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Archaeological Field Unit

**A Roman Cemetery and Settlement Remains at
6 Stratford Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire:
An Archaeological Evaluation**

Steve Hickling

May 2005

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. 786

Commissioned by *Mr A. J. Digby-Cameron*

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SUMMARY

The Cambridgeshire County Council's Archaeological Field Unit conducted an archaeological evaluation between the 8th and 11th of March 2005 at 6 Stratford Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire (TL 1818/4793). The work was carried out in advance of the construction of a house.

This evaluation uncovered evidence for both ribbon development adjacent to the Roman road south of Roman Sandy, and a late Roman inhumation cemetery, behind this to the west. The settlement appears to be of 2nd to 4th century date, while the cemetery appears to be of mid to late 4th century in date. The burials were all inhumations, east to west aligned with the heads at the west end and with no grave goods. This may appear typically Christian, but by the late 4th century most burials were of this nature.

The majority of the Roman archaeology was sealed by ploughsoil and a sandy subsoil; some features were also cut through an earlier subsoil. This layer in turn sealed a small number of features at the eastern end of Trench 1. Only one feature was demonstrated to cut through the upper subsoil layer. The total depth of overburden sealing the archaeological deposits varied between 0.4m and 0.9m.

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Drawing Conventions

Sections	Plans
Limit of Excavation	Limit of Excavation
Cut	Deposit - Conjectured
Cut - Conjectured	Natural Features
Soil Horizon	Intrusion/Truncation
Soil Horizon - Conjectured	Sondages/Machine Strip
Intrusion/Truncation	Illustrated Section S.14
Top of Natural	Archaeological feature
Top Surface	Excavated slots
Break in Section	Modern
Cut Number	Natural Features
Deposit Number 117	Human bones
Ordnance Datum $\overline{18.45\text{m ODN}}$	Cut Number 118
Human bone	
Brick	

**A Roman Cemetery and Settlement Remains at
6 Stratford Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire:
An Archaeological Evaluation
TL 1818/4793**

1 INTRODUCTION

Between the 8th and 11th of March 2005 the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (AFU) conducted an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching at 6 Stratford Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire. The work was carried out at the request of Mr. A. J. Digby-Cameron in order to fulfil a brief issued by Bedfordshire County Council in advance of planning permission being granted for the site.

The site is located just to the south of the town of Sandy, close to the border of Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

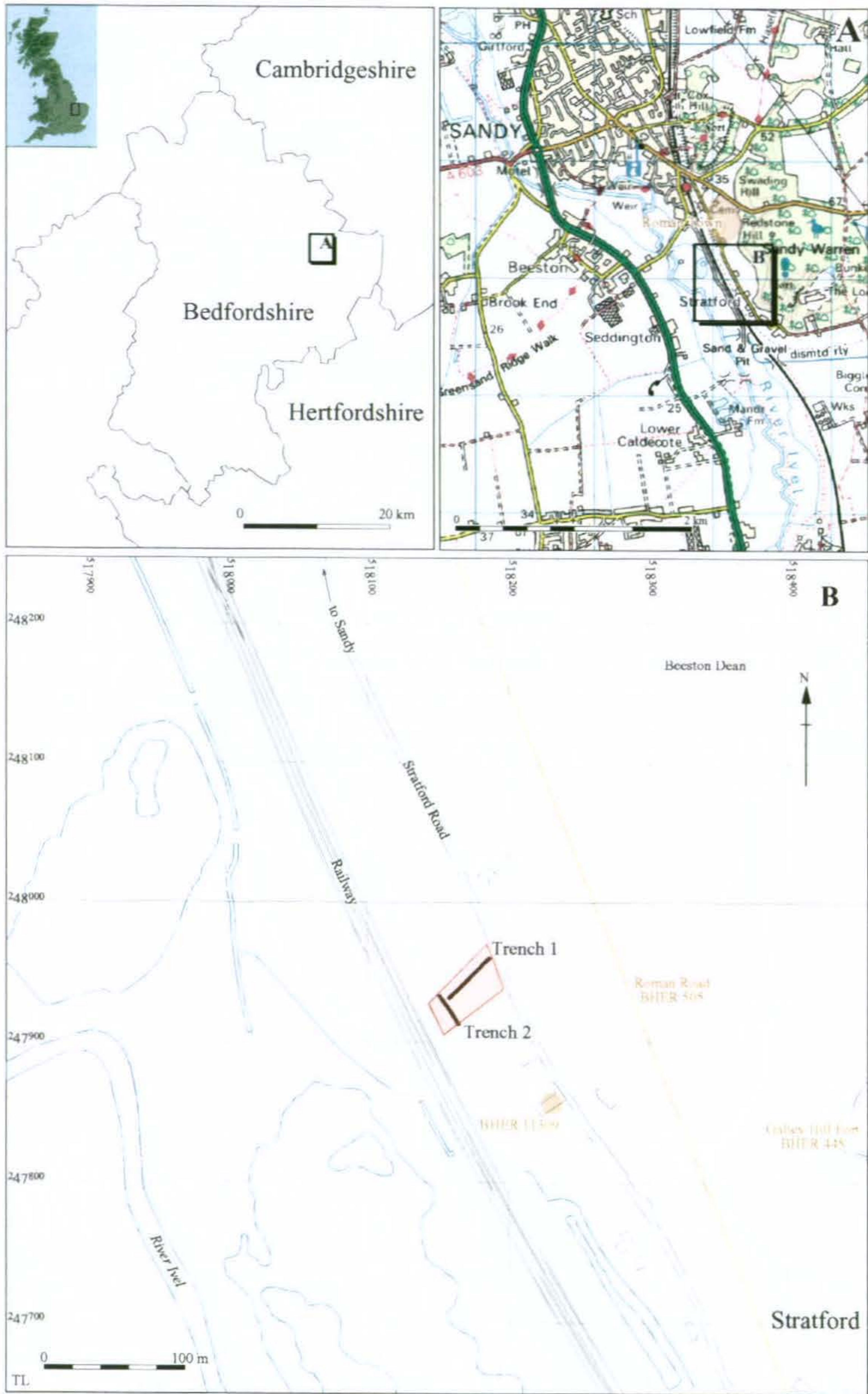
According to the British Geological Survey (BGS), the site straddles the region where Alluvium masks the boundary between Pleistocene First and Second Terrace River Deposits and Cretaceous Woburn Sands (BGS 2001). During the fieldwork, the natural geology encountered was silty sand.

