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Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit
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A1(M) Alconbury to Peterborough DBFO Scheme
Archaeological Investigations
Post Excavation Assessment and Research Design

by
Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides a preliminary statement on the results of archaeological investigations undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit on areas which are to be affected by A1(M) Alconbury to Peterborough road improvements (Fig 1). The work was commissioned by Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) on behalf of Road Management Group (RMG) and was undertaken between February and May 1996. It was based on an archaeological project design prepared by CBA (CBA 1996) and considers the work undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (Kemp and Reynolds 1995).

Work was carried out at seven sites. Area excavations were undertaken on both the east and west sides of the existing road at Tort Hill to the north of Sawtry. The work at Norman Cross to the north of Stilton and at Vinegar Hill near Alconbury began with a programme of trial trenching. This was followed by the excavation of larger areas which focused on zones of archaeological interest identified during the trial trenching. At Alconbury Hill and South Farm, Upton, areas were stripped by machine and recorded. Finally, a survey of Conington Bridge near Sawtry was undertaken in advance of its demolition.

This preliminary report outlines the principal results of the various investigations and provides a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the archive and finds. This is followed by an updated project design which includes proposals for further analysis leading to the full publication of the results. This updated proposal considers the key theme to the project outlined in the archaeological project design; that is '...the origins and development of Roman Ermine Street, its relationship to local road networks and its later development and use as a road with particular attention to associated settlement remains of late Iron Age and Romano-British date and the adjacent medieval landscape' (CBA 1996, 3). With this in mind, the general objective of the project will be to produce a thematic report combining the various elements of the study rather than a series of disconnected site reports.

The layout of this report has been prepared according to the guidelines set out by English Heritage in The Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP 2).

SITE NARRATIVES

Norman Cross

By Catharine Mould

Introduction

The site at Norman Cross (NGR TL 159907) had been subject to a series of studies in connection with the medieval agricultural remains, a hollow-way and the Roman road on the west side of the A1. A trial trenching exercise located a Roman agger with an adjacent hollow-way and concluded that the A1 had shifted eastwards to its current alignment (Kemp and Reynolds 1995, Appendix G). A later geophysical survey suggested the possible survival of a kiln-type anomaly (Ovendon 1994) and a small-scale excavation, designed to test the geophysical results, followed (Sutherland 1995). This excavation found no evidence of smithing activity, although some related material was found. A landscape and documentary study had also been conducted (Appendix B and O).

An area measuring approximately 50,000 square metres was identified for further evaluation. A 2% sample was required to clarify the nature of the archaeological remains which may have been sealed below the ridge and furrow. Two trenches were to be located alongside the A1 road in order to provide further information on the Roman road and hollow-way (CBA 1996, 20).

Twenty-five trial trenches were excavated within the area to be incorporated into the road widening scheme (Fig. 2). Three of these trenches were cut alongside the present line of the A1. The trenches were located in order to achieve maximum coverage of the area, whilst at the same time transecting areas of interest highlighted by the earlier geophysical survey.

The majority of trenches were mechanically excavated to the natural subsoil horizon. Deeper transects were cut down to the natural horizon in two of the three roadside trenches. The evaluation recorded no archaeological deposits or features, other than medieval ridge and furrow and field boundaries, in Trenches 1, 2, 4-11, 16-25. In addition, no evidence was found of the suggested line of Ermine Street to the west of the A1. However, Romano-British remains were recorded at the southern end of Trench 12, where ditches and pits were sealed beneath a 4th century spread of pottery.

A full report on the results of this evaluation has already been prepared (Ellis 1996). This recommended further excavation focusing on the Romano-British deposits identified in the southern part of Trench 12. A larger area, 20m by 24m was subsequently excavated (Fig. 3).

Results

A number of hand-excavated sondages across the area of excavation established that the natural sequence of deposits consisted of a thick layer of blue clay (1141) overlain by a deposit of orange-yellow clay-sand. This, in turn, was overlain by three layers of hillwash deposits (1121, 1131 and 1134), which built up prior to human activity on the site. All recorded archaeological features cut into the hillwash deposits, and were themselves sealed by a later episode of hillwash deposition (1122). This more recent deposit was cut by east-west aligned plough furrows, which followed the natural slope downwards from the present-day A1 towards the small brook which marked the western boundary of the field. All hillwash deposits were greater in depth at the western extent of the excavation area (ie at the base of the slope). Within the north-western corner of the site, a straight-sided and flat-bottomed gully (F119), aligned east-west, continued east to approximately the centre of the site. Here, it assumed a north - south alignment. The gully was further defined along its length by cobbles and limestone blocks and its water-logged silt-clay fill was heavily flecked with charcoal. A little further north, this gully was seen to divide into two parallel features (F123 and F126), both of which contained a vast amount of pottery fragments within their silt-sand fill. These two features continued their alignment north beyond the bounds of the excavation area.

A rather more shallow gully (F110), also aligned east - west (although slightly less rigid in its path), lay to the north of F119. Its silt-sand fill contained a concentration of pottery fragments, but no charcoal. The chronological relationship between the two roughly parallel gullies is, as yet, unclear.

Immediately to the south-east, a steeply-cut and flat-bottomed gully (F113) which contained a high percentage of bone and pottery fragments, was seen to join with a north - south aligned ditch (F111 and F118). The top of this ditch fill was characterised by a concentration of medium-large, smooth stones which showed signs of burning. The lower fill comprised a dark silt-sand with fragments of tile and brick. The ditch continued north and south beyond the limit of the excavation area. It did not, however, continue as far south as the machine trench, located to the south of a steep-sided, east-west aligned, hollow.

The ditch and gully described above, combined to define an area which was characterised by an irregular stone surface (1116). The surface was constructed from medium-large sub-rounded flint stones and flat limestone pieces.

Stratigraphically later activity was represented by the cutting of three pits, one of which (F127) truncated the east-west aligned gully (F113). This pit, which contained a concentration of pottery fragments within its silt-sand fill, was itself cut by a shallow, north-west - south-east aligned gully (Evaluation F9). The gully, which also cut F119, was filled with clay and flint, and contained a high percentage of charcoal.

It is clear that a number of phases of activity are represented at Norman Cross. Preliminary analysis of the pottery assemblage has suggested that the site was occupied in the later 2nd and 3rd centuries, with subsequent abandonment within the

Roman period. The agricultural ridge and furrow is dated to the medieval and post-medieval period.

The series of interconnecting linear gullies and ditches do not combine to form any coherent structure. However, the concentration of pottery, bone and structural material within their fills does suggest that domestic occupation must have been located within the immediate vicinity. It is possible that the roughly rectangular areas defined by the linear features represent "backplots" or paddocks, and that the stone surface (1116) may represent the surviving remains of a yard, all of which could have been associated with a nearby Romano-British domestic homestead.

Tort Hill West

by Peter Leach

Introduction

Tort Hill, Sawtry is the focus for a series of later prehistoric and Romano-British settlements in north west Cambridgeshire, bisected by the Ermine Street (A1). The importance of this locality was first appreciated during a previous episode of road improvement in 1939, when remains of a suspected Romano-British roadside settlement were uncovered just to the east of Sawtry village (Garrod 1940 and 1947). Subsequent surface discoveries by local fieldworkers identified at least two other settlement locations further north alongside the main road. The earthwork remains of the shrunken medieval village of Sawtry are still visible at Tort Hill, along with a more prominent rectangular earthwork identified as a Civil War gun battery (Edwardson 1966), but perhaps originating as a medieval windmill mound and now scheduled as an Ancient Monument (SAM 172). Occasional survivals of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation earthworks are now all that represent the once extensive remains in fields around Sawtry, since obliterated by modern agricultural practice.

Proposals for the widening and improvement of the A1 in this locality required that the potential of archaeological sites and remains likely to be affected be evaluated further. This was achieved in 1993 by Cambridgeshire County Council for the two sites north of Tort Hill, on either side of the A1 (Welsh 1994). To the west a series of nine trenches were opened between Tort Hill and Conington Bridge, in fields alongside the road carriageway. Two of these (Trenches 6 and 7), centred upon TL 1720 8460, exposed remains of archaeological significance which were then sampled. On the basis of these results it was apparent that a further archaeological response was required in advance of road construction works.

Objectives

As part of the project design brief it was specified that open area excavations should take place, centred upon the evaluation Trenches 6 and 7 and subject to a specified sampling procedure (Chris Blandford Associates 4.4.17 & 18, 1996). These were to be undertaken with the objectives of elucidating the nature of a rectilinear enclosure and associated features of late Iron Age/early Roman date in the vicinity of Trench 7, and to examine the extent and nature of features of similar date in the area of Trench 6 (Welsh 1994, 16). The two areas originally designated for investigation totalled almost 2400 square metres (CBA, 1996, Fig.4).

Method

At the commencement of the project it was apparent that more extensive investigations were desirable, linking the two separately designated areas and approaching more closely the existing road boundary to the east. This having been agreed, an area within the proposed road-widening corridor extending north and parallel to the existing A1 road verge for over 150m from a small pond, was

mechanically stripped of ploughsoil and overburden to a width of 27m for c 40m, and thereafter to approximately 15m for the remaining length (Figs. 5 and 6). Subsequently, an additional area c 3x90m in area was cleared along the east side of the main area, and another 1m-wide cut made along the designated western boundary of the new road corridor. The latter proposed to examine the archaeological potential of an area linking the two originally specified localities, demonstrating that this was quite low in its western half while increasing further east. For this reason only the first 40m of the available width of the proposed road corridor was fully exposed for excavation at the southern end. For reasons of safety and the disposal of spoil it was not possible to excavate up to the edge of the present road carriageway until excavation and recording in the main area was completed.

Mechanical removal of ploughsoil, the field boundary hedge and part of the existing road verge, revealed a depth of overburden above preserved archaeological horizons increasing from 0.25-0.30m to as much as 0.50m from west to east. The underlying geological formation in this locality is a buff-yellow strata of weathered Oxford Clay, within whose surface the truncated fills of archaeological features were relatively well defined. No upstanding features had survived, virtually the whole area having been subject to episodes of prolonged arable cultivation and events associated with that process. In addition to a widespread and general truncation of subsoil/archaeological horizons, the effects of earlier ridge-and-furrow cultivation were particularly noticeable, the furrows having created a series of broad, shallow linear depressions on an approximately east-west axis, surviving up to 3m across and up to 0.40m deep from the base of modern ploughing (Figs. 7-9). The majority of these could not be easily removed by mechanical excavation and were only removed by hand where those deeper archaeological deposits still surviving beneath them required to be sampled by excavation. More recent disturbances resulted from the provision of land drains, not all of which were fully plotted, and the effects of localised modern deep ploughing.

Throughout the areas cleared by mechanical excavation surfaces were cleaned by hand to expose and define the boundaries of potential archaeological deposits and features surviving at the subsoil horizon. These were recorded in plan at a scale of 1:50 throughout, and selectively excavated by judgmental sampling in accordance with the brief (CBA. 1996, Section 3.3). In conjunction with this procedure, detailed recording, finds recovery and selective environmental sampling was undertaken in accordance with the project design (op cit, Sections 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8). These processes were carried out over an 8 week period between the second half of February and the beginning of April 1996. With a few exceptions, working conditions were generally favourable, although visibility and access to certain areas along the eastern margin of the site was hampered for much of the time by waterlogging or standing water on impermeable clay surfaces.

Results

Overall, the recorded archaeological remains can be seen to occur in two principal zones, although to what extent these represent discrete sites or foci of activity is less

certain (Figs. 7-9). The great majority were linear in character, interspersed with fewer and generally smaller discrete features, all of which were defined by fills contained within their cuts into the natural weathered clay substrate. No deposits or surfaces had survived outside of these cuts and it was apparent from the shallower representatives that all had suffered progressive degradation from above. Subsequent agricultural activity had affected all sub-ploughsoil horizons, in all probability removing any upstanding remains, deposits or surfaces which may once have existed between negatively defined features, and some of the shallower features themselves.

Southern Settlement Area (Fig. 9)

The most coherent set of remains were recorded at the southern extremity of the site, where the widest area was available for examination. Three principal phases of pre-medieval activity are discernible here, the earliest of which owes most to natural processes. This comprised three watercourses (F120, F142 and F170) which cross the area from west to east. All three contained mixed waterborne deposits in their lowest levels, along with occasional archaeological material which included some early Iron Age pottery and possibly earlier ceramics. It is difficult to relate this material to a primary phase of human activity recognised elsewhere on the site, although all three features were certainly utilised and receiving archaeological deposits during the later occupation phases.

The earliest set of clearly discernible features are a group of irregularly circular, shallow ditches, incompletely surviving, but identified as Structures 1, 2 and 3. Two lie between the watercourses F120 and F142, and a third may have been present here in the south-west corner - now the site of a large modern disturbance. This was the position of evaluation Trench 7, which encountered another shallow, curvilinear gully in 1993 (Welsh 1994, 11-12). Regrettably, this has since been obliterated by the location of a borehole, cut to re-route an existing overhead electricity supply cable beneath the proposed A1 widening. Structures 1 and 2, up to 10m in diameter, represent either the drip gullies or wall-construction trenches for circular buildings, but few surviving contemporary features seem to be associated with them. Structure 3 to the north is represented by a somewhat larger circular area (c 14m diameter) of broader curvilinear gullies, and what may be part of a smaller circular gully close to its centre. Finds directly associated with these structures are sparse but include pottery of exclusively middle or later Iron Age type. The bounds of this presumed settlement are unknown, except perhaps to the north, but it seems to have been unenclosed.

In the third phase a radical reorganisation of settlement is implied by the creation of a series of regular, rectilinear enclosures defined by ditches and aligned approximately NW-SE and NE-SW. Of these, the most substantial were F112, F114 and F126 to the east, each of which probably carried water and had been re-cut or partly cleaned out more than once. On the same alignments but of slighter character were the ditches F125 and F132 to the west. These were on slightly higher ground and may rarely have held water, but a lack of evidence for their recutting need not imply that they were not fully contemporary with the eastern set. Also in operation during this phase were the semi-natural watercourses F120, F142 and F170, which had been re-cut more

than once and appeared to have been integrated into the more regular system of enclosures. The most northerly (F170) may form a boundary to the complex, having been re-cut on a similar alignment to F125/F126. Unfortunately the upper exposure of this ditch was almost totally obscured by a later cultivation furrow, while waterlogging of this area restricted the scope of fuller excavation sampling.

None of the compounds created by these ditches was completely revealed, although they were evidently of variable size. Part of the western set, first encountered during the 1993 evaluation (Welsh 1994, 10-12), had been destroyed once again by the modern disturbance in the south west corner of the site. There was little surviving evidence for activity or coherent structures within them, except in the largest compound to the north east. Here were the remains of several relatively shallow ditches, gullies, and some more discrete pits or depressions. One of these contained the remains of a small fired clay hearth or oven, while a second more complete example was excavated just beyond the ditch F170 to the north. These features may have been partly responsible for a higher proportion of charcoal and other burnt material within the fills of many features in this locality. Finds (notably of pottery) were relatively abundant elsewhere within the enclosure ditch fills, and occasionally in some concentration, as in the top of F120. Among a high proportion of local late Iron Age pottery forms and fabrics, smaller quantities of Belgic- style wares and early Roman types suggest that most of this phase belongs to the later 1st century AD.

Only a northern boundary to this complex appears to have been located, although negative evidence from evaluation Trench 8 (Welsh 1994, 12) to the south suggests that it may not have extended far beyond the more recent pond towards Tort Hill. A hint of intensifying activity towards the east may signify the direction in which the main focus of occupation is to be expected. The former position of the original Roman Ermine Street can no longer be closely ascertained in this area but it may be hypothesised that this phase of settlement was related to and perhaps fronted onto that road. Its relationship to the preceding ?Iron Age settlement phase of circular structures requires further consideration, but the end of early Roman occupation may have been quite sudden - some deliberate slighting of banks as evidenced from upper ditch fills, and deliberate and rapid dumping of occupation debris within the ditch F120, for example. A single intrusive ?late Roman burial close to the south east corner of the site (HB 1), is the only evidence for later activity prior to the onset of medieval and later ridge and furrow cultivation.

Northern Settlement Area (Figs. 7-8)

A second complex of archaeological remains was centred upon the 1993 evaluation Trench 6 (Welsh 1994), separated by some 20m from the southern area. In this instance components were recorded within a strip approximately 15m wide and extending north for almost 100m. Once again it was apparent that their density increased eastwards, and an additional area was later opened in this direction along the A1 road verge to determine the surviving limits of archaeological deposits there. The relative clarity and coherence in the sequence of layouts for the southern

settlement is less apparent in the northern, although there are similarities in the overall pattern between what appear to have been two broadly contemporary sets of remains.

Once again, watercourses of natural origin cross this area from west to east, all of which were modified and ultimately infilled by material derived from human settlement activity. Of these, the largest (F191/F309) formed a broad southern boundary to most of the subsequent settlement activity. Further north at least two other substantial ditches (F193 and F311) seem to have originated as small stream channels, and possibly also F329/F330.

Apart from the suspected occurrence of pre-Roman ceramics in this area, there is only fragmentary evidence for associated contemporary structures. The most coherent is the curvilinear ditch F322 towards the northern end of the site, which may be continued as F315. This can be compared in scale and character with Structure 3, and may be of similar origin. Of less certain origin and sequence is part of an apparently similar curvilinear ditch (F183) further south. Whether or not other associated contemporary features can eventually be identified, there are hints that a pre-Roman Iron Age phase of circular structures was also present in this area, perhaps contemporary and directly related to Structures 1-3, etc. in the southern settlement zone.

The excavation of linear boundary ditches is once again a dominant characteristic of subsequent activity in this area. Unlike the system identified further south, far less regularity in their layout is apparent, although again, episodes of cleaning or recutting are sometimes indicated within their fills. North of F191/F309 the two former watercourses (F193 and F311) seem to have been adapted as major east-west enclosure boundaries, along with another (F329/F330) further north, whose natural origins are less certain. The latter may in fact represent a northern boundary of settlement here, since no archaeological remains were recorded in evaluation Trench 5 less than 50m further north (Welsh 1994). A major cross-linking boundary (F324) and what may be another in the extension to the east (F535), suggest that a series of somewhat irregular compounds were laid out here orientated very generally east-west.

Rather more evidence of activity within these enclosures than those to the south was recorded, though with the emphasis once more towards the east. This included some sub-division by less substantial ditches or gullies, arrangements of suspected post-holes, shallow pits and occasional hearths, and traces of clay flooring and other occupation deposits which suggest the site of a timber and wattle-and-daub structure just to the south of ditch F193. None of these features permit the reconstruction of any extensive coherent structural arrangements, although the loss of more insubstantial elements through progressive erosion must be taken into account. From the character of a substantial ceramic assemblage collected from the majority of features in this settlement zone it appears that activity was concentrated within the second half of the 1st century AD, and perhaps into the early 2nd century. Fine wares are scarce, as were artefacts of metal or other materials, but animal bone is also plentiful.

Without an accurate location for the position of the Roman Ermine Street (presumably beneath the present A1 road) it is not possible to establish the precise relationship or chronology of this settlement to the original road. Like its southern neighbour, a boundary and frontage upon that road might be hypothesised; the mid-1st century creation of Ermine Street perhaps stimulating the layout and function of both. Westwards, the fall-off in activity was emphasised in the separately cut transect along the western boundary to the proposed road corridor (Figs. 7-9), where only the continuations of a few larger linear features were traced. Ceramic evidence from the great majority of upper feature fills suggest abandonment of the settlement early in the 2nd century, although occasional later types hint at a much lower level of subsequent residual activity, perhaps originating from a nearby later settlement site. Once again, the latest events feature the use of this now abandoned settlement area for occasional burials, most probably in the late Roman period. One of these (HB 2), just north of the former boundary ditch F193, was buried prone with a shale bracelet but was badly damaged by later agriculture. A second (HB 3) had been inserted into the ditch F308 further south, and at least one more was encountered in this area during the subsequent watching brief.

Despite their separate definition, both the northern and southern settlement areas share a similar sequence and chronology. Any real distinction between them may have been functional, particularly in their later phases, and both could be regarded as elements within a single settlement complex of the late Iron Age and early Roman transition period.

