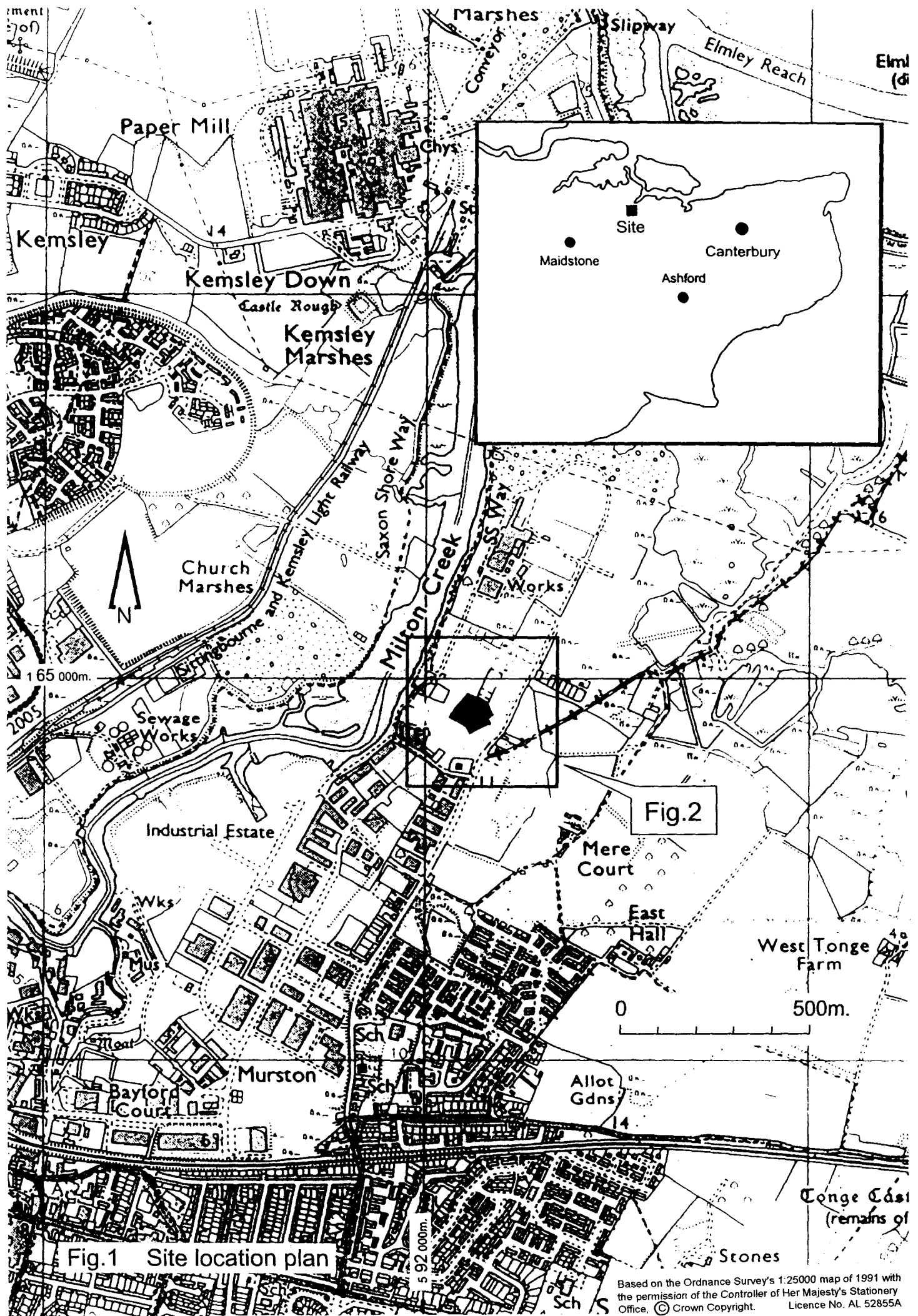


TQ 96SW 204
2000 - 23

**Archaeological evaluation at
Plot L2, Eurolink Phase 3,
Castle Road,
Sittingbourne,
Kent**

**Canterbury Archaeological Trust
December 1999**



ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF SITE OF PROPOSED BUILDING, PLOT L2 EUROLINK PHASE 3, CASTLE ROAD , SITTINGBOURNE.

