# Didcot West

## An Initial Archaeological Evaluation

## Volume 1

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# S Summary


S.1 An archaeological evaluation, comprising main stages of field-walking (the systematic collection, plotting and analysis of surface artefacts), geophysical survey (plotting of below ground anomalies) and trial trenching (sample excavation), has been undertaken within the area of the proposed 'Didcot West' development to the immediate west of Didcot (RPSC 1). The evaluation comprised three fields (21-23) to the west of Slade Road and to the north of the Wantage Road. This particular area was targeted as an initial phase of the archaeological investigation of the overall proposal site in order to determine the contemporary context of an important Roman coin hoard. Traces of possible settlement activity had been reported at the site but no previous archaeological survey had been conducted. The site was divided into a larger area (Area A) and a smaller area within it (Area B).

S.2 The fieldwalking and metal detecting survey stages within Area B were able to establish that Roman pottery and tile surface finds were concentrated in an area 60m to either side of the boundary between Fields 21 and 22. Several late Roman (4th century) coins were found in the area of the field boundary and these were in accord with a late Roman in date for the pottery assemblage. Prehistoric and medieval finds were found in low density and were considered to indicate 'background noise' from settlements beyond the present evaluation site. A restricted concentration of Roman tile, including flue tile, (which is usually indicative of a villa) was also found to the west of the Field 21/22 boundary. Chalk and limestone rubble was also found. The rubble was considered to imply the existence of disturbed structural remains.

S.3 Geophysical survey comprised an initial blanket survey of the entire 14.4 hectare site (Area A) using a rapid survey technique (magnetic susceptibility) and a second stage of detailed (magnetometer) survey encompassing parts of Area A and B. The latter technique was targeted upon an area of enhanced readings from the rapid survey which ran *c.*60m either side of the Field 21/22 boundary and continued through Field 23. The results of the detailed survey indicated the existence of possible enclosures in the southern area of the site and some interesting but unfortunately poorly defined areas of high readings in the area of the Roman tile concentration. Elsewhere, definite anomalies defied resolution. An attempt was made to further define the vague results over the tile concentration area using a different geophysical survey technique (resitivity survey) but again the results were poor.

S.4 Trial trenching of a 1.57% sample of the 947 square metres of Area B was targeted on possible features in Fields 21 and 22 with trenches placed in a random grid pattern in Field 23 where no conclusive evidence for features had been recognised. A single possible early neolithic (*c.*4,300-3,300BC) pit was found at the eastern extent of Area B in Field 21 and,

together with a few flint finds from the ploughsoil, indicates perhaps some limited neolithic activity in the landscape. Similarly the bronze age evidence, which was limited to a few sherds of pottery found in the ploughsoil and within later features, may indicate activity from this period. There was, however, no sign of settlement within the sample excavation. Middle iron age pottery finds were recovered from soils capping the natural in two trenches whilst a pit in the southern area of the site may also date to the iron age. This feature and other finds may be associated with nearby settlement.

S.5 Early Roman evidence was also scarce with only two features found that may date to the 2nd century. The gold coin hoard which prompted the evaluation exercise was deposited c.AD160 and appears to be associated with this sporadic activity. Hoards are usually deposited away from settlements and it is considered possible that an early Roman settlement located half a kilometre to the south west may have been involved with both the hoard deposition and the isolated early Roman pits here. Alternatively there may have been very low levels of activity at this site which have left little trace. A clearly defined enclosure and a further possible enclosure were investigated by trenches in the southern area of the site. The evidence suggests initial use of both in the third century. The eastern possible enclosure may have been abandoned before the 4th century whilst the western enclosure appears to have been occupied into the late 4th century at least. A significant number of pits and a concentration of domestic refuse inside the enclosure suggest settlement activity.

S.6 A trench to the north of the enclosure was placed to intercept the area of the Roman tile concentration and was specifically placed over an amorphous area of high readings from the geophysical survey. Chalk built external walls of a Roman structure 13m wide were identified. Later robbing had clearly removed some of the wall remains and further damage had been done by post medieval ploughing. It was not possible to define the length of the structure (at this stage), although Roman structures of this width are generally no more than 30m in length. An area of a hypocaust (under floor heating system) was sample excavated on the southern side of the structure. The under-floor chamber was walled with mortared limestone with a mortar floor and evidence of pillars which would have supported a tile floor above. The demolition backfill of the chamber contained flue tiles of the heating system, floor and roofing tiles and wall plaster from the room above, including painted plaster from a relatively a luxurious room. The restricted distribution of Roman tile at this site indicates that the roof of the villa was only partially tiled, the remainder probably being thatched. Coins and pottery suggest a mid 3rd century or later date for the small villa structure which indicates that it was probably contemporary with the settlement enclosure to the south. Minor villas of this type are relatively common and were occupied by low to mid status farmers/ landlords.

S.7 Other probably contemporary evidence from this farm complex from nearby trenches included a metalled surface, a ditch and a series of post holes within a slight hollow. These elements are likely to represent a yard/ track, a farmyard division and outbuildings respectively. Roman activity in the northern part of Area B (Field 23) was lower in density and significance and comprised field divisions of Roman date and a few pits and gullies some of which were backfilled with mortar constituents and, in one case, limestone blocks. These are likely to be waste materials from the construction a nearby building, probably the small villa itself.

# 1 Introduction

1.1 RPS Consultants were commissioned by the consortium promoting the Didcot West option to undertake an archaeological evaluation on arable farmland in connection with a proposed development of Didcot called the Western Alternative (Didcot West). The location of the site and areas of archaeological investigation carried out in September-October 2000 are shown on plans RPSC 1-3.

1.2 An area within the overall area of Didcot West of circa 14.4 hectares, centred on National Grid Reference SU 5085 9015, was evaluated by means of walk-over and fieldwalking surveys, geophysical surveys and trial trenching. The investigations had the specific aim of evaluating the area around the find spot of an important Roman gold coin hoard, where evidence for Roman settlement had also been reported.

1.3 A brief was prepared for this evaluation by the County Archaeological Officer, Paul Smith, and a specification in response to the requirements of the brief was prepared by RPS Consultants (Appendix 8). The brief states that 'the evaluation is required to assist the Council in determining its response to the presence of any significant archaeological remains which may result in further modifications to the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2001'.

1.4 The evaluation site comprises parts of three fields (21-23) within the Didcot West area and is situated to the west of Slade Road, bounded to the north by a trackway and hedgerow. The site had previously been allocated field numbers and includes parts of 'Fields 21 and 22' to the south east and south west of Field 23 (RPSC 2). The site lies on a broad plateau between 80m and 84m AOD. The ground slopes down to the north and west from this high ground. The geology comprises drift deposits of loam above Upper Greensand.

1.5 The current archaeological evaluation is largely a response to a need to define the archaeological context of the second largest hoard of gold *aurei* to have been found in this country. The hoard was found in 1995 by Mr Darley and consisted of 126 coins which were deposited within a pottery container around 160AD. Mr Darley found the hoard associated with the broken container close to the north-east/south-west boundary between Field 21 and 22 (around which the evaluation area is situated). Further coin finds were reported 40-60m metres either side of the field boundary by Mr Darley earlier in 2000. He also reported Roman ceramics and tile which he believed to be Roman hypocaust tile (although the identification of these had not been verified). The coins have been viewed by the County Archaeologist and are broadly dated from the late second to the fourth century. A Saxon Bow Brooch was also found by Mr Darley.

1.6 It may be significant with respect to the coin hoard that an early Romano-British settlement site has been located 0.5km to the south-west at Zulu Farm. The site was identified by Cotswold Archaeological Trust in 1997-8 during pipeline works associated with a sewer. The site produced 1st century finds, however, and may pre-date the deposition of the hoard. RPS Consultants desk based studies (part of the Environmental Statement for Didcot West) have also located a crop mark of a possible sub-circular enclosure at SU 5060 9010 in the vicinity of the evaluation site. Several Roman sherds were also collected during the RPS Consultants walkover survey at SU 507 901. Paul Smith has additionally noted a possible rectilinear enclosure cropmark at SU 507 900.

1.7 The RPS Consultants' fieldwalking, metal detecting and walkover surveys were conducted intermittently from the 11th-20th September. The geophysical surveys were conducted by Stratascan from the week beginning 18th September and were completed on the 10th October 2000. Whilst the trial trenching was conducted from 25th September until the 13th October. The fieldwork was directed by Robert Masefield BSc MA AIFA, assisted by Martin Connell BA MIFA and is reported on here by Robert Masefield. The project was managed by David Freke MIFA MA DipAD FSA.

# 2 Archaeological Background

2.1 The presently evaluated portion of the development proposal is situated on well drained loam overlying Upper Greensands of the Lower Cretaceous period. It is located on a broad plateau lying between 82 and 83 metres AOD. The River Thames is located 3.7km to the north whilst the land rises to Hagbourne Hill (at 136m) and the Berkshire Downs from 2-3km to the south.

2.2 A desk-top study for the entire area of the development proposal and surrounds (national grid squares SU 5088, 5188, 5089, 5189, 5090, 5190, 5091 and 5092) has been conducted (*RPS Consultants report; Environmental Statement for Didcot West, Oxfordshire. November 1999).* The study entailed analysis of extracts the Oxfordshire County Sites and Monuments Record; extracts from the National Monuments Record (NMR); historical map information from Oxfordshire County Record Office; historical map information from Berkshire County Record Office; listed building information from the NMR and English Heritage; a study of oblique and vertical aerial photographs held at the NMR and at the Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography; and scheduled monument information held by English Heritage. Cultural heritage sites are shown on RPSC 27.

2.3 The earliest human activity relates to the palaeolithic period (500,000-9000BC). Implements used by hunter-gatherers are not uncommonly found as redeposited finds from the River Thames terrace gravels. There is no evidence for palaeolithic activity in the study area. However, several vertebrae and the pelvic bone of an ox have been found in the vicinity of Didcot Power Station.

2.4 The mesolithic hunter-gatherers of the post-glacial period (9000BC-4500BC) inhabited a largely forested environment. In the earlier part of the period sea level remained lower than it is today. By *c.*8000BC the ice sheets had melted, coinciding with and directly affecting changes in material culture. At this time there was an increase of known sites suggesting population increases. Evidence for mesolithic settlement activity is also rare in this area with no recorded finds within the study area.

2.5 With the advent of the neolithic period (4500-2000BC) came partial clearance of the post glacial forests and the earliest farming. A mixture of animal husbandry and crop cultivation took place with a heavy emphasis on the former as a subsistence strategy. There is isolated evidence for neolithic activity in the study area. These finds include stone implements including a polished stone axe found in the garden of 8 Colbourne Road, Didcot (RPS 20 on RPSC 27). A second polished axe was found in 1955 on the western outskirts of Didcot (RPS 11). Such axe finds may be taken as evidence for a degree of forest clearance in the area. In

addition to stray finds, archaeological excavations by the Oxford Archaeological Unit within Didcot Power Station in 1991 (RPS 2), located evidence for a late neolithic recut ditch.

2.6 Farming was intensified in the bronze age (2000BC-650BC) and territories were linked with a more extensive hierarchy within society including a warrior elite. This was apparently coupled with a more controlled settlement system, from the middle to late bronze age, with greater attachment to the land. This is confirmed by evidence of field systems over extensive areas, suggesting greater settlement stability. Trial excavations by the Didcot Archaeological and Historical Society between 1978-82 to the west of the parish church of All Saints at Didcot located a scatter of residual bronze age flintwork (RPS 19). A La Tene brooch was found as a surface find at West Hagbourne in 1930 (RPS 12) although the exact find spot is unknown.

2.7 The iron age (650BC -AD43) brought a further intensification of farming with greater use of cereal cultivation. A proliferation of hillforts based on tribal groupings at this time may be a reflection of increasing social tensions. Associated factors may have been a rise in population from the late bronze age and a wetter, cooler climate. The excavations at All Saints Church, Didcot (RPS 19) located field boundary ditches that contained early iron age pottery. The ditches were shown to represent at least three phases of enclosure. A series of postholes and traces of domestic debris also indicated the presence of a settlement site. An isolated find of a gold coin of the 'Eastern Counties type' was found to the north of West Hagbourne before 1938 (RPS 12) although the exact findspot is not known.

2.8 With the Roman period (AD43-AD410) came a reorganisation of the settlement system with the establishment of towns and an efficient road network. A rise of non-agriculturally based professions such as traders and administrators was indicative of a boom in the rural economy. As a result of an increase of wealth, stability and a rising population, Romano-British sites are widespread.

2.9 A Roman settlement at Didcot is located at Belgrave Farm (former caravan site), Lydalls Road (RPS 9) just over a kilometre to the north east of the present evaluation area. Trial trenching by Oxford Archaeological Unit and the Didcot Archaeological and Historical Society in 1977 was undertaken in order to test the extent of the settlement. The subsoil contained ill defined possible settlement features that produced pottery and other finds.

2.10 Excavations by the Didcot Archaeological and Historical society at All Saints Church (RPS 19), located 150 metres west of the Lydalls Road site produced further traces of Roman domestic debris. In addition three probable Roman cremations were found within shallow pits. Fragments of Roman pottery were found in the churchyard of All Saints Church in 1930 (RPS 14). A lead coffin, thought to be Roman, was found at or near the church in c.1855 (RPS 14). Quantities of Roman pottery have also been found in a field behind All Saints Church (RPS 5).

2.11 Other finds in the Didcot area include two bronze bowls of Roman date at the former Government depot site (RPS 2) two kilometres to the north of the present evaluation area. Roman pottery was recovered in 1924 during the excavation of foundations for a tank shelter at the depot site (RPS 17). Between 1977-8, the Cotswold Archaeological Trust undertook an archaeological watching brief during the construction of a pipe trench from a sewage pumping station near Zulu Farm to Blewbury. During the course of monitoring, several archaeological sites were located and excavated. One of these was located to the immediate north-west of Zulu Farm (RPS 19). The site is located some 400m to the south west of the present evaluation area. Several features including a large pit (containing late 1st century pottery) relating to a possible settlement site were excavated.

2.12 Most importantly for the present site Mr Darley of Slade Road Didcot recovered the second largest hoard of gold *aurei* ever to have been found in Britain. The hoard consisted of 126 coins which were deposited within a pottery container around 160AD. The hoard was found close to the north east/south west boundary between Field 21 and 22 (around which the present evaluation area is situated). Further coin finds were reported 40-60metres either side of the field boundary by Mr Darley in 2000. He also reported ceramics and tile which he believed to be derived from a Roman hypocaust. The coins were viewed by the County Archaeologist and are broadly dated to the fourth century.

