

Exeter Archaeology

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWALKING AND  
TRIAL TRENCHING FOR THE PROPOSED  
SHERFORD NEW COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT,  
SOUTH HAMS, DEVON**

**Prepared on behalf of Scott Wilson Ltd**

**by J. Best**

**Exeter Archaeology**

**Report No. 06.44**

**June 2006**

## Contents

Summary	
1. Introduction	1
2. Historical and archaeological background	1
3 Aims	2
4. Method	2
4.1 Fieldwalking	2
4.2 Trial trenches	2
5. Results: Fieldwalking	3
5.1 Artefact types	3
5.2 Distribution	4
6. Results: Trial trenching	5
6.1 Trench 1	5
6.2 Trench 2	5
6.3 Trench 3	6
6.4 Trench 6	7
6.5 Trench 8	7
6.6 Trench 9	8
6.7 Trench 10	8
7. The finds	8
7.1 Introduction	8
7.2 The pottery	8
7.3 Other finds	9
8. Discussion	9
Archive	10
Acknowledgements	10
Sources consulted	10
Appendix 1 Context descriptions by trench	11
Appendix 2 Finds listing	15

## List of illustrations and plates

- Fig. 1 Location of site
- Fig. 2 Locations of trenches and fieldwalking area
- Fig. 3 Total distribution of worked flint
- Fig. 4 Distribution of flint tools and cores
- Fig. 5 Distribution of pottery
- Fig. 6 Trench 1: Plan
- Fig. 7 Trench 1: Selected sections of
- Fig. 8 Trench 2; Plan and sections
- Fig. 9 Trench 3: Plan and sections
- Fig. 10 Trench 4: Plan and sections
- Fig. 11 Trench 8: Plan and sections
- Fig. 12 Trenches 9 and 10: Plans and sections

Plate 1. Possible hearth 205, Trench 2

Plate 2. General view of Trench 3 (view from south)

## SUMMARY

A fieldwalking survey and targeted trench evaluation for the proposed Sherford New Community development, near Plymouth (NGR SX 552 540) was undertaken by Exeter Archaeology during 2006. The work was carried out in conjunction with and followed on from a geophysical survey, which identified a number of sub-surface anomalies, including ring ditches of possible barrows, enclosures, linear features and a number of discrete anomalies that may represent pits.

The fieldwalking survey was carried out in the SW corner of the proposed development, in an area where two ring ditch geophysical anomalies were recorded. The main artefact type recovered was worked flint and chert, the majority of which belonging to a late prehistoric flake industry. Of particular note, however, is an early Neolithic leaf arrowhead. Only small quantities of pottery was recovered, and this material ranges in date from the Iron Age through to the post-medieval and modern periods.

Eight trenches totalling 377m in length were excavated, all of which targeted possible archaeological anomalies identified during the geophysical survey of the site. Late prehistoric and Roman features were recorded in the western and central areas of the site, including a number of pits, postholes and possible hearth. Ditches and a bank relating to former medieval and post-medieval field systems were present in other trenches elsewhere within the site.

The fieldwalking, trial trenching and geophysical survey have provided further information that supports previous archaeological work in the area, which has established that the area to the north and east of Elburton is of high archaeological potential for the presence of prehistoric and Romano-British settlement, agricultural and funerary deposits. Within the proposed development area, this potential is clearly concentrated within the fields immediately east of Vinery Lane. Elsewhere across the site, more localised and perhaps less significant deposits are likely to be present.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report was commissioned by Scott Wilson Ltd and presents the results of a fieldwalking survey and targeted trial trench evaluation undertaken by Exeter Archaeology (EA) during 2006 on land at Sherford, near Plymouth, Devon (centred NGR SX 552 540). The work was carried out to provide supporting information for a planning application for a proposed development on the site and was required by Devon County Historic Environment Service (DCHES) and Plymouth City Council (PCC).

The fieldwalking areas and trial trenches were located within the site of the proposed Sherford New Community Development, which covers an area of *c.* 450 hectares on the eastern edge of Plymouth (Fig. 1). In addition to these works, a geophysical survey by magnetometry has also been undertaken.<sup>1</sup> All the fieldwork was carried out along the proposed route of 'Main Street' (a new road that will link the A38 and Elburton), and an area of proposed residential development in the SW part of the site.

The site is currently agricultural land, with a mixture of pasture and arable. The underlying geology comprises predominantly slate, with a band of limestone occurring to the north and east of Elburton. Areas of Schalsteins, Tuffs and Diabase are located across the south and east of the development area.

## 2. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

An archaeological desk-based assessment for the development site has been previously prepared by Exeter Archaeology.<sup>2</sup> The following is a summary of these results.

Field name and crop mark evidence suggests the presence of two prehistoric features within the southern area of the site, comprising a rectilinear enclosure and a probable barrow. Finds dating to the Mesolithic and Neolithic have been found to the SW of the site. A Bronze Age cemetery has been recorded on the eastern edge of Elburton<sup>3</sup> and an Iron Age to Romano-British settlement has been partially excavated at Hazel Grove, Elburton.<sup>4</sup> Ongoing archaeological investigations at Langage Business Park, Plympton, have also recorded Bronze Age features (Exeter Archaeology Project No. 5691). Numerous Roman find-spots are recorded in the SW part of the site, and it is possible that a Roman settlement was once located in the vicinity.

Sherford and Hareston are located on the eastern edge of the site, and were both recorded in the Domesday Book, indicating that at least some of the settlement pattern in the area dates from the Late Saxon period. Butlas Farm, Slew Farm and Vealeholme date from the medieval period. Areas of surviving relict medieval field systems have been identified around Sherford and Butlas by the Devon Historic Landscape Characterisation Project. Cartographic evidence suggests that the area continued to be used for agriculture throughout the post-medieval period, with very little development taking place.

---

<sup>1</sup> Smalley 2006.

<sup>2</sup> EA Report 00.69.

<sup>3</sup> EA Report 00.42.

<sup>4</sup> EA Report 94.64.

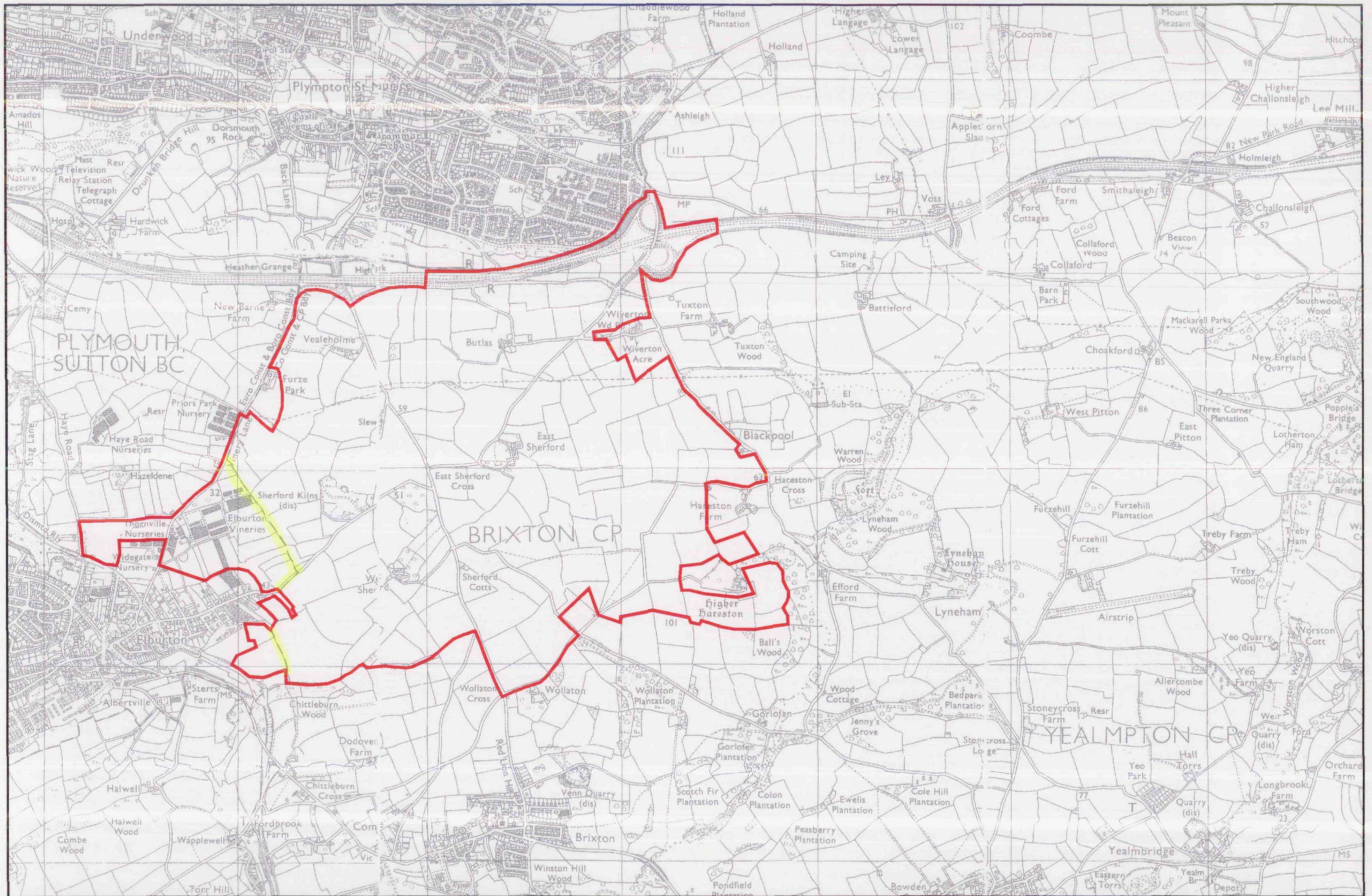


Fig. 1 Location of site. Reproduced from the 1:25000 Pathfinder® map 1356 by permission of Ordnance Survey® on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright 1988. All rights reserved. Licence No. AL 100016685.