1. INTRODUCTION

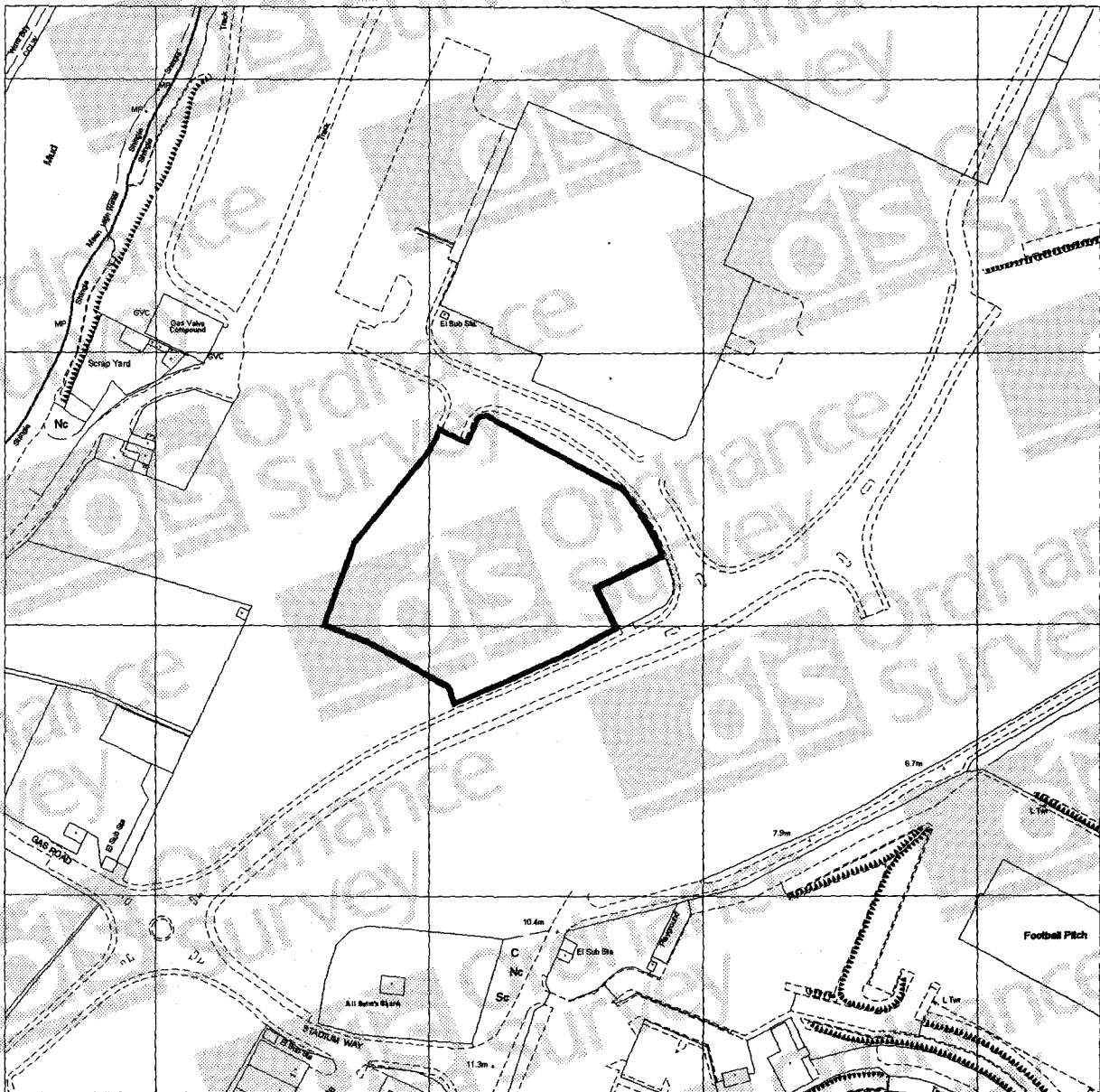
- 1.1 From the 30th November to 8th December an evaluation was carried out by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) on the above site, under the terms of a specification from Swale Borough Council requiring investigation of any surviving archaeological deposits before development. This work was carried out under the terms of the outline planning permission granted for the site (SW/99/703, case 17238), this specifying that *No development shall take place until the applicant has secured and had implemented a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the District Planning Authority.*
- 1.2 The work was carried out for Priority Sites Ltd and consisted of eight trenches 20m by 1.8. wide set at regular intervals across the plot. These trenches represented a 3% sample of the available ground, approximately 0.9Ha..
- 1.3 The site is centred at TQ 92126492 and lies within the Sittingbourne Urban District (Fig. 1). The geology is variable, boreholes and observations during the evaluation suggesting the overall presence of Thanet Sands at least 2.5 m thick overlain in some parts by Head Gravel between 0.6 and 1.2 m thick . A fine homogeneous pale grey-green ?calcareous sand containing some sub-angular flint pebbles, observed in the evaluation, may be a deposit of glacial origin, underlying the brickearth. Occasional areas of brickearth are recorded in the boreholes and geological test trenches but the archaeological evaluation suggests that any such deposits are likely to have been disturbed by human activity. Made ground, including archaeological levels, was between 0.2 and 3.4 m deep.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

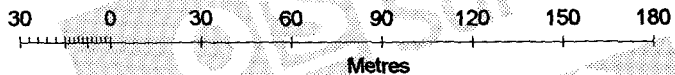
- 2.1 No prehistoric finds are known from the area other than an Iron Age ditched enclosure discovered during a watching brief carried out by CAT on the adjacent Plot K immediately to the north in 1997 (Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 1997).
- 2.2 A Roman inhumation burial, in a lead-lined coffin with rich grave goods, was discovered 250 m to the east (SMR No TQ 96 SW 8). Further east, 400 m from the site, building foundations of similar date are known, (SMR No TQ 96 SW 9), while to the south and south-west of that cremation burials are known (SMR No TQ 96 SW 50). This would suggest a settlement site of some significance with adjacent burial ground set on the slight rise overlooking Milton Creek.
- 2.3 In the early medieval period the site was occupied by the small village of Murston which, at this date, appears to have been centred on the low hill south-east of the site rather than, as now, a kilometre to the south nearer Watling Street. Reference in Domesday suggests only a small settlement held by the Bishop. The existing church of All Saints occupies the hilltop and is the only surviving remnant of this small settlement which perhaps extended west to the edge of Milton Creek. Mere Court, 300 m to the south-east, may be a dependent farm.

Siteplan

1:2500 Scale



Produced 13 Dec 1999 from Ordnance Survey digital data and incorporating surveyed revision available at this date. © Crown copyright 1999.



Due to the resolution of this image, the depiction of a solid line within dashed lines does not necessarily constitute an obstruction at ground level.

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Centre coordinates : 592145mE 164927mN

National Grid sheet reference at centre of this Siteplan: TQ9264NW.

