

**UNITS 1-3, COOPER'S COOKERS, GROVE TRADING
ESTATE, DORCHESTER, DORSET**
Archaeological Observations and Recording



Report No. 53089.1

November 2002

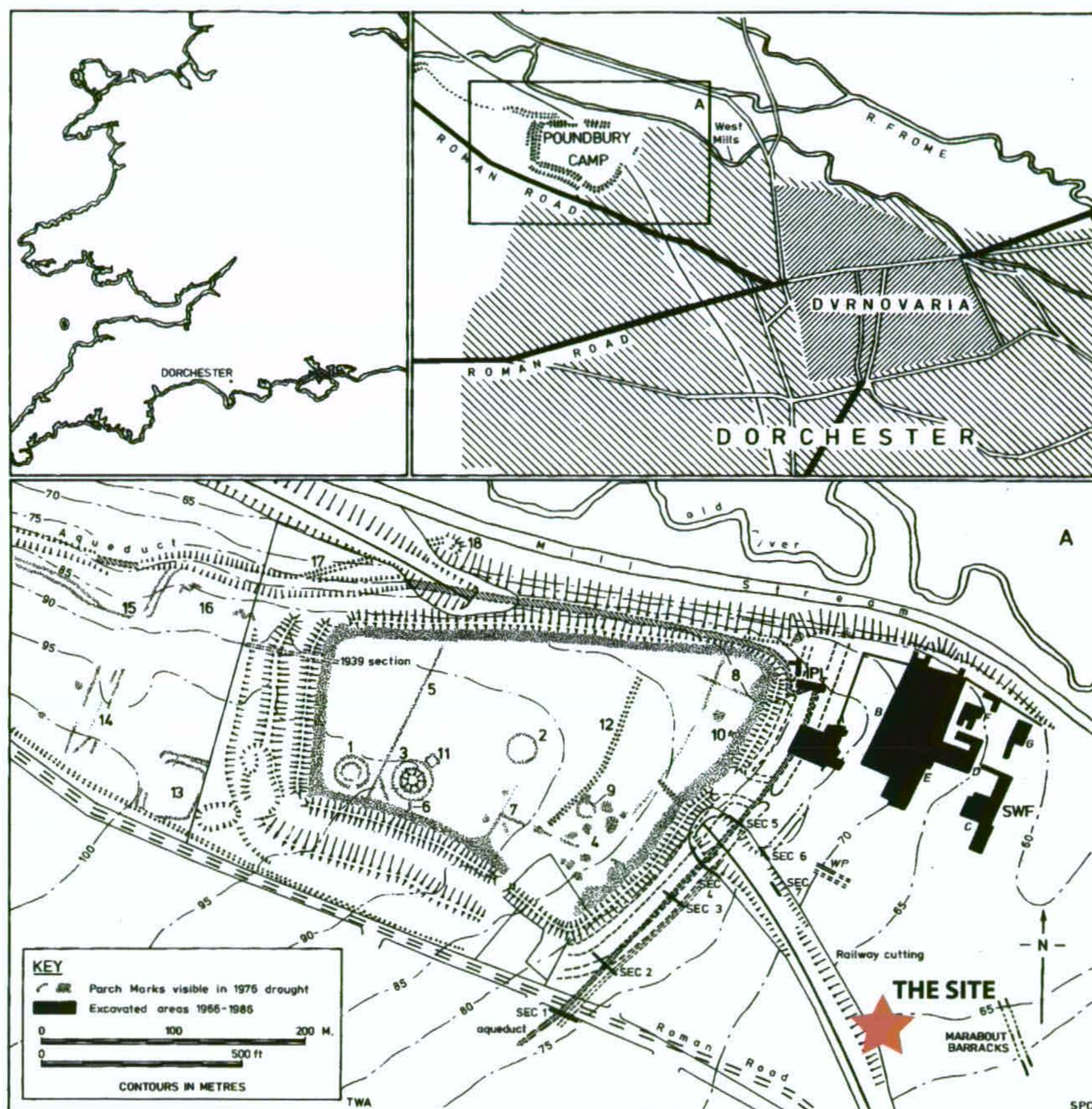


Figure 1: Map showing site location in relationship to earlier archaeological excavations (from Green 1987, figure 1).

