:** TM14557883
Scale: 1:10000	**Derived from:** 1:10000
Date: 15.11.88	**County No:** NF403

Figure 2

3.0 METHOD OF EVALUATION

3.1 NORFOLK

3.1.1 DESK-TOP SURVEY OF EXISTING ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDS

The Sites and Monuments Record was searched for entries of archaeological data pertinent to the route of the proposed road alignment, and the archived records consulted (Appendix IV).

3.1.2 DESK-TOP SURVEY OF FIELD BOUNDARIES

A landscape survey was undertaken by Dr. Tom Williamson at the Centre of East Anglian Studies at the University of East Anglia. The importance of this research lay in the possibility of the existence of a relict, pre-Roman landscape in the Scole/Dickleburgh area. The purpose of the project was to identify elements of the putative relict landscape, lying on the course of the proposed road, that could be tested by archaeological excavation. The technique of analysis employed by Dr. Williamson involved the successive removal of elements of the current pattern of field boundaries, that were argued to be more recent on the basis of topographic and documentary evidence, from the maps of the area to leave a hypothetical map of the pre-Roman landscape. A copy of Dr Williamson's paper outlining this methodology is held by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit.

3.1.3 FIELDWALKING SURVEY

Fieldwalking comprises the plotting and recovery of archaeological material, lying on the surface of cultivated fields, in order to locate sites of significance. Some 80 per cent of the arable land along the proposed route in Norfolk lay under mature crop when the evaluation was commissioned. This meant that the ground surface was obscured from view, thus rendering effective fieldwalking impossible. The remainder had been recently seeded and was adjudged to be particularly prone to damage by the landowner. Therefore no fieldwalking was undertaken in Norfolk.

3.1.4 METAL DETECTING SURVEY

A metal detecting survey involves plotting and recovering metallic objects located with a metal detector lying buried within the ploughsoil in order to enhance the data provided by fieldwalking. As the search head of the metal detector must be close to the ground surface for buried targets to be in detectable range the mature crop present on most of the area rendered this operation unviable. Therefore no metal detecting was undertaken in Norfolk.

3.2 SUFFOLK

3.2.1 DESK-TOP SURVEY OF EXISTING ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDS

As in Norfolk, the County Sites and Monuments Record was consulted, and relevant archives examined (Appendix IV).

3.2.2 FIELDWALKING SURVEY

The entire field immediately south of the River Waveney (OS Parcel No. 5449) was fieldwalked using a 20 metre grid. In this case the field was in an appropriate state to be examined (see 3.1.3 for methodology).

3.2.3 METAL DETECTING SURVEY

Unlike the fieldwalking, the metal detecting survey was restricted to the proposed roadline (see 3.1.4 for methodology).

3.2.4 TRIAL EXCAVATION

Hand excavation and archaeological recording of a series of five trenches, positioned to test the information provided by aerial photography and previous archaeological work, formed the final on-site stage of the Suffolk evaluation project.

4.0 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

4.1 NORFOLK

4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The following summary, subdivided by period, describes the archaeological finds and sites which have been previously recorded, and the arguments for the existence of a pre-Roman relict landscape. The accumulated data derives from a combination of chance finds, opportunistic observation of building works and also, in Scole, controlled archaeological work. The latter principally comprises four projects: excavations by C.E.T. Thonger before 1937 (nos 13-17 in Fig.3), excavations by G.I. Moss in the years 1967-1972 (no. 5 in Fig.3), excavations by A. Rogerson in 1973 (no.12 in Fig.3) and finally trial work and earthwork survey by T. Gregory in 1987 (see Fig.4).

4.1.2 PREHISTORIC

A number of worked flints have come from previous archaeological investigations, north of the Waveney, in and around Scole. All of the worked flints, which include blades, scrapers, microliths, gravers, cores and waste flakes, are Mesolithic in date, and indicate some in-situ activity during this period. Five flints recovered in the excavation directed by A. Rogerson in 1973, are illustrated in Figure 5.

The existence of a pre-Roman relict landscape is suggested by analysis of the relationship between the pattern of field boundaries and routeways, and the Roman Pye Road, (now largely the A140). Figure 6 shows the result of deleting features that are evidently of recent origin from a 20th-century map.

The predominant 'grain' of the landscape is orientated roughly four or five degrees west of north (or at right angles to this). This seems to be at variance, over a wide area, with the orientation of the Roman road, suggesting that the latter was imposed upon an earlier pattern of fields and lanes.

The dominant features in this putative pre-Roman landscape appear to be a number of long, slightly sinuous, north-south boundaries, some defined by lanes. The field pattern thus defined is, therefore, reminiscent of the Bronze Age 'reave' systems on Dartmoor and other prehistoric co-axial field systems elsewhere in England. Like many of these, the Scole-Dickleburgh field pattern is 'terrain oblivious'. In other words, while it clearly respects the broad features of the topography, running as it does from the watershed between the Tas and the Waveney, down into the Waveney Valley, it ignores the dictates of the local terrain, those minor valleys of streams draining across the clay plateau.

The arguments for the existence of this pre-Roman field system rest entirely upon the analysis of early maps. Its reality has not yet been tested by the more reliable, conventional techniques of field archaeology, but it should be noted that several key elements in the proposed system are crossed by the Improvement (see below 5.1.2).

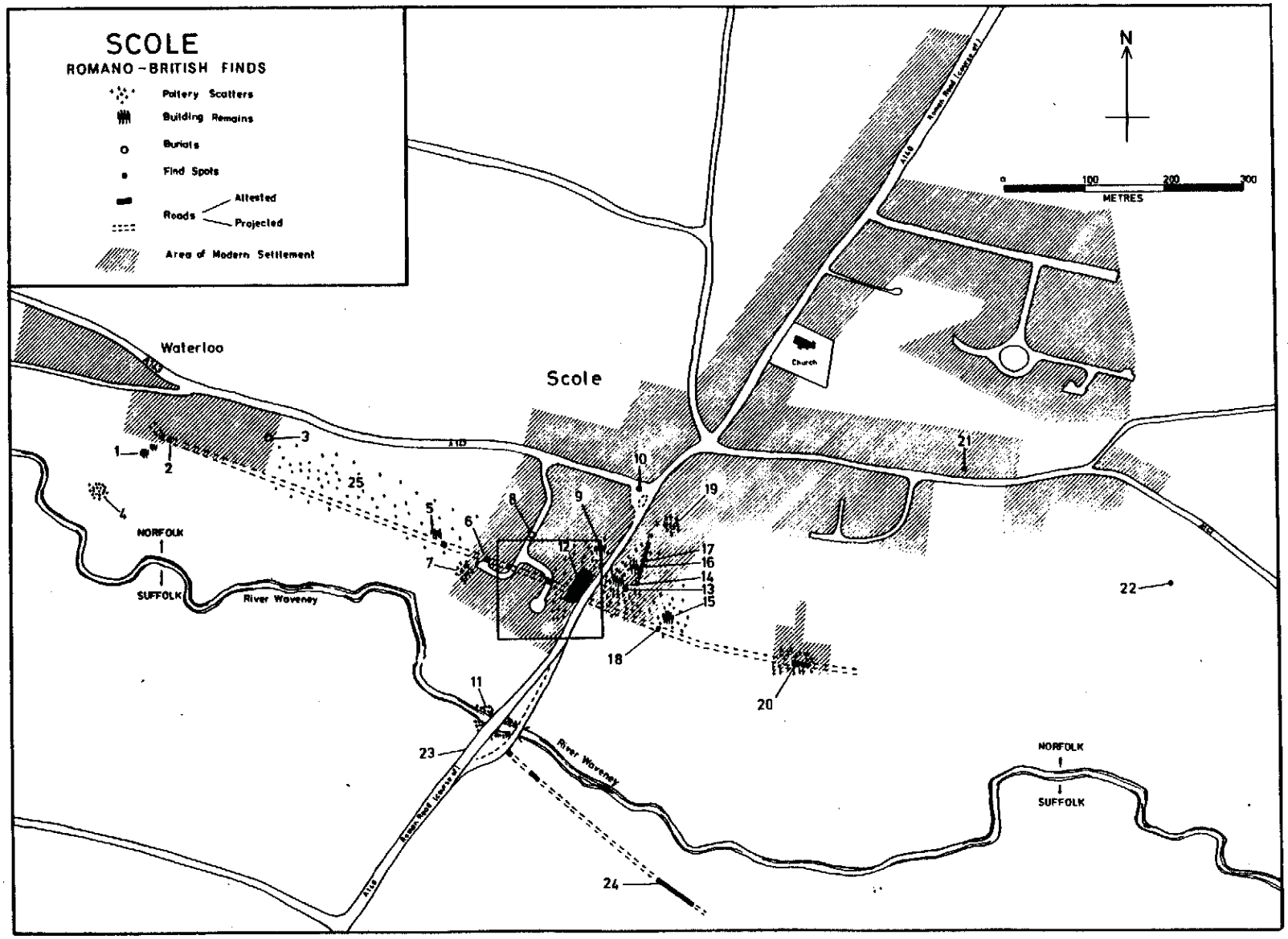


Figure 3 (after Rogerson 1977)

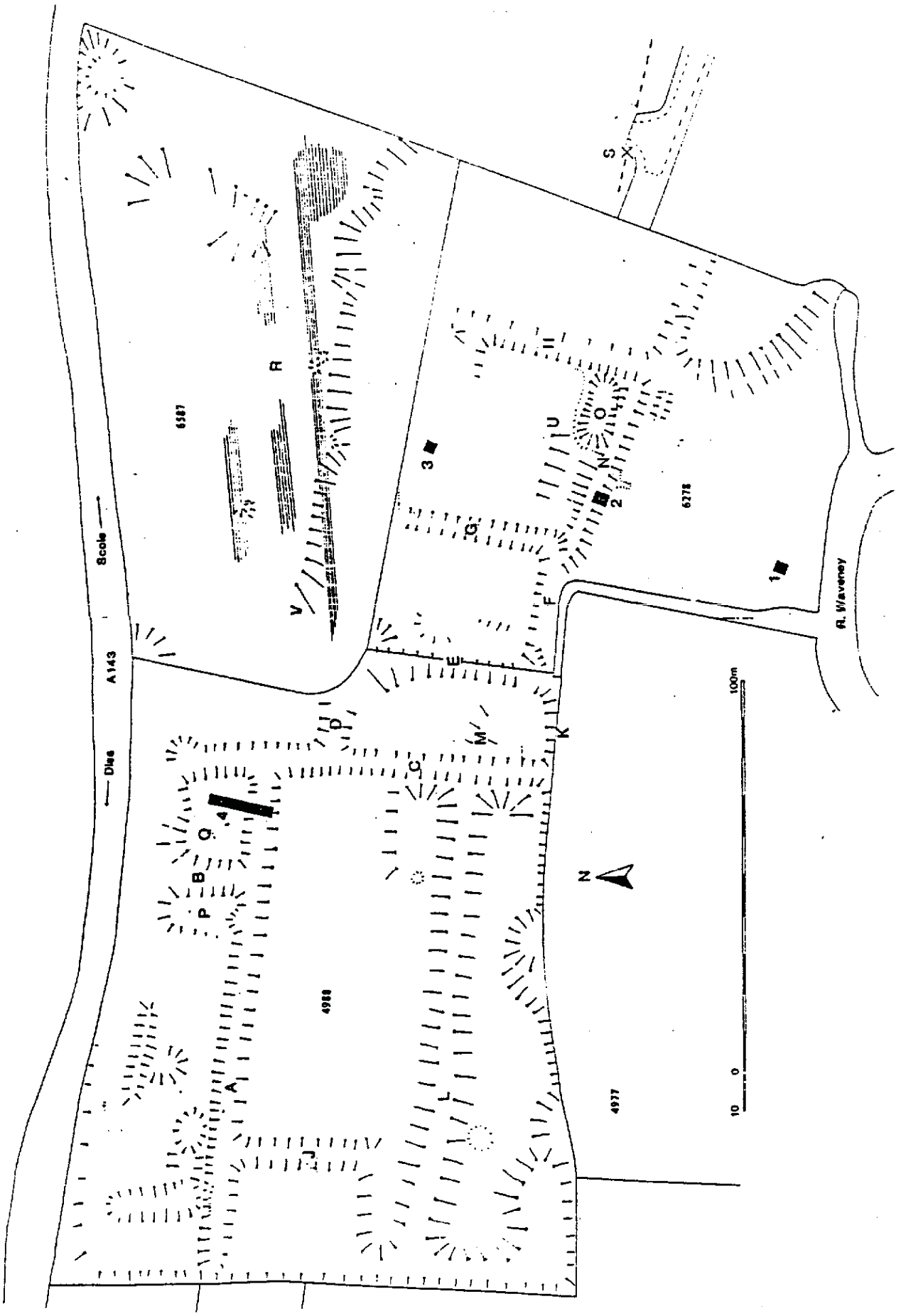


Figure 4 (after Gregory 1987)

CDD 003) provided a construction date of around AD 70. A further road, running east-to-west from the A140 just south of Scole Bridge, is believed to exist.

A substantial group of Roman metal artefacts, primarily concentrated along the eastern edge of the field, (but also extending into the central area) was recorded in 1979-1980; it consisted of 200 coins, eighteen brooches and a hairpin. The coins have been combined with those recovered during the recent Suffolk evaluation for the purposes of statistical analysis of dates represented (see histogram, Figure 8 in Appendix V).

The recent walking of the field affected by the proposed Improvement by the Suffolk Archaeological Unit produced 1,240 Roman pottery sherds. This pottery, while occurring across the whole field, tended to be most concentrated along the eastern side, dropping off sharply in the southern corner, implying a possible settlement. A higher density of early Roman material found in the 1992 survey along the southern edge of the field suggests a change in the character of the occupation. A second concentration of pottery and metalwork occurs in the northern part of the field in an area of sandy soil, close to the river (TM 1460 7858).

4.2.4 POST-ROMAN

A Middle-Saxon bronze pin was found in the recent survey in the north of the field.