2.13 During the Anglo-Saxon period (AD 410-AD1066) the basis of the medieval settlement pattern was established. In 1928, five inhumations were found during the construction of a railway siding within the area of the former Government depot (RPS 2). A substantial excavation by OAU in 1991 demonstrated that these were part of a larger Anglo-Saxon cemetery. The cemetery was associated with a sunken floored building and pits. The excavations at all Saints Church (RPS 19) located stratified early Anglo-Saxon pottery. A Saxon bow brooch was also found by Mr Darley in the area of his Roman coin finds within the present evaluation area.

2.14 The place name of *Hagbourne* (West) originates from this period. Documentary references including references from the Anglo-Saxon Charters, refer to it as *Haccaburna* (AD895) and *Hacceburnan* (AD990-2) and refers to *'Hacca's* stream'. The place name of *Harwell* is mentioned as *Haranwylle* (AD 956), *Harawill* (AD973) and *Harewillan* by AD985. This refers to a 'stream or spring by the hill named hara'. Later medieval and post medieval documentary references refer to *Harvvelle* or *Harowell* (1086); *Harewella* (*c.*1130); *Harewell* or *Harewille* (1401-2) and *Harwell* by 1337.

2.15 The feudal society of the Normans after the invasion set the pattern for the medieval period (AD1066-AD1530). The system comprised manorial centres based upon nucleated villages. The settlement pattern of the Anglo-Saxon period generally remained unchanged after 1066. The medieval parish of Didcot was located in the Hundred of *Moreton* and contained one

manor- that of Didcot. However, this manor is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey, probably being part of a larger holding in the neighbouring parish of Long Wittenham. The origins of the place name of Didcot date from the medieval period as 'Dud(d)a's cottage(s)'. There are documentary references to Dudcota (1206); *Duddecot* and *Dudcote* (1208); *Doudecote* (1235-6); *Dudcote* (1390-1517) and *Didcot* or *Dudcot* (1657). Medieval references to *Hagbourne* (West) comprise: *Hachbourne* (1086); *Hachberna* (1180); *Westakeburn* (1241); *Westhakebourn* (1327); *Westhagbourn* (1517) and *West Hagbourn* (1752).

2.16 The parish church of All Saints dates to the 12th century with later alterations. The excavations in the grounds of the former Rectory (RPS 19) located 13th century settlement features and pottery from the settlement of Didcot. In addition a quantity of medieval pottery has been recovered from the surface of a field behind the church (RPS 5) and from between the church and the Rectory (RPS 19). To the south of Didcot the relic of a medieval village cross is a scheduled monument. Other artefacts from the area include a arrowhead of 13th-14th century date found to the north of Harwell (RPS 6).

2.17 The post medieval period saw great changes in the landscape including the transformation from the feudal three field system with its strip cultivation following the agrarian revolution of the 18th-19th centuries and the accompanying enclosure of the land. The railway station of the Great Western Railway at Didcot was opened in 1840. This was followed by the branch line to Oxford in 1844. The development of this junction and the establishment of stores for the railway led to a considerable increase in the population in the late 19th-early 20th centuries. A number of other post medieval features, including listed buildings are detailed in the desk based study (which forms part of the Environmental Statement.

2.18 A study of the aerial photographs of the present evaluation area held at the NMR's National Library of Air Photographs at Swindon include verticals on sortie no. 106G/UK/1408, incl. Frame no.3309, April 1946. These show the then extant ridge and furrow within the present evaluation site area (the ridges have since been ploughed flat). The pattern comprises of NE/ SW orientated furlongs within Fields 21 and 23 and the northern portion of Field 22 with a furlong perpendicular to these from mid way down Field 22 (in the area of evaluation Trench 9) which extends partially into the corresponding western side of Field 21. The straight nature of the ridges is perhaps more typical of post medieval furlong systems than the more sinuous medieval patterns. A track orientated NW/ SE appears to cut through the ridge and furrow in the centre of Field 21. The feature was trenched during the evaluation (Trench 5, see results below).

2.19 The map search for this project involved consultation of map sources at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, the Oxfordshire Record Office and the Berkshire Records Office. A study of the O.S. first and second edition maps of 1876-1899 and the 1913-14 edition (RPSC 31) demonstrates that the present evaluation site (as defined by parts of Fields 21, and 23) is divided between

the parishes of Didcot and Harwell. The parish boundary runs north west/ south east along the boundary between Fields 23 and 21/22. It is of interest on this map that the boundary between Fields 21 and 22 only extends about half way up the field from the Wantage Road. This is illustrated on the ground by the existence of a field ditch for the southern portion of the present boundary but not the northern portion. Otherwise the fields are unchanged since the late 19th century.

2.20 The enclosure ward map for the parish of Harwell (figure RPSC 28) shows newly created enclosed fields and the former pre-enclosure open fields in the eastern part of this parish. The Wantage Road is shown as a turnpike road whilst evaluation Fields 21 and 22 are subdivided. The pre enclosure fields to the north and west of the present evaluation site are termed 'the Meadow', the Common' and 'Down Ham' and indicate areas of communal grazing land or open grasslands. By contrast 'the Marshlands' of evaluation Field 21(21 and 22 on RPSC 28) give some indication of the former ground conditions of this area. The tithe map of 1841 (RPSC 29) shows that a large degree of amalgamation of the original enclosures had taken place with the creation of larger enclosed fields. For example evaluation Field 22 is no longer subdivided. This process has continued since 1841 with the creation of still larger plots.

2.21 The First edition O.S. Map of 1830-c.1840 (see RPSC 30) demonstrates 'Didcot Field' (the open field for the parish) to the north of Harwell Turnpike road and to the immediate west of the village of Didcot. The tithe, enclosure and estate maps for Didcot clearly demonstrate how little the landscape has changed over the last 160 years, except for the removal of several hedgerows and the expansion of Didcot itself.

2.22 There are several sites within the study area which cannot be ascribed to a period at the present time. As part of the Thames Valley Project, the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) undertook a detailed survey of cropmark sites on the river gravel terraces. A possible farmstead complex was identified to the immediate north of Didcot (RPS 1). The complex comprised a trackway, rectangular shaped enclosures of varying sizes defined by ditches and 37 possible pits. A linear cropmark has been located to the north of Harwell (RPS 26) has also been identified.

2.23 Aerial photographic searches by N. Hall of RPS Consultants identified two possible crop marks sites. A 1977 vertical (sortie number OS/77151 frame 23, Sept 1977) demonstrated a circular feature at grid reference SU 506 901 (RPS 35). The second feature was an irregular cropmark and was located on a 1946 vertical (sortie number 106G/UK/1408 frame no.3309 April 1946) at GR SU 5065 8990 (RPS 36). In addition to these possible features in the vicinity of the present evaluation Paul Smith has additionally noted a possible rectilinear enclosure cropmark at SU 507 907 to the north of the present evaluation area. The watching brief between Zulu Farm and Blewbury identified a linear feature of uncertain date to the south east of Down Farm (RPS 29). The feature was 0.55m in width and 0.15m deep.

# 3 Aims and Objectives

3.1 The general aim of the evaluation was to establish whether there were any archaeological sites buried within the evaluation area which might necessitate the implementation of a mitigation strategy. In the event that archaeological remains were encountered, that these would be characterised, dated (if possible) and their degree of preservation and significance would be assessed. The primary concern was to establish the location/s, extent, nature and date of any archaeological deposits or features that might be present.

3.2 The specific aim was to determine whether the coin hoard was an isolated deposit or whether it was related to Roman occupation or ritual activity at the site, and if so, to characterise it.

# 4 Methodology

4.1 The evaluation was comprised four stages in order to maximise the potential for retrieval of data. The programme of work entailed:

a) Initial walk-over survey,

b) a systematic fieldwalking programme,

c) a rapid geophysical scan, followed by selected areas of detailed survey; and

d) a programme of trial trenching, the extent of which was informed by the above techniques.

4.2 The evaluation site was divided into Areas A and B as a two-tiered investigation:

**Area A** (14.3ha) comprised the entire study area and was subject to a walkover survey, 100% magnetic susceptibility survey and 50% coverage by magnetometer survey.

**Area B** (about 6.12ha) comprised a total coverage by fieldwalking and a 1.55% coverage by trial trenching.

4.3 The work complied with the Institute of Archaeology's Code of Conduct and Standards documents and English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects* MAP2 (1991).

## Area A

4.4 The purpose of the walkover survey was to make note of any landscape features of archaeological or historical interest and significant artefact spreads and/or soil discolourations.

4.5 Magnetic Susceptibility Survey was conducted by Stratascan Ltd (see Appendix 1) for 100% coverage of Area A.

4.6 Magnetometer Survey examined 50% of Area A (7.15ha) using 40m blocks spaced 40m apart. Stratascan Ltd conducted the survey (see Appendix 3 for results).

4.7 Full liaison was maintained between the Stratascan, RPS Consultants and the County Archaeologist during the course of the geophysical survey work. This ensured that the potential of the survey was maximised.

## Area B

4.8 A systematic Field Walking Survey was conducted over the extent of Area B.

4.9 The fieldwalking exercise entailed systematic collection of surface artefacts from the available site area.

4.10 The fieldwalking took place after ploughing and a period of weathering (where possible), to ensure that artefacts were as visible as possible in the soil.

4.11 All artefacts, except for clearly modern artefacts, were collected and retained for off site processing and analysis. Modern artefacts were noted by RPS Consultants on pro-forma fieldwalking sheets.

4.12 The fields were walked on transects based on a 20 metre grid. Finds were collected, bagged and labelled according to the individual 20 metre grid square unit. Individual field grids were surveyed perpendicular to appropriate boundaries.

4.13 Finds were bagged according to grid square location, marked and sorted for specialist analysis.

4.14 Density distributions for all categories of artefacts have been produced for fieldwalking areas (see RPSC Figures 21-25).

4.15 Trial Trenching constituted a 1.55% sample of Area B (947 square metres). The layout of the trenches was dependent on the results of the fieldwalking and geophysical surveys. Positive results from the above were specifically targeted by trenching whilst apparent 'blank areas' (Trenches 1-4) were also examined to test the validity of these negative results.

4.16 The detailed trench layout was discussed and agreed with the County Archaeologist prior to commencement.

4.17 The trenching methodology was as follows:

- Trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator utilising a toothless bucket. The machining took place under archaeological supervision.
- Topsoil/ploughsoil were removed to the level of the natural subsoil or the surface of the uppermost significant archaeological layer, whichever was exposed first.
- The spoil was scanned for artefacts.
- All trenches were hand cleaned prior to pre- excavation photography and the compilation of pre-excavation plans.

- A sample of the archaeological features were excavated. The percentage of excavation did not exceed the amount necessary to date and characterise the archaeological feature or deposit.
- The evaluation trenching conformed to the IFA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations. All finds and other relevant material were labelled and retained for post excavation analysis.
- Soil samples were taken for environmental analysis as appropriate. The aim of sampling was to inform any mitigation work which may follow on the potential of the site's deposits for environmental analysis. The samples were submitted to Rob Scaife of Palaeopol whose report is included as Appendix 7.
- All trenches were surveyed accurately by a qualified surveyor prior to the commencement of work.
- The trenches were backfilled after authorization by the County Archaeologist.

# 5 Results

## Walkover Survey Results

5.1 The walkover survey was conducted for all three field areas of the initial Didcot West archaeological evaluation. There appear to be no surviving ancient hedgerows within the study area. A headland without a hedgerow separates Fields 21 and 22. The northern boundaries of Fields 21 and 22 are defined by a sparse hedgerow with a low species count despite its status as a parish boundary. The northern boundary of Area A is bounded by a headland which is used as a public footpath, whilst the eastern boundary of Area A is bounded by modern housing of Didcot.

5.2 Field 21 was ploughed and Area B within it was walked during the detailed fieldwalking survey. As the extension of the fieldwalking lines to the eastern edge of the field (the 'walkover survey' area) was convenient Area A within Field 21 was also fieldwalked in a detailed fashion. The southern area of the field was scanned for concentrations of artefacts.

5.3 The initial walkover results demonstrated that there are no concentrations of any category of artefacts within Field 21, beyond Area B. A scatter of Roman pottery and tile was noted adjacent to the western boundary of the field within Area B. These finds were not collected at this stage in order that the scatter could be plotted by the detailed fieldwalking survey (see below). Post medieval and modern artefacts were spread thinly over the field and comprised occasional peg tile, brick and pottery. These finds are typical of deposition associated with manuring from the relevant home farm. No soil discolourations which might betray the existence of buried archaeological deposits were noted. A walkover of the southern area of the field demonstrated that the remainder of the field was relatively devoid of artefacts. Slight traces of c.north-south orientated ridge and furrow were noted in the southern area of the field. These are extant on the 1940's vertical aerial photographs. The former ridge and furrow, within Areas A and B of the evaluation site, has been completely levelled by mid to late 20th century ploughing.

5.4 Field 22 was the subject of an initial walkover survey following the removal of the bean crop. The field slopes gently down from north-west to south-east. A thin scatter of Roman artefacts was noted over Area A with a slight concentration adjacent to the eastern boundary of the field. It was also notable that a far higher proportion of stone, comprising limestone and chalk, was present within the field than was the case with Field 21 to the east. Some of the stone towards the eastern boundary of the field included large pieces (up to *c.* 30cm by 20cm). It was notable that a mini-concentration of Roman tile (over a *c.*10m by 10m area) corresponded to an area of large stone fragments between fieldwalking runs E and F (see

RPSC 26). A late Roman minim coin was found during the metal detecting survey of the site whilst tile finds included keyed box flue, tegula, imbrex and floor tile. Roman tile including floor tile and tegula was noted over a wider area including the whole of Area A, but in relatively low density. This tile and stone scatter clearly required further evaluation to define its character as it was considered likely to relate to buried archaeology. Further walkover survey to the south and west of the evaluation area demonstrated very low densities of artefacts with no concentrations.

5.5 Field 23 is set-aside and was not ploughed. There was no soil exposure below the remaining stubble and therefore both walkover survey, to establish artefact densities within Area A, and detailed fieldwalking of Area B were not possible within the field.

## Fieldwalking and Metal Detecting Survey Results (Fields 21 and 22)

5.6 Methodology - Field 21 was fieldwalked by a team of three on 11th of September whilst Field 22 was walked on 20th September 2000. A baseline for both Fields 21 and 22 was established on the north-south headland between the fields. The 20m grid was surveyed perpendicular to the baseline with a single east-west sight line (pegs at 20m intervals) and two north-south sight lines at 100m and 200m from the 0m point. The field had been allowed to weather for more than a week prior to the fieldwalk in order to improve artefact visibility. The grid enabled the walkers to collect surface artefacts from 20 m stints, 20m apart.

### Prehistoric

5.7 Three sherds of flint tempered prehistoric pottery were recovered, all from the southern part of the survey area. The prehistoric pottery was provisionally examined by Rob Masefield and Paul Booth. One sherd from Field 21 was of probable late bronze age/early iron age date, a further rim sherd from Field 22 may date to the earlier iron age, whilst the third is undiagnostic.

