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Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
& RECORDING ALONG THE
WYMONDLEY TO COREY'S MILL 'CABLE ROUTE'
HERTFORDSHIRE**

Jonathan Hunn BA PhD MIFA



November 2001

ASC:WCM01/2

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Letchworth House
Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall,
Milton Keynes MK6 1NE
Tel: 01908 608989 Fax: 01908 605700
Email: mka@archaeological-services.co.uk
www.archaeological-services.co.uk



24897

SITE DATA

ASC site code:	WCM01	Project no:	300
County:	Hertfordshire		
District:	North Hertfordshire		
Parish:	Little Wymondley (St Marys)		
NGR:	TL 2163-2689 to TL 2195-2715		
Extent of development:	Cable laying along 1.5 km route. The way leave is 18 m wide of which 13 m will be stripped of topsoil. Two cable trenches 1.2 m deep spaced 4 m apart.		
Present land use:	Pasture		
Planning proposal:	Two cable trenches 1.2m wide and spaced 4m apart		
Planning application ref/date:	Statutory Authority		
Client:	National Grid plc Project Management, Application Design Brookmead Guildford Business Park Middleton Guildford Surrey GU2 5XQ		
Contact name:	Peter Lee		
Telephone	01483 463270	Fax:	01483 463628

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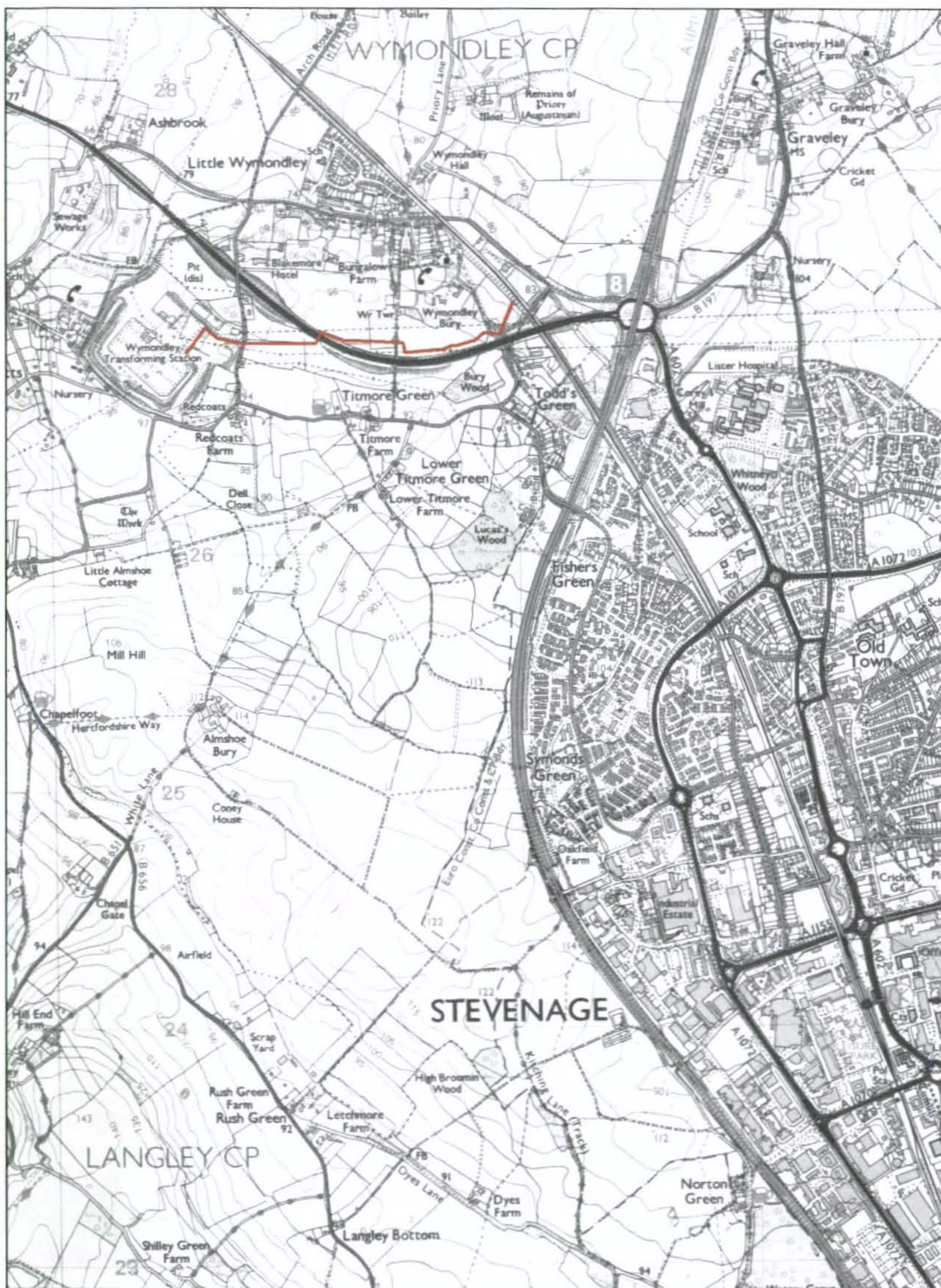
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Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In the autumn of 2001 a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by ASC Ltd on land temporarily occupied by an 'easement' in advance of electricity cable laying between the Wymondley Transforming Station and Corey's Mill, north-west of Stevenage, Hertfordshire. This revealed the presence of Romano-British occupation dating from the 1st to 3rd centuries. The evidence comprised two buildings with masonry foundations, two kilns or ovens and several post-holes and pits. The circular building had a diameter of 7.25 m and the rectangular building was 14.3 x 6.5 . There were two ovoid oven/kiln pits and several post-holes and pits, one of which was filled with oven/kiln debris.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 During autumn 2001 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording along the length of a dual trenched cable route between Wymondley and Corey's Mill near Stevenage, Hertfordshire (NGR TL: 2163-2689 to 2195-2715, Fig. 1). This project was undertaken on behalf of *The National Grid Company Plc* who requested the work in anticipation of meeting existing planning conditions for similar (non statutory) projects. Accordingly, this report has been prepared by *ASC Ltd* in order to meet the objectives that were set out and agreed in a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (Hunn 2001).
- 1.2 The work was required because the route cut through the partly excavated site of a Romanised native farmstead at Little Wymondley (SMR 2607).

2 Setting

- 2.1 The route of the cable is situated between the Wymondley Transforming Station on the west and the East Coast railway line on the east (NGR TL 2163-2689 to 2195-2715). To the north lies Wymondley Bury and to the south lies Titmore Green
- 2.2 The route proceeds along undulating terrain between the 95 m and 85 m contours, above OD. The landscape is predominantly a mix of pastoral and arable fields and a playing field.
- 2.3 The natural soils of the area are classified as being derived from Plateau Drift belonging to the Hornbeam 2 Association. These are described as follows: *'The flinty red and grey mottled clays are, in turn, overlain by thin loamy drift. The principal soil, fine loamy over clayey Hornbeam series is a stagnogleyic paleo-argillic brown earth* (Hodge et al 1984, 220). The typical soil structure has the following characteristics:
- 0-0.25m below ground surface: *Dark brown slightly stony clay loam or sandy clay loam*
 - 0.25-0.5m: *Yellowish brown slightly stony clay loam or sandy clay loam; weak medium subangular block structure.*
 - 0.5m-0.9m: *Strong brown with red and grey mottles, slightly stony clay; moderate coarse prismatic or angular structure* (Hodge et al 1984, 185).

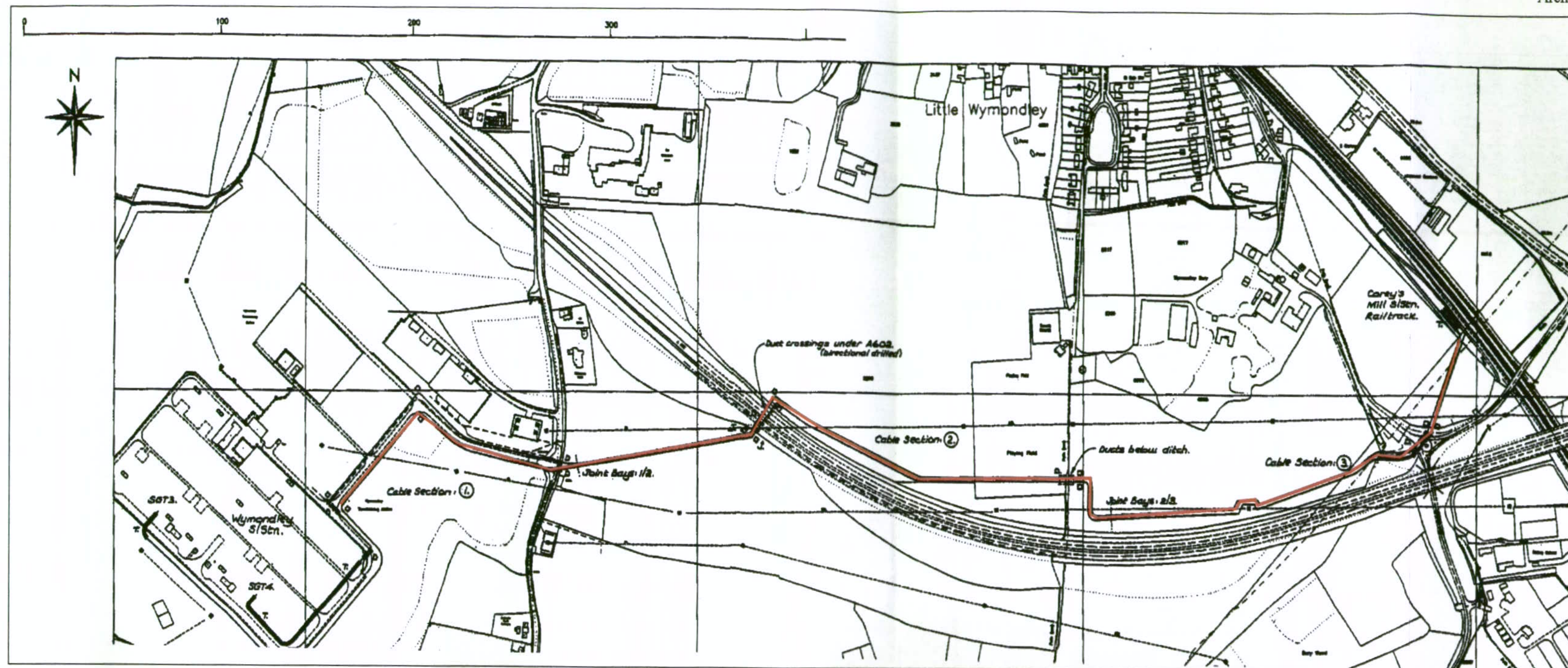


Figure 2: Cable route

3 Archaeological & Historical Background

- 3.1 The route cuts through the partly excavated site of a Romanised native farmstead at Little Wymondley. The site was first discovered during the cutting of a water pipe trench in 1975 (SMR 2607). For the location of this site see Figs. 3 and 4 (after Went & Burleigh 1992).
- 3.2 Four principal phases were identified on this interesting but incompletely excavated site. These were as follows:
1. *Phase 1:* This consisted of a probable ditched enclosure, only defined as skirting the south west corner of the site. The ditch was 2.1 m wide and 0.75 m deep. There was an apparent continuity of some of the ditches. A cobble surface and cremation were associated with this LPRIA phase.
 2. *Phase 2:* From these humble beginnings the site developed into a Romanised farmstead in the mid-1st to mid-2nd century. This development was gradual, with the appearance of a cottage with stone foundations, 14.5 x 6.7 m in extent, which was divided into two unequal parts. The building appears to have had a tiled roof. Its foundations, 0.5 m to 0.6 m wide and composed of large, closely packed flints set in mortar, could have supported a first floor. Associated with this structure were yard surfaces, a clay floor, some form of 'drying frame' arrangement, and the remains of several other probable structures and associated ditches.
 3. *Phase 3:* Between the mid-2nd to mid-3rd century the cottage was extended by a further 34 m, giving it overall dimensions of 42.0 x 14.5 m. This addition was subdivided into at least one 10.0 x 14.5 m area and one 23.0 x 14.5 m area. It has been suggested that this addition was most probably associated with decorated wall plaster and tessellated pavement found on the site, which the excavators interpreted as belonging to the phase 2 developments (David Neal pers. comm.). Associated with this building were several 'T'-shaped kilns, a well, a pond, a road, and a circular building with an external diameter of 6.1 m.
 4. *Phase 4:* By the early 4th century both the pond and the well appear to have been back-filled and the existing structures demolished. This should not necessarily be equated with a wholesale abandonment of the area. There are indications that the settlement may have shifted to the north in this final phase.
- 3.3 The principal post-Roman feature in the landscape was a medieval deer park, situated to the south of Wymondley Bury (Farris pers comm). To the south it abutted onto a lane that went between Titmore Green and Todd's Green. Its eastern bounds were defined by Chantry Lane, and its western side by a footpath. It is believed that the area of the park was greatly reduced in the late medieval period when Bury Wood was excluded from it (*ibid*). The area is shown as fields on a map dated 1731 (HCRO GR 216279), held in Hertfordshire County Record Office (HCRO). By the early 19th century these fields were referred to as 'Grass Park, Ploughed Park, Lawn Park and Lawn Pond' (HCRO 44216). On the eastern side of the playing field, the cable route cuts the park boundary.