Tort Hill East

By Gwilym Hughes

Introduction

The evaluation carried out by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit in 1993 (Welsh 1994) involved the excavation of eight trenches on the east side of the A1 at Tort Hill (centred on TL 1720 8485). A large number of pits, ditches and other features were recorded. These were interpreted as activity relating to the peripheral areas of a Roman roadside settlement. A second phase of work was undertaken by the Cambridge Unit in November 1994 (Roberts 1995) within the area of an easement stripped to accommodate a water pipeline being diverted prior to the widening of the road. A similar complex of Roman features was recorded in this area including ditches, cobbled areas and two ovens. On the basis of these results the archaeological project design outlined the need to excavate larger areas within the proposed road corridor (CBA 1996, 19).

Method

The proposed road improvements on the eastern side of the existing road at Tort Hill involved the construction of a slip road from the southbound carriageway to link with the proposed new Sawtry junction. Consequently, the area of threatened archaeological deposits formed a 'wedge-shape', becoming progressively wider to the south. As with Tort Hill West, it was not possible to excavate up to the edge of the present road carriageway until excavation and recording in the main area was completed. The final area exposed and recorded was 120m long and 20m wide at its greatest (southern) extent (Figs. 5 and 10).

As with Tort Hill East, the mechanical removal of ploughsoil, the field boundary hedge and part of the existing road verge, revealed a depth of overburden above preserved archaeological horizons increasing from 0.25-0.30m to as much as 0.50m from east to west. The underlying geology and the effect of post-Roman agricultural and land drainage activity was comparable to that encountered at Tort Hill West (see above).

The surfaces underlying the ploughsoil were cleaned by hand to expose and define the boundaries of potential archaeological deposits and features surviving at the subsoil horizon. These were recorded in plan at a scale of 1:50 throughout, and sampled in accordance with the brief (CBA. 1996, Section 3.3). The excavation was carried out over a four week period during April 1996.

Results

The substantial cut for a modern water pipe, up to 3m wide, effectively divided the site into eastern and western sectors. The archaeological deposits in the western sector were characterised by linear ditches and gullies. The eastern sector was generally characterised by pebble surfaces. All these features had to a greater or lesser extent

been truncated by later agricultural activity, in particular by a series of east-west aligned furrows.

The earliest feature in the northern part of the excavation (Fig. 11) appeared to be a narrow gully (F529), 0.7m wide and 0.3m deep, on a north-south alignment. This was cut by a substantial east-west ditch (F528) up to 3m wide and 1m deep with a V-shaped profile. It seems possible that this formed the northern boundary (Boundary Ditch B) of a plot fronting onto the former line of Ermine Street to the west. The corresponding southern boundary may have been represented by a similar V-shaped ditch (F517/519) up to 2m wide and 1.1m deep (Boundary Ditch A). This would have formed a relatively narrow plot, 18m wide (Fig. 11, Plot 1). An initial assessment of the pottery from these features (in particular from the Boundary Ditch A) suggests an early Roman (possibly conquest period) date (see Evans below).

No structural elements were identified between these two ditches apart from an arc of angular stones (5042) which included fragments from a rotary quern. Instead the majority of the area was occupied by a spread of brown silty clay containing large quantities of pottery fragments and animal bone (F523). Where this material was sample excavated it filled an irregular-shaped scoop associated with shallow east-west gullies (such as F547 and F548). It seems likely that this material represents an area of rubbish disposal to the rear of an occupation area perhaps fronting onto Ermine Street. The assessment of the pottery suggests a 3rd- to 4th-century with a high proportion of grey wares, shelly wares and Nene Valley wares indicating a 3rd- to 4th-century. Another shallow gully (F512) was recorded parallel with, and just to the north of Boundary Ditch A (F517/519).

Boundary Ditch A (F517/519) may have also formed the northern boundary of a second plot (Fig. 12, Plot 2). However, no comparable southern boundary ditch was identified. Instead, the area was characterised by a series of inter-cutting linear ditches. The earliest appeared to be orientated north-south (F510, F509, F513) and contained pottery dating to the 1st and early 2nd century. These were cut by what appeared to be the rear of a rectilinear enclosure which probably fronted onto Ermine Street to the west. The enclosure was represented by a U-shaped ditch (F507/508), up to 1.5m wide and 0.7m deep. There was no evidence for any internal structures within the area of this enclosure,. However, numerous fragments of painted wall plaster were recovered from the fill of the south-eastern corner of the enclosure ditch. This suggests the former presence of a building which presumably was located closer to Ermine Street and under the what is now the southbound carriageway of the A1. The assessment of the pottery from the enclosure ditch indicates a similar assemblage to the midden in Plot 1 with a high proportion of grey wares and Nene Valley Wares and a probable late 3rd- to 4th-century date. The enclosure ditch was in turn cut by a smaller east-west ditch (F506) up to 1m wide and 0.4m deep. It seems possible that this final ditch represents another east-west boundary, established after the abandonment of the enclosure. This ditch contained an even higher proportion of Nene Valley wares (48%). It is noticeable that the distance (18m) between this ditch and Boundary Ditch A is similar to that between Boundary Ditches A and B (ie Plot 1).

To the east of this complex of ditches was the fragmentary remains of a pebble surface (5004/5010/5087) possibly representing a yard to the rear of the occupation areas. This surface had been disturbed by a series of later east-west agricultural furrows. The only other feature of note in the southern part of the excavated area was a shallow north-south orientated ditch (F520/522) up to 1m wide and 0.3m deep.

Conington Bridge

A preliminary survey of Conington Bridge was undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council. A more detailed survey was carried out by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit in April 1996 according to the specifications outlined in the research design (CBA 1996, 19). This included a photographic survey and the production of detailed elevation drawings (Figs. 13-17).

South Farm, Upton

By Catharine Mould

Introduction

The site lay immediately to the west of the present-day A1 (TL 1841 7896). Its northern boundary was defined by a road connecting the village of Upton with the A1; to the west lay a disused underground service trench.

An initial study of the aerial photographic evidence for South Farm had suggested that a rectilinear archaeological field system, associated with the prehistoric and Roman settlement of Monk's Wood Farm, Sawtry, might extend to South Farm, Upton (Cox 1995). A trial trenching evaluation by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Unit revealed a very limited amount of artefactual evidence and only two features which were considered to be of archaeological interest. These linear features each yielded one abraded sherd of Romano-British pottery (Sutherland 1995) and were interpreted as a continuation of a Roman field system belonging to the settlement at Monk's Wood Farm, Sawtry (Kemp and Reynolds 1995).

On the basis of these evaluation results, further recording was recommended at South Farm to record the extent of the possible Romano-British ditches (CBA 1996, 17-18).

A strip and record programme was undertaken in accordance with the project design. The topsoil and associated overburden were mechanically removed by a 360 excavator within three areas which totalled approximately 2000 square metres (Fig. 18). The stripped areas were located to transect the possible Roman features recorded during the evaluation (Trenches 2 and 3).

Results

A total of thirty linear features were recorded. Of these, four were identified as being natural in origin and 23 were modern land drains. The remaining three were U-shaped and flat-bottomed, with no artefactual evidence being recovered from excavated sections.

One of the features identified during the earlier evaluation as being of possible Romano-British origin (cut 47, fill 19), was relocated. This north-west - south-east aligned feature, which was transected by a modern land-drain immediately outside the western limit of Evaluation Trench 2, was recorded as a shallow scoop, filled with a mottled yellow-brown sand-clay. No artefacts were recovered from this fill. The second possible Romano-British feature (cut 46, fill 21) could not be located despite extensive hand-cleaning and hand excavation of sections within the immediate area.

Alconbury Hill

By Peter Ellis

Introduction

A strip and record programme was undertaken at Alconbury Hill (Fig 1) following the Project Design (CBA 1996, 17). This was the first archaeological work undertaken although the potential of the area had been identified on the basis of nearby SMR recorded finds of Roman buildings and remains (Kemp and Reynolds 1995, Appendix B, fig 5). Roman pottery and burnt daub had been located 300m to the east (*ibid*, SMR no 00817). SMR no 00811 representing a group of rectangular Roman buildings excavated in 1940 lay 150m to the north (*contra* Kemp and Reynolds 1995, Appendix B, fig 5 which places them in the evaluated area).

Method

Approximately two thirds of the threatened area was machine excavated to the natural surface (Fig. 19). The sterility of the excavated area suggested no reason to complete a total coverage of the remaining unexamined area which lay beneath spoil heaps.

Results

No features of indisputable archaeological origin were recognised with the exception of a 5m wide service trench and two smaller pipe trenches. A few spreads of discoloured soil were not examined further, but are unlikely to have been of ancient origin.

A single sherd of Roman pottery was found in addition to post-medieval pottery.

Vinegar Hill

By Catharine Mould

Introduction

Vinegar Hill, which is located on the western side of the A1 (NGR TL 186778), was identified as a potentially significant archaeological site in 1992, when a magnetometer survey was undertaken by the Northampton Archaeological Unit. Although this survey identified only one semi-circular anomaly which could have been of archaeological origin, the large quantity of pottery observed on the site, and the recording of five Romano-British SMR entries for an area to the immediate south, did suggest that significant remains, relating to medieval farming practice and Romano-British deposits, could be present.

A trial trenching exercise, which was required as one part of a Stage 3 Assessment for the A1(M) road widening scheme, was designed to assess the nature, extent, date and quality of survival of any sub-surface features. The results of this evaluation were intended to allow the formulation of an appropriate mitigation strategy, which would be undertaken in advance of the main engineering contract.

The area to be evaluated measured approximately 9500 square metres, and the project design required that 2% should be sampled by trial trenching (CBA 1996,16). Seven trial trenches were excavated, each being located to transect geophysical anomalies identified by the earlier survey (Fig. 19). A JCB mechanical excavator was used to remove approximately 0.30m of overburden which directly overlay the natural subsoil horizon. Trenches 2 and 3, were subsequently widened to allow the hand excavation of several ditch sections.

The evaluation identified a number of ditches which were of archaeological significance. The fills of these ditches contained well-preserved animal bone, with considerable molluscan fauna and charred plant remains. The pottery assemblage was limited, and comprised small, abraded, fragments which appeared to have been deposited over a fairly long period of time.

The results from this evaluation suggested that some further excavation should take place within the area of Trenches 2 and 3. This would allow further on-site sampling for molluscan faunas and charred plant remains, and would facilitate the recording of any additional negative features associated with those identified by the evaluation.

A mechanical excavator was used to remove the overburden from an area measuring 16.5m x 40m. This area was centred on evaluation Trenches 2 and 3. The area was cleaned by hand prior to the excavation of individual features and the environmental sampling of ditch sections. A JCB excavator was subsequently used to excavate sections across the line of the ditches, to remove a deep deposit of ploughsoil from the western half of the site, and to excavate a further four trial trenches.

Results (Figs 20 and 21)

A large natural water channel (F204) represents the first stratified archaeological activity at Vinegar Hill. This feature, with its gently sloping, but irregular, sides and its meandering path appears to have been free-flowing when the first Romano-British activity occurred on this site, as pottery and bone were recovered from its lowest fill (1231). The feature extended across the full width of the excavation area and continued east beyond the excavation limit. Its line was also recorded in a trial trench 6m to the west of the main area.

A second phase is evidenced by a north-south aligned ditch (F203) 18m to the south-west of the water channel. This ditch was later recut by a narrower and slightly shallower ditch (F201). This recut continued north beyond the original limits of the earlier ditch (F203). The later ditch slightly cut into the southern profile of the east-west ditch (F204), and appeared to be deliberately feeding into the channel which may have still been open and free-flowing at this date.

A number of features could not be phased in stratigraphic terms, and must remain unphased until analysis of the pottery can provide dating information. Within the north-eastern corner of the excavation area, an east-west aligned feature (F214) was truncated by two parallel linear gullies (F212 and F213) which ran north-east - south-west. Eleven metres further south-west, an isolated, east-west aligned, gully, was recorded.

In addition to archaeological features, a number of natural features were also excavated. These include F206 and a cluster of deposits within the south-west corner of the site.

The archaeological deposits were truncated at regular intervals by plough furrows. These were aligned roughly north-south, and their line was further emphasised in places by modern agricultural land-drains.

The archaeological remains at Vinegar Hill do not provide an absolute or even an entirely coherent picture of occupation and settlement. However, they do provide an insight into land use and management in the Romano-British Period, and it is hoped that environmental analysis of samples collected from the lowest fills of the various features will enable a fuller understanding of the early landscape.

The function of the man-made ditches and the utilisation of the east-west ditch (F204) is not entirely clear. The evidence does not suggest that the site originally lay within a floodplain, or within a marshy area which had to be reclaimed before cultivation could commence. However, the level of the modern-day water table was high, and the need to selectively channel excess water and to actively manage this resource could be envisaged within the Romano-British period.

No structural remains were recorded at Vinegar Hill and it appears unlikely that the ditches recorded by the evaluation and excavation delineated a specific settlement (the lack of an associated bank supports this). The pottery, bone and tile fragments which

were recovered from the various features probably derive from a nearby settlement. It seems more likely that the ditches were designed as water channels, although the delineation of the ownership of cultivated agricultural land may have been a secondary function.

ASSESSMENT REPORT

Factual Data

Tables 1 and 2 provide quantitative summaries of the records and material from the fieldwork.

Stratigraphic and structural data

The quality of the stratigraphic data from the various sites was variable. Numerous features and deposits were recorded at the two Tort Hill sites, Vinegar Hill and Norman Cross. However, all had been subjected to considerable truncation by post Roman agriculture. Consequently, there were few stratified deposits. In a few cases occupation deposits and surfaces had survived (eg at Norman Cross and Tort Hill East). However, at all of the sites the archaeological evidence was dominated by features cut into the natural subsoils. Despite this, important sequences were noted at both Tort Hill West and Tort Hill East suggesting activity spanning a long period of time. At Tort Hill West at least three major phases of activity were identified with material dating from the early Iron Age through to the 2nd century AD. At Tort Hill East there was also a suggestion of late prehistoric activity, although the main phases of activity appear to date to between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD. The quality of the data from both sites should make a substantial contribution to the research objectives of the project, in particular the examination of the local impact of Romanisation and the subsequent influence of Ermine Street on local settlement patterns.

There was no evidence for domestic structures at either Norman Cross or Vinegar Hill. Instead, the character of the deposits from both sites suggests that the areas investigated were on the periphery of a Roman settlement complex. Their potential for providing an in-depth understanding of the nature of the activity taking place must be considered low. However, they will be able to help clarify the date and general character of the two sites which will in turn contribute to a general understanding of the character of Roman roadside development along this stretch of Ermine Street.

Very few features or deposits of any significance were recorded at South Farm and Alconbury Hill. Consequently, the potential of the data for addressing the objectives outlined in the original research design must be considered negligible. Further work will be limited to integrating the records into the overall archive.

Table 1: Site Records

	Norman Cross	Tort Hill West	Tort Hill East	South Farm	Vinegar Hill	Alconbury Hill	Connington Bridge
Context Records	38	279	117	-	50	-	-
Feature Records	52	232	29	7	28	2	-
Drawings							
A1	1	12	1	2	3	1	-
A2	-	-	14	-	-	-	-
A3	7	10	3	-	8	-	4
A4	11	52	19	2	5	-	3
Photographs							
Black and white	43	1026	144	-	23	-	16
Colour slides	84	931	174	20	75	-	-
Colour prints	-	76	29	-	-	-	37

Table 2: Finds

	Norman Cross	Tort Hill West	Tort Hill East	Vinegar Hill
Prehistoric pottery	-*	2,372	-*	-*
Romano-British pottery	2,516	605	5,462	354
Worked flint	6	19	60	1
Worked stone	11	4	15-	9
Copper alloy objects	4	3	10	4
Iron objects	18	7	24	6
iron nails	23	3	186	6
Slag	26	166	45	1
Lead objects	2	1	10	4
Coins	3	3	49	17
Wall plaster	-	-	208	-
Glass	2	-	6	-
Brick and tile frags	31	12	111	102
Fired clay/daub	38	1,592	320	16
Human skeletons	-	3	-	-
Animal bone frags	344	4,403	2,173	892
Oyster shell	-	3	200	4

Pottery

by Jane Evans and Ann Woodward

Summary by site (Sherd Count)

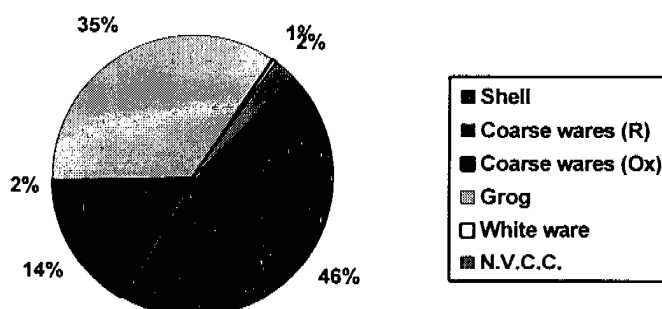
	T.H.W.	T.H.E.	N.C.	V.H.	TOTAL
PREHISTORIC	2372	0*	0*	0*	2372
Coarse Ware	566	5276	2507	351	8700
Samian	29	160	7	2	199
Mortaria	10	26	2	1	34
ROMAN	605	5462	2516	354	8937
TOTAL POTTERY	2977	5462	2516	354	11309

*No prehistoric pottery was identified during the initial processing of these assemblages but possible prehistoric pottery was noted during the assessment. Some provision should therefore be made for a small number of additional sherds to be analysed.

The combined pottery assemblage from the four A1(M) excavations provides a sequence from the prehistoric to the late Roman period. The Tort Hill West assemblage ranged from the Early Iron Age to the conquest period, with only small quantities of later Roman pottery represented. Tort Hill West also produced a little Late pre-Roman Iron Age/conquest material, although the bulk of the assemblage was 3rd century or later, while Norman Cross and Vinegar Hill produced later Roman assemblages. All the pottery from Tort Hill West was assessed in order to separate out the prehistoric pottery. Only key stratigraphic groups were assessed from Tort Hill East and the pottery from Norman Cross and Vinegar Hill was rapidly scanned, although a more detailed assessment had been made following the evaluation.

Tort Hill West

Pottery from Tort Hill West (% Count)



The Tort Hill West excavations produced an assemblage ranging in date from the early Iron Age to the early Roman period. It proved difficult to distinguish late pre-

Roman Iron Age coarse wares from conquest/early Roman coarse wares on the basis of form. The assemblage was split between specialists on the basis of fabric, which was judged to be a more consistent approach. Characteristically 'Belgic' grog tempered wares appear to die out soon after the conquest elsewhere in the region (Going 1987, 10, fabric 53), and although native-style shelly wares do continue in use into the 1st century, they are gradually replaced by sand tempered fabrics from the Flavian period on (op. cit. fabric 50). These wares are therefore to be reported on by Dr Ann Woodward. The sandy wares were included with the 'Roman' pottery, with the exception of a few handmade and obviously prehistoric sherds which were separated out for the attention of Ann Woodward. It is anticipated that during analysis there will be some swapping of material between the specialists, who will need to work closely together to produce an integrated report.

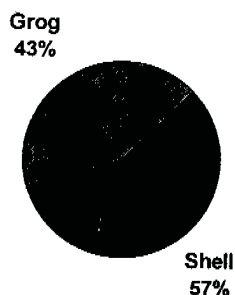
The Prehistoric and native pottery
by Dr Ann Woodward

Belgic grog tempered ware 1014 sherds (43%) and native shelly wares 1347 (57%)

Most of the pottery belongs to Middle to Late Iron Age traditions with a significant occurrence of wheel-made vessels of 'Belgic' type. Much of the material will have been used just before and after the conquest period. Native pottery occurred in 95% of the context assemblages which produced ceramic material. There was a slight occurrence of Early Iron Age forms, in 2% of the contexts, while 35% of them contained Early and/or Middle/Late Iron Age coarse wares alone. In 15% of contexts Middle/Late Iron Age coarse wares occurred in association with 'Belgic' fine wares, whilst in 45% of the contexts the assemblage contained native coarse wares, 'Belgic' fine wares and first century Roman material. Spot-dating suggests that the ditches aligned W-E started their life as settlement boundaries in the Middle/Late Iron Age, whilst at least some of the NW-SE ditches were cut around or after the conquest period. Assemblages from the circular structures, where these could be pinpointed, were pre 'Belgic' in character.

The fabrics were very standardised, with two main groups recognised, but it should prove possible to subdivide the shelly wares at least.