5.8 A total of seven worked flint items were recovered. These included hard hammer flakes of probable late neolithic/bronze age date, two cores and a soft hammer mesolithic/ early neolithic flake. Further low levels of prehistoric activity may be represented by three pieces of burnt flint.

### Roman Pottery

5.9 The Roman pottery was examined by Paul Booth. The distribution of finds was largely confined to 60m either side of the boundary between Fields 21 and 22, with 75 sherds from Field 22 and 47 from Field 21.

5.10 Although Samian ware was present (central Gaulish), the assemblage was consistently late Roman in date with a relatively high proportion of Oxford Colour Coat Wares. Other Oxford products were present including white slipped mortarium.

**Roman Tile**

5.11 The tile distribution pattern mirrors the pottery distribution, generally with a marked concentration in Field 22 around walk lines E and F 0-40m. A total of 56 Roman tile fragments were collected from the fieldwalk. These can be added to the 38 pieces of tile (4.26kg) collected from between walk lines E and F 16-23m of the walkover survey.

5.12 The tile assemblage includes a significantly high proportion of box flue tiles with straight and wavy comb keying, in addition to tegula and imbrex roof tiles and floor tiles (probably pilae). This combination of tile is generally found on Roman villa sites (although often in greater numbers as surface finds).

**Roman Coins**

5.13 Six late Roman coins were collected, five as metal detecting finds and one as a surface find. The coin distribution was similar to that of the Roman tile and all were within Field 22. Four of the coins were minims, two further late Romans coins were recovered including a Ae3 of Constantine 1 issued AD318-319, the reverse type reads *Victoriae Latae Princ Perp* (P Booth pers comm). No further significant finds were recovered from the metal detecting survey.

**Medieval Pottery**

5.14 A total of five sherds were recovered, three from Field 22 and two from Field 21. All the sherds were coarsewares.

**Post-Medieval**

5.15 A total of 75 sherds of post-medieval/modern pottery were collected. The distribution of the post-medieval pottery was mirrored by peg tile and brick distributions which show a consistent low density scatter across the fields. The medieval and post-medieval pottery and post Roman tile scatter are characteristic of manuring distributions.

## Geophysical Survey after Stratascan (See Appendix 3)

5.16 The magnetic susceptibility results demonstrated an area of enhancement running north-south through the centre of the survey area. The results of the subsequent magnetometer survey of this central area showed the anomalies to be of very low contrast. Therefore, the weaker magnetic features were masked and only the stronger features abstracted. Only in the southern area of Fields 21 and 22 was it possible to interpret a number of possible

archaeological features. These were thought to represent settlement enclosures (see RPSC 3 which shows RPS Consultants' interpretation following Stratascan's initial interpretation).

5.17 The concentrated area of Roman tile finds and rubble coincided with areas of anomalous readings but no discernible building plan was identifiable. For this reason the area was further targeted by resitivity survey (see Appendix 3). The results were similar however with no discernible building plan although discrete areas of high readings were considered to be brick rich as possible wall fragments. It should be noted that the interpretive plots within Stratascan's report (Appendix 3) are slightly at variance with their initial on site interpretation (as shown on RPSC 3). The interpretation of 'Enclosure 2' as an enclosure was confirmed by trenching and is considered to be the more reliable interpretation of the magnetometer survey results.

## Trial Trenching Results

5.18 Trenches 1 and 2 were positioned within Field 22 to the west of both the artefact concentration and magnetic susceptibility high readings, in order to test the validity of these negative results in this area. **Trench 1** was 30m in length by 1.5m in width orientated north-south, whilst **Trench 2** was 70m in length by 1.5m in width orientated north-east/south-west. No archaeological features other than occasional plough marks were noted within these trenches.

5.19 Trenches 3 and 4 were positioned within Field 21 to the east of the artefact concentration and magnetic susceptibility high readings (see RPSC 4), again to test the negative survey results. **Trench 3** was 30m by 1.5m in extent orientated north-south, whilst Trench 4 was 70m in length by 1.5m in width. Traces of a light brown compact silt subsoil were noted beneath the topsoil in Trench 3, above the natural silty clay (with sandstone fragments). No features were identified. Once more, traces of a subsoil were noted in patches above the natural within **Trench 4** (see RPSC 5). A patch of subsoil (404) within a probable natural hollow (*c.*0.08m in depth and 2m by over 1.5m in extent) was hand-excavated at the northern end of the trench. The deposit produced 21 sherds of probable middle iron age pottery. The soil horizon may represent ancient ploughsoil remnants.

5.20 A single small oval cut feature 0.55m by 0.36m in extent, was noted within the central portion of Trench 4. The cut sloped steeply on its northern side and at *c.*45 degrees on its eastern side to a rounded base at a depth of 0.26m. Feature [405] is possibly dated to the (early) neolithic period, based on a collection of 18 sherds of poorly sorted and irregular fired flint tempered sherds (although it is also possible that these date to the bronze age). Several soft hammer flint flakes also suggest an early neolithic date. The fill (406) comprised mid-grey clayey silt with charcoal flecks and occasional sandstone inclusions. The homogenous fill suggests that the feature was rapidly filled. This isolated pit represents activity in the

landscape in the period, which is to be expected in the relatively light and free draining greensand soils, and given the favourable topographical situation between the high ground of the chalk Downs to the south and the resources and communication line of the River Thames to the north. No other significant features other than furrow and plough marks were located within the trench. The pit appears to be an isolated feature.

5.21 Trenches 5-8 were situated towards the western boundary of Field 21, in order to characterise probable linear features which were detected by the detailed geophysical survey. Trenches 5 and 6 were positioned to intersect the ditches of (possible) enclosure 1 (see RPSC 3). **Trench 5** (see RPSC 6) was 30m in length by 1.5m in width orientated north-east/south-west. The earliest feature, in the centre of the trench, was poorly defined and may simply reflect a variation in the natural subsoil. The possible cut [512] was up to 5m wide width sides gently sloping sides to a rounded base at a depth of 0.3m. The primary and main fill (511) comprised yellowish clay with no finds. A 0.6m wide and 0.18m thick deposit of brownish grey clayey silt (514) overlay part of deposit (511) and may also be a fill of possible cut [512]. Fills (511) and (514) were truncated by a more certain feature [505]. This cut was over 1.5m long, 2.4m wide and 0.4m deep with a wide V-shaped cut. Primary fill (509) comprised silty clay an produced a single (?middle) iron age sherd. The secondary and major fill (506) consisted of a compacted yellowish brown silt and produced four (?middle) iron age sherds. The feature is interpreted as a probable ditch. The feature is shown by the geophysical survey (see RPSC 3) and appeared to continue into Trench 6 as a curvilinear boundary or perhaps part of an enclosure (? Enclosure 1). However, the middle iron age pottery from the ditch may indicate that this is a separate feature of earlier (prehistoric) date than the Roman ditch in Trench 6. Alternatively, the pottery within [505] may be residual.

5.22 Ditch [505] was truncated on its northern side by linear feature [507]. This linear feature was 2.0m in wide and by over 1.5m in long orientated north west/ south east. The sides sloped gently to a wide U-shaped profile with a depth of 0.24m. Light brown silty clay fill (508) produced two sherds of 2nd-3rd century pottery. The ditch may be a recut ditch of Roman date or alternatively might be associated with a further ditch [503] which was parallel with it and *c.*2m to the north. Ditch [503] was 0.8m in width with a U-shaped profile to a depth of 0.25m. The mid brown sandy silt fill produced glass and post medieval finds as dating evidence. Between ditches [503] and [507] were possible remnants of surfacing in the form of sandstone fragments which were pressed into the natural below (513). These remnants might alternatively be of natural origin. A track, which appeared to cut through the ridge and furrow within the field, is visible on the mid 20th century aerial photographs of the site. No further features were noted within Trench 5 although the ditch sequence [505]/ [507] was overlaid by a compact silt soil horizon (502) typical of the post medieval furrows and levelled furrows identified elsewhere across the site. This 0.08m thick layer was directly overlaid by the 0.35m thick modern ploughsoil.

5.23 **Trench 6** (see RPSC 4 and 7) was 20m long by 1.5m wide orientated south east/ north west. Removal of the 0.36m thick ploughsoil layer (601) (which produced 14 sherds of Roman pottery and a coin dated to AD 337-341), exposed the natural clay at either end of the trench. Dark fill material was identified within the centre of the trench. Excavation demonstrated three phases of intercutting ditches orientated *c.*north east/ south west (603, 605, 609). The earliest ditch on the east side [605] was 1.2m in width by over 1.5m in length. The cut sides sloped at *c.*45 degrees to a flat base at a depth of 0.44m. The sole fill (606) comprised mid greyish brown clayey silt with charcoal flecks and produced 9 sherds of mid/late 3rd century plus pottery and four pieces of bone. The earliest phase [609] on the west side (which was not physically linked to ditch [605]) was 1.14m in wide with a stepped profile to a possible 'U' shaped base at a depth of 0.5m. The mottled greyish brown silty clay fill produced no dateable finds. Both ditches [605] and [609] cut a later ditch, feature [603]. This ditch was 1.2m wide with sides sloping at 45 to 55 degrees to a stepped base at a depth of 0.6m. The sole fill (604) consisted of a light greyish brown firm clayey silt and produced 18 sherds of mid-late 3rd century pottery in addition to six residual iron age sherds and several fragments of tile and animal bone. The fills of these three intercutting features had evidently compacted over time creating a 0.34m deep hollow. The hollow was filled by deposit (607) and comprised a dark grey clayey silt with charcoal flecking sealing the ditch fills. Fill (607) produced a high density of finds indicating adjacent settlement activity, including 43 sherds of mid 3rd/4th century pottery, 21 fragments of iron (nails) and 23 animal bone fragments. The charcoal rich layer was sampled for environmental data (Appendix 7). The density of finds indicates nearby settlement. This occupation deposit was directly sealed by the ploughsoil (601). No further features were noted within the trench.

5.24 From the above it is likely that the earliest phase was probably of mid/late 3rd century date with final silting of the ditches in the 4th century AD?

5.25 If the ditches within Trench 5 and 6 are indeed connected, as part of enclosure 1 (which extends to the south beyond the survey area), then at least 3 phases of ditches exist, representing a significant duration of occupation. The higher organic content and finds density within Trench 6 ditches suggests that occupation activity was adjacent to this ditch segment.

5.26 **Trench 7** was 30m in length by 1.5m in width orientated *c.*north east/ south west. The trench was positioned to the east and parallel to the Field 21/22 headland. Removal of the 0.3m thick greyish brown silt ploughsoil (701) exposed a furrow [707] on a similar alignment to the trench. A total of five sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the ploughsoil. The light brownish grey firm silt fill (703) of the furrow cut completely obscured the natural level for the length of the trench and was machine reduced a further *c.*0.25m in order to expose undisturbed natural silty clay with sandstone (702) below. The full furrow depth was 0.4m and its fill produced four fragments of tile including post medieval peg tile. A single discreet feature

[704] was identified truncated by the furrow at the southern end of the trench. This sub oval feature was over 1.3m long (entering the eastern trench baulk), and 1.2m wide with sides sloping at c.45 degrees to a rounded base at a depth of 0.39m. Primary fill (706) comprised mid grey silty clay whist the upper and main fill (705) comprised dark grey clayey silt and produced 9 sherds of pottery (including central Gaulish Samian ware dated to the 2nd century AD). The fill was sampled for environmental data (see Appendix 7). No further features were noted within the trench.

5.27 **Trench 8** was 22m long by 1.5m wide and was orientated c.north west / south east. It was situated on the east side of the field boundary between Fields 21 and 22, in order to intersect the eastern side of a possible enclosure located by the detailed geophysical survey ('Enclosure 2' on RPSC 3), and a linear feature to the east of the postulated enclosure. The 0.4m thick mid brown silt ploughsoil was removed by machine. This exposed the natural clayey sand (802) at the eastern end of the trench. Cut features and deposits obscured the natural for the remainder of the trench. A total of 19 Roman pottery sherds, 2 iron age sherds and three fragments of tile in addition to a late Roman (?4th century) coin were recovered from the ploughsoil. Again the trench was affected by post medieval ridge and furrow, in this case orientated south east/ north west in the form of cut [803] which was c.3m in width and up to 0.4m in depth. Its mid greyish brown firm clayey silt fill (804) produced a fragment of post medieval peg tile.

5.28 A series of archaeological features were sealed by the ridge and furrow fill. The most easterly feature was linear [805] in the centre of the trench. The cut was 2.5m wide and over 1.5m long orientated north east/ south west with a V-shaped profile to a depth of 0.65m. Three fills were identified. A basal grey clayey silt (808) produced two fragments of possible tile and a piece of bone and was overlaid by a mid grey clayey silt secondary fill (807) with no finds. The tertiary upper greyish brown clayey silt fill (806) produced four Roman greyware sherds of 2nd century or later date. They could be as late as 4th century. The feature is interpreted as a ditch and was identified in the detailed geophysical survey as a possible flanking ditch of 'Enclosure 2' to the immediate west.

5.29 To the west of ditch [805] a 1.57m long by over 1.5m wide sub-rectangular pit [809] was investigated. The cut was vertical side to a flat base at a depth of 0.5m. a single stake hole [822] with a diameter of 0.1m and a depth of 0.1m was cut into the base of the cut, possibly as an associated structural element. No finds were recovered from the silty clay fill of the stake hole. The pit subsequently silted up with a dark grey clayey silt fill (811) which contained 12 sherds of mid 3rd century or later pottery. The upper dark grey silt fill (810) produced a further fill 12 sherds of 4th century pottery. Several fragments of animal bone were also recovered from this feature. A series of three intercutting ditches (812, 821, 815) orientated north east/ south west were excavated to the immediate west of pit [809]. The

earliest of these was [812] and was truncated leaving a 1.0m width surviving. The sides sloped steeply to a depth of 0.68m. Primary silting fill (814) produced no artefacts whilst the upper dark grey clayey silt fill (813) produced three sherds of 2nd century or later pottery. Ditch [812] was cut away on its west side by recut ditch [821]. The cut was 1.4m in width, over 1.5m in length and was 0.6m in depth with a U-shaped profile. A sole fill (818) consisted of mottled light grey silt and clay and produced no finds within the excavated segment. Ditch [821] was cut away on its west side by the third phase ditch [815]. The feature was over 1.5m in length with a width of 1.8m and a U-shaped profile to a depth of 0.42m. The sole fill (817) comprised dark grey clayey silt and produced nine sherds of mid 2nd century plus pottery and 45 fragments of animal bone. The high concentration of bone suggests dumping of domestic waste within the feature, indicative of associated settlement. The compacted fills of these ditches were overlaid by a 0.18m thick layer of dark grey clayey silt (816) which contained 63 sherds of mid/late 3rd-4th century pottery and in addition 26 pieces of Roman tile. Layer (816) was sampled for environmental evidence and produced relatively well preserved pollen.