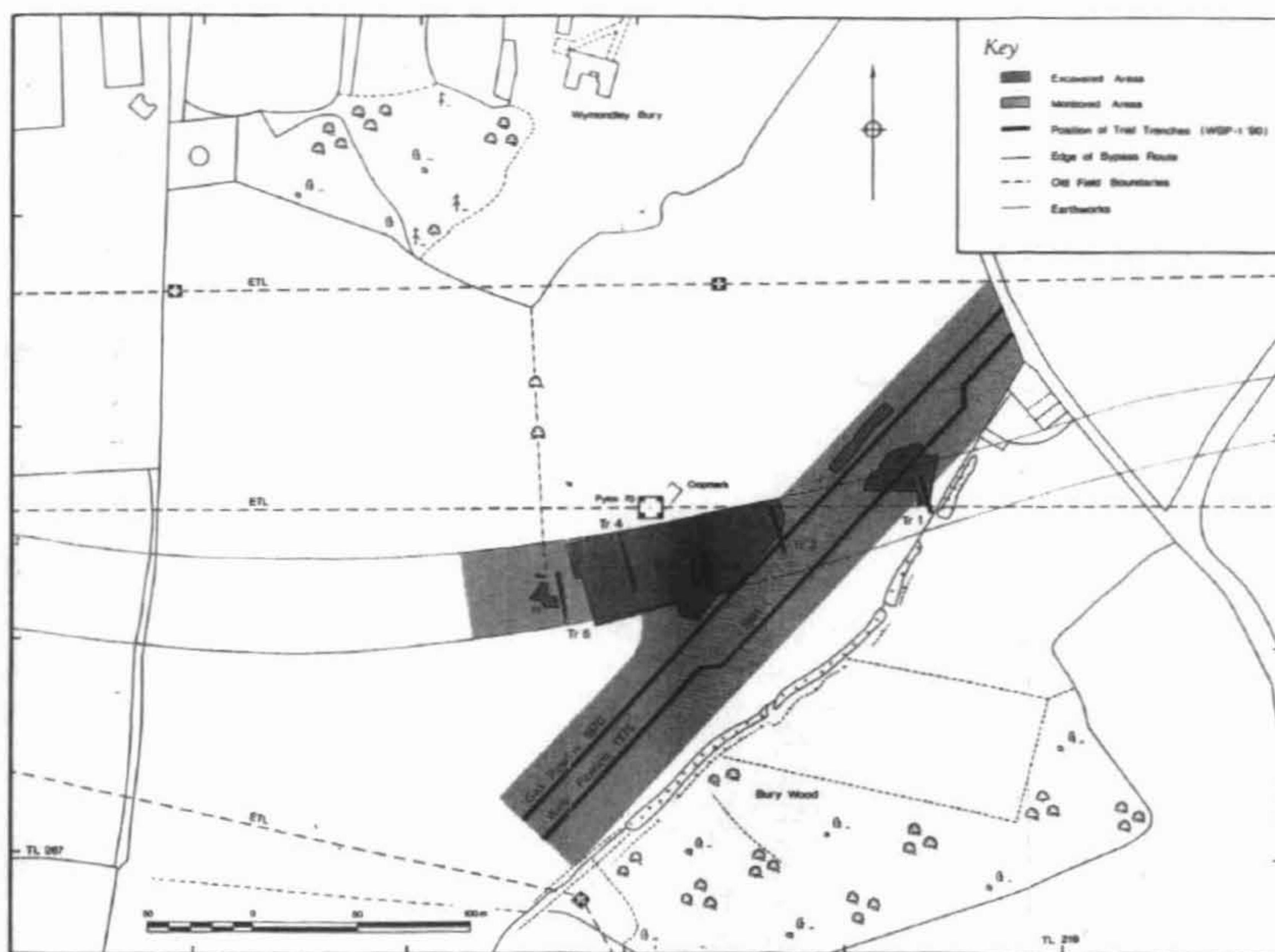


Figure 3: Area of previous archaeological investigation
(after Went & Burleigh 1992)

4 Aims & Methods

4.1 The aims of project were as follows:

- To ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect archaeological remains.
- To secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme.
- To secure the analysis, conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site.

4.2 The work was carried out according to a standard brief, which required:

- Soil and overburden stripping under archaeological supervision;
- Inspection of sub-soil for archaeological features;
- The excavation and recording of any archaeological features/deposits;
- Sub-soil stripping under archaeological supervision;
- Examination of any service and foundation trenches and the subsequent recording of any exposed archaeological deposits;
- Rapid examination of spoil heaps for archaeological material;
- A programme of post-fieldwork analysis, archiving and publication.

4.3 The work was carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Watching Briefs*, and the relevant section(s) of ASC's *Operations Manual*.

4.4 Excavation Method

It is important to bear in mind that the recording programme was not a conventional excavation project. A balance was struck between understanding the archaeological remains and the need, as far as possible, to protect the site from further damage. It was clear that simply by concentrating on the cable trenches an overall view of what was going on would not be obtained. Accordingly, in those areas where archaeological features were present, cleaning was undertaken by hand using trowels and draw-hoes. It became apparent that the more that was uncovered the more archaeology there was and this increased its exposure to possible damage during the development phase.

In the case of the westernmost building, the internal area was manually cleaned and part of the area to the west was exposed amounting to c. 100 m². On its south side the area was cleaned by machine where there were no cobbles or chalk present. In the area immediately adjacent to Pylon 70 an area some 10 x 12 m was manually cleaned and recorded. The only areas that were excavated were along the routes of the proposed cables, which were marked out by the contractors. In the area of the rectangular building the route was subsequently shifted a metre or so to the north.

5 Results

5.1 This section describes the results of the monitoring programme along the cable route and then the detail of the archaeology where appropriate (Fig. 2).

5.2 Cable Section 1

Location: Between Wymondley Transforming Station and Blackmore Lane where it runs between Great Wymondley and Redcoats Farm.

NGR: TL 2063-2689 to TL 2082-2682

Observations: Mostly within an old quarry. None of the soil horizons look natural.

5.3 Cable Section 2

Location: Between Blackmore Lane and the boundary between the recreation field to the west and arable land to the east. In addition the boundary follows the footpath between Great Wymondley to the north and the Titmore Green to the south, which demarcated a medieval hunting park.

NGR: TL 2082-2682 to TL 2147-2687

Observations: The area to the south of the by-pass was seen on August 23rd and was devoid of any archaeological features. The remaining area was observed on September 13th and this was equally barren.

5.4 Cable Section 3

Location: Between the footpath between Titmore Green and Great Wymondley demarcating a medieval park and Corey's Mill adjacent to the East Coast railway line.

NGR: TL 2147-2687 to TL 2195-2715

Observations: The great majority of this section was devoid of archaeological features. However, there were three distinct areas of interest. These are described below.

5.4.1 The medieval park boundary

This was located by the excavating machine near the Wymondley By-Pass at NGR TL 2147-2687. The machine cut was c. 1.20 m wide and 1.2 m deep. The clay sides of the trench were hard and dry so only photographs were taken and a sketch section made. The boundary was c. 3.6 m wide and about 2.0 m deep (Pl. 2). The ditch was only half filled and is still in use. The fills consisted of yellowish brown silty clay and occasional pebbles and flints. There were no finds retrieved and no sign of a bank. However, visibility was poor on the eastern side of the boundary so its existence cannot be ruled out (see reverse of monitoring sheet for September 14th).

5.4.2 The Roman settlement at Pylon 70

The archaeology uncovered in this area was a continuation of the Romano-British farmstead that had been excavated in the early 1990's. It was originally anticipated that there might be ditches and pits present. However, in the event,

the archaeology revealed exceeded expectations, and its discovery adds a significantly new dimension to our knowledge of the Roman settlement at Little Wymondley. The intensive recording programme took place between September 17th 2001 and October 12th 2001 in a period of variable, though mild, weather. The area of potential archaeology amounted to a zone 170 m long by 13 m wide (2210 m²), of which 224 m² (10%) was manually cleaned.

Description

The first part of the site to be exposed lay some 40 m to the west of Pylon 70 at NGR TL 21695-26850. This was a concentration of chalk and flints. On further examination this turned out to be the site of a circular building and what has been interpreted as the remains of associated 'yard surfaces'.

Circular building [3003]

This structure had an internal diameter of 7.25 m, with wall foundations 0.6 m wide and 0.3 m deep (Fig. 5; Pl. 3). On the western side the foundation appeared to consist of flint with mortar bonding, though in the eastern segment that was excavated only very slight traces of mortar survived in what was otherwise a mass of small broken flint, occasional Roman brick fragments and some abraded pottery (Pl. 4). According to Helen Ashworth the pottery is dateable to the 3rd century. No contemporary internal features were observed, but the centre had been cut by a post-medieval ditch. The abraded chalk may be the remains of a former floor make-up.

To the east of the circular building was a spread of chalk and flint cobbles (Pl. 5). This was exposed but not excavated before the cable trench was dug.

Building [3010]

The second area to be excavated lay partly beneath Pylon 70 at NGR TL 21700-26860. This consisted of a rectangular building orientated NE-SW with internal dimensions of 14.3 x 6.5 m (Fig. 6; Pl. 6). Its foundations were 0.58 m wide and 0.9 m deep comprised mortared flints (Pl. 8) with an average size of between 0.15 m and 0.20 m (Pls. 9 & 10). No evidence survived of the above ground structure or of the location of the entrance. The pottery recovered from a section excavated through the wall was dated to the late 1st to early 2nd century. However, it would be unwise to rely unduly on this date as a date for the construction of the wall. It was certainly not earlier than the early 2nd century but it could be later.

There were several post-holes [3046, 3051] situated within the building but it was difficult to see how they might have related to the structure. There was also an area of burnt clay in the middle of the building, indicating where a hearth might once have been. The western wall cut through an area of chalk make-up [3014], which in turn sealed two sunken furnaces (see below). A pit [3057, filled with decorated plaster cut the western wall [3013] (Pl. 11). In addition,

there were some faint traces of what looked like plaster debris partly overlying the chalk area within the building.

To the east of the rectangular building was an area of miscellaneous Romano-British activity (Pl. 7). This appeared to consist of a range of pits, burnt spreads and possible traces of cobbling. The only areas which were excavated lay along the two cable routes. These both revealed a range of pits and shallow scoops, the significance of which remains unclear.

Sunken kiln or oven [3036]

This feature was sealed beneath a chalk spread [3014] (Fig. 6). In plan it was an elongated oval 1.10 m long, 0.48 m wide and 0.44 m deep, orientated north to south (Fig. 7). The sides had been burned red to a depth of about 0.40 m, but no burning was apparent at the base of the feature (Pls. 12 & 13). There was evidence for at least four stake-holes at its northern end. The fill of the feature consisted of a uniformly loose, charcoal deposit with occasional lenses of sand present. Two scraps of Romano-British pottery were recovered from the upper fill, but its dating will depend on C14 evidence. There were some signs for the presence of charred sticks at its northern end. The sample of the fill [3037] contained pottery, flint, bone fragments, charcoal and charred cereal grains (Appendix 4).

Sunken kiln or oven [3044]

This feature was partly sealed beneath the chalk spread [3014] (Fig. 6). It was slightly narrower than the previous feature, measuring 1.12 m long by 0.42 m wide and 0.44 m deep, and was orientated NW-SE (Fig. 7). Its sides exhibited a similar degree of burning to a kiln or oven [3036] [Pls. 14 & 15]. Three fills were identified, though little significance should be attached to these distinctions as they are all probably the result of a single, deliberate act of back-filling. The upper fill [3045] was a predominantly loose, dark yellowish brown sand with occasional pebbles. Beneath this was a layer of black, sandy charcoal [3058] containing fired earth, flint, bone fragments and some hammer scale flakes. The lower fill [3059] contained occasional iron slag, charred cereal grains and hammer scale. The upper fill contained fragments of late 1st or early 2nd century pottery (Appendix 4).

Pit [3063]

At about 100m due west of the rectangular building was a sub-rectangular pit. It had a diameter of 1.30 m and was 0.42 m deep. It was only partly excavated where the cable trench was due to cut through it. The pit was filled with a very dark grey silty clay containing fragments of burnt clay, daub, pebbles and oven debris, and some seeds were observed by the excavator. The soil sample revealed a comparatively rich assemblage of material including pottery, flint, fired earth, fired clay, an iron object, some bone fragments, a piece of quern stone and much charred cereal grain (Appendix 4).

