

LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Tonge's Farm, Norton Disney Quarry Phase 4 Norton Disney, Lincs. Archaeological Watching Brief

NGR: SK 8880 5970 Site Code: NDTF 05

LCNCC Museum Accn No.:2005.34

Lincs. C.C. Planning Application: 66/0360/00/MR

Report for
CEMEX
(RMC Aggregates (Eastern) Ltd)

by M. Jordan

L.C.C.
2 9 NOV 2005
HIGHWAYS & PLANNING DIRECTORATE

LAS Report No. 882 November 2005

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Conservation Services

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Highways & Planning Directorate

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Tonge's Farm, Norton Disney Quarry, Norton Disney, Lincs Archaeological Watching Brief, Phase 4

NGR: SK 8880 5970 Site Code: NDTF 05

LCNCC Museum Accn No.:2005.34 Lincs. C.C. Planning Application: 66/0360/00/MR

Summary

The watching brief during Phase 4 of the quarry works revealed a small section across a ditch containing sherds of 2nd century pottery. This ditch was badly truncated and plough scores, agricultural ditches and drains were present across the field. No other archaeological features were seen. The Roman ditch may relate to the features seen during the 2003 excavation (NDTF 03) which produced pottery of a similar period. There is a high potential for further archaeological remains to be found during the next phase of work (Phase 5) to the east.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services (LAS) was commissioned by CEMEX in September 2005 to undertake an archaeological watching brief during further phases of topsoil and overburden removal at Norton Disney, Lincs. (Figs.1 and 2). This work was in preparation for extension of the Tonge's Farm sand and gravel quarry.

Monitoring of Phase 4 was conducted by Matt Jordan on the 21st, 22nd, 30th September, and the 3rd, 4th and 5th October 2005, with help from Mike Garrett during the excavation of features.

Site Location and Description

Norton Disney Quarry is situated close to the border between Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, NE of the village of Norton Disney. The Tonge's Farm area of the quarry extension lies to the east of Butt Lane and in total consists of 48ha of agricultural land.

Planning Background

Planning permission was granted for extension of the existing gravel quarry at Tonge's Farm, with a condition requiring an archaeological watching brief during topsoil stripping and removal of overburden.

Archaeological Background

Aerial photographs taken in August 1959 show several cropmarks of linear and pit-like features to the east of Butt Lane (RAF verticals 543/673–2114–53-58). Most are probably of geological or glacial origin, but some appear to be of archaeological interest, suggesting enclosures similar to known examples c.1km to the west. An archaeological evaluation in September 2000 of land to the north of the bend in Butt Lane found nothing dating to before the medieval period (Armour-Chelu 2000). A watching brief in 2003 (on blocks of land east and south of Norton Low Wood) and archaeological excavation (east of Norton Low Wood) demonstrated that significant archaeological remains were

present within other parts of the quarry extension, although very few features were identified (McDaid et al 2004). No dating evidence was found from some features, but most of the features within an unexpected Romano-British enclosure contained fragments of pottery. It appeared that past occupation has been restricted to small habitation sites, and that there had been no spread of ceramic artefacts across the surrounding ground. No worked flints were seen. Topsoil stripping to the south of Tonge's Plantation in 2004 revealed ridge and furrow, but produced no artefacts or features (Tann 2005).

The Watching Brief (Fig. 2, 3, 4, Pls. 1 and 2)

Topsoil stripping was undertaken (using a 360° machine equipped with a 1.6m wide flat-bladed ditching bucket). The topsoil **4000**, was a 0.30 – 0.40m deep, grey brown silty sand with occasional inclusions of rounded flint pebbles. This overlay the natural, **4001**, a brown orange sand with frequent gravel inclusions. It also contained greyer sandy patches and occasional areas of iron panning. Cutting the natural in the northern half of the area were north/south aligned plough scores, while in the south these were aligned east/west. The change in orientation may relate to an east/west aligned ditch, **4014**, representing a possible field boundary, which runs across the area. This measured 2.8m wide and contained **4015**, a dark grey brown silty sand which contained 19th/20th century pot. Along the south boundary of the area were modern features, while immediately to the north was a north/south aligned field drain.

In the centre of the area was ditch **4010**, measuring 1.2m wide and 0.3m deep. It ran 30 to 40m east/west across the site and contained **4011** a light brown grey silt sand (Pl. 6). No finds were recovered from this feature it had a shallow concave profile and may be an agricultural ditch or possibly a furrow connected with medieval ridge and furrow as seen elsewhere in the quarry.