Prehistoric pottery from Tort Hill West (%
Count)

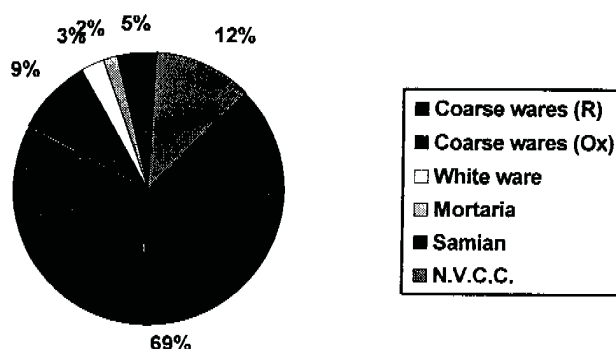


Most of the shell-tempered vessels were plain, but rim types were variable, including simple, expanded, T-shaped, everted, proto-bead and bead forms, belonging to vessels in a wide range of sizes. Scored ware occurred in 13 context groups. The 'Belgic' vessels, represented by many large sherds, appear to belong mainly to Thompson's groups E1-1, E1-2, B3-5 and E3-7. The assemblage as a whole may be compared with the later groups from Maxey and Fengate (Cat's Water), and with similar assemblages from Lincolnshire, Northampton and Leicester.

The Roman pottery
by Jane Evans

Features producing Romano-British pottery: 107, 110, 112, 113, 118, 119, 120, 125, 126, 132, 135, 142, 149, 155, 163, 169, 170, 173, 174, 176, 179, 180, 182, 183, 184, 188, 190, 191, 195, 302, 311, 321, 324, 326, 327, 330 (the largest assemblages coming from F112, F126, F173, F324). No attempt has been made at this stage to assess the spatial distribution of the Roman pottery.

Romano-British pottery (% Count)

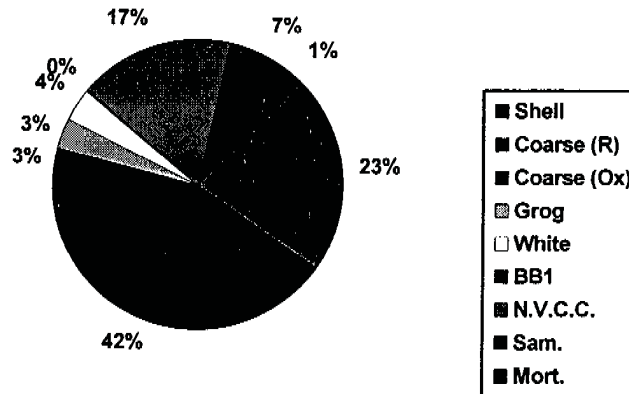


The assemblage dated predominantly to the late-first to early-second century, although some later material was included. It included typically 'Romanised' wares such as amphorae, samian, mortaria, white ware, Nene Valley ware and BB1, as well as the more problematic sandy coarse wares. The small samian assemblage included first century forms such as the Dr 18 platter, and later types such as a Dr 33 cup with characteristically 2nd-century concave walls and an external groove. A variety of reduced wares was represented. These included small sherds in a sand and grog tempered fabric, with a grey core, oxidised margins and dark grey or black surfaces, similar to 'Romanising grey wares' noted at Chelmsford and considered to be the post-conquest continuation of the earlier grog-tempered fabrics (Going 1987, 9, fabric 45). Other grey wares included Belgic forms, such as a carinated bowl and a high shouldered jar, and a London ware type bowl, possibly copying an early Dr 29 in form, decorated with scribed semi circles and vertical combing. Similar London wares are dated Flavian to Hadrianic at Chelmsford (Going 1987, 7, fabric 33). Also represented were Nene Valley grey wares, including a bead rim bowl of a 2nd/3rd century type. Further evidence of later activity was provided by the Nene Valley colour coated wares, which included folded beakers dating to the later 2nd to 3rd centuries and a 4th-century jug.

Tort Hill East

The Tort Hill East excavations produced the largest of the four assemblages, 5462 sherds. Only pottery from the key groups was assessed.

Assessed Pottery from Tort Hill East (% Count)



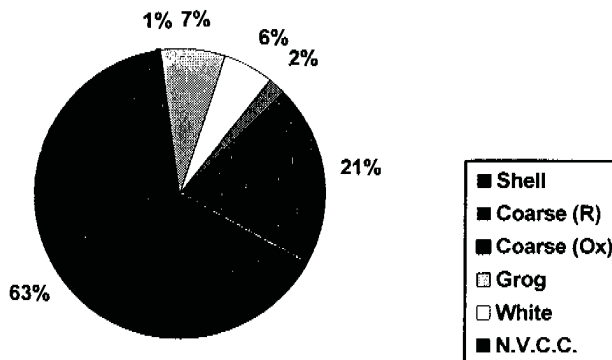
Key Groups

*indicates assemblages assessed

Plot 2

Phase 1 Ditches: F513 *[5060], [5062]; F509 *[5012], *[5013]; F515 *[5068]; F510 [5046], [5048]

Pottery from Plot 2, Phase 1 (% Count)

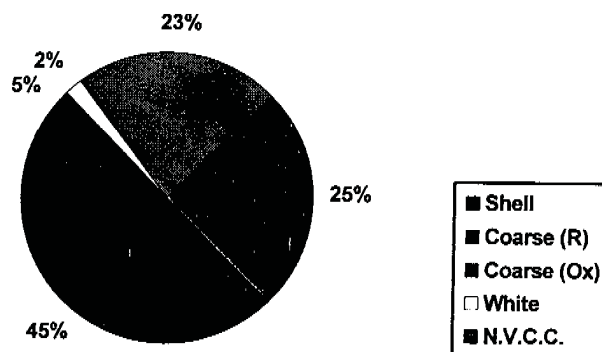


The majority of this assemblage dated to the 1st to early 2nd century. Grey wares were the most common type (63%), of which more than half were broadly similar to 1st-century 'Romanising grey wares' noted at Chelmsford (Going 1987, 9, fabric 45). The grey wares included decorative motifs noted elsewhere in late-1st to early-2nd century assemblages; barbotine dots, London ware type incised lines and rusticated blobs. Also represented were a number of Belgic derived forms. Residual sherds in the more characteristically Belgic grog tempered fabric were also present (7%), together with sherds in the native shelly ware (21%). The white wares (6%) included a splayed ring necked flagon, dating to the first half of the 2nd century. Context [5013], however, also produced some later material: 6 body sherds of Nene Valley colour

coated ware (2%) dating to at least the latter half of the 2nd century, and a grey ware bowl imitating a BB1 flanged type dating to the late 3rd century or later.

*Phase 2 Ditches: F507/508 *[5011], *[5015], *[5026], *[5034], *[5049], *[5051], *[5052], *[5053], *[5055], *[5058], *[5059], [5069], [5071], [5072], [5078]*

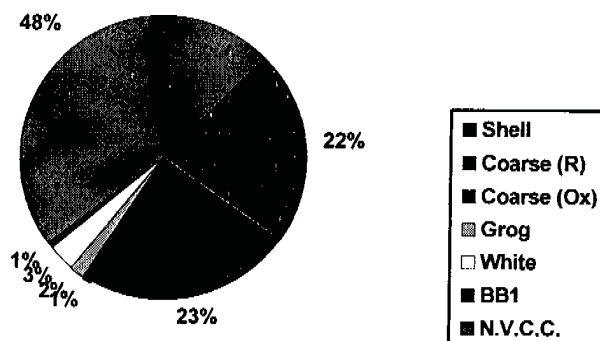
Pottery from Plot 2, Phase 2 (% Count)



The phase 2 contexts produced a characteristically later assemblage, with a higher proportion of Nene Valley wares (23%). This included sherds with white painted decoration over the slip, post dating c AD 250, and a couple of 4th century dish and bowl types (from contexts [5026] and [5034]). Also present were a couple of later 3rd to 4th century mortaria rims. Some residual pottery was also noted; the 'Romanising grey ware' accounted for 26% of all the grey wares, which remained the most common group (45%), but only a single sherd of grog tempered ware was noted. The samian included 2nd century types, together with sherds of late 2nd to early 3rd century East Gaulish ware.

*Phase 3 Ditches: F505/506 *[5043], *[5044], *[5045], *[5050]*

Pottery from Plot 2, Phase 3 (% Count)



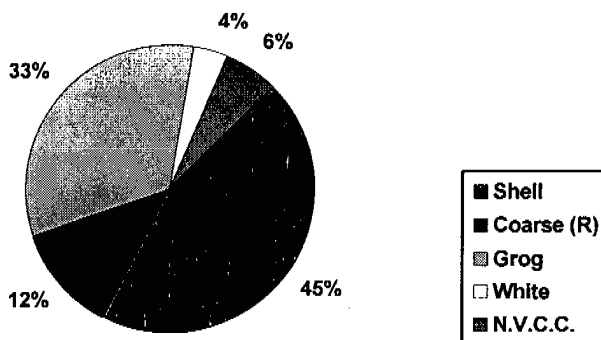
It was not possible during the assessment to define the date of this assemblage more closely than late 3rd to 4th century, so it was difficult to distinguish chronologically from the phase 2 material. More detailed analysis may allow the dating to be refined. Nene Valley wares were the most common fabric (48%), while grey wares and shelly wares occurred in near equal proportions (23% and 22% respectively).

Characteristically late Nene Valley forms included a pulley wheel flagon with a lustrous slip and a lid, both probably dating to the 4th century. Also present were late 3rd to 4th century types such as BB1 and grey ware flange rimmed bowls, and a shelly ware bowl and hooked rim jar. Residual material included Belgic derived grey ware forms, but no samian was noted.

Boundary Ditch A

F517/519 *[5019], *[5085], *[5090], *[5091], [5100]

Pottery from Boundary Ditch A (% Count)

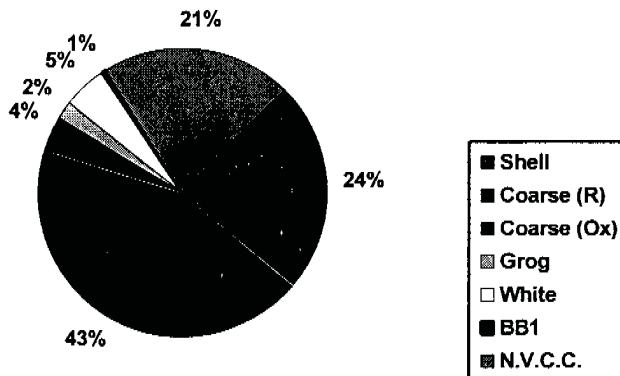


The majority of pottery from this ditch was broadly similar to the Tort Hill West assemblage and dated to the conquest period. A rim with finger impressed decoration, probably Early Iron Age, indicated the presence of further small quantities of prehistoric material included amongst the Tort Hill East assemblage. The relatively high proportions of Shelly ware (45%) and grog tempered Belgic ware (33%), and the relatively low proportions of the more Romanised grey wares (12%) suggest that this group predates the Plot 2, Phase 1 assemblage. Forms in the shelly ware included a large storage jar and a small native type jar, while forms in the grog tempered ware were all Belgic derived types, for example a butt beaker and a high shouldered jar or bowl. One context [5019] however also produced 5 sherds of Nene Valley ware dating at least to the end of the 2nd century.

Plot 1

Midden F523 *[5081], *[5088], *[5089], *[5094], *[5095], *[5096]

Pottery from Plot 1 (% Count)

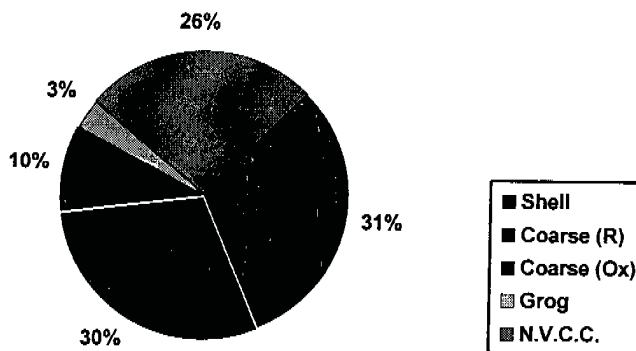


The composition of the assemblage from the plot 1 'midden' was broadly similar to the assemblage from plot 2 phase. Grey wares were the most common fabric (44%), followed by shelly wares (24%) and Nene Valley wares (21%). The Nene Valley colour coated wares included a 2nd or 3rd century scale beaker, and the only characteristically late 2nd to early 3rd century Nene Valley wares (a hunt cup and a couple of sherds with an under-slip barbotine scroll group) from the groups assessed. Datable later pottery included a flanged mortarium rim similar to a type dated by Going to 260-360 A.D. (Going 1987, D14), and a grey ware jar rim similar to an example dated by Going to the 3rd or 4th centuries (Going 1987, E5). The samian included 2nd century Central Gaulish wares, together with East Gaulish types dating to the late 2nd-3rd centuries. Context [5088] produced fairly complete vessels as would be expected if the ditch had been used as a midden. Included were a near complete grey ware flat rimmed bowl and a sandy oxidised Belgic platter. The pottery from context [5081] however was rather fragmentary and abraded.

Boundary Ditch B

F528 *[5104], [5107], [5113]

Pottery from Boundary Ditch B (% Count)

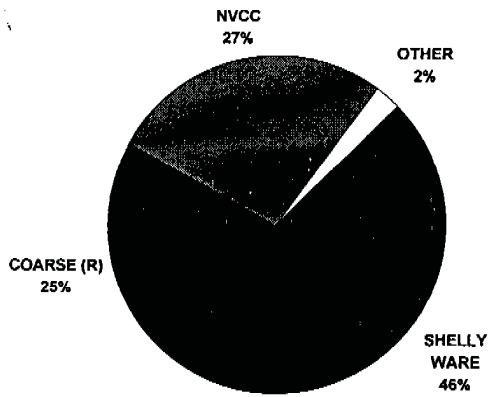


The small assemblage from boundary ditch B was broadly similar to the assemblage from boundary ditch A. It included characteristically early types: a samian Dr 24/25 cup dating to the 1st century and possibly pre-Flavian; a shelly ware large storage jar and a smaller lid seated jar or bowl; and a grog tempered large storage jar. Like the group from boundary ditch A, however, it also produced 16 sherds of Nene Valley ware providing a TPQ in the late 2nd century or later.

Considering the assemblage as a whole the samian appeared to be predominantly Central and East Gaulish ware dating to latter half of second century to the early third, although some first to early second century material was also included (Dr 67, 18). A variety of vessels were represented including cups (Dr 27, 24/25 and 33), beakers (Dr 67), platters (Dr 18), bowls and dishes (Dr 31, 37, 36, 18/31?).

Norman Cross

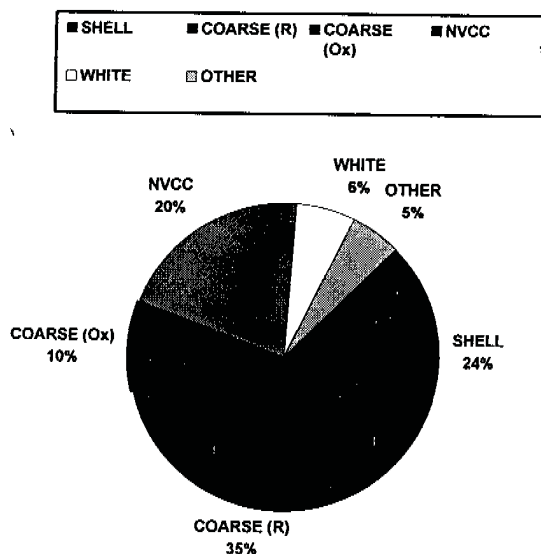
Romano-British Pottery from Norman Cross (% count)



2516 sherds of pottery were recovered from Norman Cross. Basing the assessment on the material from the evaluation, Shelly wares were the most common type followed by Nene Valley colour coated wares and grey wares. Other wares represented in much smaller quantities included BB1, Mancetter-Hartshill mortaria, Samian (7 sherds) and miscellaneous red and white wares. The pottery dated mainly to the third century, with only a little residual or characteristically later material being apparent. The small group of samian included late 2nd to early 3rd century types. Amongst the Nene Valley colour coated wares were funnel necked, folded 'scale' beakers produced from c A.D. 225. Only one possible fourth century beaker type was noted, with rounded folds, rouletting and a lustrous colour coat. There were very few of the characteristically fourth century colour coated flanged bowls, plain dishes and wide mouthed jars; and very few shelly ware jars with the characteristically fourth century undercut rims.

Vinegar Hill

Romano-British potter from Vinegar Hill (% count)



The Vinegar Hill excavation produced a small assemblage of 345 abraded and fragmentary sherds which included few datable forms. It was a very mixed assemblage, probably representing material deposited over a long period of time although dating predominantly to the second and third centuries. There was a greater variety of grey ware than from Norman Cross, more oxidised wares and small quantities of other wares such as Belgic type grog tempered ware, BB1 and samian. The Nene Valley colour coated wares included characteristically later beakers with white paint over the slip, post dating \approx 250 A.D, and earlier types with barbotine under slip. Also noted were self coloured jars with pulley rims, similar to types dating to the 2nd century (Howe et.al. 1981 fig. 8.90).

Metalwork

by Lynne Bevan

In total 23 items of copper alloy, 55 items of iron and 80 nails were recovered from the four sites. The assemblage was generally in a poor state of preservation but, with the exception of a circular brooch from Tort Hill West, fairly stable.

The composition of the assemblages, which include door furniture and fittings, generally suggests domestic activities on the sites, with some evidence for crafts in the form of hand tools and debris from low-level iron and leadworking. The high incidence of personal adornments and accessories such as brooches, bracelet fragments and pins implies that the acquisition of consumer valuables featured in the lives of individuals, perhaps to a greater extent than would normally be expected on rural settlements. The presence of a decorative key handle from a box suggests that personal valuables were stored at Tort Hill East, where the largest assemblage of metalwork was recovered. The assemblage also included a diamond-shaped lid from a

seal box, an enamelled type of 2nd to 3rd century date, which attests to the presence of literate, socially important people, and is an unusual type of find for a rural site.

At Tort Hill East, where the largest number of metal items was found, copper objects included: an enamelled seal box lid, a decorative key handle, a loop-headed terminal, three pins, the shaft of a toilet implement and fragments from a brooch plate and a bracelet. Identifiable iron objects included a reaping knife, a ferrule, two possible punches or awls, a gauge, two items of door furniture, a loop-headed spike, a socketed projectile and 186 nails. Lead items included a weight and a counter.

At Tort Hill West copper alloy items included two brooches and a brooch spring. A piece of door furniture and three nails have been identified among the ironwork.

At Norman Cross copper alloy items comprised a brooch, a bracelet fragment, tweezers and a handle/fitting with an iron attachment. A spatulate-headed linchpin, a possible handle, two items of door furniture and 23 nails were also identified among the iron objects. A copper alloy brooch spring, two iron buckles, two pieces of door furniture and 36 nails were found at Vinegar Hill.

Iron-Slag: The largest collection of slag was recovered from Tort Hill West (166 fragments). Smaller amounts were found at Tort Hill East (45 fragments), and Norman Cross (26 fragments), whereas only one fragment was found at Vinegar Hill. This material (in particular that from Tort Hill West) might contribute to the understanding of the character of the small-scale industrial processes that were suggested by the excavation.

Coins: A total of 72 coins was recovered: 49 at Tort Hill East, 17 at Vinegar Hill, and three each at Norman Cross and Tort Hill West. The identification of these coins will contribute to the interpretation of the level of economic activity at each of the sites and to refining the chronology of the various phases of activity.

Other finds

by Lynne Bevan

Flint - The flint assemblage from Tort Hill East comprised 60 items including two hammerstones, twelve cores, one serrated and two retouched pieces and 43 struck flakes. Smaller assemblages were found at Tort Hill West (one scraper fragment, two serrated blades and sixteen flakes) and at Norman Cross (one blade, a core and four flakes) and only one flake was found at Vinegar Hill. These items (particularly those recovered from Tort Hill East) may indicate the presence of earlier prehistoric activity in the area.

Stone - Fragments from two shale bracelets, three fragments from two quernstones and part of a roof tile were found at Tort Hill West. A possible whetstone, six quernstone fragments and eight roof tile fragments were found at Tort Hill East. Roof tile fragments were also found at Vinegar Hill (9) and at Norman Cross (11).