Later Medieval activity was represented by a few glazed sherds from the fieldwalking survey.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 PREHISTORIC

5.1.1 There is mounting evidence of mesolithic activity in the Scole area of the Waveney Valley and its tributary the Dove. Peat beds are evident in much of the present flood plain and mesolithic sites in dateable contexts associated with organic material may well lie sealed beneath some of them in both Norfolk and Suffolk (see 4.1.2 and 4.2.2)

5.1.2 There is also compelling landscape evidence for the existence of a pre-Roman relict field system in the Scole-Dickleburgh area, Norfolk. As this has not, to date, been tested by conventional archaeological methods in the field, (a chance to do this when the Dickleburgh bypass was constructed was unfortunately missed due to inadequate provision for archaeological work), the proposed A140 project represents an important opportunity. Archaeological investigation would be possible at three key points (see Fig.10):

a) Firstly, it would be very useful to conduct a small-scale excavation in the area formerly occupied by Thelveton Common where the proposed improvement route intersects with a projection of a north-south axis of the putative landscape pattern (Context A in Fig. 10). Since the edges of commons in Norfolk seem to have become fixed by the later Saxon period, the discovery of a linear boundary within the site of the common would mean that the north-south axis is probably pre-saxon in date.

b) Archaeological excavation could be undertaken where the proposed alignment crosses a transverse element of the system at TM 1640 8080 (Context B in Fig 10).

c) At Low Road, the routeway <u>may</u> be a component of the original system and this could be checked by excavation (Context C in Fig. 10)

5.1.3 To summarize there are key areas which pose archaeological questions and are crossed by the proposed Improvement. These are as follows:

1. Flood plain of the Waveney (Norfolk and Suffolk)
   - need for identification of Mesolithic sites.

2. Thelveton Common (Norfolk)
   - need to locate boundaries which could support the pre-Roman interpretation.

3. At Tm 1640 8080 (Norfolk)
   - need to examine elements of early field system.

4. Low Road (Norfolk)
   - need to investigate whether this is an actual component of the early field system.

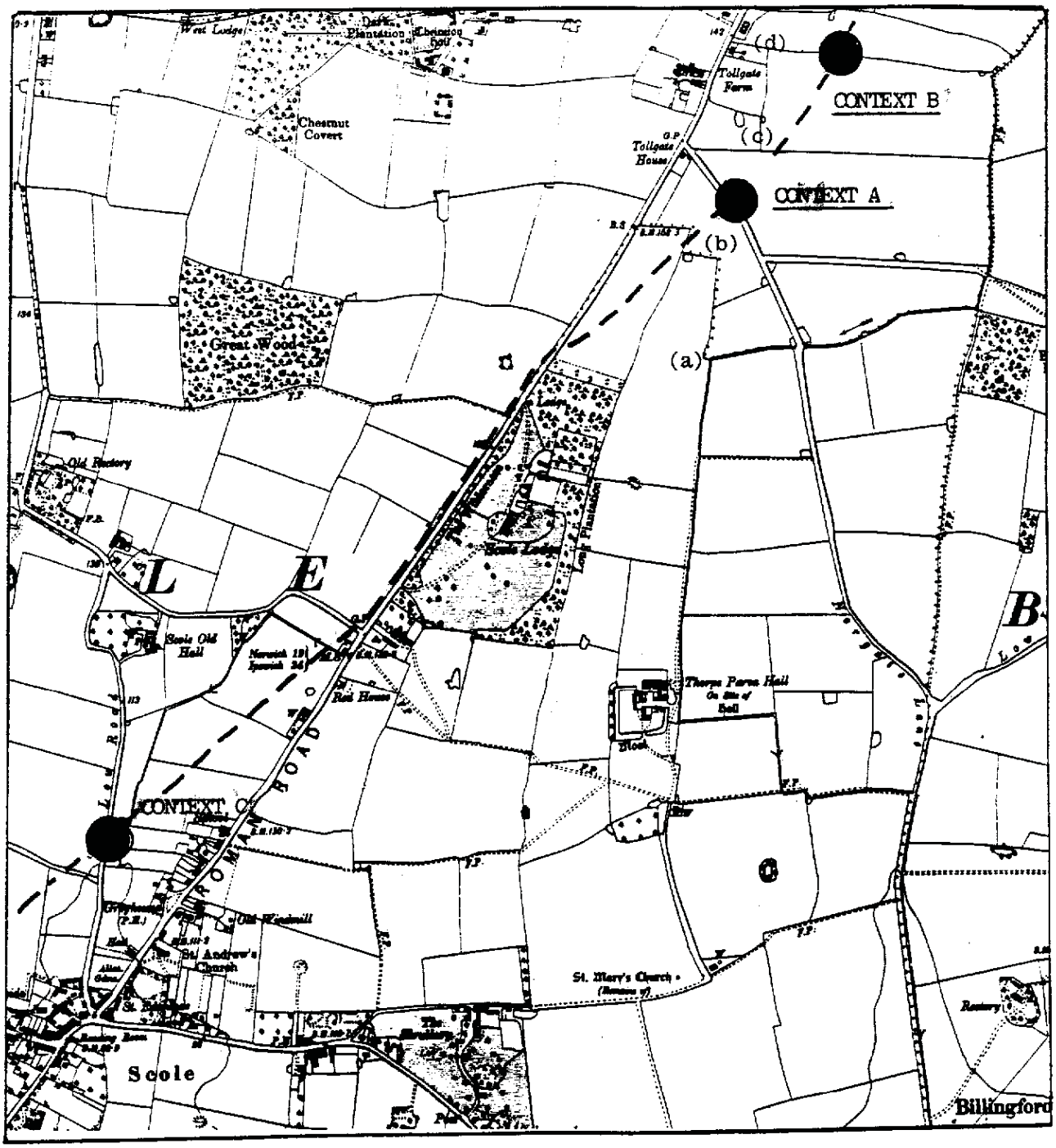


Figure 10 (after Williamson 1992)

5.2 ROMAN

5.2.1 The distribution of Roman finds, to both north and south of the Waveney, suggests a pattern of ribbon development along the two principal known Roman roads (see 4.1.3 and 4.2.3).

5.2.2 The model of roadside development is corroborated by the record of a flint and mortar building with a portico to the south facing the east-to-west road known to traverse the scheduled site in Norfolk. This structure lay near the centreline of the proposed Improvement road. The 1987 investigations, within the area subsequently scheduled, appeared to indicate that the densest concentration of Roman material lay on the alignment of the Improvement road.

5.2.3 The locations of cemeteries associated with the Roman settlement have yet to be identified. Roman cemeteries were usually extramural and the possibility must exist, therefore, that burials could lie on the route of the proposed Improvement on the Norfolk side of the river.

5.2.4 Also within Norfolk the spatial extent of recorded Roman material, particularly to the north and east, cannot be regarded as a complete reflection of the geography of the Roman town. This is because of the constraints upon visibility of finds and unmonitored destruction of archaeological deposits represented by previous development in the village of Scole.

5.2.5 The scheduled area forms about 20 per cent of the estimated total area of the Roman settlement. It should be noted that only about one per cent of the area in the vicinity of the scheduled site has been investigated by archaeological excavation. This represents far too small a sample for the internal anatomy of the settlement to be understood confidently.

5.2.6 The sample does, however, afford a useful insight into the character and preservation of archaeological stratification. The small-scale excavations of 1967 and 1987 showed that the Scheduled Ancient Monument (No.403) contains well-preserved archaeological strata below the level of plough disturbance, including foundations, floors and hearths of buildings and contemporary ground surfaces.

5.2.7 The large amount of wood (including parts of Roman furniture), leather, and faunal and botanical remains excavated from two Roman wells north of the river in 1973, indicate the potential for organic preservation in deeper features. Waterlogged deposits, favouring the preservation of organic material, can also be expected in the floodplain of the Waveney.

5.2.8 In the Suffolk field, the major concentrations of Roman material recorded in May 1992 are along the eastern side of the Roman road, extending some 50 metres eastwards of the A140.

5.2.9 The recently-commissioned Suffolk evaluation identified an area of some 4000 square metres fronting the A140, in the southern half of the field south of the Waveney, in which, similarly, there is good survival of stratification.

5.2.10 To summarize; there are several key areas which pose archaeological questions and are crossed by the proposed Improvement. These are as follows:

1. The area of Scheduled Ancient Monument No. 403 (Norfolk)

2. The area to the north and east of Scheduled Ancient Monument No. 403 (Norfolk)
   - need to establish the extent of the Roman occupation.

3. The southern side of the field fronting the A140 in Suffolk
   - need to establish survival and nature of Roman deposits.

4. Around sandhill on Suffolk side TM 1460 7858
   - need to establish nature and density of Roman features, particularly as waterlogging may preserve wood and other organic remains.

5.3 POST-ROMAN

5.3.1 On the basis of various Saxon finds recorded in Scole and vicinity, there is clearly a likelihood of continuity of settlement from the Roman period (see 4.1.4 and 4.2.4)

5.3.2 There are reasonable topographical grounds to suspect the raised area in the vicinity of the Rectory, north of The Street within Scole in Norfolk, as a possible site of an early Anglo-Saxon cemetery. Comparison could be made with other sites such as the Markshall cemetery that overlooks Caistor-by-Norwich from elevated ground nearby.

5.3.3 The area of the Scheduled Ancient Monument in Scole contains a series of earthworks which have been dated as medieval by trial work in 1987. These probably represent house platforms and associated enclosures.

5.3.4 The two moats, at Dickleburgh House (TM 165 818) and south of Thelveton common (TM 163 811), the rectangular building marked on Faden's map and the crop marks identified at TM 154 796 attest to considerable medieval activity.

5.3.5 To summarize there are key areas which pose archaeological questions and are crossed by the proposed Improvement. These are as follows:

1. The raised area in the vicinity of the Rectory, north of The Street within Scole in Norfolk
   - need to investigate possibility of site of an early Anglo-Saxon cemetery.

2. The area of the Scheduled Ancient Monument in Scole
   - need to establish nature and extent of the series of earthworks.

3. At TM 165 818 to the southern end of the extant moat, believed to belong to Dickleburgh House
- need to investigate whether features associated with the moat survive.

4. In the western corner of Thelveton common
- need to investigate whether the rectangular building marked on Faden's map of 1797 represents the remants of a village.

5. At TM 154 796, just to the north of Scole
- need to investigate crop marks, which may be of medieval cottages.

6.0 END NOTE

The variety of sources of archaeological data which have been consulted for this evaluation have provided the basis for an initial survey of the area which is to be disturbed by the Improvement. However, there are several areas, mentioned above in 5.1.3, 5.2.10 and 5.3.5 which highlight the need for further work to understand fully the significance of the evaluation results. Further, the minimal access for archaeological field survey on the Norfolk side has meant that further questions may be posed by the investigation of these areas at a later date. Nevertheless, the evaluation has shown that there is continuity of use of the landscape through time, from the Prehistoric to the Post-Roman periods, offering a unique insight into human settlement patterns in this area of East Anglia.

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APPENDIX I

A140 SCOLE - DICKLEBURGH IMPROVEMENT

DoT REF. 506609/A140/08

L.A.S. REF. LASPLAG 297

BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SURVEY

Background

The A140 Scole-Dickleburgh Improvement is 2.5 miles long. Along the route, only a single archaeological site is known, Site 23353, which was located during fieldwork in advance of the construction of the Dickleburgh bypass. It is located where a new roundabout is to be built at the junction with the Dickleburgh Bypass, and it includes Iron Age, Romano-British and medieval material.

It is highly probable that further as yet unknown sites are located along the line of the A140 Improvement, as this area has never been systematically examined. Here, as with the Dickleburgh bypass, there are likely to be a number of sites which should be located and assessed by field survey prior to road construction. It is possible that sites may be found which will require either excavation or a watching brief during road construction. A field survey along the route is therefore required to determine the presence or absence of archaeological sites and to assess if further work is required.

This area of Norfolk also contains field boundaries which are believed to be of considerable antiquity, and, if the A140 Improvement cuts across these, it is possible that small-scale excavation may be required. A rapid desk-top assessment of the field boundaries should be carried out to see if work is required.

Brief

The project design should:-

1. Show what provision will be made for a field survey of the route to collect as much information as possible on the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological sites.

2. Present the fieldwalking strategy to be followed

3. Specify what recording methods will be used

4. Consider if other survey techniques are appropriate.

5. Include projected timetable on site, and numbers and grades of staff involved.

6. Include an estimate of the time and resources required for report production.

7. Provide a provisional programme outlining post-survey analysis,

with provision for conservation, the identification of artefacts, specialist reports if appropriate, production of archive report, donation of finds to an appropriate museum, transfer and storage of artefacts and archive in an acceptable form to an appropriate museum, and inclusion of the results of the project in the County SMR.

8. Show what provision will be made for a rapid desk-top assessment of the field boundaries affected by the Improvement, to show if extant boundaries potentially of great antiquity are present.

Results

1. Style and format may be determined by the archaeological contractor.

2. Scale plans showing all areas fieldwalked and the location of all archaeological finds and sites must be included, together with a gazetteer of all sites with details and identifications of all finds.

3. A copy of the results will be supplied to the Norfolk SMR within six months of the completion of the project on the understanding that this will become a public document after an appropriate period of time (generally not exceeding six months).

The Norfolk Museums Service Landscape Archaeology Section will be responsible for monitoring progress and standard throughout the project. The archaeological contractor will give the Landscape Archaeology Section not less than one week's notice of the commencement of the work so that arrangements for monitoring the work can be made.

Archaeological contractors may wish to forward any 'Detailed Project Specifications' to the Norfolk Museums Service Landscape Archaeology Section for validation before any proposals are submitted to potential clients. Any subsequent variation to the specification must be agreed with the Landscape Archaeology Section prior to its implementation.

The report should not give an opinion on whether preservation or further investigation is considered appropriate.

D.A.Gurney
Principal Landscape Archaeologist
4 November 1991

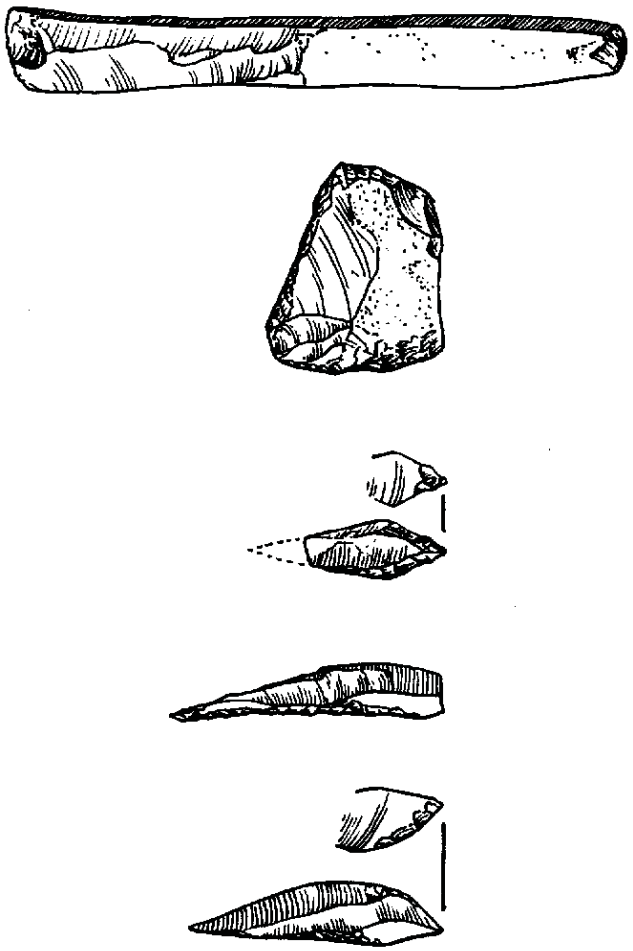


Figure 5 (after Rogerson 1977)

Figure 6 (after Williamson 1992)

4.1.3 ROMAN

Much of the course of the present A140 represents the alignment of the Colchester to Caistor-by-Norwich Roman road.