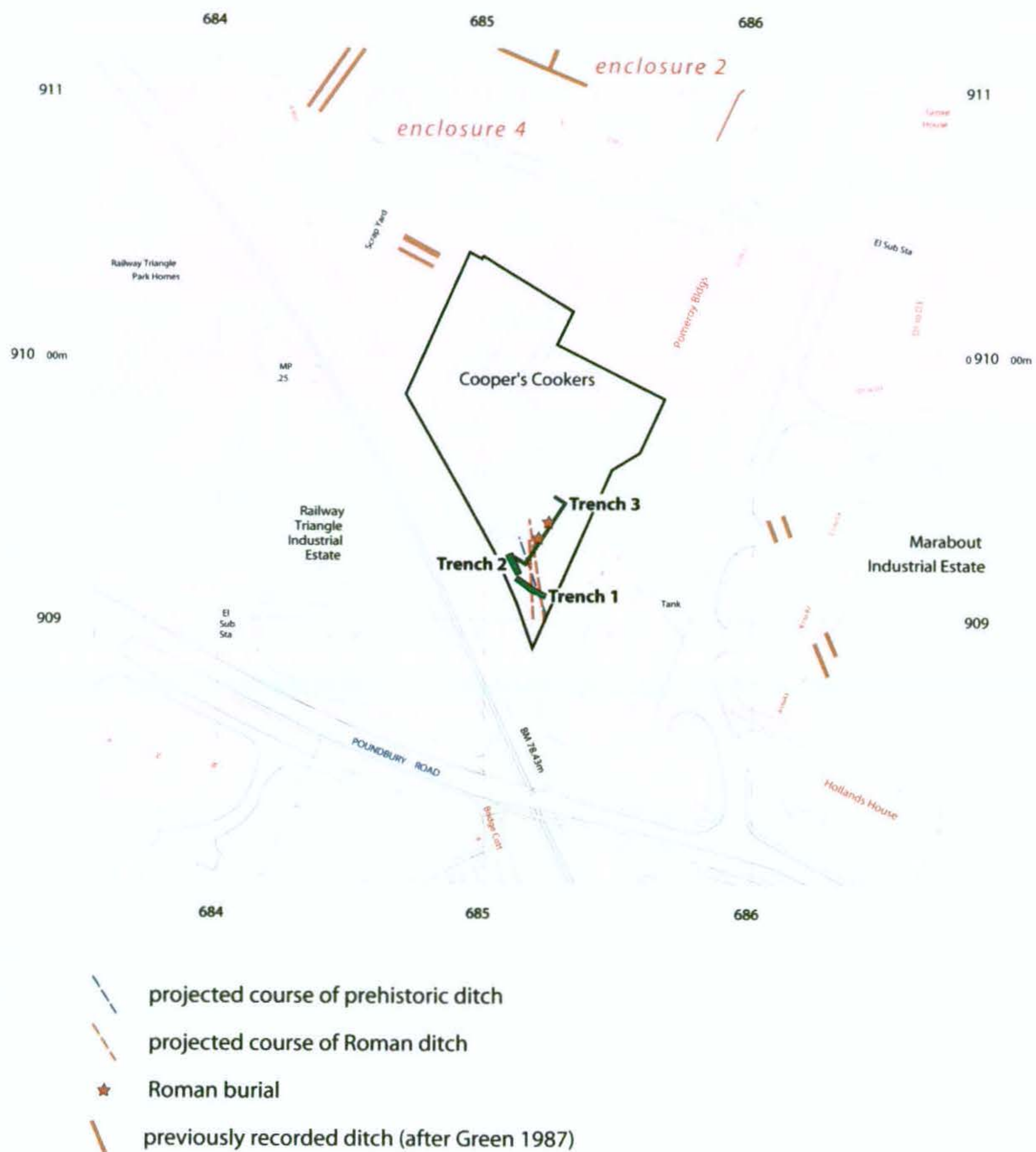


Figure 2: Trench location map

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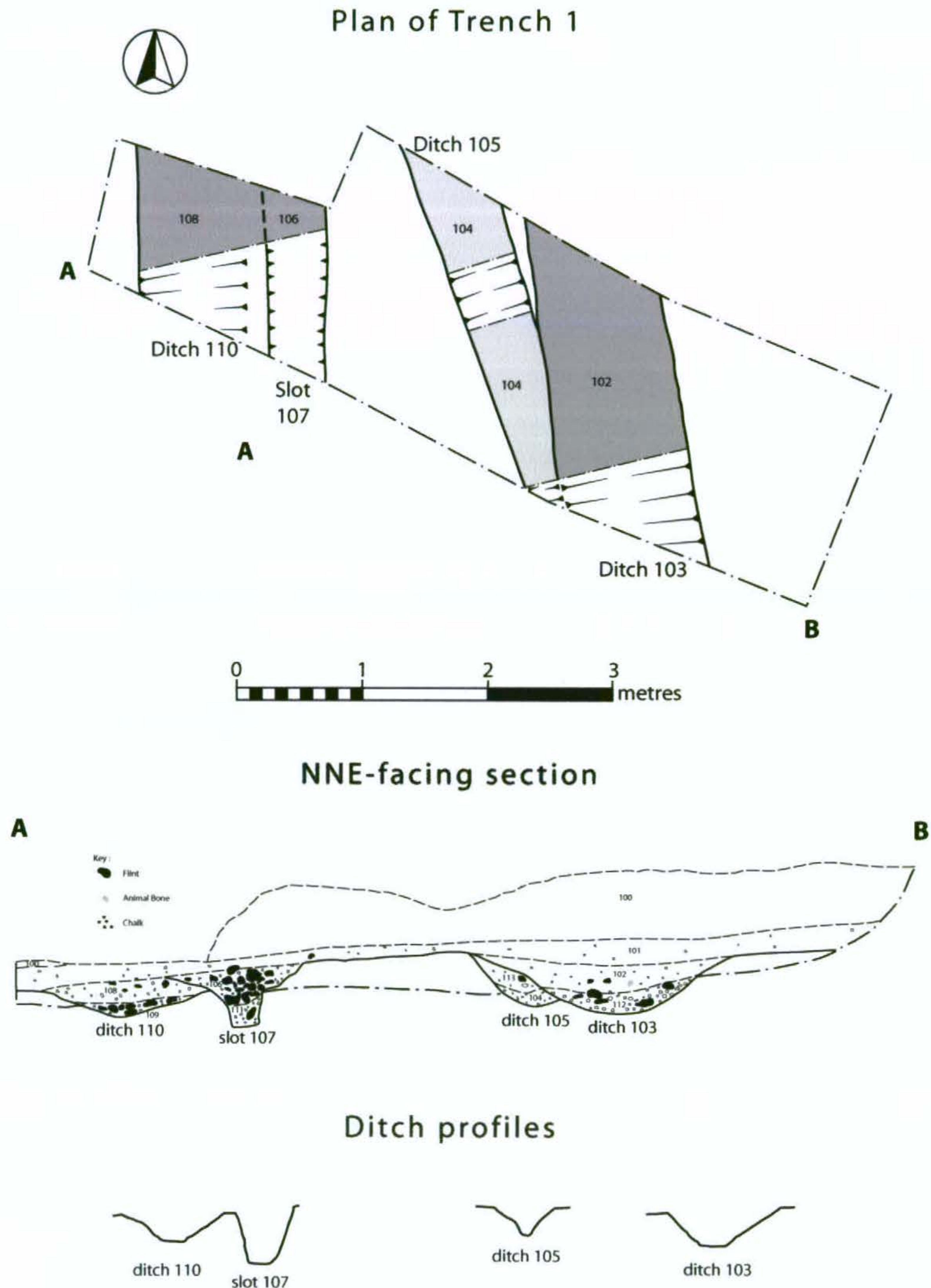


