

**LAND ADJACENT TO 24 FRIARY FIELDS
DUNSTABLE**

An Archaeological Evaluation

May 2001

Site Code: HAT 526
NGR: TL 0183 2157
Borough: Dunstable

Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust

HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST
Report No. 874

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SUMMARY

In May 2001 Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust (HAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to 24 Friary Fields, Dunstable, Bedfordshire. The investigation was undertaken in advance of proposed housing development. A number of archaeological features were recorded. These included at least one inhumation burial and a substantial ditch, both of Roman date. A further six features are also likely inhumation burials (based on shape and common alignment), though they were partially revealed within the trench and could not be fully characterised. A large area of mediaeval disturbance was recorded in Trenches 1 and 3, possibly relating to the quarrying of chalk. The Roman features probably date to the later Roman period. The inhumation/s form part of a late Roman cemetery that has been excavated previously adjacent to the site. No evidence of 'cross-shaped' mediaeval features recorded during excavations on the Friary site to the north east was recorded.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 During May 2001 Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust (HAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to 24 Friary Fields, Dunstable, Bedfordshire (NGR TL 0183 2157) (Figs.1-2). The work was commissioned by Moody Homes Limited in advance of redevelopment of the site (Planning Consent Ref. SB/TP/99/0780). The archaeological evaluation was undertaken as part of a planning condition required by South Bedfordshire District Council (based on advice from Bedfordshire County Council Heritage and Environment Section (BCC HES)). It is proposed to construct two houses on the site, with associated access, landscaping and services.

1.2 The archaeological evaluation was conducted in accordance with a brief prepared by BCC HES (dated 03/04/01) and a specification compiled by HAT (dated 04/01). In addition, it complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IFA, revised 1999), English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects* (1991) and *Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedfordshire* (1998).

1.3 The aims of the evaluation were to determine the location, extent, date and character of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development (BCC HES brief). In addition the condition, significance and quality of the remains were to be assessed to facilitate the development of a strategy for any further necessary archaeological investigation of the site. The BCC HES brief noted important research aims of the project:

- To further investigate any surviving late Roman cemetery activity which is known to be in the area of the site. In particular the cemetery's structure and the nature of any post-cemetery occupation are to be further examined.
- To identify the nature and, if possible, function of 'cross-shaped' features encountered during previous archaeological investigations nearby, and which were thought likely to extend into the current site. As yet their purpose is unclear but they are thought to be associated with the mediaeval Friary to the north east of Friary Field.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site lies in the south west quadrant of the historic core of Dunstable town centre (Fig. 1). It covers an area of c.500 square metres, and lies at approximately 149m AOD at the foot of the Chilterns, on a solid geology of Middle Chalk. At present the site is occupied by gardens of the neighbouring properties that front onto Bull Pond Lane. It is bounded to the south, east and west by gardens and residential dwellings and to the north by the roadway of Friary Fields.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Prehistoric

Dunstable lies on the course of the Icknield Way (HER 353), a prehistoric routeway that linked East Anglia with Wessex. The town is at the point where Roman Watling Street later crossed the line of the Icknield Way. However, no major prehistoric occupation sites are recorded in the immediate area of the proposed development.

3.2 Roman (Fig. 3)

Settlement at Dunstable becomes established in the Roman period at the junction of the Icknield Way and Watling Street, eventually developing into the small town of *Durocbrivis*. Previous archaeological investigations in the town have confirmed the presence of this settlement, as well as indicating much of its extent. Of particular relevance here are a series of excavations that took place between 1967 and 1981 which revealed the presence of a late Roman cemetery immediately adjacent to the site of proposed development (HER 11284, Matthews, 1981). However, its full extent was not precisely identified, and this would clearly be an important research question (§ 3.5). There is also some evidence that occupation of the area continued into the 5th century after the cemetery fell into disuse.

3.3 Saxon

There is little evidence of the town being occupied during the Saxon period.

3.4 Medieval and post-Medieval (Fig. 3)

In 1119 a medieval new town was founded by Henry I on his Houghton Regis estate. Again, this centred on the junction of the two prevailing main roads and the period reveals evidence of occupation. Immediately to the north east of Friary Field a Dominican Friary was founded in 1259, with the first church completed shortly after (c.1264). It surrendered to the Dissolution in 1539. The Friary has been subject to a number of phases of excavation from the 1920s to the 1990s (Clark & Maull, 1989, Green & Horne, 1991). These investigations revealed a number of 'cross-shaped' features of unknown function, though clearly medieval and thought to be associated with the Friary. These are known to continue to the south west of the Friary into the area of the earlier Roman cemetery (Green & Horne, 1991).

3.5 Summary of Research Design

It was clearly important to identify the presence of any prehistoric occupation in the area. The prime importance of the project was to characterise any further evidence of the late Roman cemetery recorded nearby. Going and Plouviez (in Brown & Glazebrook, 2000, 19-22) outline current research topics for the Romano-British period in the area, with fuller analysis of both small (such as Dunstable) and large towns being the primary regional research aim. The nature of settlement at Dunstable requires further characterisation and dating (a particular point of interest is the identification of any evidence for the burning of late Antonine towns, as finds such as fire-damaged Samian pottery have been recovered from a number of sites). Along with town development, other research topics include the analysis of pottery assemblages as a possible indicator of changing settlement patterns, and the analysis of crop production/storage in later Roman towns. Indeed, closer examination of food production is seen as a high priority for the period, particularly with respect to the question of a possible change in the ratio of grain import/export in the later Roman period. Wider ranging research topics for the period concern analysis of the landscape; for example the extent and character of relict landscapes and field systems.

