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Harradine's Farm, Woodhurst, Cambridgeshire Archaeological Excavation 2001

Post-Excavation Assessment

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit
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Harradine's Farm, Woodhurst, Cambridgeshire
Archaeological Excavation 2001
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1.0: SUMMARY

This report describes the results of an archaeological excavation at Harradine's Farm, Church Street, Woodhurst, Cambridgeshire (centred on NGR. TL 3153 7607), and provides proposals to bring the fieldwork results to full publication. An archaeological excavation in advance of proposals for residential development was undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) in June and July 2001 for D. H. Barford and Co., acting on behalf of the Fleming Construction. The excavation followed a desk-based assessment and archaeological trial trenching. The fieldwork identified four phases of activity on the site, Roman, Saxon, early medieval and late medieval/post-medieval, in date.

Roman settlement was represented by two enclosures and other ditches, and by gullies and pits, together with three inhumations. The Roman features dated between the 2nd and 4th century AD. The Early-Middle Saxon remains were characterised by a series of possible quarry pits. Medieval activity notably comprised a concentration of twelve intercutting pits. Three of these pits contained large amounts of disarticulated human and animal bone. Due to the proximity to the Roman inhumations, it is suspected that the medieval pitting disturbed Roman burials, and that the human bones were re-buried as a mark of respect. Further medieval features were found in the other areas excavated. More recent features, including traces of recently-demolished farm buildings, were also found.

2.0: INTRODUCTION (Fig. 1)

2.1: Background

This report describes the results of an archaeological excavation at Harradine's Farm, Church Street, Woodhurst, Cambridgeshire (centred on NGR TL 3153 7607, Fig. 1, hereafter called 'the site'). BUFAU were commissioned to undertake the archaeological excavation by D. H. Barford and Co., acting on behalf of Fleming Construction, and in accordance with the guidelines laid down in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (Department of the Environment, November 1990). The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken in advance of proposals for residential development of the site. This report provides a post-excavation assessment of the archaeological data, prepared in accordance with The Management of Archaeology Projects 2 (MAP 2 - English Heritage). The work was undertaken in accordance with a Design Brief prepared by the Council (Cambridgeshire CC 2001), and a Specification prepared by BUFAU (BUFAU 2001), approved by the County Archaeology Office of Cambridgeshire County Council.

The site (Fig. 2) is located close to the historic core of the village of Woodhurst, with its entrance off Church Street to the north, and extending towards South Street to the south.

It is irregular in plan, 0.627ha in area and was used as a farm for several centuries. The site lay within a ridge of glacial gravel surrounded by Pleistocene boulder clay overlying Jurassic Ampthill Clay.

The assessment (Walls 2001) described the archaeological background, which need not be repeated here. An archaeological evaluation of the site was carried out in April and May 2001 by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (Kenny 2001a and b). A total of five machine-cut trial-trenches were excavated (Fig. 2), with selective cleaning and hand-excavation of the features identified. The evaluation revealed archaeological features in all five trenches, including enclosure ditches, gullies and pits, which ranged in date from Iron Age to post-medieval. A single crouched burial found in the top of a ditch was tentatively dated to the Roman period by the manner and location of the burial.

2.2: Aims

The general aims of the archaeological excavation were to identify archaeological remains, and to preserve those remains by record.

The detailed research aims of the excavation were to:
1) Investigate the nature and context of the Roman settlement and burial evidence.
2) Contribute towards an understanding of the evidence for Saxon/early medieval village development.
3) Contribute towards the understanding of the later medieval development of the village, and its subsequent history.

3.0: METHODOLOGY (Fig. 2)

Four areas were excavated in 2001 (Fig. 2). Area A was located in the northern part of the site, Area B was located in the centre of the site and Areas C and D in the southern part of the site. The areas excavated totalled approximately 1,110 square metres. These areas corresponded to the footprints of the new dwellings. Within the excavated areas, the overburden was removed by a mechanical excavator, working under archaeological supervision, to expose the uppermost horizon of the subsoil. Sampling of the linear features by hand-excavation was 25% by length. Pits and post-holes were examined in half-section. Inhumations and human re-burial pits were fully excavated, following the grant of a Home Office Licence, and after the local Coroner was informed. Samples for environmental analysis were collected from datable feature fills.

Recording employed separate running numerical sequences for contexts (four digit numbers) and features (three digit numbers, prefixed by an 'F'). Features were defined to include negative features such as ditches, pits and post-holes. Modern deposits, such as concrete footings, were not assigned feature numbers. Contexts include feature fills and discrete layers. During the excavation, pre-printed pro-formas for contexts and features

were completed, together with plans (1:50) and sections (1:20). Monochrome and colour slide photographs were also taken.

Subject to permission from the landowner, it is proposed to deposit the finds and paper archive with the Cambridgeshire County Council approved archive store. At the time of the compilation of this report the finds and paper archive relating to the evaluation stage of the project were not available for consultation in Birmingham.

4.0: RESULTS (Figs. 3-5)

4.1: Phasing

The results from the excavation have been provisionally divided into four phases, defined according to the finds spot-dating and stratigraphic data, as follows:

Phase 1 *Roman*
Phase 2 *Saxon*
Phase 3 *Early medieval*
Phase 4 *Late medieval/post-medieval*

Within each phase the results are described alphabetically, by area. All the archaeological features were cut into the subsoil, a red-brown silt-gravel with islands patches of orange-yellow sand (1001), recorded at a depth of between 0.1-0.5m below the modern surface.

4.2: Phase 1: Roman (Areas A-C)

Description

The inhumation (HB 8) revealed in evaluation Trench 1 was recorded and lifted during the excavation. The grave cut (F133, Fig. 3) was located just outside Area A. The skeleton was buried in a crouched position, with the body on an approximate north-south alignment. The cranium had been removed, presumably *post-mortem*, and placed at the feet.

The majority of features in Area B (Fig. 4), comprising ditches, gullies, pits and one posthole, were assigned to this phase. A north-south aligned gully (F120) was located towards the eastern edge of the area. This was 0.2m wide, 5.5m long, 0.05m deep and was backfilled with a grey-brown sand-silt. It was cut by an east-west aligned ditch (F102, F111, F113, F119), which was recorded for a distance of 15.5m. This ditch was a maximum of 1.9m wide, 0.7m deep and was filled with a mid-brown sand-silt. To the north was located a circular pit (F126), 1.1m in diameter, 0.8m deep and filled with a brown sand-silt. A circular pit (F112), 1.4m in diameter, 0.5m deep and filled with a black-brown silt-clay was located further to the north.

A second east-west ditch (F122, F123, F124, F129), was recorded for a distance of 16m, cutting backfilled pit F112. This ditch was a maximum of 1.6m wide, 0.7m deep and was filled with a grey-brown sand-silt. To the south was a north-south aligned ditch (F105, F109, F115, F125, F128, Plate 1), contemporary with ditch F129, which it joined. This north-south aligned ditch was recorded for a length of 28m, and cut both ditch F111 and pit F126. The north-south ditch measured a maximum of 2.25m in width, 0.8m in depth, and was filled with a grey-brown sand-silt. Ditch F115 had been re-cut (F114) for a short length on its western side. A posthole (F116) was recorded flush with this re-cut. The posthole was circular in plan, 0.4m in diameter, 0.1m deep and filled with a grey-brown sand-silt. Ditch F109 was cut by a mainly east-west aligned ditch (F100, F107, F110), which was a maximum of 1m wide, 0.4m deep, and filled with a grey-brown silt-sand. This ditch was recorded for a total length of 18m in Area B, and returned to the south (F100). A further pit (F108), square-shaped in plan, was also located towards the western edge of this area. It was 1.3m wide, 0.6m deep and filled with a grey-black sand-silt with an organic green-grey clay-silt at the base.

Three Phase 1 pits were located in Area C (F144, F145 and F169, Fig. 5). Feature F169 was a sub-circular pit, 2m in diameter, 0.35m deep and backfilled with a dark brown sand-silt. This pit had been heavily truncated by later activity (see below). Circular pits F144 and F145 were located near the southeast corner of Area C, and were presumably contemporary. Both were 1m in diameter, 0.3m deep and filled with a grey-brown silt-sand.

Cutting feature F144 was a rectangular grave (F141), measuring 1.8m in length, 0.6m in width and 0.3m in depth. It contained an extended adult inhumation (HB 2), aligned east-west. The condition of the bone was fairly good, although the cranium had been damaged in antiquity and the feet were not present. The grave had been backfilled with a brown-black silt-clay. Part of another grave (F142) was located just to the south of F141. This grave was 1.1m long, 0.4m wide and 0.4m deep, and contained an extended juvenile inhumation. The left arm was crossed over the rib cage, and the right leg was flexed. Again, the condition of the bone was fairly good, although the cranium was damaged.