5.30 The sequence of ditches was located by the detailed geophysical survey (see RPSC 3) and appears to represent the western side of a sub-rectangular enclosure ('Enclosure 2'). The three phases here must span a considerable period of time although the pottery dates are not precise enough to provide an accurate chronology. The latest phase (ditch [815]) may date to the 4th century and cut a chalk rubble surface (820) at the west end of the trench. The 0.19m thick chalk rubble layer was originally thought to be natural but was reinterpreted as a yard or track following the discovery of similar compacted surfaces in trenches 9 and 12. The hardstanding was undated by finds but clearly predates the latest phase of enclosure ditch. No further features or deposits were noted within the trench.

5.31 **Trench 9** was 50m in length by 1.5m in width and continued the alignment of Trench 8 into the western field (22) in order to transect the interior area of the probable enclosure ('Enclosure 2'), its western side and a flanking linear feature adjacent to the western enclosure ditch.

5.32 The trench is described from west to east. The westernmost series of features in the area of the 'flanking' linear identified in the geophysical survey comprised a sequence of five intercutting features. The earliest of these was cut [940], a 1.6m wide feature with a length of over 0.5m (the full extent within the trench was obscured by a sealing layer). The sides were partially truncated but sloped at approximately 45 degrees to a flat base at a depth of 0.22m. No finds were recovered from light grey (non humic) fill (941). Feature [940] was truncated on its northern side by feature [938] which comprised a 1.1m wide cut to a depth of 0.37m. The feature, interpreted as a ditch, was over 0.5m in length orientated north east/ south west and contained a single light grey clayey silt fill with no finds. Feature [940] was also truncated on its southern side by a poorly defined feature [962]. Feature [962] was heavily damaged by

features to the south east and comprised a cut, over 0.5m in length by over 0.8m in width, with a sloping surviving side to a depth of 0.4m. Silty clay fill (961) was sterile. Features [940], [938] and [962] were sealed by a 0.13m thick brownish grey silty clay layer (937) which contained three sherds of ?late 1st/early 2nd century Roman pottery.

5.33 A pair of more substantial intercutting ditches cut through feature [962]. The earliest, [935], was over 1.5m long by at least 0.5m wide with steeply sloping sides to a flat bottom at a depth of 0.42m. No finds were recovered from the greyish brown silty clay fill (936). Fill (936) was truncated by a 2.2m wide linear feature [915]. Feature [915] was over 1.5m in length orientated north east/south west with a U-shaped profile to a depth of 0.9m. Primary silting fill (914B) contained animal bone but failed to produce dateable finds, whilst fill (914A) above produced three sherds of mid/late 3rd-4th century pottery. The uppermost fill (913) also sealed the fill of ditch [935] and produced 8 sherds of 4th century pottery This deposit may be have formed within a hollow created by compaction of the earlier fills. The large ditch is interpreted as an outer ditch around 'Enclosure 2' which may be equivalent to ditch [805]. The geophysical survey suggests that the flanking ditch forms an outer enclosure ditch or perhaps encloses a track or stock area around the settlement enclosure. The dating of the intercutting ditches is problematic, given a 4th century date for the uppermost fill of ditch [915], however, at which time rubbish disposal appears to have increased, it is probable that the earlier fills and recut ditch [935] predate the 4th century.

5.34 A further pair of large ditches orientated north east/south west were encountered 7.5m to the south east of ditch [915]. The northerly ditch [912] was 2.7m wide with sides sloping at 45 degrees to a flat base at a depth of 0.9m. The primary fills (919) and (933) may have been truncated by a cut represented by fills (918) and (917). This interpretation is however uncertain, and a recut has not been attributed at present. Fill (919) comprised mottled grey clayey silt and produced a 2nd century or later sherd. Equivalent mid grey clayey silt fill (933) was sterile in terms of finds. Later fill (918) (possibly within a recut) consisted of dark grey clayey silt and contained 15 sherds of mid/late 3rd/ 4th century pottery, a fragment of tile and 17 fragments of bone indicate use for the disposal of domestic rubbish. The fill was sealed by further silting deposit (917). The final silting of the ditch was represented by a 0.4m thick deposit of dark grey clayey silt (911). Much domestic rubbish was collected from this fill including 37 sherds of mid/late 3rd-4th century or later pottery, 13 pieces of animal bone and 14 metal finds (including a Roman coin dated *c.*AD 375, iron nails and other iron fittings). Ditch [912] is interpreted as the western side of 'Enclosure 2' which was in use in the later 3rd/ 4th century and possibly earlier. A similar sized ditch [946] was excavated to the immediate east of the enclosure ditch and may represent a further phase of enclosure ditch (three intercutting phases were noted in the eastern side of the enclosure in Trench 8). This ditch [946] was 3.1m in width with sides at approximately 45 degrees to a flat base at a depth of 0.92m. The grey/brown clayey silt primary fill (945) produced a 2nd century or later Roman

sherd whilst secondary dark grey clayey silt fill (944) produced 7 sherds of late 1st to 2nd century pottery. Tertiary fill grey clayey silt fill (943) and the final silting fill (942) produced 16 sherds of late Roman pottery in addition to tile fragments (including intrusive post-medieval tile). The limited use for dating purposes of sherds from the earlier fills of both ditches [912] and [946] contrast with clearly late Roman finds from the upper fills of both ditches. It is at present unclear which of these enclosure ditches was earlier.

5.35 A further series of features were excavated within a 0.5m wide trench along the northern edge of Trench 9 from 3.5 m to the east of ditch [946]. The earliest feature appeared to be [930], which comprised a large feature *c.*7.5m in length by over 1.5m in width. The feature was sample excavated but not bottomed due to the potentially dangerous overall depth of the within the excavated sondage (over 1.4m). The cut sides sloped at *c.*45 degrees to an excavated depth of 0.76m. The lowest fill (952) comprised mid grey clayey silt edge collapse with no finds. Fill (951) above comprised grey clayey silt and produced a single sherd of flint tempered iron age or late bronze age pottery. Fill (951) was sealed by a further deposit of grey clayey silt (950) which produced three sherds of probable iron age pottery. A single sherd from (950) may date to the 1st-2nd century however and it is therefore possible that the iron age pottery is residual within a later feature. The earlier fills may have compacted over time to create a hollow in which later deposits (931) and (934) accumulated. Deposit (931) comprised a dark grey clayey silt and contained 38 4th century (after 350?) pottery sherds (and in addition three residual iron age/late bronze age sherds). A single late Roman coin dated AD 270-273, several iron nails and animal bones were also recovered from the deposit. Grey clayey silt fill (934) is interpreted as a trample deposit and produced three sherds of mid 3rd to 4th century pottery and a residual iron age sherd. An equivalent deposit to (931) was excavated on the western side of the feature, this comprised grey clayey silt and was undated. A series of clayey silt deposits including (953), (954), (955), (956) and (957) were recorded in section apparently within a cut into the upper (late Roman) levels of pit [930]. The feature is dated by stratigraphical means to the late Roman period but was otherwise poorly understood.

5.36 A rubble limestone spread (916) was excavated to the east of feature [930]. The deposit may represent a poorly constructed or very eroded hard-standing and produced two sherds of late Roman pottery. Two *c.*0.1m diameter probable stake-holes were cut through the surface and these may represent associated structural components. A similar stake-hole [947], close on the eastern edge of pit [930] and cut directly into the natural, may also be associated. A series of small pit features were excavated in this area of the trench. The most westerly, [924] was sub- rectangular in form and was 0.6m in truncated length by over 0.4m in width. The cut sides sloped gently to a shallow 0.11m depth. Its dark grey clayey silt fill (925) produced three sherds of 2nd century or later Roman pottery. Pit [924] may have been truncated on its east side by pit [922] although the relationship was uncertain. Pit [922] was 1.85m in length by

over 0.45m in width and was again shallow with a maximum depth of 0.12m. No finds were recovered from clayey silt fill (923). Feature [920] to the immediate east was rounded in plan with a diameter of c.0.7m. The 0.12m deep feature contained a mid grey clayey silt fill (921) which produced five sherds of mid 2nd century plus Roman pottery. A further pit [910] was 0.75m in length by over 0.7m with a rounded form. The feature was U-shaped in profile and contained a dark grey clayey silt fill (909). Fill (909) produced 16 sherds of late Roman pottery and several fragments of bone which may indicate that the pits was used for the disposal of domestic refuse. The concentration of small pits here is likely to represent a defined zone of pitting activity within 'Enclosure 2'.

5.37 The chalk surface (820) at the western end of Trench 8 continued for 3.6m into the eastern end of Trench 9. The deposit, here numbered (949), was c.0.25m in depth and again directly overlay the natural. As indicated above, the compact surface is likely to have formed a hard-standing on the eastern side of the enclosure. Surface (949) was truncated by a stake-hole [905] and a probable ditch feature [908]. Feature [908] was 1.09m in width with a U-shaped profile to a depth of 0.5m. Lower dark grey clayey silt fill (907) produced two sherds of ?mid to late 1st century or later pottery whilst the upper grey clay/silt fill (906) produced six sherds of 4th century Roman pottery. It is considered likely that the feature is of late Roman date.

5.38 All of the silted features within in the eastern 24.5m area of Trench 9 were sealed by a dark grey/ black clayey silt layer (903). The c.0.2m thick deposit was rich in finds including 205 sherds of 4th century pottery, 46 fragments of Roman tile, five late Roman coins, seven iron objects and 28 fragments of animal bone. Of the coins, two were datable to the late 3rd century and three to the 4th century, the latest were dated AD 364-378. Layer (903) is interpreted as an occupation deposit representing 4th century settlement use of 'Enclosure 2'. A 0.35m thick pale brown silt layer sealed layer (903) and the archaeological features at the west end of the trench. The deposit contained post medieval peg tile and is interpreted as a remnant of post medieval ridge and furrow agriculture. The ploughsoil (901) sealed the deposit. A further five late Roman coins (all ?4th century) were recovered from layers (902) and (901). The high density of archaeological features within Trench 9 and the associated domestic finds is interpreted as evidence that 'Enclosure 2' was utilised for human occupation.

5.39 Trench 10 (see RPSC 12-14) was initially 20m in length by 1.5m in width and was orientated north east/ south west in order to intersect an area of high readings on the magnetometer survey. This area of readings corresponded with the high Roman tile concentration which was noted during the walkover and fieldwalking surveys. The tile finds were typical of a Roman villa whilst chalk and limestone fragments on the surface were also suggestive of structural remains. The ploughsoil (1001) produced two sherds of late Roman pottery and 21 fragments of Roman tile whilst two 4th century coins were recovered from the spoil heap. Removal of the

0.3m thick ploughsoil exposed a north west/south east orientated chalk built wall (1014) at the south west end of the trench in addition to further probable structural features and an 'internal' layer (RPSC 12). As a consequence of subsequent discussions with the County Archaeologist, it was agreed to extend Trench 10 for a further 19.5m to the south west. This extension was designed to establish whether wall (1014) was an internal division or the external wall and to link the trench with the 'flanking ditch' of 'Enclosure 2' at the northern extent of the ditch on the geophysical survey. A further trench (Trench 10a) was excavated perpendicular to the original trench 7m to the south/east (see RPSC 12). This trench was intended to trace the southern wall of the structure and define its eastern extent. Additionally Trench 10b was excavated perpendicular to Trench 10 from the centre of the postulated structure for 18m to the north/west in an attempt to define the western extent of the structural remains. It should be noted that both magnetometer and resitivity geophysical surveys of this area failed to provide clear information on the extent or form of the structure.

5.40 It was also agreed that excavation of deposits and structural remains within the trench and its extensions would be kept to the minimum level required to establish the nature and scale of the structure thus avoiding unnecessary damage to it at this stage of the investigations. The earliest deposit within the overall trench was a mid brown clayey silt deposit (1042) which capped the natural clayey silt over an area of over 19m by over 5m within Trench 10 and 10a. The deposit was a maximum of 0.08m in depth and is interpreted as an interface layer with the underlying natural. It is probable that the deposit also continued to the west (within Trench 10b) although this was not proven by excavation. A single heavily abraded prehistoric pottery sherd and a fragment of bone were recovered from the layer.

5.41 A linear feature [1036] orientated north west/south east was traced for a length of 8.1m within the southern extension of Trench 10 and cut layer (1042). The feature was excavated within four segments numbered [1036] A-D. Segments A-D demonstrated a U-shaped profile to a maximum depth of 0.36m. The fills of these segments were very similar mid brown clayey silts and were numbered (1038) -(1041) respectively. Feature [1036] is interpreted as a drainage ditch and contained three sherds of Roman pottery from fill (1038) and seven sherds from fill (1039). The dating suggests a late 3rd century or later date. The relationship of the ditch with the Roman structural elements was not physically demonstrable within the trench. It was noted, however that a post demolition layer (1035) associated with the abandonment of the structure, sealed the ditch fill. The southern end of ditch [1036] was allocated as separate number [1037]. It is possible and it was indeed the excavators' view, that this cut represented a separate feature recutting or cut by ditch [1036]. The postulated relationship was not located within the excavated slots, however and this point is currently unresolved.

5.42 The 'Enclosure 2 flanking ditch' was located as expected at the south west end of the trench. The feature was numbered [1026] within Trench 10. The ditch is equivalent to features [915]/[935] the earlier of which was undated whilst the upper fills of the later ditch were of 4th century date. It was not considered necessary to re-excavate the ditch sequence within Trench 10. Fill (1025) produced no finds from surface cleaning.

5.43 Stratigraphically the earliest structural elements in the trench are represented by the construction of chalk wall footings/ foundations (1014) in the central area of Trench 10 and (1008) towards the northern end of the trench and a large structural pit [1034] to the immediate north of wall (1014) (see RPSC 12). Wall (1014) comprised of large irregular chalk blocks and was traced for a length of four metres orientated north west/south east within Trench 10 and 10a in plan. The wall entered the western trench baulk and was traced within Trench 10a to a corner at which point it appears to turn towards the north east. The wall was apparently badly robbed immediately to the north east of this corner. To the south and east of the wall, clean natural was encountered and it is therefore probable that it represents the external wall of the structure. The wall was excavated within a narrow slot along the western edge of Trench 10 and was found to be 0.4m in depth within a 0.6m wide foundation cut [1013] (see RPSC 13). A similar fragment of chalk wall (1008) towards the northern end of Trench 10 was also affected by later robbing activity. However a length of over 0.4m, entering the eastern trench baulk, survived truncation. The wall comprised chalk rubble within a straight sided foundation cut [1007] orientated north west/south east, with a width of c.0.55m. The wall (foundation) was not mortared in common with wall foundation (1014). This segment was not excavated at this stage. Layers on either side of wall (1008) were of significantly different composition (see below) and this change is taken to indicate that the wall comprised the northern extent of the postulated structure with interior deposits to the south and exterior deposits to the north. Drawing RPSC 12 shows a possible interpretation of the chalk walls with a conjectural eastern and partial northern edge of the structure extrapolated from the evaluation evidence.