The character of the occupation of Dunstable in the immediate post-Roman period has yet to be ascertained. As such, identification of any evidence of sub-Roman and Saxon activity in the area of proposed development would be important in enabling a broader understanding of settlement continuity/abandonment in regional towns such as Dunstable. In particular, evidence for 5th century and later occupation remains to be identified in the area. More broadly, Wade (in Brown & Glazebrook, 2000 pp. 23-26) identifies research issues for rural areas in the Saxon and mediaeval period, again prioritising any evidence for the 5th century. These include analysis of population, settlement patterns, agricultural production, changes in land use, craft production and the impact of both Christianity and colonists (Saxons, Danes and Normans). Urban research themes are outlined by Ayers (in Brown & Glazebrook, 2000 pp. 27-32) and include further study of demography, social organisation, development of a surplus economy and (of particular importance in this case with the proximity of the Friary) the impact of religion on urban culture.

4 METHOD OF WORK

4.1 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the brief and specification, and conformed to the guidelines of BCC HES and the IFA.

4.2 The Brief required a maximum of 100 square metres of trial trenches to be excavated on the site.

4.3 Four trenches (numbered 1-4) were located across the area of proposed development, in positions agreed by BCC HES (Fig. 3). The trenches measured 12.50-14.50m x 1.60m in size.

4.4 Topsoil and overburden was mechanically excavated under close archaeological supervision with a 180 degree wheeled excavator (JCB) fitted with a toothless ditching bucket until the exposure of either natural geology or surviving archaeological horizons. Thereafter all further investigation was undertaken by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned as appropriate and examined for archaeological features, and excavated spoil was checked for residual finds. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate.

5 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS (Figs. 3 & 4)

Individual trench descriptions are presented below.

5.1 Trench 1 (12.40m x 1.60m)

Sample Section

(0.00 = 149.00m AOD):

0.00m - 0.20m	L100. Topsoil. A friable mid brownish grey clayey silt below a thin turf line.
0.20m - 0.60m	L101. Overburden. A poorly-sorted, light brownish grey, clayey silt with occasional small sub-rounded chalk pebbles and small-medium sub-angular fragments of post-medieval building materials, small post-medieval pottery sherds. Some 57g of Roman pottery sherds was recovered from this layer across the site, in addition to 3015g of post-mediaeval tile.
0.60m+	Re-deposited chalk

Description Trench 1 was largely characterised by dump and backfill deposits within features that extended beyond the limits of the trench. This included numerous patches of redeposited chalk. Full excavation of the features in which these deposits were contained was not possible in the majority of cases within the limited area of the trench. It would appear that a series of re-cut ditches or large pits lay within this area. The features are most likely chalk quarry pits. These would appear to be of High Mediaeval date, though quantities of abraded Roman pottery were also recovered

from the vicinity. The features almost certainly correspond with those recorded in Trench 3.

Three areas were excavated within the area of larger features (recorded as F115, F117 and F119), all with uncertain edges and irregular sides. These were all filled with a similar friable, dark greyish, brown silts with moderate small chalk pebbles. The area between these features was dominated by heavy redeposition of chalk and backfilling activity. Finds from the features comprise residual Roman and High Mediaeval sherds. Finds from F115 (L116) comprise very abraded Roman pottery of late 3rd to 4th century date (92g) and tile (40g). Finds from F117 (Fill L118) comprise High Mediaeval pottery sherds (99g), tile (44g), possible human bone (6g) and animal bone (18g). And finds from F119 (L120) also comprise High Mediaeval (12th-14th century) pottery sherds (160g).

5.2 Trench 2 (10.50m x 1.60m)

Sample Section (0.00 = 149.00m AOD):

0.00m - 0.20m	L100. Topsoil. Friable mid brownish grey clayey silt below a thin turf line.
0.20m - 0.55m	L101/L109. Overburden. A poorly-sorted, light brownish grey clayey silt with occasional small sub-rounded chalk pebbles, and occasional small-medium sub-angular fragments of post-medieval brick and tile (660g of the latter).
0.55m+	L104. Natural chalk.

Description Trench 2 contained two short, shallow features at its southern limit, possibly representing ditch terminals. In addition, a NE-SW aligned inhumation burial was partially revealed. All the features were sealed by L101.

F103 was 0.28m deep, 0.70m wide and at 0.90m+ long. It extended beyond the southern limit of the trench. It exhibited moderately steep sides (45^o) and a flattish base, and most likely represents a ditch terminal. It contained a single fill, L102, a loose light off-white/brown clayey silt containing small-medium sub-rounded chalk pebbles. It contained no finds.

F113 was 0.15m deep, at least 0.70m wide and 0.85m+ in length. It extended beyond the southern and western trench limits, and possibly also represents a ditch terminal. It exhibited a shallow, concave profile with a flattish base, and was filled with a single, homogeneous deposit of off-white/mid brown silt and small-medium sized chalk pebbles, roughly in equal proportion (L112). No finds were present.