The site lies just above the eastern edge of the floodplain of the River Ivel, at a height of 30m OD. The land rises steeply to the east up the scarp slope of the Woburn Sands ridge.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The area is rich in Iron Age material. 1.5km north of the site lies Caesar's Camp, a large (nearly 3ha), early Iron Age hill fort. 400m to the west of the site lies Galley Hill, an Iron Age promontory fort (BHER 445). Neither of these forts has been excavated.

Sandy Lodge, another fort to the southwest of Galley Hill has been investigated, yielding an early Iron Age date. The late Iron Age settlement pattern is one of small farms and enclosures along the Ivel valley. Sometimes these were enclosed within a ditch and bank and survived well into the Roman period, when occupation seems to have expanded into the more marginal parts



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Figure 1 Location of trenches (black) and development area (red)

of the valley bottom, suggesting considerable population pressure. There is evidence that the area occupied by the Roman town of Sandy was already a considerable settlement in the late Iron Age, with pottery, structures and coins coming to light (Dawson 1995).

The Roman small town of Sandy lies 0.75km north of the development site, where the main north to south Roman road meets another Roman road coming from the west and where this road crosses the river Ivel. The town was probably founded after the north to south road was built in the mid 1st century and saw accelerated growth in the late 1st and early 2nd century. Finds later than the late 4th century have not been recovered, suggesting the demise of the town at that time. In character, the settlement appears to be a low status agricultural community, providing services for passing travellers (Dawson 1995). A small excavation here, in the municipal cemetery in 1989 revealed settlement remains and burials (BHER 11313).

Stratford Road is probably the line of the main Roman road going south out of Roman Sandy, running from Baldock in the south to Godmanchester in the north (BHER 505).

Excavations in 1954, 200-300m north of the site, revealed that the Roman road follows earlier Iron Age field boundaries (Dawson 1995 and BHER 11311).

An archaeological investigation on land immediately to the south of the development site produced a total of 13 inhumations of early Roman date (Walsh 1999 and BHER 11309). Evidence of Roman burials have been observed here since 1900 (BHER 11309). Roads leading out of Roman towns are known to act as foci for roadside cemeteries.

A more comprehensive illustration of the surrounding BHER information can be found in Walsh 1999, figure 1.

4 METHODOLOGY

Two trial trenches were opened, 1.6m wide and 25m and 42m long. The stripping was done using the backhoe of a JCB wheeled excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under archaeological supervision. The topsoil and subsoil was stripped off down to the level of the natural geology or the archaeological horizons.

The exposed surfaces were cleaned in order to clarify any features or deposits. All exposed features and deposits were excavated and recorded according to AFU standards and practices. Burials were excavated until articulated bone was exposed, but no human bone was lifted. The skeletons were then covered with plastic and spoil before the trenches were backfilled.