Supplied by : Cross's, Canterbury
Serial Number : 408

Fig.2 Detailed site location plan



Siteplan

Symbols and depiction

Boundary Information

County/Region Island Boundary	---
District/London Borough Boundary	---
Parish/Community Boundary
Electoral Division/Ward Boundary	----
Parliamentary Constituency or Euro Const Boundary	----
Boundary Mereing Change Symbol	o-o
Boundary Post, Boundary Stone (BP, BS)	*



Vegetation

Non-Coniferous Trees	Nc
Non-Coniferous Trees (Scattered)	Nc (scat)
Non-Coniferous Trees (Positioned)	
Coniferous Trees	C
Coniferous Trees (Scattered)	C (scat)
Coniferous Trees (Positioned)	
Orchard	Orch
Coppice/Osiers	Cap
Rough Grass	RG
Heath	Heath
Scrub	Sc
Saltings/Marsh/ Reeds	Marsh
Vegetation Limits	---

Areas (Rural survey mapping only)


Areas Parcel No (published)	4226
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Buildings

Roofed Structure/ Glasshouse	
Upper Level of Communication	

Others

Spot Height	+
Bench Mark	←
Triangulation Station	△

Pylon/Flare Stack/ Lighting Tower	
--------------------------------------	---

Flow Arrow	→
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Mean High Water	---
-----------------	-----

Mean Low Water	---
----------------	-----

General Detail	---
----------------	-----

Underground Detail	---
--------------------	-----

Overhead Detail	---
-----------------	-----

Tramway/ Narrow Gauge Railway	---
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Standard Gauge Railway	---
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Point Fixture (e.g. Letterbox)	*
-----------------------------------	---

Water Feature	
---------------	---

Water	Water
-------	-------

Archway	
---------	---

Non-Roman Antiquity	
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Ornament

Rock	Rock
------	------

Inland Rock (Scattered)	Rock (scat)
----------------------------	-------------

Shingle	Shingle
---------	---------

Mud	Mud
-----	-----


Inland Boulders	Bo
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
Inland Boulders (Scattered)	Bo (scat)
--------------------------------	-----------

Coastal Boulders	Boulders
------------------	----------

Sand	Sand
------	------

Slope	
-------	---

Coastal Slope	
---------------	---

Cliff	
-------	---

Scree	Scree
-------	-------

Common Abbreviations

Boundaries Information

ED Boundary	Electoral Division
Ward Boundary	Ward
Boro Const Bdy	Constituency
Euro Const Bdy	(County Borough or European)
Und	Undefined
CB	Centre of Bank
CD	Centre of Ditch
CR	Centre of Road
CS	Centre of Stream
Def	Defaced
FF	Face of Fence
FW	Face of Wall
SR	Side of River
TB	Top of Bank
TH	Track of Hedge
RM	Root of Hedge

Other Information

Chy	Chimney
ETP	Electricity Pillar or Pole
ETL	Electricity Transmission Line
FB	Foot bridge
FS	Flagstaff
GP	Guide Post
GVC	Gas Valve Compound
LB	Letter Box
Mem	Memorial
MHW	Mean High Water
MLW	Mean Low Water
NTL	Normal Tidal Limit
P	Post or Pole
PC	Public Convenience
PH	Public House
PO	Post Office
PW	Place of Worship
TCS	Telephone Call Box
TK	Tank or Track
UM	Unmade
W	Well



- 2.4 Murston in 1840 consisted of a scattered parish of 24 houses, presumably still dependent on agriculture but probably with some facilities for shipping on the side of Milton Creek. Brick making here started in 1834, growing from earlier brick fields nearer Sittingbourne (S.J. Twist, *Stock Bricks of Swale*, Sittingbourne Papers 2 (2nd edition, 1993), 14, 18). In 1846 George Smeed opened his first brick field on land near the old All Saints Church, presumably on or near the present site, eight huts being built near the church for those working in the field. In 1850 operations expanded with the purchase of the Manor of Murston. In the following decades, stripping of brick-earth from the neighbouring land supplied the latter and also revealed the finds summarised above. Present day Murston, to the south, is a relatively new village founded to cater for those involved in the expanded industry of the late 19th century. The only remnant of the original village, other than the old church, is the Brickmaker's Arms near Milton Creek, now occupied by a scrap merchants.
- 2.5 Ordnance Survey maps of the 1960s show a small gasworks occupied the area close to the Creek, while rows of brick clamps existed on the north edge of the site and further north; this and other old industrial buildings or derelict land on the east side of Milton Creek have now been cleared for the present industrial estates.

3 OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The aim of the evaluation was to establish whether any archaeological deposits survived that might be vulnerable to disturbance by the proposed development. The work was thus intended to identify the extent of any such remains and the depth of deposit, their character and quality.
- 3.2 Eight trenches were excavated with a JCB using a toothless ditching blade, the machine removing only the most recent overburden down to the natural surface or significant archaeological deposits. Where obvious recent fill was encountered this was dug out to a depth of up to 0.7m.
- 3.3 The trenches were set in staggered rows some 15-20 m apart on a north-east by south-west alignment. The alignment was set at 45 degrees to the line of the previously located Iron Age ditches in order to cross the line of any further such features at an angle.
- 3.4 Limited hand excavation was undertaken of the archaeological features in Trenches 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 to ascertain the nature and extent of the deposits and to recover a sample of finds from their fills, without intruding into undisturbed stratigraphy more than was absolutely necessary.
- 3.5 Environmental samples were taken from one feature rich in occupation debris.
- 3.6 From the nature of the subsoil and the archaeological deposits encountered there is a high degree of confidence in the identification and accurate definition of the remains within the limits of the trenches. The quality and quantity of finds from Trenches 2 and 5 also allow equal confidence in the dating of the remains and give strong indication of the extent and quality of preservation .
- 3.7 In the absence of an Ordnance Survey bench mark a temporary bench mark was fixed at ground level on the south-west side of the gas compound, 7.5m in from the kerb. This point was given a notional level of 10m (Ground level at the highest point east of All Saints Church 200m to the south is 11m so the actual level here is probably