Glass - A total of eight fragments of Roman glass were found from two sites: at Norman Cross a colourless fragment from a vessel and part of a multi-ribbed handle from a bottle, and at Tort Hill West the neck from a flask, four more fragments from bottles and a piece of window glass.

Painted Wall Plaster - 208 fragments of wall plaster were found at Tort Hill East.

Brick and Tile - A total of 256 fragments of ceramic tile and brick was recovered from the four main sites. Tegulae, imbrices and tiles with 'keying' marks reminiscent of box flue tiles were identified in the collection, suggesting a Roman origin for the majority of the assemblage. The largest amounts came from Tort Hill East (111) and Vinegar Hill (102), and the smallest amounts from Norman Cross (31) and Tort Hill West (12).

Fired Clay/Daub - The largest collection of fired clay came from Tort Hill West where 1,592 fragments were recovered. The assemblage from Tort Hill East comprised 320 fragments, and smaller amounts came from Norman Cross (38) and Vinegar Hill (16).

Miscellaneous - The pointed end of a bone pin was recovered from Tort Hill East, and a circular jet pendant/fastener and a possible piece of worked shell inlay at Tort Hill West.

All these objects will contribute to the general interpretation of the character, function and date of the sites. Of particular interest is the quantity of material associated with buildings, such as the wall plaster and roof tiles. Although there was no direct evidence for buildings at Tort Hill East, Vinegar Hill or Norman Cross, these finds do suggest the presence of buildings in the immediate vicinity.

Animal Bone

by Umberto Albarella

Introduction

Animal bone was recovered from Tort Hill East, Tort Hill West, Norman Cross and Vinegar Hill. The bones were recovered from hand excavated contexts in all cases apart from machine excavated layers at Vinegar Hill. A lower efficiency of recovery is expected from this site.

Recovery: due to time and financial constraints and to the difficult nature of the soil, an extensive programme of coarse sieving was not carried out on this site. However, a few samples were taken for flotation and 2mm sieving of flotation residues. Hardly surprisingly, these have produced a very small number of animal bones. Animal bones were hand-collected from all contexts, including those machine excavated at Vinegar Hill.

Residuality and contamination: a residuality problem does not arise for these sites, as each assemblage is considered as a single unit and not divided into phases.

However, a division into chronological phases could be decided at a later stage, in particular for Tort Hill West. Then the possible presence of residual material should be considered as this will affect the reliability of the dating of different phases.

No major contamination problems seem to affect these sites.

Context: most animal bones derive from linear ditches and gullies. However, several bones from Tort Hill East were dumped in a "midden".

Preservation: this was good or very good at the two Tort Hill sites, but worse at Vinegar Hill and even more so at Norman Cross, where most bones were in rather poor condition. Fragmentation was high, as is typical of butchery and kitchen refuse, in particular of Roman date. Gnawing marks were rather common on all sites and these suggest that many bones were found in secondary deposits. However, a small group of bones found in excellent condition and partly in articulation at Tort Hill West (context 1264) suggests that these had been promptly buried and then left in primary deposition.

Storage and quantity: the animal bones are stored in 17 cardboard boxes measuring 44x24x17.5cm. A total weight of c.104 Kg of animal bone has been collected from the four sites. The quantities are distributed as follows:

Tort Hill West: 7 boxes, 38 Kg.

Tort Hill East: 6 boxes, 41.5 Kg.

Norman Cross: 1 box, 5.5 Kg.

Vinegar Hill: 3 boxes, 19 Kg.

The bones are washed and bagged by context. The few bones from sieving are not kept separate, but can be found with the hand-collected ones. Their provenance from soil samples is specified on the bags.

The bones are temporarily stored at the offices of BUFAU in the University of Birmingham.

Assessment

Method: the following samples of the animal bone assemblages have been selected for assessment:

Tort Hill West: 2 boxes, 33% of the total weight

Tort Hill East: 2 boxes, 30% of the total weight

Norman Cross: 1 box, 100% of the total weight

Vinegar Hill: 1 box, 40% of the total weight.

Numbers of "countable" bones, ageable mandibles and measurable bones are recorded in Table 3. The counting system was based on a modified version of the system suggested by Davis (1992) and Albarella and Davis (1994). Due to the small size of the assemblage a few more "countable" elements were included (Albarella in press).

PERIOD	COUNTABLE BONES							Comments
	Cattle	Sheep/Goat	Pig	Others	Bird	TOTAL (assessment)	TOTAL (estimated)	
Tort Hill West	54 (54)	51 (54)	9 (9)	18 (18)	1 (1)	133 (136)	405 (415)	It includes horse and dog
Tort Hill East	21 (22)	16 (17)	4 (4)	20 (20)	- (-)	61 (63)	201 (207)	It includes horse and a dog partial skeleton
Norman Cross	16	12	1	5	3	37	37	It includes horse and chicken
Vinegar Hill	29 (31)	3 (3)	1 (1)	14 (14)	- (-)	47 (49)	118 (123)	It includes horse

PERIOD	AGEABLE MANDIBLES				MEASURABLE BONES							
	Cattle	Sheep/Goat	Pig	TOTAL (assessment)	TOTAL (estimated)	Cattle	Sheep/Goat	Pig	Others	Bird	TOTAL (assessment)	TOTAL (estimated)
Tort Hill West	1	3	-	4	12	12	13	1	6	1	33	101
Tort Hill East	4	2	-	6	20	20	5	-	7	-	24	79
Norman Cross	4	2	-	6	6	6	5	-	4	-	16	16
Vinegar Hill	1	-	-	1	3	3	1	-	1	-	5	13

Table 3. All sites. Number of "countable" bones (Davis 1992; Albarella & Davis 1994; Albarella in press) used for assessment and estimates of their total. The Norman Cross site has been fully counted at assessment stage. The estimate of total number of specimens is calculated on the basis of what percentage of each assemblage had been selected for assessment. Numbers in brackets include material from sieving (countable bones). No ageable mandibles or measurable bones were found in the sieved samples.

Variety: the three main domestic mammals - cattle, sheep and pig - dominate all four assemblages, but horse bones are also common throughout (see Table 3). Cattle and sheep are approximately equally common, except for Vinegar Hill, where cattle is predominant. However, this could be due to a recovery bias (see above). Birds are rare and fish totally absent. It is difficult to say to what extent this is due to the fact that small bones were overlooked during the excavation.

Quantity: these are small assemblages of animal bones, tiny in the cases of Norman Cross and Vinegar Hill. Very few bones derive from sieved samples. Altogether there will probably be no more than 800 "countable" specimens, 40 ageable mandibles and 200 measurable bones (see Table 3).

Potential: despite their small size these assemblages are still of some interest. They can certainly provide a contribution to the interpretation of the sites and of some specific features. A possible division of the Tort Hill West assemblage into an Iron Age and a Roman phase would reduce the size of the assemblage further, but it could contribute to the detection of any possible changes in the use of animal resources in the two periods. The relatively high frequency of horse bones is interesting and will require an explanation, possibly connected to the function of the sites. The apparent homogeneity of the four sites is also worth investigating.

It is unlikely that there will be enough data to detect kill-off patterns and the sizes of different animals. However, age data and measurements will still be useful as part of a more general database for Iron Age and Roman sites in the area.

Oyster Shell

by Jessica Winder

The assessment establishes whether the marine shells from the archaeological sites at Tort Hill East and Norman Cross are of sufficient quantity and quality to enable statistical analyses to be carried out. Such analyses are needed to make comparisons of samples on an intrasite and intersite basis. Comparisons might be made between areas of a site, feature types, contexts, or phases. On a broader scale comparisons might be possible with mollusc shells from sites of the same type or period elsewhere; or archaeological samples with modern ones.

The detailed recording and analyses of size, infestation and other characters, particularly of oyster shells (*Ostrea edulis* L.) but also of other species such as cockles (*Cerastoderma edule* L.), mussels (*Mytilus edulis* L.) and whelks (*Buccinum undatum* L.), are undertaken to determine their source, the level of their exploitation, how they are prepared, and the method of their disposal.

The information from the assessment includes which species are present, how many shells are represented, what proportion can be measured, the date or phase of the contexts suitable for further analysis, and the kind of feature to which the selected contexts belong.

For statistical analyses a minimum number of thirty measurable individuals is required but the larger the sample the better. Both left and right valves are important. A sample may comprise the shells from a single context or a grouping of contexts if this is considered appropriate. Generally, the left valves are used for size comparisons and the right valves for studies of age, growth rate and shape. Evidence for infestation or encrustation by epibiont organisms is recorded for both valves.

Oyster shells from Norman Cross

Thirty small bags containing shells from 20 contexts yielded thirty-five oyster valves (*Ostrea edulis* L.). These comprise 20 left valves and 15 right valves giving a minimum number of 20 individual oysters represented. Although the state of preservation of the shells is good, one quarter of the shells are too badly broken to make accurate measurements. There are not enough measurable shells to permit statistical comparisons between the contexts, or groups of contexts, to make intrasite or intersite comparisons. In addition to the oyster shells, there are six mussel valves (probably *Mytilus edulis* L.) and twenty-two land snails. It is not recommended that any further work should be carried out on the shells from this site.

Oyster shells from Tort Hill East

The excavations on this site recovered 383 oyster valves which are contained in 56 bags and have been assigned to fifty-one separate contexts. There are 205 left and 178 right valves giving a minimum number of 205 individual oysters. These shells are well preserved but 29% of the left and 21% of the right do not survive sufficiently intact to permit detailed recording. Context 5069 was the only context with enough measurable shells to allow comparisons to be made with samples from other sites. The majority of oysters (238) were derived from the same area and phase as context 5069, i.e. Plot 2 phase 2, features 507/508, an enclosure represented by a U-shaped ditch and probably dating to the late 3rd- to 4th-century. This whole group could also be used in statistical comparisons of size and infestation with samples from elsewhere.

Information is available for oyster shells recovered from a number of Roman sites mostly in southern England. The Tort Hill oyster data could be compared with samples from the following sites:

- Colchester, Essex
- North Shoebury, Essex
- Pudding Lane, London
- Owlesbury, Hampshire
- Newport Roman Villa, Isle of Wight
- Greyhound Yard, Dorchester, Dorset
- Alington Avenue, Dorchester, Dorset
- Halstock Roman Villa, Dorset
- Shapwick, Dorset
- Westhampnett, Sussex
- Fishbourne Harbour, Sussex
- Chichester Harbour, Sussex
- The Shires, Leicester

There is also data available from a range of archaeological sites covering the Iron Age, Saxon, medieval, and post-medieval periods; and present-day, live, oyster samples from the River Colne, River Roach, Colchester oyster feast 1971, various natural beds in the Solent, Poole Bay and Poole Harbour.

Such comparisons are used to try to locate the source of a sample of oysters and indicate any differences through time which might be attributable to the development of new fishing practices or other natural factors.

Charred plant remains

by Angela Monckton

Introduction

During the excavation selected deposits were sampled which had the potential to produce plant or animal remains from dateable contexts. No waterlogged deposits were found so samples were processed for the recovery of charred plant remains, snails and bone which were preserved on the site. The samples were wet sieved with flotation into a sieve with 0.5mm mesh. The flotation fractions were air dried and are the subject of this assessment.

Three of the sites excavated produced samples with charred plant remains. Charred plant remains may result from the disposal of food waste, crop processing waste or the burning, either deliberate or accidental, of other plant material used on the site. They can therefore give evidence of the crops grown and plants exploited for food, and plant material utilised for other purposes. They may in some instances give evidence about agricultural practices and the type of economy of the site.

Method of Assessment

The flotation fractions (flots) of all the sieved samples were quickly scanned using a stereo microscope at x10 magnification. The whole of the flot was examined but nothing was removed from the samples from the two Tort Hill sites while the samples from Vinegar Hill were completely sorted for plant remains. The range and quantity of plant remains was assessed by eye to select samples which would provide more information about the site by more detailed recording.

The plant remains were all charred and, although some were abraded, they were in identifiable condition. The remains are in a stable condition and stored dry in suitable conditions.

Tort Hill West

Provenance, Dating and Quantity - Sixteen samples from contexts of Romano-British date were processed. They ranged in size from 4 to 24 litres and totalled 228 litres.

Range and Variety of Material - Six of the samples produced a reasonable amount of material worthy of more detailed recording.

Context 1001 produced grains of wheat and hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) with weed seeds including cleavers (*Galium aparine*), large grasses (Poaceae), vetch (*Vicia* sp), goosefoots (*Chenopodium* sp) and sedges (*Carex* sp); it also contained burnt bone.

Context 1032 had around 50 cereal grains and identifiable glumes (chaff) possibly including emmer (*Triticum dicoccum*) and also burnt bone and a tooth.

Context 1147/F161 was a small flot of mainly charred material with wild radish pod (*Raphanus raphanistrum*) and seeds present.

Context 1208 had a moderate number of cereal grains and a few glumes including spelt with more numerous weed seeds including brome grass (*Bromus* sp), medick type (*Medicago* type), spike rush (*Eleocharis* sp) and blinks (*Montia* sp).

Context 1272 had wheat (*Triticum* sp), barley and a few glumes with weed seeds.

Context 1277 had over a hundred cereal grains with small weed seeds, possibly sufficient for analysis of proportions of material present.

A further four contexts (1207, 1214, 1135 and 1220) had a few charred seeds and grains present which may add species to the above weed seeds.

Statement of Potential - Although the above samples may have insufficient remains for detailed analysis of proportions of types of remains present, they do have the potential to reveal the crops utilised and the weeds which accompanied them, and may be sufficient to suggest food preparation waste on some areas of the site and the type of land cultivated to produce the cereals.

Tort Hill East

Provenance, Dating and Quantity - Five bulk samples, which totalled 70 litres, produced flots which were submitted for assessment. The contexts represented were of Romano-British date.

Range and Variety of Material - Three of the samples contained over 100 items and so were suitable for analysis.

Context 5068 contained grains, including barley with a barley rachis, and spelt glumes (*Triticum spelta*) were present. Abundant weed seeds included cleavers and large grasses. Large legumes, possibly peas (cf *Pisum sativum*), were found in this sample.

Context 5107 contained wheat and barley with the above weeds; field gromwell (*Lithospermum arvense*) was found as an additional weed.

Context 5012 contained numerous weed seeds, particularly of docks (*Rumex* sp), with wheat glumes and a fragment of barley rachis.

In addition context 5071 also had hazel nutshell (*Corylus avellana*) and legume fragments present, and additional small weed seeds. This sample also contained small bones, fish scale fragments (also found from 5088), a possible charred maggot fragment and abundant snails, all removed for appropriate analysis.

Statement of Potential - Analysis of the above samples may suggest food processing on these areas of the site as well as the crops exploited, which may include bread wheat (*Triticum cf aestivum*). The presence of legumes is interesting as they are thought to be under-represented as finds since they do not come into contact with fire during their processing as is the case with cereals. The range of weeds present may suggest the type of land cultivated.

Vinegar Hill

Provenance, Dating and Quantity - The samples from this site were taken mainly for the recovery of molluscs for analysis but the samples were also scanned for plant remains. A total of 16 bulk samples of around 20 litres in size totalled 349 litres.

Range and Variety of Material - Some of these samples were found to contain a large number of wheat glumes with fewer cereal grains and remarkably few weed seeds. The plant remains were removed and identified. Abundant remains were found in five samples, which all had over a hundred items present, with the most abundant from from F5 and F201/1202, and a moderate amount from F3/1007, F5/1010 and F203/1204. The cereals included the glume wheats, spelt and emmer with a very small amount of barley. The weeds included docks, goosefoots, medick type and stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*). Seeds of duckweed (*Lemna* sp) were found in some of the samples: F7/1011, F204/S3 and F204. These were preserved, although uncharred, and have been found on a number of sites preserved in the same conditions to those in which snails are preserved.

Statement of Potential - The remains show the cereals in use at the time and provide evidence for the cleaning of glume wheats on the site, probably for domestic use. The proportions of the remains may indicate the relative importance of the cereals exploited. The distribution of the remains may suggest the areas of the site used for this activity. The presence of seeds of duckweed suggests that there was permanent water in these features at this time, as duckweed only sets seed in these conditions.

Conclusions.

The selected samples from the three sites assessed have the potential to produce information about the crops grown and utilised by the occupants of the sites. There are sufficient weeds present to suggest the types of land cultivated, and although the samples do not show bulk crop processing they indicate domestic preparation of cereals for use. Consideration of this in the context of the sites may help to interpret activities on the sites. Comparison between the sites will be possible and comparison

with other sites in the area in the future will be facilitated by the publication of this material.

Mollusc remains

A total of nine samples collected from the fills of the linear ditches at Vinegar Hill contained a substantial assemblage of molluscan fauna. An initial scan suggests that two contrasting groups are present: species preferring a marshy habitat and species preferring a watery habitat. Clearly these remains have the potential to assist in the interpretation of the ditches. Together with the other palaeo-environmental analysis, this material might also contribute to the overall interpretation of neighbouring landuse patterns.

Human Bone

The fragmentary remains of five inhumation burials and one cremation burial were recovered from Tort Hill West. An preliminary inspection by Stephanie Pinter-Bellows suggests the following.

Burial 1 - Inhumation. Approximately 80% complete. Adult possibly female.

Burial 2 - Inhumation. Approximately 40% complete. Adult.

Burial 3 - Inhumation. Approximately 40% complete. Adult.

Burial 4 - Inhumation. Less than 20% complete. Adult, possibly male.

Burial 5 - Inhumation. Less than 20% complete. Infant.

Burial 6 - Cremation. Approximately 500grms. Teeth roots indicate an age of 15+ (either adolescent or adult). All parts of the body are represented but the cremation is represented by very small fragments.

UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN

Background

A prerequisite of the mitigation strategy for archaeology of the A1(M) Alconbury to Peterborough DBFO Scheme is the publication of the results of the excavations in a form appropriate to their academic value (CBA 1996, 1.3). The assessment of the results above provides the basis the updated project design presented below. The aim of the updated project design is to provide a scheme for the for the final phase of the project (CBA 1996, 3.11), leading to the publication of an academic-style report.

Aims and Objectives

At the commencement of the project Ermine Street was identified as a key study theme, representing a potential unifying factor in the interpretation and presentation of archaeological data recovered during investigations along the proposed new road corridor (CBA 1996, 2). In the context of the results and information subsequently obtained, the validity of this approach appears amply confirmed. More specifically, it should now be possible to explore in some detail the influence of the original road upon late prehistoric and Romano-British settlement and land use in its vicinity, as well as making an important contribution to the broader study of the impact of Rome upon native British society. Central to this study are the important roadside settlements at Tort Hill, Sawtry and their context.

These themes will take precedence in the study and reporting of the archaeological data as a whole. The results from investigations in 1996, allied with data recorded in previous evaluations along the road corridor (Kemp & Reynolds 1995, etc.) and earlier discoveries, will be utilised to provide an interpretative account.

Publication Synopsis

Excavations alongside Roman Ermine Street, Cambridgeshire 1996

By Gwilym Hughes, Peter Leach and Catharine Mould

with contributions by

Umberto Albarella, Lynne Bevan, Simon Esmonde Cleary, Jane Evans, Angela Monkton, Graham Morgan, Andrew Moss, Stephanie Pinter-Bellows, Jessica Winder and Ann Woodward

Summary

Acknowledgements

Introduction - the site and its landscape setting, background to the excavations, objectives and methodology

The Results - an illustrated account of each site outlining main features and site characteristics

Specialist reports

- The pottery by Jane Evans and Ann Woodward
- The worked stone by Lynne Bevan
- The brick and tile by Lynne Bevan
- The coins by Simon Esmonde Cleary
- The metalwork objects by Lynne Bevan
- The painted wall plaster by Graham Morgan
- The human remains by Stephanie Pinter-Bellows
- The animal bone by Umberto Albarella
- The charred plant remains by Angela Monkton
- The oyster shell by Jessica Winder
- The mollusc remains by Andrew Moss

Discussion

References

(Estimated total length 50 000 words, 40 figures, 15 plates)

Method

The examination of the stratigraphic and structural evidence

A detailed examination of the written, graphic and photographic records contained within the various site archives will be undertaken in order to refine the accounts of the sequence and morphology of the sites. Further refinement of the provisional context groups and phasing outlined in the site narratives will be attempted.

The pottery

Fabric and Form sorting

The pottery will be sorted by context and the following information will be recorded on the standard B.U.F.A.U. pottery recording sheets:

A *Fabric* - Prehistoric and Romano-British wares will be allocated Fabric codes in a single running sequence. These will be cross referenced with published series where appropriate, using Chris Going's Chelmsford series for the Romano-British pottery (Going 1987).