An inhumation burial (F111) was encountered within the northern end of the trench, aligned NE-SW, 1.05m+ long, 1m wide and 0.55m+ deep. The burial was largely unexcavated at this stage, other than to confirm the presence of human remains. The grave exhibited steep sides and a flattish base, the skeleton being deeply buried. The lower legs of the supine inhumation (SK 114) were recorded only. The bone appeared to be in a moderate to good state of preservation. The grave fill (L110) consisted of redeposited chalk pebbles and nodules in a matrix of light buff/brown

silt. Finds from the deposit included two sherds of 3rd-4th century pottery (14g) and tile (86g).

5.3 Trench 3 (14.5m x 1.6m)

Sample section

(0.00 = 146.90m AOD):

0.00 – 0.50m	L100. Topsoil. As Trenches 1 & 2.
0.50 – 0.80m	L101. Overburden. As Trenches 1 & 2.
0.80m+	Chalk rubble and silt

Description The trench revealed an area of intercutting features, almost certainly a continuation of the large mediaeval features recorded within Trench 1.

The edge of a large feature (F123) was revealed within the southern part of the trench. It may have been a continuation of Roman ditch F105 recorded in Trench 4, being of similar profile and suggesting a slight turn of course. It was moderately steep-sided and flat-based (maximum depth 0.7m), and truncated an earlier grave cut (F126). F123 contained two distinct fills. The upper fill (L121) consisted of light brownish grey silt with occasional chalk pebbles. Finds from the deposit include late Roman pottery sherds (151g), an iron object (2g) and stone (208g). The basal fill (L122), consisted of chalk rubble and patchy off-white/brown silt. No finds were present.

F126 was possibly a grave cut, though little of it was visible. It was filled with a soft mid greyish brown silt (L124) with occasional chalk rubble. Finds from the deposit include pottery sherds (10g; mid 1st-to late 1st/early 2nd century). Parts of a human skull were also seen towards the base of the feature, but left *in situ*.

The remainder of the trench also comprised an area of deposits of chalk rubble and dark greyish brown uncompact silt (L137). They form the fills of a large area of re-cut ditch or intercutting quarry pits. No finds were made.

5.4 Trench 4 (12m x 1.6m)

Sample section (0.00 = 147.00m AOD):

0.00 – 0.70m	L101. Overburden. As Trenches 1-3.
0.70m+	L104. Natural chalk.

Description No topsoil survived in this part of the site. A number of features were sealed by L101. A large, V-profile enclosure ditch truncated a number of earlier features, including a number of small, NE-SW aligned features which were partially revealed within the trench. These latter features (given their shape and alignment) are likely inhumation burials.

F105 was a large, wide, V-profile, enclosure ditch aligned NW-SE. It was 2.18m wide and 0.8m deep, with moderately steep sides, steepening to a flat base. The ditch

contained two fills. The main upper fill consisted of an uncompact, mid greyish brown silt, containing frequent sub-angular chalk nodules, pebbles and flecks (L106). Finds from the deposit include pottery sherds (179g; mid 1st-mid 3rd century AD), tile (56g) and animal bone (672g). The basal fill of the ditch comprised an uncompact, light greyish brown silt with frequent chalk rubble (L127). No finds were contained within the latter fill.

A number NE-SW small, sub-rectangular linear features were partially revealed within the trench. Their alignment may suggest that these features represent graves. Two were excavated. F107 was truncated by Ditch F105. It was 0.19m+ wide and 1.5m+ long, excavated to a depth of 0.4m+. It was steep, near-vertical sided and flattish based (where seen). It was filled with an uncompact dark brown silt with occasional small chalk rubble (L108). No finds were made from the deposit.

A further linear feature of similar character was also excavated (F133). It was also partially revealed within the trench. F133 was 0.3m+ wide and 1.75m long. It was excavated to a depth of 0.66m+, with near-vertical sides. The base was not reached within the confines of the trench. It was filled with two distinct deposits. The upper fill (L135) comprised an uncompact, dark greyish brown silt with occasional chalk pebbles and small nodules. It contained Roman pottery sherds (13g) and tile (4g). The basal fill (L134) consisted of a light greyish brown chalky silt with frequent chalk pebbles. It contained no finds. Feature F128 lay parallel to the north, was similar in form and fill (L136) to the former and was also partially revealed within the trench. No finds were made.

A sub-circular pit (F130) truncated a large irregular pit (F132). Pit F130 was 1.2m x 0.9m+ and 0.75m deep, with steep, near-vertical sides and a concave base. It was filled with an uncompact light greyish brown silt (L129) with moderate inclusions of chalk rubble. Finds from the deposit include Roman pottery sherds (213g; 2nd to 3rd century AD) and tile (4g).

Large, shallow pit F132 was also recorded within the trench. The pit was truncated by Pit F130. The former was 2.9m long and 0.85m+ wide. It was up to 0.45m deep, with steep, shallow sides leading to a large, flattish concave base. The pit contained a single fill (L131), consisting of a mid greyish brown silt with moderate chalk rubble and occasional sub-rounded flint pebbles. Finds from the deposit comprise sherds of Roman pottery (10g; 2nd to 3rd century AD).

6 CONFIDENCE RATING

6.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological contexts on the site.