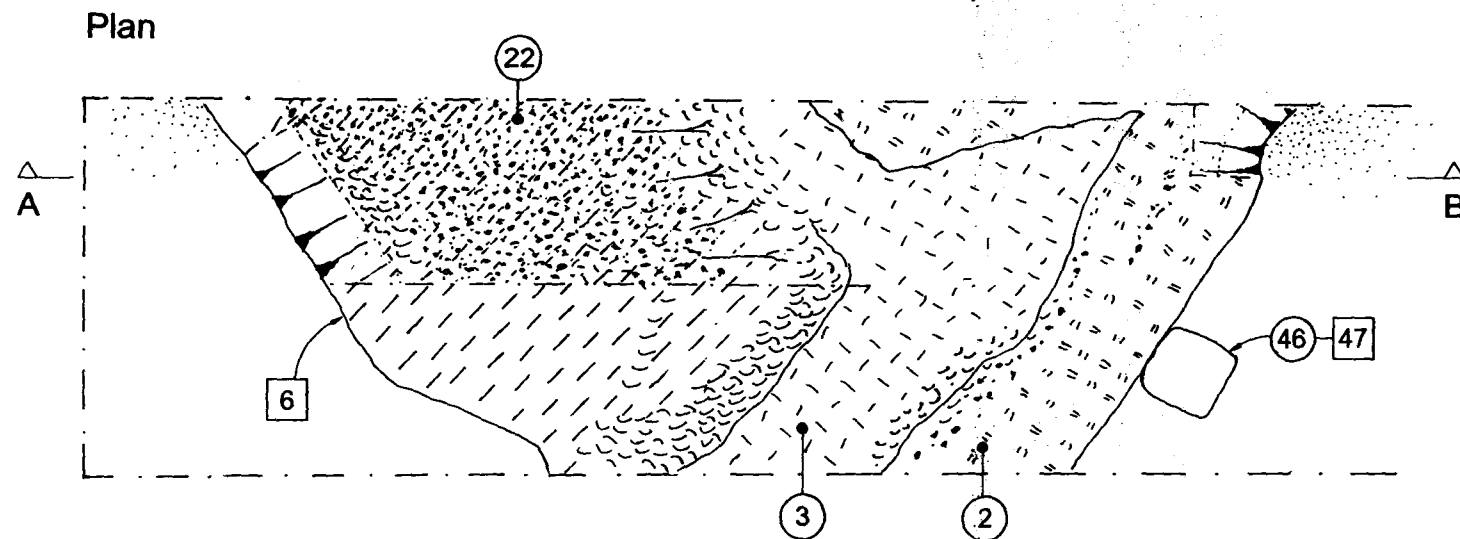
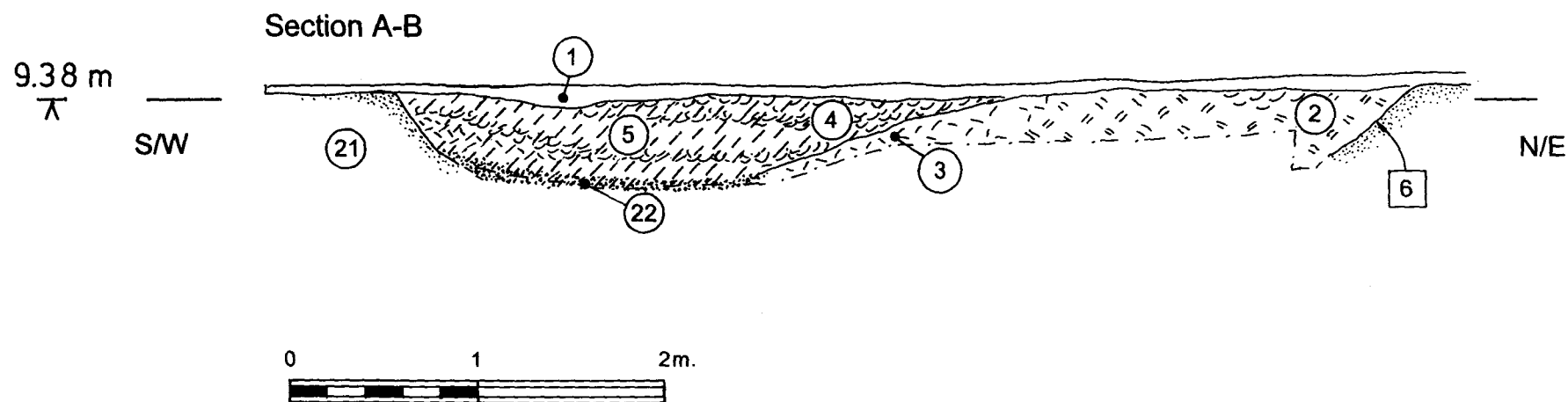


Fig.4 Trench 2

Oysters



several metres lower; the figures given here are thus only useful for intra-site comparison).

4. RESULTS: DESCRIPTION OF FEATURES AND DEPOSITS

- 4.1 The site has been designated ELS99 in the CAT records, this code being applied to all site records and finds. The location of the site is shown on figures 1 and 2. The excavations are described in numerical order of trenches, the deposits denoted by context numbers in (), the cut features by numbers in []. The disposition of trenches is shown in Fig. 3. The most significant features and deposits are shown in detail in figures 4 –6; the more significant superimposed deposits in trenches 2 and 5 are shown in section on Figs 4 and 5.