Existing archaeological records, comprising reports of limited excavations and chance finds since 1855, indicate that a substantial Roman settlement was established shortly after AD60 adjacent to the south-to-north road, at its crossing with the River Waveney. The settlement is argued to represent the Villa Faustini of the Antonine Itinerary (dated to the early 3rd century). An east-to-west Roman road, which intersects with the main route some 185 metres north of the river crossing, has also been traced on both sides of the south-to-north road.

The earliest reference to the existence of a Romano-British site at Scole was in 1855. This noted the discovery of numerous coins "not many hundred yards from the river" (Rogerson 1977).

In 1903 gravel diggers found a group of ironwork artefacts, including spearheads, several copper objects and twenty-seven sherds of pottery at the eastern edge of Scole (no. 22 in Fig. 3). A series of six to eight ditches, forming a square, was also noted.

During excavations in 1936 by B. Brown and C.H. Gale, (no.1 in Fig. 3), a road running northwest-to-southeast was recorded. A series of wooden piles with struts and horizontal timbers was identified and interpreted as a wharf. Timber structures on flint foundations, rubbish pits and other structural remains were revealed to the south.

Excavations by C.E.T. Thonger at Scole House before 1937 (nos. 13-17 in Fig. 3) exposed two Roman structures with concrete floors and walls of flint and oyster shells, one of which contained an apparent complex of ovens. Remains of further structures were found including a building with wattle and daub walls that had been burnt. A north-to-south road was also revealed (no. 17 in Fig. 3). Finds included coins and 2nd century pottery.

Cobbled areas overlain by deposits containing pot and animal bones were recorded at the Sewage Works site (no. 20 in Fig 3) in 1951 by R.R. Clarke and B. Brown. A clay structure, probably an oven, lay further to the north. An east-to-west cambered road was also recorded.

In 1964 A.K. Knowles recorded a road running west north west-east south east (no.2 in Fig. 3).

At least two cremation burials associated with late 1st or early 2nd century pottery were recorded in 1964 by W.F. Milligan and E.B. Green during construction of a bungalow (no.3 in Fig. 3).

Excavations by G.I. Moss in 1967 (no. 5 in Fig. 3) revealed an east-to-west road of gravel over crushed chalk and associated finds. Further excavation in 1972 by G.I. Moss on the north side of this east-to-west road revealed a ditch which lay beneath a flint and mortar Roman building with a portico to the south,

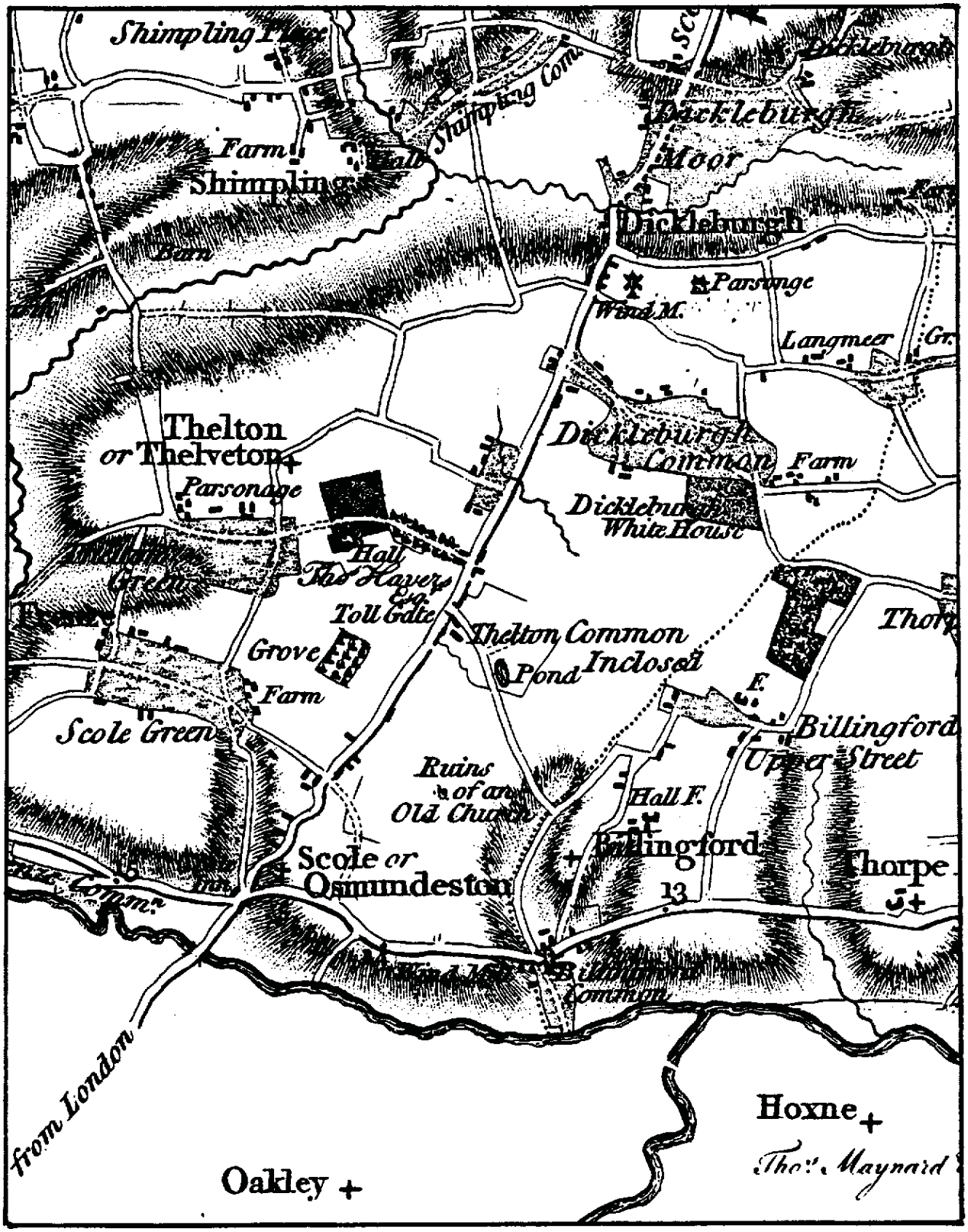

Shimpling Place
Shimpling Com.
Farm
Shimpling
Barn
Dicklebrough Moor
Dicklebrough
Parsonage
Wind M.
Langmeer
Thelton or Thelveton
Parsonage
Dicklebrough Common Farm
Dicklebrough White House
Hall
Toll Gate
Thelton Common
Grove
Farm
Pond
Inclosed
Scole Green
Billingford Upper Street
Ruins of an Old Church
Hall F.
Scole or Osmundeston
Billingford
13
Thorpe
From London
Hoxne
Thos. Maynard
Oakley

Figure 7

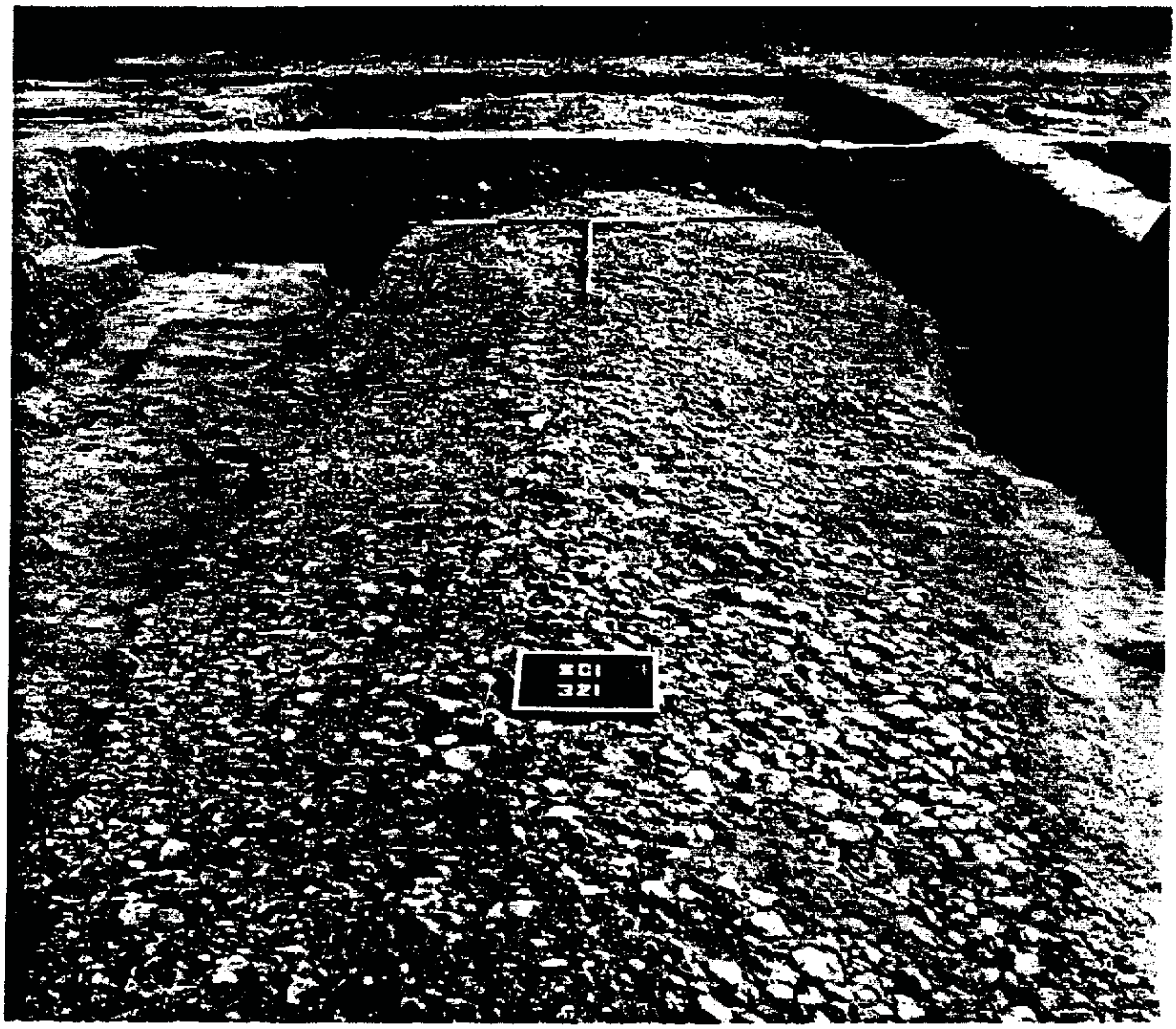
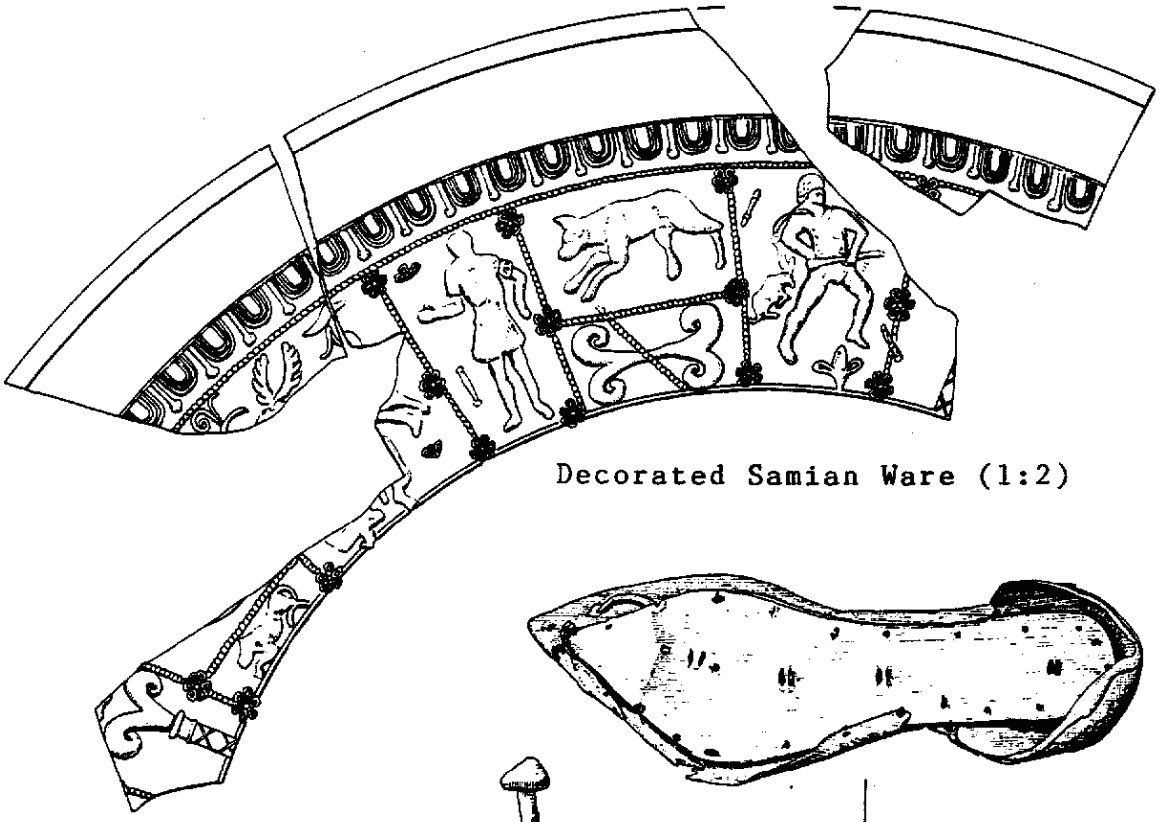
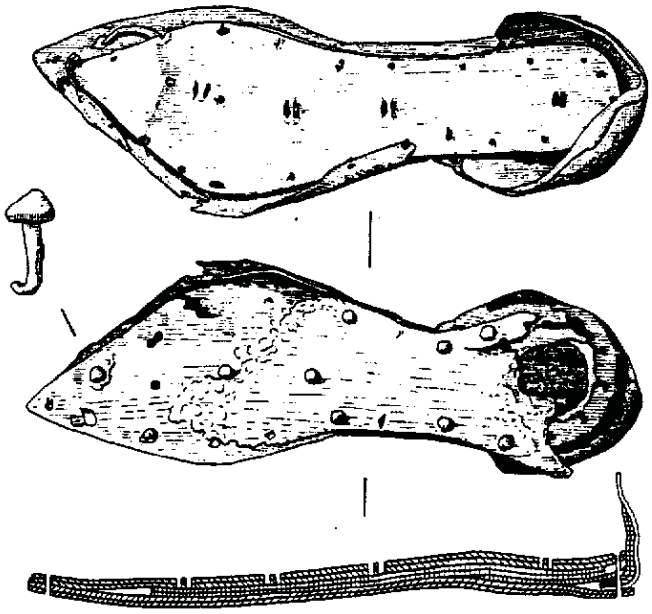