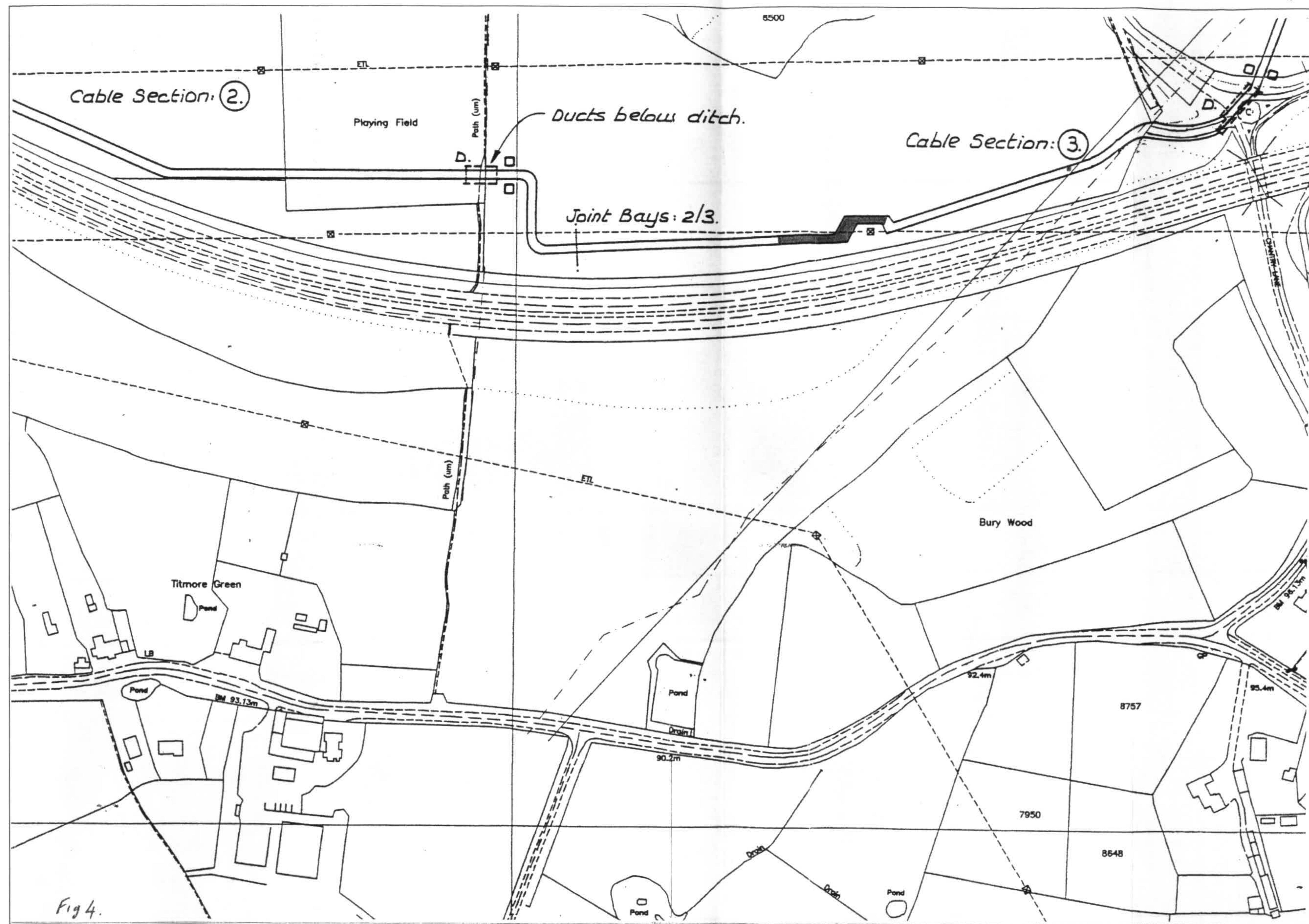


Figure 4: Area of current detailed recording

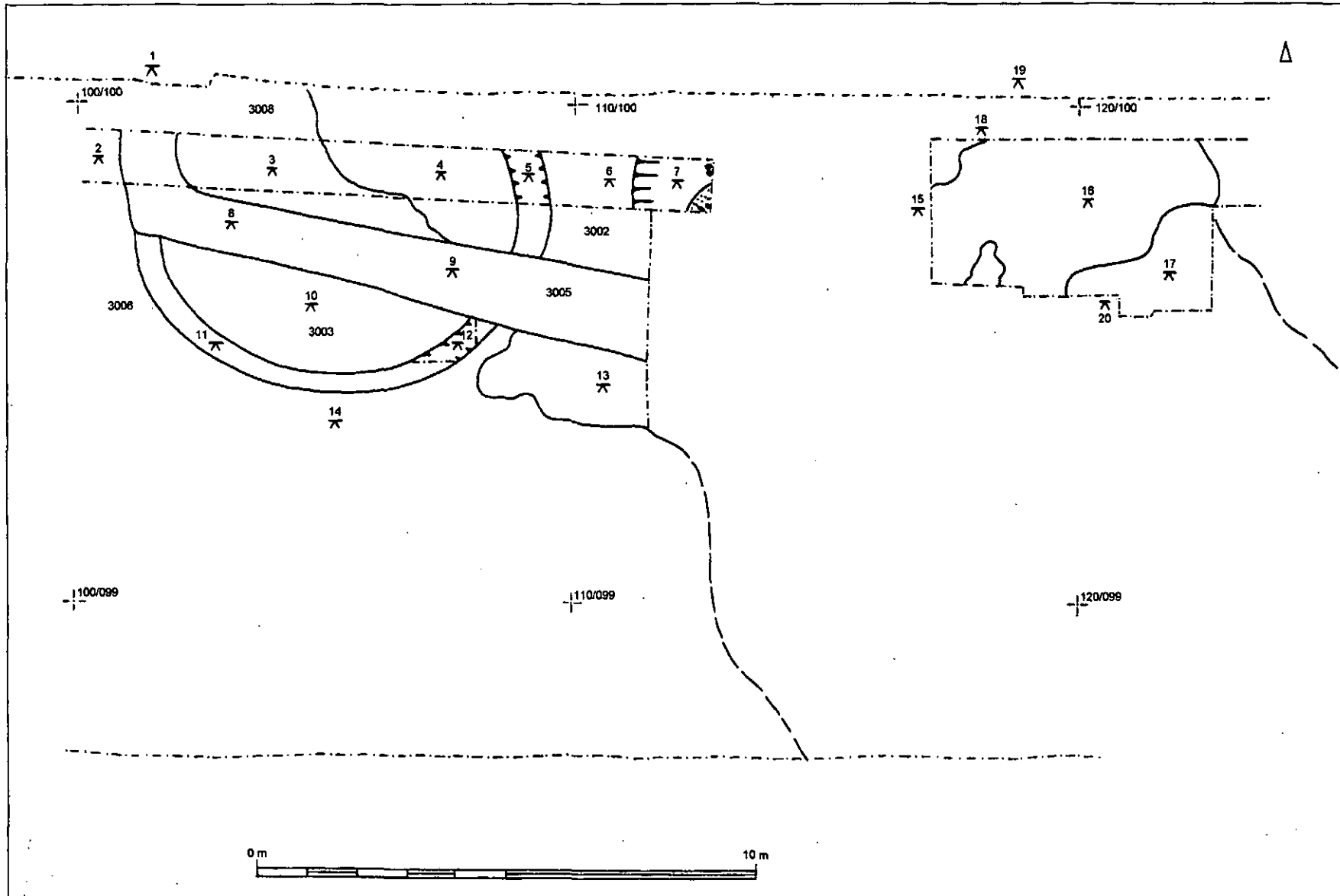


Figure 5: Plan showing the area around the circular building [3003]

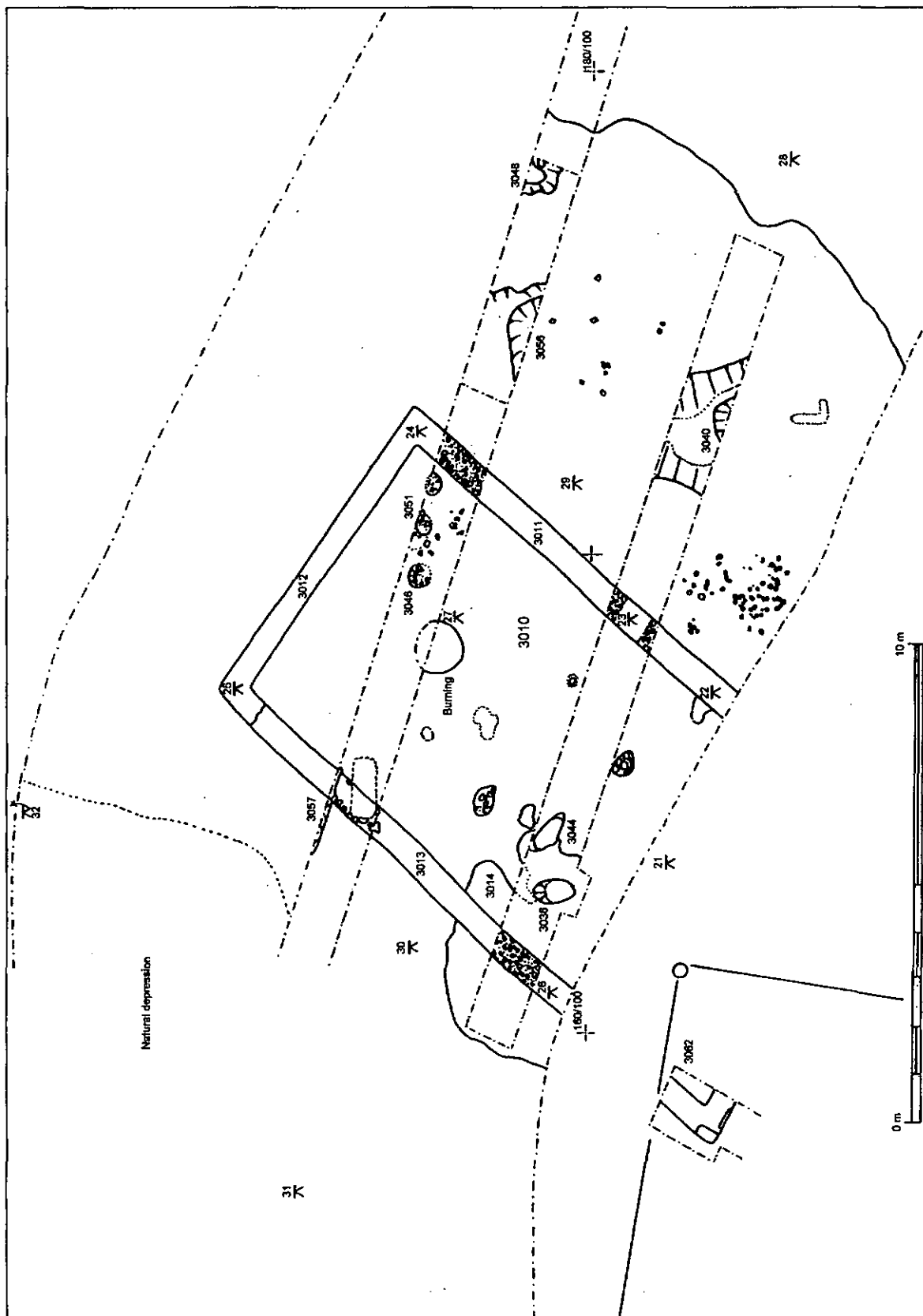


Figure 6: Plan showing the area around building [3010]