Dating

The Phase 1 features contained pottery dated from the 2nd to the 4th century. Grave F141 contained Roman pottery. It may be reasonably assumed from the attitudes of the other two burials that they were Roman in date, and also because the grave fills did not contain later finds.

Phase 2: Saxon (Areas C and D)

Description

Most of the features assigned to this phase were located in Area D (Fig. 5). A large circular pit (F159), measuring 9m in diameter was recorded in the centre of the area. It was backfilled with a brown sand-silt-clay. This pit was cut on its eastern side by a sub-

rectangular pit (F173), which measured 4m in length, 1m in width and 1m in depth. This latter pit was filled with a dark brown sand-silt-clay. Adjoining feature F159 was a smaller oval pit (F171), 2.3m long, 2m wide and 0.4m deep. This was filled with a brown sand-silt. Feature F171 was cut by a sub-rectangular pit (F172). This measured 1.55m by 1.05m in plan was 0.3m deep and had been backfilled with a brown-black sand-silt.

To the north of these features was another cluster of pits. A small circular pit (F162) was recorded towards at the northern edge of Area D. This feature measured 1.6m in diameter, 0.5m in depth and was filled with a brown sand-silt. This was cut by a sub-rectangular pit (F160), measuring 4.15m by 1.9m in plan and 0.6m in depth. This was filled with a dark brown sand-silt. In turn, pit F160 was cut by another sub-rectangular pit (F161). This feature measured 4.85m in length, 1.4m in width, and was backfilled with a black-brown silty loam. To the east of this group was a circular pit (F158), measuring 2.85m by 1.35m in plan, and 0.65m in depth.

Four pits in Area C (Plate 6) were assigned to this phase. Sub-circular pit F148 was an average of 1.9m in diameter and 0.8m deep and was backfilled with a brown sand-silt. Another sub-circular pit (F156) was 2.1m long, 1.7m wide, 0.4m deep and filled with a dark brown-sand silt-clay. The third pit (F164) was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 3.9m in length, 1.35m in width and 0.5m in depth. This pit was filled with a dark brown sand-silt-clay. One circular pit (F134) was located at the southern edge of Area A (Fig. 3). This was 2.75m in diameter and 1.3m deep, backfilled with a grey-brown silt-clay. All Phase 2 pits in Area C were truncated by later pitting.

Dating

The group of pits in Area D (apart from feature F161), and feature F164 in Area C, contained Early-Middle Saxon pottery. The other pits assigned to this phase - F134, F156 and F161 contained Late Saxon pottery.

Phase 3: Early medieval (Areas A-D)

Description

Early medieval activity was concentrated towards the southern end of Area A (Fig. 3). A mainly east-west aligned ditch (F127, F130, F140), was recorded for a length of 14m. This ditch was a maximum of 0.75m wide and 0.4m deep, and was backfilled with a brown sand-silt. A large circular pit or ditch terminal (F135), to the south of the ditch, was 1.3m in diameter and 0.8m in depth, and was backfilled with a orange-brown silt-clay. This pit was cut by the terminal of ditch F137, which measured 2m long, 1.3m wide and 0.35m deep. The ditch was filled with a brown silt-clay. To the west of feature F135 was a small post-hole (F136), which was 0.7m in diameter and 0.14m in depth. This feature was undated, but was assumed to belong to this phase, due to its proximity to feature F135.

A large, irregularly shaped pit (F121, Plate 2) was recorded at the north end of Area B (Fig. 4). This was approximately 7m in diameter and 2m deep. The basal fill was a yellow-brown clay. At the southeast corner of Area B, another large pit (F101) was located. This appeared to be sub-rectangular in plan, 5m long, 3.1m wide and 0.5m deep. The pit was backfilled with grey-brown silt.

A sub-rectangular pit (F150) was recorded in the north of Area C (Fig. 5). This was 4m long, 0.8m wide and 0.5m deep, and filled with a dark brown silt-sand. On the south side of the area a sub-circular pit (F149) was located. This was 1.8m in diameter and 0.25m deep, and filled with a brown sand-silt. To the north of this, a circular pit (F146) measuring 2.5m in diameter and 0.15m in depth, was recorded. This was cut on its eastern side by another circular pit (F147), 3m in diameter and 1m deep. Both pits were filled with brown sand-silt.

In the centre of Area C (Plate 6), a series of intercutting pits were recorded. These pits had very similar fills, a dark brown sand-silt-clay, so it was difficult to identify the sequence. A small circular pit (F155) was recorded at the northern limit of the area excavated, measuring 0.85m in diameter and 0.08m in depth A sub-rectangular pit (F154) was cut into the subsoil to the north of the former feature. This feature was 2.5m long, 0.5m wide and 0.4m deep. Cutting feature F154 to the south, and also cutting Phase 2 pit F156 was another sub-rectangular pit (F151, Plate 3). This pit was 1.7m long, 1.3m wide and 0.4m deep. At the base of this pit, a quantity of disarticulated human (HB4) and animal bone was discovered.

To the south, a small circular pit (F152, Plate 4), was cut through the backfills of Phase 1 pit F169. This Phase 3 pit was 1.2m in diameter and 0.3m deep. It also contained mixed disarticulated human and animal bone (HB5) at its base. A sub-rectangular pit (F163) was cut through F169. Pit F163 measured 4.15m in length, 1.85m in width and 0.45m in depth. It was cut to the west by another sub-rectangular pit (F165), measuring 3.3m in length, 2.2m in width and 0.4m in depth. Cut through the top of this pit was a small sub-circular pit (F153, Plate 5) containing disarticulated human and animal bone (HB6). Backfilled feature F165 was cut by two further pits to the west; a circular pit (F166), 2.3m in diameter and 0.35m deep, and a sub-rectangular pit (F168) measuring 2.6m in length, 2.3m in width and 0.6m in depth. Both of these pits were truncated by a Phase 4 pit (F167).

A sub-rectangular pit (F143) was also recorded to the east of the intercutting pit group. This was 1.4m long, 1m wide and 0.3m deep, and filled with a black-brown sand-silt-clay.

One sub-circular pit (F157) was recorded in the northwestern corner of Area D. This pit was 3.1m long, 1.6m wide and 0.6m deep, and filled with a brown sand-silt-clay.

Dating

All of the pottery dated from between the 12th and 14th century, although some features contained residual Roman and Saxon pottery.

Phase 4: Late medieval/post-medieval (Areas A-D)

Description and Dating

A small sub-rectangular pit or ditch terminal (F132, Fig. 3) in Area A dated to the late 17th-early 18th century. This feature was 1.5m long, 0.6m wide and 0.2m deep, and filled with dark brown sand-silt. Also in Area A, an east-west aligned gully (F131, F138), recorded for a length of 8m, was dated to the early 19th century. The gully was a maximum of 0.8m wide and 0.4m deep, and filled with a loose dark brown sand-silt, and was cut into backfilled gully F127, F130. Another gully (F139), although containing no datable pottery may have been contemporary with the former feature.

The upper fills of a large pit in Area B (F121, Fig. 4) were dated to the late 17th-early 18th century.

An irregularly-shaped sub-circular pit in Area C (Plate 6, F168, Fig. 5) dated to the 16th-18th century. This pit was 2.1m long, 0.8m wide and 0.5m deep, and was backfilled with a dark brown clay-silt.

A number of modern intrusions and building footings were located in all four areas, mainly relating to the demolished farm buildings, but these are not described or illustrated, except where they are intrusions into earlier features.

Discussion

The main area of Roman activity was recorded in Area B. The earliest ditch (F102, F111, F113, F119) could have formed a boundary. This ditch could be the same as Ditch 28 from Trench 3 in the evaluation, although this later feature was not dated. The two contemporary ditches, may have formed part of an enclosure, although only pit (F108) could be associated with these ditches. Similarly, the smaller ditch (F100, F107, F110) could have formed part of an enclosure although there were no associated features. None of these ditches appeared to continue further south, into evaluation Trench 4. Feature F108 is likely to be a cess-pit given its shape and size, and the organic nature of the lowest fill. The three, probably-contemporary inhumations were located outside the enclosure. No buildings were recorded within the excavated part of the enclosure interior.

Apart from one ditch in Area A (F127, F130, F140), probably a boundary feature, the Saxon and medieval periods are mainly characterized by pitting. The size of these pits, and the lack of finds from within their fills suggests that they were not rubbish pits. It is possible that these pits were used for quarrying the natural sand and gravel on the site. As

the site is positioned on a ridge of sand, surrounded by boulder clay, this area may have been the only nearby source of sand.

The pits containing disarticulated human remains are unusual. It is possible, that these were human remains of Roman date, disturbed during later pitting, as is suggested by the proximity of the undisturbed human burials of presumed similar date in Area C. The human remains were re-buried in the medieval period, as a mark of respect.