Photo: Andrew Jones

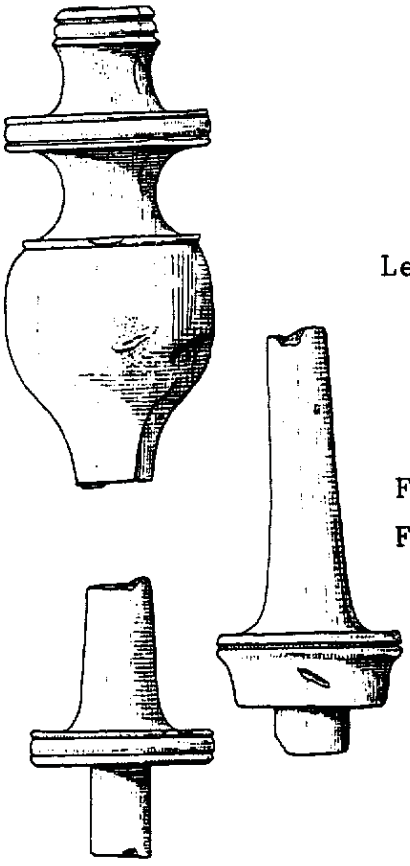
Figure 8 (after Rogerson 1977)



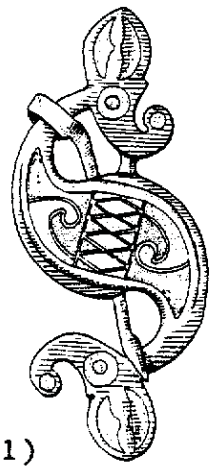
Decorated Samian Ware (1:2)



Leather Shoe (1:3) with Iron Hobnail (1:1)



Fragments of Wooden Furniture Legs (1:2)



Dragonesque Brooch (1:1)

Figure 9 (after Rogerson 1977)

This was probably enclosed for arable purposes in the last quarter of the 18th century. It may be pre-Conquest in origin.

It is possible that a rectangular building, also depicted on Faden's map, as standing isolated in the angle formed by the two roads in the western corner of the common, may represent a remnant of a village that had otherwise gone to waste by the time of the survey. As the building lies directly on the line of the proposed Improvement, the discovery of a medieval site at this place is a clear possibility.

A series of crop marks has been recorded by aerial photography at TM 154 796 to the west of the A140, just to the north of the village of Scole. These features, which suggest the presence of medieval cottages, lie directly on the alignment of the Improvement.

4.2 SUFFOLK

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

The following summaries describe the evidence for each period of activity that has been recorded in the field south of the River Waveney. They comprise data from existing records and new data from the evaluation work recently carried out by the Suffolk Archaeological Unit. A copy of the full report of the Suffolk Archaeological Unit is provided in Appendix V.

4.2.2 PREHISTORIC

About 100 struck flint flakes were found during the recently-commissioned fieldwalking survey by the Suffolk Archaeological Unit. A number of these were blades and possibly Mesolithic in date.

In the period 1979 to 1980, Neolithic worked flints and a Bronze Age flat axe were discovered in the field south of the Waveney. Six scrapers and a flake from a polished flint axe were also recovered in the recent survey. These further attest activity in the Neolithic to the Bronze Age. The Suffolk evaluation also located a concentration of burnt flint.

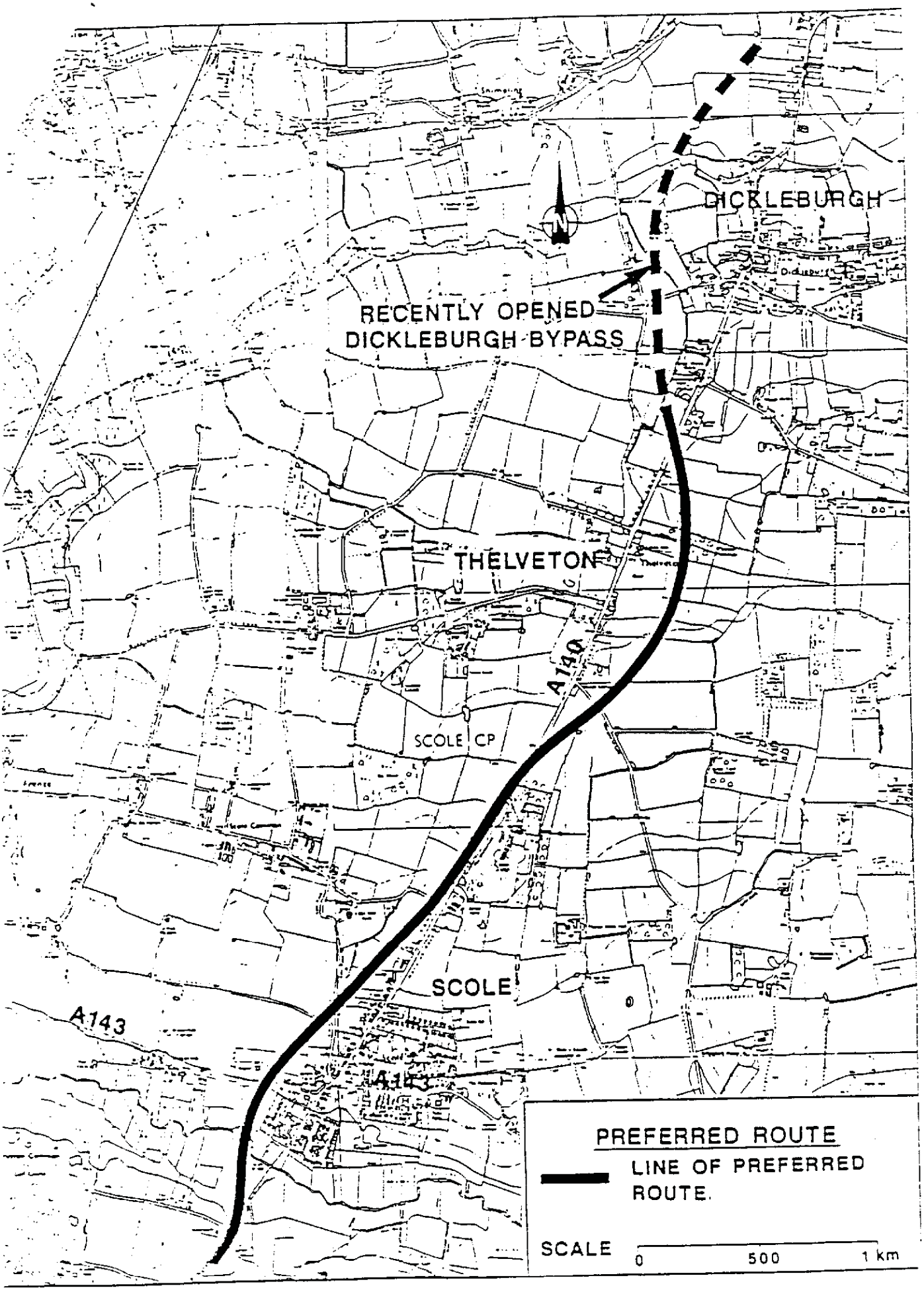
Evidence of Iron Age activity consists of a late coin found in 1979-1980 and a single sherd from the recent survey.

4.2.3 ROMAN

The archaeological significance of field 5449 was indicated by previous finds, cropmarks recorded by aerial photography and the proximity to the river crossing of the Colchester to Caister-by-Norwich Roman road (now the A140). The distribution of previous finds suggested linear development along the south-to-north Roman road.

In the 1930's the south-to-north Roman road (now the A140) was sectioned (S.M.R. No. SUS 001). The road was shown to be 21 feet wide, of packed flints, with a ditch on the west side (no.23 in Fig. 3). Archaeological work at Coddenham, Suffolk (S.M.R. No.

A140 SCOLE TO DICKLEBURGH IMPROVEMENT



A140 Scole-Dickleburgh by-pass : archaeological implications (Suffolk only)

1. Existing archaeological records.
The by-pass proposal affects a 400 metre long area south of the River Waveney within the county of Suffolk (parish of Stuston). This field includes several cropmark features of unknown date possibly Roman (enclosures, parallel ditched ?road, field systems) and a number of surface finds including prehistoric flintwork and Roman metalwork. An older record also mentions possible road metalling and a nearby Roman cremation burial. The cropmarks and the known and supposed areas of Roman finds are shown on the plan.

2. Evaluation proposals

2.1 Field survey : the entire field should be fieldwalked on a 20 metre grid at an appropriate time (generally the winter months) to provide detailed information on pottery concentrations for comparison with the existing metalwork plot. The roadline only should be metal detected on the same grid to check and update the information.

2.2 Trial trenching : a 150m length of the route will affect the visible cropmarks. Trial sections should be cut across the possible road cropmark and each of the main elements to the south (avoiding the obvious intersections). These will consist of mechanical removal of ploughsoil and hand cut sections across the ditches. Trial trenches should also be put across the concentrations of surface finds to determine the extent and degree of survival of features in these areas. These trenches should be machine cut to the top of subsoil, cleaned by hand and minimally excavated.

At the north end of the field a trench should be cut through the river margin deposits, including the proposed new river cut, to check that no waterfront structures exist.

The total extent of trial trenching is dependent on the results of the field survey stage, but on present evidence is likely to be about 300 metres of 1m wide trench.

3. Evaluation timing and organisation

3.1 Field survey needs to be done during winter months, i.e. could be done now (1991/2 winter).

3.2 Trial trenching must follow after the field survey. For practical economic reasons it should take place between harvest and sowing. Six weeks access time should be allowed for this stage.

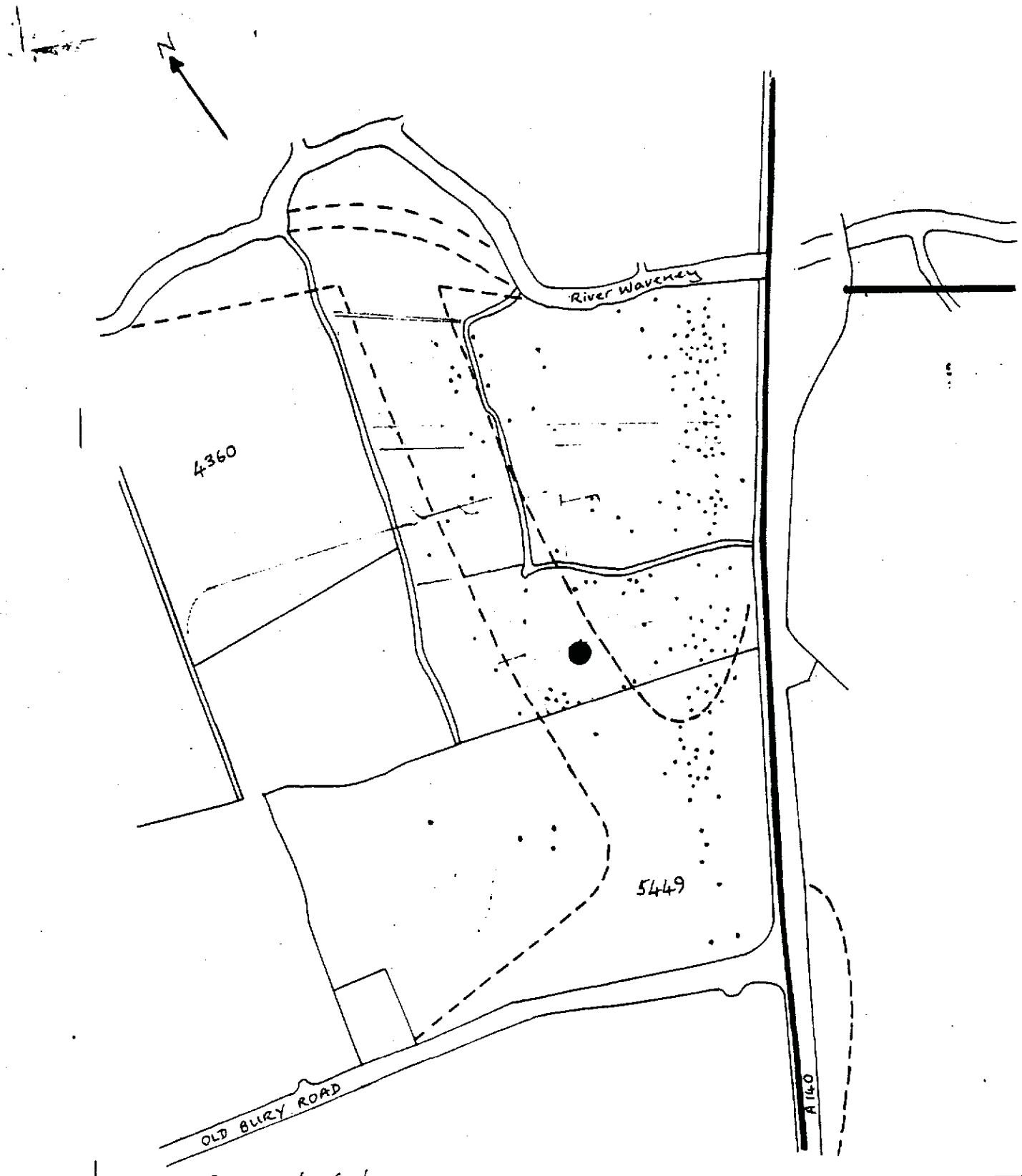
3.3 The County Council archaeological section would be available to carry out the evaluation work and can provide an estimate of costs on request.