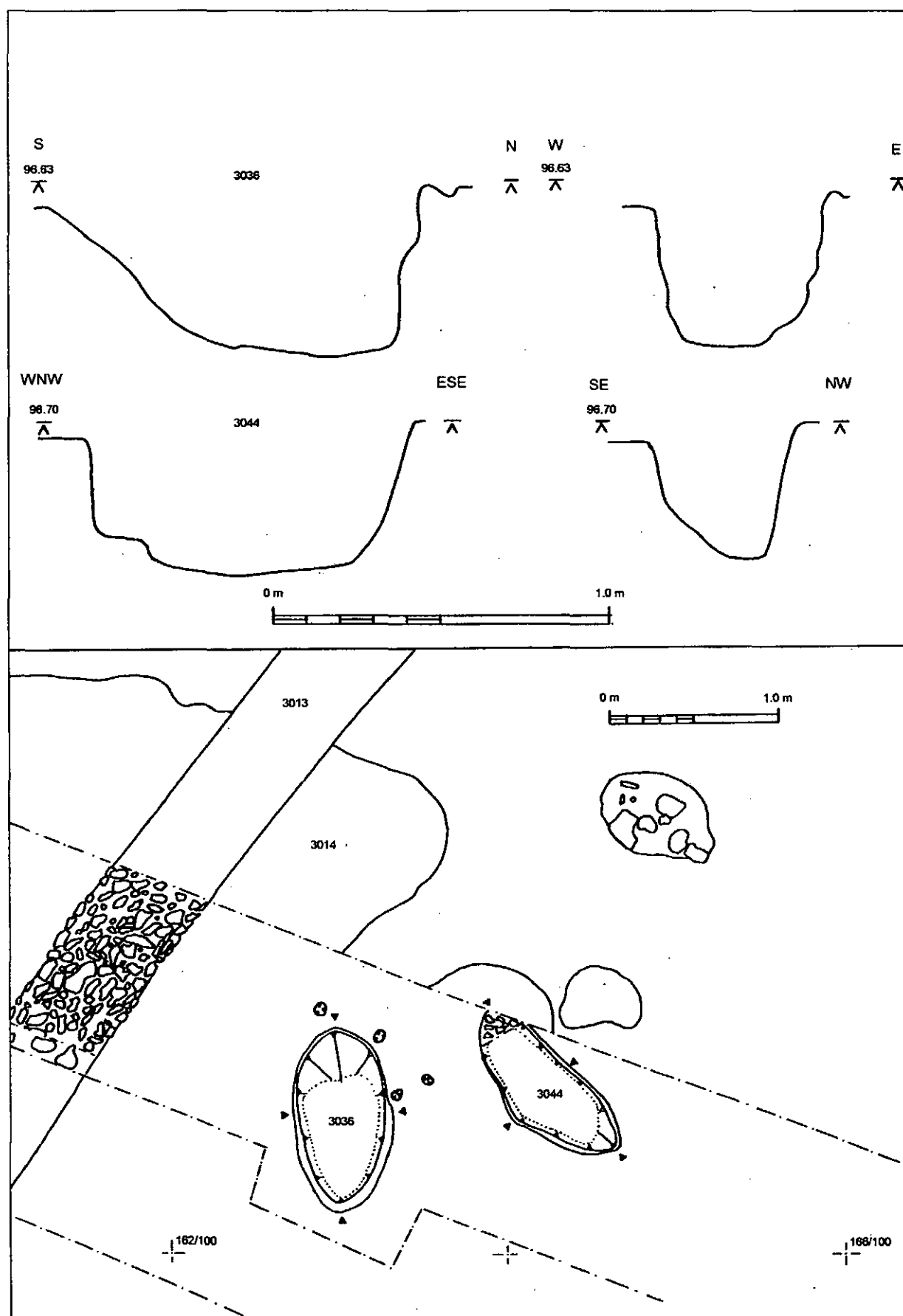


Figure 7: Plan and profiles of oven/kiln pits

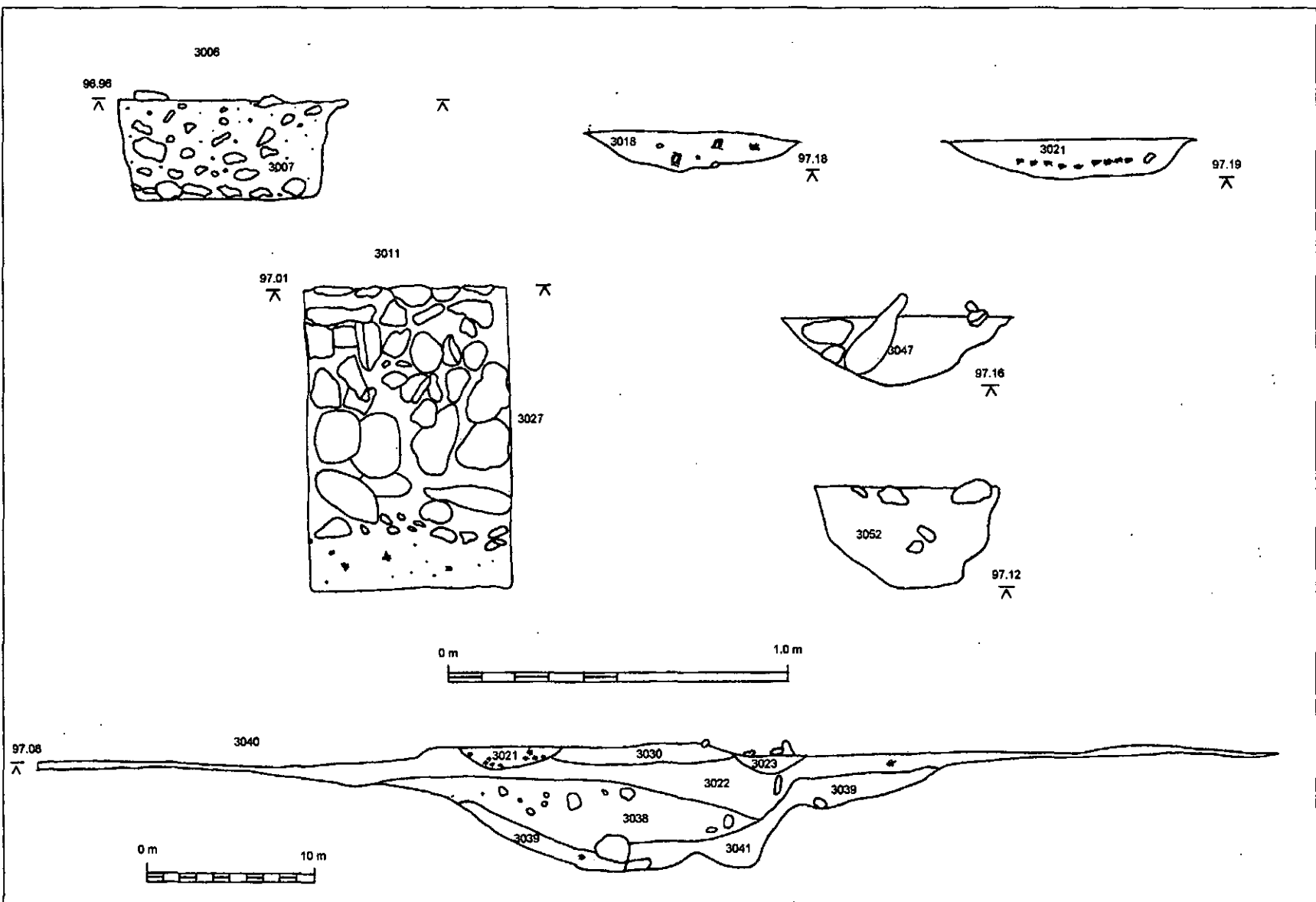


Figure 8: Section drawings

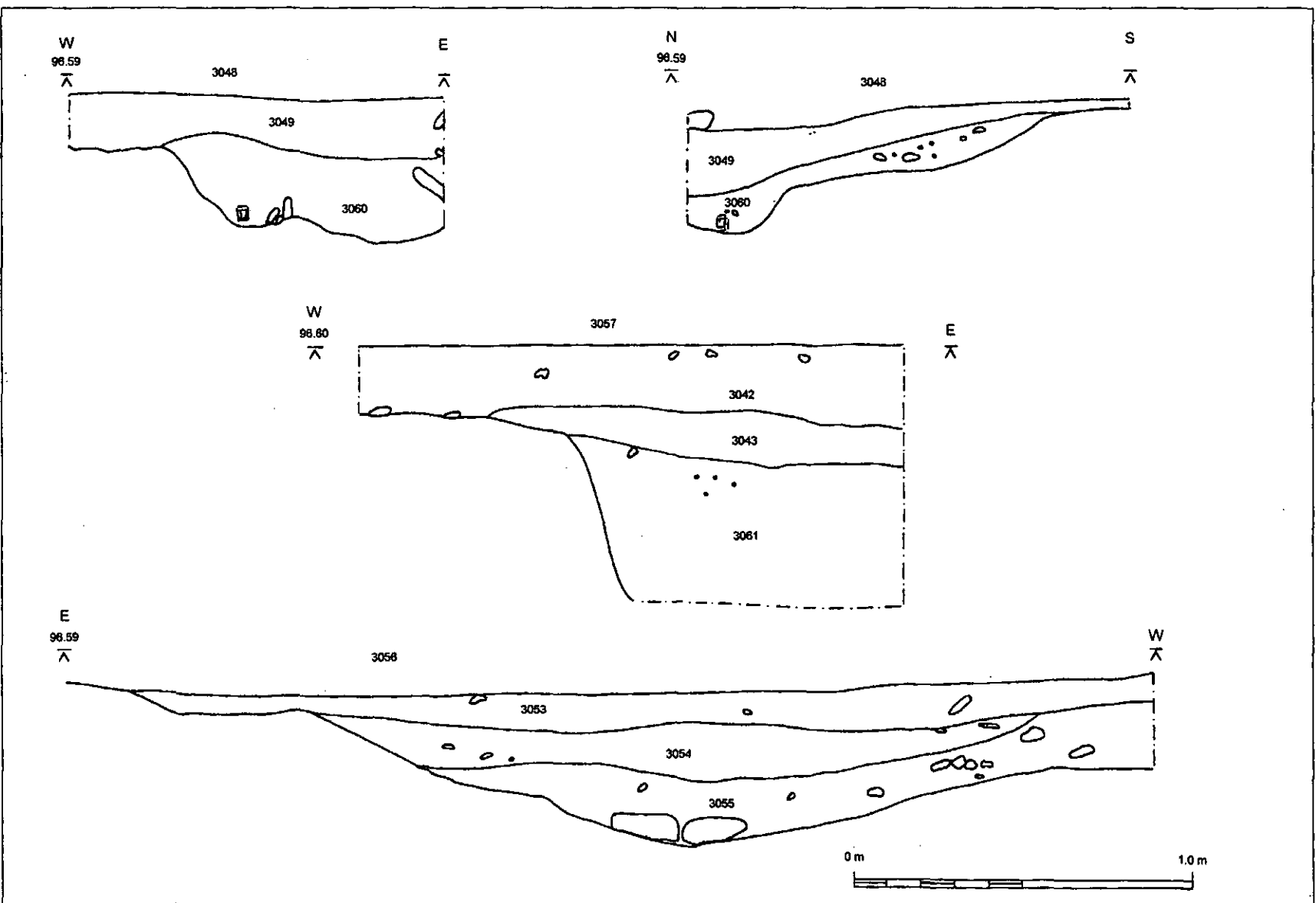


Figure 9: Section drawings

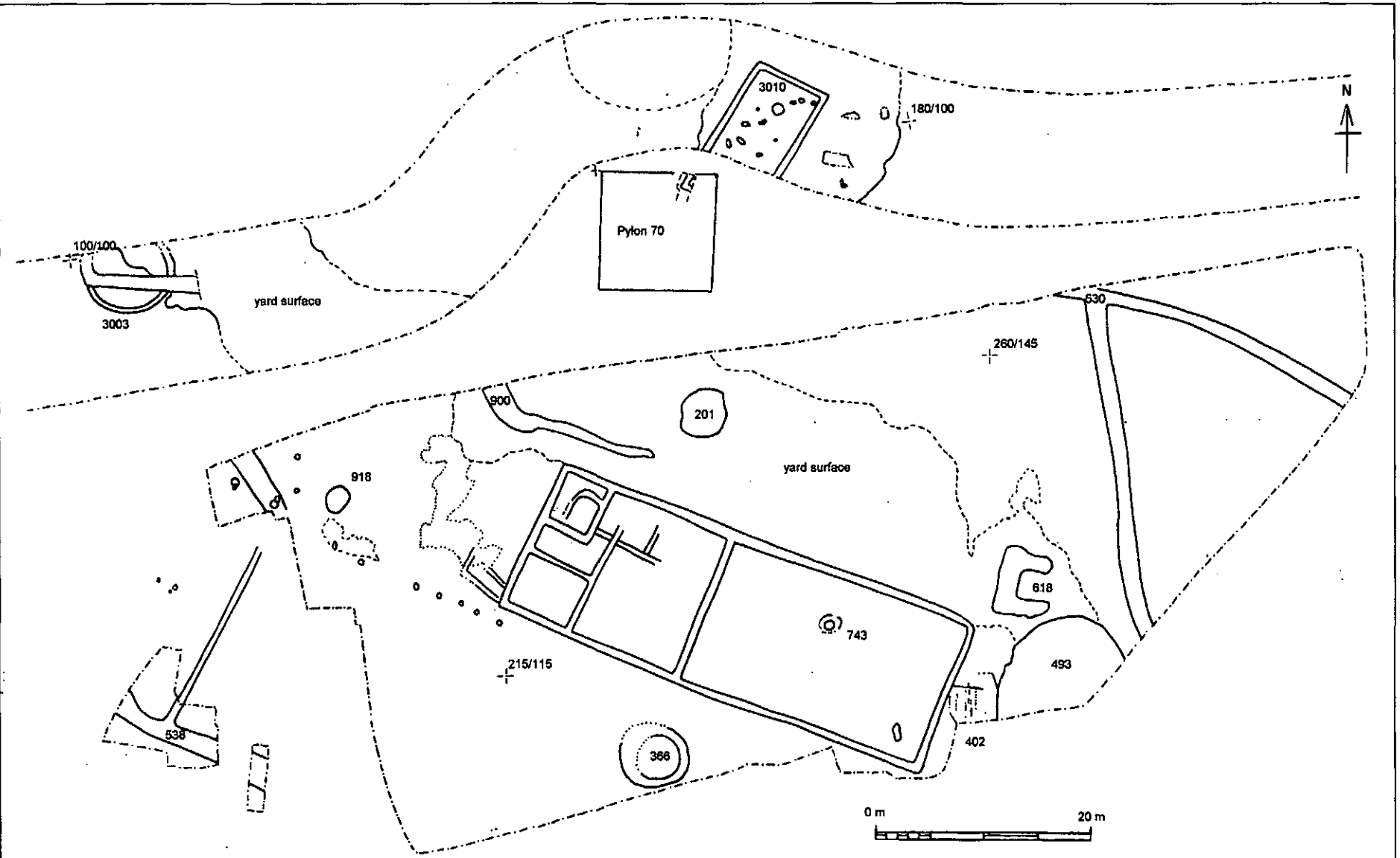


Figure 10: The Romano-British settlement at Little Wymondley (simplified)



Plate 1: Section across the medieval park boundary at NGR TL 21490-26825



Plate 2: Area of circular building [3003] under excavation looking NE



Plate 3: Detail of wall foundation [3006] belonging to circular building looking north



Plate 4: Chalky spread & cobbles to the east of the circular building



Plate 5: Building [3010] looking northwards



Plate 6: View of cleaned area to the west of [3010]



Plate 7: Upper fills of pit [3057] which cuts wall [3013] of rectangular building [3010]



Plate 8: Detail of the character of the flint foundations of wall [3011]



Plate 9: Detail of section through the foundations of wall [3011] looking south



Plate 10: Wall [3062] forming the south-western corner of building [3010]



Plate 11: View of the upper fill of the furnace pit [3036] looking south



Plate 12: Excavated furnace pit [3036]



Plate 13: View of the upper fill of the furnace pit [3044] looking south west



Plate 14: Excavated furnace pit [3044]



Plate 15: Section through pit 3063 revealing its burnt fill [3050]



Plate 16: Section through a sandy gravel deposit to the NW of Pylon 70. Note the presence of a deposit of iron just above the lower white 0.5m of the ranging rod

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 The current excavation adds significantly to what was already known about the Romano-British settlement at Little Wymondley (Fig.10). The previous fieldwork revealed a rectangular masonry building 42.0 x 14.5 m and a number of other structures that were not necessarily contemporary. The stone building may have replaced a wooden framed building which lay immediately to its west. There was evidence that it was internally furnished with tessellated floors, painted walls and possibly a small mosaic. There was a rectangular structure [618] that was c.8.0 m wide and of unknown length that belonged to the 2nd century. There was a third structure identified which consisted of two concentric rings of post-holes [366]. The outer ring had a diameter of 6.1 m and the internal ring had a diameter of 4.3 m (14.5 m²). There was an area of what may have been drying frames or a loom shed [402] to the east of the main rectangular building. To the east two, possibly three T-shaped malting kilns were located. In addition, a well [918], a pond [493] and half a dozen cremations were found. Associated with the main structures was a yard surface, which covered at least 700 m².
- 6.2 The current fieldwork showed that the yard surface of the settlement extended, as predicted, across to the west into the area of the cable trench easement (Fig.10). The presence of a 3rd-century circular building at the western end of the yard is of considerable interest. Despite the paucity of internal features, the structure [3003] was sufficiently robust to have been capable of supporting a thatched roof. Its function is unknown but its internal area of 41.2 m² would have been capable of housing a family unit. While the possibility that the structure might have been a shrine cannot be ruled out, the lack of any votive finds makes this a less likely interpretation.
- 6.3 The size and impressive foundations of Building [3010] suggest it could have had an upper floor. The presence of decorated wall plaster and the occasional piece of coarse tesserae suggests that Building [3010] had a domestic rather than agrarian use. The small amount of pottery recovered from the vicinity of the building may argue against such an interpretation. However, the archaeological horizons to the west of Building [3010] were only partly sampled, and more may remain in this area. If the building had a domestic function and was not used as a barn, then there were at least three structures on the site that may have been inhabited contemporaneously. However, it is not possible to draw any conclusions over this since the site has only been partly excavated.
- 6.4 One of the most interesting aspects of the site was the evidence for possible industrial or domestic activity. The two oven/kiln pits [3036 & 3044] almost certainly pre-dated Building [3010] and belong to the early Roman phase of the site. At the time of their excavation it was thought that these two features might be furnaces for roasting iron ore. This now seems unlikely since the environmental evidence suggests that they were being used for some domestic purpose (Appendix 4). The fact that oven/kiln Pit [3036] had no hammerscale in its fill suggests that it and oven/kiln Pit [3044] may not have been in use at the same time.
- 6.5 From the presence of hammerscale, it seems likely that there must have been a smithy in the vicinity of the oven/kiln pits. A potential area for this activity exists immediately

to the NNW of Pylon 70. Although this area was not cleaned or excavated, the author observed a concentration of hammer scale lying exposed by the clearance of the topsoil. Nowhere else on the site was there such a concentration of iron slag, some of which was retrieved for later analysis. This area coincides with what appeared to be a man-made depression. However, during the observation of the excavation of a cable trench it could be seen that the sunken area was located on a pocket of sand and gravel surrounded by chalky boulder clay. Of further interest was the presence of a band of iron ore, or more accurately 'hydrated iron' amongst the sandy deposit (Plate 17). The author observed other large nuggets of iron ore (120 mm dia.) in the vicinity. This suggests that the area might have been a primary source of ore for iron smelting in the 1st century AD.