The large medieval pit (F121) in the north of Area B may have formed a pond. The pit had a waterlogged deposit at its base, containing waterflea eggs, only found in water.

5.0: ASSESSMENTS

5.1: Quantifications

Tables 1-2 quantify the excavation archive. The evaluation archive was not available in Birmingham during the preparation of this report.

TABLE 1: Quantification of excavation paper archive

Record	*Quantity*
Contexts	90
Features	73
Skeleton records	3 (+ disarticulated material)
Assemblage summaries	60
Colour slide	5 films
Black and white prints	5 films
Drawings	45
Env. sample record files	1
Survey file	2 sheets

TABLE 2: Quantification of excavation finds archive

Find type	*Unphased*	*Phase 1*	*Phase 2*	*Phase 3*	*Phase 4*
Tile	1	-	4	-	2
Brick	-	1		1	6
Fired clay/ daub	3	-	-	-	-
Other building materials	1	-	-	-	-
Roman pottery	-	195	14	13	1
Saxon	-	-	31	2	-
Medieval pottery	-	-	8	116	9
Post-medieval pottery	-	-	-	-	12
Clay pipe	-	-	-	-	2
Coins	-	8	-	-	-
Iron nails	-	2	-	-	-
Other iron objects	-	1	-	1	1
Copper alloy	1	-	-	-	-
Bottle glass	-	-	-	-	4
Other vessel glass	-	-	-	-	1
Flint	-	3	1	1	1
Stone spindle whorl	-	-	-	1	-
Animal bone (wt in g)	-	3996g	3768g	2819g	572g
Shell	-	7	1	-	-

5.2: Factual data and statement of potential

5.2.1: Coins by Roger White

TABLE 3: Coin identifications

SF no	*Identification*	*Date*
1	*Urbs Roma* Trier Mint	AD 330-337
2	*Beatatranquilitas Crispus Nob. Caes* Lyons Mint	AD 320s
3	Unidentifiable	
5	Forgery/irregular	Mid-late 4th C
6	Unidentifiable	
7	Irregular radiate	AD 273+
8	Fallen Horseman 3. Overstruck on another issue	AD 353-355
U/S	Radiate	*c* AD 270

All the coins are unstratified metal detector finds from the topsoil in Area D. As such, no further reporting or analysis is worthwhile.

5.2.2: Small finds by Lynne Bevan

Stone spindlewhorl

A rounded, cylindrical stone spindlewhorl was recovered (Phase 3, F151/1067). The stone used was a pale-coloured, fine-grained, slightly micacious sandstone. There was

some damage to one side of the object and, on the opposing side, wear traces suggestive of long-term use around the central perforation.

A medieval or early post-medieval date is most likely for this object based upon its shape, size, weight and similarity with published stone spindlewhorls from Norwich, including one example which dates to the 16th century (Margeson 1993, fig. 136.1444).

Flint

The assemblage comprised six fragments of humanly-struck flint, including three retouched flakes (F108/1012, F113/1021, F132/1047), one of which was totally recorticated (F132/1047). Another flake, also recorticated, but very abraded, might also have been retouched (F101/1004). The remaining flints comprised a recorticated multi-platform flake core of a coarse-textured flint (F159/1078) and a primary flake from a pebble nodule (F100/1002).

A secondary, pebble origin from local river gravels or boulder clay, is most likely for all of this material, which, although not chronologically-diagnostic, probably dates to the Bronze Age. This small assemblage is unworthy of further research.

Copper alloy and iron objects

One copper alloy button (SF 4) was recovered. Iron finds comprised: two nails (F109/1015, F147/1063), a fragment of horseshoe (F147/1063), a possible knife blade (F125/1040), and a collar or binding, possibly for a pipe (F121/1035). None of these finds are chronologically-diagnostic.

Fired clay/daub

Three fragments of fired clay/daub were recovered (F113/1021 x 2, F116/1025). These fragments probably originated from a hearth or building.

No further work is recommended on this small group of material, although the final report should include a brief summary of the small finds.

5.2.2: Roman pottery by Annette Hancocks

Quantity

The Romano-British pottery was quantified by count and weight (g) only. A total of 223 sherds (3568g) was recovered from the excavation. The pottery was rapidly scanned, assigned a ceramic period, and spot-dated to provide a *terminus post quem.* The Roman pottery recovered derived from thirty four deposits and comprised 55% of the total ceramic assemblage. Less than 1% of the Roman material was residual.

Provenance/dating

At least 36 diagnostic and dateable rim, decorated and base sherds were recognized. This material principally dated to the late 3rd/4th century AD. The main focus of Romano-British activity was within Area B.

Range/variety

The range and variety of this material comprised regionally-traded wares such as greyware copies of Black-burnished ware forms, Lower Nene Valley colour-coated wares, shell-tempered wares and Horningsea ware. Forms represented in these fabrics included bowls, dishes, jars and beakers. Small quantities of decorated material were noted, including burnishing, rouletting and incised line motifs. Several sherds also showed signs of external sooting.

Statement of potential

Further work will aim to examine the chronological development and economy of the site. The pottery is the principal source of dating evidence for the site. The national research framework for the study of Romano-British pottery identifies pottery from rural sites as being 'highly significant for our understanding of the Romano-British economy and of 'Romanization'' (Willis 1997, 15). The East Midlands and East Anglia framework (Martin and Wallace 1997, 42 and 44, 3.4.3) emphasizes some areas that could potentially be addressed with this assemblage. These comprise patterns of consumption, function, intra-site organisation and defining cultural and economic regions. Characterising the assemblage through further analysis will add to the corpus of comparable published data from similar rural Roman sites within the region.

The pottery assemblage will be quantified by sherd count and weight (g), minimum number of rims and EVE's. The pottery will be recorded by fabric and form and cross-referenced to the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (NRFRC; Tomber and Dore 1998).

5.2.3: Post-Roman pottery by Stephanie Ratkai

Quantity

The post-Roman pottery consisted of 178 sherds. These included 31 sherds of Early-Middle Saxon hand-made pottery; two sherds of wheel-finished Middle Saxon pottery (Ipswich ware), 133 medieval sherds and twelve sherds of post-medieval date.

Provenance/dating

The spot dating is summarised below:

Fea/layer	*Date*	*Comments*
F101/1003	13th-14th C	
F1011004	12th-14th C	
F106/1010	12th-14th C	
F121/1033	12th-13th C	
F121/1034	13th-14th C	
F121/1035	(late 17th) early 18th C	Residual Late Saxon and medieval sherds
F123/1037	Late Saxon	Possible x-join with context 1049
F127/1042	13th (14th) C	
F130/1045	13th (14th) C	
F132/1047	(?late 17th) 18th	Residual medieval pottery
F134/1049	Late Saxon	
F138/1053	Early 19th C	
F140/1055	12th-14th C	
F147/1063	?12th C	Residual Ipswich ware
F148/1064	Late Saxon	
F152/1070	12th-13th C	Possibly one Early-Middle Saxon residual sherd
F153/1072	12th-14th C	Residual Early-Middle Saxon material
F156/1075	Late Saxon	
F157/1076	?12th C	
F159/1078	Early-Middle Saxon	
F160/1079	Early-Middle Saxon	
F161/1080	?Late Saxon	
F163/1082	12th-14th C	Residual St Neots ware
F164/1083	Early-Middle Saxon	
F165/1084	(12th) 13th C	Residual Ipswich ware
F166/1085	12th-14th C	
F167/1086	12th-14th C	
F187/1087	16th-18th C	
F171/1089	Early-Middle Saxon	
F172/1090	Early-Middle Saxon	

Range/variety

Pre-Conquest pottery

The Early-Middle Saxon pottery was divided into ten fabrics. These fell into three main groups: sand tempered, calcareous tempered and igneous rock (grano-diorite) tempered. All the vessels were hand made and many of the sherds were burnished. There were six rim sherds representing two jars and three bowls. There were two Ipswich ware sherds, one with a finger grooved exterior surface from feature F165 (1084), the other an undiagnostic abraded body sherd from feature F147 (1063). Both these features were in Area C. The Late Saxon pottery consisted of St Neots ware, Stamford ware and Thetford type ware.