Figure 3: Plan and section of Trench 1

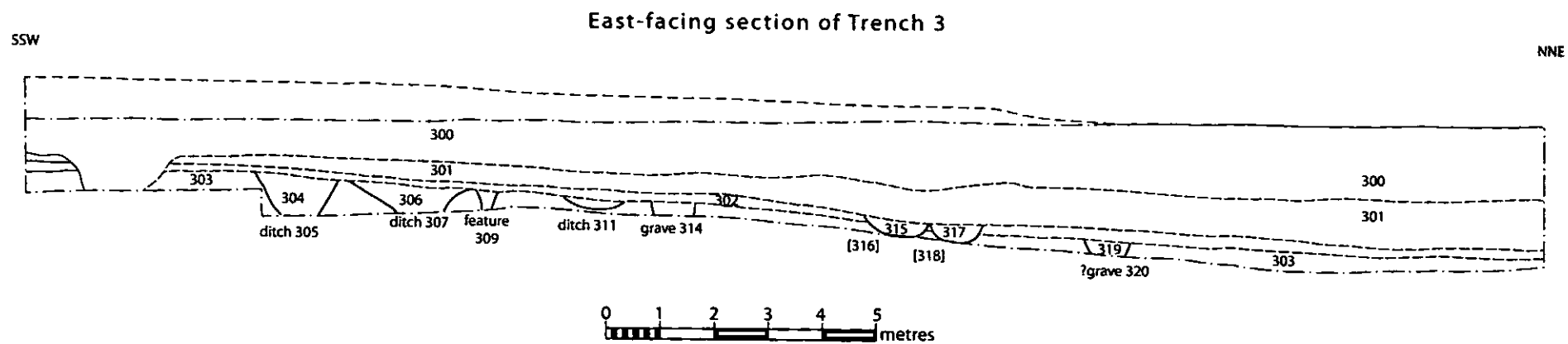


Figure 4: East-facing section of Trench 3



*Plate 1: General view of Trench 1
from west*



*Plate 2: Ditches 103 and 105
from north*



*Plate 3: Slot 107 and Ditch 110
from north*



Plate 4: General view of Trench 2 from east



Plate 5: Grave 314 from north

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ALL CONTEXTS

Context	Fill of/ filled by	Description	Interpretation
Trench 1			
100		Mixed layer of soil with lenses and dumps of ash, clinker, chalk rubble, etc.	Recent dumped material
101		Greyish-brown silty clay loam with 20% small chalk lumps and occasional flint nodules.	Buried Topsoil
102	103	Reddish-brown silty clay with 20% small chalk lumps, 5% flint nodules (50–100 mm) and sparse charcoal flecks.	Upper fill of Roman ditch
103	102	N–S aligned linear feature with straight, fairly steeply sloping sides and an irregular flat base.	Roman field boundary ditch
104	105	Pale yellowish-brown clayey loam with 40% small chalk lumps and sparse flint nodules.	Primary fill of ?prehistoric ditch
105	104	NNW–SSE aligned linear feature with steeply sloping sides with a narrow base. Adjacent to (and cut by) ditch 103	Prehistoric field boundary ditch
106	107	Dark reddish-brown silty clay with 60% flint nodules (100–150 mm).	Flint rubble footing
107	106	N–S aligned linear feature with almost vertical, straight sides and a flat base. Adjacent and parallel to ditch 110.	Slot for footing of Roman building?
108	110	Dark reddish-brown silty clay with 20% small chalk lumps, 5% flint nodules and sparse limestone pieces.	Upper fill of Roman ditch
109	110	Yellowish-brown silty clay with 20% small chalk lumps and 40% flint nodules (100–150 mm).	Primary fill of Roman ditch
110	108, 109	N–S aligned linear feature with steeply sloping sides and an irregular, flat base. Adjacent and parallel to ditch 107.	Roman field boundary ditch.
111	107	Reddish-brown silty clay with 50% small chalk lumps and 20% flint nodules.	Lower fill of footings trench
112	103	Dark reddish-brown silty clay with 50% small chalk lumps and 20% flint nodules (< 100mm).	Primary fill of Roman ditch
113	105	Yellowish-brown silty clay with 10% small chalk lumps and sparse flint nodules.	Upper fill of ?prehistoric ditch
Trench 2			
200		Mixed layer of soil with lenses and dumps of ash, clinker, chalk rubble, etc.	Recent dumped material
201		Greyish-brown silty clay loam with 20% small chalk lumps and occasional flint nodules.	Buried Topsoil
Trench 3			
300		Yellowish-brown silty clay loam topsoil mixed with dumps of chalk, chippings, tarmac, brick, wire and cinders.	Recent dumped material
301		Yellowish-brown calcareous silty clay with frequent flint fragments and nodules (<200 mm).	Possibly redeposited subsoil used to level site
302		Reddish-brown calcareous silty clay with frequent flint fragments and nodules.	Buried soil or colluvium

Context	Fill of/ filled by	Description	Interpretation
303		Natural chalk bedrock	Natural
304	305	Light reddish-brown calcareous silty clay with frequent peagrit and moderate flint fragments (<150 mm).	Fill of ditch
305	304	N–S aligned linear feature with steep, straight sides.	Ditch, probably continuation of ditch 110