North of **4010** was the east/west orientated ditch **4002**, was 1.1m wide with a maximum depth of 0.20m, it shallowed to the east and west and was at least 10m long. Its fill was a brown grey silty sand **4003**, which contained 26 sherds of Roman pottery of 2nd century date (Pls. 3 and 4). This part of the site was situated in a small hollow which suggest that features survived better here possibly due to a greater depth of topsoil, lessening the effects of later ploughing. Three north/south aligned plough furrows **4004**, **4006**, **4017** and **4008** could be seen in this area, two of which **4004** and **4017**, cut ditch **4002**. **4004** contained one sherd of 2nd to 3rd century pottery, but this is likely to be residual with these features representing medieval or later ploughing (Pl. 5).

Seven more sherds of Roman pottery were found nearby in the loose soil left by the machine. One piece of worked flint was also found in the topsoil. It was identified as a late Mesolithic or Neolithic double bladed knife. While it is indicative of a prehistoric presence in the area, the lack of associated features and the solitary nature of the find would suggest this presence would have been small, transitional or very ephemeral in nature. Post depositional abrasion shows the results of the flint being found in the plough soil.

Discussion

The only datable feature identified was ditch **4002**, of which only a short section survived. It is likely ditch **4002** once continued both to the east and west, but traces of this have been removed by ploughing. It probably dates from the Romano-British period, the associated pottery being 2nd century in date. The seven sherds of unstratified pottery found nearby were also 2nd century and are likely to have been disturbed from this feature during machine stripping.

The pottery evidence suggests the ditch may have lay open for some period due to the abrasion and water wear on the pottery, while the lack of fine wares in the assemblage shows the rural nature of occupation. The pottery is of a similar date range and of similar fabric to the pottery from the earlier excavation in Phase 3 of the quarry (NDTF 03). There was no indication of a military nature to the pottery or features seen in this phase as was suggested by the 2003 excavations (LAS Report No. 736), approx 500m to the north east of Phase 4. It is possible both sets of features represent the remains of a Romano-British fieldsystem/farmstead which was associated with the Roman villa site at Hill Holt Farm, Norton Disney which was occupied from the 1st century onwards.

Conclusion

The presence of Roman pottery in the shallow remains of a ditch shows the archaeological potential of the area and also unfortunately the detrimental effects of medieval and more recent ploughing and agricultural activity. This suggests there is a likelihood of further features being revealed in the adjacent area (Phase 5) to the east.

Acknowledgements

LAS would like to thank CEMEX and their contractors for their assistance. Illustrations were prepared by D. Hopkins. The specialist reports were by Jim Rylatt and Barbara Precious. Naomi Field edited the report. The report was collated by Doug Young.

Matt Jordan Lindsey Archaeological Services November 2005

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Tann, G. 2005 Tonge's Farm, Norton Disney Quarry, Norton Disney, Lincs.: Archaeological Watching Brief. LAS Report No. 794, January 2005.

Archive Summary

Correspondence

Sketch Plan

Notes

Photographs: colour prints, LAS film nos. 05/60 23-28, 05/99 15-25, 05/78 1-18, 05/59 1-6, 05/94 19-24.

Tonges Farm, Norton Disney Quarry, Phase 4. Lincolnshire (NDTF 05) Context Summary

Context no.	Context Type	Description
4000	Layer	Topsoil
4001	Layer	Natural
4002	Cut	Ditch
4003	Fill	Fill of 4002
4004	Cut	Ditch
4005	Fill	Fill of 4004
4006	Cut	Ditch/furrow
4007	Fill	Fill of 4006
4008	Cut	Ditch/furrow
4009	Fill	Fill of 4008
4010	Cut	Ditch/furrow
4011	Fill	Fill of 4010
4012	Cut	Ditch/furrow
4013	Fill	Fill of 4012
4014	Cut	Field boundary
4015	Fill	Fill of 4014
4016		Unstratified
4017	Cut	Ditch/furrow
4018	Fill	Fill of 4017

A Report on the Roman pottery from Tonge's Farm, Norton Disney, Nottinghamshire (NDTF05), SK 8880 5970, for Lindsey Archaeological Services

B J Precious - Late Iron Age and Roman Pottery Consultant

13/10/05

The pottery has been recorded to the basic archive level according to the guidelines of the Study Group for Roman Pottery using the computer codes and pottery recording system of the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit, with sherd count and weight in grams as the measures. The site archive has been collated using Microsoft 95, Excel 5.0 (NDTF05.XLS).