Post-Conquest pottery

A variety of medieval fabrics were present. Some of these fabrics have been found elsewhere in Cambridgeshire and, where this was so, the fabric codes used by Spoerry (Spoerry and Hinman 1998) have been used in this assessment. Other fabrics have been given brief abbreviated descriptive codes. The following fabrics were present:

cshw	coarse shelly ware (Spoerry and Hinman 1998) 12th-14th C
oxsandy	oxidized sandy ware 13th-14th C?
sandy	sandy cooking pot ware 13th-14th C
sandygw	reduced sandy ware 12th C?
scalc	sandy calcareous ware 12th-14th C
shelly	shelly ware (Spoerry and Hinman 1998) 12th-14th C
sibhed	Sible-Hedingham type ware (Spoerry and Hinman 1998) 13th-14th C
ssw	smooth sandy ware (Spoerry and Hinman 1998) 13th-14th C

Some, or all of the sandy calcareous sherds may be Medieval Ely ware (Spoerry and Hinman 1998, fabric MEL), which appears to have been widely distributed in the Fens, although it is likely that there were other manufacturing areas along the Fen edge (P. Spoerry pers comm). The oxidized sandy sherds may derive from south Lincolnshire and at least one of the sandy cooking pot sherds may be a Bourne product. The reduced sandy ware sherds were similar to fabric S14 from Longstanton (Ratkai 2001). Sourcing the shelly wares is clearly problematic, but a sloping sided bowl with a heavily thumbed rim from (1042) F127, was very similar to some Lyveden forms (cf Bryant and Steane 1975, fig. 21 form N), so it is reasonable to assume that some of the shelly wares are from that area.

Post-medieval pottery

The post-medieval pottery consisted of creamware (crw), glazed red earthenware (gre), brown stoneware (stw), slipware (slpw) and modern yellow ware (myw).

Assessment methodology

The pottery was examined macroscopically and divided into fabric or ware groups and quantified by sherd and rim count.

Statement of potential

The pottery dated from the Early-Middle Saxon period through to the early 19th century. Post-Conquest medieval pottery formed the largest period group and this was dominated by shelly wares and sandy calcareous wares. The Early-Middle Saxon pottery formed the second largest group.

Generally the post-Roman contexts did not contain residual Roman pottery, with the exception of features F159 (1078), F160 (1079) and F172 (1090), all in Area D. Area D was the focus for Early-Middle Saxon activity. Some Early-Middle Saxon activity had spread over into Area C with one feature F164 of this date and residual Early-Middle

Saxon pottery in the fills of intercutting pits F152, F153 and F147. This area also contained the two Ipswich ware sherds and residual late Saxon St Neots and Thetford ware in features F156, F148 and F163.

Some further work on the pottery assemblage is recommended. This is to make sure that all the data is compatible with other work undertaken within the county, in concordance with professional guidelines (Slowikowski *et al.* 2001). The pottery should be quantified by sherd count and weight, rim count and *eves*. The assemblage is small. Thus, detailed work on spatial and functional analysis is not required. Nevertheless, the assemblage is important for understanding the use, movement and trade in ceramics in the county and provides useful comparanda between the Early-Middle Saxon period (in particular the use of grano-diorite tempered wares and their distribution) and the post-Conquest period.

The following are recommended:

- Detailed description of Early-Middle Saxon pottery fabrics and forms.
- Illustration of the pottery (6 drawings).
- Comparison of Saxon fabrics with those from Fordham, Cambridgeshire.
- Sourcing of medieval fabrics ie comparison with Cambridgeshire County pottery type series and liaison with Paul Spoerry (Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit).

5.2.5: Human bone by Dr. Megan Brickley

Quantity

The three inhumations (HB 1, HB 2 and HB 3) are relatively complete (25-50%, 50-75% and 75%+ respectively). The bone surface in two of the burials (HB 1 and 2) is not well preserved (Behrensmeyer 1978, Stage 2) and this will limit the amount of information that can be obtained on pathology. However, the bone surface of HB 3 was better preserved (mainly Stage 1). The amount of metric data that could be recorded from all three individuals is relatively limited as the bones were fragile, and in many cases are quite fragmentary.

Three of the pits excavated yielded significant quantities of disarticulated human bone HB 4 (F151) two boxes, HB 5 (F152) and HB 6 (F153) one full box each. Three further features also produced small amounts of human bone (F165, Phase 3; F156, Phase 2; F144-5, Phase 1). The disarticulated bone is all fairly well preserved.

Provenance/dating

The three inhumation HB1, HB2, and HB3 have been dated as Roman based on their attitudes, the stratigraphy, and the lack of contrary dating evidence. The date of the human bone found in pits is less secure. It is highly probable that this human bone is also originally Roman, this cannot be proved beyond doubt. The interpretation of the pits

would be radically different if the human bone was shown to be of a later date, which is very unlikely.

Range/variety

The site contains inhumations, displaying a variety of positions and treatments (e.g. crouched, supine, decapitated), as well as the disarticulated material.

Documentation/data collection

Data such as age, sex, metric, non-metric, pathological and minimum number of individuals will be recorded using the most appropriate techniques set out in Brothwell (1994) and Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994) (e.g. metric and non-metric data from Brothwell; sex determination descriptions Buikstra and Ubelaker).

Statement of potential

The articulated bone material has the potential to add to knowledge concerning burial practice at small rural Romano-British settlements. To date most analysis has focused on large cemeteries of this date and relatively little is known about burial practice connected with small rural settlements (Esmonde Cleary 2000). Data from sites such as Woodhurst will help redress this imbalance in understanding.

Assuming the re-buried bone is Roman in date, brief analysis of the disarticulated human bone from the pits will enable an estimate to be made of the number of individuals buried at the site and contribute to knowledge of the demographic makeup of the individuals originally buried at the Roman cemetery.

The range of metric data gathered and information obtained on disease will be limited, but will form a useful source for future studies addressing questions relating to health in the period, for which data from a range of sites would need to be collated.

5.2.6: Animal bone by Dr. Emily Murray

Quantity, dating and provenance

Two standard sized boxes (47x24x26 cm) of hand-collected animal bones weighing *c* 11kg, were recovered. Four phases of occupation have been identified at the site and animal bones were recovered from each (Tables 4-5) but principally from Phases 1 (33%) and 2 (36%). The bones were recovered from the four areas of the excavation (Table 4) and mainly from pits (59%) and ditches (36%, Table 4).

TABLE 4: Animal bone, weight of hand-collected material

Feature/Phase	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*Total*	*%*
Ditch	3713	-	282	-	3995	*36*
Pit	120	3768	2248	481	6617	*59*
Gully	163	-	-	83	246	*2*
Burial pit	-	-	289	-	289	*3*
Other	-	-	-	8	8	*<1*
Total (g)	**3996**	**3768**	**2819**	**572**	**11155**	
%	**36**	**34**	**25**	**5**		
Area	A	B	C	D		
Wt (g)	658	5489	1571	3437		
%	*6*	*49*	*14*	*31*		

TABLE 5: Animal bone, number of countable animal bones and teeth identified to species

Phase *Date*	*1* *Roman*	*2* *Saxon*	*3* *Early med*	*4* *Late med/post-med*	*Total*	*%*
Cattle (*Bos taurus*)	15	20	6	-	41	*41.4*
Sheep/Goat (*Ovis/Capra*)	2	4	8	2	16	*16.2*
[Sheep) (Ovis aries)]	-	-	1	2	3	*3.0*
[Goat)(Capra hircus)]	-	-	*	-		
Pig (*Sus scrofa*)	1	10	3	3	17	*17.2*
Equid (*Equus* sp.)	7	1	4	-	12	*12.1*
Dog (*Canis familiaris*)	5	1	*	-	6	*6.1*
Fox *(Vulpes vulpes)*	3	-	-	-	3	*3.0*
Domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*)	-	-	1	-	1	*1.0*
Total	**33**	**36**	**23**	**7**	**99**	
%	*33.3*	*36.4*	*23.2*	*7.1*		

Note: * denotes species represented by 'non-countable' specimen(s) only

Assessment methodology

The assemblage was recorded using a modified version of a system devised by Davis (Davis 1992: Albarella and Davis 1994). This system considers a selection of anatomical elements as 'countable', while the presence of non-countable specimens of interest are also noted. Differentiation of sheep and goat was attempted on number of elements using the criteria described in Boessneck (1969) and Kratochvil (1969). Ageing and metrical data have not been recorded.

Range and variety

The animal bones from Woodhurst are generally very well preserved and the typical range of domestic species are represented, which are cattle, sheep, goat (1 horncore), pig, horse, dog and domestic fowl. Fox is also present. Cattle are the predominant species overall (Table 5) although the assemblage is too small to make any quantitative analyses. A number of specimens showed signs of carnivore gnawing, including a dog mandible and both goat and sheep horncores.

An assemblage of post-cranial neonatal pig bones, comprising two individuals, was recovered from a Saxon pit (F172/1090). None of the bones had any evidence of butchery and it is probable that they represent natural mortalities, perhaps the runts of a litter. Pig was also represented by a possible wild individual as a very large tibia (breadth of the distal epiphysis = *c* 44mm) was recovered from a Phase 1 deposit, while improved breeds were represented in post-medieval deposits (F168/1087).

The assessment of the charred plant remains (Ciaraldi below) suggests that the earliest Phase 1 assemblages (features F105/1008 and F119/1031) represent discarded food waste. The faunal assemblage is consistent with this suggestion as it is dominated by bones of the main domesticates, cattle, sheep/goat and pig, and the level of fragmentation for these species is typical of material derived from butchery waste.