7 DEPOSIT MODEL

7.1 Between 0.50-0.80m of recent overburden sealed the archaeological features and natural drift geology. Trenches 1 and 3 revealed evidence of large-scale ground disturbance, possibly associated with mediaeval chalk quarrying activity. Trenches 2,

3 and possibly 4 revealed evidence of a Romano-British inhumation cemetery, with up to seven burials, aligned NE/SW. It is likely that these are late Roman in date.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 The evaluation revealed inhumation burials, pits and an enclosure ditch of Romano-British date, as well as a large area of large mediaeval activity, possibly representing quarrying (dating to the 13th to 14th century).

8.2 Roman Ditch F105 (Trench 4) is probably the same feature as F123 recorded within Trench 3, suggesting a large, curving enclosure ditch.

8.3 Mediaeval features on the site lie close to the south west of the Friary buildings recorded in Friary Field by Clark and Maull (1989), though as noted above, no evidence of the dense area of 'cross-shaped' mediaeval features recorded nearby were identified within the confines of the evaluation trenches (see Fig. 3), suggesting that the projection of them into this area as contained in Hudspith (1991) and Green & Horne (1991) is incorrect.

8.4 The Roman inhumations are a continuation of the late Roman cemetery recorded immediately adjacent (HER 11284, Matthews 1981), the extent of which had not so far been fully identified (Fig. 3). The human bone appears to be well-preserved in the chalky soils. Occupation of the immediate area was known to continue into the 5th century, and indeed ceramics of a style that continue into the 5th century were recovered from large ditch F123 during the current investigation. Finds of common styles of storage jar rims elsewhere on the site suggest occupation in the vicinity.

8.5 The Romano-British cemetery was excavated between 1968 and 1980, revealing over 100 individuals of the 3rd to as late as the 5th centuries. The cemetery was enclosed by a formal ditch, also containing burials. Ditch F123 in Trench 4 (and potentially also within Trench 3) of the current investigation likely corresponds with the south-western cemetery boundary ditch partially excavated by the Manshead Archaeological Society along the line of the present roadway of Friary Field (see Fig. 3). The burials recorded during the current investigation also accord with the orientation of those previously investigated. No evidence of the wells or kilns recorded during the previous cemetery excavations was identified during the current evaluation.

8.6 The so-called mediaeval 'buttress trench' identified during previous investigations (and revealed to the immediate south of the site at Pond Cottage by Hudspith (1991)) was not recorded during the current investigation, though the large area of possible mediaeval quarrying lay in the vicinity of its line and may have truncated evidence of this feature.

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Roman Pottery
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Medieval Pottery
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Introduction

This report provides dating evidence for each context that contained pottery at land adjacent to 24 Friary Field, Dunstable, Bedfordshire. Dating is based (where possible) upon both the identification of form and fabric. The report also contains a brief summary of the results of analysis.

Methodology

Quantification is by sherd count and weight per fabric. A summary of the results is presented below. The assemblage from each context was given a brief macroscopic examination. No detailed fabric description of any of the material and no detailed comparison with other material of a similar nature has been attempted. The spot date for each context is based upon the most recent sherd. However, where appropriate a range is given and comments are directed toward the condition and majority of pottery. Fabric and form keys are provided below to facilitate reference. The fabric key incorporates codes that pertain to the national system and the Bedfordshire type series.

Fabric Key

Roman

R01C	(EGL SA)	Samian [Eastern-Gaulish]
R03A	(UNS WH)	Verulamium whiteware
R03E	(UNS WH)	Fine whiteware
R04E	(COL CC)	Colchester colour coat
R05A	(UNS OX)	Orange sandy ware
R05C	(UNS OX)	Orange micaceous ware
R06	(GRS)	Grey ware [general]
R06B	(GRS)	Coarse grey ware
R06E	(GRS)	Calcareous grey ware
R06H	(UNS WS)	White slipped grey ware
R07A	(DOR BB 1)	Black burnished ware [BB 1]
R07E	(UNS BW)	Coarse blackware
R09D	(BSW)	Grog and sandy ware
R11	(OXF OX)	Oxford oxidised ware [non CC]
R11E	(OXF WH)	Oxford mortaria
R11G	(OXF RS)	Oxford orange slipped
R12B	(LNV CC)	Lower Nene Valley colour coat
R13	(UNS SH/HAR SH/STOR)	Shell tempered ware
R22D	(HAD WS)	Hadham white slipped ware
R35	(SOB GT/STOR)	Roman grogged ware

Medieval

- C Medieval quartz based ware (12th - 14th C AD)
Abundant sub-angular to rounded clear, white and occasionally iron-stained quartz. Also included are occasional red iron ores.
- C01 Medieval sand based coarse ware (12th - 14th C AD)
- C02 Medieval red quartz based coarse ware (12th - 14th C AD)
Abundant angular to rounded red quartz and moderate inclusions of red iron ore.
- C85 Medieval sand based fabric (12th - 14th C AD)
Includes occasional to moderate calcareous inclusions.

Form Key

B - dish, C - bowl, D - mortaria, G - jar, J - flagon.