The geophysical survey (Smalley 2006) identified a number of sub-surface anomalies throughout the proposed development area. These included ring ditches of possible barrows in the SW Corner of the site, possible enclosures, linear features and a number of discrete anomalies that may represent pits.

### 3. AIMS

The aims of the work were set out in an initial written scheme of investigation prepared by Scott Wilson Ltd (2006).

The aim of the fieldwalking survey was to identify any significant hitherto unknown surface artefact assemblages within the proposed development area.

The aims of the evaluation were:

- To determine the presence/absence of buried archaeological remains;
- To establish (where possible) the nature, depth, extent, character and date of any archaeological deposits or features encountered;
- To determine the condition or state of preservation of any archaeological deposits or features encountered;
- To determine the likely range, quality and quantity of artefactual and environmental evidence present;
- To test the interpretations of anomalies identified by geophysical survey and fieldwalking;
- To determine the significance of any archaeological remains present.

The results set out in this report will provide supporting evidence for a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and Environmental Statement, and assist in allowing an informed decision to be made as to any future archaeological mitigation that may be required on the site.

### 4. METHOD

All work was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (Scott Wilson Ltd 2006) that was approved by DCHES and PCC prior to commencement on site.

#### 4.1 Fieldwalking

There were four fields in the SW corner of the site suitable for fieldwalking (A-D on Fig. 2). For Fields A-C collection units were based on 10m long transects aligned along the National Grid. For Field D 20m transect were walked in order to minimise crop damage.

#### 4.2 Trial trenches

A total of 450m of trenching was originally proposed, to target a number of the possible archaeological anomalies identified during the geophysical survey. 377m of trenching was excavated, comprising eight trenches measuring between 27m and 50m in length. Trench 5 was not excavated due to the presence of arable crops in the field



Fig. 2 Locations of trenches and field walking area. Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick. Licence No. AL 100018181.



and Trench 7 was not opened due the close proximity of overhead power lines. The position of trenches is shown on Fig. 2.

The trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machining was carried out under the supervision and to the satisfaction of the site archaeologist. In Trenches 1, 2, 3, 6, 9 and 10 machine excavations stopped at the level of the archaeological deposits, and investigation continued by hand, in order to determine their nature and full extent. In Trench 4 machining stopped at the level of undisturbed natural deposits, which were exposed at a depth of 0.45m below ground level. In Trench 8 machine excavations ceased at a maximum depth of 1.20m, due to the presence of substantial natural clay deposits.

The standard EA recording system was employed, and consisted of:

- Preparation of evaluation trench record sheets
- standardised single context recording
- drawings in plan and section at scales of 1:10, 1:20, 1:50 and 1:100
- a photographic record consisting of black and white prints and colour transparency, accompanied by digital photography
- labelling and bagging of finds from each context.

## 5. RESULTS: FIELDWALKING

### 5.1 Artefact types

Many of the finds recovered during the fieldwalking exercise comprised modern material such as brick, tile, flowerpot, glass and modern pottery. These finds were catalogued and then discarded.

The principal artefact types retained comprise prehistoric worked flint and chert and prehistoric to post-medieval pottery.

#### *Worked flint and chert*

This assemblage comprises 254 items and includes material from most prehistoric periods, although the majority belongs to a late prehistoric flake industry. Unworked pieces have also been included as flint and chert is not indigenous to the site so must have been brought in.

Waste flakes account for around 45% of the assemblage and these are generally broad and squat pieces, which are generally characteristic of the late Neolithic or Bronze Age periods. Evidence for a late Mesolithic or early Neolithic industry comprises the 40 blade flakes.

Pieces categorised as tools include end and side scrapers and awls of probable late Neolithic or Bronze Age date. Of particular note is an early Neolithic leaf arrowhead from field D. The flint and chert assemblage is itemised by type in Table 1 below.

Table 1. The flint and chert

Category	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Totals
Tools	47	3	0	6	56
Cores	17	5	1	4	27
Blades	35	2	0	3	40
Flakes	74	7	5	27	113
Burnt	0	0	0	1	1
Unworked	10	2	0	6	18
<b>Totals</b>	183	19	6	47	255

### *Pottery*

A total of 488 sherds of pottery has been retained, with modern material quantified then discarded. Most of the remaining assemblage is medieval or post-medieval in date. Earlier pieces are present, however, including two Iron Age sherds from field D. There were two Roman pieces recovered; an abraded imported Samian ware sherd from field B and one in Black Burnished ware from field D.

Of the 120 medieval sherds, two may be Saxo-Norman and probably date to the 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. The majority of sherds, however, are in local Totnes-type or granite-derived fabrics, although a Cornish Lostwithiel type and an imported medieval French Saintogne sherd have also been identified. This preference for local fabrics is also reflected in the 364 post-medieval sherds with the bulk of the local wares being Totnes-type, North Devon gravel-free and coarsewares and South Somerset wares. However, the post-medieval assemblage does exhibit a greater variety of continental imports including German Frechen, Rarean and Westerwald stonewares, Iberian Merida-type and French Saintogne fabrics.

### 5.2 Distribution

The distributions of the principal artefact types in relation to the geophysical survey results are shown on Fig. 3 – 5.

For most transects where worked flint or chert was recovered, quantities were generally only one or two pieces (Fig. 3). In only six transects were three or more pieces recovered, with all these located in the southern part of field A, in an area containing the possible barrow. Similarly, a large proportion of the tools and cores recovered were located in this part of the site (Fig. 4). In fields B, C and D, few tools or cores were recovered, although the relatively low quantities in the latter field may be as a result of the 20m rather than 10m transect intervals.

The distribution of pottery is shown on Fig. 5. There was a general paucity of sherds pre-dating the medieval period and the Roman and Iron Age material were isolated finds in fields B and D. Although the quantities of medieval and post medieval pottery were higher, there do not appear to be any significant concentrations. It is likely that this material represents manuring or other early agricultural practices, rather than indicating evidence for intact settlement of these periods within the fields.

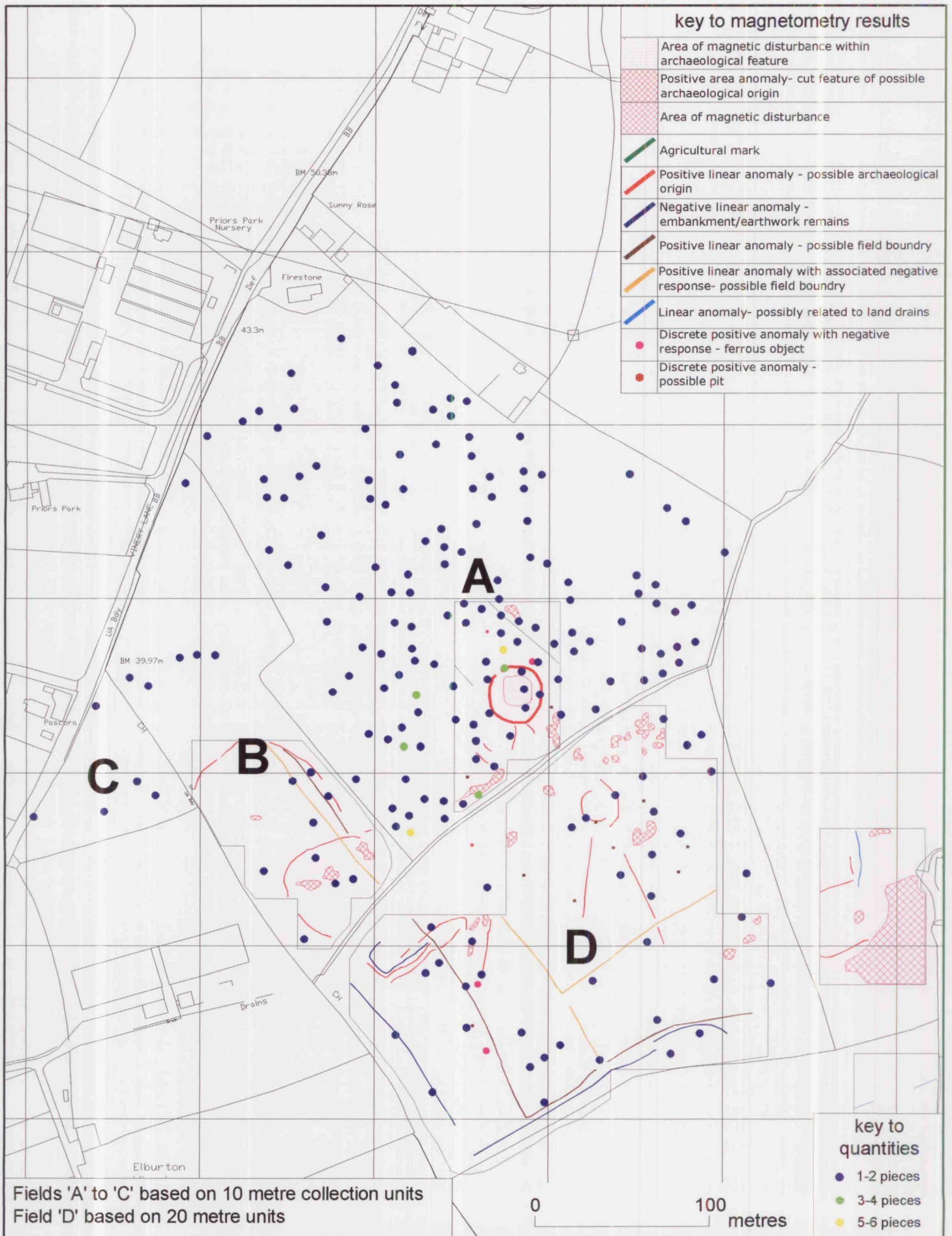


Fig. 3 Total distribution of worked flint in relation to preliminary magnetometry results. Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick. Licence No. AL 100018181.