306	307	Reddish-brown calcareous silty clay with frequent large flint fragments.	Fill of ditch
307	306	N–S aligned linear feature with moderate, straight sides	Ditch, probably continuation of ditch 103
308	309	Reddish-brown calcareous silty clay with occasional flint fragments	Fill of ditch/ gully
309	308	Narrow linear feature with vertical sides.	Ditch/ gully?
310	311	Reddish-brown calcareous silty clay with frequent chalk lumps and occasional flint fragments	Fill of shallow ditch
311	310	E–W aligned linear feature with shallow, concave sides and a rounded base.	Ditch, possibly associated with the grave 314 t
312	314	Very loose dark reddish-brown silty clay with frequent flint fragments.	Fill of grave
313	314	Human skeleton— Skull only observed (slightly damaged by machine).	Roman inhumation burial
314	312, 313	Eastern terminal of a rectangular feature aligned E–W. Contained a human burial.	Roman grave
315	316	Dark reddish-brown silty clay with frequent flint fragments.	Fill of ditch
316	315	Linear feature with moderate, concave sides and a flat base. Situated in the northern half of the trench and adjacent and parallel to ditch 318. Cuts soil layer 302	Ditch
317	318	Dark reddish-brown silty clay with frequent flint fragments.	Fill of ditch
318	317	Linear feature with steep, straight sides and a flat base. Situated in the northern half of the trench and adjacent and parallel to ditch 316. Cuts soil layer 302	Ditch
319	320	Loose reddish-brown silty clay with frequent flint fragments. Similar to grave fill 312.	Fill of grave (?)
320	319	Steep sided feature observed in northwest section only. Fill very similar to grave 314.	Grave (?)

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Units 1–3, Cooper's Cookers, Grove Trading Estate, Dorchester, Dorset

Archaeological Observations and Recording, July 2002

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Units 1-3, Cooper's Cookers, Grove Trading Estate, Dorchester, Dorset

Archaeological Observations and Recording, July 2002

SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Cooper's Cookers, Grove Trading Estate, Dorchester during groundworks associated with the construction of proposed industrial units 1- 3 in the southeast part of the site (SY685910). Two trenches were excavated along the southern edge of the site to locate an existing modern drain. One possible prehistoric ditch, two Roman ditches and a possible flint footing for a Roman building were observed. These were all aligned roughly north-south. Part of two probable Roman inhumation graves, oriented East-West was also observed.

INTRODUCTION

This project was commissioned by Stuart Nicklen, Building Surveyor, acting as agent for Cooper's Wholesale Ltd, in order to satisfy condition 6 in the Schedule of Conditions for Planning Permission (Application No. 1/E1996/0396) issued by West Dorset District Council. This states that "the development shall not take place within the area indicated until the applicant has secured and implemented a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which shall have been submitted to, and been approved in writing by the Planning Authority."