/cont'd...

4. Further excavation requirements
It is extremely likely that the evaluation will demonstrate the need to excavate all or part of the area affected by the road (as one assumes that the route is not likely to be altered from the course shown). The test trenching will however indicate the extent and thus the likely costs of a full archaeological record.

J.Plouviez
November 1991

A140 Suffolk



Cropmark features
Roman roads
Roman cremation (approx.)
Roman coins etc.

Scale 1:2500

CP 11/1991

APPENDIX III

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

A140 SCOLE - DICKLEBURGH IMPROVEMENT

DOT REF: 506609/A140/08
LAS REF: LASPLAG 297.
NAU REF: NAU/MS.2/SCO.

METHOD STATEMENT FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SURVEY *

A. Field Survey

1. A detailed fieldwalk and metal-detector survey will be undertaken along the line of the proposed road in order to recover as much information as possible on the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological sites. Ideally this will be undertaken following ploughing and appropriate weathering of the ploughsoil. Within Suffolk, where the road line crosses the field south of the River Waveney, the entire field will be surveyed (excluding detecting which wil be confined to the road line). This procedure will also be adopted for the entire field north of the River Waveney.

2. The fieldwalk survey will be undertaken using a 20 metre grid. A more detailed survey, using a 5 metre grid, will be implemented for those areas where concentrations of material are located in order to define more accurately the perceived boundaries of archaeological sites.

3. The finds will be located within the 20 metre grid which will, wherever possible, be aligned along the drills of the fields. The data will be listed on proforma sheets. In order to conform with established strategy in Norfolk, any location of Middle Saxon material will be plotted on a single sherd basis to the nearest metre. This policy will be extended to cover other discoveries of other relatively rare material (such as neolithic pottery) but will not be implemented for more commonplace material such as medieval pottery. The policy will apply on both the Norfolk and Suffolk parts of the road line.

4. The fieldwalking will be complemented by a metal detector survey which will be undertaken using the same grid and recording system as above. Consideration of further survey techniques will follow the fieldwalk and metal detector surveys, in consultation with the Norfolk Landscape Archaeology Section, Suffolk Archaeological Unit and English Heritage.

B. Evaluation Excavation

5. Trial trenches will be excavated within the field south of the River Waveney in Suffolk. The precise location of these trenches will be determined by the preliminary field survey but each trench will be excavated by mechanical removal of the ploughsoil followed by hand-cleaning and excavation and recording of features.

6. All archaeological contexts and artefacts exposed by evaluation excavation wil be recorded using standardised Norfolk Archaeological Unit recording systems**. These include context, cut, finds and sample sheets (copies can be supplied upon request). Plans, sections and, as appropriate, elevation and projection drawings will be produced at appropriate scales. Colour and black-and-white photography will be undertaken. The colour medium will be at 35mm. transparency; black-and-white photography will use 120mm. roll film or, alternatively, 35mm. film. All photographs will be catalogued acording to the Norfolk or Suffolk county recording system as appropriate. All written and drawn records will be capable of computerisation.

C. General

7. The timetable on site will need to be flexible to take into account the survey programme and the excavation programme. It is anticipated that the latter will require a maximum of six weeks' work. The project will be managed by a Project Manager (Scale 5). Survey and excavation work may be undertaken by suitably qualified contract staff although these will be responsible to the Project Manager.

8. Report production will take place immediately following the completion of field survey and evaluation work. This report will be ready for circulation within six weeks of the conclusion of these works. Its compilation will be the responsibility of the Project Manager supported by a Graphics Assistant. Any necessary specialist data will be included.

9. Post-excavation analysis will include an assessment of any artefacts and samples. An archive will be prepared and will be deposited within an appropriate museum, preferably within the Norfolk Museums Service for Norfolk material and within the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Section for Suffolk material. Cultural material will also be deposited, subject to the consent of the landowners. Provision will be made for conservation and interim storage of the material with the material and archive being deposited to the standards prevailing in the museum(s) at the time of deposition. Site and context numbering will be compatible with the appropriate SMR. A digest of the results will be sent to the appropriate SMR and the archive will be sent to the NMR for microfilming.

10. A rapid desk-top assessment of field boundaries will be undertaken, probably by sub-contracting such work to the appropriate specialist at the University of East Anglia or by seeking access to unpublished material held at U.E.A..

* This method statement absorbs the requirements of archaeological briefs issued by the Norfolk Landscape Archaeeology Section and the Suffolk Archaeological Unit. The numbered paragraphs above correspond to the following paragraphs in the briefs:

NAU/MS.1/SCO	LASPLAG 297	SAU
1	1	2.1; 3.1
2	2	2.1
3	3	2.1
4	4	-
5	-	2.2
6	-	2.2
7	5	3.2
8	6	-
9	7	-
10	8	-

** Site recording systems in Suffolk could be varied if requested by SAU.

Brian S. Ayers
Principal Field Archaeologist

19th February, 1992.

List of S.M.R. numbers consulted for the evaluation report

NORFOLK

1007

1008

7943

7947

7964

9866

11032

11033

23353

23354

25530

SUFFOLK

SUS 005

SUS 001

CDD 003

OKY 010

SAU GH 09

Archaeological Evaluation for A140, Scole Dickleburgh improvement (river Waveney to A140 south)

Contents

1. Topography and soil

2. Archaeological history

3. Method of survey

4. Finds from surface surveys

5. Description of trenches

6. Finds from trenches

7. Interpretation of trenches

8. Conclusion and discussion

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1. Map: Topography
2. Map: Visible soil types
3. Map: Previous finds
4. Map: Air photo features
5. Map: Survey results - Prehistoric
6. Map: Survey results - Roman pottery
7. Map: Survey results - Roman and Saxon metalwork
8. Graph: Roman coins
9. Drawing: Metalwork
10. Map: Trench locations
11. Plan: Trench 1a and Sections: Trench 5 and 6

1. Topography and Soil

The field surveyed (5449 on the current OS map) lies between the river Waveney, the junction of the Old Bury Road and the existing A140 at TM 145 786 in the parish of Stuston.

The limit of the river flood plain crosses the field where there is a sharp rise in the height of the land (Fig.1). The northern two-thirds of the field are fairly level but this was not always the case and when the flood plain was brought into arable production after the Second World War, some major ditches were backfilled and higher areas were levelled.

The flood plain also shows clearly on the ploughsoil plan (Fig.2). The darker peaty loam topsoil close to the river contrasts with the light brown sandy loam over the slope. Areas of very sandy topsoil at the northern end of the field indicate where topsoil has been removed in levelling and the sand subsoil has been exposed.

2. Archaeological history

The existing data about this field (Suffolk County SMR no. SUS 005) mostly relates to occupation in the Roman period. There are also some air photographs of cropmarks which have been interpreted as Roman. The Roman occupation has to be seen in the context of the small town centred on the north side of the river Waveney in Scole.

The A140, forming the eastern boundary of the field, is on the line of the Roman road from Colchester to Caistor by Norwich. The road was sectioned in the 1930's and shown to be 21 foot wide, of packed flints, with a ditch on the west side (SMR no. SUS 001). The construction of this road was dated at Coddenham, Suffolk to around AD 70 (SMR no.CDD 003). A probable Roman road runs east from the A140 just south of Scole Bridge (SMR OKY 010). A road to the west across SUS 005 was recorded in 1954 by Basil Brown; it was found when digging a drain and was described as very hard. A single Roman cremation (pottery urn fragment with burnt bone) was found at the same time. The recorded location for this may not be very accurate (Fig.3).

A substantial group of metal artefacts was recorded in 1979-1980; it consisted of one Late Iron Age and 200 Roman coins, eighteen Roman brooches and a hairpin. The distribution of artefacts was recorded by the finder and is reproduced in Fig.3; it shows a primary concentration along the eastern edge of the field but also extends into the central area. In date the finds spanned the Roman period, without the

sharp decline noted at Scole in the early fourth century (Rogerson, 1977, 129 and 222).

Some pre-Roman material was found at this time including a Bronze Age flat axe and Neolithic worked flint (precise findspots are not recorded). Worked flint has also been found in material dredged from the river (SUS 001).

Cropmark information for this field is available on air photographs taken in 1976 (NAU/TM1478/3/AFA5-9) and 1977 (SAU GH 09). A number of overlapping linear systems are visible including field boundaries removed in the twentieth century (see Fig.4). One linear feature, with a curve at its western end, has been interpreted as part of a possible Roman military marching camp (Edwards, 1977, 236), with a pair of ditches to the north as a Roman road. This interpretation was probably influenced by the likelihood of a military origin for the Scole settlement; both excavations at Scole and the finds from SUS 005 suggest Roman activity began in the AD 60's, possibly immediately after the Boudican revolt.

3. Method of survey

Three methods of survey were adopted:

i) A 20m gridded fieldwalking survey of the entire field.

ii) A metal detecting survey restricted to the proposed roadline.

iii) A series of five trenches dug by hand, and one by machine, were positioned to test the information provided by aerial photography and previous archaeological fieldwork.

The survey strategy was constrained by a short timetable and the need to minimise crop damage by cutting trenches by hand.

Fig.10 shows the locations of the trenches superimposed on an interpretation of the aerial photographic evidence. Trenches 1a, 1b and 1c were positioned to test the archaeological stratigraphy adjoining the known Roman road (A140) and the depth of preservation at the higher southern end of the field.

Trench 2 was to investigate the area identified by B.Brown in the 1950's as containing a Roman cremation urn and a road. It crossed two of the linear cropmarks, one of which was known to be recently infilled.

Trench 3 crossed the ditch suggested to be part of a Roman marching camp.

Trench 4 was placed to traverse the suggested course of the Roman road as identified from aerial photography.

Trench 5 was a machine excavated trench across the rough ground between the farmed land and the river.

Trench 6 was located in an area of surface finds also said to have produced Roman material during the laying of land drains in the 1960s.

4. Finds from the surface surveys

The fieldwalking produced finds ranging from prehistoric to recent, the largest group of material being Roman pottery sherds.

Prehistoric (Fig.5)

About 100 struck flint flakes were collected; a number of these were blades and possibly Mesolithic in date. Six scrapers and a flake from a polished flint axe were also found, indicating Neolithic or Bronze Age activity .

Pieces of burnt flint were also collected as possible indicators of early activity; only one area of dense burnt flint was recorded.

The only pre-Roman pottery was a possible late Iron Age sherd from an area of dense Roman material. The lack of earlier prehistoric sherds is most likely the result of disintegration due to cultivation rather than a true absence.

The distribution of the worked flints suggests more activity in the southern part of the field and possibly also in the north (around the polished axe flake) where the topography shows a slight rise. The concentration of burnt flints is also probably a prehistoric feature of a type described as a 'cooking pit', often located close to water.

Roman (Figs.6,7)

A total of 1,240 Roman pottery sherds were found over the whole field. Wares include samian, amphorae, Colchester colour-coated, Nene Valley, Pakenham colour-coated and late Roman shell-gritted as well as the predominant local grey wares. The forms and fabrics date from the first through to the fourth century.

The metal detecting survey area produced 64 Roman coins (52 attributable to specific coin periods), four brooches, a hairpin, a finger ring and a fragment of a terret ring. The coins range in date from a Republican denarius (first century BC) to Honorian (AD 388-402). The coins have been plotted on a chronological histogram (Fig.9) as defined by Reece (Reece 1987, 73-83) in combination with the 1979-80 finds to give an adequate sample. The result is very similar to the general pattern established for Suffolk (and broadly similar to the Roman Britain norm). There is an unusually high number in the 1992 period 2a group (Claudian) and a dearth of period 3 (later first century) which might reflect different levels of activity in the different areas of the field - tentatively one could postulate an early (?military) presence within the 1992 survey area followed by roadside settlement circa AD 70-100 in the north east of the field. The brooch fragments include three first century Colchester derivative types and a second century enamelled disc type. The terret ring is probably mid-first century.

The distribution of Roman finds confirms and refines the data collected in 1979-80. The major concentrations are along the eastern side of the field but dropping off sharply in the southern corner and generally extending about 50m westwards from the A140. These roadside areas include both early and late finds; there are also a few Roman tile fragments from the northern half of this strip. To the west there is a secondary concentration of pottery near the bend in the river which suggests activity on the slightly higher sandy area. The metalwork shows a lack of correlation with the pottery density in the centre of the western half of the field where two brooches and the terret were found (and see also the 1979-80 brooches in Fig.3). There are also three Claudian coins and a brooch from the southern edge of the field. This raises the question whether the distribution of first century pottery has been masked by the greater abundance of later wares.

Post-Roman finds

There was little post-Roman pottery apart from relatively modern glazed wares which are omnipresent on cultivated land; a few sherds of local late Medieval glazed ware were noted. The metalwork also included mainly sixteenth century and later material. There was, however, one pin of Middle Saxon type (Figs.7,9) from the north of the field.

5. Description of trenches

Trench 1a (Fig.11)

Trench 1a was located on the higher ground, it was 36m long, and was initially opened up to a width of 0.5m with the

eastern 22m later widened to a full metre. The light brown sandy ploughsoil varied in depth from 0.3m in the east to 0.4m in the west and there was a further 0.1m of flinty dark loam in the expanded area of trench (above the stratigraphy recorded in plan).

The plan revealed (reading from the east): between 0 and 2.5m a light brown sandy loam with charcoal flecks, between 2.5m and 4m was a mid-brown loam and between 4m and 6m was a dark brown loam (numbered 0158). Between 6m and 9m was an orange-brown sand and gravel layer which was cambered in the middle and showed signs of north-south plough damage (numbered 0159). From 9m to 22m the stratigraphy was less clearly delineated; there were areas of orange sand, gravel, charcoal and patches of loam. At 22m the complicated stratigraphy stopped abruptly and the remaining 14m of trench showed diagonal dark loam filled cuts across a background of reddish-brown sand loam. A sample length of this material was excavated and from 22m to 24m the mixed reddish loam extended to a depth of 0.9m (0.6m below the ploughsoil) onto light sand and gravel; at 24m it rose 0.2m (to 0.7m below the surface) at which level it continued to the end of the trench.

Two 10m long by 0.5m wide trenches, 1b and 1c, were similar in fill to the west end of 1a. They both contained 0.3m of ploughsoil over a mixed horizon of reddish brown loam cut by diagonal lines, the mixture extending down to 0.7m in the two sample areas excavated in each trench.