- 4.2 Trench 1 - The uppermost deposit in this trench (1) varied between 0.25 and 0.30m in depth and consisted of very mixed brick and stone chips, cement and gravel which at the northern end of the trench had been heavily compacted, presumably by traffic. In the southern half of the trench this lay directly on a natural sand (21). In the northern half of the trench an extensive feature [41] was encountered. The southern edge of this, crossing the trench on a north-south alignment, was traced but not investigated in depth, the fill (40) consisting of stock brick rubble and redeposited brickearth of recent origin. From the extent of (40) this feature must have measured at least 9m square.

Present Ground surface level - 9.53m

Surface of natural sand - 9.06m

- 4.3 Trench 2 - Deposit (1) was between 0.20 and 0.35m thick and comprised a similar mix of recent debris, heavily compacted. In the greater part of the northern end of the trench this overlay natural sand (21), the only features cut in to it comprising three post-holes [43], [45], and [47] and a larger dug feature [6] at the south end. Post-holes [43] and [47] were sub- rectangular in outline and all three contained lenses of sand and brick earth with fragments of stock brick, suggesting a recent origin. Feature [6] was a rectilinear cut in the sand, the two exposed edges suggesting this was the south-eastern corner of a feature at least 4.5m by 4m and extending north and west (Section, fig 4). Archaeological material in spoil from a nearby test pit suggested that the feature did extend north-westward. Feature 6 was excavated to a depth of 0.40m and found to be a steep-sided cut with, on the south side at least, a base sloping gently down to the north. Five deposits were identified within this feature (2), (3), (4), (5) and (22) of which only the latter three were sampled. The uppermost fill on the south side was (4), a very dark brown ashy clay silt containing much charred debris, very frequent oyster shells and pottery sherds of the mid to late 1st century AD (see finds report below). This overlay (5), a very similar deposit but containing a lens of brown brick earth and large quantities of unabraded pottery sherds. Below this, and resting on the natural sand, was (22), a very dark grey brown finely divided silt with flecks of burnt clay, charred wood oyster shell and frequent sherds of pottery of the same date. On the south these deposits overlapped (3), a mass of grey brown clay silt containing frequent oyster shells which on the north adjoined (2), along the north-eastern edge of [6]. Deposit (2) consisted of light brown clay silt with lenses of charcoal and oyster shell. A small sondage showed this deposit to be at least 0.4m deep.