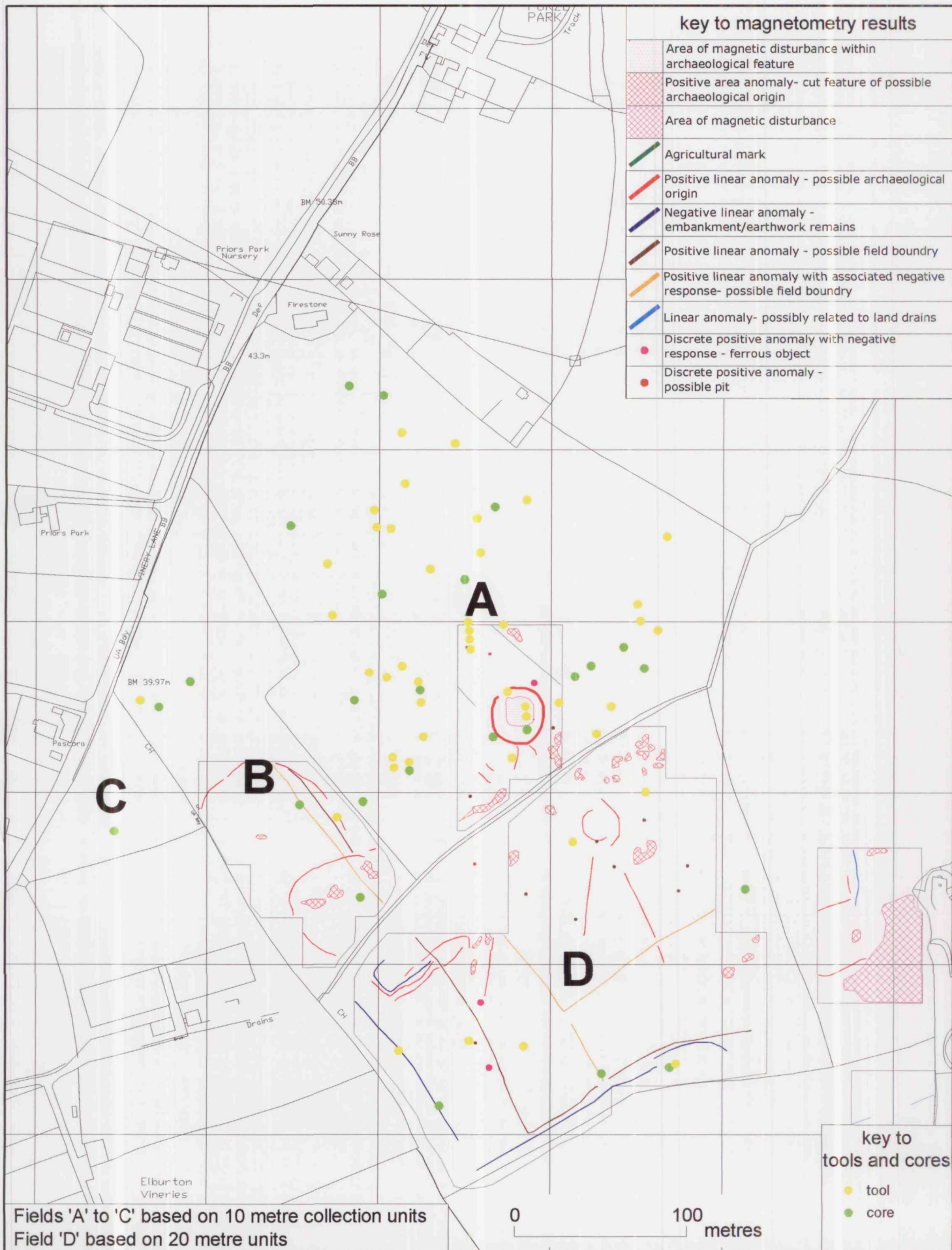


Fig. 4 Distribution of flint tools and cores in relation to preliminary magnetometry results. Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick. Licence No. AL 100018181. Scale 1:2000.

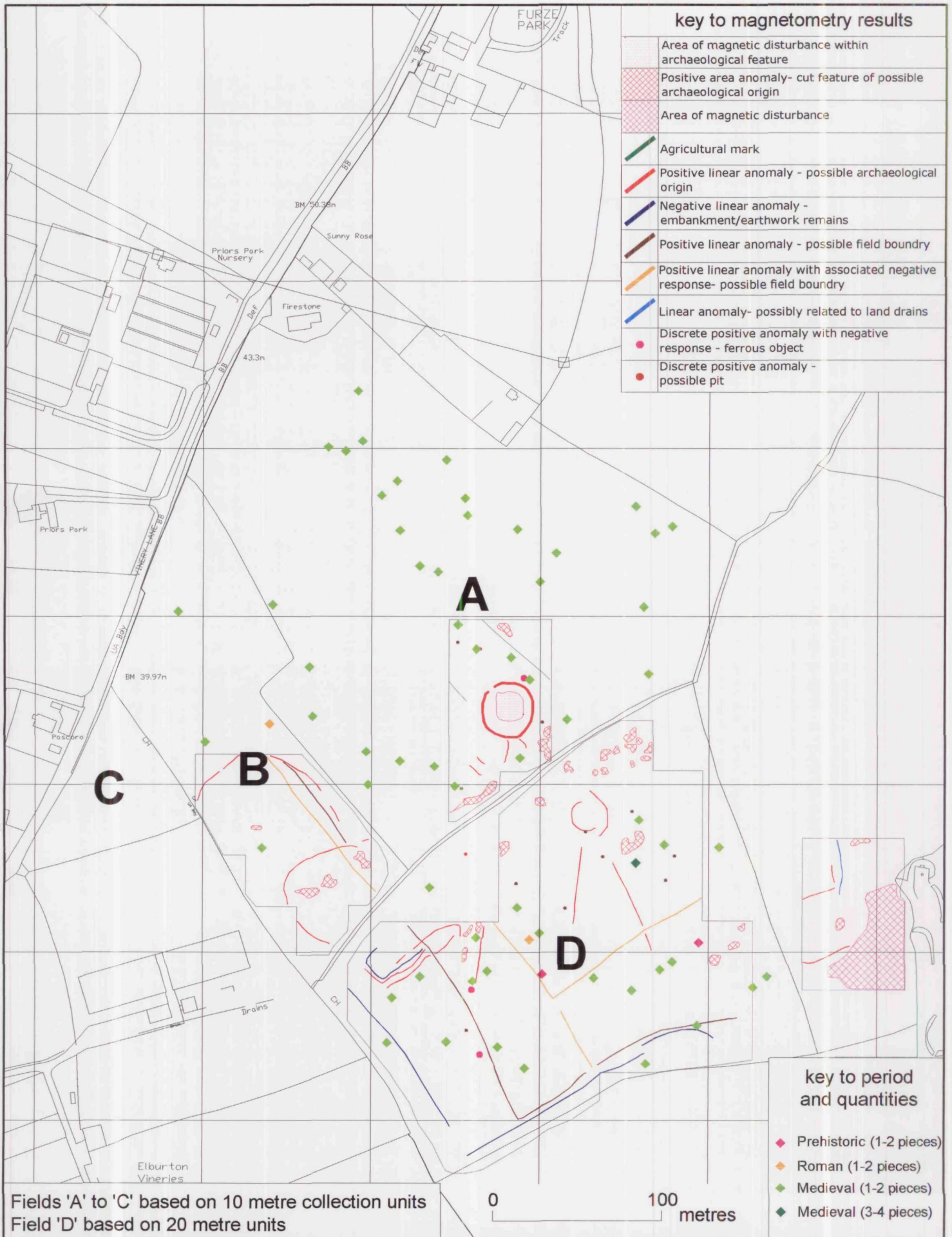


Fig. 5 Total distribution of pottery in relation to preliminary magnetometry results. Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick. Licence No. AL 100018181. Scale 1:2000.

## 6. RESULTS: TRIAL TRENCHING

Archaeological features were present in Trenches 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9 and 10. In the majority of the trenches the deposit sequence consisted of topsoil overlying subsoil that was above natural ground. The natural bedrock in Trenches 4, 8, 9 and 10 was vertically bedded shillet and patches of reddish-brown clay-silt, whereas in Trenches 1 and 6 it comprised silts and clays with very few inclusions. In Trenches 2 and 3 the natural bedrock was very uneven and consisted of bedded limestone outcrops. Detailed context descriptions for each trench are set out in Appendix 1, with trenches described in detail below only when pre-modern features were present.

### 6.1 Trench 1 (Plan Fig. 6, sections Fig. 7)

Trench 1 was located at the base of a shallow slope and contained a deep overlying soil sequence, with up to 0.76m of topsoil (100) and 0.46m of subsoil (101) overlying natural clay silts (103). In the base of the trench were 12 postholes and two pits, mainly concentrated at the east end of the trench. The features were cut from the level of subsoil, but were only visible when natural clays were exposed.

Most of the postholes measured between 0.05-0.15m in diameter and 0.05-0.55m deep, with steep sides and flat bases. Postholes 105, 107, 109, 124 contained limestone packing material and sparse fragments of charcoal. Pit 111 also contained fragments of limestone, charcoal and heat-discoloured clay. In the base of pit 103 was a layer of carbonised grain, charcoal and heat-discoloured clay, overlain by a dark brown clay-silt, which had been truncated by posthole 124. Posthole 128 also contained carbonised grain and charcoal. No dateable artefacts were found within any of these features. The postholes may represent the remains of a prehistoric or Roman structures associated with domestic activities that have produced waste, such as the carbonised grain within pit 103. Samples from those features containing carbonised grain and charcoal were collected but were not analysed as part of the current work, as no associated dateable artefacts were recovered.