Ceramic Catalogue

CONTEXT	CERAMIC LISTING	DATE RANGE	COMMENTS
101	1x R13 [HAR SH] - G - (57g)	Roman	Part of a storage jar rim is present in HAR SH.
106 TT4	1x R05C [UNS OX] (3g) 3x R06 [GRS] (60g) 1x R09D [BSW] (13g) 1x R13 [HAR SH] (8g) 4x R35 [STOR] - G - (95g)	Mid 1st to mid 3rd C AD	All the sherds join in fabric STOR.
110	1x R07A [DOR BB 1] (5g) 1x R12B [LNV CC] (9g)	3rd - 4th C	The Nene Valley sherd is a later fabric.
116 TT1	1x R01C [EGL SA] (1g) 1x R03A [VER WH] (2g) 1x R07E [UNS BW] (1g) 1x R09D [BSW] (14g) 1x R11G [OXF RS] - J - late 3rd to 4th C AD - (3g) 1x R13 [UNS SH] (7g) 1x R35 [STOR] (64g)	Late 3rd to 4th C AD	All the pottery in this context is poorly preserved
118 TT1	9x C (63g) 1x C01 (2g) 1x C02 (6g) 1x C85 (3g) 1x R11G [OXF RS] - AD240 to AD410 - (1g) 1x R06B [GRS] (1g) 1x R35 [STOR] (23g)	12th to 14th C AD	In fabric C one sherd displays external sooting whilst another exhibits internal residue. All the Roman sherds are small and abraded.

CONTEXT	CERAMIC LISTING	DATE RANGE	COMMENTS
120 TT1	8x C (89g) 1x C01 (2g) 1x C02 (5g) 1x C85 (5g) 1x R06B [GRS] (8g) 1x R13 [HAR SH] - G - (51g)	12th to 14th C AD	In fabric C many sherds are from the same vessel. Other noted characteristics are a flat topped cooking pot rim, a sagging base, an external applied thumb strip and one example of external sooting. Recorded in C02 is a flat base and the sherd in C85 is externally wiped. A small abraded fragment of a storage jar is present in R13.
121 TT3	2x R06B [GRS] (33g) 1x R06H [UNS WS] (5g) 1x R11G [OXF RS] - C AD270 to AD400 - (17g) 1x R11E [OXF WH] - D AD200+ - (74g) 1x R35 [STOR] (22g)	AD270 to AD400+	The bowl in OXF RS fits C45 category (Young 1977, 158).
124 TT3	1x R06E [GRS] (5g) 1x R35 [SOB GT] (5g)	Mid 1st to late 1st/early 2nd C AD	
129 TT4	1x R11G [OXF RS] - AD240 to AD400+ - (5g) 2x R03A [VER WH] (29g) 1x R04E [COL CC] - AD120 to later 3rd C AD - (9g) 1x R05A [UNS OX] (1g) 3x R06B [GRS] - B - (31g) 4x R06H [UNS WS] - H mid 2nd to late 2nd C AD style - (27g) 2x R07E [UNS BW] - B x2 2nd C AD+ - (14g) 3x R13 [UNS SH] - G x2 - (65g) 4x R22D [HAD WS] (16g) 1x R35 [STOR] (13g)	2nd to 3rd C AD	All the sherds in UNS WS belong to the same beaker. The style is akin to the poppyhead type produced at Highgate Wood, North London. Both of the rims in UNS SH belong to storage jars. The context is predominantly 2nd C.

131 TT4	2x R03E [UNS WH] (3g) 1x R06E [GRS] (2g) 1x R11 [OXF OX] (2g) 1x R22D [HAD WS] (3g)	2nd to 3rd C AD	The oxidised wares in this context do not fit neatly into their respective fabric categories.
135 TT4	1x R06B [GRS] (3g) 1x R13E [HAR SH] - G - (10g)	Roman	

Discussion

A total of 85 sherds weighing 995g were recovered during the evaluation.

Roman

Roman fabrics dominate the assemblage and are mostly derived from the features in Trenches 3 and 4. The pottery is variously fragmented and abraded. The form assemblage is small and only nine types are recorded. The most common are storage jar rims. The continental imports are negligible. Only one sherd weighing 1g from East Gaul is present. However a number of Romano-British fine wares are present, principally dating to the 2nd, 3rd and 4th centuries. The sources are Oxford, the Nene Valley and Colchester. The majority of the coarse wares are local, but others are derived from beyond the modern county boundary e.g. Verulamium and Hadham in Hertfordshire, and a single sherd of BB1 is from Dorset.

Three contexts date to the later Roman period (3rd to 4th centuries AD) and two are 2nd and 3rd C. Only L124 (F126) in Trench 3 could be dated to the earlier Roman period. At this stage little meaningful comparison can be made with a recent evaluation (October 2000) on land to the rear of the Quadrant Centre. Nevertheless a similar range of fabrics are present and similarly the later Roman period is well represented.

Medieval

Local sand and quartz based coarse wares, typical within the region (Slowikowski 1995, 156), account for the entire medieval assemblage recovered from the site. Although broadly dated from the 12th to 14th centuries, technologically and decoratively the groups from the area of quarrying in Trench 1 would appear to be quite early, probably 12th to 13th century.

These latter features both produced fairly abraded residual Roman material but the medieval sherds are in very good condition and are likely to be in a primary context of deposition. A total of 23 sherds weighing 175g represent this period.