The site of the proposed development lies within Poundbury Scheduled Ancient Monument (Dorset M12501). Scheduled Monuments have Statutory Protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, as amended. Scheduled Monument Consent has been granted for this development (Ref: HSD9/2/698pt5 23/9/1998).

A desk-based archaeological assessment of the site has been undertaken by Wessex Archaeology (Wessex Archaeology report no. T3468, April 1997). Subsequently, Wessex Archaeology prepared a Project Design for a programme of archaeological works during the proposed redevelopment of the site (Wessex Archaeology reference 44100a, January 1998). Terrain Archaeology has produced a specification for the present works, based on the original Wessex Archaeology Project Design.

The proposed redevelopment comprises the demolition of some existing buildings and the erection of 10 industrial units. This redevelopment will be phased with the first phase comprising the erection of Units 1-3.

The groundworks comprised the clearance of recent overburden from the southern end of the site and the excavation of two trenches along the southern boundary of the site to locate an existing drain. These were subsequently backfilled. The footings trench for the eastern end of Units 1-3 was excavated by machine down to the solid chalk and filled with concrete. The remainder of the footings will be dug at some future date.

The fieldwork was carried out between 19th – 31st July 2002 by Peter Bellamy and Steven Tatler.

Terrain Archaeology would like to acknowledge Duncan Coe, (English Heritage), Steven Wallis (Dorset County Council), Stewart Nicklen, Cooper's Wholesale, and D J Contracts Ltd for their help and cooperation during this project.

THE SITE

The site lies on the southern edge of the Grove Trading Estate, in the northwestern part of modern Dorchester, at Ordnance Survey NGR SY685910. The Grove Trading Estate is situated just to the east of Poundbury Camp, an Iron Age hillfort, and lies in a coombe running down towards the River Frome to the north.

The Cooper's Cookers site lies across the lower slopes and base of the coombe, between 65–75 m above Ordnance Datum (Figure 1). The ground levels are varied due to terracing. The site is bounded to the southwest by a railway embankment and by industrial units on the other sides (Figure 2). It is occupied, at present, by two substantial buildings. The area of the site that forms the subject of the present observations lies on the lower eastern slope of the coombe and generally slopes down to the NNW. At the time of the observations it was rough waste ground.

The underlying geology is mapped as Upper Chalk (Geological Survey of Great Britain 1: 50,000 Sheet 328 *Dorchester* 1981).

The site lies within Poundbury Scheduled Ancient Monument ('Poundbury Camp & western adjoining section of Roman Aqueduct' SM Dorset M12501).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The archaeological background of the site has been set out in the desk based assessment prepared by Wessex Archaeology (Wessex Archaeology report No. T3468, April 1997), so only a brief summary extracted from that document is given here.

There have been a number of archaeological investigations within the Grove Trading Estate. Large-scale excavations were undertaken, about 50–100 m to the north and northwest of the present site, between 1966–1976, and in 1979 and 1980 (Green 1987, Farwell and Molleson 1993) (Figure 1). These excavations revealed a sequence of settlements and related earthworks spanning a period of three millennia, together with a large cemetery belonging to the Roman town. Smaller investigations including observations of a water pipeline in 1986 (Davies and Grieve 1986) and excavations at Wyvern Marlborough in 1987 (Davies, Harding and Soames 1987), had added further details to the results of the original excavations. The closest archaeological observations, during building work at Wright Pugson Ltd adjacent to the northwestern corner of the site, revealed elements of a Roman ditch system, possibly forming the southern boundary of a late Roman enclosure "Enclosure 4" (Green 1987) (Figure 2).

The earliest evidence for occupation in the vicinity of the site was observed over 50 m to the northwest and interpreted as the remains of probable Neolithic settlement. Evidence for enclosed settlements of Early and Middle Bronze Age date have also been excavated in this same area, together with some evidence for Late Bronze Age activity.

Further to the north and northwest, an enclosed settlement of Middle Iron Age date was excavated, in addition to a Late Iron Age unenclosed settlement outside the northeastern corner of the hillfort. A number of Durotrigian (Iron Age) crouched inhumation burials were also recorded.

There was extensive occupation of the hillside during the Roman period with a system of enclosures across the coombe and numerous buildings. The aqueduct the Roman town of *Durnovaria* was constructed round the edge of Poundbury Camp (RCHME 1970; Green 1987). A series of late Roman cemeteries (including stone built mausolea), comprising over 1400 inhumation burials has been excavated (Farwell and Molleson 1993).

After the end of the Roman period, the area continued to be occupied and a number of timber buildings and ditches possibly dating to c. 5th–7th centuries AD were discovered. There is little evidence of Saxon and medieval activity suggesting that the area probably reverted to farmland.

In 1855 the construction of the Great Western railway involved tunnelling beneath Poundbury Camp. A cutting to the southeast of the Camp, immediately west of the site, was expanded in 1918 exposing archaeological features including the outer ditch of the hillfort and the aqueduct. Roman burials were uncovered in 1914–18 when a Prisoner-of-War camp was constructed, and again in 1940 when Poundbury East Camp was built. In 1964 when the camp went out of use by the army, the area was redeveloped as a trading estate.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of the archaeological observations was to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.