- 6.6 It has been estimated that the site extends across an area of some 20,000 m² (Went & Burleigh 1992, 23). Of this, 3,450 m² was exposed in 1991 and 2,210 m² was stripped in 2001. This totals 5,660 m², approximately 28% of the potential area of the site. It should also be remembered that only 10% of the area exposed in 2001 could be described as being cleaned to a satisfactory standard. While it is unlikely that there are any undiscovered substantial buildings within the easement area, other smaller features may well remain undetected.
- 6.7 The discovery of a post-Roman ditch [3005] and its subsequent identification with a boundary shown on the first series Ordnance Survey 6" scale (c.1878) was of interest. The ditch appears to belong to a post-medieval boundary that post-dated the demise of the medieval park. This boundary came from the north and then turned 90° to the east. According to the Ordnance Survey map, after some 65 m it then started to curve to the south-west, where it abutted onto the boundary of Bury Wood. It has been suggested that Ditch [530] belongs to the first phase of the site (late pre-Roman Iron Age). However, according to the illustration in the report on the 1990-1 excavation this boundary appears to cut this east-west ditch (Went & Burleigh 1992, Fig.3). If this was so then Ditch [530] cannot have formed the eastern boundary of the settlement and must have belonged to the post-Roman period.

6.8 Landscape setting

Location, status and economy

The site lay above the 95 m contour on the undulating plateau of the chalky boulder clay between the Ippollitts Brook, 1.9 km to the west, and the River Beane, 7.5 km to the east. There was a dew pond on the site (Went & Burleigh 1992, 17) as there was at the other Romano-British sites excavated in North Stevenage, including Boxfield Farm (Hunn 1996, 73-74) and Lobs Hole (Heritage Network forthcoming). A dew pond would have served the needs of a small number of stock, though for domestic use the settlement relied on water supplied from wells (e.g. 908). Cereals can be grown in the area, though this requires ploughs capable of working the heavy soils. It is impossible, on the present level of information available, to be certain of the character of the agrarian regime in the Romano-British period. However, the number of quernstone fragments and the existence of at least three malting kilns suggests that an arable regime may have predominated.

The nearest major Roman road lay about 750 m to the west of the site and about 1.9 km to the south west from the junction of the Verulamium to Baldock road with the Braughing to Baldock road. The site lay 7.5 km south west of the Roman town of Baldock and 21 km NNW of the major town of Verulamium. It was one of several higher status sites to the south of Baldock, which was almost certainly its principal market. The nearest known villa is at Purwell (SMR 0467; NGR TL 207-291) some 1500 m to the north of the site. Other villas or potential villa sites are known at Weston (SMR 1588; NGR TL 272-307), Frogmore Farm (SMR 0509; NGR TL 285-210), Gravely (SMR 4423; NGR TL 238-291) and Aston End (SMR 0796; NGR TL 273-241). A figure of 175 ha (432 acres) has been suggested as a probable estimate for the territory of the Romano-British settlement at Little Wymondley (*Heritage Network forthcoming*).

Little Wymondley is one of three Romano-British settlements in the vicinity of Stevenage to have been excavated in the course of the last twelve years. The other two are Boxfield Farm (NGR TL 266-259) and Lob's Hole (NGR TL 263-263) on the north eastern side of Stevenage. These sites began as late Iron Age/early Romano-British enclosures. The precise form of enclosure which preceded the Roman period site at Little Wymondley is not known, but it is almost certain that there was one. The sites represent three of the six types of Romano-British settlement identified within Hertfordshire (Hunn 1995, 80). Little Wymondley belongs to Group 3 - Romanised farmsteads' Boxfield Farm belongs to Group 4 - lesser Romanised farmsteads and Lob's Hole to Group 5 - Native settlements. It is possible to illustrate the different characteristics of these settlements by a comparative table showing the types of structure found on each site. The data must be approached with caution as not all these sites have been excavated to the same scale and intensity.

Type	Context	Date	Little Wymondley	Boxfield Farm	Lobs Hole	Area (m ²)
rectangular dwelling	Multiple contexts	2 nd /3 rd C	42.0 x 14.5m	-	-	609.0
rectangular	3010	3 rd C	14.3 x 6.5m	-	-	93.0
circular	3003	3 rd C	7.25 m	-	-	41.2
rectangular	618	2 nd C	8 x ? m	-	-	?
circular	366	2 nd /3 rd C	4.3 m	-	-	14.5
circular	ABO/ABP	4 th C	-	14 m dia	-	154.0
circular	ABQ	4 th C	-	9 m dia	-	63.6
circular	DDX	4 th C	-	16 m dia	-	201.1
circular	1840	2 nd /3 rd C	-	-	6 m dia	28.3
circular	1864	2 nd /3 rd C	-	-	3 m dia	7.0
circular	1867	2 nd /3 rd C	-	-	4 m dia	12.5

Table 1: Comparative structures on three excavated sites in the North Stevenage area

If a comparison is made between the three sites the following pattern emerges for the types of personal artefacts recovered.

Items	Little Wymondley	Boxfield Farm	Lobs Hole
cu alloy brooches	3	15	13 (frags)
enamel brooches	0	0	0
bracelet (shale)	1	5	0
bracelet (cu alloy)	2	17	3
rings (cu alloy)	1	1	2
Cu alloy pins	3	21	0
bone pins	2	20	1
ear rings (cu alloy)	0	2	0
cosmetic items	0	7	2

Table 2: Comparative list of personal artefacts recovered from the North Stevenage sites

The Little Wymondley site is relatively poor in the way of personal artefacts. The reason for this is not clear, but was more sophisticated in terms of its structural complexity because it had mortar bonded footings, tessellated pavements, decorated plaster and probably a small mosaic. The disparity between the level of material culture recovered from the above sites may well narrow in the future because there is still a considerable area of the Little Wymondley site remaining to be excavated.

7 Acknowledgements

The writer would like to thank Peter Lee of *The National Grid Plc* who commissioned this project and his colleagues for their interest throughout, in particular John Wilkinson. Thanks are also due to the contractors involved, in particular David Martindale, Mick Marsh and Neil McLachan of *Pirelli Construction* and to *Durkin & Sons Ltd* for their co-operation. Also the author wishes to thank members of the Stevenage Archaeology Group who located the end of the Roman building beneath Pylon 70. Harvey Cross and Jim Fairbairn kindly searched the adjacent areas with their metal detectors. Thanks are due to the following for their assistance on the excavation: Martin Lightfoot (supervisor), Claire Griffiths, David Neal, Justin Neal, Karin Semmelmann, Geoffrey Saunders, Bill Leigh, Delli Beckly, John Oxford and Chris Turner. Thanks also go to Angela Wardle for kindly identifying the brooch. Finally, the author must thank Gil Burleigh and Stewart Bryant (HCC) for their interest and advice during the project.

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9 Archive

9.1 The project archive will be deposited with Letchworth Museum.

9.2 The accession number has not yet been allocated.

9.3 The project archive comprises:

1. 63 context sheets.
2. 33 pottery processing sheets
3. 7 x A1 plans and 2 A2 section sheets
4. 42 x B/W photographs and 42 x colour transparencies
5. 4 boxes containing ceramics, building material, artefacts iron and slag.
6. Copy of the project design
7. Copy of the report

Appendix 1: Pottery Assessment Report

By Helen Ashworth, The Heritage Network Ltd

Introduction

A total of 713 sherds, weighing 6249 g, was recovered from 30 stratified and 2 unstratified contexts during the current phase of field work at Little Wymondley. The following report is based on a brief examination of this assemblage, which is predominantly Romano-British in date.

The pottery was in variable condition, ranging from small, abraded fragments to sizeable, relatively unworn, sherds. The condition of the pottery from each context was shown on the pottery recording forms by use of a letter code, from A to E. A represents a significant context containing complete, or almost complete vessels; and E signified a small group of abraded, mainly undiagnostic sherds, that were likely to be residual within the context. The majority of contexts contained pottery designated by the letter E.

Methodology

Initially, the pottery from each context was scanned, weighed, counted and assigned a spot-date on the basis of the fabrics and forms present. This was done to provide rapid information to the excavator for the phasing of the site.

Further analysis of the pottery was then undertaken to divide the pottery into broad fabric groups, including grog-tempered ware, shell-tempered ware and Hadham grey ware, which were then weighed and counted. This was done to provide an indication of the relative importance of the sources of pottery supplying the site.

Chronology

The pottery from the site ranged from a few residual sherds of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery to a scatter of 4th/5th century sherds. The bulk of the assemblage falls into the mid-Roman period, the 2nd/3rd centuries.

On the ceramic evidence, activity appears to have started at this site in the late 1st/early 2nd century AD and continued into the late 3rd century. Early shelly wares, grog-tempered wares and early Roman sandy wares, distinguish the early phase. During the 2nd century grey wares began to predominate. Nene Valley colour-coat and late products of the Hadham and Oxford kiln sites distinguish the latest activity.

Discussion

The assessment of the pottery assemblage from the present site was undertaken to provide a chronological sequence for the site, and to identify its significance within the rural hinterland of the Roman town of Baldock. The bulk of the pottery was in the form of abraded, undiagnostic bodysherds, indicating that the material was not in its place of primary deposition. The exception to this was context [3007], the fill of the circular wall, which produced large, relatively unabraded sherds of a shell-tempered storage jar, dating to the 3rd century AD. Of the identifiable forms; jars predominated, but flanged bowls, platters, mortaria and beakers were also recorded. No amphora was recovered from the site.

It appears that most of the pottery reaching the site came from local and regional sources. Unsurprisingly, the bulk of the assemblage came from the kilns at Hadham, which lay approximately 20 km to the east. Hadham grey wares comprised 35%, by number, of the total assemblage, and Hadham oxidised wares 1%. Grey wares, from unknown kiln sites, formed the next largest group, comprising 15% of the total assemblage. Other coarse wares recovered include shell-tempered wares, mostly from the kiln site at Harrold in Bedfordshire, at 9%; sherds from the Verulamium region, which formed 8% of the total assemblage; grog-tempered wares, of probable local origin, 7% of the total assemblage; local black burnished wares, comprising 6%, and early Roman sandy wares, which formed 5% of the total assemblage.

Imported and fine wares make up a very low proportion of the assemblage. Samian and colour-coated wares from the Nene valley were the largest groups, both comprised 2% of the assemblage. Small amounts of Gaulish colour-coated wares and Oxford red-slipped wares were recovered. One very abraded sherd from a glazed vessel was collected from context [3049].

It appears from the ceramic evidence that both the circular and the rectangular building were in use at the same time. Pottery of late 2nd and 3rd century date was collected from the area of the circular building, whilst part of a shell-tempered vessel, dating to the 3rd century AD, was recovered from the wall foundation trench of the rectangular building, suggesting a 3rd century construction date. This fits with the suggested dating for the Roman farmstead excavated along the line of the Wymondley By-Pass in the early 1990's (Went & Burleigh 1992). The original house was probably constructed during the early 2nd century AD, but was significantly extended in the later 2nd or early 3rd century.

The furnace and at least one pit appear to predate these buildings. Pottery of late 1st or early 2nd century AD was recovered from furnace fill [3045] and from pit fills [3038] and [3055]. Several contexts described as deposits also date to this period, including [3042] and [3054].

The pottery assemblage appears to indicate domestic occupation in close proximity to the present site. The small number of sherds recovered from the area of the stone buildings suggests that it was unlikely to have been used for human habitation. However, a greater amount of pottery was recovered from the area of the circular building [3003], indicating that this may have been occupied from the late 2nd century into the 3rd century.

The dearth of late Roman wares suggests that the site went out of use, probably from the late 3rd century AD. This also fits with the evidence from the Romanised farmstead excavated in 1990/1 (Went & Burleigh 1992).

Appendix 2: General Finds Report

Animal bone

The amount of bone recovered from this season's work is summarised in Table 4. A total of 828 g from 13 contexts, of which 3 were unstratified, was recovered. The majority was very fragmentary and appears to derive from both cattle and sheep. The character of this assemblage is too small to justify further analysis. Material to be discarded.

Building material

A total of 3338 g of Roman tile and brick were recovered from 11 contexts, of which 3 were unstratified. The majority of this material was composed of fragments of tegula and imbrex. Material to be discarded.

Tesserae

Eleven *tesserae* weighing 158 g were recovered from 3 contexts, 2 of which were unstratified. The assemblage was composed of reddish brown *tesserae* derived from brick. Material retained.

Oven/kiln debris

A total of 3700 g of debris was recovered from a single context [3050]. Only a small proportion of this context derived from pit [3063] was actually excavated, which, nevertheless, yielded a considerable amount of this material. The assemblage consisted of fragments of brown brick-like material of varying sizes but none exceeding 80 mm in diameter. Many of these pieces exhibited semi cube-like impressions, presumably of the stems of wood. The diameter of these stems varied between 12 mm and 28 mm, though in one case the impression was c. 48 mm. One of the smaller fragments consisted of the corner of an almost brick-like object. None illustrated. Material retained.