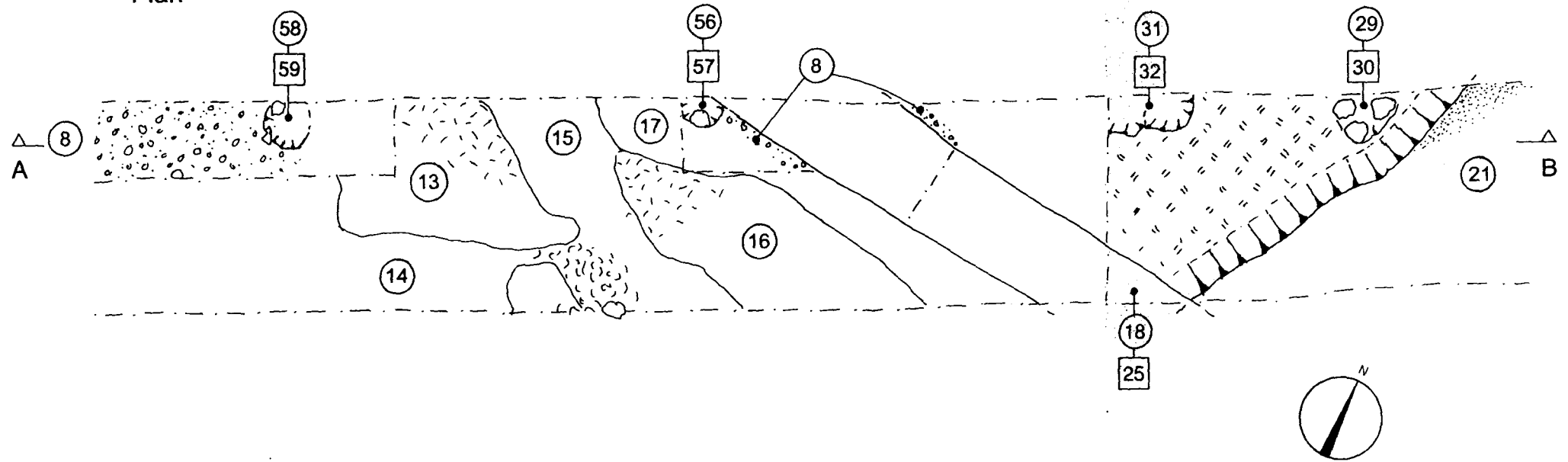
Present Ground Level - 9.53m

Surface of natural sand - 9.19m

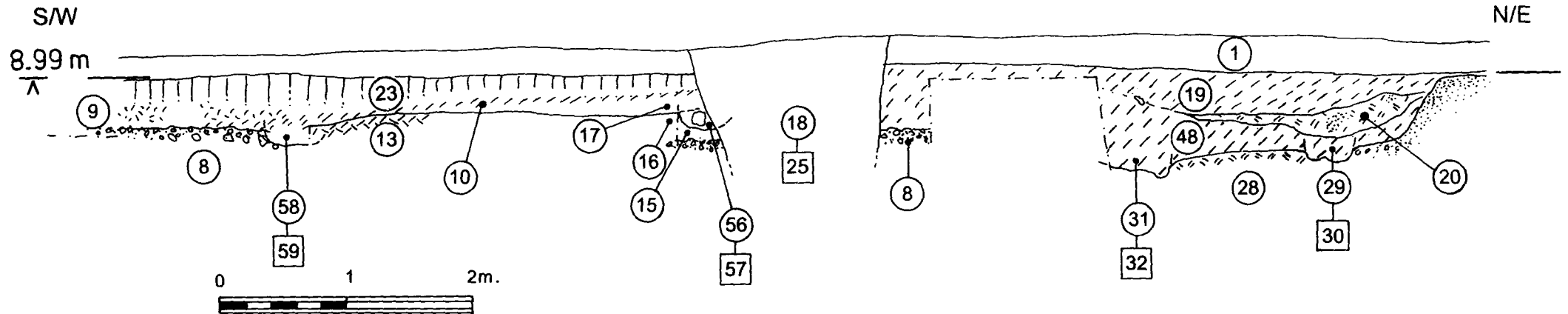
Top of surviving archaeological levels - 9.38m

Fig.5 Trench 5

Plan



Section A-B



- 4.4 Trench 3 - The disturbed overburden (1) in this trench varied between 0.35 and 0.5 m deep and was not heavily compacted. At the north end of the trench it overlay the natural sand (21) but the majority of the trench was occupied by the fill (48) of a large feature [49]. The northern edge of this feature was an irregular scarp in the sand, the fill consisting of lenses of brick earth and stock brick rubble of recent origin. This deposit was dug by machine to a depth of 0.5m below the level of the sand, but in view of its recent origin was not further excavated. Further south, two lines of unmortared stock bricks (51), 0.5m apart, enclosed a band of dark ashy soil (50) containing pipe stems and china fragments. This was surrounded by a dense mass of stock brick and brick earth debris (52).

Present ground level - 9.40m
Surface of natural sand - 8.68m

- 4.5 Trench 4 - The disturbed overburden (1) was between 0.3 and 0.5m deep and overlay three deposits (37), (38) and (39). At the north end of the trench a level of redeposited brick earth (37) approximately 0.3m deep contained fragments of china and brick. This overlay 0.1m of orange-brown clay silt (38) containing a single sherd of Iron Age pottery. This disturbed brick earth overlay (8), a coarse ill-sorted sub-angular gravel and sand, presumably a Head deposit. Towards the southern end of the trench a deposit of dark brown clay silt (39) up to 0.25m thick filled a very slight hollow in the top of the natural gravel, this deposit yielding some pottery of the mid 1st century AD and burnt flints. This end of the trench appeared to accumulate water, possibly from a ground source rather than run-off.

Present ground level - 9.24m
Surface of natural gravel - 8.63m

- 4.6 Trench 5 - The disturbed overburden (1) was 0.40m thick and sealed the natural sand (21) at the northern end of the trench (Section, fig 5). The majority of the trench was occupied by a feature [24] containing a series of deposits and features (Plan, Fig. 5). The north-eastern, uphill edge of this feature crossed the trench diagonally, the exposed face being a steep scarp 0.5 m deep to a slight ledge 0.20m wide. The base of the cut dropped below the limit of excavation at this point but 2m to the south-west it was again located at the same level and traced along the length of the trench as an almost level surface. Here the exposed surface was the gravel natural (8). The fill of feature [24] extended over most of the southern end of the trench and was sealed by (23), a compacted layer of grey-brown slightly clayey silt up to 0.25m deep. This homogeneous band of silt had the appearance of an old topsoil and had been cut by a recent linear disturbance [25].

The fill of feature [24] consisted of a series of dark grey-brown clay silts and lenses of brown brick earth. At the northern end a layer of light grey-brown clay silt (19) sealed a deposit of cleaner brown brickearth and lenses of sand (20). This in turn overlay (48), a grey brown clay silt containing shell and charcoal fragments. Both (19) and (48) produced quantities of pottery, the former dating to the mid to late 1st century AD, the latter somewhat earlier, to the late 1st century BC or early 1st century AD. Below (48), a compact and well-defined layer of brick earth (28) had been cut by two shallow depressions [30] and [32], the former packed with flints. These may have been sockets for posts or supports, the brickearth surface perhaps a floor or surface. To the south (23) sealed a sequence of layers (10) - (17) comprising alternating deposits of light and darker grey-brown clay silts similar to (19), (20), (48) and (28). A copper alloy object, small quantities of pottery and a dense cluster of oyster shells in (15) suggest deposition of occupation debris. Two further shallow sockets [57] and

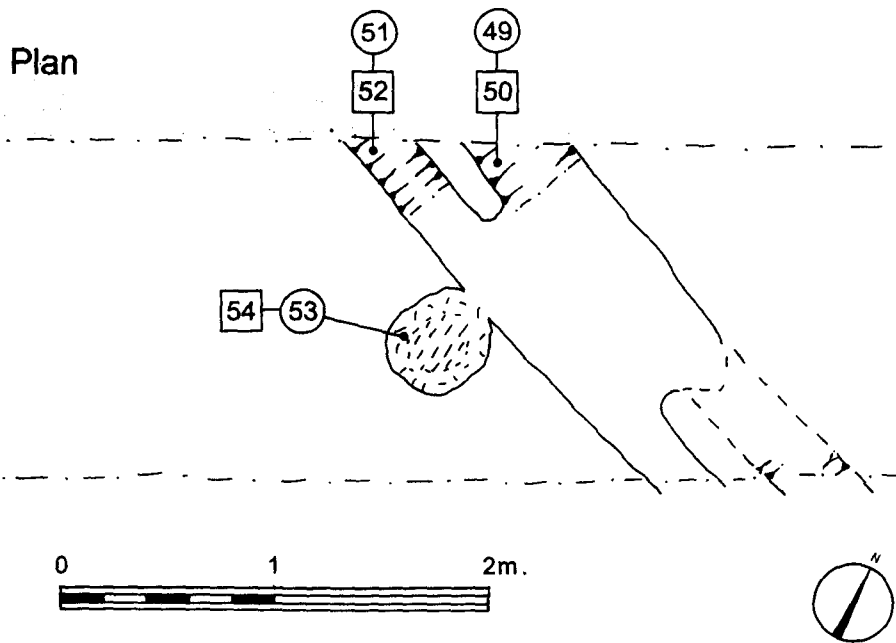


Fig.6 Trench 7

[59] with possible flint packing were identified set into the top of the natural (8) beneath these layers. These may also be evidence for supports of a timber structure using the level surface of the natural gravel as a foundation.