B *Form/Decoration* - Each fabric group within a context will be divided into decorated and undecorated body sherds, rims, handles and bases. Forms will be recorded by 'Form Name' (Vessel class such as jar, bowl etc.) and 'Form Code' (the specific vessel type). A single coding system will need to be agreed for the Prehistoric and Romano-British pottery so that no duplication occurs on the database. Decoration will also be recorded and again a single coding system will be required.

C *Quantity* - All the pottery (including wares sent to external specialists) will be quantified by sherd count, sherd weight, and Estimated Vessel Equivalents for rims (rim EVEs). Rim diameters and percentages extant will therefore need to be recorded for rims.

D *Comments* - Any additional information relating to manufacture (e.g. potters stamps), use (e.g. sooting, wear-marks and residues), re-use (e.g. repair holes or rivets, smoothed off sherds), or post-depositional history (abrasion) will also be recorded. Again a single coding system will be required.

Illustration

An example of each form noted will be illustrated with the exception of forms well published elsewhere. In addition key groups may be selected for illustration during analysis.

The Pottery Report

The reports from all specialists will be integrated into a single pottery report structured broadly as follows:

Introduction/methodology

Fabric descriptions

Discussion by site (site specific evidence relating to date, function, etc.)

Tort Hill West

Tort Hill East

Norman Cross

Vinegar Hill

Thematic Discussion (comparison between the four site assemblages and a discussion of the overall assemblage in its regional and national context, considering function, status, trade, regional influences, etc.)

Metalwork and Miscellaneous Small Finds Reports

Descriptive cataloguing and a full report, including a search for published parallels for some of the more distinctive objects, is recommended for identifiable objects in the metalwork and small finds assemblages. Illustration is required for a selection of the more complete and interesting objects and the conservation of some badly-preserved metal objects is also necessary, together with the X-Ray of a number of unidentified iron objects.

Full cataloguing, illustration and a search for published parallels is recommended for the shale bracelets. Long-term conservation of this environmentally-sensitive material might also be appropriate. A closer examination of the whetstone and quern fragments, together with identification to source of stone, is recommended. No further action is necessary for the stone tile fragments.

The small flint assemblages attest to a generally low level of prehistoric flintworking on the Tort Hill sites and since no chronologically diagnostic material is present, no further action is recommended beyond the compilation of short reports perhaps including the illustration of some selected items.

The animal bone

Full analysis of the assemblages of animal bone from all four sites is recommended. A comparison of the frequency of species between the Iron Age and the Roman phase at Tort Hill West will be useful - unless residuality problems arise. For other types of analysis, such as distribution of body parts, age, size, it will be necessary to consider the Tort Hill West assemblage as a single entity.

Human Bone

A brief report will be prepared on the five partial or complete inhumations and the cremation from Tort Hill West.

The charred plant remains

It is suggested that six of the samples from Tort Hill East and three of the samples from Tort Hill West are sorted and recorded in detail, analysis is carried out and a report written in line with the phasing of the sites.

Very little further work is required on the material recovered from Vinegar Hill but it is suggested that the results are tabulated in detail, related to the phasing of the site and a short report prepared to include with the final site report.

Mollusc remains

The samples from Vinegar Hill will be initially sorted in order to extract the molluscs from the sample matrix. These will then be identified and counted and a short report will be prepared.

Report writing and illustration

The first draft of the publication report will be prepared using data compiled from the excavation archive and analysis, and the specialist finds reports. Library research will be undertaken in order to establish the regional and national context for the site. Publication quality illustrations will be prepared for both the site plans and finds.

Publication

An edited draft of the report will be submitted to British Archaeological Reports (British Series).

Preparation and deposition of research and finds archive

The preparation of the research archive will be an ongoing task throughout the project. On completion, the archives will be checked and cross-referenced. Arrangements will be made for copying and deposition with Cambridgeshire County Council.

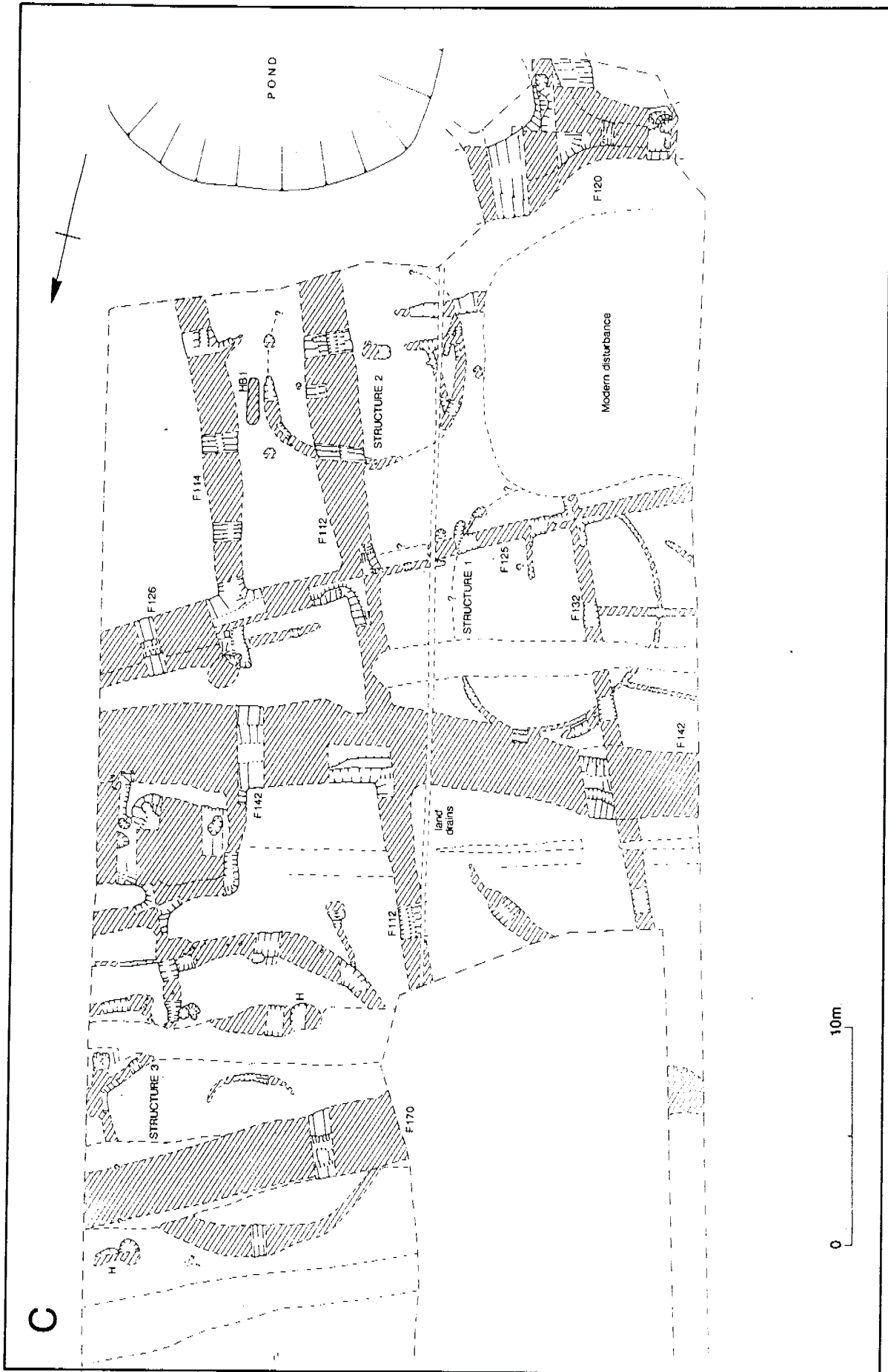


Fig 9 Tort Hill West: detailed plans of features (southern area)

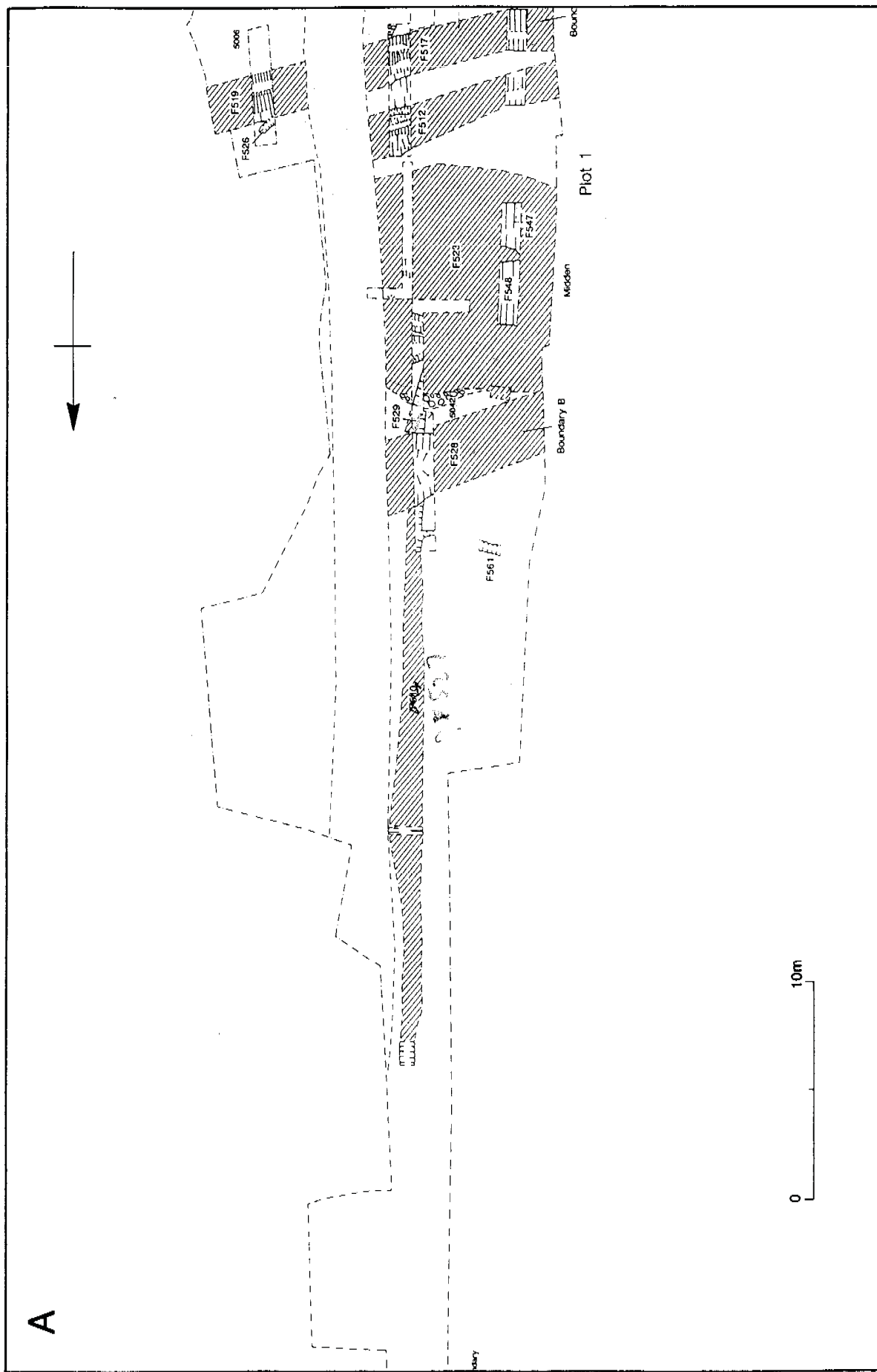


Fig 11 Tort Hill East: detailed plans of features (northern area)

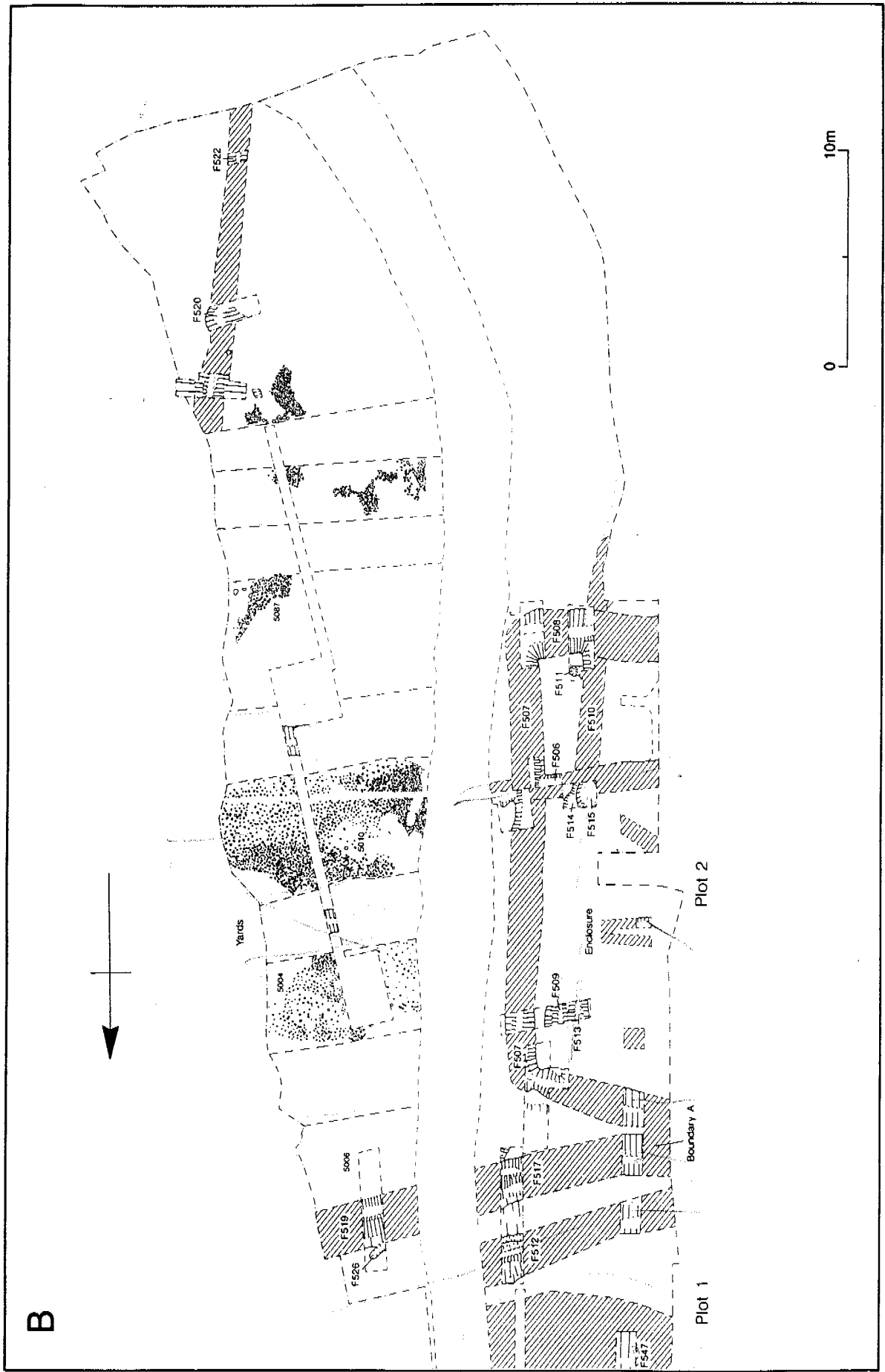


Fig 12 Tort Hill East: detailed plans of features (southern area)