Introduction and Dating (see Table 1, below)

The watching brief for this quarry site produced a small assemblage of Roman pottery consisting of 35 sherds weighing 1602 grams, and is of largely, homogenous early to mid-2nd century date. This group should not be viewed in isolation but in conjunction with the material from the previous excavation at Tong's Farm in 2003 (NDTF03 - see Precious, 2003), as it has a similar date-range and fabrics, although the forms differ (see Illus. 1-7).

The bulk of the material from NDTF05 came from context 4003, the fill of ditch 4002, with 26 sherds weighing 1152 grams. A single sherd weighing 38 grams from context 4005 was excavated from ditch 4004, and the remaining pottery (8 sherds, 415 grams) is noted as being unstratified (Context 4016).

Table 1: Date range of the Roman pottery by context, sherd count, weight, and stratigraphic relationship

Context	Sherds	Weight	Date range	sh/wt	Stratigraphy	Join
4003	26	1152	2C	44.31	Fill of ditch 4002	4016
4005	1	38	2-3C+	38	Fill of ditch 4004	
4016	7	393	2C	56.14	Unstratified	4003
TOTAL	34	1583		46.56		

In common with NDTF03, good external dating for the assemblage is absent from NDTF05, although sherds of Dressel 20 amphorae, imported from Baetica in southern Spain, are in the gritty fabric of 1st to mid-2nd century date rather than the smoother, mid-2nd to 3rd century fabric (contexts 4003 and 4106).

Context 4003 produced the most diagnostic pottery, although there is some variety in the date ranges. The earliest type is a wheel-made, grog-tempered jar or bowl with an everted rim and a distinctive, deeply ribbed or corrugated body wall, Illus 7. There is a second example in a sandier fabric with less grog that is heavily burnt and too fragmentary to be drawn. A similar vessel also wheel-made and in a grog-tempered fabric, occurred at the Late Iron Age and Roman settlement at Weekley, Northants (Jackson and Dix, 1987, fig 39, no 140). The Weekley example came from Ceramic Phase 2, which, although containing some earlier wares, is dated to the third quarter of the first century. This vessel type is rooted in the Iron Age tradition, but being wheel-made continues well into the Roman period.

The presence of two, contemporary forms place the main dating for 4003 into the early to mid 2nd century. These vessels are both in grey fabrics, but with less coarse inclusions than the majority of the grey fabrics from this site: the latter being more typical of Trent valley estuarine clays. One is the profile of a bowl with a bifurcated rim, B333 (Illus. 3). The other is less certain, being just the rim and neck sherds, but probably that of a carinated bowl or beaker type, with a long neck, B334 (Illus. 1).

There are no definitively, mid- to late Roman wares from this context, but the rim fragment of a large jar or bowl, also in a non-Trent Valley grey ware, may be of slightly later date (Illus. 2). This could suggest that ditch 4002 lay open for some time. An abraded and water worn, grey ware body sherd from 4005 dates to at least the 2nd century, but may also be later.

The unstratified material from 4016 also appears to be of mixed date, mirroring that of 4003. A flanged bowl in the coarser, Trent Valley clays is another form rooted in the Iron Age tradition, but being wheel-made is clearly Roman in manufacture, and may continue into the mid-2nd century (Illus. 5). Two examples of curve-rimmed jars with stubby lips, one in a Trent Valley clay, the other less certainly so, are also broadly 2nd, probably early to mid 2nd century in date (Illus. 4 and 6). This context contains an abraded, grey body sherd in a non-Trent Valley fabric that may be of later date.

Condition

There is a moderate degree of abrasion and water wear on the pottery that may be due to soil conditions or the ditch, in which they were found, might have been left open for some time, and the pottery consequently weathered. One of the vessels is very burnt and others are sooted on the exterior. Many sherds are encrusted or stained with red-brown, ferruginous? material. The average sherd/weight is high (over 40 grams) indicating a fairly fresh deposit. There are no definite sherd joins, but large pieces from the same Dressel 20 amphora came from both 4003 and 4016.

Statement of Potential (see Tables 2-4, below)

This assemblage clearly complements the important group from the previous excavation at Tong's Farm (NDTF03), and provides further evidence for comparatively early occupation in the area of the Roman villa site at Hill Holt Farm, Norton Disney (Oswald, 1937).