Present ground surface - 9.33m

Surface of natural sand (N end of trench) - 8.91m

Surface of natural gravel (S end of trench) - 8.68m

Top of surviving archaeological levels - 8.94m

- 4.7 Trench 6 - The disturbed overburden (1) was 0.3m in depth and for most of the trench overlay a variable natural deposit of greyish clayey sand and gravel or re-brown sandy gravel. At the north end of the trench this sealed a rectilinear cut [36] at least 2m square and 0.25m deep with steeply cut sides and a flat base. This contained finely divided brick dust and 19th century china and pipe stem and thus dated to the period of the brick field. At the southern end of the trench mixed lenses of yellow-brown brickearth and grey-brown clay silt (33) and (34), up to 0.40m thick, produced a small quantity of prehistoric pottery, daub and calcined flint but did not contain any recent occupation or industrial debris.

Present ground surface - 8.99m

Surface of natural gravel - 8.48m

- 4.8 Trench 7 - The uppermost deposit (1) was of very mixed and uncompacted recent debris and for most of the trench lay directly over remnants of the brick-earth and (21), the natural pale sand. Near the centre of the trench two parallel linear features [50] and [52] crossed the line of the trench diagonally on an east-west alignment (figure 6). These were at least 2.3m long, the more northerly [50] being 0.40m wide and 0.08m deep with a rounded base, the fill consisting of brown clayey silt. The southern feature [52] was 0.30m wide and of similar depth and fill. On the southern edge was an oval feature [54] filled with brown clay silt and a central patch of pale grey-brown. This was not investigated but from its size and fill it would appear to be a post-hole. No finds were recovered from these features.

Present ground surface - 9.02m

Surface of natural sand - 8.87m

Top of surviving archaeological levels - 8.87m

- 4.9 Trench 8 - The disturbed surface deposit (1) was between 0.15 and 0.25 m deep and lay directly on the natural, here a coarse ill sorted sand and gravel with large cobbles (8). Shallow lenses of red-brown brick-earth survived on its surface but no archaeological features were revealed in it.

Present ground surface - 8.79m

Surface of natural gravel - 8.40m

5. FINDS

- 5.1 For the relatively small area excavated by hand, perhaps 2 – 3 cu m in volume, a large quantity of pottery was recovered (2.8kg), much of it conjoining fragments and some from partially complete vessels which derived from relatively undisturbed contexts.

- 5.2 The earliest pottery sherds were of Iron Age type from (16) in trench 5 and (38) in trench 4. The former sherds are residual since they were associated with early Roman material, but the latter came from redeposited or disturbed brick-earth and might derive from pre-Roman activity.
- 5.3 The majority of the early Roman pottery was from layers (5) and (22) in feature [6] in trench 2 and was associated with a fragment of brown glass of a type current in the mid-late 1st century AD and fragments of Southern Gaulish samian ware of similar date. The pottery from [6] in trench 2 comprised largely coarse and fine wares of "Belgic" type dating to the mid or late 1st century AD, the finest including well-made and thin-walled vessels in complex forms, one copying a vessel of Terra Nigra type. The Romanised wares include fine grey and orange vessels from the local kilnfield on the Upchurch marshes.
- 5.4 There were few other finds, only a small quantity of burnt clay daub or calcined flint presumably scattered from burnt structures or from the use of heated stones for water heating.
- 5.5 Finds from the post-Roman period were limited to a sherd of medieval pottery and pieces of medieval or later peg-tile from the redeposited brick earth and fragments of china or pipe stem from modern brick-working features.

Tr No.	Context No.	Material	Quantity	Weight	Comments	Find No.	Dsk
2	5	Glass	1		3 brown coloured fragment	3	k
2	5	Pottery	97	825		2	k
2	22	Bone	5	20		19	k
2	22	Pottery	42	970		18	k
2	22	Shell	1		4 whelk	20	d
2 u/s		Pottery	50	500		4	k
3	50	Clay Pipes	1		3 stem	28	k
3	50	Pottery	1	5		27	k
4	38	Pottery	5	5		8	k
4	57	Post Med Brick	1	80		30	d
4	57	Pottery	1	30		29	k
5	19	Bone	4	25		15	k
5	19	Pottery	18	415		13	k
5	19	Shell	4		55 oyster	14	d
5	19	Stone	3		70 burnt flint	16	d
5	48	Pottery	8	20		26	k
5 u/s		Bone	2	10		7	k
5 u/s		Pottery	9	50		6	k
6	33	Pottery	1	5		17	k
6	35	Clay Pipes	1		3 stem	25	k
6	35	Pottery	1	4		24	k
2	4	Pottery	12	55		1	k
5	11	Pottery	3	15		12	k
5	16	Pottery	2	5		9	k
6	34	Daub	3	10		22	d
6	34	Pottery	23	155		21	k