Statement of potential

No further analysis is recommended for this animal bone assemblage, although when the bulk samples have been processed and sorted it is recommended that any animal bones that recovered be scanned to note if any notable species are present. A summary of the animal bone assessment should be included in the final report.

5.2.7: Charred plant remains by Marina Ciaraldi

Thirteen soil samples, each of 20 litres, were collected at the excavators discretion from Phase 1-3 deposits. Six of these samples, selected from a variety of deposits of different nature and date, were assessed in order to establish:

- the type of preservation of organic remains, particularly plant macroremains
- the potential of the plant assemblage in understanding the site economy and its surrounding palaeoenvironment.

Methodology

The six samples consisted of loamy, sandy sediment with a skeleton of flint pebbles. The sediment of the two burials (F152/1070 and F153/1072) was quite clay-rich and organic. Only ten litres of sediment were processed for the purpose of this assessment. All the samples, with the exception of the sample from feature F121 (1034), were floated manually to recover charred material. The flots were recovered on a 0.5mm mesh and the residue on a 1mm mesh. They flots were then dried in an oven at 40 degrees centigrade

before being scanned under a low power stereomicroscope, while the residue was sorted by eye. The sample from feature F121 (1034) contained waterlogged organic material and was processed differently. A small quantity of sediment (300 cc) was wet-sieved on a 0.3mm mesh and scanned under a low power stereomicroscope.

The plant remains were identified without the use of the reference collection, therefore their identifications need to be confirmed.

Results

The charred plant remains present in samples from features F119/1031 (Phase 1); F105/1008 (Phase 1); and F153/1072 (Phase 3), were well preserved and relatively abundant. The presence in samples from features F119/1031 (Phase 1); and F105/1008 (Phase 1), of grains of barley (*Hordeum vulgare L.*) and wheat (*Triticum sp.*), as well as of pulses (eg horsebean, *Vicia faba* L.), suggests that the two assemblages represent discarded food processing waste. In this respect, they can be helpful in understanding the nature of the settlement and its economy during the earliest phases of occupation.

The sample from feature F153/1072 (Phase 3), on the other hand, contains an interesting plant assemblage formed almost exclusively of charred grains of hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare* L.). The grains were better preserved than those from other features.

Finally, the sample from feature F121/1034 (Phase 3) contained a well-preserved assemblage of waterlogged plant and insect remains. The species present in the deposit suggest the presence of an anthropic, disturbed environment in the immediate surrounding of the pit. The presence of water flea's eggs indicates that the pit was filled with water. This sample has good potential to inform on the type of environment during the medieval occupation. The organic remains provide complementary information to that derived from the charred plant assemblages.

TABLE 6: Samples assessed for plant remains

Area	*Feature/ Deposit*	*Vol. processed (litres*	*Type of feature*	*Phase*	*Notes*
B	F119/1031	10	Boundary ditch	1	*Hordeum vulgare* (3), *Triticum* sp. (2) cereals (15) *Vicia/Lathyrus* (2), onion couch bulb. Small fragments of coal. Slag.
B	F105/1008	10	Enclosure ditch	1	*T. aestivum* (3), *Triticum* sp. (3); cereals; *Vicia faba* (1), *Rosa* sp. (5). A few small bones
D	F159/1078	10	Large pit	2	*T.* cf. *spelta* (1) cereal (4), *T. spelta* glume basis, *Galium aparine* (1), *Trifolium/Medicago/Melilotus*, *Prunus* sp.
C	F152/1070	10	Re-burial pit	3	Barley (1), a few snails
C	F153/1072	10	Re-burial pit	3	Barley 915). Well preserved seeds. Small bones
B	F121/1034	0.3	Pit	3	*Urtica dioica, Ranunculus repens, R. bulbosus/acris, Chenopodium album, Hyoscyamus* sp., *Verbena officinalis, Polygonum aviculare, Carex* sp., *Sonchus, Sambucus nigra, Brassicaceae, Corylus avellana* thorn of *Rosa*, buds. Abundant insect remains and water flea's eggs

Note: numbers in parenthesis represent a rough estimate of the quantities of seeds observed in the sample

Statement of potential

The assessment of the charred and waterlogged plant remains suggests that they have the potential to inform on the nature of human occupation of this site. On the basis of the assessment, it is recommended that further analysis of the plant remains should be undertaken in the case of four samples assessed (highlighted in Table 6). In the case of samples F119/1031, F105/1008 and F153/1072, the remaining 10 litres of soil sample will have to be processed. Sample F121/1034 will require further processing, too. It is suggested that small sub-samples of circa 300cc are processed and quickly scanned in order to determine the total quantity of sample necessary for the recovery of a satisfactory plant assemblage. Roman cesspit F108/1013 may contain mineralised plant remains, and the sample from this feature should be processed and reported-on.

6.0: UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN

6.1: General

- Roman settlement and context.

Evidence of prehistoric activity was limited to six flint fragments. The Phase 1 Roman features, dating from the 2nd to the 4th century appears to be the earliest occupation of the

site. Other settlements of Roman date were revealed by fieldwork 400m to the southeast, and 1500m to the southeast of Harradine's Farm (Walls 2001). Further finds of Roman date are recorded to the north and east of the modern village of Woodhurst. These settlements will have occupied higher ground (between 37-39m AOD) between fenland to the north (Hall 1996), and river terrace gravels to the south. Since the excamination of Roman rural sites has concentrated upon the examination of high status sites such as villas (Going 1997, 37), investigation of lower-order settlements such as at Harradine's Farm is of particular importance, particularly in the context of achieving a better understanding of the fen-edge landscape, particularly within the surrounds of the present village of Woodhurst. Further analysis of the pottery will contribute towards an understanding of the settlement chronology and economy. As noted by Brickley above comparatively few rural cemeteries have been investigated, which will make full reporting of the human remains, although admittedly small in number, relevant. The Phase 1 remains are also important as representing the first settlement within a sequence extending into the Saxon, medieval periods (Phases 2-3), and beyond, although not necessarily continuous.

- Saxon/early medieval, and later medieval village development

Given the evidence for continued Roman activity into the 4th century, and the Phase 2 pit groups containing Early-Middle Saxon pottery, further analysis of the data could contribute to an understanding of the Roman-Saxon transition, although the Phase 1 and 2 feature groups are both small-scale. The features of Saxon date uncovered during the 2001 excavation were limited to pits, which may have been peripheral to the Saxon settlement excavated in 1949 approximately 130m to the northwest of the site. The remains excavated in 1949 included burnt clay floors, wattle-built structures (SMR 3588a), and finds, principally pottery. At Harradine's Farm the Saxon and medieval features mainly comprised gravel-pits, presumably peripheral to settlement in the immediate surrounds, possibly focused in the later of the two phases on the moat (SMR 03607) recorded to the west of Harradine's Farm.

Seven east-west aligned human skeletons with no associated grave-goods were excavated in 1949 100m east of the site of the 2001 excavation. These burials were interpreted as the remains of plague pits, due to their distance from the church, located 150m from Harradine's Farm.

- Re-burial of Roman human remains in the medieval period.

The most unexpected features were the pits containing disarticulated human remains. It is probable that the inhumations were of Roman date, and were disturbed during the excavation of gravel-pits. The human remains were carefully re-buried as a mark of respect, although the re-burial pits also contained some animal bone, and charred cereals. Because the human remains within these pits derive from a disturbed context, C14 dating would be clearly inappropriate. Further research could provide parallels for this re-burial of the human remains.

6.2: List of updated aims

The original excavation aims comprised the following:

1) To investigate the nature and context of the Roman settlement and burial evidence.
2) To contribute towards an understanding of the evidence for Saxon/early medieval village development.
3) To contribute towards the understanding of the later medieval development of the village, and its subsequent history.

To these aims can be added the following:

4) To investigate the evidence for re-burial of the Roman human remains in the medieval period, and the comparative data.

7.0: PUBLICATION SYNOPSIS

It is proposed to publish the report as part of a volume in *the British Archaeological Reports, British Series*. The report will also present the results from other excavations of Saxon and medieval sites in Cambridgeshire dug by the Unit.