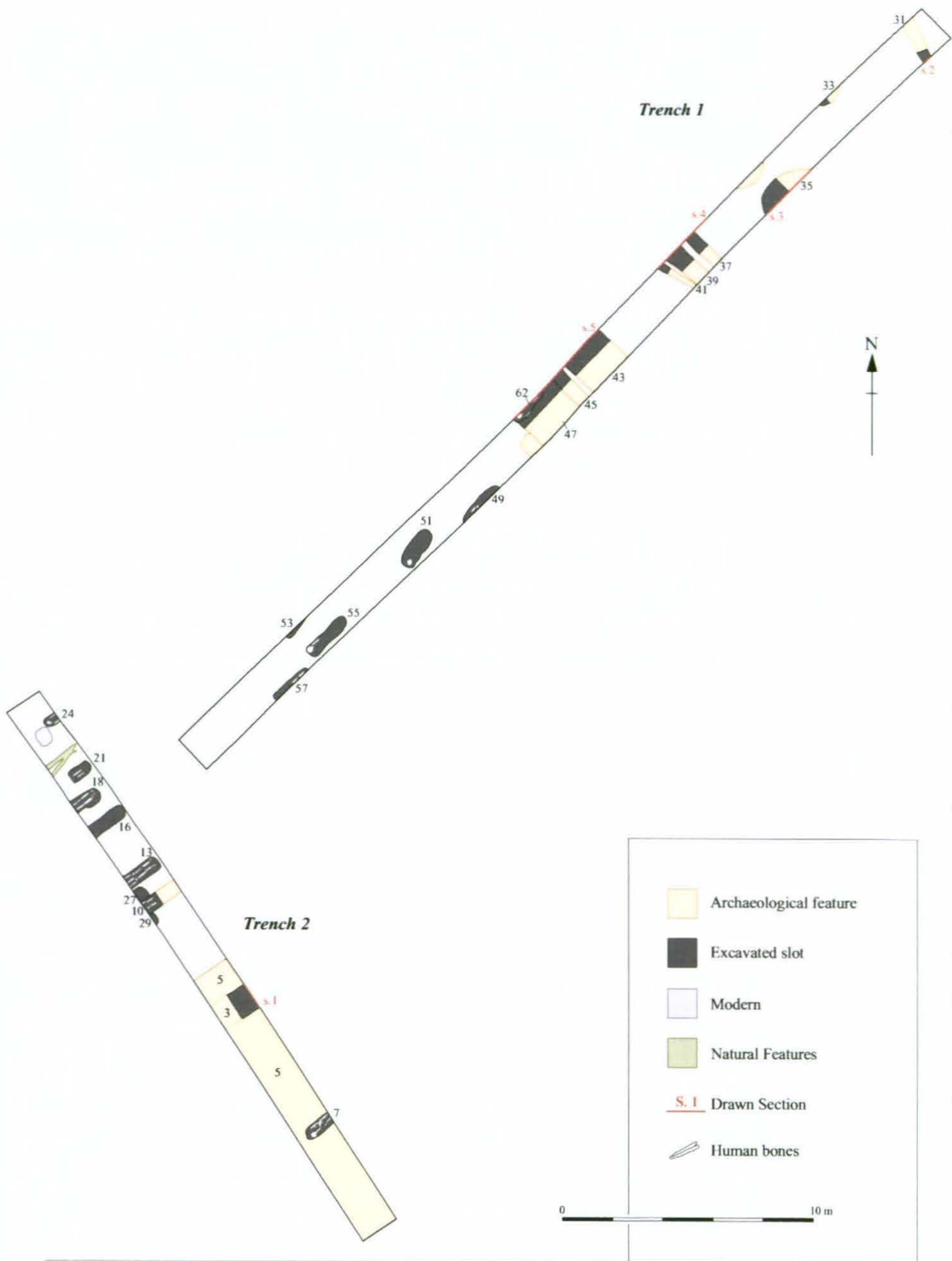


Figure 2 Excavation trenches. Scale 1:200.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Trench 1

This trench was 42m long and 1.6m wide, orientated NW-SE. Six burials, seven ditches and two pits were uncovered. All the archaeological features were sealed by both 0.3m of topsoil (1) and up to 0.2m of reddish brown sandy subsoil (2). Some of the archaeological features were cut through a lower layer of subsoil, 64 (see appendix 2).

Starting at the eastern edge of the trench, ditch 31 was sealed by topsoil layer 1 and orientated NNW-SSE, parallel to Stratford Road. It was 0.6m wide and 0.6m deep, containing fill 32, a dark greyish brown sand with occasional gravel and charcoal. It was dated by pottery to the late post-medieval period.

Pit 33 was only partially exposed within the trench, but appeared to be a tree bole or other root disturbance. Its fill, 34, was similar to subsoil layer 2 and contained no finds.

Pit 35 was again only partially exposed within the trench, but appeared subcircular and cut through the lower subsoil layer 64. It was 2.5m wide and 0.8m deep, containing fill 36, a dark brown sand with occasional charcoal and very occasional gravel, dated by pottery to the Roman period.

Layer 59 was a dark brown sand with very occasional gravel and charcoal, and was up to 0.2m deep. It extended along the trench from just to the east of pit 35 to become the upper fill of ditch 43, filling a slight hollow, possibly a holloway. It was dated by pottery to the Roman period.

Ditch 37 was 0.84m wide and 0.12m deep, sealed by layer 59. It was aligned NW-SE. Its fill, 38, was a mid to dark brown sand with very occasional gravel and charcoal, dated by pottery to the Roman period.

Ditch 39 was again aligned NW-SE and sealed by layer 59. It was 0.9m wide and 0.4m deep, with the eastern edge much steeper than the western. Its fill, 40, was a mid-pale brown sand with very occasional charcoal and gravel, dated by pottery to the Roman period.

Cutting this ditch was a narrow, but deep ditch/slot, 41. This was flat bottomed and vertically sided, 0.56m deep and 0.36m wide, cutting through layer 59. Its fill, 42 was dark brown sand with occasional charcoal and very occasional gravel.

Ditch 43 was aligned NW-SE and was 2.36m wide and 0.92m deep. Its upper fill, 44, was identical to layer 59 and may represent that layers most westerly extent. The lower fill, 61, was a mid grey/brown sand with very occasional gravel. This feature was dated by pottery as Roman. This ditch cut an earlier ditch, 45.