The geophysical anomaly targeted by the trench at its west end was the remains of a tree throw, one of several visible in the base of the trench. The larger anomaly at the eastern end of the trench broadly follows the base of the gentle hill-slope in this field and may be a result of the more substantial depths of topsoil and subsoil in this area. The depth of these deposits had obscured the pits and postholes recorded above.

### 6.2 Trench 2 (Plan and sections Fig. 8, Plate 1)

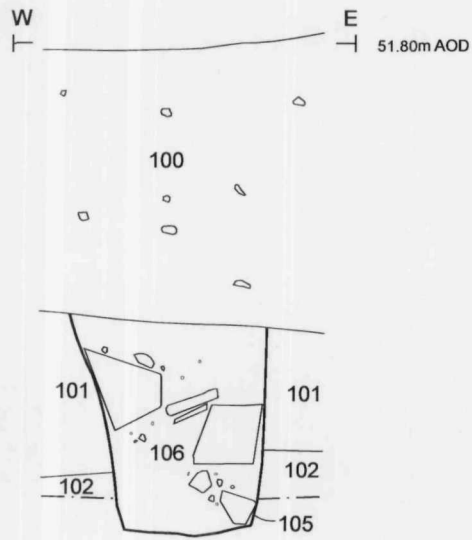
This trench was located 70m to the north of Trench 1, on relatively level ground. The topsoil (200) and subsoil (201) were up to 0.65m deep, overlying very uneven and fragmented limestone bedrock (202). The earliest feature within the trench was a possible hearth (205) located 4m from the west end. The northern edge of the hearth extended beyond the boundary of the trench and the west edge had been truncated by a linear feature (203). The hearth measured at least 1.1m long and 0.6m wide and contained firm yellow clay (206), which was a well-defined concentric ring of heavily burnt clay and charcoal. The feature was not excavated, but one sherd of probable middle Iron Age pottery was recovered from its exposed surface.



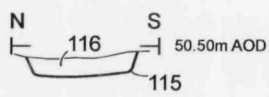
# Trench 1: Sections

## Post-holes

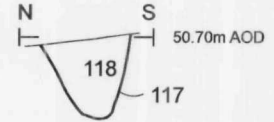
1



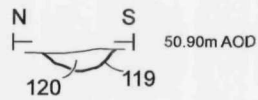
2



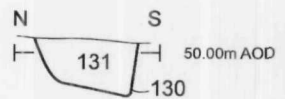
3



4

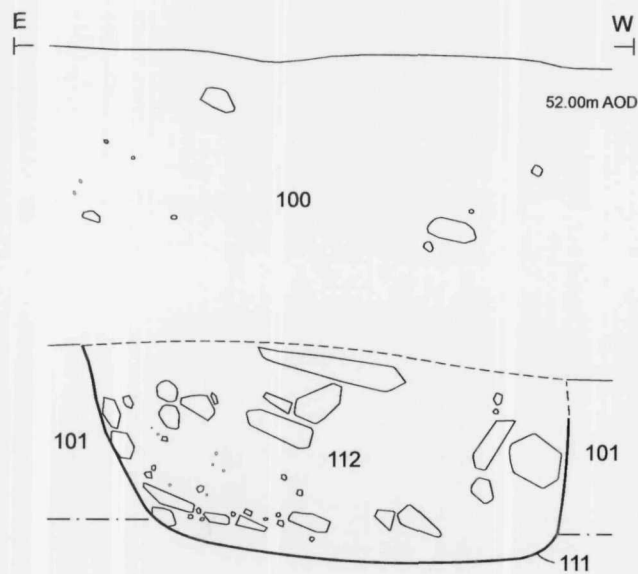


5



## Pits

6



7

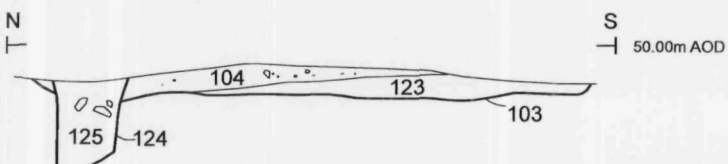


Fig. 7 Selected sections of features Trench 1.







Plate 1. Possible hearth 205, Trench 2 (scale 0.25m)



Plate 2. General view of Trench 3 (view from south)

Adjacent to the east edge of 205 was a possible linear feature (216) aligned approximately east-west, which overlay the natural limestone and contained 2 sherds of Roman pottery dating from the 1st-2nd-century AD. The full extent was not visible within the trench; it had been removed to the east by a later feature.

Feature 209 was approximately N-S aligned, c. 6.6m wide and had a depth of at least 1m. It contained a number of different fills/deposits (210-214, 218-220 & 222), mainly consisting of brown clay and limestone. A small quantity of finds was recovered, including a small, abraded sherd of late Roman mortaria from fill 215 and an early Roman greyware sherd from 216. Fill 210 contained a number of sherds of late Iron Age and early Romano-British date.

The feature may be a large quarry pit or ditch, but it is also conceivable that it represents a series of intercutting features. However, its interpretation is tentative due to the limited area available within the trial trench, the lack of consistency between the two sections of the trench, and the voided nature of many of the lower deposits.

The latest feature in this part of the trench was linear feature 203, which was aligned approximately NE-SW and filled with material very similar to the subsoil. It was probably a ditch associated with the former medieval strip-field system identified in this area by the Devon Historic Landscape Characterisation Project.

A ditch (207) was located in the west end of Trench 2. It was aligned broadly east-west and measured 1.6m wide and 0.45m deep. The limestone bedrock in this part of the trench was very uneven and the ditch was mainly visible beneath the topsoil in the sides of the trench. No dateable finds were recovered from its fill (208).

Linear feature 203 and ditch 207 were the only archaeological anomalies recorded by the geophysical survey in Trench 3. The presence of large fragments of limestone and compacted clay deposits within 209, 221 etc may have obscured the underlying remains.

### 6.3 Trench 3 (Plan and sections Fig. 9, Plate 2)

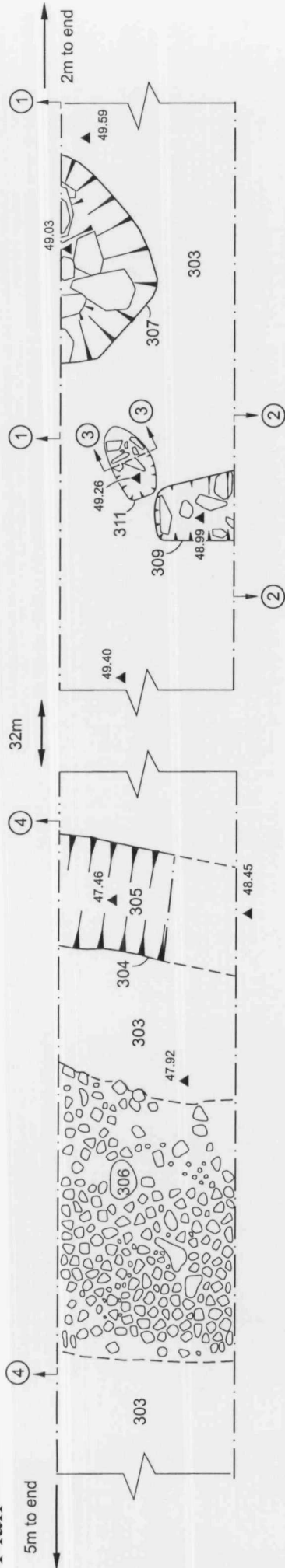
This trench was located on sloping ground to the east of the disused Sherford limekilns. The layer sequence comprised 0.19m of topsoil (300) overlying a layer of yellowish-brown silty clay (301) that had accumulated on the uneven and fragmented surface of the limestone bedrock (303). Within layer 301 were a small number of pottery sherds dating from the late Iron Age/early Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods. The bedrock was very uneven and the outcrops sloped steeply down towards the west. The natural ground for c.12m at the southern end of the trench comprised brownish-yellow clay with some small fragments of limestone.

Cutting the natural clay at the southern end of the trench were pits 307 and 311 and ditch terminus 309. The most substantial feature was 307, which measured 1.8m long and 0.6m deep. All three features were filled with reddish-brown clay silt, limestone and flecks of charcoal (308), which produced one sherd of 13th/14th-century pottery.