At least three of the diagnostic vessels from NDT05, although wheel made, were derived from native-tradition types, for example Illus. 5 and 7, and, to date, have not occurred on sites in Lincoln. Two are Roman derivatives of Gallo-belgic traditions (Illus. 1 and 3) and were more likely to have been used for serving. In contrast, these vessels *are* found on site from the city of Lincoln and in some of the assemblages from kiln sites at Market Rasen. Several of the vessels were used as cooking pots, attested by sooting on the exterior, and a large jar or bowl was likely to have been used for storage (Illus. 2).

There are no fine wares from this site, indicating a rural population. However, the presence of sherds from an amphora containing olive oil from Southern Spain suggests a degree of refinement, and access to markets supplying imported pottery.

Table 2: The Roman pottery fabrics by context, sherd count and weight.

Fabric	Code	Sherds '	%	Weight '	%
Grog-tempered ware	GROG	13	38.24%	644	40.68%
Dressel 20 amphorae	DR20	2	5.88%	288	18.19%
Grey ware	GREY	14	41.18%	498	31.46%
Grey ware with brown surfaces	GYBN	4	11.76%	118	7.45%
Oxidised ware	OX	1	2.94%	35	2.21%
	TOTAL	34	100.00%	1583	100.00%

Many of the grey wares from this site are different to the ubiquitous grey fabrics found in Lincoln and its environs. Instead they resemble the Trent Valley grey wares (TVAL), being lighter in colour, occasionally with brown surfaces, with large, rounded quartz grains typical of estuarine material. The pottery identified as grog-tempered consists of similar rounded quartz, but with Jurassic, clay pellets rather than grog, and occasional voids (pers. comm Dr A G Vince).

Table 3: The Roman pottery forms by context, sherd count and weight.

Form	Code	Sherds '	%	Weight 9	%
Undiagnostic		2	5.88%	45	2.84%
Amphorae	A	2	5.88%	288	18.19%
Bowl with bifurcated rim	B333V	4	11.76%	194	12.26%
Carinated bowl with deep neck	B334?	2	5.88%	32	2.02%
Flanged bowl	BFL	1	2.94%	70	4.42%
Closed form	CLSD	6	17.65%	146	9.22%
Jar	J	1	2.94%	52	3.28%
Curve-rimmed jar	JCUR	2	5.88%	128	8.09%
Everted rim jar or bowl	JBEV	12	35.29%	560	35.38%
Large jar or bowl	JBL	2	5.88%	68	4.30%
	TOTAL	34	100.00%	1583	100.00%

Further Work

It is worth publishing this group together with that from NDTF03, for although they are both small groups they are of good homogenous date. They contain a variety of forms that demonstrate the interface between native-tradition and Roman pottery. The grey wares, coarse and grog-tempered fabrics, are good representatives of Trent Valley estuarine clays and show the interface between Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire clay sources. They should be thin-sectioned as part of the reference collection for Lincolnshire.

The vessels selected for illustration should be drawn and inked (see Table 4, below). The pottery is in stable condition and should be retained for further research.

Table 4: The Roman pottery drawing list.

Illus/Pub No	Context	Fabric	Form	Dec	Noves	Dwg no	Alter	Comments	Shs	Wt
1	4003	GREY	B334?		1	D5	ABR	RIM NECK	2	32
2	4003	GREY	JBL			D4		RIM INT? MRO?	1	42
3	4003	GREY	B333V		1	D6	WWORN	RIMS LWR WALL	4	194
4	4016	GREY	JCUR			D1	FESTAIN	RIM SHLDR; TVAL	1	44
5	4016	GYBN	BFL			D3	FESTAIN	RIM GIRTH;TVAL	1	70
6	4016	GROG	JCUR			D2	FESTAIN	RIM SHLDR;TVAL	1	84
7	4003	GROG	JBEV	RIB	1?	D7	BURNT	RIMS BSS;TVAL	9	514