Trench 2

This trench was 51m long by 0.5m wide. The depth of plough disturbance was constant at about 0.30m. The trench was on a slope dropping 0.75m from south to north which had a noticeable effect on the stratigraphy. Described from north to south the ploughsoil overlaid a silty peat, which was approximately 0.20m thick, over a white silt/sand. Between 17m and 19.5m the course of a ditch crossed the trench. It had an upper layer of silty clay over a dark peaty fill. At this point there was standing water at 0.5m and the sand below the ploughsoil was damp. There was a second ditch between 41m and 43m; it had a black silty fill similar to that from the first ditch. South of this ditch the ploughsoil overlaid orange sand.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was fairly level and situated on the low ground. It was 17m long and 0.5m wide. The ploughsoil was 0.3m. deep and overlay a dark silty sand approximately 0.10m deep, which rested on a white silty sand. In the profile of one of the ditches this was seen to extend down to 0.7m where the soil became bright orange. Between 7m and 11m the base

of the ploughsoil overlay clay which had collected in a depression over a ditch which was at least 0.9m deep. On the north edge of this ditch was a smaller one, 0.8m deep and 1m wide. Both ditches contained a similar fill of white silty sand and peat.

Trench 4

This trench also crossed fairly even low ground, it was 20m long and 0.5m wide. The plough soil was 0.3m deep; towards the south end of the section 0.15m of grey brown silt sealed a narrow band of peaty/silt which was over white sand and silt. This was over the natural orange sand which was 0.55m below the surface of the ploughsoil. This profile continued to about 8m where the dark peaty silt and white sand petered out as the orange sand rose to about 0.5m. A small test section showed the sand continuing to at least 0.9m changing from a rusty orange to yellow.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was 44m long and 2m wide and crossed even ground. It was excavated into peat to variable depths between 1.20m up to 2.20m by mechanical digger. The latter depth was excavated at 28m from the northern end at which point white silty sand was exposed. One sample section, that nearest the river has been illustrated (Fig.11). It shows a disturbed topsoil over a silty soil; a layer of clay presumably from flooding caps the peat at a depth of 0.6m. The remainder of the section shows a continuous build up of peat, a dark interface at 0.8m indicates where the peat has been decaying. At 1.4m the base of tree roots project vertically down. These occurred throughout the trench at a similar depth. The peat in this section was not bottomed at 2.2m. Silt was visible at the southern end of the trench, rising sharply out of the peat at 41m. Column samples were taken of the deposits at each end of the trench.

Trench 6

This trench was on level ground, it measured 12m by 0.5m with a 0.3m depth of ploughsoil. From the eastern end the ploughsoil was above orange sand which was cut between 2.5m and 5.5m by a dark loamy ditch fill. The orange sand dipped below grey sand between 7.5m and the end of the trench and between 8.5m and 10m there was a grey sand filled ditch which was sectioned and found to be 0.95m deep. Central to the ditch and cutting vertically through it was a modern disturbance 0.2m wide. This ditch appeared to cross the trench at an angle aligned roughly north-south.

6. The finds from the trenches

Trench 1a

Features	Pottery (No.of sherds)	Date range	Flint
0158	14	2nd/3rd Century	
0159	6	"	
0160	68	"	
0171	6	2nd Century	

Trench 6

0176			2 scrapers 1 flake, 2 burnt flints

Trench 4

			3 Mesolithic blades

7. Interpretation of trenches

Trenches 1a, 1b and 1c.

The evidence in plan (Fig.11), and the finds recovered from trench 1a suggest the eastern 22m of the trench contained a high concentration of Roman features. A probable sequence of linear features aligned on north-south axes (0158 and 0159 particularly) at the eastern end give way to a less regular and more varied sequence of features further west where the outlines of pits, notably 0163, may tentatively be identified. The distribution of gravel and sand across the trench suggest much of this material was redeposited and represents Roman stratification above the natural. In recent years at least the 0.1m of dark flinty soil above much of this area may have afforded some protection from the ploughing.

The diagonal scars below the ploughing over the remaining 14m of trench may have been caused by land drains and the ground was disturbed to a depth of 0.7m over most of this distance and 0.9m in a 2m wide belt on the edge of the Roman deposits. In the small area of natural sand cleaned no archaeological features were uncovered although given the density of material in the east of the trench the

possibility of some deeper features such as pits and ditches surviving cannot be ruled out.

Trenches 1b and 1c may be interpreted in the same way, the land drainage trenches below the ploughing are likely to have obliterated any stratified deposits but the survival of deeper features was not tested.

Trench 2

Within trench 2 the ploughsoil at the southern end lay directly on a natural orange sand and there was no sign of the land drains evident to the south. The two ditches which crossed the trench can clearly be seen to align with parts of the existing field system, and they were both filled with a dark silty peat suggesting they filled up whilst the water table was relatively high, probably near the present level. Given these factors it seems fairly safe to assume these ditches were medieval or later in origin.

The white sand at the northern end of the trench probably reflects water sorting and deposition as there was a marked drop in the height of the land over the 50m. No finds were recovered during the excavation and there were no signs of occupation apart from the ditches.

Trench 3

This trench contained similar material to that from the north end of trench 2 although the white silty sand was shallower. The double ditch suggested to be Roman from the aerial photograph contained a similar fill to the ditches in trench 2, consisting of silt and peat capped by a layer of naturally deposited clay. The similarity of fill and parallel alignment of this ditch to those from trench 2 strongly suggests they were part of the same field system.

Trench 4

No occupation features showed in this trench and there was no evidence to explain the suggested road line flanked by ditches indicated by the aerial photography.

Trench 5

The section through the peat suggested a largely uninterrupted accumulation of peat had occurred to a depth of up to 2.27m (this compares with the bore hole report, BH.214 carried out by Trevor Crocker and Partners suggesting a peat depth of 2.3m). Some fluctuation in the water table was suggested towards the top of the peat with depositions of silt and clay.

Trench 6

Of the two ditches in trench 6 the eastern ditch can be identified, from the aerial photograph, with a recent field boundary. This was confirmed in excavation by the mixture of homogenous peaty silt with topsoil that was used to backfill the ditch.

The sandy fill of the western ditch (0176) contrasted with all the other ditch fills which contained dark peaty fills. This factor alone suggests the ditch was earlier than the field systems represented on the aerial photographs, the ditch having been filled when the water table was lower. One flake and two burnt flints were recovered from the small section excavated which suggests the ditch was prehistoric. However, if these flints are residual the ditch might be Roman. The only finds from the remainder of the trench were two worked flints.

8. Conclusion and discussion

The evidence from the fieldwalking and metal detecting surveys shows that there was a lengthy Roman occupation of the eastern side of the field. This is presumably the result of linear development along the Roman road spreading south from the large settlement at Scole just north of the river. The varied and relatively high status finds are characteristic of these Roman small towns in East Anglia. This field differs from the excavated area in Scole by including a typical range of fourth century material; the relatively well-preserved stratified deposits offer good potential for examining late Roman levels which are often missing on rural sites.

The concentration of Roman deposits recorded in trench 1a supports the evidence found on the surface; there was however a marked decline in the amount of surface material found to the south of this trench. The explanation for this may lie with the land drainage pattern (recorded in trenches 1a, 1b and 1c), although the churning of the subsoil should not have resulted in the disappearance of pottery and metalwork from the ploughsoil. The higher density of worked flints and the early Roman material along the southern edge of the field also suggests a change in the character of the occupation.

A second concentration of pottery and metalwork occurs in the northern part of the field in the area of sandy soil, close to the river. This area also produced a concentration of prehistoric artefacts and the single Saxon find. The evidence for an early feature in Trench 6 reinforces the potential of this part of the proposed roadline,

particularly as features might be partially waterlogged. Samples taken from Trench 5 need to be examined to clarify the environmental sequence in the low-lying area.

The trial trenching appears to show that most of the cropmarks visible on aerial photographs are no earlier than the Middle Ages, although the sample sections were very small.

As noted above the constraints of time and hand excavation mean that the trenched areas were extremely small and could not fully take account of the surface survey results. Ideally further assessment trenches could be machine cut after harvest to clarify:

1. The southern extent of stratified deposits identified in Trench 1a.
2. Whether archaeological features have survived the heavy agricultural disturbance along the southern edge of the field.
3. The likely density and preservation of features on and around the northern sandhill (Trench 6 area).
4. The generally negative results in the central area.
5. The possiblity of Roman roadside occupation east of the A140 in the strip of Scole Plantation which is within the proposed roadline.

On the basis of the evidence recovered so far there is a case for full excavation prior to destruction by the proposed road in the following areas:

1. About 4000 square metres of Roman deposits in the southern half of the field fronting the A140, with in situ stratigraphy likely in much of the area.

2. About 3750 square metres on and around the sandhill area in the north. Feature density is likely to be lower in this area but there is waterlogging potential.