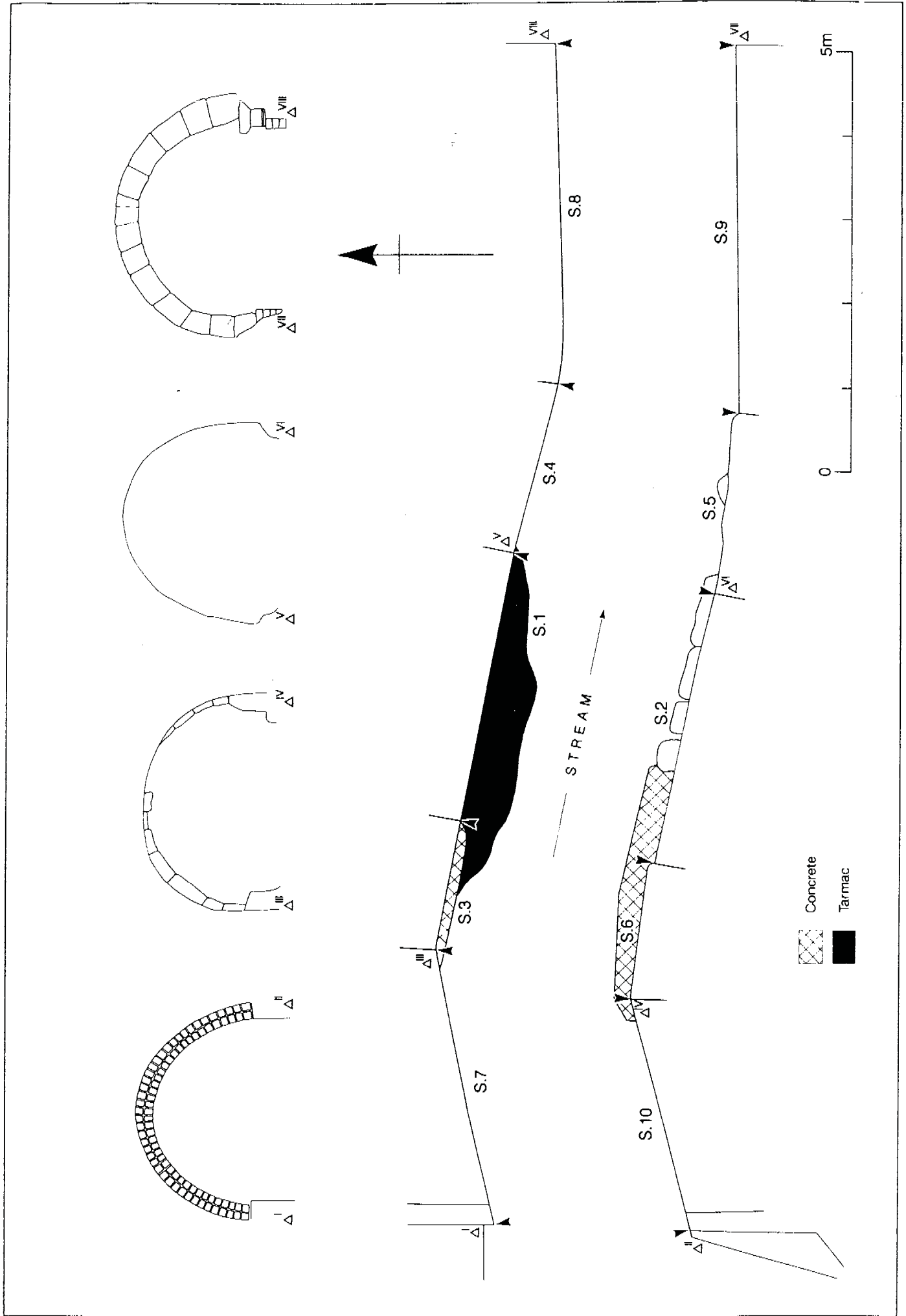


Fig 13 Conington Bridge: Plan and profiles

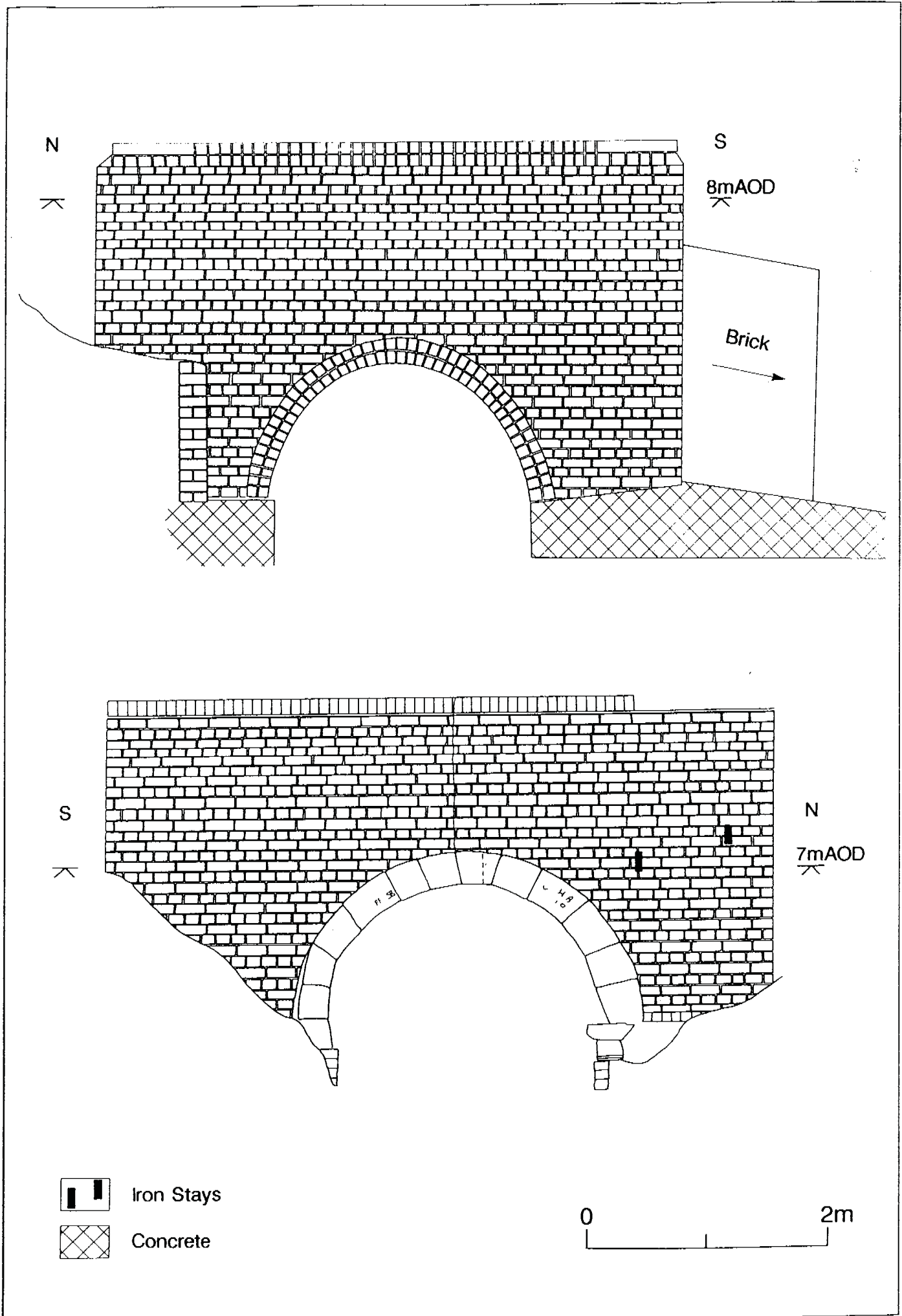
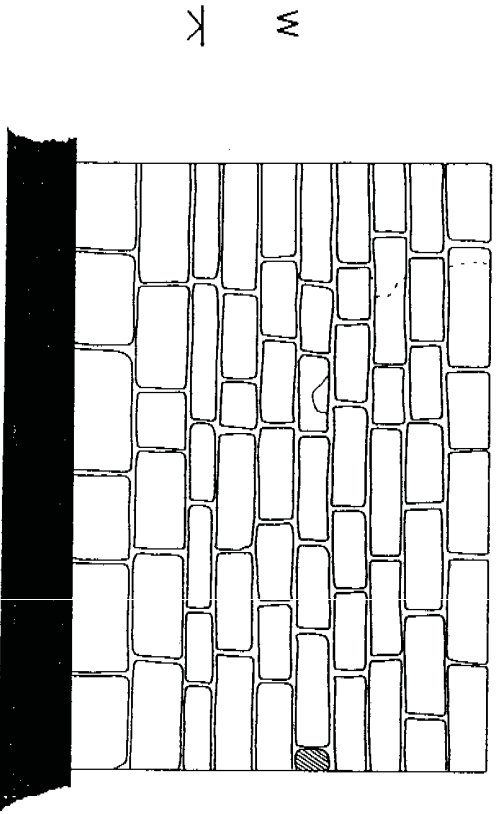


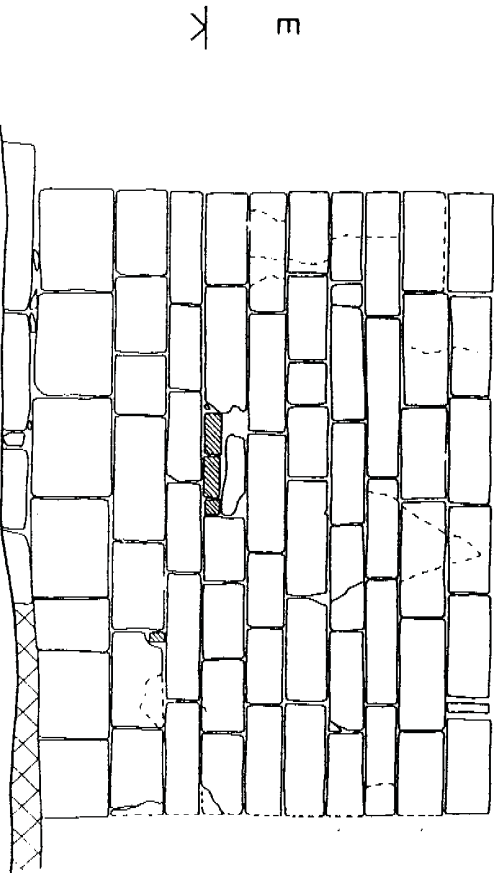
Fig 14 Conington Bridge: Entrance elevations




Phase I

S.1



S.2



-  Concrete
-  Brick
-  Tarmac

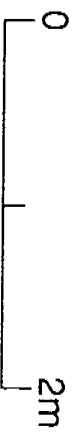
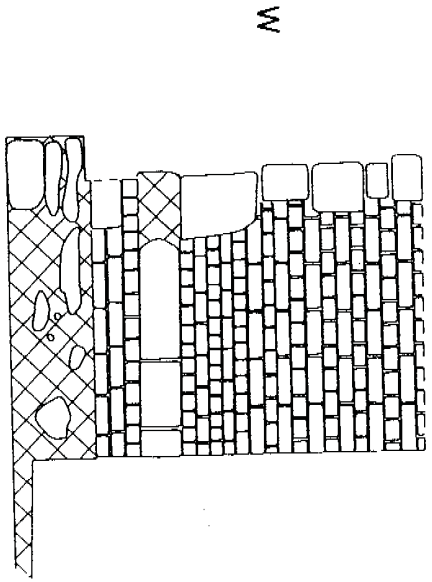
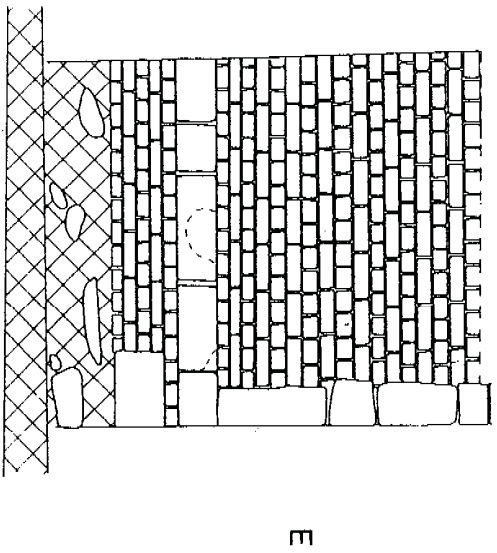


Fig 15 Conington Bridge: Internal elevations (Phase I)

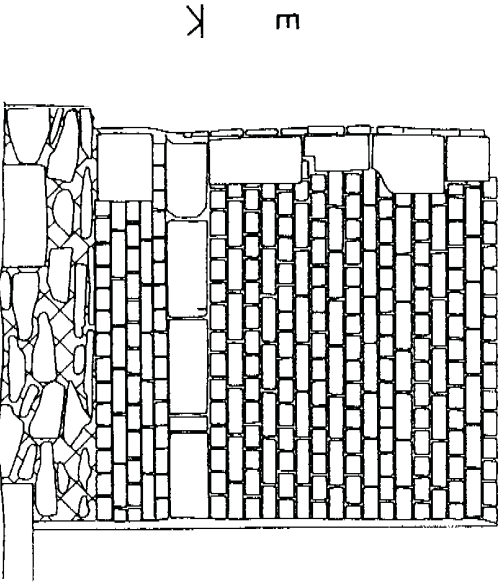
Phase II S.3



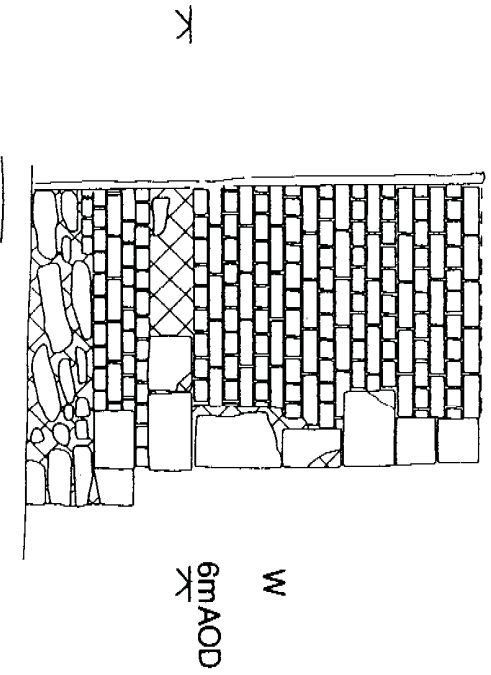
S.4



S.5



S.6



Concrete

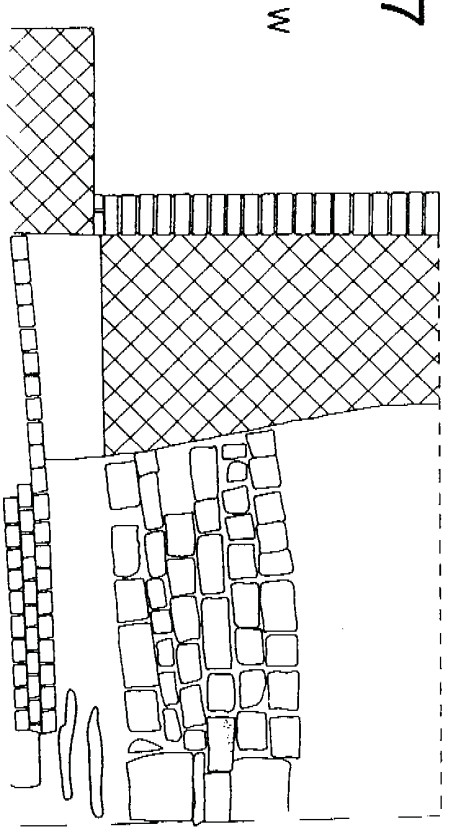
W
6m AOD
E

0
2m

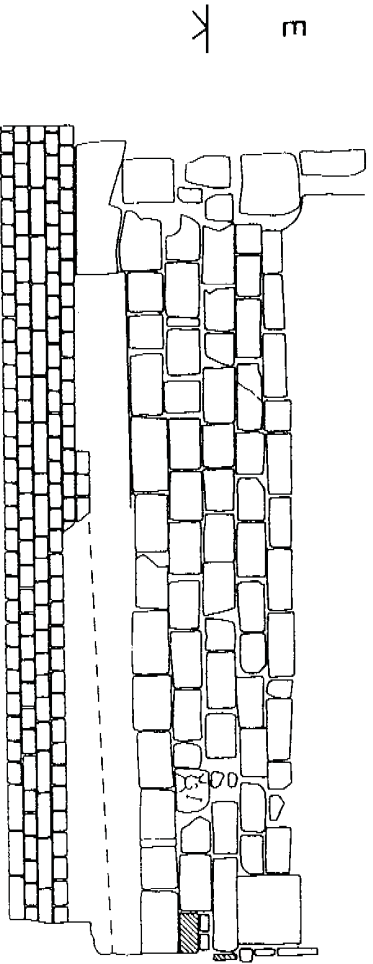
Fig 16 Conington Bridge: Internal elevations (Phase II)

Phase III

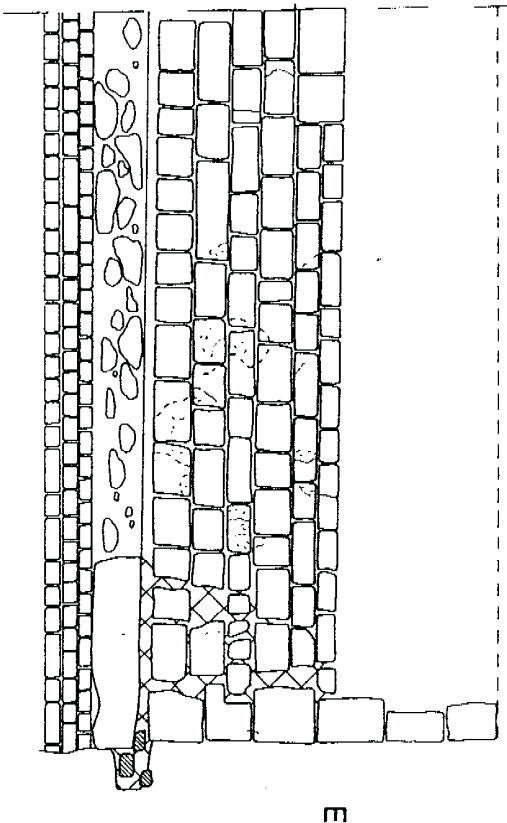
S.7



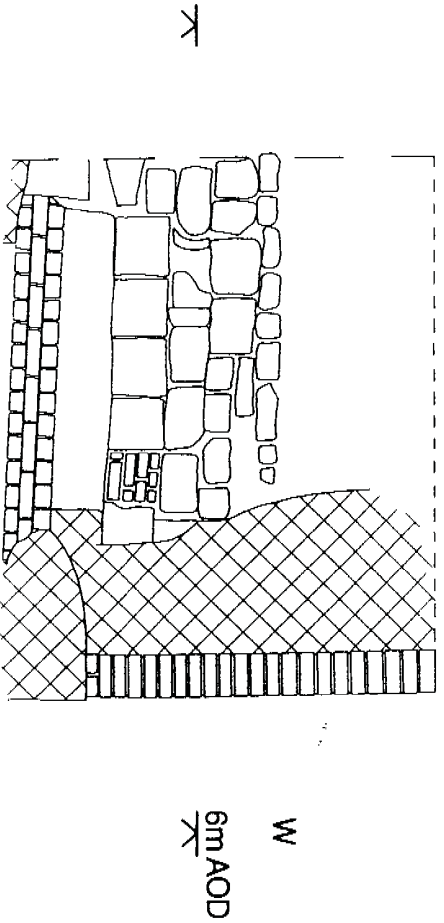
S.9



S.8



S.10



Brick



Concrete

Fig 17

Comington Bridge: Internal elevations (Phase III)

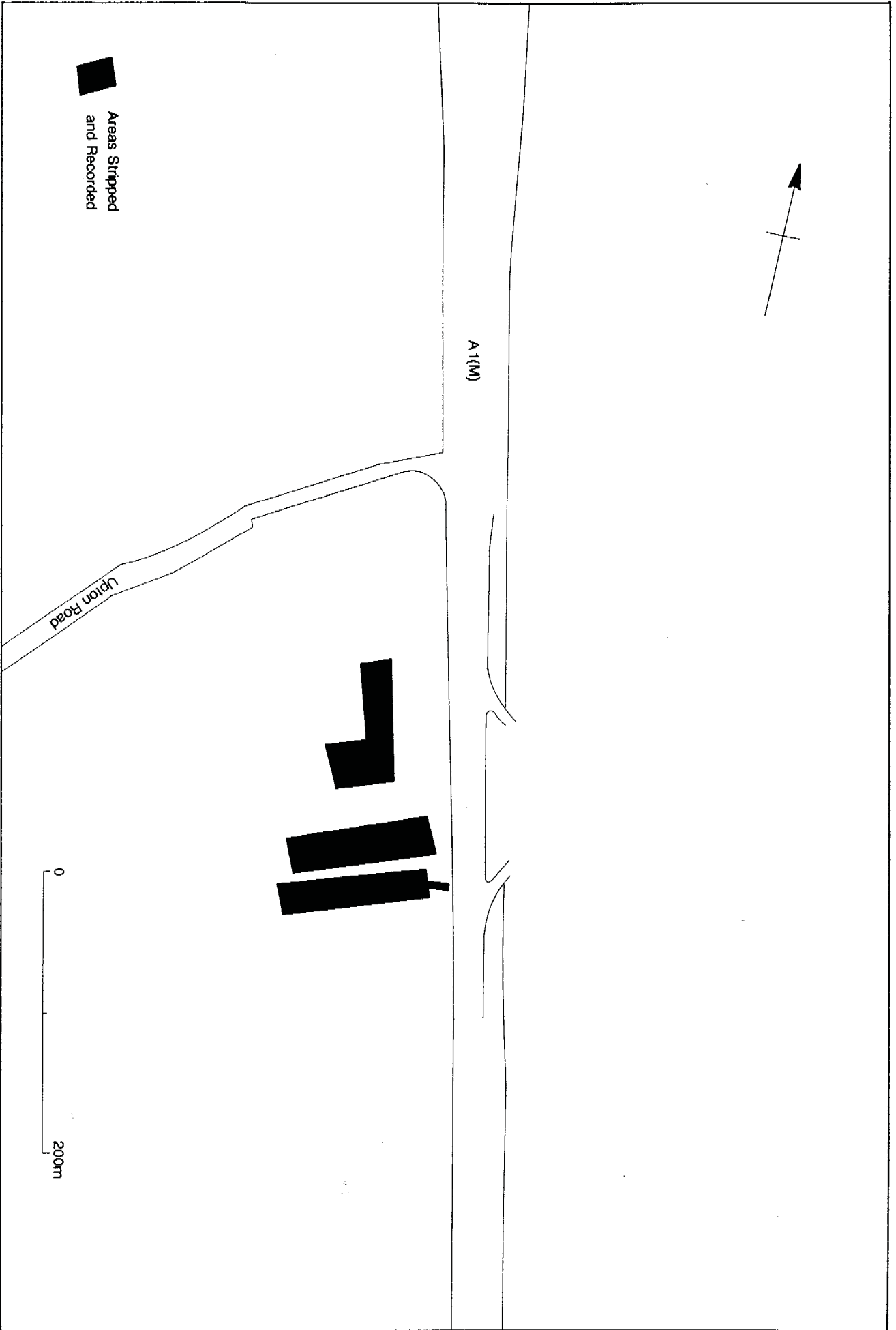
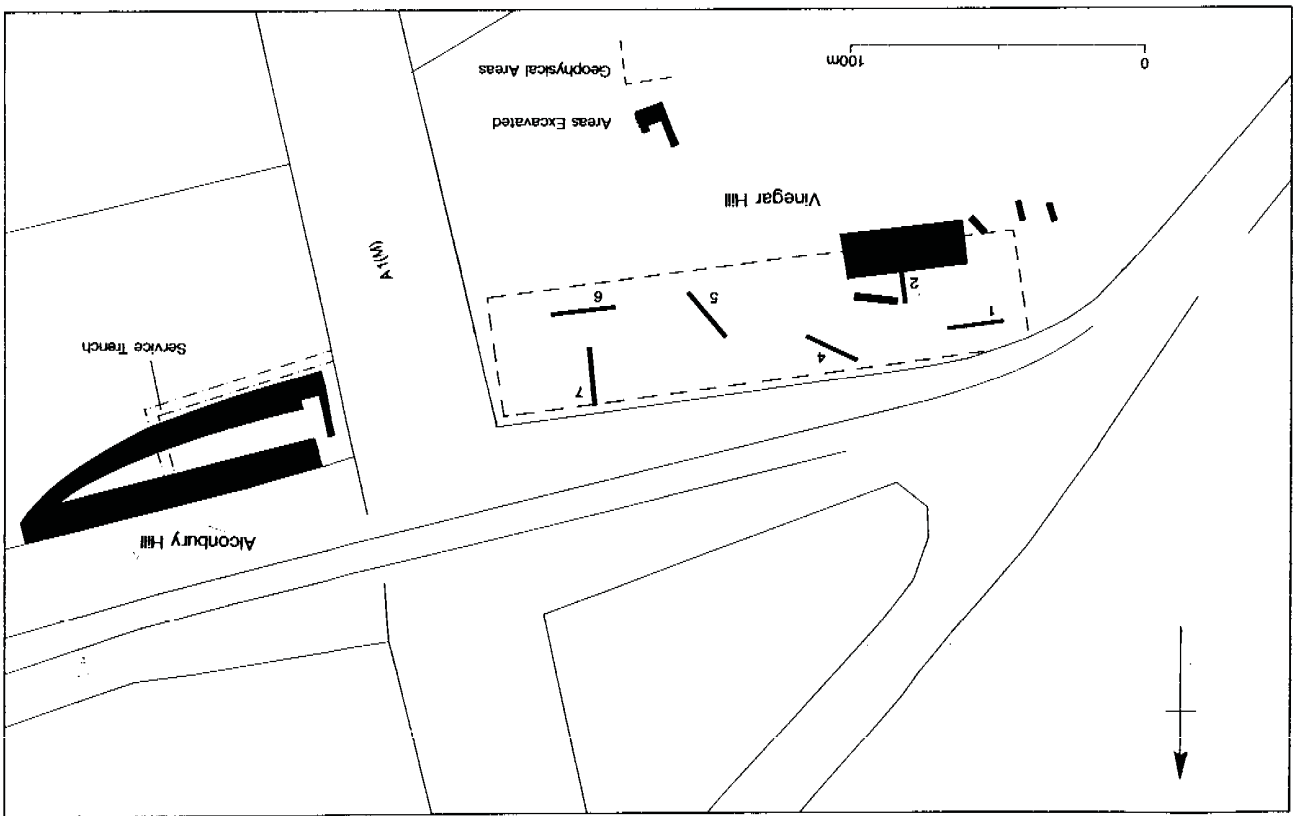