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24 Friary Field, Dunstable, Beds

10/05/01

Concordance of finds by feature

Feature	Context	Trench	Description	Spot Date	Pottery (g)	Building material (g)	Human Bone (g)	Animal Bone (g)	Other
101	-		Layer -- build up deposit	Roman	57	tile 3015			
105	106	4	Ditch fill	Mid 1 st to Mid 3 rd C AD	179	tile 56		672	
109	-	2	Layer = 101			tile 660			
111	110	2	Grave fill	3 rd to 4 th C AD	14	tile 86			
115	116	1	Pit fill?	Late 3 rd to 4 th C AD	92	tile 40			
117	118	1	Pit fill?	12 th to 14 th C AD	99	tile 44	6	18	
119	120	1	Pit fill?	12 th to 14 th C AD	160				
123	121	3	Ditch fill	AD270 to AD400+	151				Fe (2g) Stone (208g)
126	124	3	Grave fill	Mid 1 st to late 1 st /early 2 nd C AD	10				
130	129	4	Pit fill	2 nd to 3 rd C AD	213	tile 4			
132	131	4	Ditch fill	2 nd to 3 rd C AD	10				
133	135	4	?Ditch terminus	Roman	13	tile 4			

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Fig. 1 Site location plan
Scale 1:25,000

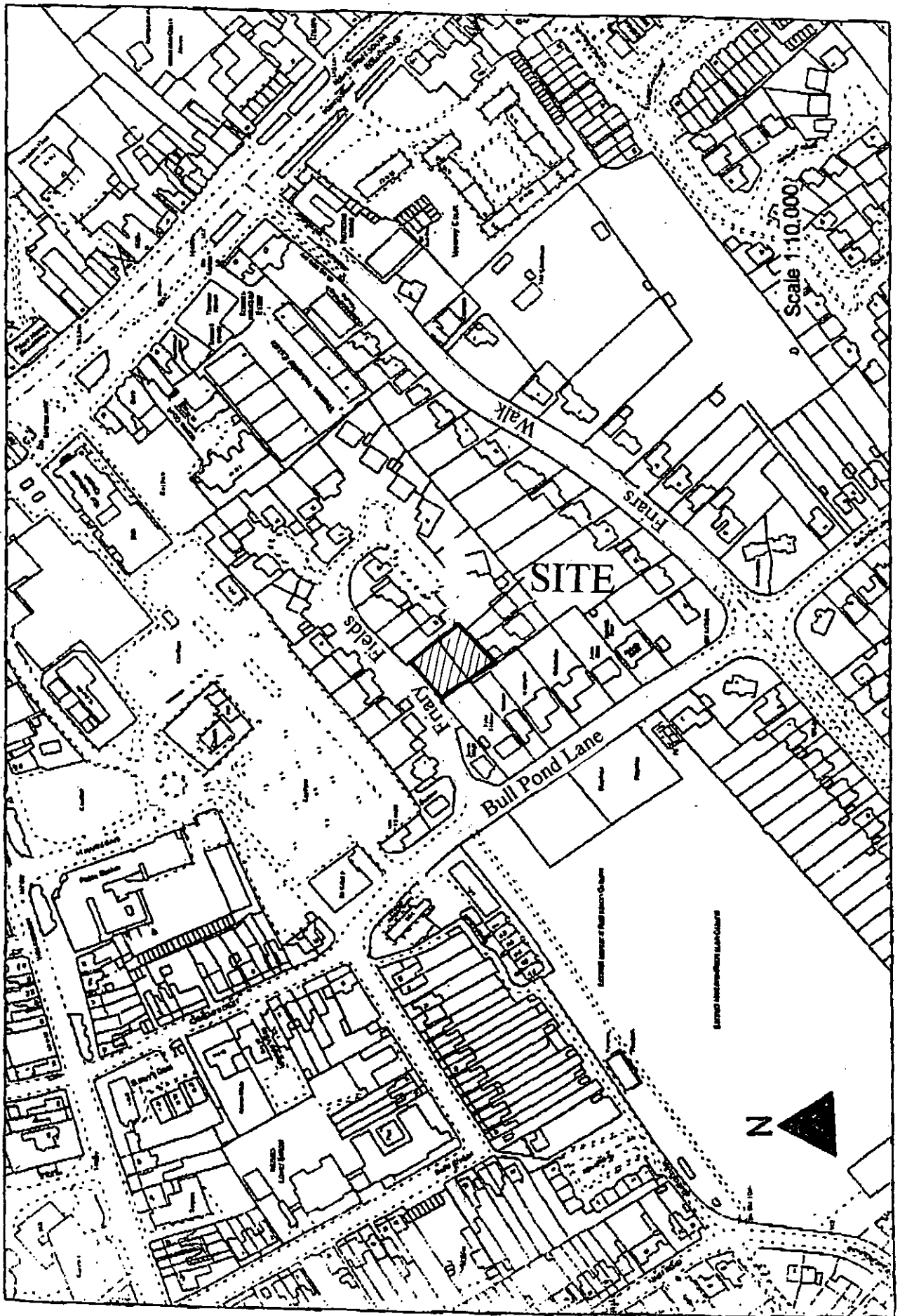
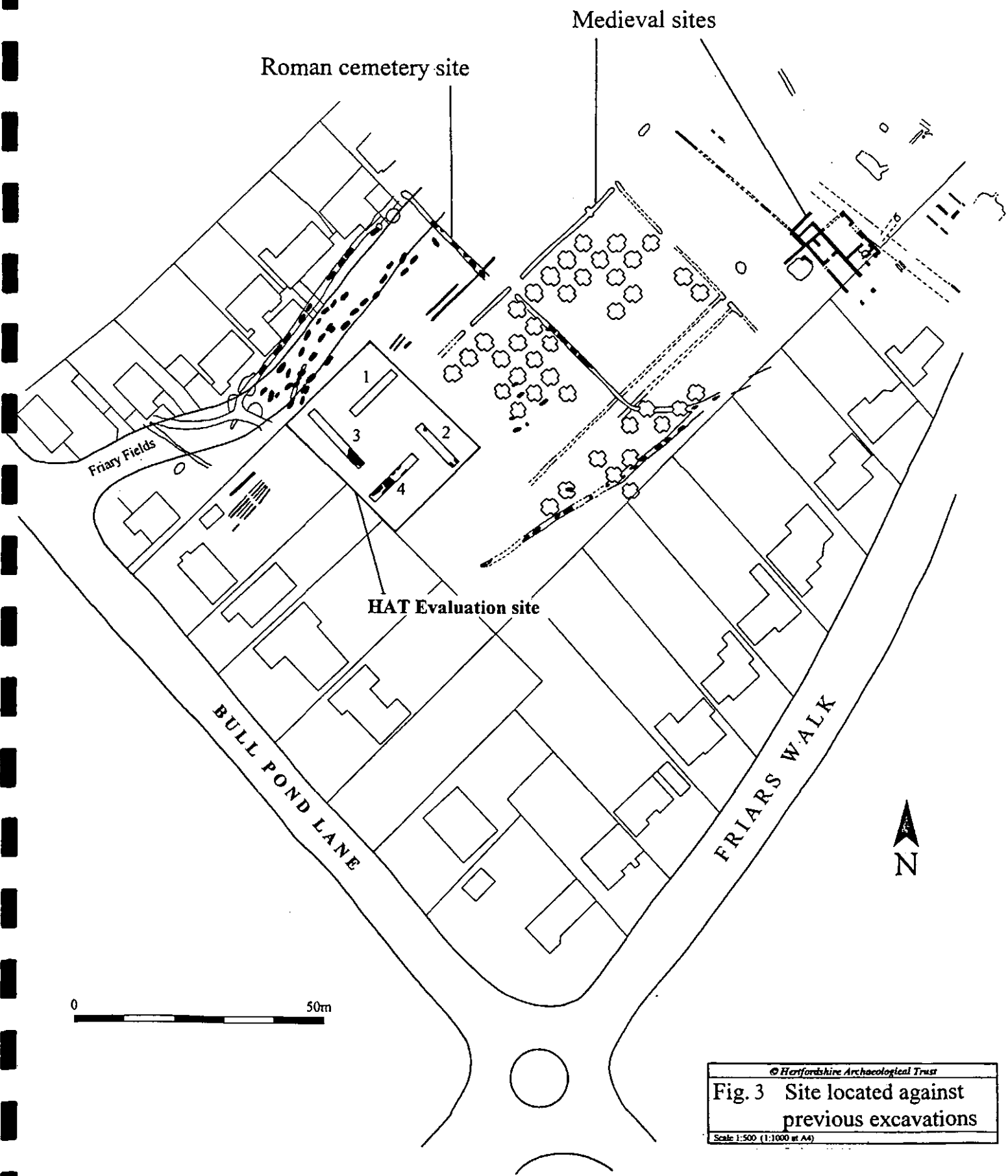