3. A small (around 500 square metres) area to examine features related to the prehistoric burnt flint concentration.

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27.5.92

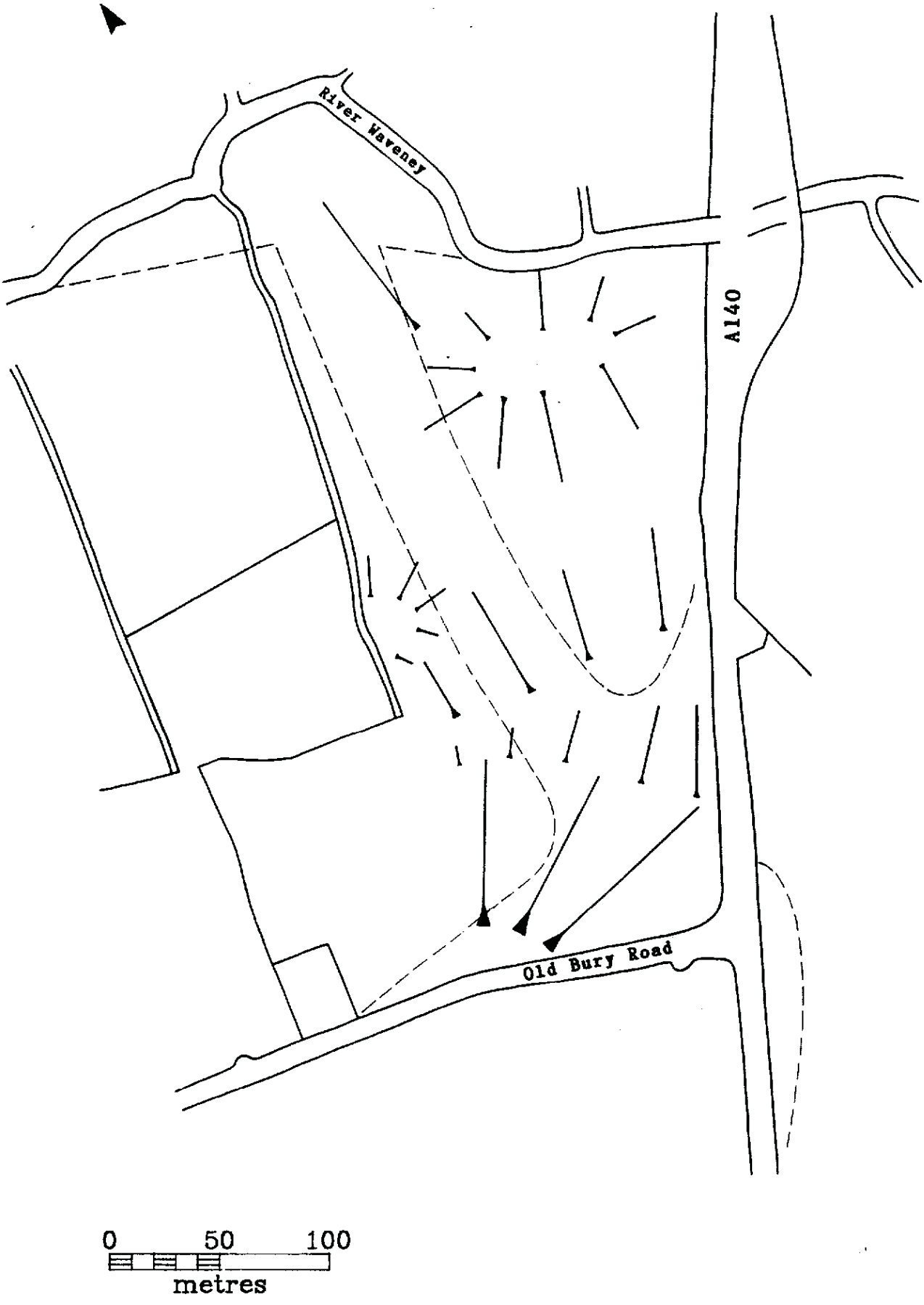


Fig.1 Topographic features Scale 1:2500

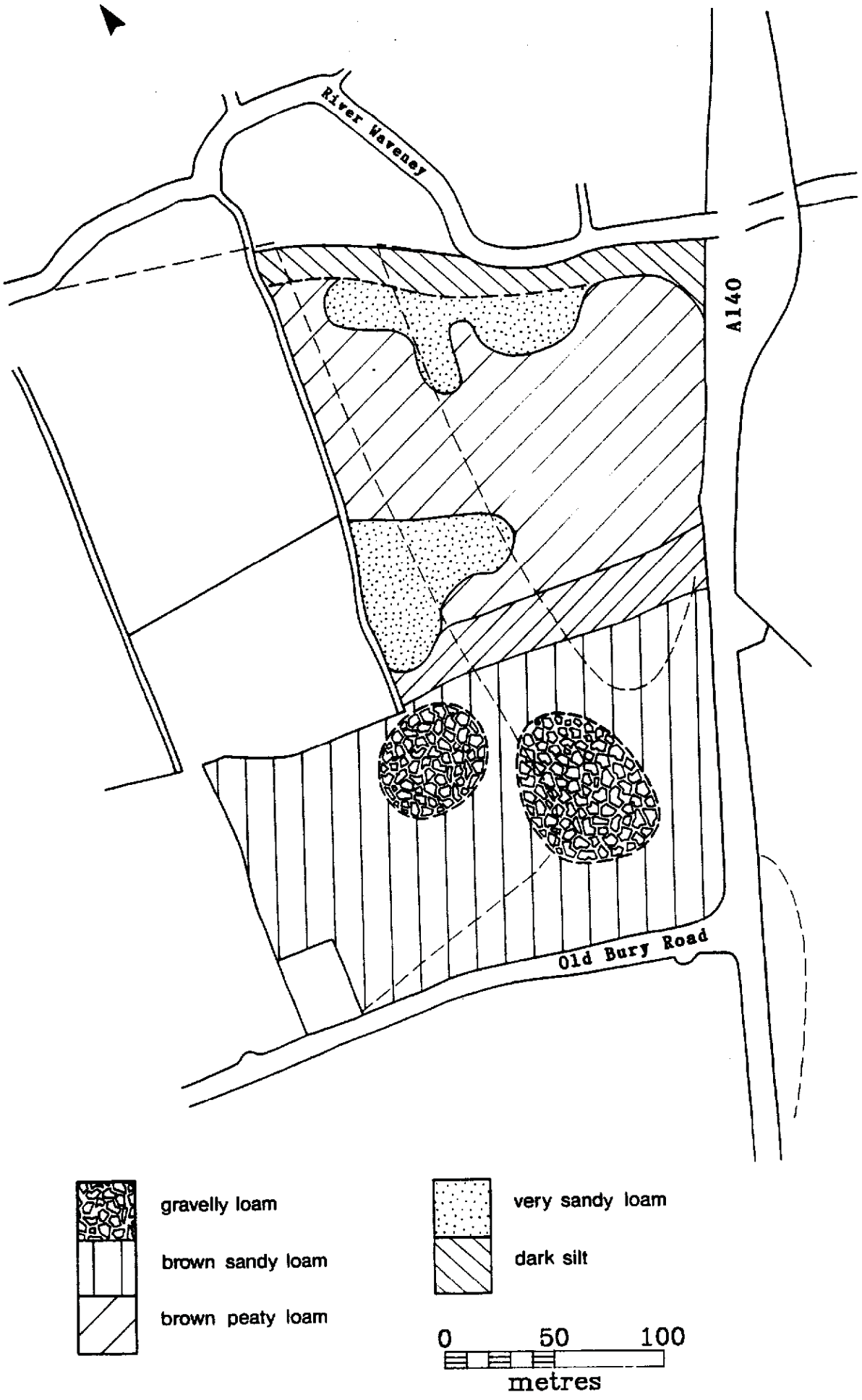


Fig.2 Visible soil types Scale 1:2500

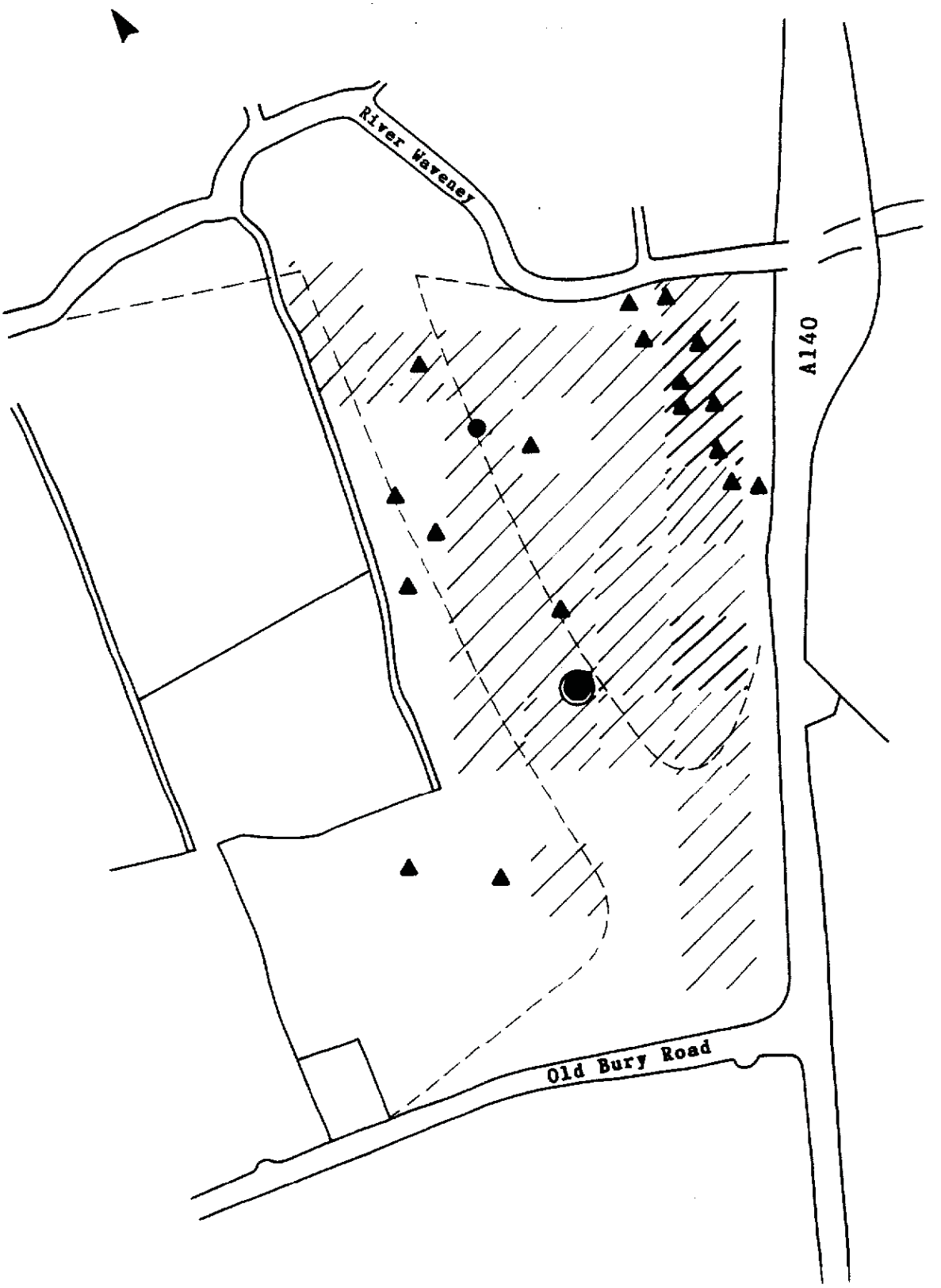
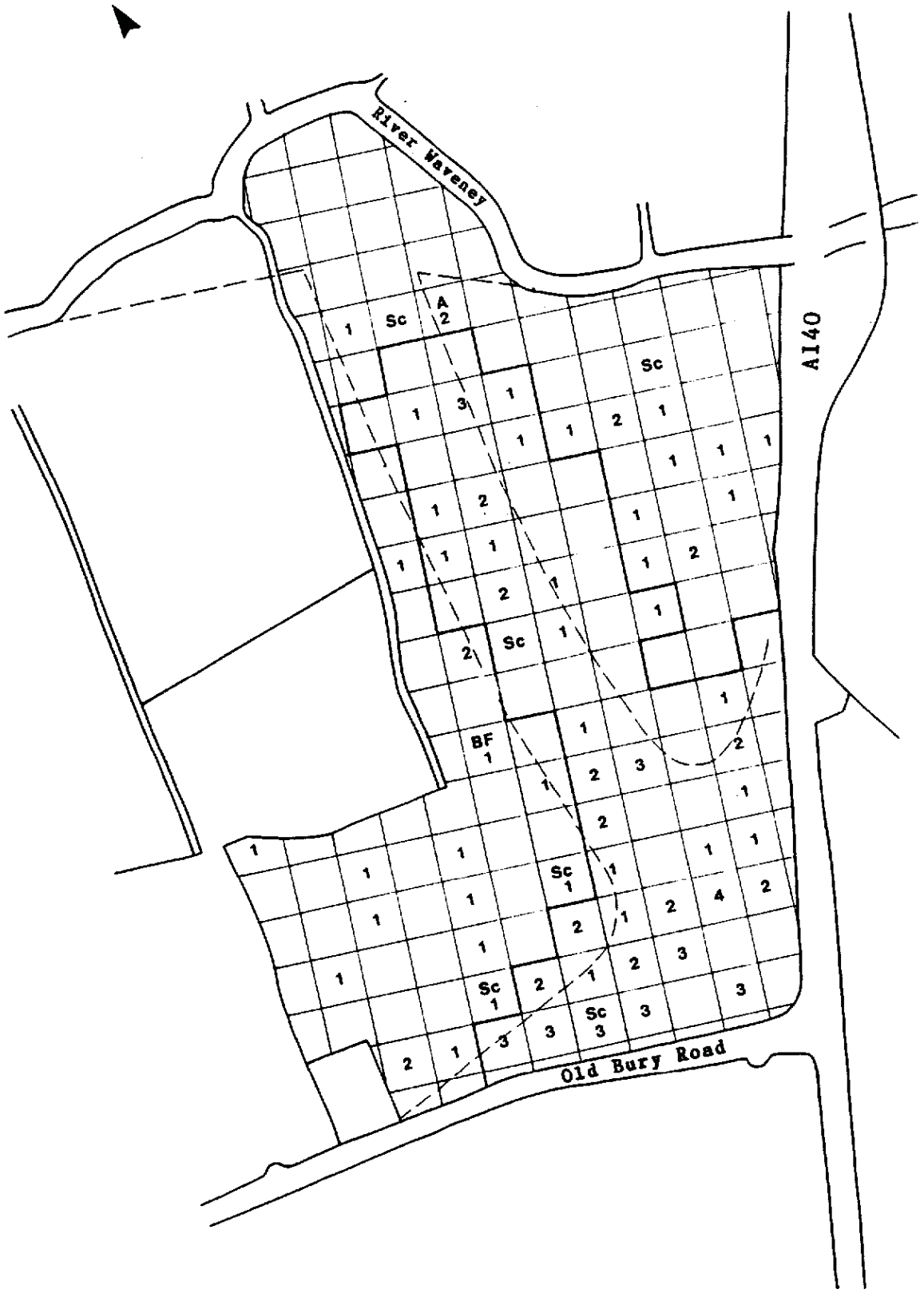


Fig.3 Previous finds Scale 1:2500

Fig.4 Cropmark features on air photographs Scale 1:2500



1 number of flint flakes

A polished axe flake

BF burnt flint concentration

Sc scraper

0 50 100

metres

Fig.5 Fieldwalking survey: Prehistoric finds Scale 1:2500

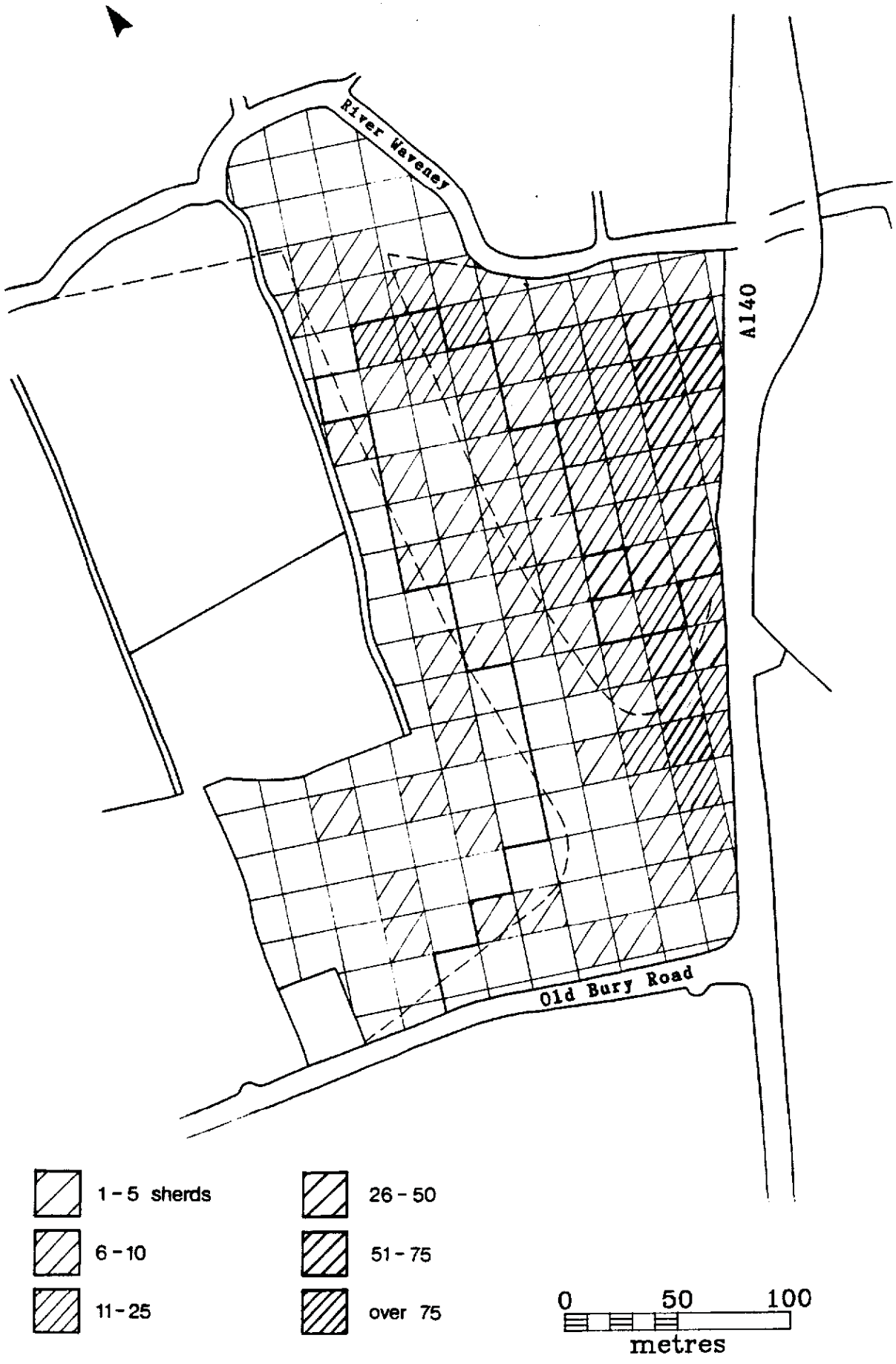
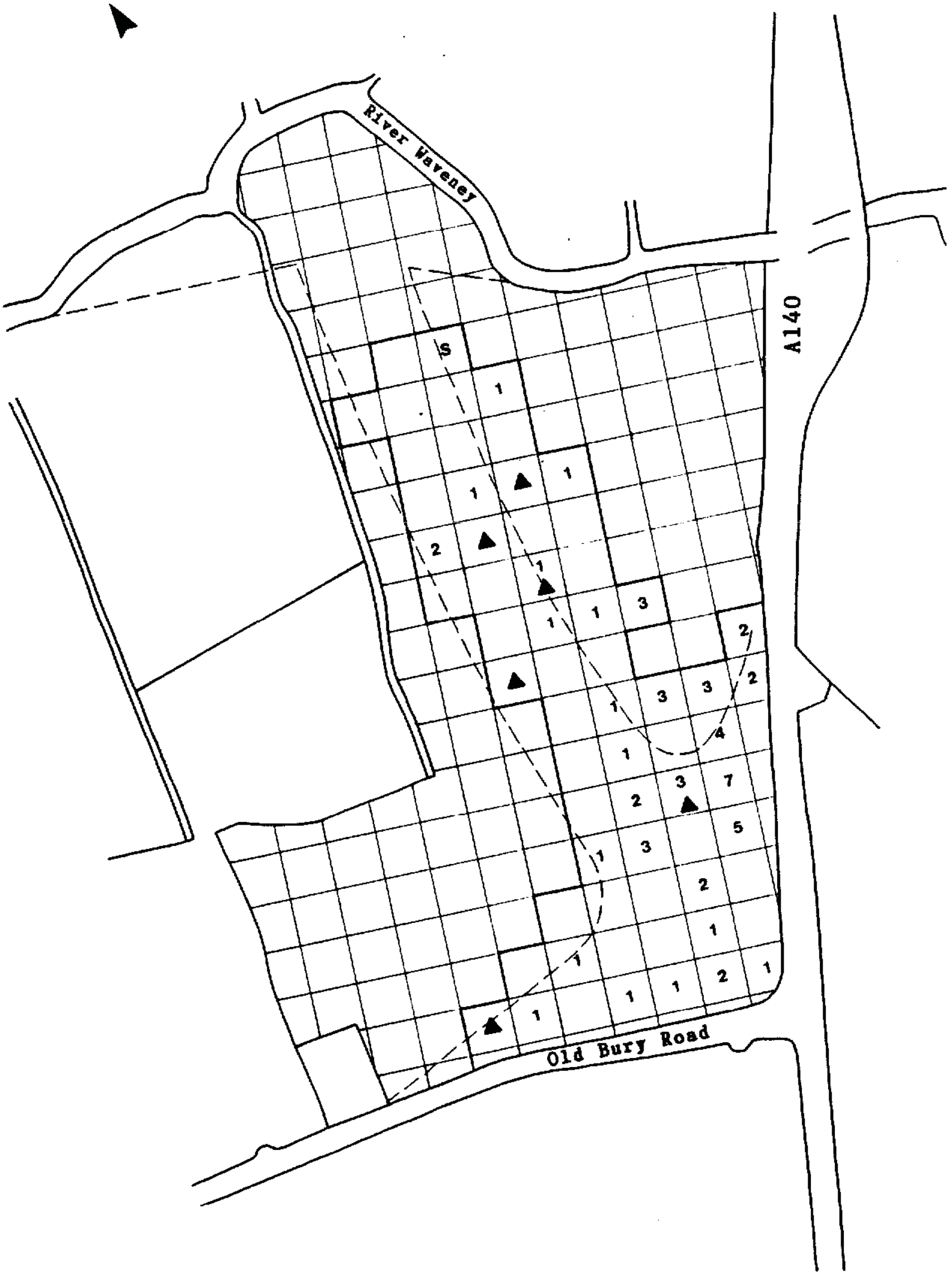