An approximately NE-SW aligned ditch (304) was located near the northern end of the trench. It measured 0.8m wide and 0.5m deep, with a 'V' shaped profile cut into the limestone bedrock. The fill was a brown silty clay with fragments of limestone

# Trench 3

## Plan



## Sections:

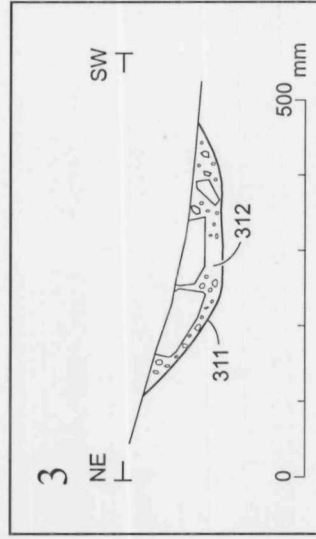
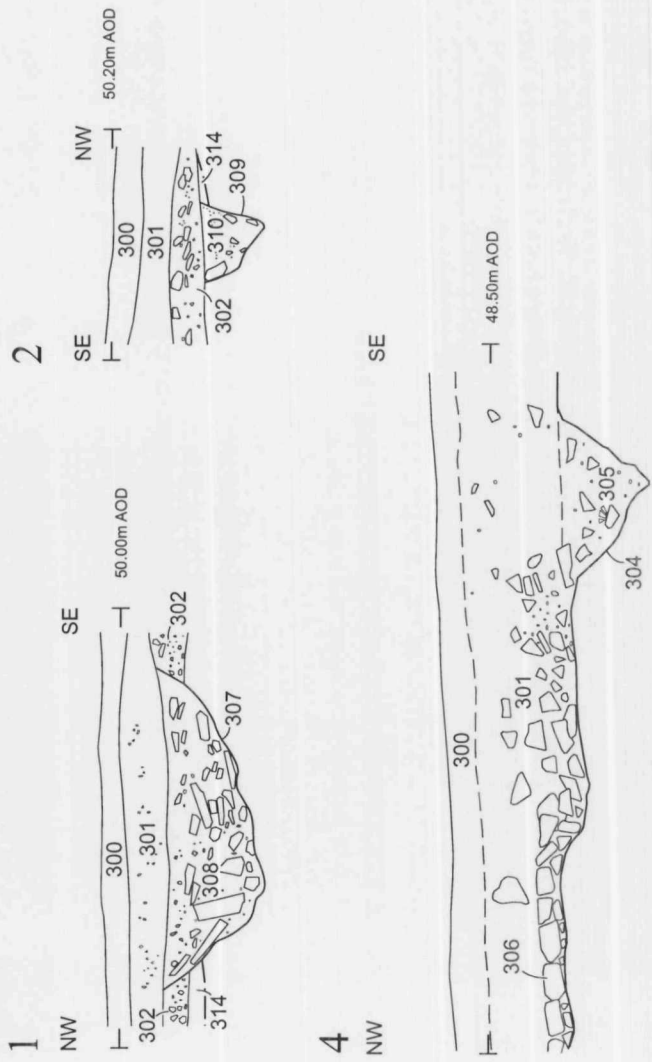


Fig. 9 Trench 3: Plan and sections.

(305). Pottery recovered comprised two late Iron Age or Roman sherds, two 13th-century sherds and two 16th-18th-century sherds.

Approximately 1m to the north of ditch 304 and parallel with it. This was composed of compacted small limestone fragments, and was 1.8m wide and up to 0.2m thick. It is likely to represent the remains of a linear bank.

Ditches 304 and 309 were identified during the geophysical survey and may be part of a former medieval or post-medieval enclosure or field system. The presence of possible bank material 306 along the north side of 304 suggests that it may have been a ditched hedge bank, extending westwards from the disused kilns. The mixture of pottery found within the trench suggests that low-level activity occurred throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods.

#### 6.4 Trench 6 (Plan and sections Fig. 10)

Trench 6 was located 400m to the SW of Butlas Farm, on land that slopes gradually down towards the east. A ditch (609) was exposed in the southern part of the trench. It was aligned SE-NW and had been sealed beneath the subsoil. It measured 0.92m wide and 0.25m deep, with a 'U' shaped profile. The single fill (610) comprised olive-brown clay silt, with no large inclusions. It contained two small sherds of Roman pottery. The ditch was recorded during the geophysical survey and may have been part of a former field boundary or enclosure.

A second ditch (603) was aligned approximately E-W and measured 0.72m wide and 0.42m deep. It had been infilled with a sequence of brown silty clay, redeposited clay and brown silty clay with sparse fragments of charcoal (604, 611, 612). No finds were recovered, but it is likely to be later than ditch 603 as it truncated the subsoil, rather than being sealed by it. The ditch was also recorded during the geophysical survey and may have been part of a former field boundary.

#### 6.5 Trench 8 (Plan and sections Fig. 11)

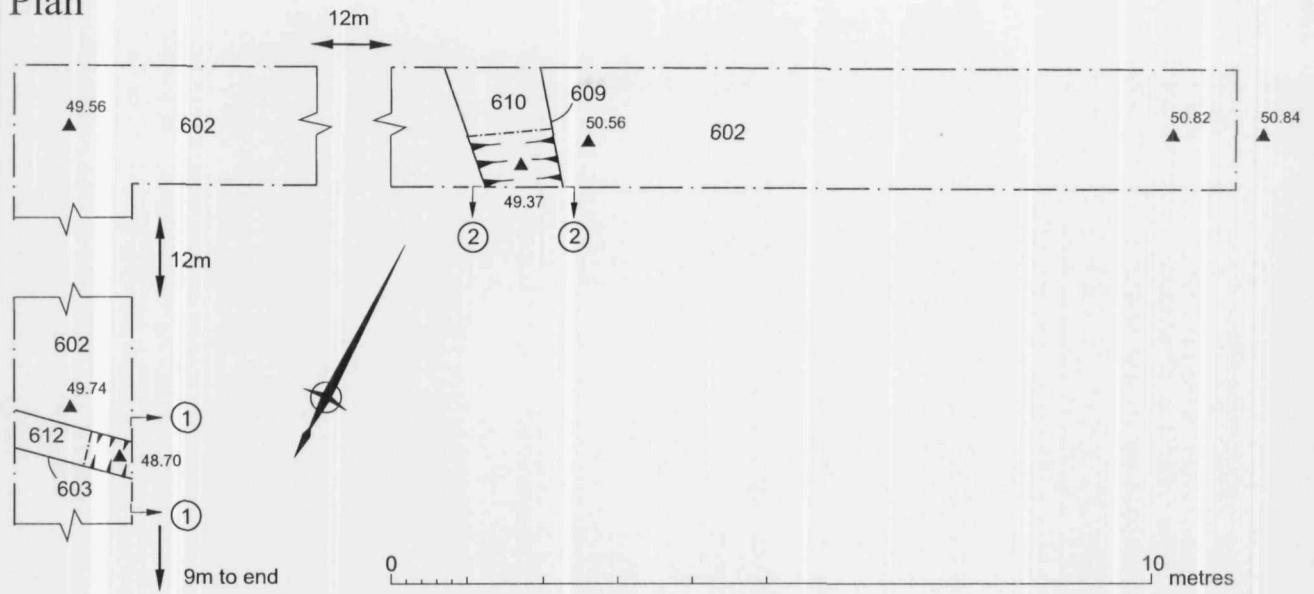
This trench was located to the SW of Butlas Farm, within an area of low-lying ground. At each end of the trench the topsoil directly overlay natural shillet. In the centre was a large naturally-formed feature infilled with colluvial layers of brown and grey clay, with fine silts and very few inclusions (805 & 806). Within the east edge of the hollow was layer 804, composed of very fragmented shillet and clay, steeply sloping down to the west. The full depth of these deposits was not exposed and no artefacts were recovered.

At the east end of the trench was a linear ditch (802), which was aligned N-S and measured 1.3m wide and 0.6m deep. The ditch had infilled with brown silty clay and shillet (803) and no artefacts were present. It may represent part of the former medieval field system in this area.

Both features were identified during the geophysical survey.

# Trench 6

## Plan



## Sections:

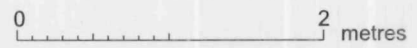
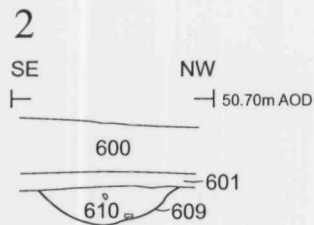
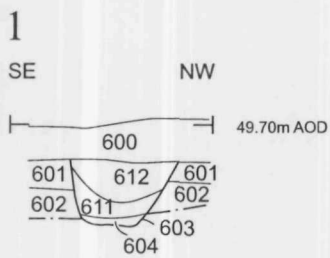
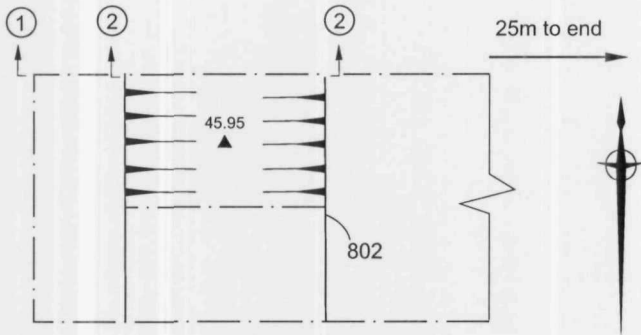


Fig. 10 Trench 6: plan and sections.