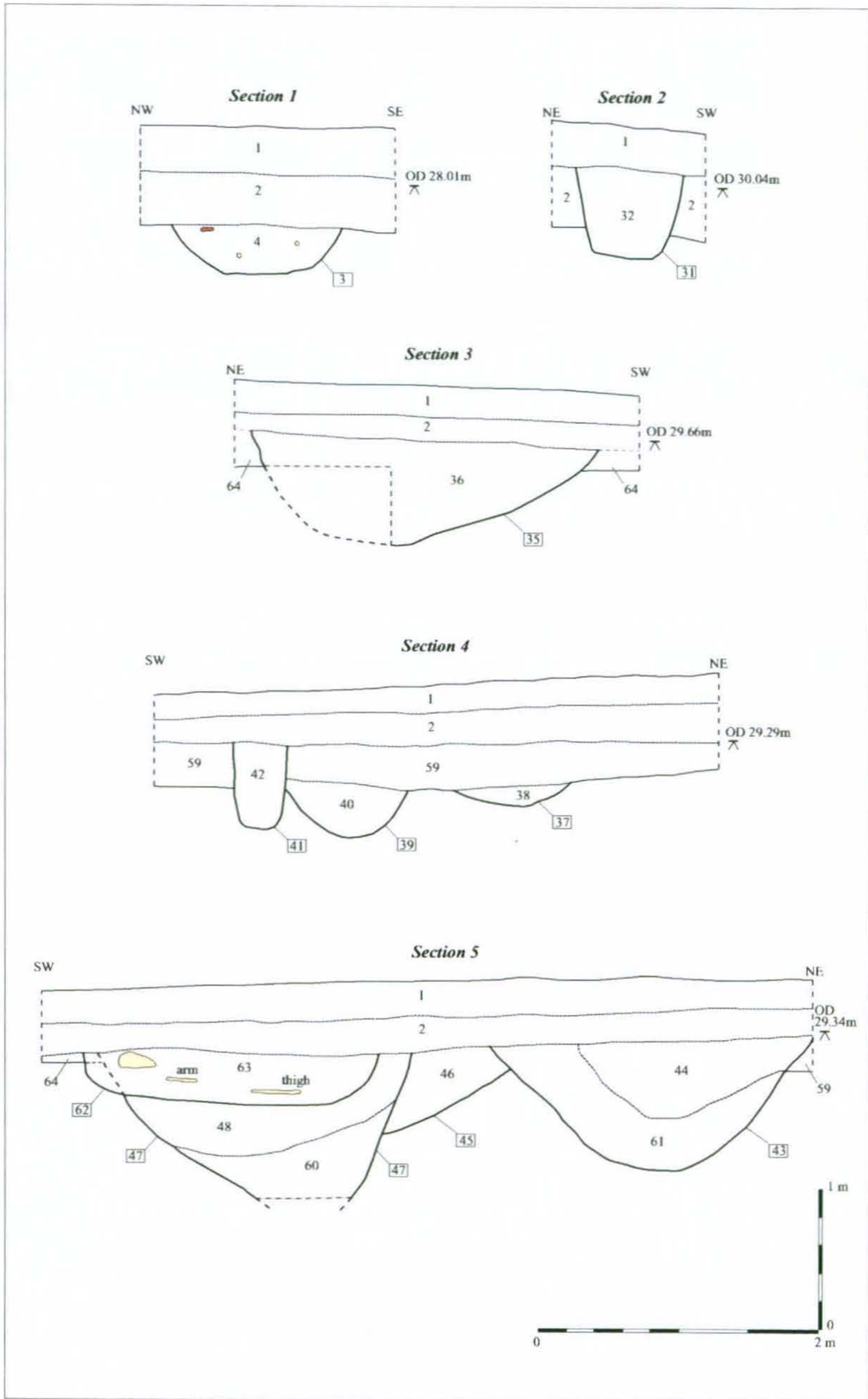


Figure 3 Section drawings. Scale 1:40.