Fig.6 Fieldwalking survey: Roman pottery Scale 1:2500



1 number of Roman coins

▲ Roman object

s Saxon pin

Heavy line shows extent of metal detecting

0 50 100
metres

Fig.7 Metal detector survey Scale 1:2500

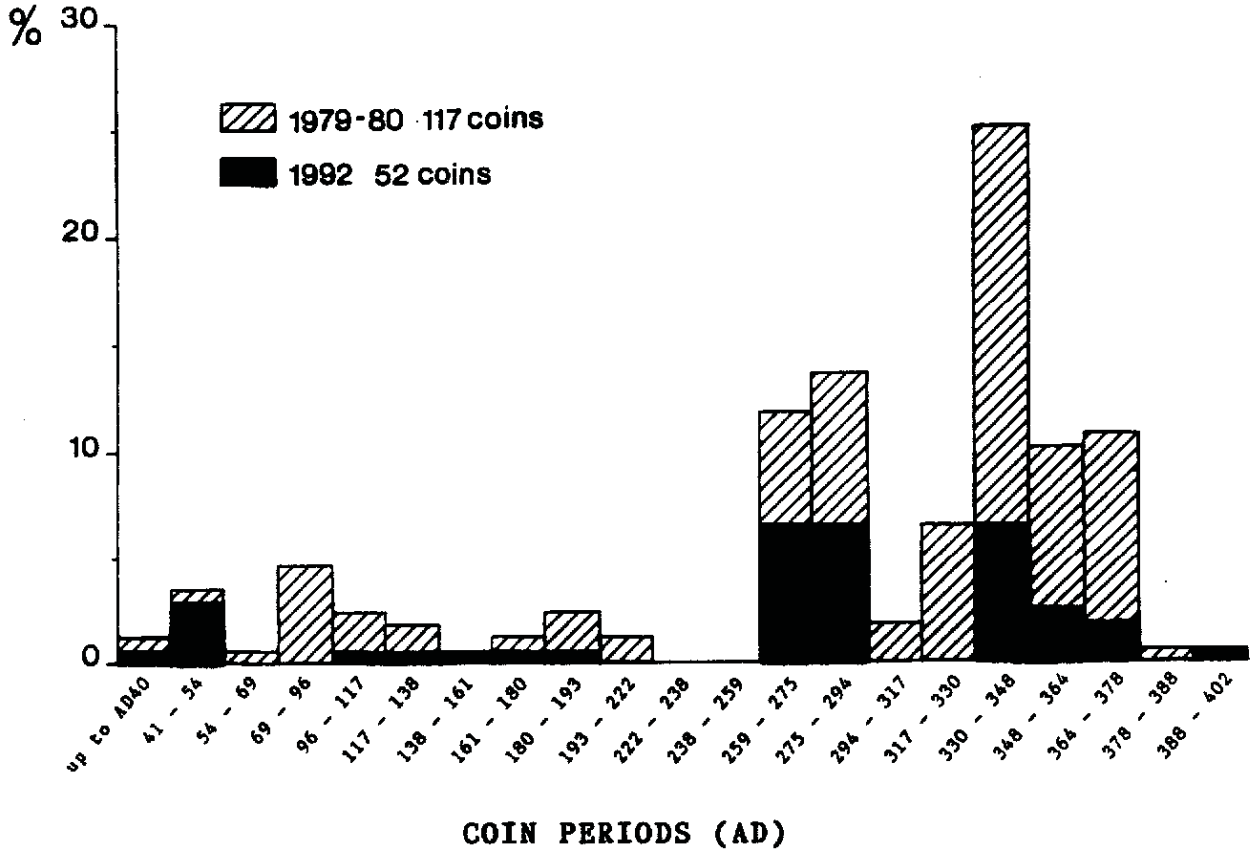


Fig.8 Histogram of Roman coins Coin periods as Reece 1987 along y-axis

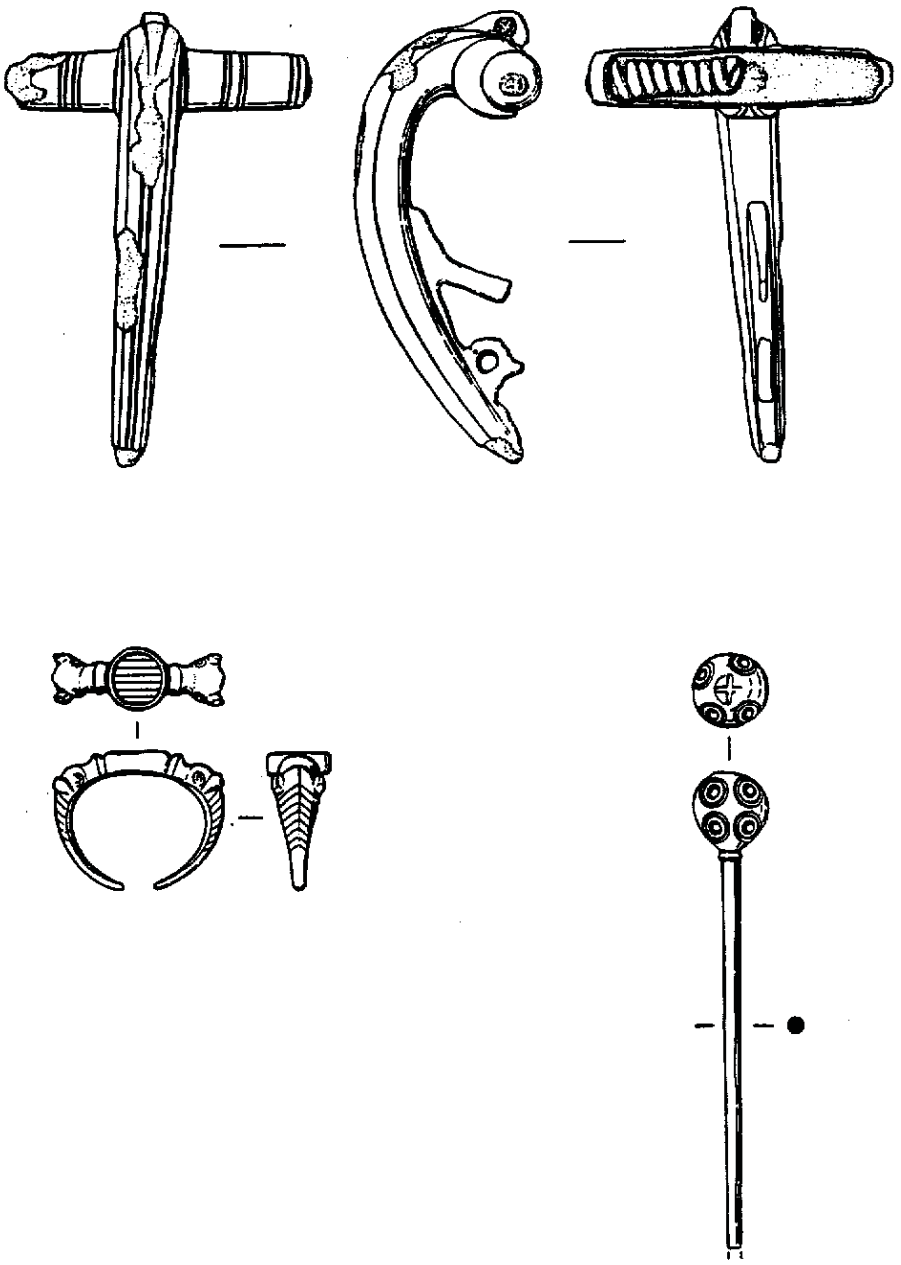


Fig.9 Bronze first century brooch 1/1

Roman bronze finger ring 1/1

Saxon bronze pin 1/1

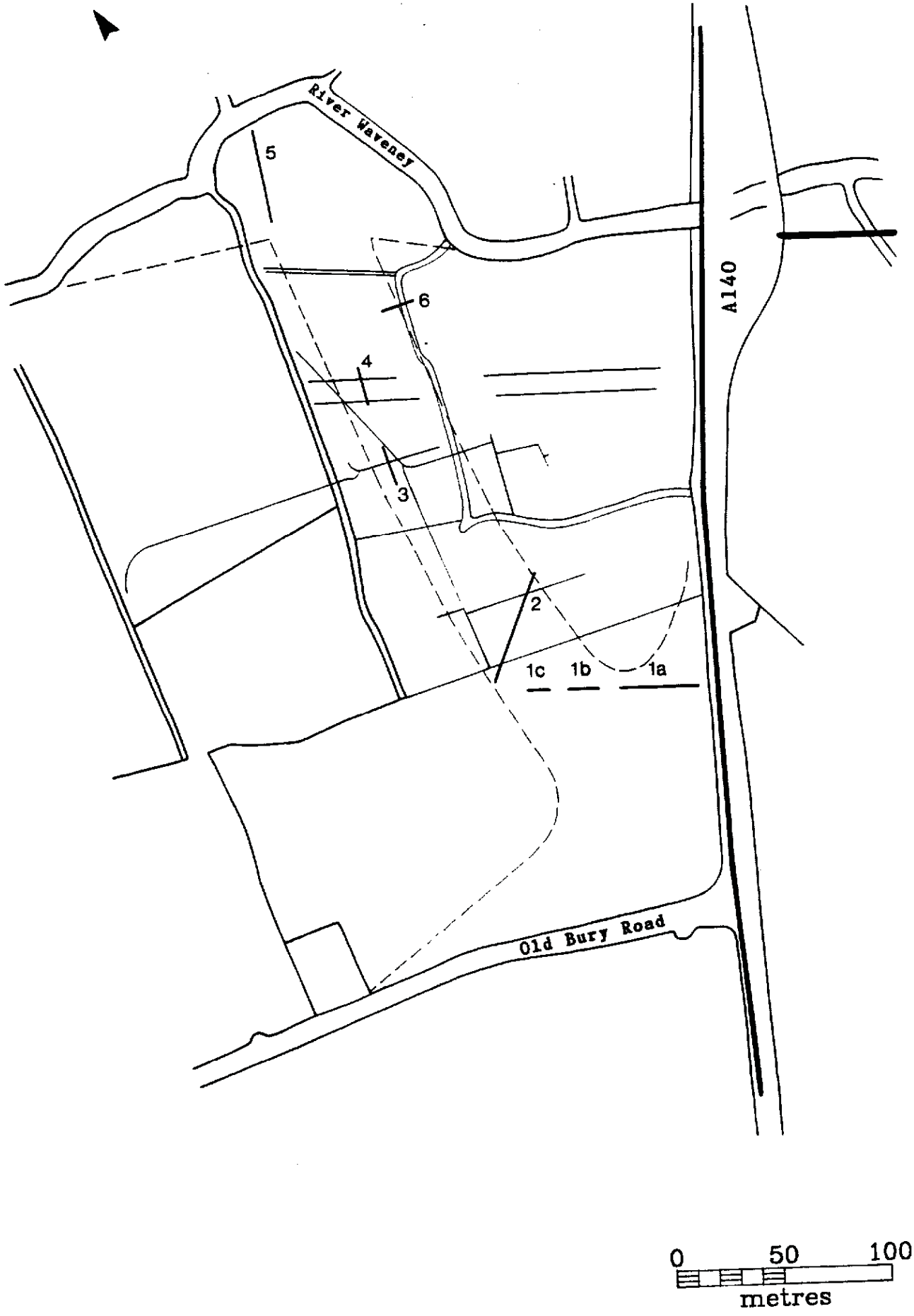


Fig.10 Location of trial trenches Scale 1:2500

Fig.11 Plan of Trench 1a Scale 1:100

Section Trench 5 Scale 1:40

Section Trench 6 Scale 1:100