# Trench 8

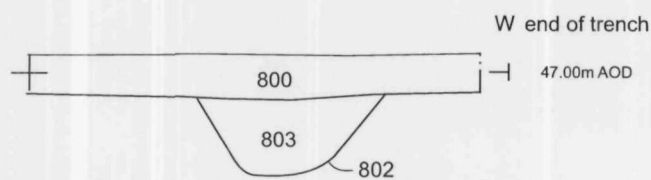
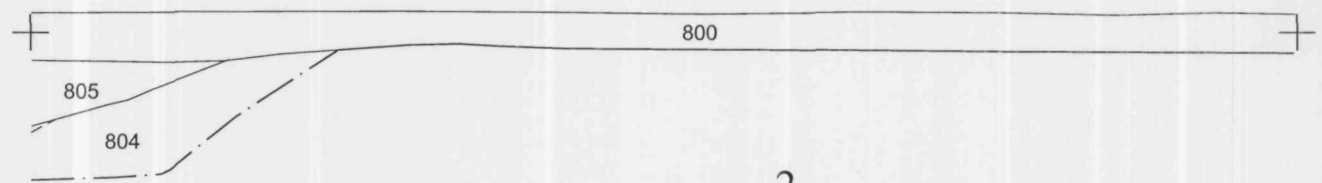
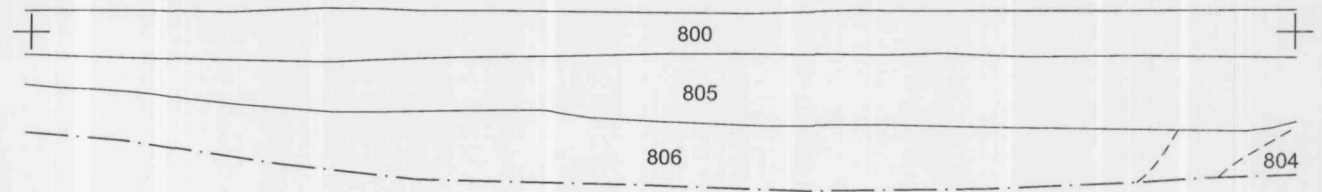
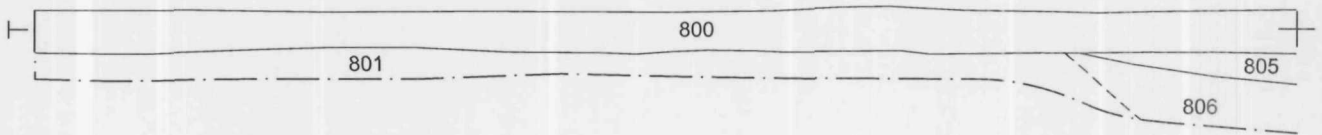
## Plan



## Sections:

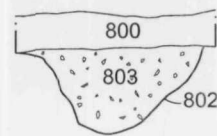
1

E end of trench



2

W E  
47.00m AOD



0 5 metres

Fig. 11 Trench 8: plan and sections.

### 6.6 Trench 9 (Plan and section Fig. 12)

Trench 9 was located on level ground around 150m to the SE of Butlas Farm. It contained two N-S aligned ditches cut into the natural shillet and clay. Ditch 904 measured 0.98m wide and 0.44m deep, with steep sides and a flat base. Its fill (903) comprised brown silt clay with frequent fragments of slate. Ditch 905 appeared very similar to 904 but was not excavated. No dateable finds were recovered from these features. They were probably part of the former medieval field system in this area.

Ditches 903 and 905 were recorded during the geophysical survey. The linear anomaly at the west end of the trench was most likely a result of variations in the natural deposits.

### 6.7 Trench 10 (Plan and section Fig. 12)

Trench 10 was located c.50m to the north-east of Trench 9 and contained a similar layer sequence. Ditch 1002 was aligned N-S and measured 1.05m wide and 0.28m deep, with a wide 'U' shaped profile. The fill (1003) was a brown silty clay with frequent fragments of shillet. No finds were recovered. It is likely that ditch 1002 was also probably part of the former medieval field system in this area.

Two linear anomalies were identified in this area during the geophysical survey. Ditch 1002 was the eastern one and the anomaly to the west was not present.

## 7. THE FINDS

### 7.1 Introduction

A small finds assemblage was recovered during the evaluation and comprises mainly late Iron Age, Romano-British, medieval and post-medieval pottery. All finds are itemised by material type in Appendix 2.

### 7.2 The pottery

The earliest pottery recovered was from the subsoil layer in Trench 1, and is a quartz-tempered body sherd of late Neolithic or early Bronze Age date. Contexts in Trench 2 produced the majority of Iron Age and Romano-British pottery. A probable middle Iron Age sherd was recovered from the surface of unexcavated hearth 205 (context 206), while late Iron Age or early Romano-British pieces were present in ditch 216 (context 210). These include a rim sherd in South Devon Ware and six sherds in a local, but unidentified granite-tempered ware. Sherds of similar date were recovered from the subsoil layer in Trench 3 (301) and from ditch 304 (context 305). These again include South Devon ware sherds.

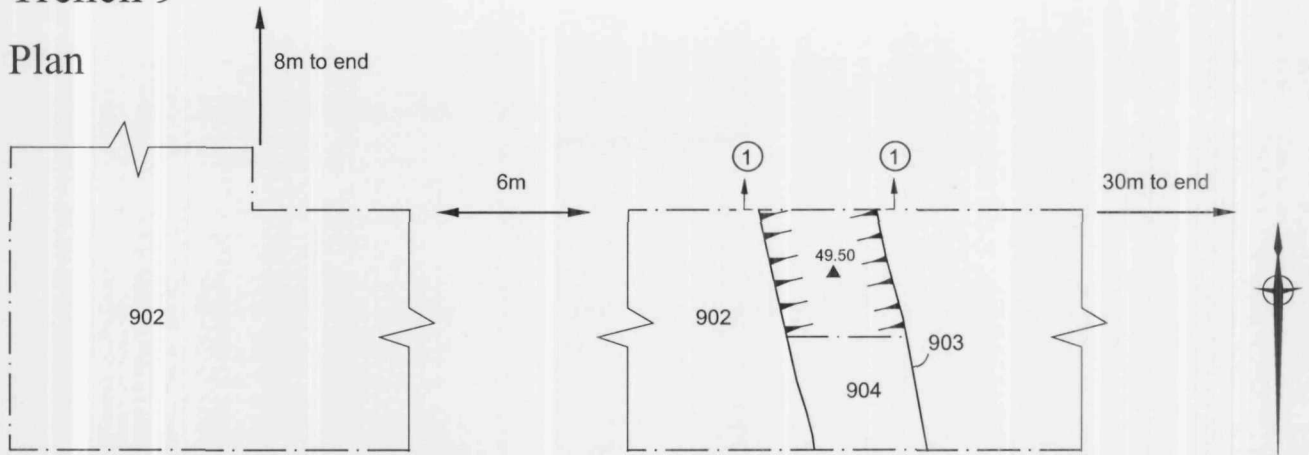
Romano-British pottery was also recovered from Trench 2, and this material includes Black Burnished ware jar sherds, one piece with incised decoration, and an imported colour coated sherd, which is part of the rim of a mortaria. Two abraded probable Romano-British sherds were recovered from ditch 609 in Trench 6 (context 610).

Medieval pottery was mainly recovered from contexts in Trench 3. These include white ware sherds from the Surrey/Hampshire border (ditch 304, context 305) and more local granite-tempered wares (layer 301 and context 305). Post medieval and modern pottery was collected from layer 301 and ditch 304 (context 305). This latter



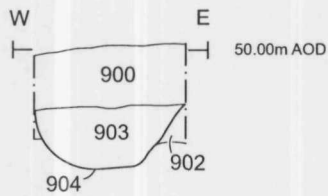
# Trench 9

## Plan



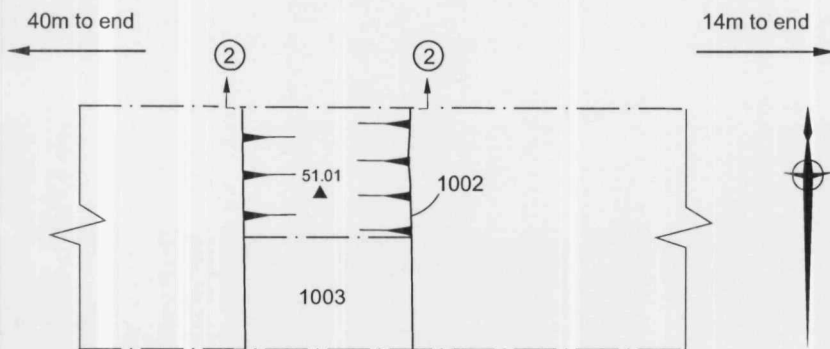
## Section

1



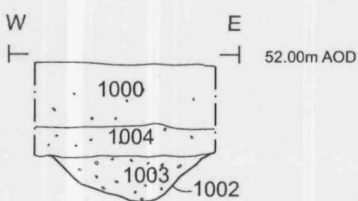
# Trench 10

## Plan



## Section

2



0 5 metres

Fig. 12 Trenches 9 and 10: plans and sections.

piece is probably from the Totnes kilns and dates to between the 16th and 18th centuries.

### 7.3 Other finds

Iron objects and nails were recovered from the probable bank in Trench 3 (layer 306). These are probably post-medieval in date. Animal bone and shell was recovered from late Iron Age or Romano-British contexts in Trench 2, and includes a burnt cow longbone from ditch 216 (context 210), with an oyster shell recovered from the same context.

The remaining finds comprise a small piece of iron slag from Trench 3 (pit 307, context 308), and fired clay fragments from overburden contexts in Trenches 3 and 6.

## 8. DISCUSSION

The fieldwalking, trial trenching and geophysical survey have provided further information that further supports previous archaeological work nearby, that has established that the area to north and east of Elburton is of high archaeological potential for the presence of prehistoric and Romano-British settlement, agricultural and funerary deposits. Within the proposed development area, this potential is clearly concentrated within the fields immediately east of Vinery Lane.

The targeted trial trench evaluation has identified the presence of archaeological deposits in a number of locations along the proposed route of 'Main Street' and the residential development area in the SW part of the site. Most of the archaeological deposits present within the trenches were identified by the geophysical survey, but a number of the earlier features were not recognised by this technique.

The earliest and probably most significant deposits were located in the SW part of the site, with Iron Age and Romano-British settlement-type features and finds present in Trench 2. Features recorded include ditches, a hearth and a possible large quarry pit. The pits and postholes recorded in the adjacent Trench 2 are also likely to be of similar date, although none contained any dateable artefacts. Sherds of Roman pottery were also found within ditch 609 in Trench 6, suggesting that more localised features or deposits of this period could be present elsewhere within the proposed development area.

Ditches associated with former medieval and post-medieval field systems were recorded in Trenches 2, 3, 6, 8 9 and 10. These confirm the presence of intact archaeological remains of this date as suggested by the desk-based assessment (EA 2000) and geophysical survey.