ROMAN, SAXON AND MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT IN WOODHURST. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT HARRADINE'S FARM, 2001

By Jonathan Williams

with contributions by Lynne Bevan, Dr. Megan Brickley, Marina Ciaraldi, Annette Hancocks, Dr. Emily Murray and Stephanie Ratkai

The suggested layout of the report is as follows:

Text

Summary (400 w)
Introduction, aims and methodology, archaeological setting (2000 w, 2 figures)
Results and interpretation (3000 w, 1 table, 6 figures, 6 plates)
Roman pottery (2000 w, 2 tables, 1 figures)
Saxon and medieval pottery (2500 w, 2 tables, 1 figure)
Charred plant remains (2000 w, 2 tables)
Animal bone, summary (250 w, 1 table)
Human bone (2500 w, 1 table)
Summary of the other finds (250 w)
Discussion (2500 w)
Conclusion (500 w)

Total 15,400 w, 9 tables, 6 plates, 10 figures

Figures

8.0: TASK LIST

TABLE 7: Task list and programme

STAGE A, PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS. Performance indicator, completion May 2002

1	Project management	AEJ	0.25
2	Site archive/update phasing/plans	JW	0.5
3	Data entry	JW	0.5
4	Prepare detailed site plans/sections: roughs	JW	0.5
5	Roman pottery recording	AH	2
6	Pottery recording/ revise phasing	SR	2
7	Charred plant remains, analysis	MC	2
8	Summary of other finds/ finds management	AH	0.25
9	Update database	AH	0.25

STAGE B, REPORTING AND ILLUSTRATION. Performance indicator, completion July 2002

10	Project management	AEJ	0.25
11	Prepare plans and sections	ND	0.5
12	Prepare pottery illustrations	ND	0.5
13	Library research	JW	0.5
14	Roman pottery reporting/discussion	AH	2.5
15	Post-Roman pottery reporting/discussion	SR	2
16	Charred plant remains reporting	MC	5
17	Human bone reporting	MBR	3
18	Draft new stratigraphic text	JW	1.5
19	Draft discussion	JW	1.5
20	Mount illustrations/corrections	ND	0.25

STAGE C, COMPLETION OF FIRST DRAFT. Performance indicator, completion October 2002

21	Project management	AEJ	0.25
22	First edit/ corrections to text	AEJ	0.25
23	Prepare/deposit archive	KM	
26	Prepare camera ready copy	-	-
27	Liaison with referees/BAR/ corrections	AEJ	-
28	Deposit archive	KM	0.5

KEY: AEJ= A. Jones, Project Manager; JW= J. Williams, author; ND=N. Dodds, illustrator; MBR=Dr. M. Brickley, human bone specialist; MC=M. Ciaraldi, charred plant remains specialist; AH=A. Hancocks, Roman pottery specialist/ finds manager; KM=K. Muldoon, Archive Supervisor; SR= S. Ratkai, post-Roman pottery specialist.

9.0: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The illustrations were prepared by Mark Breedon. The text was edited by Alex Jones, who also managed the project for BUFAU.

The evaluation was undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit for the same sponsors.

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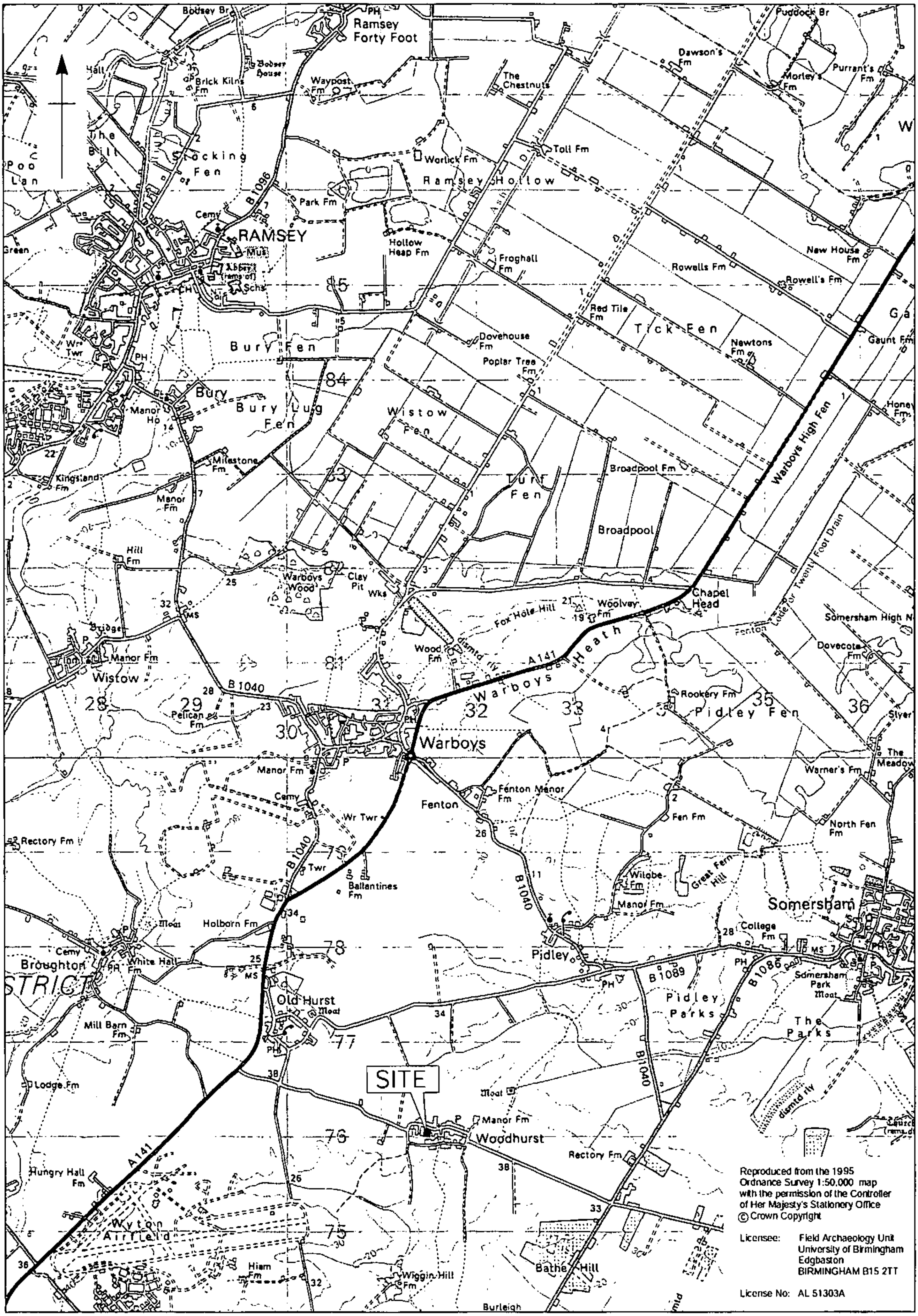
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Warboys High Fen
Warboys Heath
Warboys
Warboys Wood
Clay Pit Wks
Chapel Head
Fox Hole Hill
Wistow
Fenton
Pidley
Pidley Fen
Pidley Parks
Somersham
The Parks
Old Hurst
Broughton
Wyton Airfield
Bathe Hill
Wiggin Hill
Hungry Hall Fm
Manor Fm
Rectory Fm
A141
B1040
B1096
B1089
B1086
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Fig.1