Fig 18 South Farm: location of stripped area

Fig 19 Alconbury Hill and Vinegar Hill: location of stripped areas, excavation trenches and of geophysical survey area



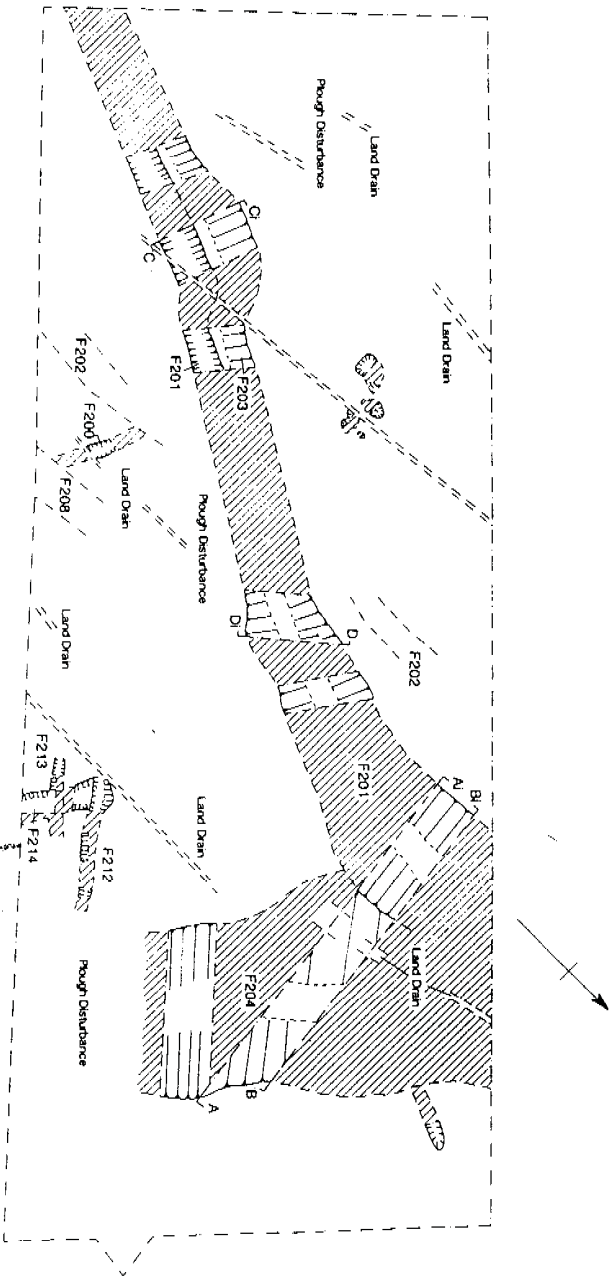


Fig 20 Vinegar Hill: detailed plan of excavated area

Fig 21 Vinegar Hill: sections

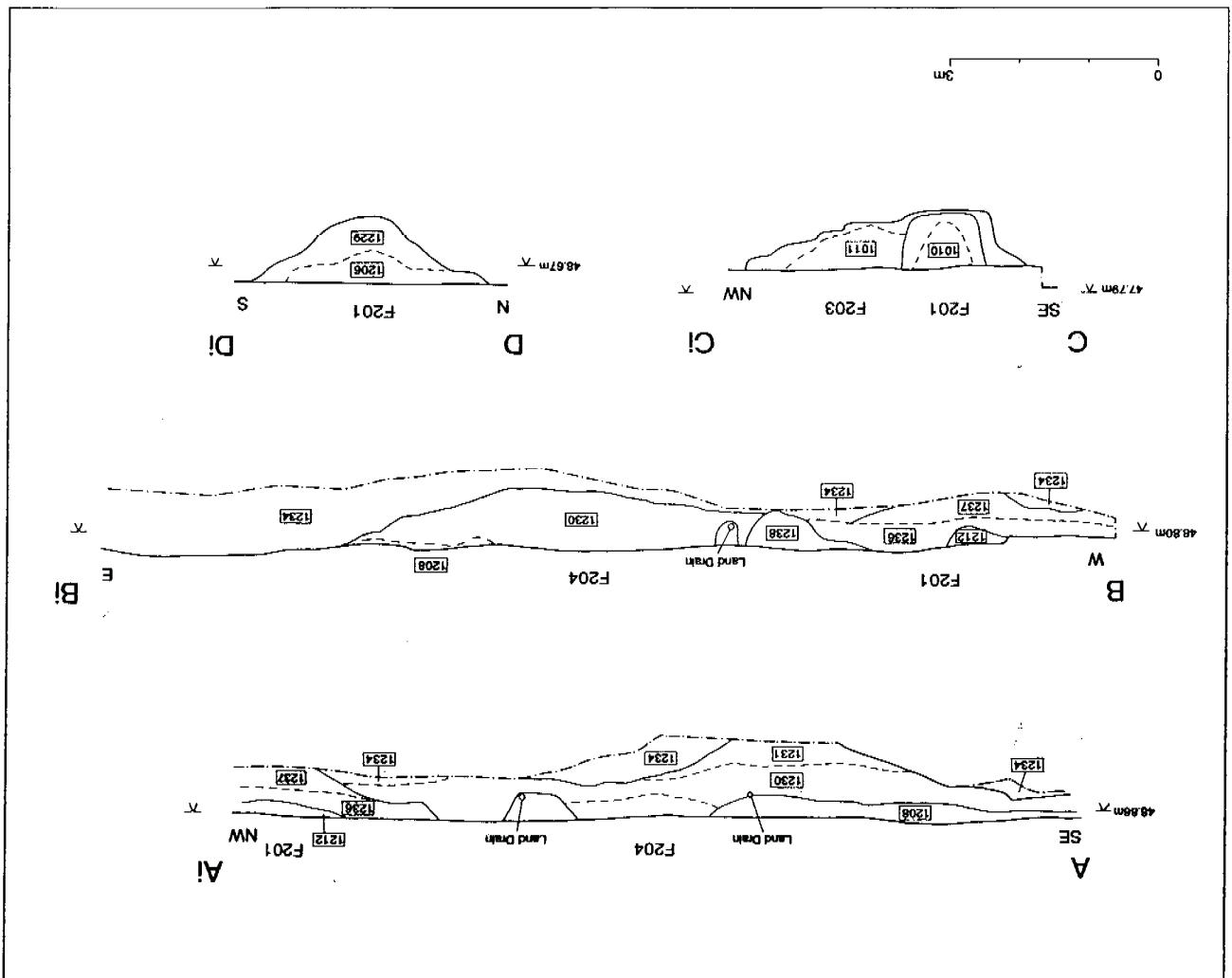


Table 1: Site Records

	Norman Cross	Tort Hill West	Tort Hill East	South Farm	Vinegar Hill	Alconbury Hill	Connington Bridge
Context Records	38	279	117	-	50	-	-
Feature Records	52	232	29	7	28	2	-
Drawings							
A1	1	12	1	2	3	1	-
A2	-	-	14	-	-	-	-
A3	7	10	3	-	8	-	4
A4	11	52	19	2	5	-	3
Photographs							
Black and white	43	1026	144	-	23	-	16
Colour slides	84	931	174	20	75	-	-
Colour prints	-	76	29	-	-	-	37

Table 2: Finds

	Norman Cross	Tort Hill West	Tort Hill East	Vinegar Hill
Prehistoric pottery	.*	2,372	.*	.*
Romano-British pottery	2,516	605	5,462	354
Worked flint	6	19	60	1
Worked stone	11	4	15-	9
Copper alloy objects	4	3	10	4
Iron objects	18	7	24	6
iron nails	23	3	186	6
Slag	26	166	45	1
Lead objects	2	1	10	4
Coins	3	3	49	17
Wall plaster	-	-	208	-
Glass	2	-	6	-
Brick and tile frags	31	12	111	102
Fired clay/daub	38	1,592	320	16
Human skeletons	-	3	-	-
Animal bone frags	344	4,403	2,173	892
Oyster shell	-	3	200	4

The following presents a combined timetable for the post-excavation programme for all sites and assumes a start date of 1st September 1996.

Timetable

Task	Description	Personnel	Unit staff	days	No.
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1	Enhancement of excavation archive	G Hughes	C. Mould	2 days	3 days
2	Further analysis of contextual information	G Hughes	C. Mould	2 days	4 days
3	Updating site interpretation	G Hughes	P. Leach	1 day	4 days
4	Co-ordination of specialists	G Hughes	C. Mould	2 days	1 day
			P. Leach	2 days	2 days

11/96 Performance indicator - completion of contextual analysis

5	Preparation of pottery report	A Woodward	J. Evans		
6	Report on wall plaster	G. Morgan	S. Esmonde Cleary		
7	Report on coins	L. Bevan			
8	Miscellaneous finds reports	S. Pinter-Bellows	U. Albarella		
9	Report on human remains		A. Monkton		
10	Report on animal bones		A. Moss		
11	Report on charred plant remains		J. Winder		
12	Report on mollusc remains				
13	Report on oyster shell				

8/97 Performance indicator - completion of specialist reports

21	Proof reading and publication	A Humphries	10 days
		G Hughes	1 day
		C. Mould	1 day
		P. Leach	1 day
		G Hughes	5 days
22	Preparation of research archive	G Hughes	4 days
23	Arrangements for copying and final deposition of archive and finds	G Hughes	4 days

12/97 Performance indicator - completion of second draft of final report

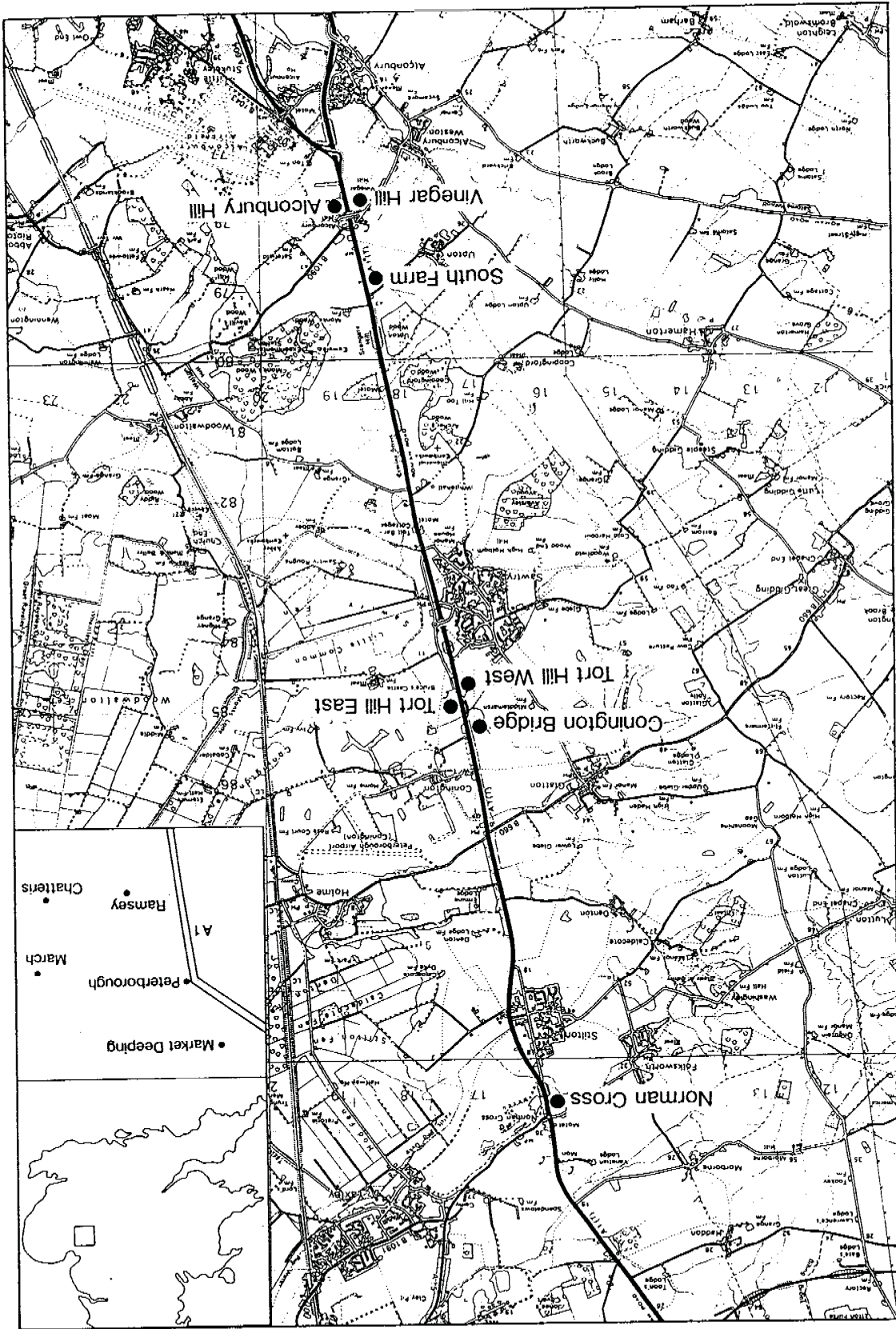
14	Library research	G Hughes	2 days
		C. Mould	1 day
		P. Leach	4 days
15	Preparation of drawing roughs	G Hughes	2 days
		C. Mould	1 day
		P. Leach	3 days
16	Preparation of first draft of reports	G Hughes	4 days
		C. Mould	2 days
		P. Leach	8 days
17	Preparation of site drawings	N Dodds	15 days
18	Preparation of finds drawings	M Breedon	37 days
19	Editing first draft of reports	A Woodward	3 days
20	Amendments to first drafts	G Hughes	2 days
		C. Mould	1 day
		P. Leach	3 days
		N Dodds	3 days

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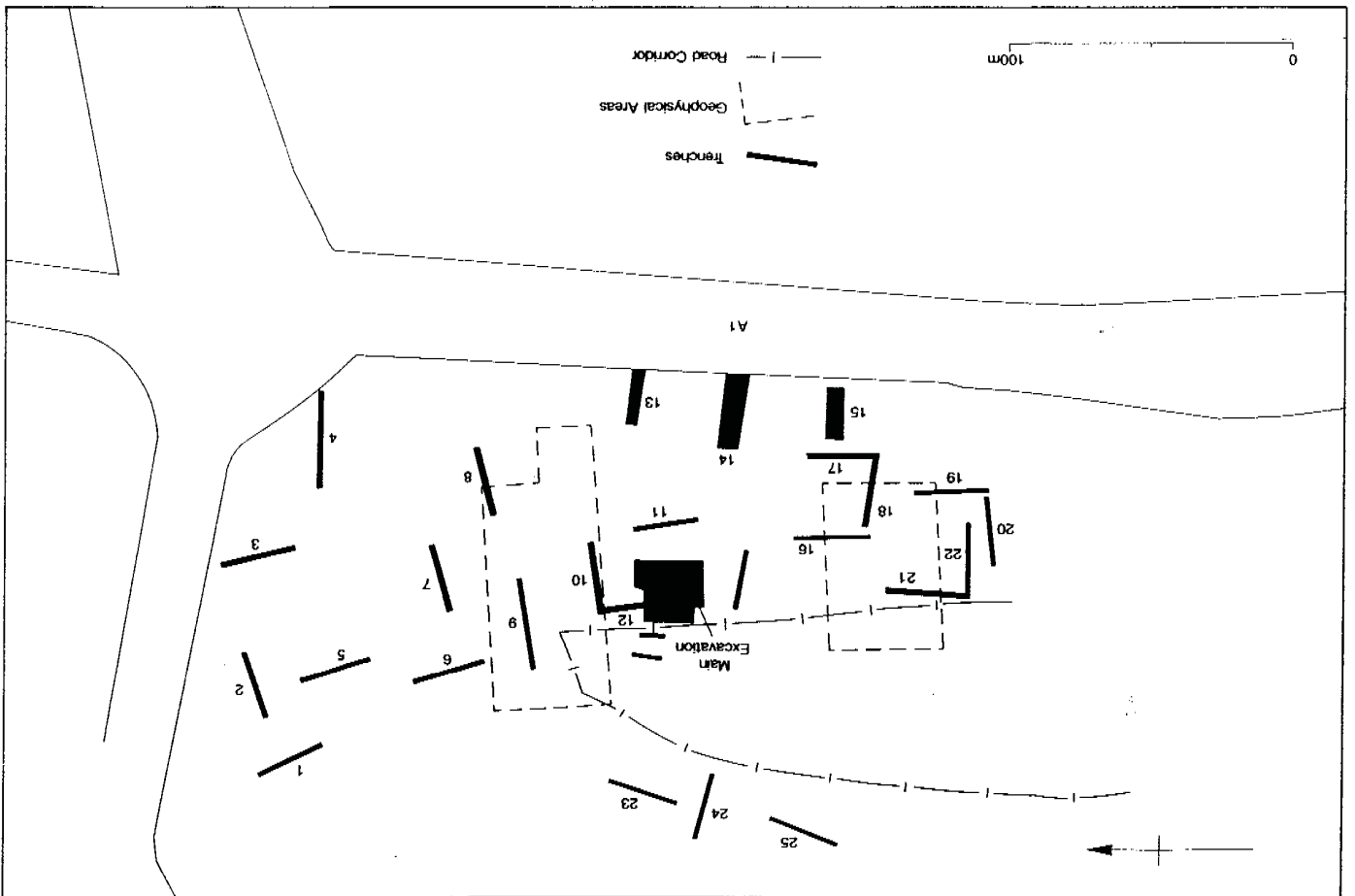
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Fig 1 Location of Sites