5.44 A large vertical sided cut [1034] was excavated within a narrow slot immediately to the north of wall (1014). The cut was 2.9m in width within the excavated slot with a flat base at a depth of 0.8m. The base comprised of compacted/ trampled natural clay (1048). Part of this level was burnt indicating presence of a fire or furnace. The surface was overlain by floor (1045). This comprised compacted sandy silt mortar with a depth of 0.04m. The floor butted a limestone built wall which lined the northern side of cut [1034] and a single flat tile or 'pilae' (1046) which rested on the base of cut [1034]. Wall 1033 comprised two surviving courses of limestone bonded with mortar. The stones were very roughly worked into rectangular blocks. A limestone and tile built 'pillar' (1029) was similarly constructed immediately above the base of cut [1034] on its southern side. The structure, which was exposed but not excavated, was 0.65m in width and over 0.3m in length, with a surviving height of 0.37m. The tiles and tabular

possibly to an entirely new construction following the demolition of the previous structure. It should be noted that no other walls or footings on similar alignments were identified and therefore that this wall does not necessarily relate to another structure. Pottery from the fill was dated to the mid-late 3rd century plus.

5.47 Two features further to the north east within the trench appeared to cut directly into layer (1042). Feature [1043] was a 0.04m deep hollow or depression with a width of 0.3m and a length of over 0.3m. This feature was undated. Feature [1011] was probably linear with a probable north west/ south east orientation, in common with the structure. The cut was 0.8m in width by over 1.5m in length with gently sloping sides to a rounded base at a depth of 0.2m. Fill (1012) comprised of dark brown clayey silt with common gravel, mortar and chalk rubble fragments as inclusions. A total of four mid to late 3rd century plus sherds were recovered from the fill. It is possible that the feature was a shallow foundation trench for a wall given the rubble and mortar within the cut. This possible structural element will require further attention by excavation to confirm its function however.

5.48 Features' [1015], [1011] and [1043] were sealed by a c.0.05m thick layer (1005) which extended 12m from the south west end of the structure, above the backfilled hypocaust, to the north east end of the postulated structure up to wall (1008). The deposit also appeared to extend in patches for the length of Trench 10b (see RPSC 14). Layer (1005) comprised grey clayey silt with frequent wall plaster/ mortar fragments. A total of seven sherds of mid 3rd century plus pottery were recovered from the excavated segment in addition to a 4th century coin. The layer may represent the area of the structure's internal floor but contains much evidence of disturbance or trample from the demolition of the structure which is evidenced by the mortar and gravel inclusions. Layer (1005) was cut by features [1017] and [1009] at the north east end of the trench. Feature [1017] was a linear cut orientated north west/south east for over 1.2m and was 0.9m in width. The cut sides were steep to a flat base at a depth 0.7m. Fill (1018) comprised dark brownish grey silty clay with common chalk fragments and plaster particles. Eight sherds of mid 3rd century or later pottery were recovered from the fill. The feature appears to have removed the western extension of chalk wall (1008) in the area within the evaluation trench. The cut was wider than the wall foundation cut and contained significant quantities of rubble which is interpreted as the remnants of the wall which had bee robbed out.

5.49 Feature [1017] is therefore interpreted as a robber trench. Such wall robbing activities may explain the failure of the geophysical surveys to produce a coherent building plan. Feature [1009] was orientated north west/south east for a length of over 1.5m immediately to the south of robber trench [1017] and was 0.65m in width. The cut sides sloped steeply to a rounded base at a depth of 0.56m. The sole fill (1010) comprised silty clay with many pea grit and chalk fragments up to 10cm in diameter. The chalk within the cut was originally thought to

be *in situ* foundation material. However the feature post dates demolition layer (1005) and it is now considered that the feature represents a further wall robber trench. The fills of the probable robber trenches were sealed by the modern ploughsoil. Elsewhere within the extension of Trench 10 and Trench 10b a c.6m wide furrow [1024] of post medieval date truncated the upper levels of the archaeology. Heavy truncation by ridge and furrow and modern agriculture has also contributed to the poor survival of structural remains. Trench 10b was particularly disturbed with patches of mortar of layer (1005) surviving whilst a badly disturbed patch of chalk rubble with mortar (1049) towards the north west end of the trench may have derived from a wall. The failure of the trench to define a western extent for the structure is probably due to such damage, although it is possible that western wall lay beyond the north west end of the trench. No further features were noted within Trench 10 or its extensions.

5.50 **Trench 11** (see RPSC 4) was 15m in length by 1.5m in width and was orientated north west/south east to the immediate west of the Field 21/22 boundary. The trench was positioned to test an area of vague magnetometer anomalies. Removal of the 0.25m thick clayey silt ploughsoil (1101) from which a coin dated AD383-388 was recovered in addition to a sherd of Roman pottery) exposed three shallow cuts into the natural. Of these two were thought to be post medieval north east/south west orientated furrows (cut group [1103]) and contained mid grey clayey silt fills. These produced occasional residual finds including a 3rd/4th century coin and late Roman pottery. A further 0.15m deep and 0.6m wide gully with a length of over 1.5m and orientated north east/ south west was excavated at the north west end of the trench. The undated gully contained grey clayey silt fill reminiscent of the furrow fills and produced no finds. No further archaeological traces were noted within the trench.

5.51 **Trench 12** (see RPSC 4 and 15) was a continuation of the alignment of Trench 11 for 11m on the eastern side of the field boundary. The 0.25m thick clayey silt ploughsoil produced six sherds of Roman pottery in addition to a coin dated AD337-341. Removal of the layer exposed a spread of soil which was excavated within a 0.5m slot on the north east side of the trench. The earliest deposit within the trench comprised a chalk and flint surface (1204) with a width of 6.2 and a length (north east/south west) of over 1.5m. The surface was compacted with a slightly concave profile and included occasional fragments of Roman tile. Such metalling may have been part of a yard area or track, possibly associated with the Roman structure in Trench 10 and enclosure in Trench 9. The surface was sealed by a 0.15m thick deposit of greyish brown clayey silt (1203) which produced 13 sherds of mid 3rd to 4th century pottery and coins of ?AD350-365 and general 4th century dates. The coins suggests a mid to late 4th century date for the deposit. A further coin from the spoil heap was minted in AD 383-388 and was the latest coin found during the evaluation. The build up layer represents the disuse of the surface. A further layer of post medieval furrow fill (1202) sealed layer (1203)

and was in turn truncated by a later phase of furrow represented by cut [1206] filled by fill (1207).

5.52 **Trench 13** (see RPSC 4) was 10m in length by 1.5m in width and was located to the west of the field boundary in the north east corner of Field 22, in order to test a possible linear feature located by the geophysical survey. However following removal of the 0.25m thick ploughsoil no features were found to be cut into the silty clay natural.

5.53 **Trench 14** (see RPSC 4 and 15), 30m long and 1.5m wide and orientated north east/ south west, was situated to the east of the Field 21/22 boundary within Field 21. The trench was positioned in an area with low geophysical background results. However following the machine removal of the 0.21m thick clayey silt ploughsoil (1401) a linear feature [1404], was exposed along most of its length (19.8m). The feature turned eastwards at the south west end of the trench. It was excavated in three segments, which demonstrated that the ditch was flat bottomed at a depth of 0.52m. The dark greyish brown fill (1405) produced 31 sherds of pottery indicating that it was of mid 3rd century plus date with final silting in the 4th century. This probable field ditch or plot division was cut by a post medieval furrow [1406] orientated north east/south west for its entire length. The compacted furrow fill (1402) may have partially obscured the late Roman ditch from detection by the geophysical survey. No further features were noted within the trench.

5.54 **Trench 15** (see RPSC 4, 16 and 17) was originally 30m in length by 1.5m in width, orientated north west west/south east east, but was increased to 45m in order to define the eastern extent of an archaeological deposit. Removal of the 0.3m thick ploughsoil exposed a number of furrows orientated approximately north/south, which were removed by machine to expose the natural silty clay. Ditch [1404] continued into Trench 15 as [1503]/[1505]. Two phases of intercutting ditches were demonstrable here, the earliest [1503] was a truncated 0.8m in width, with a western side which sloped at 45 degrees to rounded base at a depth of 0.25m. Fill (1504) comprised mid grey clayey silt and contained eight sherds of mid 3rd -4th century pottery. Further to the east, within the trench, a compacted chalk surface with a length of 10.6m and a width of over 1.5m was exposed at the base of a wide hollow. It is possible that the apparent compaction of the surface was caused by livestock which may have caused the erosion of the associated 0.29m deep hollow in the first instance. As such the exposed stony level may represent a yard area.

5.55 A number of discrete features were cut into the compacted layer within the excavated sondage (see RPSC 16 and 17). These were found in two clusters. The western cluster comprised cuts [1512], [1514], [1516] and [1524]. Cut [1512] was square with dimensions of 0.22m by 0.2m and with vertical sides to a flat base at a depth of 0.24m. Its dark grey silty clay fill (1513) contained several packing stones which confirm the cuts' use as a post hole. A second sub rectangular feature [1514] with a length of 0.5m and a width of 0.26m was located

immediately adjacent. The cut sides were vertical to a base at c.0.25m. Once again the blackish grey silt fill (1515) contained chalk packing stones indicating use as a post hole. Feature [1516] was oval in form with dimensions of 0.36m by 0.24m. The cut sides were vertical to a depth of 0.3m. Fill (1517) comprised dark blackish grey silty clay with occasional chalk packing stones again demonstrating use as a post hole. Finally in this cluster feature [1524] was over 0.2m in length by 0.18m in width and was 0.02m deep. This hollow may represent a post setting. None of these features produced artefacts.

5.56 The second cluster comprised features [1518], [1520] and [1523] and was situated 4.5m to the east. [1518] was oval in form with a length of 0.38m and a width of 0.26m. The cut sides were vertical to a rounded base at a depth of 0.22m. Packing stones within the blackish grey silty fill (1519) demonstrated use as a post hole. To the immediate east the sub-square feature [1523] with sides of c0.26m was only 0.02m in depth. The hollow may represent a post setting. Partially exposed cut [1520] to the east was 0.28m in length by 0.24m in width and was 0.25m in depth. The vertical sided feature contained several packing stones within the light grey silty clay fill (5121) and these are again indicative of use as a post hole. No finds were recovered from the fills of these features. The post holes within Trench 15 appear to represent structural elements, perhaps within a yard area. One possibility is that these were components of a farm outbuilding or (buildings) such as a barn.

5.57 The overlaying deposits (1511) and (1522) within hollow [1523]/ [1524] comprised dark blackish grey clayey silt and light grey clayey silt respectively. Deposit (1511) was 8.2m in length with a depth of 0.29m and graded to (1522) which was labelled as a further 2.4m and 0.24m deep less organic rich extension of the same general layer as (1511), on its eastern side. Deposit (1511) produced 42 fragments of animal bone, 13 sherds of mid/late 3rd century plus pottery, 12 fragments of Roman tile and several iron nails. This density of finds, whilst not high, at least demonstrates late Roman activity in this area of the site. The low surface finds scatters were correspondingly low. Two post medieval furrows (1507 and 1527) were cut into deposit (1511)/ (1522) and were orientated c.north east/south west. The fills comprised firm light grey clayey silts. A single residual Roman sherd and several tile fragments were recovered fill (1509) of furrow cut [1508]. No further features were identified within the trench.

5.58 Trenches 16-19 were located in the northern field (Field 23) and were positioned in a grid pattern since there were no clear features which could be targeted from the geophysical survey. All four trenches were 30m in length by 30m in width. **Trench 16** (see RPSC 4 and 18) was orientated c. north west/south east. Following removal of 0.28m thick greyish brown clayey silt topsoil (with no finds) and the removal of several post medieval furrow fills several features were exposed cut into the natural clayey sand (with stony patches). A linear feature [1611] was located towards the western end of the trench and was over 1.5m in length

orientated north east/ south west by 0.82m in width. The cut sides sloped at *c.*45 degrees to a rounded bottom at a depth of 0.36m Grey silty clay fill (1607)=(1610) produced two mid 2nd century sherds which give a terminus post quem for the plot or field boundary.

5.59 Ditch [1611] was truncated by an irregular scoop or pit [1605] with dimensions of 0.4m by 0.3m and a depth of 0.06m. Its dark greyish brown clayey silt fill (1606) produced no finds. Feature [1605] was itself truncated by a further feature [1608], which also truncated ditch [1611]. The partially exposed feature was rounded in form with a length of 1.0m and a width of over 0.3m. The sides sloped at *c.*45 degrees to an exposed depth of 0.3m. Fill (1609) comprised pure sand and gravel. It may be that the pit was used to dispose of mortar constituents which were perhaps intended for use in the construction of a nearby building.

5.60 To the east a pit or hollow [1625] was investigated. The feature was 0.25m in depth and 2.6m in length by over 0.7m in width and was oval in form. The clayey silt fill (1626)=(1614) was reddish in colour which is indicative of burning. It is however unclear whether the soil was burnt in situ or was dumped into the feature. The latter is more likely given that the natural around the feature was not burnt. A total of three late Roman sherds were recovered from the fill as dating evidence. Gully [1627] to the east was over 1.6m in length orientated north east/south west, and was 0.3m in width. The cut sides sloped steeply to a flat base at a depth of 0.35m. Fill (1628) comprised a dark greyish brown sandy silt with no finds. The drainage feature [1627] may be associated with agricultural or possibly small scale industrial activity in the area of Trench 16. A further series of features were identified to the east of gully [1627]. An earliest phase consisted of an amorphous feature [1637] with a length of *c.*1.5m and a width of *c.*1m. The cut was filled by (1638) which consisted of mid grey clayey silt and an upper fill (1639) which comprised clayey silt. No finds were recovered from these fills. Two gully features may be associated with feature [1637]. Gully [1633] was over 0.5m in length by 0.4m in width and was 0.3m in depth. Fill dark grey clayey silt fill was very similar to fill (1638) of feature [1637] and may be part of the same silting episode. Gully [1635] was over 0.85m in length, orientated *c.*east/west and was 0.032m in width. The cut sides were steep to rounded base at a depth of 0.35m. No finds were recovered from silting fill (1636). It is possible that gullies [1633] and [1635] were drains or leats connected with pit [1637] which might suggest an industrial use for the feature.