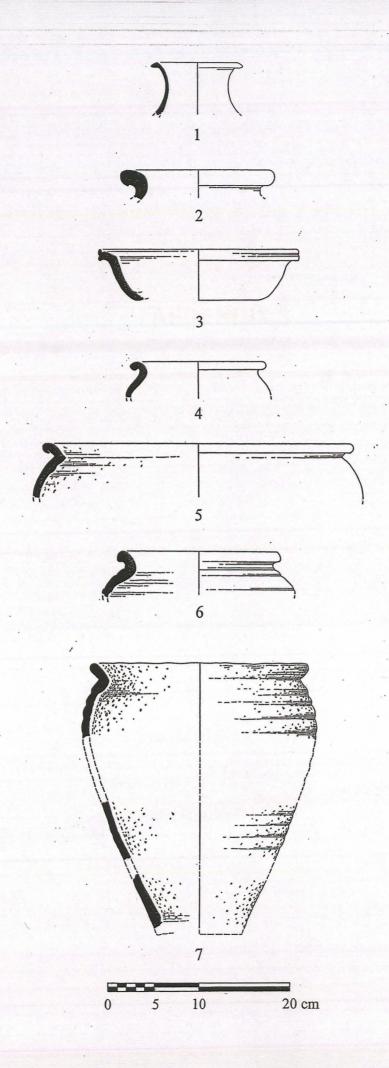
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The Roman pottery archive for Norton Disney, Tongs Farm (NDTF05), SK8880 5970 for LAS

*					351					
	Context Fabric	Form	Dec	Novess	Dwg no	Alter	Comments	n Shs	W	t
	4016 GREY	JCUR	. :		D1	FESTAIN	RIM SHLDR STUBBY NARROW RIM;TAVL?		. 1	44
	4016 GREY	JCUR			D2	FESTAIN	RIM SHLDR; PALE GRY; NARROW RIM; TVAL		1	84
	4016 GYBN	BFL			D3	FESTAIN	RIM GIRTH; OCC LGER R Q; ABR; TVAL		1	70
	4003 GREY	JBL			D4		RIM INT? MRO?		. 1	42
	4003 GREY	B334?		9	1 D5	ABR	RIM NECK BS J; WWORN; TVAL?		2	32
	4003 GREY	B333V			1 D6	WWORN			4	194
	4003 GROG		RIB	1?	D7	BURNT	RIMS BSS; CORRUGATED; TVAL		9	514
	4003 DR20	A				STAIN	BS GRITTY EFAB; L1-E2C; SAME IN	4016	1	156
	4016 DR20	A			The state of	STAIN	BS GRITTY EFAB; L1-E2C; SAME IN	4003	1	132
	4003 GREY	CLSD					CBS;TVAL	4000	1	40
	4003 GREY	CLSD			1	71011,0000	BS:TVAL		1	13
	4005 GREY	CLSD				ABR:WW	BS; SOME LGER R Q; FLIN?; TVAL		1	38
	4016 GREY	CLSD	В			ABR	BS; BODY GROOVE; MROM?		1	17
	4003 GREY	J			59 c 3 d	71511	FTM NEAT; TVAL?		1	52
	4003 GREY	JBL				ENCRUST	BS;FE?ENCRUST; TVAL		1	26
	4003 GROG		RIB	1?			RIM FRAG BSS; AS D7; FESTAIN;TVAL		3	46
	4003 GYBN	CLSD			1	BURNT?	BSS; OXEXT GREY INT; TVAL		2	37
	4016 GYBN				• •	VABR	FRAG LEACH; POSS FCLAY		1	11
	4016 OX	CLSD				******	BS; GRY CORE, SILTY Q; DK RDBN		1	20
	4016 OX					VABR	BS GREY CORE POSS CBM		1	34
	4003 ZDATE					VILLI	2C			04
	4005 ZDATE			•			2-3C+			
	4016 ZDATE						2C			
7.0	4003 ZZZ						MIX? SOME MLRO GREY?; RPOB EM2C			1
	4005 ZZZ			60			GREY ONLY			
	4016 ZZZ						FLINT FLAKE; MIX? LATER ABR GRY; PROBEN	12C		
	TO TO PERSONAL PROPERTY.					* */-	I bell t I ber sixberjittivit berti belt (1601 Citt) i 1000 belt	12.0		



Phase 4 Watching Brief, Tonge Farm, Norton Disney, Lincolnshire NDTF 05 Lithic Materials: Catalogue

Report by Jim Rylatt - October 2005

1.0 Catalogue

One piece of worked flint was recovered:

Context No.		Description
4016	Retouched	Tertiary blade from type C blade core – dorsal surface indicates a series of blades
	blade	(4+) removed from 1 (primary platform). Flat platform with diffuse/very small
		bulb and feathered termination. Significant platform edge preparation, probably
		including some abrasion. Distal end has been retouched by serial removal of small
		abrupt spalls; this retouch has 'backed'/blunted the distal end so that the distal end
		and proximal ends can be held safely between thumb and forefinger to allow use.
		There is some post-depositional damage - very small chips have been detached
		along the majority of both lateral edges. However, small areas of both original
		margins survive; they are worn and slightly rounded with a diffuse polish. Both
		lateral edges are acute, which together with the other attributes of the piece suggest
		that it was probably used as a double-edged blade-knife. The piece is of later
		Mesolithic or early Neolithic date; it is difficult to be more specific, as it is not
		possible to determine the mean size of raw materials available to the person who
		manufactured it, but a date toward the beginning of this range seems more likely.
		Dark grevish-brown translucent flint Weight 4.9g. Dimensions 45x22mm.

NB: Measurements are given only for complete flakes. The first figure relates to the maximum length, measured perpendicular to the striking platform; the second to maximum breadth, measured at a right angle to the length.

2.0 Comments

This utilised blade provides an indication of a later Mesolithic or an early Neolithic presence on the site. The absence of other lithic material suggests that this activity was brief and ephemeral. The slight damage to the flake margins show that the piece has been rolled or subjected to some other post-depositional process, which increases the likelihood that it was not recovered from a primary context.

THE FIGURES

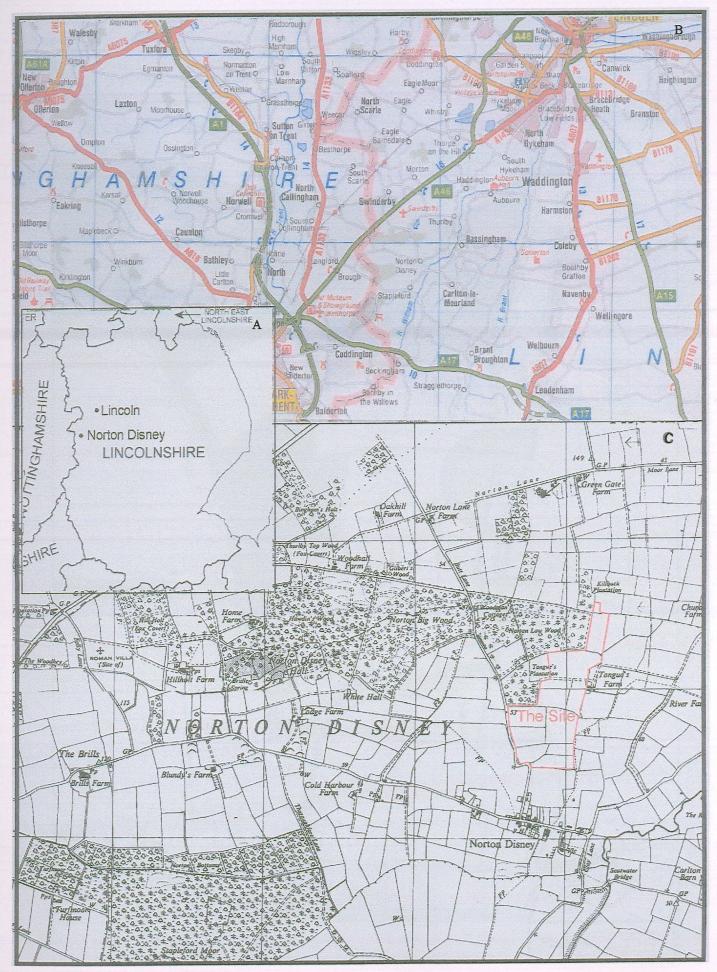


Fig.1 Location of Norton Disney (inset c based on the 1953 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map Sheets SK 85 and SK 86. Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 100002165).