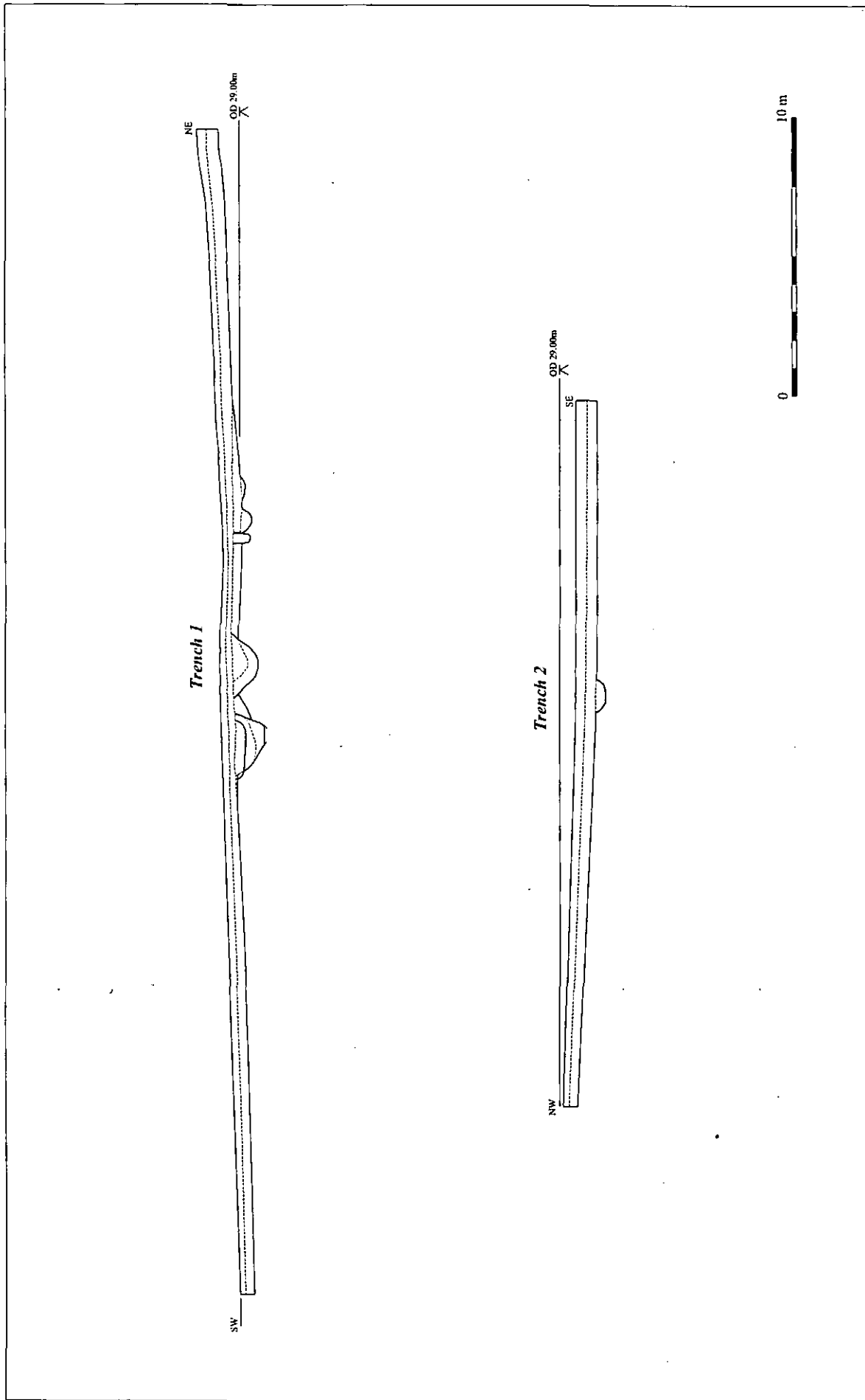


Figure 4 Trench plans with running sections. Scale 1:200.

Ditch 45 was also aligned NW-SE and also cut by ditch 47. Only a small part of ditch 45 was visible, but it appeared to have been quite a substantial feature, aligned NW-SE. Its fill, 46, was a mid brown sand containing lumps of natural yellow sand. It was dated by pottery as Roman.

Ditch 47 was the most westerly non-burial feature. It was orientated NW-SE, 2.2m wide and in excess of 1m deep. It was cut by burial 62. The upper fill, 48, was a mid-dark brown sand with very occasional charcoal and gravel, dated by pottery to the Roman period. The lower fill, 60 was a very dark brown silty sand with occasional charcoal and very occasional gravel.

Burial 49 was sealed by the subsoil layer 2 and partially obscured by the edge of excavation. Visible were the skull and left arm. It was aligned north-east to south-west with the skull at the south-western end and the skeleton supine and extended. There was no evidence of grave goods or a coffin. The backfill, 50, was again very similar to the natural sand.

Burial 51 was not fully excavated, but again it was north-east-south-west aligned with the skull visible at the southwestern end. There was no evidence of grave goods or a coffin. The backfill, 52, was very similar to the natural sand.

Burial 53 was not excavated and mostly obscured by the edge of the trench. The skull was visible at the southwest end of the NE-SW orientated cut. There was no evidence of grave goods or a coffin. The backfill, 54, was very similar to the natural sand.

Burial 55 was again not excavated, but the skull and left arm were visible. The grave was oriented NE-SW with the skull at the southwestern end and the position of the arm suggesting an extended and supine position. There was no evidence of grave goods or a coffin. The backfill, 56, was very similar to the natural sand.

Burial 57 was not excavated, but the left leg was visible. The grave was orientated NE-SW, with the leg at the northeast end. The position of the leg suggests that the body was extended and supine. There was no evidence of grave goods or a coffin. The backfill, 58, was very similar to the natural sand.

Burial 62 was dug into the top of ditch 47. It was aligned NE-SW, with the skull, right arm and right leg visible. The position of these bone suggest an extended and supine position. There was no evidence of grave goods or a coffin. The backfill, 63, was a mix of natural sand and ditch fill 48.

5.2 Trench 2

This trench was 25m long and 1.6m wide, orientated NE-SW. Nine burials, one ditch and one large hollow were discovered.

The large hollow (feature 5) occupied the southern 12m of the trench and was sealed by both the topsoil (1) and subsoil (2). It was a large feature, only the northern edge of it was encountered and it was not bottomed. Its fill (6) was a pale cream silty sand with pottery dated to the Roman period.

Cut into the top of fill 6 was a ditch (3) and a burial (7). Ditch 3 was aligned NE-SW and again sealed by both the topsoil (1) and the subsoil (2). It was 0.84m wide and 0.24m deep. Its fill, 4, was a mid brown silty sand with occasional charcoal and gravel, dated by pottery and tile to the Roman period.

Burial 7 was cut through fill 6 of feature 5. It was orientated NE-SW with the head at the south-west end. The skeleton was extended and supine, with its hands crossed over its groin. There was no evidence of grave goods or a coffin. The backfill of the grave (8) was very similar to fill 6.

Burial 10 was cut through possible burial 29 and was cut through by possible burial 27. It was orientated NE-SW, with the skull at the south-west end. The skeleton was extended and supine. There was no evidence of grave goods or a coffin. The backfill, 11, was very similar to the natural, but included lumps of blue/grey clay not found in the natural geology on this site.