5.61 Feature [1627] was truncated by a shallow scoop [1631] with a diameter of *c.*1.0m and a depth of 0.1m. The fill (1632) was similar to that of pit [1608] to the west and comprised sandy clay/silt with gravel (?mortar) inclusions. Once again it is possible that industrial residues or waste were dumped into the shallow feature, perhaps during cleaning up after a construction programme. Feature [1629] was also cut into feature [1627] and was a vertical sided cut with a depth 0.24m. The feature was over 0.5m by 0.3m in extent and was filled by light brown sandy silt (1630) with no associated finds. Four shallow furrows of the post medieval ridge

and furrow system were the latest features within the trench. The furrows (group no [1623]) were orientated north east/south west and were up to 0.25m in depth. No further features were noted within the trench.

5.62 **Trench 17** (see RPSC 4 and 19) was orientated north west/south east. Removal of the 0.35m thick silty clay ploughsoil (1701) (which produced no finds) exposed the fills of three post medieval furrows. These were removed by machine. A dark brown clayey silt (1705) was noted below furrow fill (1704) at the west end of the trench. The deposit produced two late Roman sherds and might be a remnant of a shallow Roman ditch which had been partially removed by the furrow. Alternatively the furrow here may have been deeper and the Roman pottery residual. Feature [1706] in the central area of the trench was sub oval in form, entering the northern baulk, with a length of 2.0m and a width of over 0.7m. The cut sides of feature [1706] sloped *c.*45 degrees to a rounded base at a depth of 0.4m. Mid grey sandy clay fill (1707) contained tightly packed limestone blocks (up to 30 by 10 by 10cm) sloping into the pit centre. The pit, which produced a fragment of Roman tegula tile and a single 2nd century or later Roman sherd, is interpreted as a receptacle for waste stone from a building project. It is possible as with two of the features within adjacent Trench 16 that that the building project concerned was the small late Roman structure within Trench 10 to the south. The latest features within the trench were three post medieval furrows (group number [1703]) which were orientated north east/south west. No further features were noted within the trench.

5.63 **Trench 18** (see RPSC 4) was orientated north east/south west between adjacent and similarly orientated post medieval furrows. Removal of the 0.3m thick silty clay ploughsoil (1801) (with no finds) exposed clean natural with no disturbance.

5.64 **Trench 19** (see RPSC 4 and 20) was the most easterly of the Field 23 trenches and was orientated north west/south east. Removal of the 0.3m thick ploughsoil (1906) exposed a further series of furrows which were also removed by machine to expose the underlying clay with sandstone natural. Two cut features were noted at the western end of the trench. Feature [1901] *c.*0.28m in diameter with a U-shaped profile to a depth of 0.1m. Blackish grey silt fill (1902) produced two sherds of 2nd century plus Roman pottery. A similar adjacent feature [1903] was 0.4m in length by 0.28m in width and was U-shaped in profile with a depth of 0.12m. Again a blackish grey silt fill (1904) produced two sherds of 2nd century plus pottery. A function for features [1901] and [1903] as post holes is likely. North east/ south west orientated post medieval furrows within Trench 19 (group 1907) and an associated soil spread above the natural sealed the stony natural clay within the trench. A 0.07m thick interface layer was noted between the furrow soil and the natural at the western end of the trench over a *c.*1m by over 1.5m area (see RPSC 20). The brownish green silty clay with common sandstone fragments produced 16 sherds of (?middle) iron age pottery. The deposit

may be interpreted as a relict agricultural soil. No further significant deposits or features were noted within the trench.

# 6 The Finds and Provisional Environmental Assessment

6.1 A full finds summary table is included as Appendix 2. The Roman pottery, tile, mortar, coins and a small collection of late prehistoric pottery, were examined and reported on by Paul Booth of Oxford Archaeological Unit (see Appendix 4). A further small assemblage of neolithic pottery was reported on by Nigel Brown of Essex County Council (Appendix 5). The animal bone was reported on by Emily Murray of Birmingham University (Appendix 7). Other finds, including iron objects, painted wall plaster and worked flint, are provisionally reported on here by Robert Masefield.

## The Worked Flint

6.2 A total of seven worked flint items were recovered from the fieldwalking survey. These include hard hammer flakes of probable late neolithic/ bronze age date, two cores and a soft hammer mesolithic or early neolithic flake. The finds were thinly spread across Fields 21 and 22. A further 16 worked flint items (140gm) from ten contexts were recovered during the evaluation. The earliest material is probably early neolithic in date and includes soft hammer blades from topsoil contexts (201) and (301) and a residual blade fragment from (1020). Pit [405] produced a small assemblage of in situ flints weighing 30gm and comprising a soft hammer flake derived from a blade core, five further soft hammer flakes (three of which were burnt and one of which was invasively retouched) and a hard hammer primary flake (also burnt). A further piece of burnt flint (2gm) was recovered. The nature of the flintwork suggests an earlier neolithic date. The burnt items are of interest and may suggest the deposition of hearth clearance debris within the pit. Single undiagnostic flakes/ shattered flake fragments were recovered residually from contexts (601), (607), (705), (903), (1006) and (1405). Single burnt flints were recovered from contexts (819) (5gm) and (901) (30gm).

## Prehistoric Pottery

6.3 Twenty-one sherds of probable neolithic pottery were recovered from pit context (405) and were commented upon by Nigel Brown. The material is heavily abraded with the surfaces removed on all but three sherds. Many of the sherds are derived from thin walled vessels whilst the temper comprises poorly sorted crushed burnt flint and quartz. Although an earlier neolithic date is likely, given the associated flintwork, no diagnostic forms were found and a bronze age date cannot be discounted.

## Later Prehistoric Pottery

6.4 In addition to 3 LBA/IA sherds from the fieldwalking an assemblage of 70 (374gm) hand made sherds, which may be broadly dated to the ? middle iron age (with a few possible late bronze age sherds), were recovered from 14 contexts. Of these contexts seven also contained later material and the sherds are therefore residual. The low incidence of iron age pottery in five further contexts with no later pottery does not preclude the possibility that these finds are also residual. However, layer (404) in Trench 4 and layer (1405) in Trench 19 produced 23 and 16 sherds respectively and probably reliably date their contexts.

6.5 The iron age assemblage was dominated by sandy fabrics although the 16 sherds from context (1905) were grog and organic tempered. Only five small rims were found with one distinctive rim from a barrel shaped jar characteristic of the middle iron age. Two flint tempered sherds from the trenches may be of late bronze age date although it is possible that these could also be middle iron age (when flint tempered fabrics were present, though rare, in the region).

6.6 The late prehistoric pottery was widely spread in the trenched area, but the relatively low density of the finds may imply that later prehistoric activity in the site area was at a correspondingly low level.

## Roman

6.7 Some 783 (8687gm) sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from 72 contexts. All but eight of these are likely to be Roman contexts based on absence of later material.

6.8 Early Roman period pottery was fond in low density and included flint-tempered and grog? tempered 'Belgic types' (8 sherds). Other clearly early Roman material included Samian ware (11 sherds) including both South Gaulish and Central Gaulish sources. The specialist (see Appendix 4) has noted the general problem of distinguishing early from late body sherds in reduced fabrics. However since the majority of large groups are late Roman, combined with a general lack of early forms within the overall assemblage, it is concluded that early Roman activity at this site was at a relatively low level. Early Roman pottery within pit [704] and ditch [1611] may well date these features whilst less diagnostic small assemblages of reduced ware within the early phases of 'Enclosure 2' and some of the internal features of the enclosure, could possibly date to the early Roman period, although a 3rd century date is perhaps more likely. A small amount of residual early Roman pottery was present within later assemblages.

6.9 The bulk of the assemblage dates to the late Roman period and was probably derived from the Oxford industry. A number of non-local coarse ware suppliers were identified including, Alice Holt greyware (Surrey/Hampshire border), black burnished ware (Dorset) pink grogged ware (Buckinghamshire) and 'Harrold' type shell tempered wares (from the Bedfordshire region). These are common components of regional assemblages. Diagnostic forms were generally late Roman and included jar, bowl and dish forms. Coarse wares represent only 54.5% of the sherd count whilst fine and specialist wares account for 26.8% of the assemblage. The percentage of the late Roman (post AD 240) fine wares is relatively high compared with other sites in the region. This may be due partly to the proximity of the principal sources of the Oxford region (which extended as far south as Dorchester) but may also indicate a relatively higher status for this site. The finding is consistent with the identification of a villa type structure at the site.

6.10 The settlement areas of the evaluation site appear to be highlighted by concentrations of Roman pottery in the southern area within trenches 6, 8, 9 and 10.

6.11 The majority of the coarsewares were probably Oxfordshire products. There were few diagnostic forms but the fabrics are consistent with a late Roman date.

6.12 Extra regional imports include BB1, Telford Overway Ware, Coarse/Pink Grogged Ware (large jars), Nene Valley Ware and possible New Forest Ware. These too are characteristic of a late third/4$^{th}$ century date.

## Painted Wall Plaster

6.13 Five pieces of painted wall plaster weighing 480gm in total were recovered from context (1028). The paint on each was applied to a pinkish plaster base with small gravel inclusions. Two fragments are paint washed orangish-yellow, one with a later splash of Pompei red, perhaps from a painted image. A further two fragments are Pompei red, one more lustrous than the other, whilst the other fragment is washed cream or off white. These fragments from the backfill of the below-floor chamber [1034], suggest that the structure above (which was dumped into the chamber following destruction) possessed walls with at least three colours. From the plaster still attached to the wall box flue tiles, it is apparent that at least parts of the heated walls were painted.

## The Tile

6.14 The tile was reported on by P. Booth (see Appendix 4). A total of 318 fragments of brick and tile (24.377KG) of Roman date were recovered during the trenching. The fabrics of these were almost exclusively sand tempered. Roofing material (tegula tile) was spread fairly widely within the features of the site, however, types associated with under floor heated rooms

(hypocausts) comprising box flue and specific brick types (e.g. pilae and bipedalis types) were associated with only Trenches 9 and 10, with the majority in Trench 10. Indeed Trench 10 produced the majority of the site's tile (56% by count and 74% by weight). Box flue tiles were usually identified by the presence of combing, with simple patterns represented. Red paint was noted on one fragment whose distinctive pink grog tempered fabric was derived from a source in Buckinghamshire. The piece is likely to date to the 4th century. Where tile was found on the site the associated pottery was found to be of late Roman date.

## The Coins

6.15 A total of 25 coins were recovered during the trenching programme (see Appendix 4). These can be added to the six coins recovered during the field walking/metal detecting survey. All but one of the coins from the trenching were recovered with the use of a metal detector.

6.16 The coins were all low denomination bronzes of late 3rd and 4th century date. The coins are variable in condition and many are illegible prior to specialist cleaning (this does not obscure their general late Roman date however). Legible coins include an Ae3 of Constantine 1 issued AD306 - 337 from the field walking. An unusual Ae4 Votis issue of Arcadius is dated to AD383 - 7 and although the mint mark is illegible the source would be Rome or Aquileia. Mints at Trier and Arles are also expected from this assemblage. The issue dates for the coin assemblage are entirely compatible with the majority of Roman pottery for the site. The earliest issues are of Tetricus I and II dated AD270 - 273 whilst there are the usual peaks discernible (even in this small assemblage) in the periods AD330 - 348 and AD364 - 378. Booth (Appendix 4) notes that an absence of coins in the AD388 - 402 period is not necessarily significant given the low number of identifiable coins.

## Non Coin Copper Alloy Objects

6.17 Non coin copper alloy objects were rare comprising a modern rivet, a rectangular framed small clothing buckle from Trench 10's spoil and a copper strip from the ploughsoil of Trench 15. The belt buckle is typical of the medieval period and is 18mm in length by16mm in width with a frame thickness of 1.2mm. The remains of a very corroded iron catch pin are present on the central bar. The copper strip is 43mm in length by 10mm in width and is 1mm thick.

## Lead

6.18 A total of 9 pieces of lead drips (251gm) were recovered from eight contexts. These comprise a piece from the spoil heap of Trench 5 (38gm), pieces from (801) (5gm) and (816) (21gm), three pieces from the Trench 9 spoil heap (50gm total), pieces from (903) (4gm) and (942) (100gm), a piece from the Trench 10 spoil heap (2gm) and a piece from context (1201)

(36gm). It is likely that most or all of the lead is Roman in date, perhaps derived from the Roman structure.

## Iron Objects

6.19 A total of 67 iron objects were collected from 22 contexts. The majority of these are from Trenches 6 (21 items) and 9 (27). A total of 56 nails were recovered. Of these 9 are hob nails from contexts (508) (1), (607) (5), (911) (2) and (1511) (1) all of which are Roman contexts. Of the 47 larger nails/ nail fragments all are likely to be of Roman date and are round headed with square shafts. These comprised context (601) (1), (604) (1), (607) (13), (811) (1), Tr. 9 spoil (1), (903) (4), (911) (5), (913) (1), (918) (2), (931) (4), Tr. 10 spoil (1), (1005) (1), (1010) (1), (1016) (1), (1040) (1), (1405) (4), (1511) (3) and (1717) (1).

6.20 A large loop from context (504) was found associated with post medieval bottle glass and is thought to be an agricultural fitting. Other items include unidentifiable corroded lumps from contexts (903), (911) (2) and (1511). A cast iron bar fragment from (939) (weighing 80gm) is 72mm in length, 30mm in width and 7mm thick. Small fragments of iron strips were recovered from contexts (607) and (918). A 22mm length and 13mm width strip from (903) is bent upwards at either end to form a fitting of some kind. The most interesting assemblage of iron items was recovered from the upper fill (911) of late Roman ditch [912]. A L-shaped rod has a (130mm) long axis with a square (6mm by 7mm) profile. The short axis is flattened (36mm by 10mm by 2mm). The piece might be a large, simple key. A nearby *c.*35mm diameter loop may have originally been attached as a handle. Alternatively this piece may have been a simple door latch. Another 59mm by 6mm by 4mm item is looped at both ends and may have been used as a fitting. A fragment of a socket fitting 24mm by 12mm in dimensions and 1mm thick was also recovered from the context. Two originally connected iron strips were also recovered and are a total of 120mm by 26mm by 1.3mm.. Both strips are pierced by *c.*5mm diameter holes through which the strip was formerly attached to a (probably wooden) backing. The strip was perhaps part of a door bracket or hinge.

## The Bone

6.21 The animal bone was reported on by Emily Murray (see Appendix 6). Bone material was well preserved within the Roman (c.2$^{nd}$-4$^{th}$ century) assemblage, whilst probable iron age deposits (950) and (951) also produced animal bone, including 'countable' elements of cattle, pit and sheep/goat.

6.22 A total of 37 'countable' bone elements (as per the system devised by Davis (Davis 1992: Albarella and Davis 1994) were identified from the overall Roman bone assemblage. The species present comprised cattle, horse, pit sheep/goat, red deer and plover. The plover was

represented by a humerus from (1010) and a proximal humerus from (1028), both within the 'villa' trench. It is reasonable to suppose that plover was on the menu at the residence. Hare and red deer were also represented and may represent species which were hunted from the site.