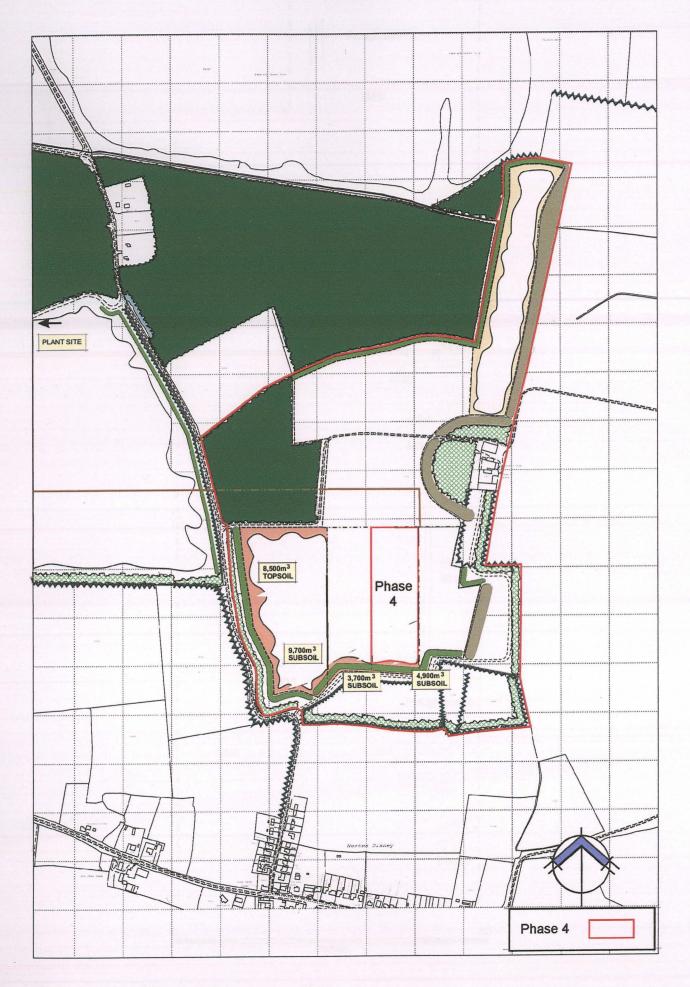


Fig. 2 Location of Phase 4 of the quarry workings.