Burial 13 was cut 30cm deep into the natural sand and its cut was visible in the lower part of subsoil layer 2. It was orientated NE-SW. The head was not visible, but it probably lay at the south-western end. The skeleton was extended and supine, with the arms at its side. There was no evidence of grave goods or a coffin. The backfill, 14, was very similar to the natural, but again with lumps of blue/grey clay incorporated. A coin was found in 14, a 'nummus' of Constans or Constantius II dated no later than 348 AD.

Possible burial 16 was not excavated, but was aligned NE-SW. The backfill, 17, was very similar to the natural sand, to the extent that the cut was only visible on overcast damp days.

Burial 18 was cut through the lower part of subsoil layer 2. It was orientated NE-SW, Although the head was not visible, it probably lay at the south-western end. The skeleton was extended and supine. Nails, probably from a coffin were recovered, as were probable hobnails around the left foot. The backfill, 19, was very similar to the natural sand.

Burial 21 was very shallow and heavily truncated. Only the thighs were still present. These were orientated NE-SW. The backfill, 22, was very similar to the natural sand. One nail was recovered, possibly a coffin nail.

Burial 24 was again cut from the lower part of the subsoil layer 64. It was orientated NE-SW, with the head at the south-western end. The skeleton was supine and extended, although only the head and upper arms were visible. There was no evidence of grave goods or a coffin. The backfill, 25, was very similar to the natural sand.

Possible burial 27 was very shallow and cut through both subsoil layer 2 and grave 10. The alignment of the feature was impossible to determine. No bones were visible, but the part of the possible grave visible was probably the foot end. The backfill, 28, was very similar to the natural sand.

Possible burial 29 was only visible at the edge of the trench and appeared to have been cut by burial 10. The alignment of the feature was impossible to determine. The backfill, 30, again contained lumps of blue/grey clay.



Plate 1: Burial 24

6 DISCUSSION

The site is divided into two distinct zones: an area of probable settlement in the north-east, presumably fronting onto the Roman road, with a cemetery area behind, to the south-west.

The easternmost 20m of trench 1 contained no graves, but had instead pits and ditches probably representing backyard activity of plots fronting onto the road. Presumably the rear of these plots were defined by ditches 37, 39 and 41.

The western portion of trench 1 and the whole of trench 2 are entirely within the cemetery. The eastern edge of the cemetery was probably defined by ditches 43, 45 and 47 at different times in its history, leaving a small gap between the plots and cemetery, which presumably contained a small trackway.

All the burials in the cemetery were inhumations. There was no evidence of any cremation. Furthermore, all the graves were northeast to southwest aligned, with the head at the west end, and contained no grave goods, besides coffin nails, hob nails and chance finds in the backfills. The orientation and lack of grave goods are typical of Roman burial practise in the period after 350 AD, when Christian influence was high. East to west orientation without grave goods is common burial rite throughout the Roman empire before Christianity became influential. The find of one mid 4th century coin in the backfill of grave 10 adds credence to this probable late date.

This cemetery may be quite extensive. Archaeological investigations 100m to the south-west discovered 13 inhumations, again NE-SW aligned and without grave goods (Walsh 1999). It is likely that this was part of the same cemetery that has been revealed by this investigation, and it is unknown how far north or south this may have extended. An eastern edge was discovered in the present fieldwork, but this edge was not present in the 1999 fieldwork.

7 CONCLUSIONS

This evaluation uncovered evidence for both ribbon development on the Roman road south of Roman Sandy and of a late Roman inhumation cemetery behind this to the west. The settlement appears to be of 4th century date, while the cemetery appears to be of mid to late 4th century in date. The burials were all inhumations, NE-SW aligned with the heads at the southwest end and with no grave goods. Apart from the alignment of the grave cuts, these appear typically Christian, but by the late 4th century most burials were of this nature.

All the Roman archaeology was sealed by plough soil (1) and a sandy subsoil (2), but features were visible cutting through the lower subsoil layer, 64, (0.5-0.9m below present ground level). The subsoil layers are probably colluvium, having shifted down from the hill to the east due to clearance for farming and ploughing. The upper colluvial layer (2) is probably post-Roman in date.

All the Roman archaeology is currently protected by a layer of topsoil and a layer of colluvium totalling 30-35cm of overburden. The burials start becoming visible at a depth of 40cm below present ground surface. Due to the soil conditions, features are difficult to spot cutting through the subsoil.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Mr A. J. Digby-Cameron who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. Steve Coleman of the Bedfordshire

Historic Environment Record (BHER) was of great help in researching the background. The project was managed by Stephen Macaulay. Scott Kenney and Rosalyn Burgess assisted with the fieldwork. Carlos Silva provided the illustrations, while Carole Fletcher, Jackie Wells (Albion Archaeology) and the author examined the finds. Steve Critchley conducted a metal detector survey.

The brief for archaeological works was written by Lesley-Ann Mather, Bedfordshire Heritage and Environment Section, who visited the site and monitored the evaluation.