The results from the trenches indicate that where present, there is likely to be good survival of archaeological features and deposits across the proposed development area. The archaeological remains recorded in Trenches 1 and 2 appeared complex and are likely to extend over a wide area.

## ARCHIVE

A fully integrated site archive had been prepared using the project code 5661 and is currently held by Exeter Archaeology at their premises in Bradninch Place, Gandy Street, Exeter EX4 3LS, pending deposition.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project was commissioned by Scott Wilson Ltd on behalf of Red Tree and was managed by S. Steadman (Scott Wilson Ltd) and J. Valentin (EA). The fieldwork was undertaken by J. Best, S. Hughes, T. Rowell, P. Swindin and M. Tunnicliffe. The finds were recorded by J. Wheeler and the illustrations prepared by T. Ives.

## SOURCES CONSULTED

- Exeter Archaeology 1994 Archaeological evaluation at Hazel Grove, Elburton, Plymouth. EMAFU Report **94.64**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2000 Archaeological observations during housing development at Alexandra Close, Elburton, Plymouth. EA Report **00.42**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2000 *Archaeological assessment of proposed new settlement site, Brixton, South Hams, Devon*. EA Report **00.69**
- Scott Wilson Ltd 2006 *Sherford New Community, Devon. Stage 1 Archaeological Evaluation: Main Street. Written Scheme of Investigation*
- Smalley, R.A.J. 2006 *Land Near Plymouth: Geophysical Survey Report*, Stratascan Ltd Report Ref: J2121

## APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS BY TRENCH

<b>Trench 1</b>	Dimensions: 50m long x 1.6m wide x 1.35m deep		Orientation: WNW-ESE
<b>Context</b>	<b>Depth (below ground level)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
100	0-0.76m max	Dark brown clay silt loam with occasional small limestone	Topsoil
101	0.76-1.22m max	Strong brown clay silt with shillet.	Subsoil
102	1.22m+	Mixed clay and degraded shillet.	Natural subsoil
103	1.2-1.3m	Pit with moderate sides and flat base	Pit
104	-	Dark brown clay silt with carbonised grain, charcoal and heat-discoloured clay.	Fill of 103
105	0.7-1.28m	Sub-circular posthole with moderate sides and flat base.	Posthole
106	-	Dark brown clay silt with limestone and charcoal.	Fill of 105
107	1.2-1.27m	Sub-circular posthole with moderate sides and flat base	Posthole
108	-	Reddish brown clay silt with limestone and charcoal	Fill of 107
109	0.75-1.28m	Sub-circular posthole with steep sides and flat base	Posthole
110	-	Dark brown clay silt with limestone and charcoal	Fill of 109
111	0.75-1.3m	Heavily truncated feature visible in section of trench.	Pit
112	-	Dark brown clay silt with frequent large fragments limestone and charcoal	Fill of 111
113	1.2-1.28m	Sub-circular posthole with steep sides and flat base	Posthole
114	-	Reddish brown clay silt with occasional charcoal	Fill of 113
115	1.2-1.25m	Heavily truncated sub-circular posthole with steep sides and flat base.	Posthole
116	-	Reddish brown clay silt with occasional charcoal.	Fill of 115
117	1.2-1.4m	Sub-circular posthole with steep sides and concave base.	Posthole
118	-	Reddish brown clay silt with occasional charcoal.	Fill of 117
119	1.2-1.25m	Heavily truncated sub-circular posthole with steep sides and concave base.	Posthole
120	-	Brown clay silt with sparse limestone.	Fill of 119
121	1.2-1.26m	Sub-circular posthole with steep sides and flat base.	Posthole
122	-	Brown clay silt with sparse limestone.	Fill of 121
123	-	Carbonised grain within a very dark brown clay silt. Charcoal and heat-discoloured clay.	Basal fill of 103
124	1.2-1.45m	Sub-circular posthole with near vertical edges and sloped base.	Posthole
125	-	Dark reddish brown clay silt with limestone (possible packing)	Fill of 124
126	1.2-1.3m	Sub-circular posthole with steep sides and flat base	Posthole
127	-	Reddish brown clay silt with charcoal	Fill of 126
128	1.2-1.23m	Sub-circular posthole with steep sides and concave base	Posthole
129	-	Dark brown clay silt with carbonised grain and charcoal	Fill of 128
130	1.2-1.35m	Sub-circular posthole with near vertical sides and sloping base	Posthole
131	-	Reddish brown clay silt with charcoal	Fill of 130

<b>Trench 2</b>		Dimensions: 50m long x 1.6m wide x 0.65m deep	Orientation: E-W
<b>Context</b>	<b>Depth (below ground level)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
200	0-0.35m max	Dark reddish-brown silty loam with small limestone fragments.	Topsoil
201	0.35-0.65m	Dark reddish-brown silty loam with common limestone frags.	Subsoil
202	0.65m+	Limestone bedrock: bedded and larger outcrops visible.	Natural bedrock
203	0.35-0.75m+	NE-SW aligned linear feature, with shallow edges. Not fully excavated	Part of medieval strip-field system
204	0.35-0.75m+	Brown silty clay with frequent limestone fragments	Fill of 203
205	0.65m+	Feature containing burnt clay. Not excavated	?hearth base/kiln
206	0.65m+	Yellow clay with internal 'ring' of heavily burnt clay and charcoal, including some in situ 'lining'. 1 sherd pottery. Not excavated	Fill of 205
207	0.25-0.65m	Very truncated linear ditch with 'U' profile, cut into v. fragmented bedrock. Visible in section of trench.	Linear ditch
208	0.25-0.65m	Dark reddish brown silty clay with frequent limestone fragments	Fill of 207
209	0.3-1.3m+	Large hollow cut into bedrock. Not fully excavated	?Late Iron Age/Roman quarry pit
210	0.3-0.9m	Dark reddish brown silty clay with charcoal and sparse limestone. Contained LIA-LRB pottery. Full extent not known	Fill of 209
211	-	Brown silty clay: silty and well sorted, vertical east edge. Sparse limestone. Full extent not known	Fill of 209
212	-	Dark reddish brown silty clay with frequent limestone. Vertical west edge to deposit. Not visible in south edge of trench.	Fill of 209
213	0.3-0.8m	Firm yellowish brown clay: compact layer. Not fully excavated	Fill of 209
214	-	Redeposited natural brown clay and small fragments limestone	Fill of 209
215	-	Brown silty clay with occasional limestone.	Layer
216	-	Dark reddish brown with rare limestone fragments. Very similar to 210. Spread or fill? Not excavated	Layer
218	0.3-0.8m	Firm deposit of brown clay with steeply pitched limestone at interface with 213.	Fill of 209
219	-	Mixed deposit of mid brown silty clay and limestone.	Fill of 209
220	0.8-1.3m+	Large limestone fragments with v. little clay matrix.	Fill of 209
222	0.3-0.7m	Reddish brown silty clay. Very similar to 211.	Fill of 209

<b>Trench 3</b>		Dimensions: 50m long x 1.6m wide x 1m deep	Orientation: W-E
<b>Context</b>	<b>Depth (below ground level)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
300	0-0.19m	Dark brown clay silt loam.	Topsoil
301	0.19-0.42m	Yellowish brown clay silt with limestone fragments.	Subsoil
302	0.58-0.82m	Strong brown silt clay with frequent limestone.	Layer
303	0.6m+	Limestone bedrock: bedded outcrops, with v. little clay matrix.	Natural bedrock
304	0.65-1.2m	E-W aligned ditch with 'V' profile and irregular edges.	Ditch ( ?hedge bank )
305	-	Brown silty clay with sparse limestone and med & post-med pottery.	Fill of 304
306	-	Spread of laid limestone fragments along east side of 304. Had post-med Fe nails.	?Base of hedge bank
307	0.4-1m	Irregular pit with moderate sides and irregular base.	Pit
308	-	Reddish brown clay silt with frequent large limestone frags.	Fill of 307
309	0.57-1m	ENE-WSW aligned ditch with steep sides and flat base	Ditch
310	-	Dark reddish brown clay silt with common limestone, and occasional mortar flecks throughout.	Fill of 309
311	0.6-0.65m	Small oval pit with shallow sides and concave base.	Pit
312	-	Brown clay silt with frequent limestone.	Fill of 311
313	0.42-0.58m	Thin layer of very dark brown clay silt with frequent charcoal, common limestone and sparse burnt clay.	Dump of burnt material
314	0.52-0.63m	Brownish yellow clay, overlying natural; common limestone.	Firm clay layer

<b>Trench 4</b>		Dimensions: 50m long x 1.6m wide x 0.52m deep		Orientation: NNW-SSE	
<b>Context</b>	<b>Depth (below ground level)</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Interpretation</b>	
400	0-0.45m	Dark reddish brown clay silt loam.		Topsoil	
401	0.45-0.52m+	Grey shillet: bedded vertically.		Natural bedrock	
402	0.45m+	Modern service trench: vertical sides.		Modern service trench	
403	-	Modern backfill within 402.		Fill of 402	
404	0.45m+	Dark reddish brown clay silt with common charcoal.		Small spread	

<b>Trench 6</b>		Dimensions: 50m long x 1.6m wide x 0.8m deep		Orientation: NW-SE/NE-SW	
<b>Context</b>	<b>Depth (below ground level)</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Interpretation</b>	
600	0-0.4m	Dark reddish grey clay silt loam.		Topsoil	
601	0.4-0.5m	Pinkish grey silty clay: compacted.		Subsoil	
602	0.5m+	Light red clay: compacted.		Natural subsoil	
603	0.4-0.7m	NE-SW aligned ditch with moderate sides and flat base.		Ditch	
604	-	Brown silt clay.		Basal fill of 603	
605	-	Modern service trench: cut.		Modern service trench	
606	-	Modern service trench: fill.		Modern service trench	
607	-	Modern service trench: cut.		Modern service trench	
608	-	Modern service trench: fill.		Modern service trench	
609	0.3-0.65m	ENE-WSW aligned ditch with steep sides and flat base.		Possible Roman ditch	
610	-	Light olive brown clay silt.		Fill of 609	
611	-	Pale yellow redeposited natural clay.		Fill of 603	
612	-	Brown clay silt with common charcoal and rare stones.		Fill of 603	