Norman Cross: location of trenches and outline of geophysical survey area



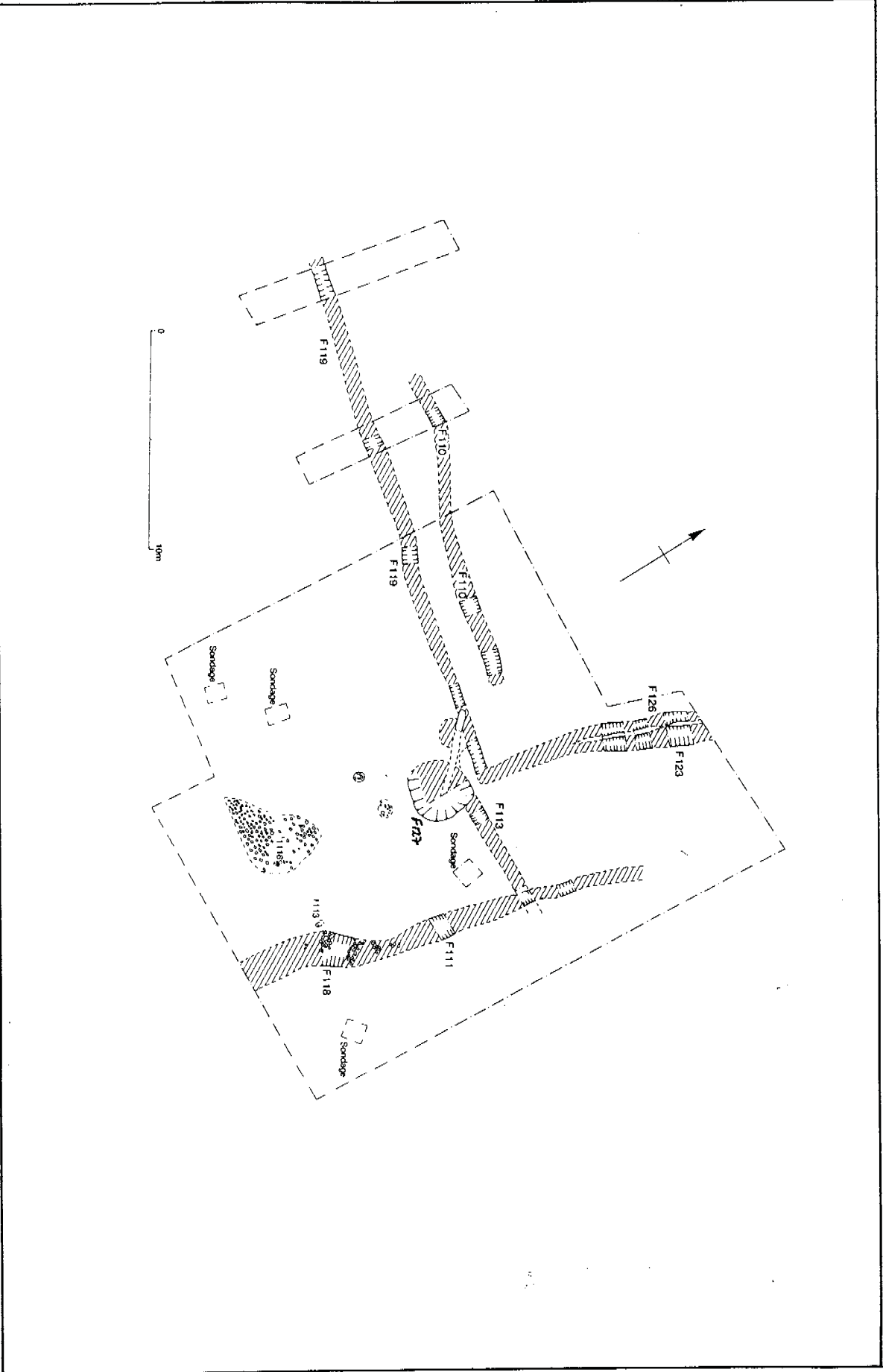


Fig 3 Norman Cross: plan of excavation area

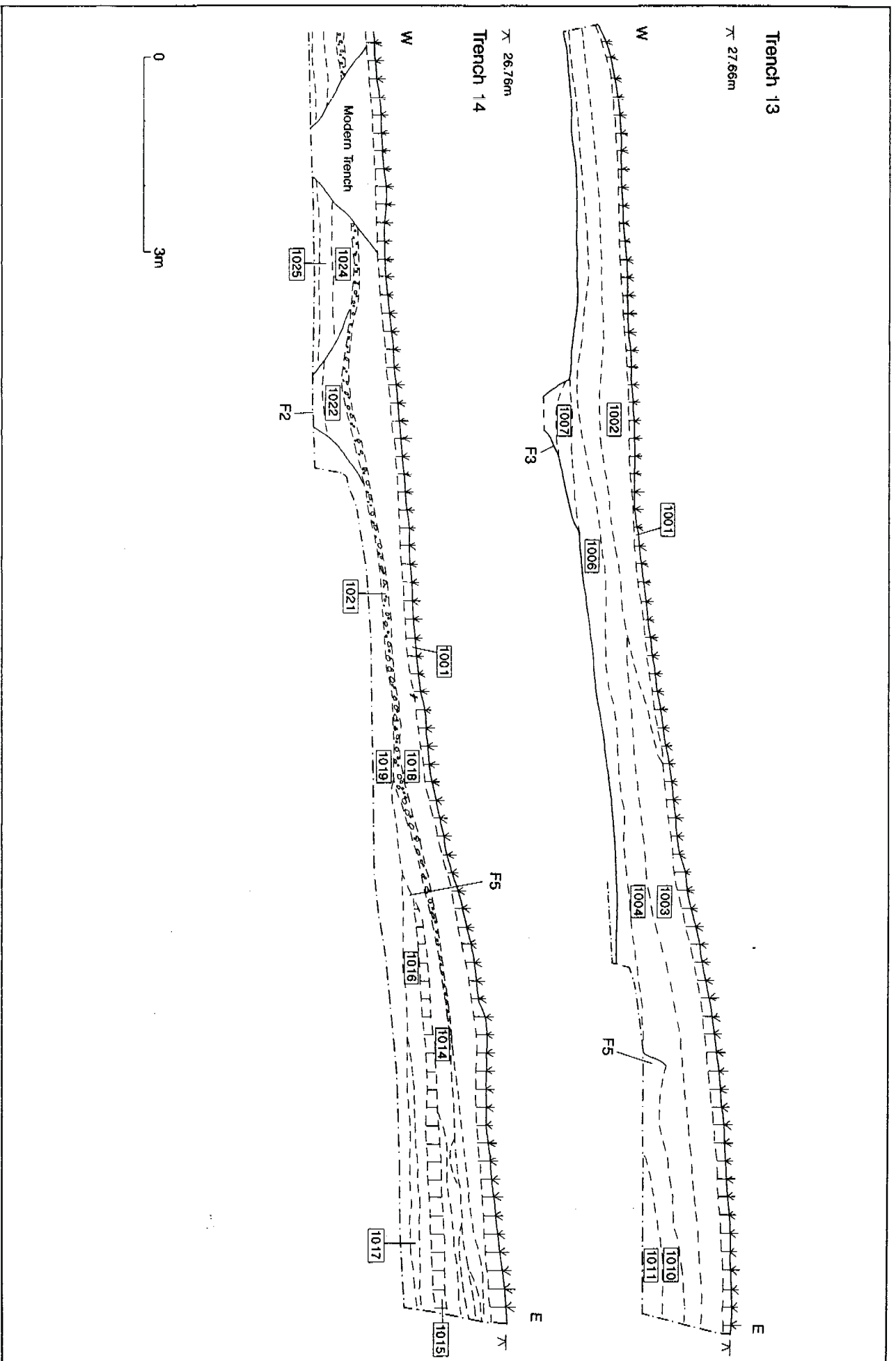


Fig 4 Norman Cross: northern sections of Trenches 13 and 14

Fig 5 Tort Hill West and Tort Hill East: location of excavated areas

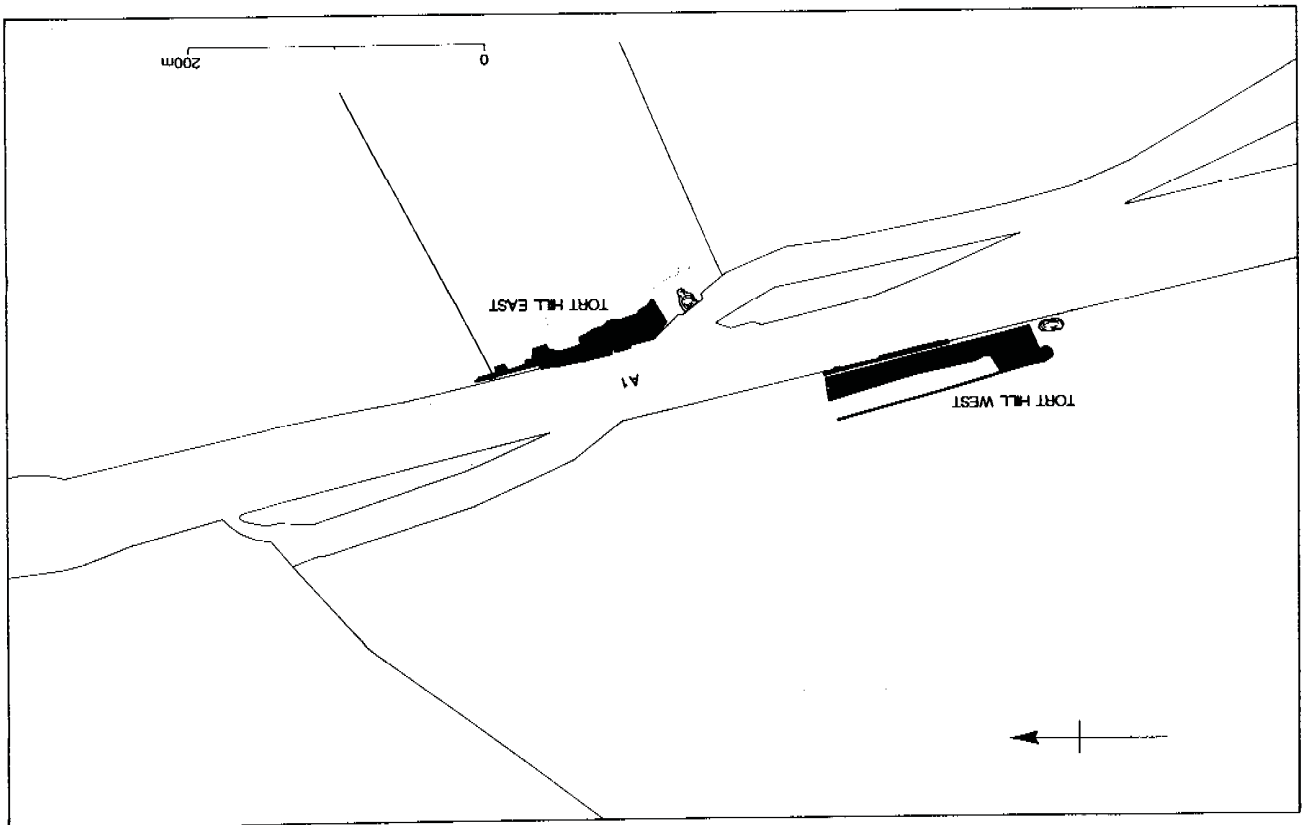
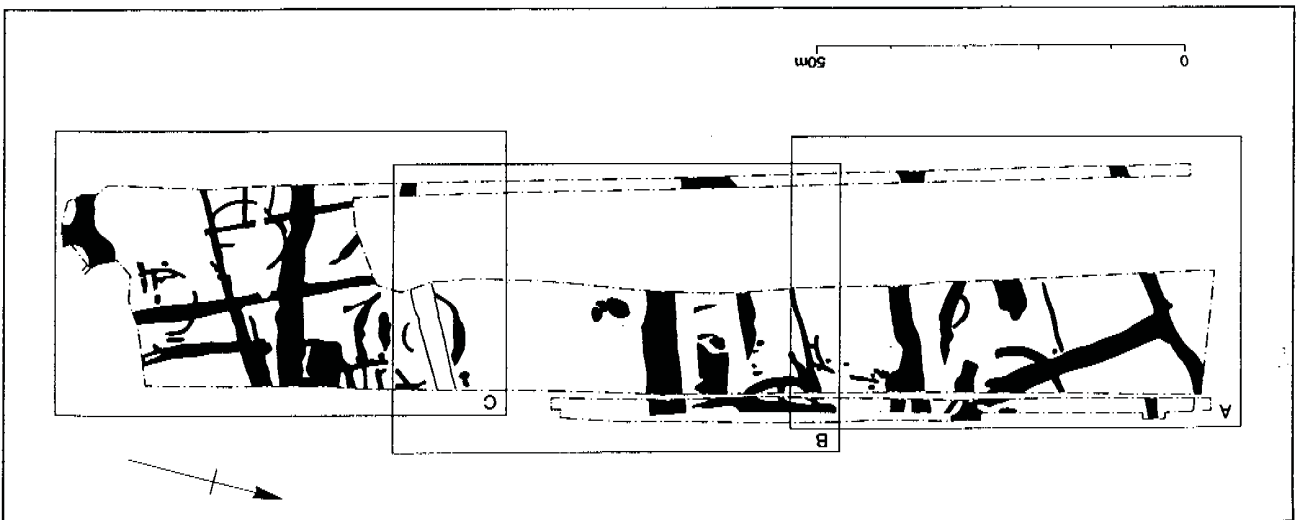


Fig 6 Tort Hill West: plan of all features



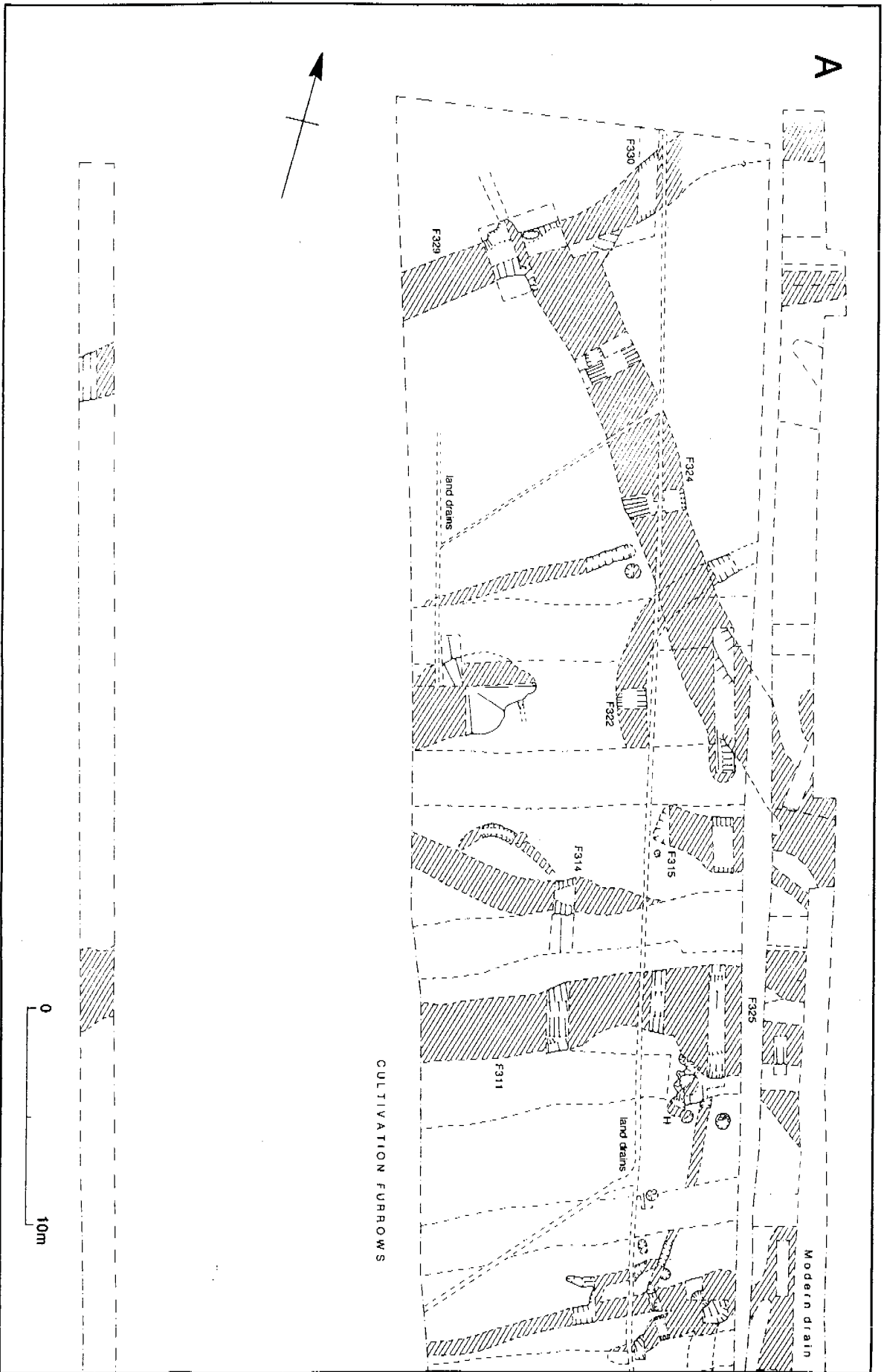


Fig 7 Tort Hill West: detailed plans of features (northern area)

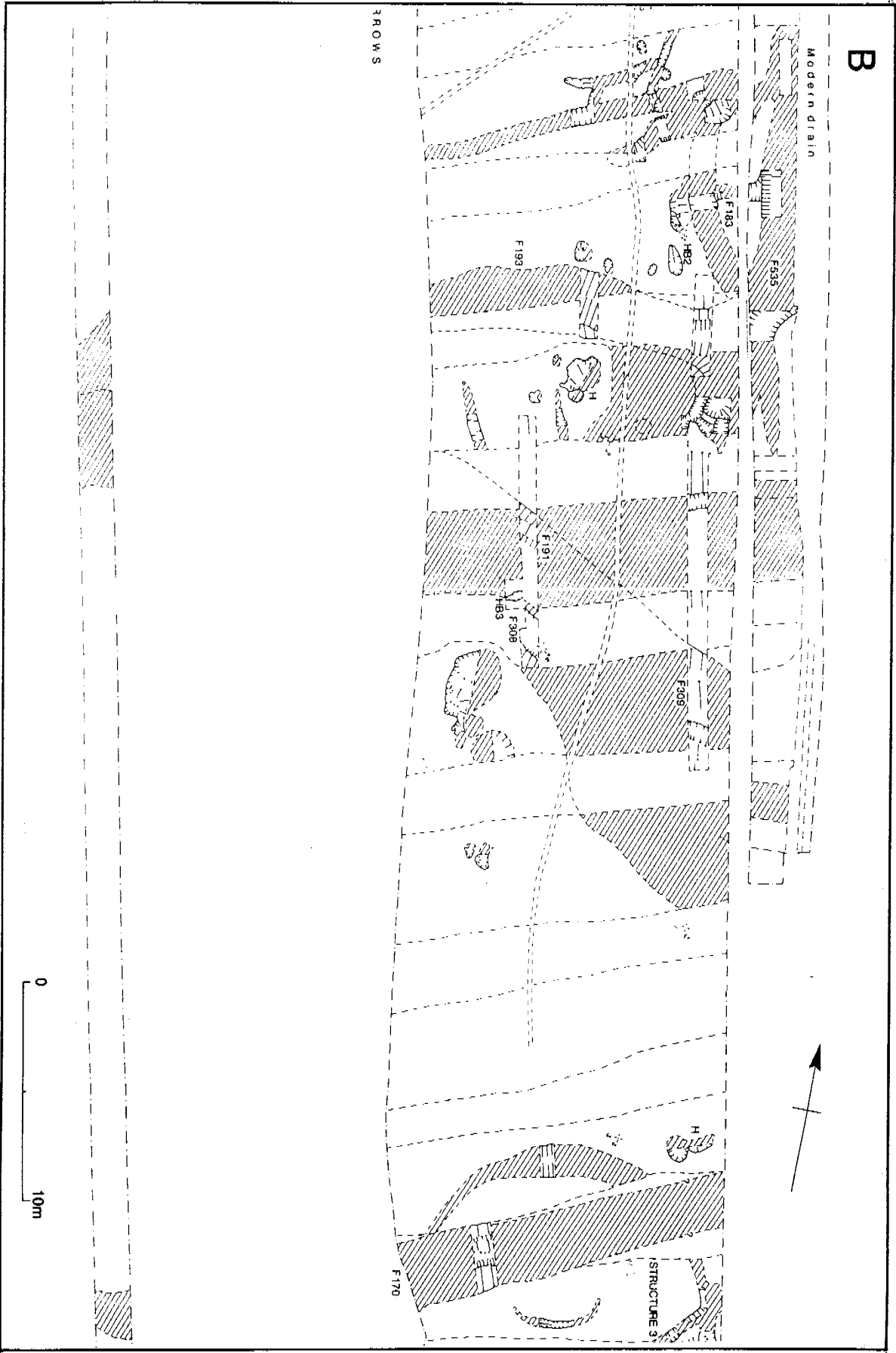


Fig 8 Tort Hill West: detailed plans of features (central area)