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- Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (BHER)

Cartographic sources

BGS, 2001, 1:50000 series sheet 204, Solid and Drift edition

APPENDIX 1: Burial Register

Burial Number	Amount Visible	Condition	Orientation (Head first)	Height above Ordnance Datum	Date
7	Everything but lower legs and feet	Spongy	West-east	27.15	
10	Hips, thighs and knees	Spongy	West-east	27.61	337 AD +
13	Legs, hips, lower spine and lower arms	Spongy	West-east	27.70	
16		Not excavated			
18	Hips and legs	Spongy	West-east	27.98	
21	Thighs only	Spongy		28.24	Roman
24	Skull and upper arms	Spongy	West-east	28.38	Roman
27		Not excavated			
29		Not excavated			
49	Skull and left arm	Not exposed	West-east	28.85	
51	Skull	Not exposed	West-east	28.85	
53	Skull	Not exposed	West-east	28.65	
55	Skull and upper right arm	Not exposed	West-east	28.65	
57	Left leg	Not exposed	West-east	28.65	
62	Skull, right upper arm and thigh	Not exposed	West-east	29.10	

Note: Height above Ordnance Datum refers to the skeletal remains.

APPENDIX 2: Context Data

Context Number	Trench	Feature	Type	Description
1	1 & 2		Layer	Topsoil
2	1 & 2		Layer	Subsoil. Mid reddish brown sand with rare gravel
3	2		Ditch	1.2m wide, 0.35m deep, steep sided. NE to SW aligned
4	2	3	Fill	Mid brown silty sand with occasional gravel and charcoal
5	2		Hollow	Large, probably natural hollow
6	2	5	Fill	Pale greyish brown sand with occasional gravel
7	2		Grave	Rectangular and shallow
8	2	7	Backfill	Pale creamy brown sand with rare gravel. Similar to 6
9	2	7	Skeleton	Bone in poor state. Lower legs not visible
10	2		Grave	Rectangular with vertical sides. 0.68m deep. Sealed by 64
11	2	10	Backfill	Pale brownish yellow sand with rare gravel and grey clay lumps
12	2	10	Skeleton	Not totally excavated, only hips and upper legs exposed
13	2		Grave	Rectangular with vertical sides. 0.35m deep. Cut through 64
14	2	13	Backfill	Pale brownish yellow sand with rare gravel and grey clay lumps
15	2	13	Skeleton	Legs, lower body and arms visible
16	2		Grave	Unexcavated. Rectangular
17	2	16	Backfill	Pale brownish yellow sand with rare gravel
18	2		Grave	Subrectangular with vertical sides. 0.3m deep. Cut through 64
19	2	18	Backfill	Pale greyish yellow sand with rare gravel
20	2	18	Skeleton	Hips and legs visible
21	2		Grave	Shallow oval feature
22	2	21	Backfill	Pale brownish yellow sand with rare gravel
23	2	21	Skeleton	Upper legs only
24	2		Grave	Subrectangular with vertical sides. 0.15m deep. Cut through 64
25	2	24	Backfill	Pale yellowish brown sand with rare gravel
26	2	24	Skeleton	Skull and upper arms only
27	2		Grave	Subrectangular with vertical sides. Cut through 64
28	2	27	Backfill	Pale brown sand with rare gravel
29	2		Grave	Unexcavated. Subrectangular
30	2	29	Backfill	Pale brownish yellow sand with lumps of grey clay
31	1		Ditch	N to S orientated, 0.66m deep, 0.6m wide, steep sided
32	1	31	Fill	Dark greyish brown sand with occasional gravel and charcoal
33	1		Pit	Irregular. Possible tree hole
34	1	33	Fill	Mid reddish brown sand with rare gravel
35	1		Pit	Large oval pit, 0.7m deep, 2.64m wide
36	1	35	Fill	Dark brown sand with occasional charcoal and rare gravel
37	1		Ditch	NW to SE aligned, 0.16m deep and 0.82m wide with gentle sides
38	1	38	Fill	Mid to dark brown sand with rare gravel and charcoal
39	1		Ditch	NW to SE aligned. 0.42m deep, 0.9m wide with a steeper western edge
40	1	39	Fill	Mid to pale brown sand with rare charcoal and gravel
41	1		Ditch	NW to SE aligned. 0.62m deep, 0.38m wide with almost vertical sides
42	1	41	Fill	Dark brown sand with rare gravel and occasional charcoal
43	1		Ditch	NW to SE aligned. 0.97m deep, 2.08m wide, steep sides
44	1	43	Fill	Same as 39, dark brown sand with occasional gravel and charcoal
45	1		Ditch	Western edge of ditch, heavily truncated by 47
46	1	45	Fill	Mid brown sand with lumps of yellow natural sand
47	1		Ditch	NW to SE aligned, 2.12m wide, 1.04+m deep. Steeper western side
48	1	47	Fill	Mid to dark brown sand with rare gravel and charcoal
49	1		Grave	Unexcavated. Subrectangular
50	1	49	Backfill	Pale greyish brown sand
51	1		Grave	Unexcavated. Subrectangular
52	1	51	Backfill	Pale greyish brown sand
53	1		Grave	Unexcavated. Subrectangular
54	1	53	Backfill	Pale brownish yellow sand
55	1		Grave	Unexcavated. Subrectangular
56	1	55	Backfill	Pale brownish yellow sand
57	1		Grave	Unexcavated. Subrectangular
58	1	57	Backfill	Mid-pale brown sand
59	1		Layer	Dark brown sand with rare gravel and charcoal
60	1	47	Fill	Dark brown silty sand with occasional charcoal and rare gravel
61	1	43	Fill	Mid grey-brown sand with rare gravel
62	1		Grave	Subrectangular, steep sides
63	1	62	Backfill	Mixed 48 and natural sand
64	1 & 2		Layer	Lower portion of subsoil