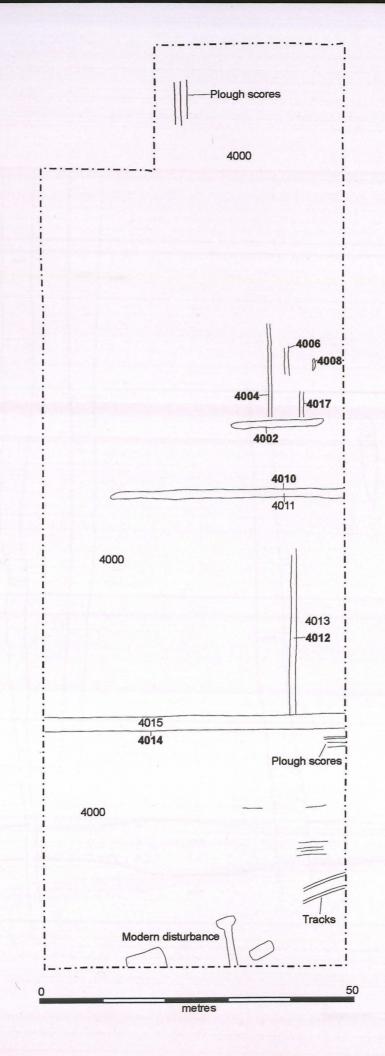


Fig. 3 Plan of Phase 4

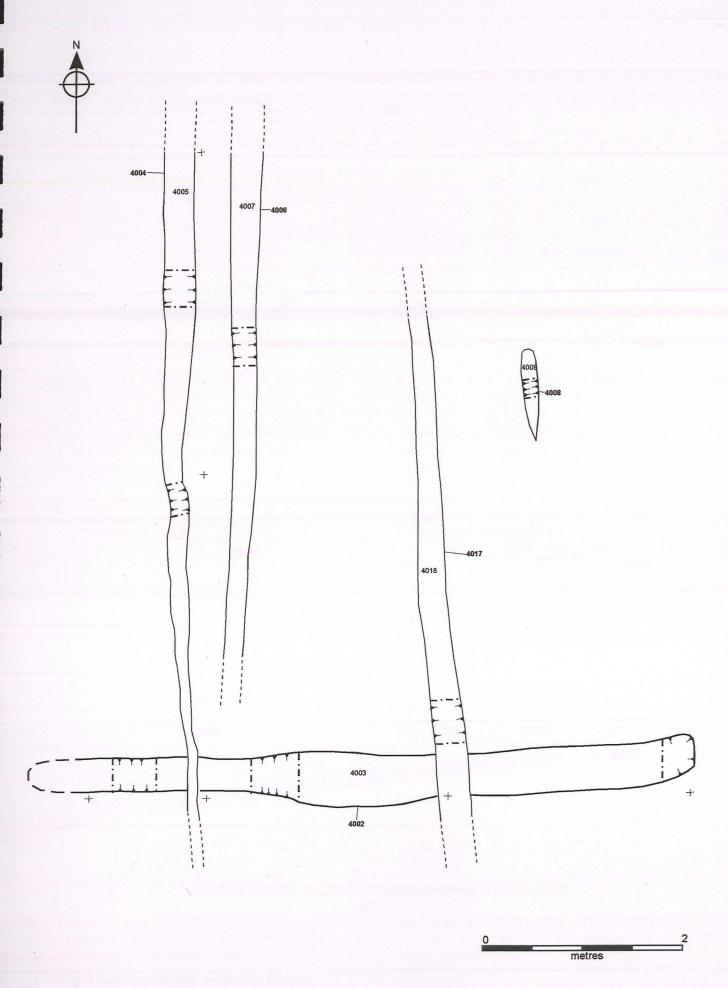


Fig. 4 Plan of excavated features and short section of Romano-British ditch

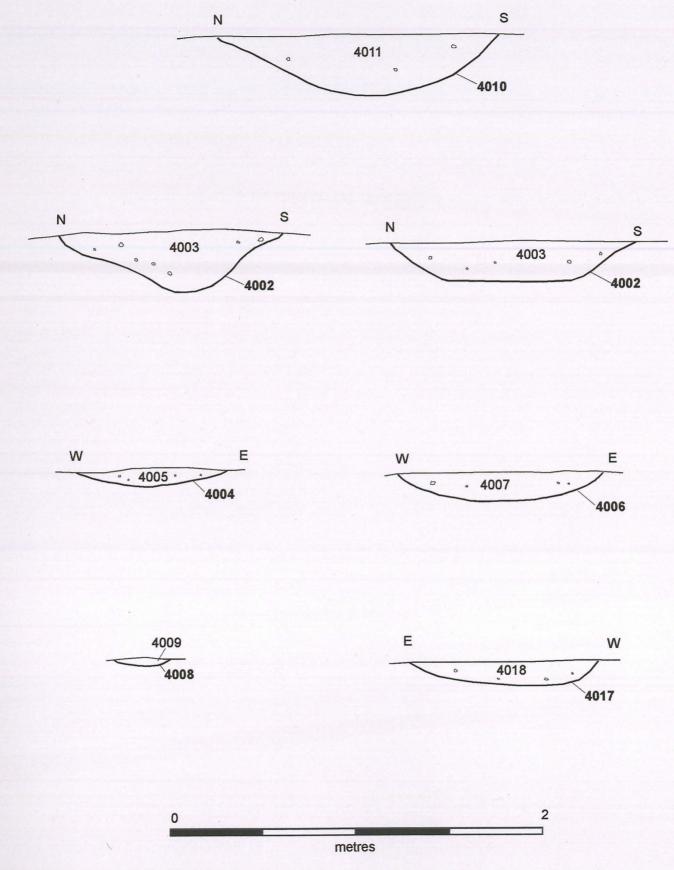


Fig. 5 Sections through excavated features

THE PLATES



Pl. 1 View of site looking northwest.



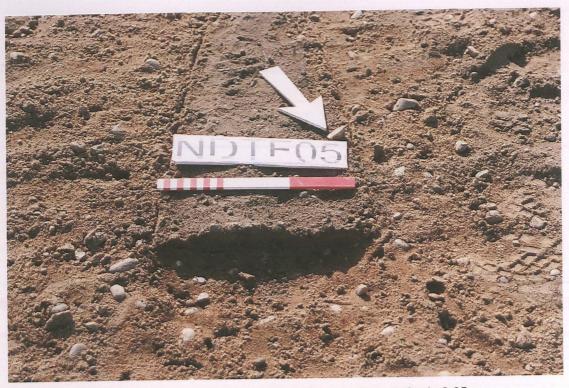
Pl. 2 View of features found. looking south. Scale 1m.



Pl. 3 View of roman ditch 4002 looking east. Scale 1m.



Pl. 4 Section through 4002 looking southeast. Scale 1m.



Pl. 5 Section through furrow 4008, looking southwest. Scale 0.25m.



Pl. 6 Section through 4010 looking northwest. Scale 1m.