<b>Trench 8</b>		Dimensions: 27m long x 1.6m wide x 1.2m deep		Orientation: E-W	
<b>Context</b>	<b>Depth (below ground level)</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Interpretation</b>	
800	0-0.35m	Dark yellowish brown silty clay loam with sparse shillet.		Topsoil	
801	0.35m+	Dark yellowish brown -pale brown clay-shillet (vertical bedded).		Natural subsoil/bedrock	
802	0.2-0.8m	N-S aligned ditch with steep sides and flat base.		? Medieval ditch	
803	-	Brown silty clay with frequent shillet.		Fill of 802	
804	0.3-1m	Shillet within a brown clay matrix: fragmentary.		Colluvium	
805	0.35-0.8m	Dark yellowish brown silty clay sparse shillet.		Colluvium	
806	0.8-1.2m	Pinkish grey silty clay.		Colluvium	

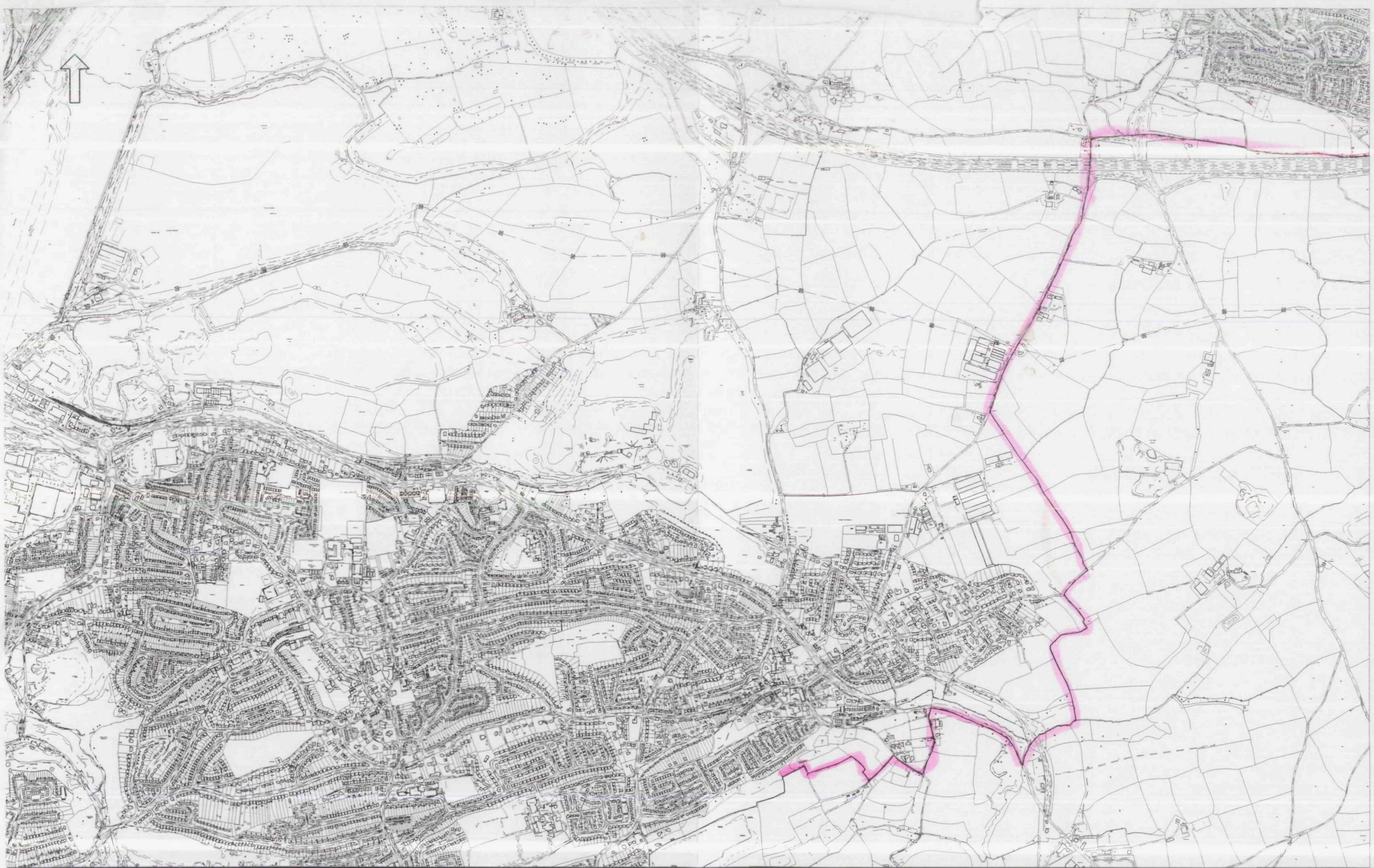
<b>Trench 9</b>		Dimensions: 50m long x 1.6m wide x 0.6m deep		Orientation: E-W/N-S	
<b>Context</b>	<b>Depth (below ground level)</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Interpretation</b>	
900	0-0.48m	Strong brown silty clay loam with occasional shillet.		Topsoil	
901	0.48-0.6m	Strong brown silty clay with common shillet.		Subsoil	
902	0.6m+	Strong brown silty clay with varying amounts of bedded shillet.		Nat subsoil/bedrock	
903	-	Brown silty clay with frequent stones.		Fill of 903	
904	0.4-0.8m	N-S aligned ditch with moderate sloping sides and flat base.		?Medieval ditch	
905	0.4m+	N-S aligned ditch with moderate sloping sides and flat base.		?Medieval ditch	
906	-	Brown silty clay with frequent stones.		Fill of 905	

<b>Trench 10</b>	Dimensions: 50m long x 1.6m wide x 0.75m deep		Orientation: W-E
<b>Context</b>	<b>Depth (below ground level)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
1000	0-0.35m	Strong brown silty clay loam with occasional shillet.	Topsoil
1001	0.35-0.75m+	Strong brown silty clay with varying amounts of bedded shillet.	Natural subsoil
1002	0.6-0.9m	N-S aligned ditch with moderate sloping sides and flat base.	?Medieval ditch
1003	-	Brown silty clay with frequent stones.	Fill of 1002
1004	0.35-0.75m	Strong brown silty clay loam with common shillet.	Subsoil

## APPENDIX 2: FINDS LISTING

Trench	Context	Material	Quantity	Date	Comments
1	101	Pottery	1 sherd 1 vessel	Neolithic –early Iron Age	Body sherd, part of shoulder. Quartz inclusions. Unclassified
2	206	Pottery	1 sherd 1 vessel	Middle Iron Age	Unclassified fine fabric, base sherd
	210	Bone	5 fragments	Late Iron Age- Roman	Burnt probable cow bone
		Pottery	3 sherds 1 vessels	Late Iron Age- early Roman	Body sherds. South Devon ware inc, 1 rim
			6 sherds 1 vessel	Late Iron Age- Roman	Unidentified granitic fabric, oxidised interior
			1 sherd 1 vessel	Early-Mid Roman	Black Burnished ware, jar body sherd with incised lines
			1 sherd 1 vessel	Late Roman	Black Burnished ware, everted jar rim
		Shell	1	Roman	Oyster shell
	215	Pottery	1 sherd 1 vessel	Late Roman	Mortaria rim, fine-walled colour coat
	216	Pottery	2 sherds 1 vessel	1st-2 <sup>nd</sup> Century	Wheel-thrown grey ware
3	301	Bone	2 fragments		burnt animal bone
		Shell	2		Snail shells
		Burnt clay	2 frags		Unidentified
		Pottery	2 sherds 1 vessel	Late Iron Age Age-Roman	South Devon ware, body sherds
			2 sherds 1 vessel	Late Iron Age- Roman	Unidentified probable local fabric. 1 rim sherd
		Pottery	2 sherds 2 vessels	13 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Century	Granite-derived cooking pot, rim
		Pottery	1 sherd 1 vessel	Late 18 <sup>th</sup> –19 <sup>th</sup> Century	White earthenware, transfer printed
	305	Pottery	1 sherd 1 vessel	Unclassified	Unidentified sherd, orange fabric. Wheel thrown.
		Pottery	2 sherds 1 vessel	Late Iron Age- Roman	South Devon ware, granite-derived. Unknown form
		Medieval pottery	1 sherd 1 vessel	13 <sup>th</sup> Century	Surrey-Hants white ware, green glazed
			1 sherd 1 vessel	13 <sup>th</sup> Century	Granite-derived
		Pottery	2 sherds 1 vessel	16 <sup>th</sup> –18 <sup>th</sup> Century	Totnes-type or granite-derived Interior green glaze
	306	Metal	2	Undated	Iron nails, discarded
			1	Undated	Iron object, unidentified (SF1)
			1		Iron object, tapering iron bar (SF2)
	308	Pottery	1 sherd 1 vessel	13 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Century	Cooking pot
		Slag	1 fragment		Fe slag
6	600	Fired clay	1 fragment		Fragment of fired clay
	610	Pottery	2 sherds 2 vessels	Roman	Unidentified, worn, orange fabric





Reproduced from the Ordnance Surveys digital maps with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright. Plymouth City Council Licence No. 100018633. This map extract has been produced for the sole purpose of providing you with reference information only. NO FURTHER COPIES CAN BE MADE. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

Scale 1:17905