APPENDIX 3: Finds Data

Context	Feature	Description	Date
04	03 (ditch)	Tile	Roman
06	05	Pottery	Roman
		Tile	
11	10 (grave)	a coin of Constans - or Constantius II	c. 337 - 348 AD
		Pottery	Roman
19	18 (grave)	Hobnails	Roman
22	21 (grave)	Pottery	Roman
25	24 (grave)	Pottery	Roman
32	31 (ditch)	Pottery	Modern
36	35 (pit)	Pottery	Roman
38	37 (ditch)	Pottery	Roman
40	39 (ditch)	Pottery	Roman
		Tile	
44	43 (ditch)	Pottery	Roman
		Tile	
		Lead amphora seal	
46	45 (ditch)	Pottery	Roman
48	47 (ditch)	Pottery	Roman
59	Layer	Pottery	Roman
99999	U/S	Pottery	Post-Medieval
		Daub	?

Pottery by Jackie Wells

A small ceramic assemblage, comprising pottery and a roof tile fragment, was recorded (Table 1).

Context	Spotdate*	Pottery	Other Finds
06	Roman	3:75	-
11	Roman	1:5	-
22	Roman	1:14	-
25	Roman	1:8	-
32	Modern	1:4	-
36	Roman	8:306	-
38	Roman	2:20	-
40	Roman	1:5	-
44	Roman	8:246	-
46	Roman	1:6	-
48	Roman	3:65	-
59	Roman	2:40	-
99999	Post-medieval	2:44	Flat roof tile (23g)
	Total	34:838	

* spotdate based on date of latest artefact in context

Table 1: Ceramic finds by context (sherd count:weight in g).

Thirty-four pottery sherds, weighing 838g were recovered. These were examined by context and quantified using minimum sherd count and weight. Sherds are generally

abraded and of moderate size (average sherd weight 25g), with only four vessels represented by more than a single sherd. Eight fabric types were identified using common names and type codes in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series (Table 2).

Fabric Type	Common Name	Total Sherd No.	Context/Sherd No.
<i>Roman</i>			
Type R06B	Coarse greyware	4	(22):1, (36):1, (44):1, (46):1
Type R06C	Fine greyware	5	(06):3, (11):1, (36):1
Type R07C	Gritty blackware	1	(44):1
Type R11	Oxford oxidised	1	(59):1
Type R11D	Oxford colour coat	1	(44):1
Type R12B	Nene Valley colour coat	3	(40):1, (44):1, (48):1
Type R13	Shell	18	(25):1, (36):6, (38):2, (44):4, (48):2, (59):1, (99999):2
<i>Modern</i>			
Type P38	Creamware	1	(32):1

Table 2: Pottery fabric types and contexts

The majority of the assemblage is datable from the late 2nd to 4th centuries AD. Fabric types represented are mainly locally manufactured sand and shell tempered coarsewares, the latter constituting over half the assemblage. Shelly forms include single examples of a rectangular and triangular rim jar, and a flanged bowl with wavy incised decoration along the rim. An undiagnostic rilled sherd was also present. All are datable to the 4th century. The exterior surfaces of several shelly sherds are sooted, and two sherds from a large jar have an internal white residue, possibly representing limescale. Most shell tempered sherds are leached to some degree, due to the acidic content of the soil. Diagnostic forms among the sand tempered greywares comprise a burnished triangular rim bowl, a fine-walled jar or beaker with abraded incised lattice decoration, a burnished bead rim bowl, a possible lid, and base sherds from two dog dishes.

Regional fineware imports comprise three colour coat sherds from the Nene Valley kilns, and two undiagnostic sherds from the Oxford industry, one with painted decoration. Nene valley forms are a beaker with barbotine decoration, datable to the later 2nd to early 3rd century, and two sherds from plain rim dog dishes, of 4th century date.

A small sherd of 18th-19th century Creamware was recovered from (32).

Metalwork by Steve Hickling

SF number	Context number	Material	Description
1	22	Fe	Nail
2	19	Fe	Nail
3	19	Fe	Nail
4	19	Fe	3 hobnail heads
5	19	Fe	Nail
6	11	Fe	Nail fragments
7	11	Cu alloy	Coin 337-348 AD
8	17	Fe	Object
9	44	Pb	Possible amphora seal
10	36	Fe	Nail
11	36	Fe	Latch-lifter/key?
12	44	Fe	Object

The state of preservation of the iron and copper objects is poor, but the lead item is good. The nails, coming from graves are probably coffin nails. The hobnails were found around the foot of one of the burials.

Brick And Tile by Carole Fletcher

A total of ten sherds of ceramic building material weighing 1.018kg was recovered from the evaluation including 0.070kg of daub recorded as unstratified material, in addition a single piece of stone roofing tile was also recovered (0.382kg)

The assemblage comprises mainly of fragments of Roman tile and brick, no complete examples were recovered and no diagnostic features such flanges, cut-aways or finger signatures were recognised. The thickness of the tile/brick fragments varied and it is likely that the thinner pieces are fragments of Tegula , the thicker fragments being pieces of Roman brick, however without any complete dimensions the type of brick is unclear.

The assemblage is very small and no further work is required at this stage.

Animal Bone by Steve Hickling

Context	Description
11	Small rib fragment, possibly sheep
36	2 lower jaws, one large dog, one cow/horse
59	Long bone fragments, possibly human

Small assemblage of little interest.



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