Plaster

The plaster from context [3043] was the single largest assemblage after the ceramics, in weight terms, recovered from the site. None of the fragments was larger than c. 45 mm in diameter. The plaster was mainly white followed by red and black bands. The red appeared to predominate. It is difficult to be certain what the decorative scheme was, but it appears to be geometric rather than pictorial.

Quern stone

There were a variety of small fragments of quern stone lying around mostly in the vicinity of [3003]. All were millstone grit but one was a fragment of Hertfordshire puddingstone from a bee-hive type quern. The only piece of quern stone that was retrieved came from just to the west of Pylon 70 at site grid reference 149.80/101.20. It lay in the direct path of the southernmost cable trench. It was approximately 240 mm x 230 mm at its maximum dimensions and came from a quern that had a diameter of about 560 mm by 110 mm thick. It was smooth on its lower side, while its upper side on its outer edges had a series of ridges c. 15 mm wide and 4 mm deep. It looks almost too big to be a hand quern and it is conceivable it might have come from a donkey mill.

Small finds

Bone pin

[SF no. 1]

This was 50 mm in length and belongs Greep's B1 type. These are described as 'hairpins with a rounded head and a swelling stem' and belong to the early to mid 4th century AD (Greep 1995, 1117-11118). It was recovered from [3020] which was deposit that lay to the west of the rectangular building [3010].

Cu alloy

[SF no. 2]

A small ring with five or six rill-like marks across its outer face. It was no more than 19 mm wide and therefore, may have belonged to a child. It came from a cleaning surface within Building [3010].

[SF no.3]

This was a fragment of a brooch which was recovered from a brown silt that lay to the east of Building [3010]. It has been identified as the lower side lug of a 1st century Hull type 61 dating to approximately AD 43-65 (Angela Wardle pers. com.)

[SF no. 4]

A coin belonging to the mid/late 3rd century. Probably Victorinus (268-270). It was recovered from a brown silt that lay to the west of Building [3010].

[SF no. 5]

A decorative stud was found imbedded in the mortar from [3011] which was the eastern wall of the rectangular Building [3010]. It is a cruciform-like rosette with a central bead-like protuberance in the middle. It was 32 mm in diameter with three incised lines but no other form of decoration.

Context	Type	Sherd count	Pot weight (g)	Spot dates
3000	u/s	145	1009	LC2/3C
3001	chalk	36	228	LC2/3C
3002	flints	-	386	3C
3007	wall fill	4	338	3C
3008	deposit	32	245	LC2/3C
3010	barn	42	474	2C
3011	wall	-	-	-
3013	wall	2	22	L1/E2C
3015	deposit	3	92	M/L2C
3017	layer	-	56	-
3018	fill	1	4	M/L2C
3019	pit/ph	28	382	RB
3020	deposit	30	186	L2/E3C
3022	deposit	18	218	E/M2C
3025	deposit	-	-	-
3026	layer	-	-	-
3030	deposit	1	38	RB
3033	deposit	5	18	E/M2C
3037	fill of furn.	2	8	RB
3038	fill of d/pit	11	90	L1/E2C
3042	deposit	2	6	L1/E2C
3043	deposit	2	24	M/L2C
3045	fill of furn.	3	6	L1/E2C
3047	fill of ph	2	8	RB
3049	pit fill	5	52	E/M2C
3050	pit fill	5	272	L2/3C
3052	ph fill	5	40	3/4C
3053	pit fill	14	106	E2C
3054	deposit	2	10	L1/E2C
3055	pit fill	10	136	L1/E2C
3061	pit fill	6	18	2C
pylon 70	u/s	-	162	2C
3003	circ. Build	-	346	2/3C
3003	east of	-	302	L2/3C
3010	E of barn	-	894	2/3C
3010	W of barn	-	19	E/M2C
Total			6249	

Table 3: Summary of ceramics

Context	Type	Bone wt (g)	Oyst. Sh	Kiln mat (g)	Plaster (g)	Building material (g)	Tess. (g)	Slag (g)	Objects	Fe. Obj	Spot dates
3000	u/s										LC2/3C
3001	chalk	222						24		nail	LC2/3C
3002	flints									1	3C
3007	wall fill					350		200			3C
3008	deposit	6						74			LC2/3C
3010	barn	58				276		396		nails	2C
3011	wall								cu alloy		
3013	wall									nail	L1/E2C
3015	deposit								cu alloy		M/L2C
3017	layer									nails	
3018	fill									nails	M/L2C
3019	pit/ph	42				4				nails	RB
3020	deposit	12							bone pin	nail	L2/E3C
3022	deposit	44				416				nails	E/M2C
3025	deposit							12			
3026	layer								coin/brooch	nails	
3030	deposit					226					RB
3033	deposit										E/M2C
3037	fill of furn.							12			RB
3038	fill of d/pit	218				724				nails	L1/E2C
3042	deposit				28					nails	L1/E2C
3043	deposit	14			4000					nail	M/L2C
3045	fill of furn.							76			L1/E2C
3047	fill of ph	44									RB
3049	pit fill						16			nails	E/M2C
3050	pit fill			3700					fl. Scraper		L2/3C
3052	ph fill	28	1								3/4C
3053	pit fill					22				nails	E2C
3054	deposit									nail	L1/E2C
3055	pit fill					208				1 + nails	L1/E2C
3061	pit fill										2C
Pylon 70	u/s										2C
3003	circ. Build	16				256			flint flake	nail	2/3C
3003	east of	12									L2/3C
3010	E of barn	112				816	116			3 + nails	2/3C
3010	W of barn					40	26		quern frag	1 + nails	E/M2C
Total		828	1	3700	4028	3338	158	794			12847

Table 4: Summary of finds

Appendix 3: Iron Working Report

by Jane Cowgill

Introduction

The slag and stone finds from the site were washed (when necessary), identified and recorded on *pro forma* recording sheets. The slag was visually examined and identified solely on morphological grounds, sometimes with the aid of a x10 binocular microscope. A note of probable fuel type has been recorded when fragments were incorporated within the slags or imprints identifiable. The stone descriptions will not be the correct geological terms. X-radiographs were not available to aid the identification of the iron objects.

Discussion

The majority, if not all, of the iron finds are Post-Medieval in date, although not all of the objects (other than nails) are obviously made from cast iron. There are only a few pieces that are not nails or hobnails from shoes/boots, and most of these are probably either structural fragments (for example the probable pintle from [3000]) or are parts of farm machinery. The iron finds have partially corroded but appear relatively stable.

The slag assemblage from the site is small, almost unusually so. The two hearth bottoms are the waste products of two different smiths. The piece from Building [3010] was generated with charcoal as the fuel but has been reused in flooring or a wall because mortar coats one side. The very small assemblage from [3045] may be relatively recent in date because their cindery, glassy appearance suggests that coal may have been the fuel source. Most of the stones are pieces of natural iron rich sandstone, some perhaps burnt. The pumice has been tentatively identified on the basis of a comparison, at x10 magnification, of a piece in the authors' bathroom! A geologist would have to confirm this.

Recommendations

No further work is required on this assemblage. The iron objects should be correctly stored in a Stewart box with an adequate amount of non-indicating silica gel. The pieces of unworked stone could be discarded.

Context	Object	Count	Comments
Circular bldg area	nail	1	
Brown silt in barn	nail	3	+ Shank.
Cleaning E of bldg	hobnail	4	
Cleaning E of bldg	nail	6	+ 6 Shanks.
Cleaning E of bldg	binding strip	1	120 x 28 x 2.5mm; curved.
Cleaning E of bldg	bar	1	152 x 16 x 4mm.
Cleaning E of bldg	rod	1	42 x 9 x 8mm; square sectioned.
Cleaning E of bldg	plate	1	Small fragment.
Cleaning W of barn	nail	9	Small.
Cleaning W of barn		1	Fragment of pintle? 79 x 23 x 9mm.
3000	nail	8	+ 9 Shanks.
3000	hobnail	4	
3001	nail	2	
3002	object	1	Length 84mm; incomplete. Tang?
3002		1	Nail shank?
3010	nail	1	Comment on bag 'Pylon 70'.
3010	cast object	2	Fragments.
3010	cast sheet	2	Fragments.
3010	lump	1	
3010	nail	7	+ 2 Shanks.
3013	nail	1	Head.
3013	rod	1	Length 45mm; very irregular section. Waste?
3017	nail	2	
3018	nail	2	
3019	nail	2	+ 2 Shanks.
3019	hobnail	1	
3020	nail	1	
3022	nail	2	
3026	nail	5	Comment on bag 'Earth over hearth 2'.
3038	nail	3	2 with very long shanks.
3042	nail	8	
3043	nail	1	
3045	nail	1	Nail head.
3049	nail	2	Large.
3053	nail	5	
3054	nail	1	
3055	nail	5	+ 5 Shanks.
3055	object?	1	Most if not all iron pan.

Table 5: Catalogue of the iron finds.

Abbreviations used in the above table.

Bldg Building

E East

W West

Context	Type	Count	Weight (g)	Comments
3001	stone	1	23	Burnt? Iron rich sandstone.
3002	pumice	1	36	Iron stained.
3007	stone	2	194	Burnt? Iron rich sandstone.
3008	stone	2	67	Burnt? Iron rich sandstone.
3010	hb	1	387	Charcoal fuel; surface encrusted; mortar attached; 2 layers; large ear.
3025	stone	2	5	Pebbles.
3025	vhl	1	<1	-
3025	slag	1	1	Droplet.
3037	stone	1	12	Smashed.
3045	stone	4	21	Pebbles.
3045	hb	1	40	38 x 50 x 18mm; small and glassy.
3045	ssl	2	4	Glassy; one with hearth lining attached.

Table 6: Catalogue of the slag and stone finds.

Codes used in the table above.

- hb Plano-convex slag accumulation (commonly known as hearth bottom).
- ssl Smithing slag lump.
- vhl Vitrified hearth lining.

Appendix 4: Environmental Archaeology Assessment

by Andrea Snelling

Introduction

An excavation conducted by Archaeological Services and Consultancy Limited investigated a variety of probable Romano-British furnace/oven features at Wymondley, Coreys Mill. Five samples were taken from the features to help identify the function and nature of the fills and for the provision of any further dating evidence. These were submitted to the Environmental Archaeology Consultancy for processing and assessment (Table 7).

Sample no.	cont. no.	samp. vol. (l)	sample weight (kg)	feature	phase
1	3021	8	8	Fill of domestic hearth or pyre?	RB
2	3037	27	23	Iron smelting furnace?	1 st C
3	3058	10	11	Fill of furnace?	1 st C
4	3059	24	23	Fill of furnace?	1 st C
5	3050	10	10.5	Deposit from oven/kiln	RB

Table 7: Samples taken for environmental analysis

Methods

The soil samples were processed in the following manner. Sample volume and weight were measured prior to processing. The samples were washed in a 'Siraf' tank (Williams 1973) using a flotation sieve with a 0.5 mm mesh and an internal wet sieve of 1 mm mesh for the residue. Both residue and flot were dried, and the residues subsequently refloated, to ensure the efficient recovery of charred material. The dry volume of the flots was measured and the volume and weight of the residue recorded. A total of 79 l of soil was processed in this way.

The residue was sorted by eye, and environmental and archaeological finds picked out, noted on the assessment sheet and bagged independently. A magnet was run through each residue in order to recover magnetised material such as hammerscale and prill and a count made of the number of flakes or spheroids of hammerscale collected. The flot of each sample was studied using x10 magnifications and the presence of environmental finds (i.e. snails, charcoal, carbonised seeds, bones etc) was noted and their abundance and species diversity recorded on the assessment sheet. These, along with the finds from the sorted residue, constitute the material archive of the samples.

The individual components of the samples were then preliminarily identified and the results are summarised below in Tables 8 and 9.

Results

A few uncharred seeds, mainly *Chenopodium album* (goosefoot) and roots were recorded in some of the samples and the blind burrowing snail, *Cecilioides acicula* was recorded in most. This material is not considered to be contemporary with the deposits and is treated as a contaminant. All apart from one of the samples, context [3050] contained molluscs and animal bone. The animal bone has not been assessed and only preliminary identifications have been made for the molluscs (Table 9).

Sample no.	cont. no.	samp. vol. (l)	feature	residue vol. (l)	pot #/g	flint #/g	mag. (g)	ham' scale #	fired earth (g)	slag (g)	metal #/g	fired clay (g)	quern (g)	marine shell (g)	bone (g)
1	3021	8	Fill of domestic hearth or pyre?	0.7	4/17	2/1	4		3					1	2
2	3037	27	Iron smelting furnace?	1	3/5	6/1	21		279						1
3	3058	10	Fill of furnace?	1		2/<1	2	51	15						4
4	3059	24	Fill of furnace?	1		17/1	14	70	59	1				1	32
5	3050	10	Deposit from oven/kiln	2.5	3/4	7/1	3		456	+	1/4 fe	1610	244		

#/g = number/weight in grams

Table 8: Finds from the processed samples

Sample no.	Cont. no.	samp. vol. (l)	feature	flot vol. (ml)	char coal */<2*	charr'd grain *	chaff *	charr'd seed *	snails *	comment
1	3021	8	Fill of domestic hearth or pyre?	<1	3/3	1		1	2	<i>Cecilioides acicula</i> , <i>Vallonia pulchella</i> , <i>Pupilla muscorum</i>
2	3037	27	Iron smelting furnace?	1950/160	5/5	2	1	1	2	Barley, wheat, <i>Vallonia excentrica</i> , <i>Cecilioides acicula</i>
3	3058	10	Fill of furnace?	14	3/5	1		1	3	Barley, brome, small legume, <i>Discus rotundatus</i> , <i>Cecilioides acicula</i> , <i>Vallonia pulchella</i>
4	3059	24	Fill of furnace?	1350/132	5/5	3	1	1	2	Barley, spelt, <i>Vallonia pulchella</i> , <i>V. costata</i> , <i>Pupilla muscorum</i> , <i>Cecilioides acicula</i>
5	3050	10	Deposit from oven/kiln	35	3/5	5	2	3		Barley, spelt, free threshing wheat? Oat, brome, cleavers, small legume

* = abundance: 1=1-10, 2=11-50, 3=51-150, 4=151-250, 5=250+

/<2 = abundance >2mm/abundance < 2mm

Table 9: Environmental finds from the processed samples

Sample 1 [3021] is considered to be a hearth or pyre deposit. A range of finds was identified, including pottery, flint and fired earth and a small amount of bone, none of which appears to be burnt, and oyster shell. A moderate amount of charcoal was recorded, one or two charred grains and a few snails. This assemblage is probably more typical of domestic debris and is likely to be derived from a domestic hearth.