The archaeological works aimed to observe and record all the in situ archaeological deposits and features revealed during the groundworks to an appropriate professional standard.

METHODS

The observations were carried out in compliance with the specification prepared by Terrain Archaeology (Ref No. 3089, May 2002), and in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (1994, rev. 1999).

An archaeological watching brief was maintained during initial clearance of the site and during the excavation of the foundation trench for the eastern wall of Unit 1. The human burial encountered during machining of the footings trench was recorded but not excavated or removed. It was covered by a sheet of expanded polystyrene prior to filling the trench with concrete.

The location of the groundworks was surveyed by taped measurements from existing boundaries. All depths have been recorded as below present ground levels.

All archaeological deposits and features exposed during the works were recorded using components of the Terrain Archaeology recording system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records.

The records have been compiled in a stable, cross-referenced and fully indexed archive in accordance with current UKIC guidelines and the requirements of the receiving museum, Dorset County Museum.

RESULTS

Trench 1

Trench 1 was excavated in the southeast corner of the site, in order to find the line of a modern drain, which runs beneath the railway embankment and then crosses the eastern part of the site. The trench measured 12.5m long and up to 2m wide. A number of archaeological features were found in the eastern 6.5m, which was left exposed to allow archaeological investigation and recording (Plate 1). The remainder of the trench was backfilled immediately. No sign of the drain was found.

Natural deposits

Natural chalk was encountered at a depth of c. 1.5 m below the existing ground level prior to site clearance.

Prehistoric features

At the eastern end of the trench was a steep-sided V-profile ditch (105) cut into the natural chalk. It was oriented roughly NNW–SSE and its eastern side was cut by a later ditch (Figure 3; Plate 2). It measured about 0.5 m wide and 0.45 m deep and was filled with yellowish-brown clay loam with frequent chalk lumps (104) at the base of the ditch and a much less chalky yellowish brown silty clay layer (113) above. The only finds recovered were worked flint of predominantly Bronze Age character (Table 1).

This ditch was on a different alignment and had a different fill to the other features exposed in this trench, suggesting that it may be of a different date. No secure dating evidence was recovered from the ditch itself, but it was cut by Ditch 103, which contained Roman material. Therefore, it is likely that this ditch is of an earlier date, probably Bronze or Iron Age, and forms part of the extensive system of boundary ditches which have been found in the vicinity.

Roman features

The possible prehistoric boundary ditch 105 was cut by a broad V-shaped ditch (103), about 1.5 m wide and 0.5 m deep (Figure 3; Plate 2). This ditch was oriented roughly north–south and was filled with a layer of reddish-brown silty clay with frequent chalk lumps (112) and a layer of dark reddish-brown silty clay (102) above (Figure 3). Two sherds of Roman pottery and two Roman tile fragments were recovered from the upper fill (102) of this ditch.

Just over two metres to the west of ditch 103 was another similar ditch (110), about 1.0 m wide and 0.5 m deep, on a similar orientation (Figure 3; Plate 3). It was filled with reddish-brown silty clay with frequent flint nodules (109) at the base and a relatively flint-free dark reddish-brown silty clay layer (108) above. Three sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the fills of this ditch.

Immediately adjacent to the east of Ditch 110 was a vertically-sided linear slot (107) about 0.3 m wide and 0.5 m deep, oriented roughly north–south. It was filled with a hard-packed layer of flint nodules and chalk lumps (111) at the base with a similar layer of tightly packed flint nodules in dark reddish-brown silty clay soil (106) above. The precise relationship between slot 107 and ditch 110 is not clear, though in section there was a suggestion that the upper part of slot 107 cut ditch 110. Slot 107 may be the remains of a footing for a Roman timber building. Similar footings have been discovered during previous excavations in the vicinity, where they clearly formed part of rectangular late Roman buildings (Green 1987, 52–69). As no traces of any wall footings were found to the west, in either Trench 1 or Trench 2, it is likely that this footing formed the western wall of the structure, which must have measured over 4.5 m across.

Later deposits

All the features described above were sealed beneath a layer of mid greyish-brown silty clay loam (101), up to 0.45 m thick. This layer appears to be a buried soil layer, though the date of its formation is unclear. It was buried in the relatively recent past by a loosely consolidated mixed deposit of topsoil, ash, clinker, chalk rubble and other debris (100). This layer was up to 1 m deep and probably represents imported material dumped on waste ground, probably during the second half of the 20th century.

Trench 2

This trench was immediately west of Trench 1 and was also excavated to try to find the course of the drain that ran across the eastern side of the site. No sign of the drain was found as subsequently it was discovered that the drain had been tunnelled through this part of the site. Trench 2 measured about 8 m long, between 2–2.5 m wide, and excavated to a depth of 1.5 m down on to the natural chalk (Plate 4). No archaeological features were identified and the trench

was not entered due to the depth and unconsolidated nature of the deposits. It was immediately backfilled.