6.23 The major domesticates are all present, with cattle the most commonly found, although the assemblage is too small to enable a detailed overview of the pastoral economy, it appears that cattle were an important component. The presence of a neonatal caprine metapodial suggests sheep were being bred on or close to the site according to Murray,

## Environmental Analysis (see Appendix 7)

6.24 Soil samples were taken from deposits with visibly good potential and included c.3 litre samples from ditch fill (606), pit fills (705) and (811) and spreads (607) and (816). The sample size was intended to provide sufficient information to establish the potential for more detailed analysis during subsequent stages of fieldwork, and is not intended to provide exhaustive evidence at this early stage. The principal aim was to establish the survival and suitability for study of plant macrofossils and pollen at this site. The samples were analysed by Dr. Rob Scaife. His report (Appendix 7) is summarised below.

6.25 Pollen is present in all of the samples but varies in terms of state of preservation and pollen numbers were small. Herbs and fern spores are most prevalent with occasional trees and shrub pollen including oak, elm, alder and hazel. Typically thin walled pollen species do not survive whilst robust taxa including dandelion types, daisy family and bracken survive better.

6.26 However, it can be stated that there was a local dominance of herbs with few trees, suggestive of an open, possibly grassland, environment. Cereal pollen with associated weeds were also found however, which may derive from local cultivation (or possibly from crop processing (domestic waste).

6.27 Spread (816), which may be equivalent to layer (903) (inside 'Enclosure 2') is particularly rich in pollen in addition to a high incidence of domestic rubbish. The environmental specialist stated that it is likely that this was a developed soil or possibly a dumped and stabilised soil above earlier silts within archaeological features. The soil also gave the appearance of being worm sorted, contrasting with feature fills where the soils were less structured and more sedimentary character.

6.28 Flots and residues were sorted for plant remains and all five samples contained small amounts of wood charcoal and cereal remains. Both cereal grain and chaff remains were recovered including grain of *Triticum spelta* type (emmer and spelt wheat) and with glume bases indicate the presence of this crop (Pit 809). A glume of ?emmer wheat was also present. These bread wheat types are common on Roman British sites (R. Scaife Appendix

7). Spelt glumes are also present in pit fill (705). The presence of chaff remains has aided identification and shows that processing occurred at this site.

6.29 It is possible given the very low number of weed seeds (indicative of broken ground) that cereals were not grown locally to the site with the grains having been cleaned prior to processing at the settlement. No deliberate dumps of waste material, indicative of such processing were found however.

6.30 Should further work on the site be conducted it is recommended that monoliths should be taken through soil profiles (e.g. layer (607)) and basal? organic rich waterlogged ditch/pit deposits. Layers should be examined on site by a pedologist. In addition the above results demonstrate that a strategy of bulk sampling (*c.*40 litre samples) of promising fills should be undertaken in the event of full excavation.

# 7 Discussion and Conclusions

7.1 The project brief states that ' The evaluation should aim to gather sufficient information to establish the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains within those areas affected.' The effectiveness of the adopted methodology to address these questions is reviewed below. According to Planning Policy Guidance 16 (PPG16) 'Evaluations of this kind help to define the character and extent of a proposed development, and thus indicate the weight which ought to be attached to their preservation. They also provide information useful for identifying potential options for minimising or avoiding damage. On this basis, an informed and reasonable planning decision can be taken.' The quality of the techniques used to facilitate these decisions by the County Archaeologist is also reviewed.

7.2 Walkover survey as the initial stage was a particularly useful tool for establishing the presence of a Roman finds scatter within the evaluation area. This was noted on the boundary of Fields 21/22 with a trail off of artefacts in the southern and eastern area of Field 21 and the southern and western area of Field 22. The site of the Roman structure at this site was also initially noted during the walkover survey as a discrete tile and rubble scatter on the west side of the Field 21/22 boundary. The wider walkover survey of Fields 21 and 22 located no further densities of Roman tile which might allude to further structures. The technique therefore partially informed both the presence of a Roman structure, whilst the absence of finds from the wider area was a useful indication.

7.3 Fieldwalking consolidated the initial observations with the plotting and dating of a clearly defined concentration of late Roman pottery 60 metres on either side of the Field 21/22 boundary. The density of the scatter trailed off to the north, although it was not possible to fieldwalk Field 23 to demonstrate this over the entire evaluation area. The low density of prehistoric flintwork and pottery from fieldwalking was shown to be a fair indication of the generally low density of prehistoric features and deposits within the subsequent evaluation trenches. The presence, date and extent of the main phase of Roman settlement activity was particularly well defined by the fieldwalking.

7.4 Magnetic Susceptibility Survey was similarly able to define a clear distribution of human activity with higher readings for c.60 metres on either side of the Field 21/22 boundary. The highest readings were significantly associated with this area and were a reliable indication of the presence of subsequently identified archaeological features. The band of relatively higher readings continued into Field 23 but here were shown by subsequent magnetometer survey and trial trenching to be representative of significantly lower levels of archaeological activity.

Areas of low readings were proven to be blank or virtually so by subsequent trenching. Magnetic susceptibility survey therefore proved to be a reliable indicator of the presence/absence of archaeological features at the site.

7.5 Magnetometer Survey successfully identified a series of linear, curvilinear and discrete features within the southern area of the site and again in areas adjacent to the Field 21/22 boundary. In this area of the site the potential of the high magnetic susceptibility readings were confirmed by the presence of archaeological features. The survey was able to detect the extent of 'Enclosure2' and part of another enclosure or curvilinear ditch termed 'Enclosure 1'. In addition the area of potential structural remains highlighted by the above techniques produced evidence for the existence of buried structural remains. However, no recognisable building plan was apparent. For this reason resistivity survey was also conducted but produced near identical results. This was undoubtedly due in part to the poor preservation of the structure but it is clear also that the compacted fills of post medieval furrows at this site also affected the results where furrows overlaid archaeological features. This occurrence was particularly notable in Trench 14 where a late Roman ditch (identified by trenching) was obscured from clear identification on the magnetometer plot outs due to the masking effect of a furrow on the same alignment.

7.6 It is fair to say that the variable stone content within the geology and the existence of masking furrows did not assist the identification of all of the shallower features and soil spreads. This was evident in Field 23 where no major features were identified via the magnetometer survey but a small number of shallow pits, gullies and ditches were subsequently found by the trenching. The presence of this low density of features was probably responsible for the slightly higher magnetic susceptibility readings in this area of the site. Despite the variable success in picking up all of the site's features, a high success rate can be attributed to the magnetometer survey in its effectiveness in drawing attention to the most significant features of the site.

7.7 Trial trenching was able to confirm that blank areas from the preceding surveys were indeed devoid or relatively devoid of archaeological features or deposits. Combined with the positive results from trenches in the central area of the site the technique was successful in defining the extent of the significant archaeology. The technique was also successful in terms of defining the condition, character and quality of the archaeological resource. The main area of Roman occupation was clearly defined as lying within a ditched enclosure 'Enclosure 2', a nearby Roman masonry structure and in areas of further activity in the vicinity. This occupation concentration was well defined by the associated high densities of finds. In Field 23, to the north, features, although present, were fewer, with less finds and are consequently believed to be peripheral to settlement. The dating of the majority of these features to the middle to late Roman period was also achieved by the trial trenching. Furthermore it was

possible to define the quality of the preservation of features at the site. This was particularly relevant for the Roman structure whose remains were found to be fragmentary with evidence for wall robbing (which may, in part, explain why it was not possible to obtain a plan of the structure from the geophysics).

7.8 Overall a high confidence rating is given for the results. As such the information is considered to provide the basis for an adequate level of technical information in order to facilitate reasonable planning decisions with respect to the impact and effect of the proposed development on the archaeological resource. An appropriate level of mitigation can then be implemented.

7.9 The following conclusions can be drawn from the evaluation results. Mesolithic/neolithic activity at the site is represented by a very thin scatter of flintwork from the fieldwalking of Fields 21 and 22 and from the spoil heaps of Trenches 2 and 3 in the form of flint blades. Although fieldwalking was not possible in Field 23 no flint items were recovered from the spoil heaps of the trenches within the field which may indicate a similar low density of flintwork in the relevant area of the field. A single probable early neolithic (c.4,300-3,000BC) pit within Trench 4, at the eastern edge of Area B, may demonstrate temporary settlement/exploitation of the area at this time. The light soils combined with the geographical location between the natural resources of the River Thames to the north and of the Berkshire Downs hills to the south were undoubtedly attractive to the early farmers as well as hunting bands.

7.10 The vast majority of early neolithic activity/ settlement sites in England are characterised by concentrations of flintwork in the ploughsoil, and when excavated these are often associated with pits. The pit at Didcot is entirely consistent with the majority of published early neolithic pits. They are often small, shallow, bowl shaped in profile, have few or single homogenous fills, often contain burnt material such as charcoal and burnt flint, and generally exhibit relatively fresh sides with little evidence of weathering or subsidence (Thomas 1991). Thomas (1991) suggested a specialised use for neolithic pits as they were apparently backfilled soon after their excavation (evidenced by the lack of weathering and homogenous fills) and that they often contain axes, arrowheads or pots, not consistent with household waste. In addition a number of 'representative' sherds of a range of vessels are often found (as in this case) which may represent selected deposition of pottery from larger collections elsewhere. Whittle (1996 p234) conjectures that some of the pits were 'deliberately dug to receive depositions of material to mark the comings and goings of settlements' whilst Thomas (1991) has suggested that the digging of pits and their subsequent filling was a symbolic act of establishing domesticity in the landscape.

7.11 The neolithic use of the landscape in the Didcot area is presently unknown although pollen evidence suggests that neolithic occupation clearances of woodland were relatively short lived. A model adopted by Whittle (1996) proposes that populations moved around within

wooded landscapes practising an economy based on herding and hunting and gathering, with only small scale cultivation of crops. Indeed the evidence for permanent settlements with well defined field systems does not appear until the middle bronze age (Thomas 1991) when there is good evidence for grain storage pits. These factors indicate that economic intensification with large scale clearance of forest and larger scale cereal production did not occur until about 1500-1800BC. Large scale neolithic communal works in the area include a causewayed enclosure at Abingdon on second terrace gravels and a henge monument at Dorchester. Burial evidence in the region includes a characteristic long mortuary enclosure at Dorchester. Middle neolithic linear cursus monuments include examples at Dorchester, Drayton and Benson (Case, in Briggs, Cook and Rowley (eds), 1986 p26-27). The construction of these monuments in the area indicate that the local population was sufficient to undertake the construction of such large scale communal undertakings.

7.12 Bronze age activity at the present evaluation site was restricted to a few probably late bronze age flint tempered sherds from fieldwalking and one or two late bronze age (or possibly iron age) sherds found residually within later archaeological contexts (for example in pit [930] in Trench 9). Traces of early bronze age activities are rare other than as surface concentrations of flintwork or barrow sites and neither of these have been found during the present evaluation. Middle bronze age field systems have been previously identified in the Didcot area in addition to Dorchester-on-Thames and Abingdon (Yates 1999, p158) and demonstrate the establishment of organised and relatively stable settlement and agricultural exploitation of the Thames Valley in the region by this time. By the late bronze age, territorial groupings appear to have emerged in the Thames Valley and are associated with a realignment of field systems and a clustering of settlements around new high status settlements (Yates 1999 157-170). At Wallingford a high status bronze age site is eroding into the river Thames (Bradley in Briggs, Cook and Rowley (eds) 1986) and this is now seen as the central site of 'the Wallingford Group'. This settlement group includes Didcot where late bronze age settlement and field system evidence have been found previously (Ruben and Ford 1992). However although late bronze age activity is expected on the Greensand area of Didcot presently under evaluation (based on low densities of residual pottery) at present there is no evidence that the field-systems and settlements themselves extended into this area from the gravels. It is possible that seasonal herding was practised and that stock were moved from riverside lowland pastures in the summer to high ground pastures in the Downs in winter.

7.13 It has become increasingly apparent that following the late bronze age there was a degree of social and economic dislocation in the Thames Valley and the settlements and fields were abandoned (Yates 1999). Iron age hillforts (such as the examples at Dykes Hill, Dorchester, Segesbury, south of Wantage and Uffington Castle) are the dominant form of high status settlement with farmstead sites the common unit of settlement in the region. Middle iron age

evidence is prolific in Oxfordshire (Miles in Briggs, Cook and Rowley (eds) 1984). At All Saints Church, Didcot, a field boundary containing early iron age pottery was excavated. Three phases of enclosure ditch were discovered along with settlement evidence comprising domestic debris and post holes. The evidence from the present evaluation hints at activity here also. Possible middle iron age pottery was recovered from probably contemporary soil horizons capping the natural in both Trenches 4 and 19. A ditch in Trench 5 produced several probable middle iron age sherds which may date the feature, whilst pit [930] within Trench 9 appears to be of (?middle) iron age date. Ditch [805] in Trench 8 also produced two sherds of (middle) iron age pottery which may possibly date this feature. The density of the iron age evidence is low and is not considered likely to represent a significant level of occupation within the present evaluation area. However is possible that the area was farmed in the iron age from a nearby settlement.

7.14 Early Roman activity is also relatively scarce. second century central Gaulish Samian ware was recovered from a pit in Trench 7 and a ditch in Trench 16, suggesting limited activity at the site in the 2nd century. The gold coin hoard was deposited around AD160 and appears to have been associated with this sporadic activity, most plausibly within the field of an associated settlement. The early Roman Settlement at Zulu Farm c.500m to the south west may well be the settlement concerned. Hoards are more commonly deposited away from settlements, rather than within them and this appears to be the case with this particular hoard.

7.15 Two probable ditched enclosures were identified by geophysical survey and trial trenching at the southern end of the site (tested by Trenches 5, 6, 8 and 9). An analysis of the pottery from the ditch phases indicates that the pottery assemblages of earlier phases generally consist of 2nd century or later greywares and lack both Samian ware of the 2nd century and late 3rd century and later colour coat wares. The absence of these finewares may suggest that these non-diagnostic greywares are early-mid 3rd century in date although the assemblages are too small to be sure at this stage. The ditch of 'Enclosure 1' may not have continued in use into the 4th century. Within 'Enclosure 2' the majority of settlement evidence appears to date to the late 3rd and 4th century, with a series of internal pits dated to the period and a large assemblage of 4th century pottery with contemporary coins from an occupation layer inside the enclosure. The coin evidence from Trench 9 spans the period AD270-273 to AD364-378. The coin issue types are typical of sites occupied in the late Roman period. An absence of very late Roman coins is not necessarily significant given the small size of the legible coin assemblage. The economy of the site appears to be agricultural with a pastoral element suggested by the bones of cattle, pigs and sheep/goat.