6	34 Stone	8	150 burnt flint	23 d
4	39 Pottery	2	10	10 k
4	39 Stone	4	55 burnt flint	11 d

Environmental Evidence

- 5.7 Analysis of the charred debris from (22) in Trench 2 shows the survival of well-preserved cereal remains and other categories of finds from what was only a small sample of a larger deposit. Apart from large quantities of charcoal there was a significant quantity of charred grain and chaff, some burnt animal bone, unburnt bone and fish bones. The range of contents is not typical of the sooty ash derived from an oven stoke-hole and thus might suggest this is debris from a burnt structure or occupation material.
- 5.8 Oyster shell was common in the deposits of feature [6] in trench 2 and in the upper fill of [24] in trench 5. From the large quantity of oyster encountered in (5) a sample of 2.5 kg of the more complete shells was retained, unwashed, for specialist study. Little animal bone (55g) was recovered but the fragments were well preserved, the survival of bone and shell together suggesting the soils were calcareous and that any bone in the unexcavated deposits is likely to be well preserved.

6 DATING AND INTERPRETATION

- 6.1 It is presumed that a stratum of brick-earth has been stripped from the site before any use of this plot for brick works buildings or brick clamps. This is, however, only a presumption and needs testing on sites near the church to the south-east where the full depth of ancient stratigraphy may survive relatively untouched. On the present site an apparently natural pale sand (21) in trenches 1-3, 5 and 7 overlaid the deeper coarse gravel deposit of the Thanet beds. The interface between the two deposits was not recorded, but in trench 5 the sand was observed at a higher level than the gravel and in trench 7 it may have underlain a remnant of brick-earth. The features in trenches 2, 5 and 7 also contained lenses of brick earth in their fill even though, as excavated, they appeared cut into sand; originally they had been cut through a cap of brickearth, now removed. The sand may be a less clayey fraction at the base of the brickearth which was present on the uphill, south-eastern side of the site and survived because of its unsuitability for brick-making. This would have allowed the preferential survival here of archaeological features which had elsewhere been largely removed in the quarrying.
- 6.2 Prehistoric features were not certainly identified but the disturbed brick earth in trench 4 produced one sherd of early date and the lowest levels in the terrace [24] produced pre-conquest Iron Age pottery. The area of disturbed ground in trench 6 may have been from a large tree throw of some antiquity, the mixed soil having been avoided by any brick earth diggings on the site. The proximity of the earlier Iron Age enclosure on ELS98 raises the possibility of late prehistoric activity having existed here also.
- 6.3 Feature [6] in trench 2 was particularly rich in finds of the early Roman period, both artefacts such as pottery and charred organic remains. Because of the significant deposits contained in it only the uppermost fill was sampled but this consisted largely of either unfired clay or quantities of charred debris, pottery and oyster shell. The latter may derive from the debris back filled into the stoke-hole of an oven but the lack of an in situ fired clay structure may militate against this. Alternatively, this may

have been the site of a building with dried brick-earth walls, collapsed into the slight terrace on which it had been set. The burnt debris might then be dumps of domestic waste and /or the result of the burning of a superstructure but not to an intensity such as would have fired the soil. Without further work this cannot be resolved.

- 6.4 Feature [24] in trench 5 may have been similar, but its fill was less rich in finds or burnt debris. The surface of the natural gravel (8) here seems to have formed the base of a terrace, the back of which on the east was formed by the pale sand (21). The deposits of dark soil and brick earth within this terrace would have derived from the laying of clay floors and the accumulation of occupation and trampled layers. The small, shallow depressions containing flint nodules - not native to the site - associated with these layers could then have served to hold timber uprights from simple buildings.
- 6.5 The features in trench 7 may have been very truncated and originally been gullies or ditches for drainage. They could also have served to carry horizontal timbers from framed buildings and have formed a downhill element in the structure postulated on the terrace in trench 5.
- 6.6 The structures here identified belong to a short span of the early Roman period. In view of past finds to the east further elements of the later Roman settlement might be encountered superimposed on these earlier finds.
- 6.7 There is no trace of medieval activity on the site but occasional fragments of peg tile were noted in disturbed brick earth layers. The proximity of All Saints Church, presumably the centre of the small village of Murston, raises the possibility of medieval occupation being encountered.
- 6.8 Feature [41] in trench 1, [49], (50) and (51) in trench 3 and [36] in trench 6 were almost certainly connected with the late 19th or early 20th century brickworks activity, to judge by the nature of their fills and the date. The structure (50) and its ashy fill (51) appeared to be remnants of stacked bricks from a clamp or uncemented structure from a kiln. The presence of the southern end of a bank of kilns in the northern part of the site is indicated by early Ordnance Survey maps, so disturbances or structures associated with the brick field would be expected in this area.

7 ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 From the limited exposure of archaeological features in the southern part of the site it is certain that significant remains do exist here at shallow depth and as such would be vulnerable to disturbance in development. Although the nature of the remains is uncertain this is only a result of the limited exposure made in these trenches and is not a reflection of the quality of their preservation.
- 7.2 There are signs of the one-time presence of structures or buildings in clay and timber of the late Iron Age and early Roman period, apparently terraced into the gentle slope. Such a discovery is important where it is associated with quantities of closely dated objects and significant environmental evidence.
- 7.3 The environmental evidence is for the survival of important and well preserved faunal and floral remains, including animal bone and well dated groups of molluscan food debris and cereal remains.

- 7.4 In a wider context, industrial activity over the last two centuries has revealed a high density of sites in this area, the vast majority of which are ill recorded or from which the finds are scattered. Indeed, within this archaeological landscape, no site on the eastern side of the creek has been scientifically studied so the identification of important traces of early settlement here places some importance on the preservation or investigation of this site.

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