Overlying the chalk bedrock (202) was a layer of greyish-brown silty clay loam (201) about 0.3 m thick, which is the same as the buried topsoil layer 101 found in Trench 1. It was sealed by a roughly 1.2 m thick poorly-consolidated mixed deposit of topsoil, ash and clinker, chalk rubble and other debris (200) which is part of the same deposit as layer 100 found in Trench 1.

Trench 3

This was the foundation trench for the eastern wall of proposed Unit 1 and was oriented roughly NNE–SSW immediately to the north of Trench 2 (Figure 2). It measured 28 m long and 0.8 m wide, with a 5 m long spur at each end, perpendicular to the trench. It was excavated to a depth of 2.2 m at the southern end down to 2.7 m at the northern end into the top of the chalk bedrock. The depth and unconsolidated nature of the deposits meant that it was not possible to safely enter this trench.

Roman ditches

At the southern end of the trench, two possible ditches (305 and 307) were observed apparently crossing the trench in a north–south alignment (Figure 4). These steep-sided features, cut into the natural chalk, were filled with reddish-brown calcareous silty clay soils (306, 308). These ditches lie on the projected lines of ditches 110 and 103 respectively, and are likely to be continuation of these boundary ditches (Figure 2).

Immediately to the north of ditch 307 was a small steep-sided feature (309), about 0.4 m wide, filled with reddish-brown silty clay (308). It is unclear what this feature is it may be another slot similar to that found in Trench 1, but it lacks the flint nodule filling. To the north of 309 was a shallow round-bottomed linear feature (311), aligned roughly east–west, and filled with reddish-brown silty clay with frequent chalk lumps (310). This feature was different in character to the other ditches described above, suggesting that it does not form part of the same boundary system. It lies adjacent and parallel to a probable Roman grave (314) and may be associated with it.

Roman burials

About 16 m south of the northern end of the trench, the eastern end of a grave (314) was observed cut into the natural chalk (Plate 5). The grave was oriented east–west and comprised a vertically-sided rectilinear cut projecting c. 0.45 m into the trench and continuing westwards beyond the limits of the excavation. It was c. 0.8 m wide and over 0.25 m deep. The size and shape of the grave would suggest that it contained an extended inhumation. Part of the skull (313) was exposed at the eastern end of the grave, indicating that the burial was supine, with the head to the west. Although only a small part of this grave was exposed, enough of its character was determined to suggest that it is Roman in date.

Another possible grave cut (320) was identified about 7.25 m to the north of Grave 314 (Figure 4). This was another steep-sided rectilinear cut, c. 0.85 m wide, which only just projected into the western side of the trench. No bones were observed in this feature, but its size and orientation, together with the fact that its fill was very similar to Grave 314, suggests that this may have been another grave.

Other features

All of the features in Trench 3 described above were sealed by a c. 0.2 m thick layer of compact, stony, reddish-brown silty clay (302), which was traced over the whole length of the trench, immediately above the chalk bedrock (Figure 4). This layer may represent a thin layer of colluvium, or is the remnants of a buried soil. The date of this deposit is not known.

In the northern half of the trench two adjacent, parallel, linear features (316, 318), were observed, aligned northwest–southeast and cutting through soil layer 302, indicating a more recent date than the other features in the trench. Both of these ditches were filled with a darker soil filling than the other features observed in this trench.

Later deposits

Overlying soil layer 302 was a layer yellowish-brown silty clay (301). This layer was about 0.2 m thick at the southern end of the trench and increased in thickness towards the north, becoming about 0.9 m thick at the northern end of the trench. This layer may be the same as the buried soil layer found in Trenches 1 and 2.

This soil layer was covered by a mixed deposit of yellowish-brown silty clay loam with dumps of chalk rubble, stone chippings, tarmac, brick, wire and cinders (300), up to 1.2 m thick and is part of the same deposit found over both Trenches 1 and 2. At the southern end of the trench, this deposit appeared to fill a large modern feature cutting down into the chalk.

Finds

Finds were recovered from Trench 1 only. Trench 2 had no deposits or features of archaeological interest and Trench 3 was too deep to safely recover artefacts.

context	Context description	Roman pottery		Ceramic Building Material		Worked flint		Animal bone	
		No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)
102	Fill of ditch 103	2	12	2	196	73	4051	1	33
104	Lower fill of ditch 105					28	631		
106	Upper fill of slot 107					7	516	1	15
108	Upper fill of ditch 110	2	10			11	1040		
109	Lower fill of ditch 110	1	2			12	702		
111	Lower fill of slot 107					9	58	2	4
114	Cleaning over slot 107 and ditch 110					18	246		
<i>total</i>		5	24	2	196	158	7244	4	52

Table 1: All finds by context

Roman pottery

Five sherds of Roman coarseware pottery were recovered from Trench 1 (Table 1) and were identified by Jo Draper. They were all small, abraded, undiagnostic body sherds, except for a single sherd from context 108 (the upper fill of ditch 110), which may be a 2nd century Black-Burnished Ware type.