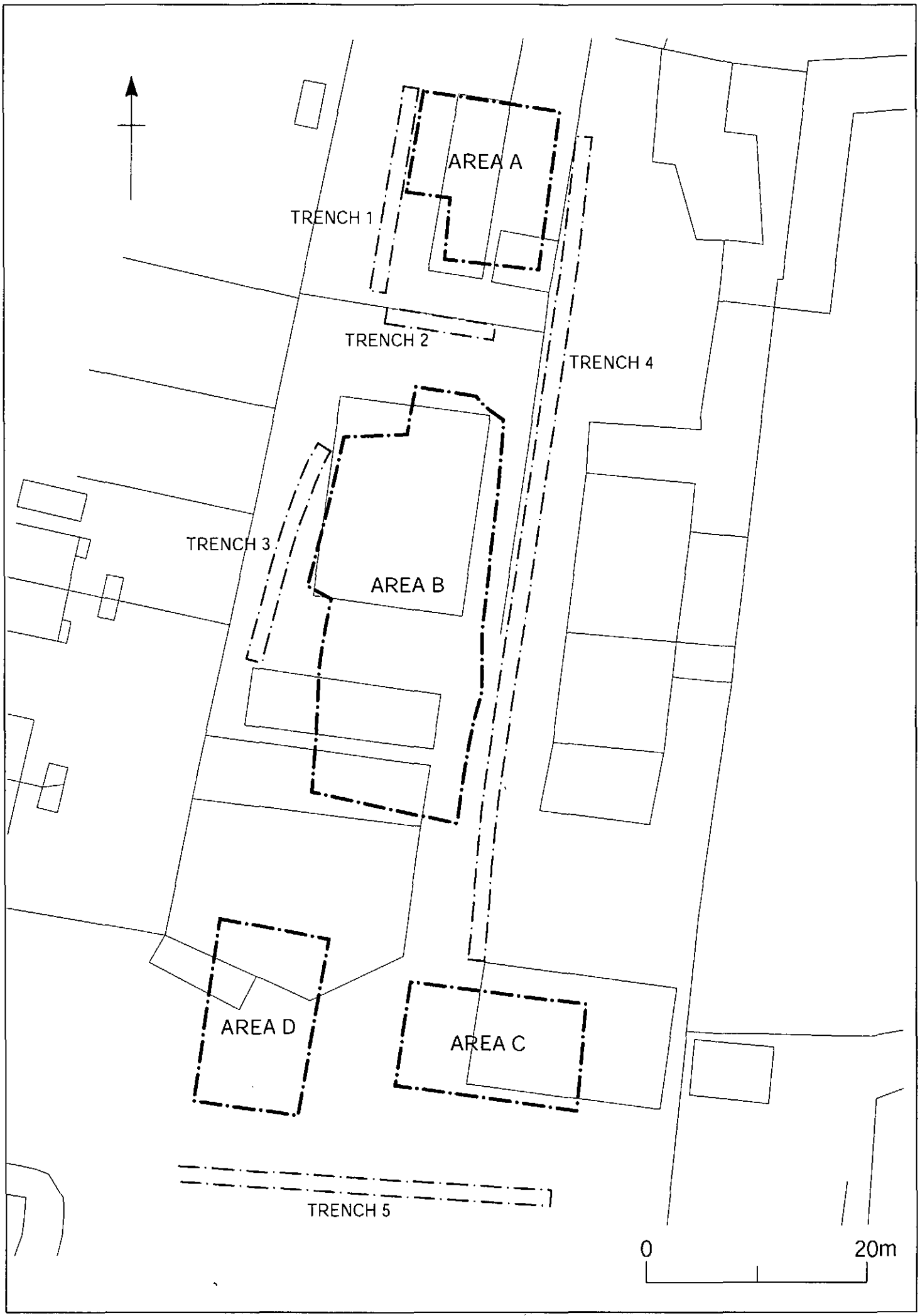
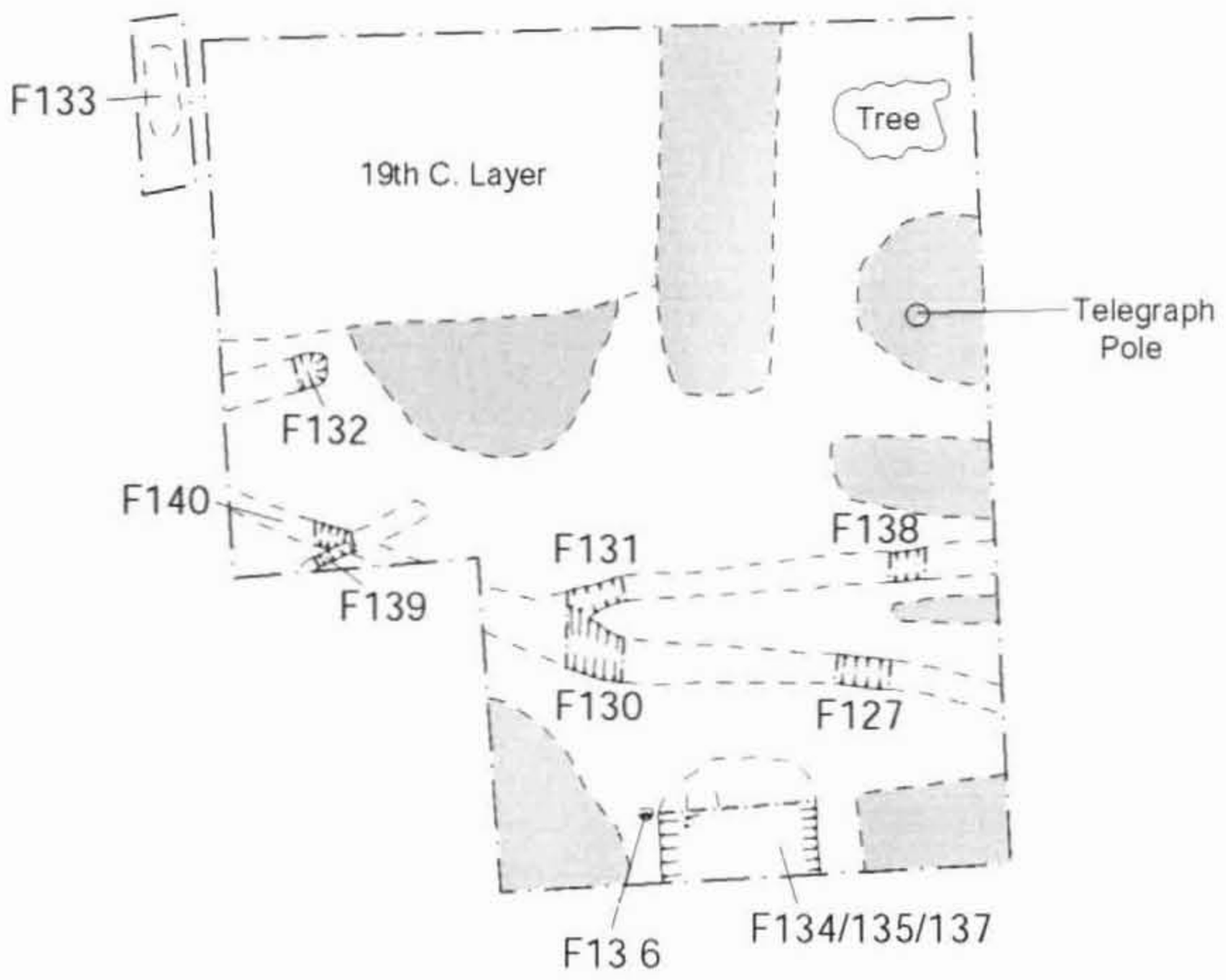

AREA A
TRENCH 1
TRENCH 2
TRENCH 4
TRENCH 3
AREA B
AREA D
AREA C
TRENCH 5
0
20m

Fig. 2

AREA A



Disturbance

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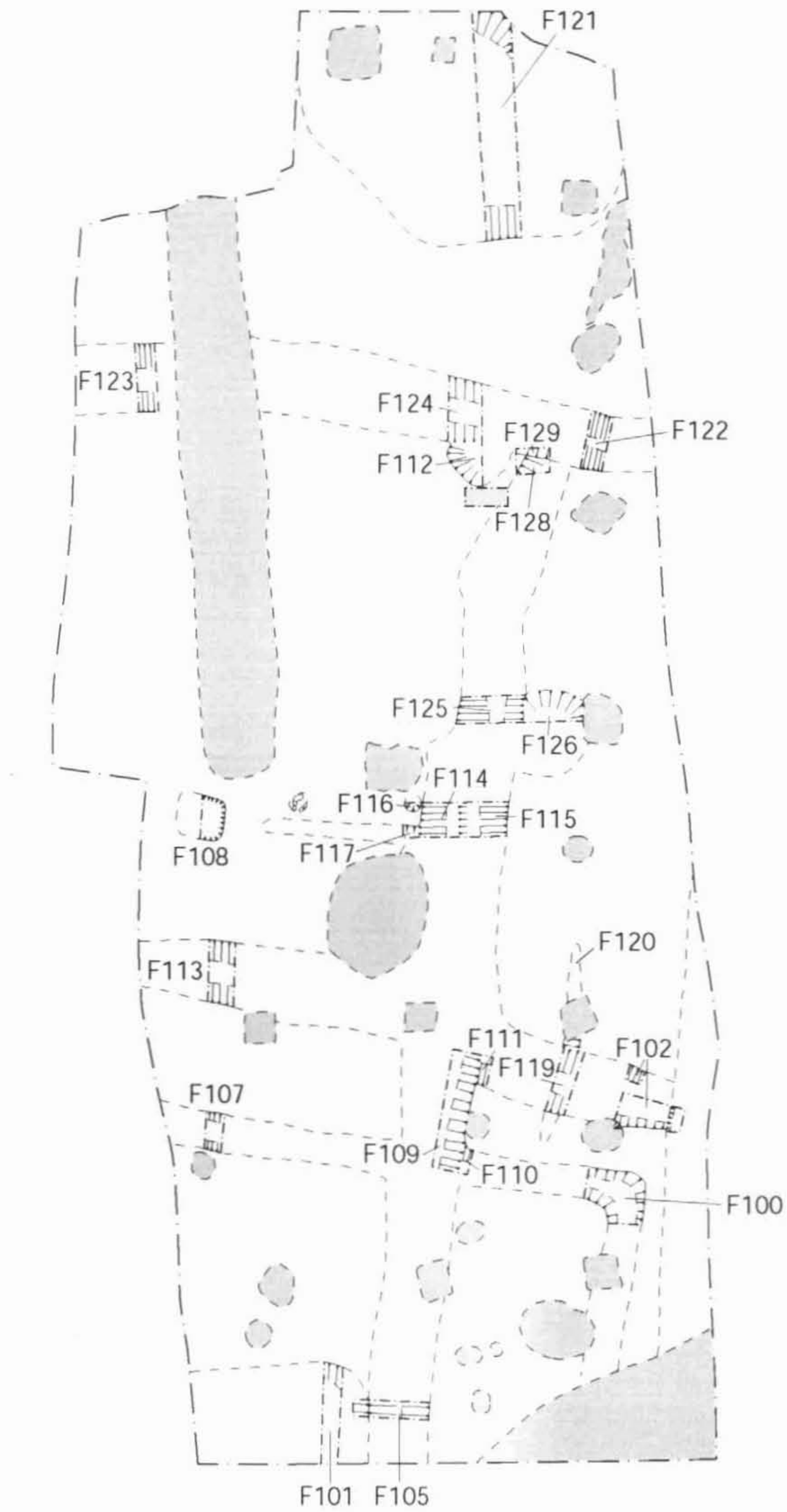
Fig.3