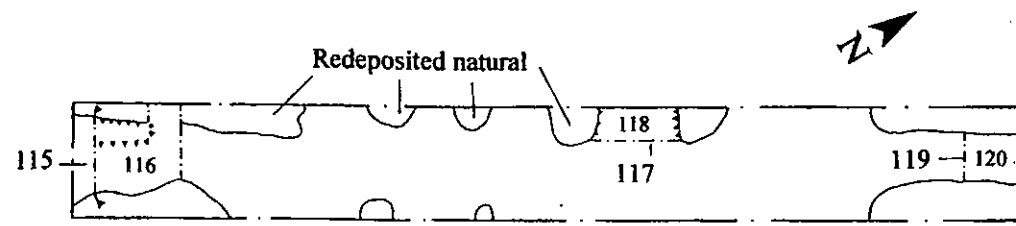
Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:10,000



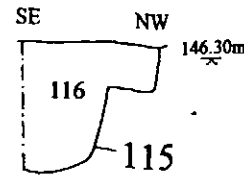
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Fig. 3 Site located against previous excavations

Scale 1:500 (1:1000 at A4)

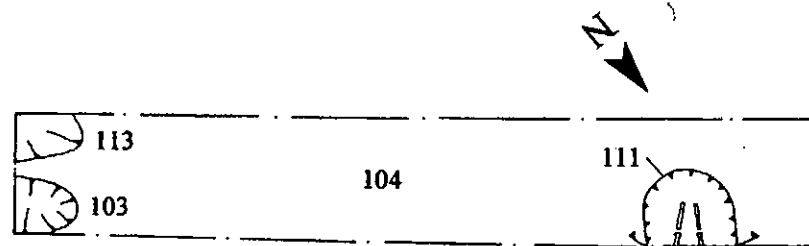


Trench 1

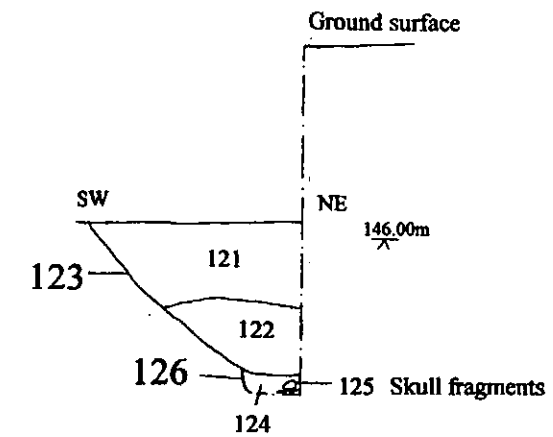
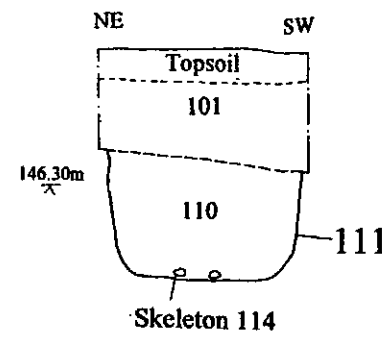


0 3m (Sections only)

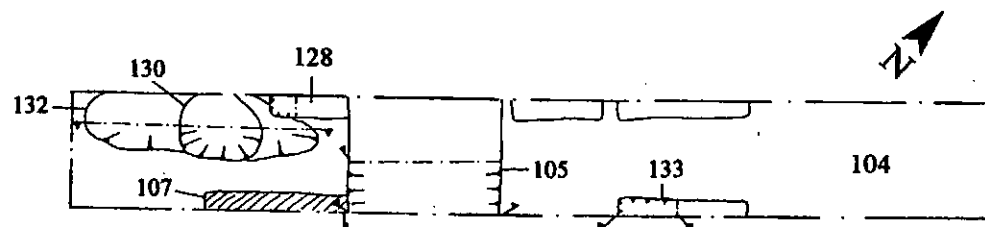
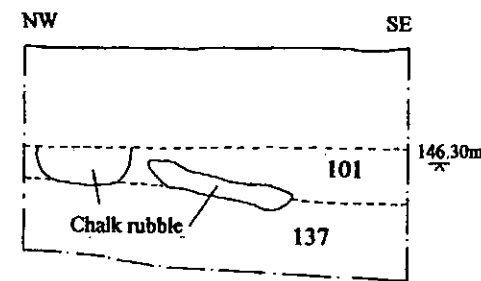
0 5m (Plans only)



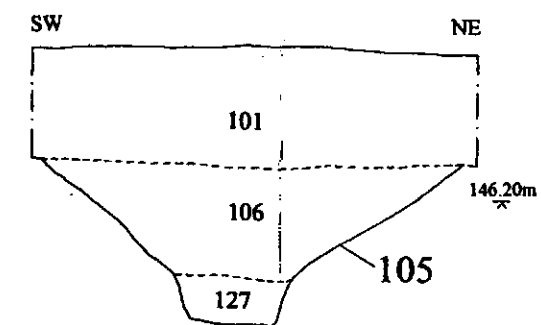
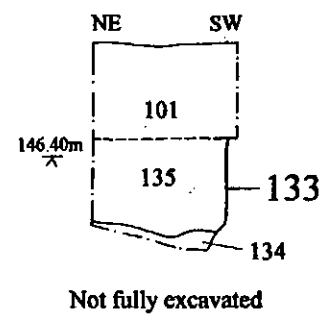
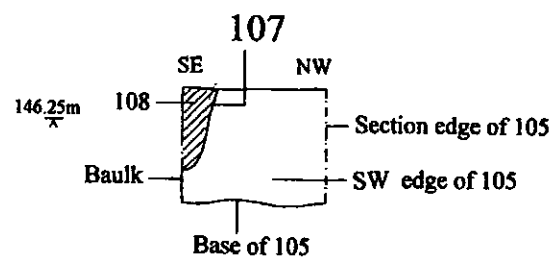
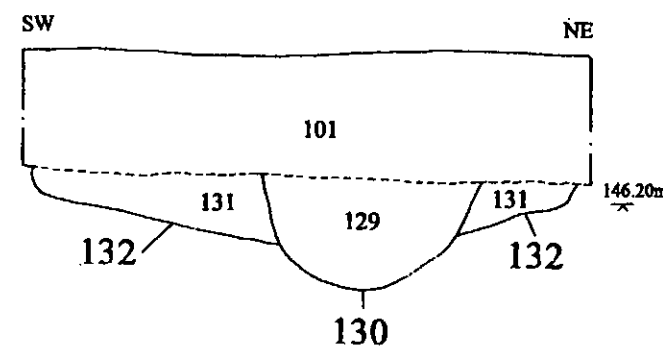
Trench 2



Trench 3



Trench 4



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Fig. 4 Plans and Sections
 Scale 1:50 and 1:20 (1:100 and 1:40 at A3)