Worked flint

A total of 158 pieces of worked flint was recovered from the fills of ditches 103, 105, 107, and 110. The flint from all but context 104, the lower fill of the possible prehistoric ditch 105, may be considered residual in Romano-British features. However, as the flint from 104 did not differ significantly from that from the other contexts, the collection will be considered as a whole.

The flint is likely to be derived locally, from the Upper Chalk, and is all heavily patinated to a greyish- or blueish-white colour. Two pieces of tabular flint were recovered; the rest is or is likely to be nodular. The condition of the flint was fairly uniform, neither very fresh nor heavily rolled, abraded or weathered. Only one burnt piece was noted — a flake tool from ditch fill 104.

The majority of the flint appears to be Late Neolithic/Bronze Age in date. Most of the cores are multiplatform flake cores, and the flakes are generally fairly wide, with very broad, plain butts and

often with prominent cones of percussion, indicating the use of a hard hammer. Two flakes (both from context 102, the fill of ditch 103) had two bulbs of percussion, indicating miss-hits.

There is some evidence for an earlier component in the collection. A keeled core from context 102 had several blade removals, as did one large, worked-out multiplatform flake core. Two complete and two broken blades were also recovered, from contexts 102 and 104. Platform abrasion on some of the cores from context 102 suggests greater care was taken in the production of their flakes. This earlier component may well date from the Early Neolithic period.

A total of eight flake tools was identified. Three scrapers were recovered, one piercer and four miscellaneous retouched flakes. None of the tool types was particularly closely chronologically diagnostic: all could comfortably belong to a Late Neolithic/Bronze Age assemblage.

Context	Context description	Flakes	Broken flakes	Blades	Broken blades	Cores	Tools	Angular shatter	Total	Tool type
102	Fill of ditch 103	42	13			8	2	6	73	2 scrapers
104	Lower fill of ditch 105	14	5		2	1	1	5	28	Retouched flake
106	Upper fill of slot 107	4				2	1		7	Piercer
111	Lower fill of slot 107	5	4						9	
108	Upper fill of ditch 110	4	3			2	2		11	2 retouched flakes
109	Lower fill of ditch 110	5	1			2	2	2	12	1 scraper; 1 retouched flake
114	Cleaning over slot 107 and ditch 110	13	2			1		2	18	
Total		87	28	2	2	16	8	15	158	

Table 2: Worked flint assemblage

Other finds

Two fragments of Roman tile were recovered from context 102 (the upper fill of ditch 103): one roof tile (*tegula*) fragment and one undiagnostic fragment.

Four small fragments of animal bone were recovered (Table 1), all probably sheep/goat.

CONCLUSIONS

These observations have been useful in revealing elements of the archaeology in an area outside Poundbury Camp not previously investigated archaeologically. The present lies on the lower eastern slopes of the coombe between Poundbury Camp and the Roman town of Durnovaria. All the other archaeological investigations have been on the western slopes of the coombe below the hillfort (Figure 1). The features revealed during the present observations fit within the archaeological framework for this area established by the large-scale excavations directed by Christopher Sparey Green (Green 1987; Farwell and Molleson 1993) but extend their distribution further south and east.

As the present site lies on the other side of the coombe from the previously discovered archaeological remains, it is difficult to link the features from the two areas. The linear features found during the present work are on a different alignment to those from the earlier investigations. This can be explained by the fact that they are generally aligned on the topography, rather than forming part of a large system of boundaries cutting across the landscape. It is likely that the prehistoric and Roman boundary systems curve round the head of the coombe and follow the line of the slopes on the other side, thus giving rise to a different alignment (see Figure 1).

The small length of possible prehistoric ditch (110) investigated did not provide any dating evidence. However, it is similar in character to some of the Middle Bronze Age ditches found

during the earlier excavations (Green 1987, figures 5 and 11). Ditch 110 is likely to have been a field boundary forming part of the field system surrounding the Bronze Age settlement discovered during the Poundbury excavations. Further traces of this field system have been traced within and to the west of Poundbury hillfort (Green 1987, 26). The paucity of finds recovered from Ditch 110 suggests that the site was not in the immediate vicinity of a settlement.

The possible Roman boundary ditches were smaller in scale than the ditches of the Roman enclosure system investigated by Green (1987). In view of their small size, the boundaries found on the Cooper's Cookers site are probably simple field boundary ditches rather than large enclosure ditches. The possible Roman building footing is of interest as it is the first evidence for settlement in this area. Previous evidence for Roman settlement lies over 150 m to the north.

The burial(s) are most likely to be Roman in date given the large number of Roman burials previously discovered in the vicinity. The vast majority of Roman graves in the area lie to the north of the site. The only burials found to the south of Enclosure 4 were discovered during the construction of the railway in 1855. These burials lay about 100 m to the northwest of the Cooper's Cookers site.

PROJECT ARCHIVE

The archive (Terrain Archaeology Project No. 53089) will be deposited with Dorset County Museum, which has agreed in principle to accept the archive, subject to fulfilment of the Museum's requirements of the preparation of archaeological archives. A copy of the microfilmed archive will be deposited with the National Monuments Record.

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