AREA B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F123
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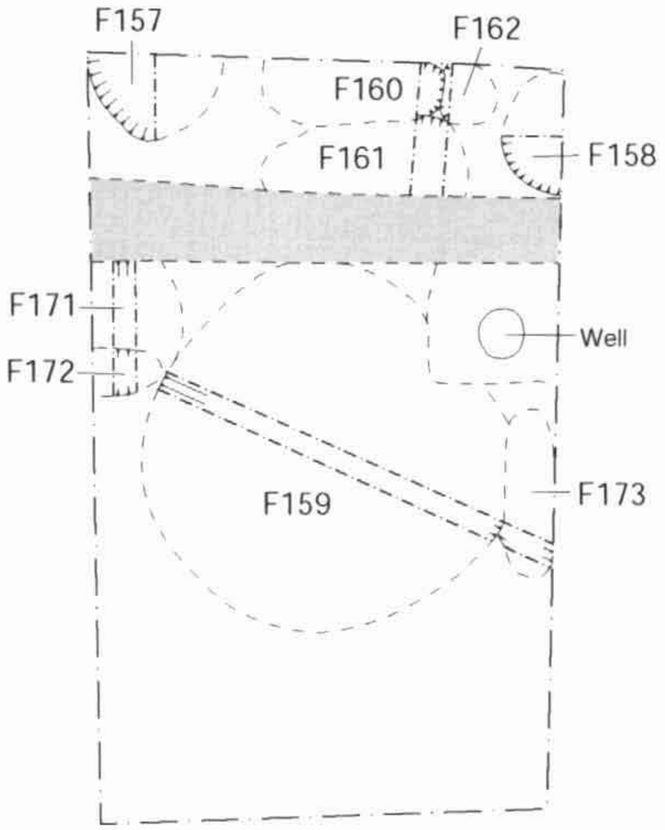
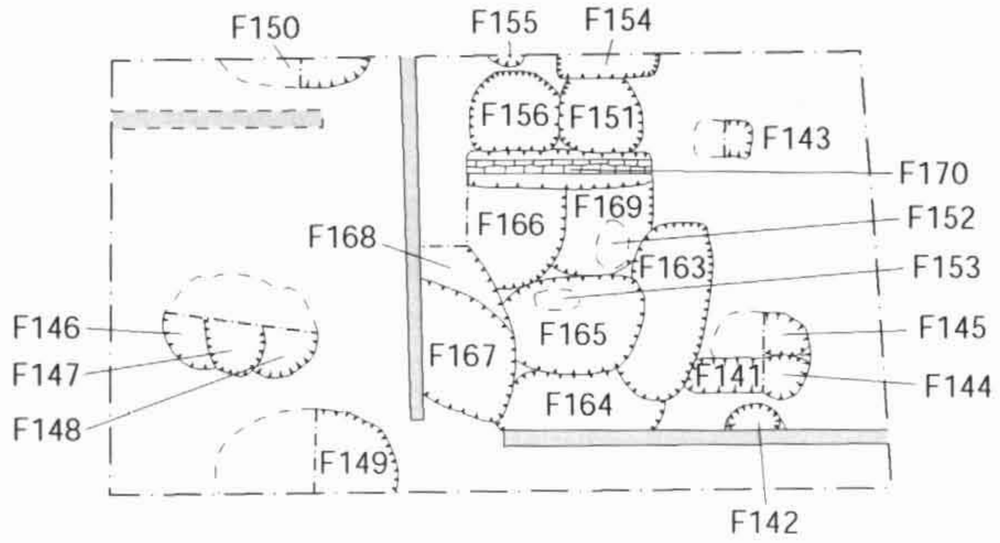
F128
F125
F126
F114
F116
F115
F108
F117
F120
F113
F111
F119
F102
F107
F109
F110
F100
F101
F105
Disturbance
0
10m

Fig.4

AREA D

AREA C





Disturbance

0 10m

Fig.5

Plate 1

Plate 2

Plate 3

Plate 4

Plate 5

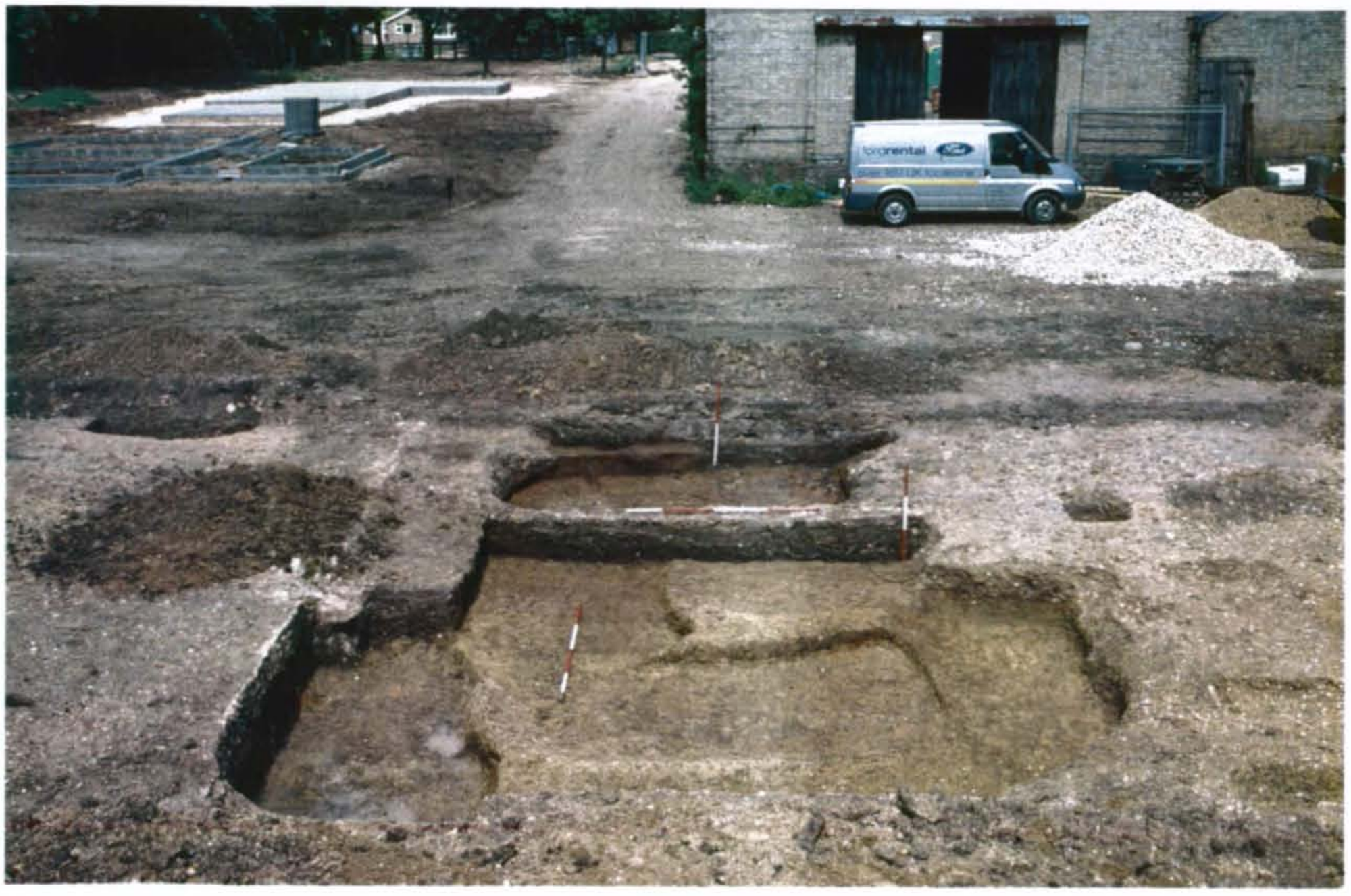


Plate 6