Contexts [3037], [3058] and [3059] are the fills from two adjacent furnace/oven features. Context [3037], is the fill of context [3036] and contained pottery, flint, bone fragments, some of which are burnt and an abundance of fired earth. A relatively high weight of magnetic material was recorded, but no hammerscale, which may be associated with the high quantity of fired earth, such that the oxidised iron component in sands becomes magnetised when it is heated. Charcoal was abundant and included some large pieces, greater than 20 mm in diameter and given that the wood to charcoal shrinkage rate is 6:1, some fairly large pieces of wood were probably used. A small number of charred cereal grains were recorded, including barley and wheat, although only a tenth of the total flot volume was examined.

Contexts [3058] and [3059] are the fills from context [3044]. Context [3058] was stratigraphically above context [3059] and contained flint, fired earth, bone fragments (some burnt) and a moderate number of hammerscale flakes. A few charred cereal grains and seeds were noted and a moderate amount of charcoal, with one or two pieces greater than 7 mm in diameter. Again this is from about a tenth of the total flot volume (Table 9). The lower fill, context [3059] also contained flint flakes, bone fragments (some burnt), oyster shell and fired earth and a slightly larger number of flakes of hammerscale than context [3058]. A piece of slag was also recorded. Charcoal was relatively abundant, with occasional pieces up to 15 mm in diameter and a moderate number of charred cereal grains, including both barley and spelt wheat. The presence of spelt wheat was confirmed by the occasional pieces of spelt wheat chaff.

The final sample, context [3050] was an area of burning to the east of Building [3010]. A rich assemblage of material was recovered from the sample and included pottery, flint, an abundance of fired earth and fired clay, an iron object a few bone fragments and a piece of quern stone (Table 8). The residue of this sample, included large plates of phosphate concretions. A moderate amount of charcoal was recorded, mostly less than 2 mm in size and an abundance of charred barley and spelt grain. A few grains of free threshing wheat have been preliminarily identified but require further identification. Of the charred seeds, oat and brome grass were most common with a few other smaller weed seeds (Table 9).

Discussion

Both domestic and industrial activity is suggested by the composition of the five environmental samples. Samples 1 and 5 (contexts [3021] and [3050] respectively) are both characteristic of domestic activity. The material collected from Sample 1 is probably indicative of a small hearth. Context [3050] produced a rich and diverse assemblage, including an abundance of fired clay. This has an oxidised fabric and is clearly structural fired clay, possibly from a cob or wattle and daub structure, which contained a timber element, as large timber imprints are present on some pieces. The material is not well faced and the structure was probably crudely constructed from poorly worked clay that still has large stones within the fabric. There does not appear to be any obvious temper (Jane Cowgill, *pers. comm.*). The fired clay may have formed part of an oven, given the quantity of relatively clean charred cereal grain recorded,

with other domestic debris incorporated subsequently. The composition of the charred seeds, with the majority of the weeds of a similar size to the grain is indicative of a final stage in the processing sequence. There was no evidence in this sample for either animal bone or molluscs, both of which were identified in the other samples and could suggest that the conditions in this feature were acidic or decalcified. The fill of furnace [3036] (sample 2) may also be domestic in origin, indicated by the variety of artefacts recovered and the presence of charred grain.

The remaining two samples, contexts [3058] and [3059] (the fills from furnace [3044]), as well as containing the general domestic debris found in the other samples, also include moderate counts of hammerscale. This indicates that iron smithing is occurring in the vicinity of this feature and suggests that, both domestic and industrial waste was becoming incorporated in the same context.

Molluscs were identified in four of the five samples. The majority of the species identified are typical of open habitats, with one *Discus rotundatus*, a shade loving species. A generally open landscape is therefore suggested for the settlement, with the possibility of some shaded areas, although on the basis of one individual, this cannot be confirmed.

Conclusion and recommendations

Domestic and industrial activities are indicated by the five samples collected from the various hearths and furnace features. Context [3050] contained the richest assemblage of material, which may indicate its proximity to a habitation area. The presence of phosphate concretions are usually typical of cess pits and may suggest that a variety of domestic debris was deposited in this feature, some of which may not have survived due to preservation constraints.

The presence of the moderate counts of hammerscale, suggests that there was a smithy in the vicinity of feature [3044] and that domestic and industrial waste was disposed of within the same contexts. The absence of any hammerscale in the fills of the adjacent feature, context [3036], would suggest that the two features might not be contemporary. A few flakes of residual hammerscale may have been expected, even if it was not specifically dumped in this feature, if they were open at the same time as hammerscale may be blown about by the wind. The fills from both of the features contain large pieces of charcoal, which would be suitable for radiocarbon analysis.

The amalgamation of both industrial and domestic debris in the various features could suggest a relatively small settlement size, with a variety of activities occurring in close proximity. Barley and spelt wheat were utilised and may have been grown locally. The composition of the charred assemblages would suggest that they were in a final stage of the processing sequence, given the relatively low counts of chaff and that the majority of the charred weed seeds were of a similar size to the grain. Further work is necessary to identify the relative importance of wheat and barley.

The animal bone should be identified, so that a more complete picture of the available resources can be acknowledged.

The furnace feature containing the smithing evidence, context [3044], should be dated, using standard radiocarbon assay. The richer fill from this feature, context [3059] and context [3050] should be considered for further work as they contain the richest charred seed assemblages.

Acknowledgements

I should like to thank Trude Maynard for the sample processing and sorting and Jane Cowgill for her comments.

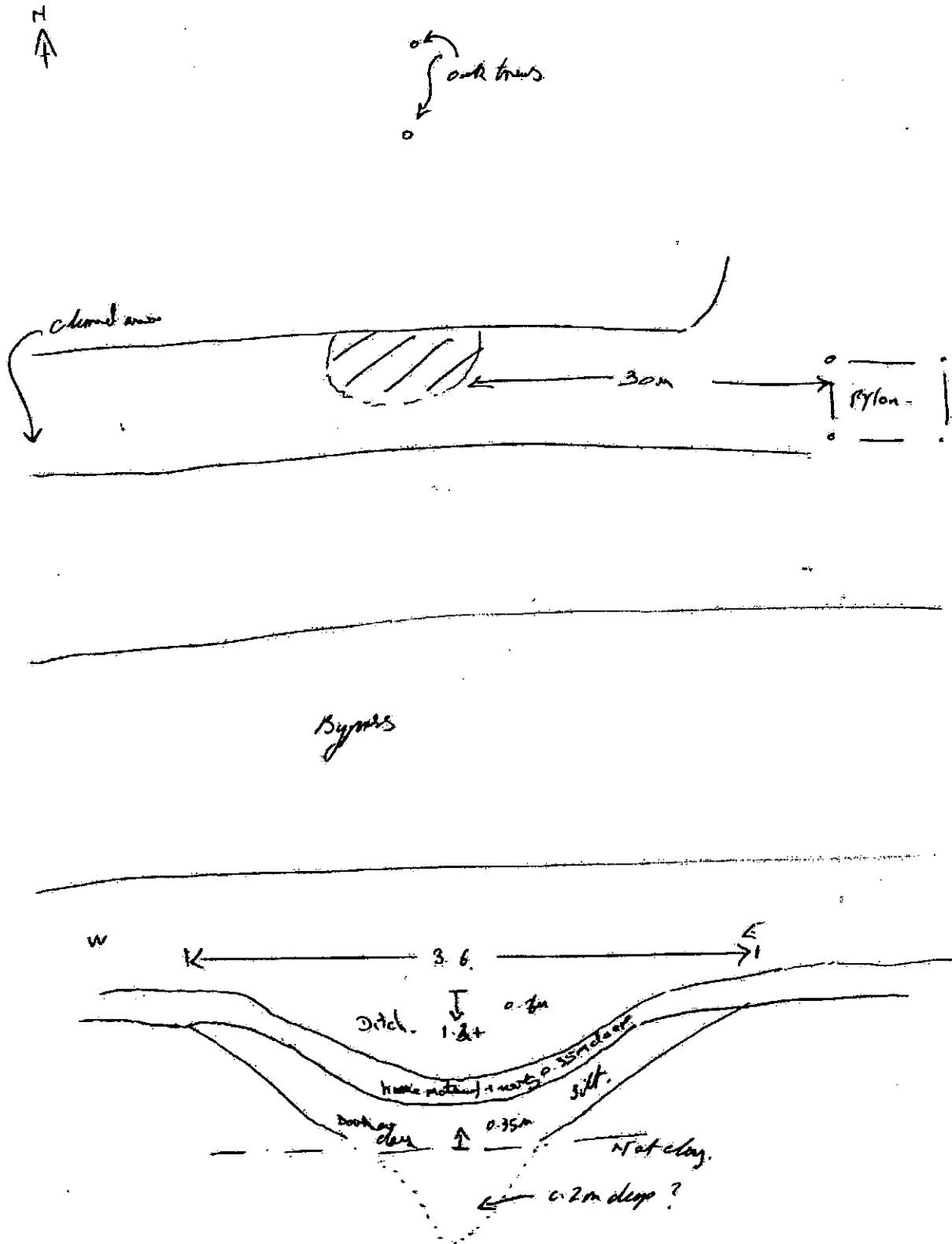
Appendix 5: Monitoring and Recording sheets

(visits with sketch plan only - other sheets in archive)

A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD			
Project Name: <i>Cable route</i>		Project Code: <i>WCR01</i>		Date of visit: <i>14/09/01</i>	
Location: <i>Wymondley - Corey's Mill.</i>					
Client/Developer: <i>Notch Ltd.</i>					
Architect:					
Site Manager/Farmer: <i>A. M. Lush</i>				Phone:	
Development Type:					
Foundations	Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Other:
Site conditions (weather, ground condition, etc): <i>Dry - Sunny</i>					
Observations made: (e.g. length of trench/foundation; depth/width; soil descriptions, archaeological features)					
<p><i>A spread of chalky rubble was covered with area of cleared ground. This was situated approximately 30m to the west of the central pylon in the villa field (NCR). It was about 10m in diameter E-W and may project at least 7.5m into bank area. Photos taken. See notes for sketch.</i></p> <p><i>+ soil profile on edge of site (see above). About 20-25cm below ground surface.</i></p> <p><i>* Also observed a section through the park boundary. This was some 3.6m in width and over 1.2m deep (not bottomed) on the basis of what remained the ditch was probably c. 2m deep or so. No fossils. See notes for sketch (photos taken).</i></p>					
Comments: <i>I anticipate some trenching but the results were inclusive. There were layers of concrete and modern debris present in the ground area but no concrete. No pottery or other building material present.</i>					
Completed by: <i>J. H. Lush</i>					

For sketch plan, use reverse

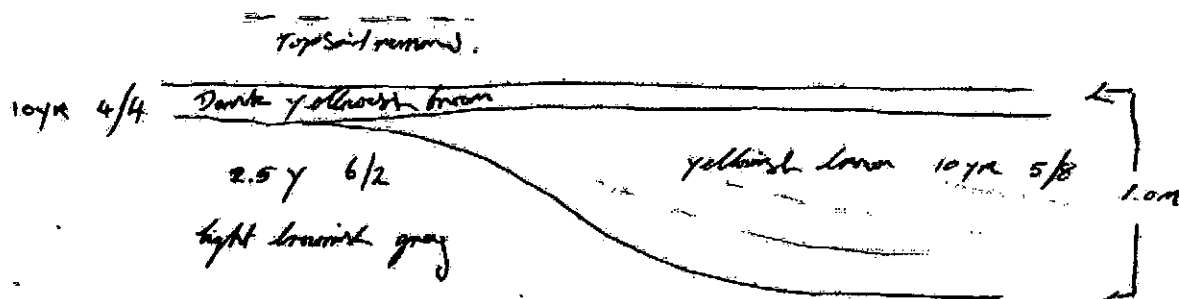
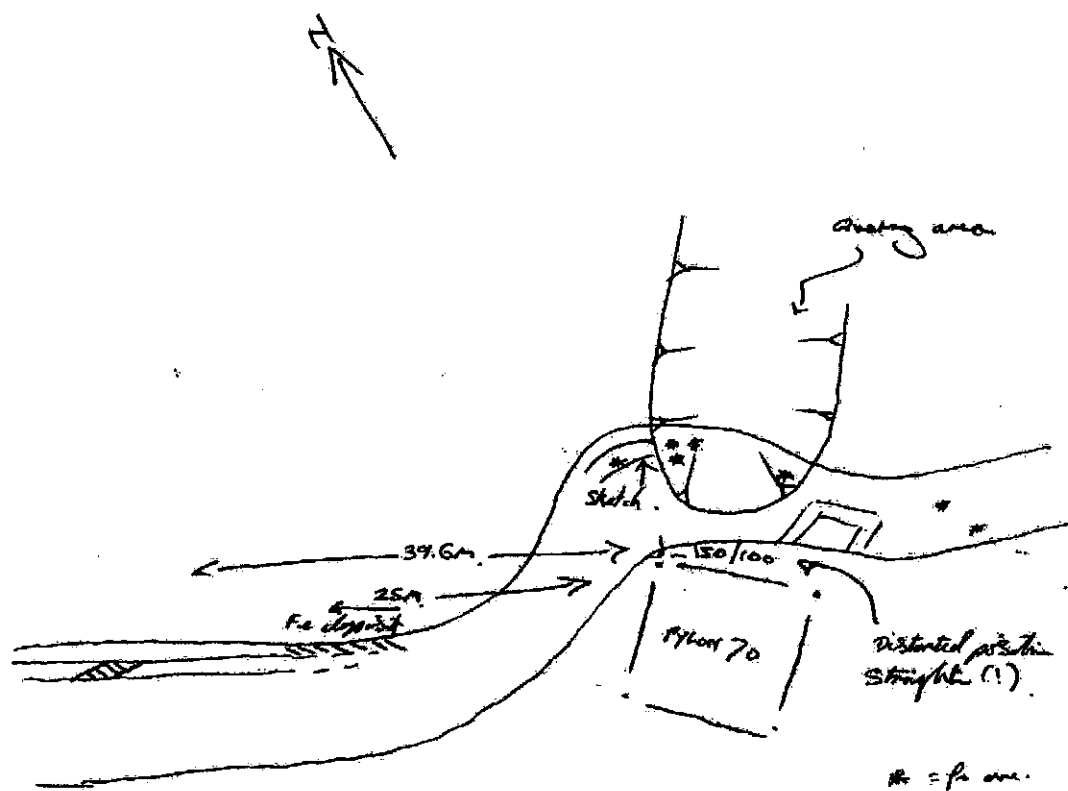
ASACFM26, revised 1999



A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD	
Project Name: <i>Wymondley - Corey's Mill</i>		Project Code: <i>WCM01</i>	Date of visit: <i>19/10/01</i>
Location: <i>Little Wymondley</i>			
Client/Developer: <i>Nat. Grid</i>			
Architect:			
Site Manager/Farmer: <i>P.J.R. Lee</i>		Phone:	
Development Type:			
Foundations	Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Roads	Levelling
		Quarrying	Other:
Site conditions (weather, ground condition, etc)			
<i>Dull, on rain</i>			
Observations made: (e.g. length of trench/foundation; depth/width; soil descriptions, archaeological features)			
<p><i>Observed the area of the R3 circular building [3003]. The only one almost over a ditch-like feature which runs NW-SE, in a E-W direction is oblique to the ditch. 1.2m deep on part one and approximately 2m wide. Filled with dark yellowish brown clay and some stones. Some pottery scattered around but nothing in situ. The character (fill) suggests that it is of R3 date. It was about 3m from east of 150/100 is at Site co-ordinate 11060/09975. See over for sketch.</i></p> <p><i>Observed accidentally more 'natural' over one section. One was quite big at 0.25m dia (photographed). A number of small fragments have been retrieved for analysis. They are more obvious due to the weathering of the site. Particularly evident inside excavation/garden area which has one or two due north of section 70.</i></p> <p><i>A natural band of iron ore is found deposited 2.5m to west of section 70. About 0.15m thick and some 4m in extent. It has about 0.35m above and the sand over the grey boulder clay. The section through the quarry (opposite section 70) shows no signs of any 'cut'. Immediately below the ground consists of natural sandy ground.</i></p>			
Comments: <i>New R3 feature observed with profile of grass sand. Interestingly, the area of lawn appears to be sitting on a natural 'kerf' of grey clay so that the depression may be partly natural. That is, with the sand and gravel filling a pre-existing hollow. Plenty of magniferous stuff present - See over for sketch.</i>			
Completed by: <i>SMH</i>			

For sketch plan, use reverse

ASACFM26, revised 1999



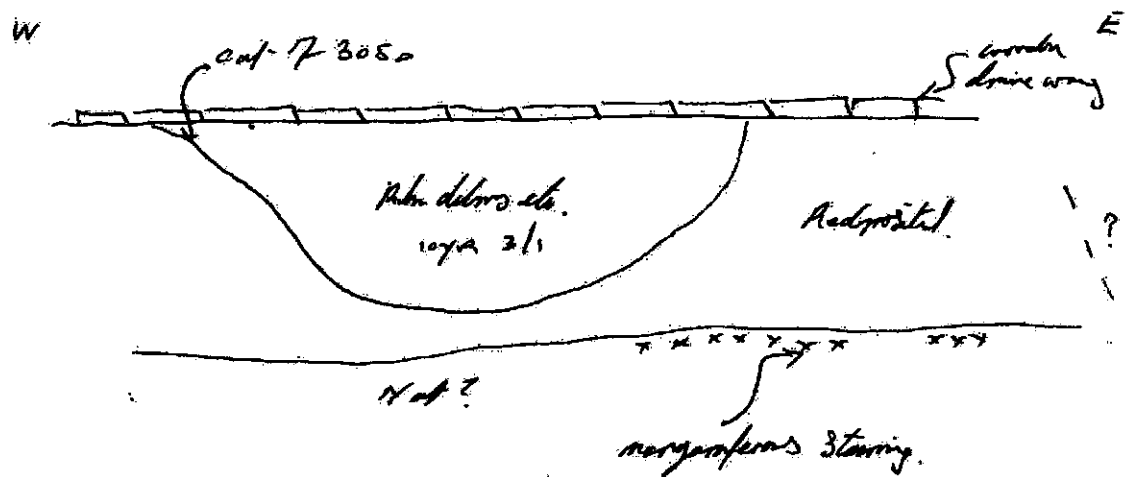



ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project Name: <i>Wymondley - Corey's Mill</i>		Project Code: <i>WCM01</i>	Date of visit: <i>22/10/01</i>
Location: <i>Little Wymondley</i>			
Client/Developer: <i>Natural Land</i>			
Architect:			
Site Manager/Farmer: <i>PJR Lee</i>		Phone:	
Development Type:			
Foundations	Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Other:
Site conditions (weather, ground condition, etc) <i>Very wet on exposed soil. Mainly over the one week sun.</i>			
Observations made: (e.g. length of trench/foundation; depth/width; soil descriptions, archaeological features)			
<p>Was able to examine the area of 'buried pit' 3050 which contained appreciable quantities of iron/ferrous debris. The machine had stopped working and due to the wet conditions there had been a total collapse revealing that much of the ground consisted of re-deposited clays. Iron staining + nodules / fragments deposits visible. Found a cluster back of 3050 which was 1.3m wide x 0.42m deep. See sketch over. The pit was composed of a very dark grey (10YR 2/1) silty clay with one burnt clay clast. Noted a sand as a sample was taken (10L). Taken from the section. The feature (3050) appears to have been cut into a variegated clay - yellowish red (10YR 5YR 5/8) and brown (10YR 7.5YR 5/6) with an irregular assortment of pebbles and broken flint. This looks like it has been re-deposited. It passes down into a brown clay which has variegated deposits present (10YR 10YR 5/8).</p> <p>A sample of fragments of a thin flat black material - the cross section a fine granular and small irregularities. A third piece found - Shell of mussel/horn? In yellowish brown clay about 0.25m below topsoil.</p>			
Comments:			
<i>clays more complex than anticipated.</i>			
<p>* Man-made Substances (on cleaning) and Plasterable - almost certainly brick - full of 1970s Co's pigments - after 30 years settling hard to discern. Not significant.</p>			
Completed by: <i>MAH</i>			

For sketch: plan, use reverse

ASACFM26, revised 1999




A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project Name: *Wymondley - Conroy's Mill*

Project Code: *WC/101*

Date of visit: *24/10/01*

Location: *Little Wymondley*

Client/Developer: *Not listed*

Architect:

Site Manager/Farmer: *P.R. Lee*

Phone:

Development Type:

Foundations	Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Other:
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Site conditions (weather, ground condition, etc)

wet underfoot but otherwise clear and sunny

Observations made: (e.g. length of trench/foundation; depth/width; soil descriptions, archaeological features)

Visited the site to carry out a first examination of the worked soils. See over for sketch. This shows that there is a good correspondence between the pattern of ground level and iron, albeit low-grade.

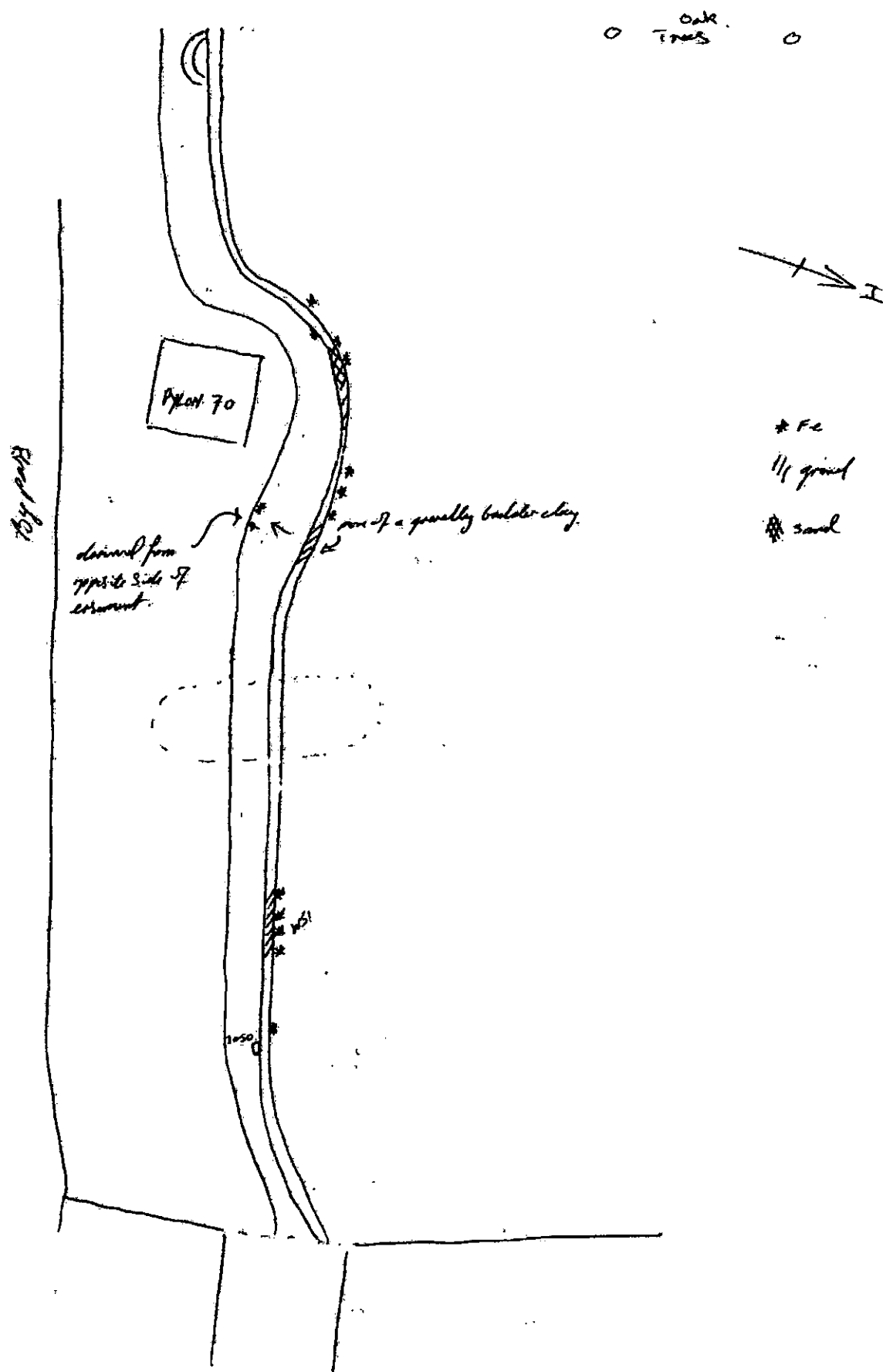
Comments:

Excavation of 1st trench for cat 4 is approx 70% field now complete.

Completed by: *[Signature]*

For sketch plan, use reverse

ASACFM26, revised 1999



Appendix 6: List of levels recorded on the site

Circular building [3003]

TBM (on top concrete base of NW corner of Pylon 70) = 1.05: AOD = 97.23

Number	Uncalibrated	Above Ord. Datum (m)
1	1.03	97.21
2	1.33	96.95
3	1.30	96.98
4	1.32	96.96
5	1.62	96.66
6	1.49	96.79
7	1.48	96.80
8	1.30	96.98
9	1.33	96.95
10	1.29	96.99
11	1.35	96.93
12	1.45	96.83
13	1.33	96.95
14	1.35	96.93
15	1.39	96.89
16	1.44	96.84
17	1.45	96.83
18	1.36	96.92
19	1.19	97.09
20	1.38	96.90

Rectangular building [3010]

TBM (on top concrete base of NW corner of Pylon 70) = 0.90 : AOD =97.23

Number	Uncalibrated	Above Ord. Datum (m)
21	1.10	97.03
22	1.26	96.87
23	2.15	95.98
24	1.52	96.61
25	1.68	96.45
26	1.52	96.61
27	1.31	96.82
28	1.40	96.73
29	1.44	96.69
30	1.42	96.71
31	1.93	96.20
32	1.68	96.45

Appendix 7: Sites And Monuments Record Summary Sheet

Site name and address: Pylon 70		
County: Hertfordshire		District: North Herts
Village/Town:		Parish: Little Wymondley
Planning application reference: not applicable		
Client name, address, and tel. no.: The National Grid Plc, Project Management, Application Design, Brookmead, Guildford Business Park, Middleton, Guildford, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 5XQ		
Nature of application: electric cable route		
Present land use: arable/pastoral fields		
Size of application area: 1.5 km x 13 m		Size of area investigated: 224 m ²
NGR (to 8 figures): TL 2063-2689 to 2195-2715		
Site code: WWM01		Site no:
Site director/Organization: J. R. Hunn		
Type of work: Watching brief and recording involving excavation		
Date of work:	Start: August 23rd	Finish: November 21 st 2001
Location of finds/Curating museum: Letchworth Museum		
Related SMR Nos: 2607		Periods represented: Romano-British
Relevant previous summaries/reports: Went & Burleigh 1992		
Summary of fieldwork results: Romano-British occupation dating from the 1 st to 3 rd centuries was found. The evidence comprised one circular with a diameter of 7.25m and one rectangular building which both had masonry foundations (14.3 x 6.5m). There were two ovoid kilns/ovens and several post-holes and pits, one of which was filled with oven/kiln debris.		
Author of summary: J. R. Hunn		Date of summary: 29/11/01