7.16 A metalled surface within Trench 12, a north-south orientated ditch within Trenches 14 and 15 and a soil spread above post holes within a possible yard area in Trench 15, are apparently late Roman in date. Indeed the vast majority of the 853 Roman pottery sherds recovered from the trenching are late Roman in date. This fits well with the findings of the fieldwalking. The fieldwalking scatter was limited to the 60m on either side of Field 21/22 boundary and this indeed accords well with the location of the late Roman features at the site. Fieldwalking, geophysical survey (less successfully), and trial trenching (Trench 10) have revealed the existence of a relatively small Roman structure, possibly in the form of a villa or aisled building. The structure is 13m wide north east/south west but the north west/south east dimensions have been difficult to determine (due to later extensive agricultural damage and wall robbing) without significant intrusive excavation which is inappropriate at this stage. Possible evidence of disturbed walling within the western arm of the trench (Trench 10b) however suggests that the structure was north west/south east orientated in its long axis. If so, a length of up to 30m would not be inappropriate in comparison with numerous other examples of small villa and aisled buildings of similar width (Johnston 1979).

7.17 The evaluation has established that the structure included a small area of underfloor heating of true Roman character, including a pillared floor, vented and painted walls and partial use of Roman tile for roofing (probably only associated with the hypocaust area). There may have been a bath house element, although this has not been established by the limited evaluation excavation. As stated above the concentration of Roman tile as surface finds and indeed in the hypocaust area of Trench 10 implies that only the roof in the area of the hypocaust was constructed using tile. There is no concentration of stone within the field beyond the area of the hypocaust. It is therefore probable that the structure was largely timber framed with dwarf walls of stone and a mainly thatched roof. Dating evidence from the internal layers and demolition deposits suggest a mid to late 3rd century plus date for the construction and use of the structure. No earlier finds suggest the possibility of an earlier foundation whilst the five Roman coins from Trench 10 all date to the 4th century (with one closely dated coin of AD337-341 issue). Unfortunately no coins were found within foundation cuts and more precise dating of the initial use of the structure would require further detailed excavation.

7.18 On the basis of the evidence it is probable that this was a minor villa, of probable 'cottage' type, which is defined as a simple suite of rooms which may be divided by passageways. The closely spaced wall robber trenches/ foundations of the north east end of Trench 10 may represent such a passageway (or phases of passageway).

7.19 Such villas were usually the central residence of a farm or estate and as such were set within farmyards with the full range of barns, wells and agricultural facilities. In most cases the use of Roman styles of architecture was an expression of the Romanisation of the indigenous landlords. In this case it may be possible that a relatively low status farmstead, evidenced by

enclosures was 'upgraded' with the addition of a villa residence. Cottage villas were the simplest and least elaborate (and cheapest) forms and need not imply any great wealth. A low to mid-status site with associated yards, tracks and outbuildings is probably represented. It is probable, given the juxtaposition of the structure to the enclosure just to the south (Enclosure 2) that the two elements were contemporary and socially and economically linked. The nature of this relationship is of interest.

7.20 Small 'cottage' type villas are not uncommon in the region (Paul Smith pers. comm.). Examples include Barton Court Farm, Little Milton and Sutton Courtenay. The Little Milton example is a corridor villa, *c.*25m in length which has been identified by aerial photographs (Scott 1993). The example at Penn Copse, Sutton Courtenay, comprises a series of cropmarks of rectangular enclosures and straight lines which were noted from aerial photographs. Limited excavation in 1962/3 revealed stone structures and evidence of 1st to 4th century occupation (Benson and Miles 1974).

7.21 The Roman structure at Didcot was superseded by a later foundation, possibly a realignment of the structure. The apparent robbing out of the northern walls may have occurred in the latest Roman period or later. No clear evidence for a sub-Roman or early Saxon phase was found during the course of the evaluation. Such early Saxon activity is increasingly found on late Roman villa sites, and has however, been variously interpreted as newcomers 'squatting' on the decaying farms or as evidence of a direct transfer of estate ownership from Romano-British to Saxon control. The only evidence for Saxon activity at this site has come in the form of a bow brooch which was recovered by a metal-detectist (Mr Darley) prior to professional investigation of the site. Such a high status find may suggest the presence of contemporary burials or settlement but may equally be a casual loss. The nature of the post Roman landscape use in the area may be brought into shaper focus with further excavation.

7.22 Later activity at the site is limited to agricultural use with the very low occurrence of Medieval pottery from the fieldwalking attributable to manuring activity. The medieval, or more probably post medieval, furrows which were encountered in almost every trench, conform to the evidence for these strip fields and furlongs recorded on aerial photographs in the 1940's when the ridges were still extant. A track, which apparently cut through the ridge and furrow within Field 21 on the aerial photographs, was investigated in Trench 5 and was found to comprise a pair of ditches, one of which contained post medieval bottle glass.

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# Appendices

# Appendix 1

## Context Summary Table

## Appendix 1: Context Summary Table

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 101 | 1 | Layer | >70 | >1.5 | c.0.3 | Light greyish brown clayey silt ploughsoil |
| 102 | 1 | Layer | >70 | >1.5 | - | Mid yellowish brown clayey sand (with sandstone inclusions) Natural. |
| 103 | 1 | Feature group | 1.5 (max) | c.0.1 | c.0.05 | East/ west orientated, probably modern, ploughmarks. |
| 104 | 1 | Feature Group | 1.4 | 0.1 | 0.05 | NW/SE aligned, probably modern, plough marks. |
| 201 | 2 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | c.0.3 | Brown clayey silt ploughsoil. |
| 202 | 2 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | - | Sandy yellow clayey silt (with stony patches) natural. |
| 203 | 2 | Feature Group | 1.5 | c.0.1 | c.0.1 | Ploughmarks orientated c.N/S |
| 301 | 3 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | c.0.3 | Brown clayey silt ploughsoil |
| 302 | 3 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | - | Sandy yellow clayey silty sand natural with occ. stony patches. |
| 303 | 3 | Fill Group | >1.7 | 0.1 | c.0.1 | Silty fill of ploughmarks [304]. |
| 304 | 3 | Cut Group | >1.7 | 0.1 | c.0.1 | Ploughmarks within Trench 3. |
| 401 | 4 | Layer | >70 | >1.5 | c.0.2 | Light greyish brown clayey silt ploughsoil. |
| 402 | 4 | Layer | >70 | >1.5 | - | Yellowish brown firm clay with sandstone inclusions. Natural/interface. |
| 403 | 4 | Hollow | 2 | >1.5 | c.0.08 | Natural irregular hollow or depression |
| 404 | 4 | Fill/ layer | 2 | >1.5 | c.0.08 | Mid grey silty clay deposit within a shallow depression. Contained 21 sherds of middle iron age pottery. |
| 405 | 4 | Cut | 0.55 | 0.36 | 0.26 | Oval feature with a steep vertical northern side and a gently sloping southern side. Contained neolithic finds and demonstrates neolithic activity in the landscape. |
| 406 | 4 | Fill | 0.55 | 0.36 | 0.26 | Firm mid grey clayey silt with charcoal flecks and occ. sandstone (<3cm) inclusions. Produced 18 probable neolithic sherds and several flint flakes. The nature of the fill suggests that the feature was rapidly filled. |
| 501 | 5 | Layer | >30 | 1.5 | 0.35 | Greyish brown silty clay ploughsoil. |
| 502 | 5 | Layer | >14.5 | 1.5 | 0.08 | Light brown compact silt subsoil – probably over-spill from post medieval furrows. |
| 503 | 5 | Cut | >1.5 | 0.8 | 0.25 | U-shaped ditch orientated NW/SE. Probable post medieval trackway ditch (also forming a field division). The silted up ditch is visible on mid 20th century aerial photographs seemingly post dating the then still extant ridge and furrow. |
| 504 | 5 | Fill | >1.5 | 0.8 | 0.25 | Mid brown sandy silt fill of ditch [503]. |
| 505 | 5 | Cut | 2.4 | >1.5 | 0.4 | Ditch feature with a wide V-shaped profile contained iron age (in low density) and a Roman sherd which probably dates it. May recut an earlier ditch represented by deposits (511) and (514). |
| 506 | 5 | Fill | 2.4 | >1.5 | 0.4 | Compacted yellowish brown silty main fill of ditch [505]. Contained 4 (?middle) iron age sherds. |
| 507 | 5 | Cut | 2.0 | >1.5 | 0.24 | Wide shallow ditch re-cutting ditch [505]. Fill (508) contained two sherds of 2nd-3rd century Roman sherds. |

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 508 | 5 | Fill | 2.0 | >1.5 | 0.24 | Light brown silty clay fill of ditch [507] contained six middle iron age sherds. |
| 509 | 5 | Fill | 0.3 | | 0.1 | Basal fill of ditch [505]. Contained a ?middle iron age sherd. |
| 510 | 5 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | - | Light yellowish brown clayey silt with stone inclusions. Natural. |
| 511 | 5 | ?Fill/ layer | 5.0 | >0.5 | 0.3 | Natural clay or its slight discolouration might indicate that it fills feature ([512]). |
| 512 | 5 | ?Cut | 5.0 | >1.5 | 0.3 | Possible heavily truncated undated feature or natural ? |
| 513 | 5 | Layer | 2.0 | >1.5 | 0.05 | Number allocated for probably natural sandstone rubble spread between cuts [503] and [507]. Might alternatively be a remnant of the post medieval trackway. |
| 514 | 5 | Layer/ Fill? | 0.6 | >0.5 | 0.18 | Possible feature fill or natural deposit. |
| 601 | 6 | Layer | >20 | >1.5 | 0.36 | Brownish grey clayey silt ploughsoil. Contained 14 Roman sherds. |
| 602 | 6 | Layer | >20 | >1.5 | - | Yellowish clay natural within Trench 6. |
| 603 | 6 | Cut | >1.5 | 1.4 | 0.6 | Linear feature orientated NE/SW with stepped side to a flat base. Dated mid 3rd century plus. |
| 604 | 6 | Fill | >1.5 | 1.4 | 0.6 | Light greyish brown firm clayey silt fill of [603]. Produced 18 sherds of mid-late 3rd century plus Roman pottery. Sealed by layer (607). |
| 605 | 6 | Cut | >1.5 | c.1.2 | 0.44 | Linear feature orientated NE/SW. Steep sided to a flat base. Recuts ditch [603] – contained late 3rd/4th century finds. |
| 606 | 6 | Fill | >1.5 | c.1.2 | 0.44 | Mid greyish brown firm clayey silt with charcoal flecks, entire fill of [605]. |
| 607 | 6 | Layer | >1.5 | 3.9 | 0.34 | Dark grey clayey silt (with charcoal flecking) layer sealing slumped fills of ditches [603], [605] and [609]. Produced 43 sherds dated to the mid-late 3rd/4th century AD. |
| 608 | 6 | Fill | >1.5 | 1.14 | 0.5 | Mottled greyish brown silty clay fill of ditch [609]. |
| 609 | 6 | Cut | >1.5 | 1.14 | 0.5 | Ditch, probably orientated NE/SW. Recut by Roman ditch [603], but undated. |
| 701 | 7 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | 0.3 | Dark greyish brown silt ploughsoil. |
| 702 | 7 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | - | Pale yellow silty clay with sandstone fragments natural. |
| 703 | 7 | Fill | >30 | >1.5 | 0.4 | Light brownish grey silt fill of furrow [707]. |
| 704 | 7 | Cut | 1.2 | 1.3 | 0.39 | Oval pit entering the eastern baulk with a U-shaped profile. Contained ?2nd century pottery. |
| 705 | 7 | Fill | 1.2 | 1.3 | 0.32 | Mid-dark grey clayey silt fill of [705] contained 2nd century pottery. |
| 706 | 7 | Fill | 1.2 | 1.3 | 0.07 | Mottled mid grey silty clay with sandstone inclusions. Primary fill of pit [705] |
| 707 | 7 | Cut | >30 | >1.5 | 0.4 | Post medieval furrow running along the length of the trench approximately N/S. |
| 801 | 8 | Layer | >22 | >1.5 | 0.4 | Mid brown silty ploughsoil. Produced 19 sherds of Roman pottery and 2 sherds of prehistoric pottery. |
| 802 | 8 | Layer | >22 | >1.5 | - | Clay/ Greensand natural. |
| 803 | 8 | Cut | >3 | >2 | 0.4 | Furrow feature orientated NW/SE. Post medieval. Contained peg tile fragment. |
| 804 | 8 | Fill | >3 | >2 | 0.4 | Mid greyish brown firm clayey silt furrow fill. |

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 805 | 8 | Cut | >1.5 | 2.5 | 0.65 | Ditch with a V-shaped profile orientated NE/SW. Dated to the 3rd century plus. Ditch of a possible track which flanks an enclosure to the immediate west (as seen on geophysical survey). |
| 806 | 8 | Fill | >1.5 | >2.5 | 0.2 | Upper greyish brown clayey silt fill of ditch [805]. Contained three 2nd century plus Roman sherds. |
| 807 | 8 | Fill | >1.5 | >2.5 | 0.3 | Mid grey clayey silt secondary fill of [805]. |
| 808 | 8 | Fill | >0.4 | 1.7 | 0.15 | Sandy grey clayey silt primary fill of [805]. |
| 809 | 8 | Cut | 1.57 | >1.55 | 0.5 | ?Rectangular pit with vertical sides and a flat base. Post/ stake hole [822] was cut into its base possibly as a structural component. Contained 4th century pottery |
| 810 | 8 | Fill | 1.57 | >1.55 | 0.26 | Secondary dark grey clayey silt fill of [809]. |
| 811 | 8 | Fill | >0.4. | 1.57 | 0.24 | Primary dark grey clayey silt fill of [809]. |
| 812 | 8 | Cut | >1.5 | >1.0 | 0.68 | U-shaped ditch orientated NE/SW. Recut on its west side by ditch [821]. Contained Roman pottery of 2nd century or later date. |
| 813 | 8 | Fill | >0.4 | >0.6 | 0.4 | Dark grey clayey silt upper fill of ditch [812]. |
| 814 | 8 | Fill | >0.4 | >0.6 | 0.25 | Dark grey clayey silt primary fill of [812]. |
| 815 | 8 | Cut | >1.5 | 1.8 | 0.42 | U-shaped ditch re-cutting ditch [821]. Phase three of enclosure boundary ditch. Dated to the 3rd century plus. |
| 816 | 8 | Layer | >1.5 | 2.8 | 0.18 | Dark grey clayey silt layer filling void left by slumped ditch fills below. Dated by pottery to the late 3rd/4th century period. |
| 817 | 8 | Fill | >1.5 | 1.6 | 0.42 | Dark grey clayey silt fill of ditch [815]. |
| 818 | 8 | Fill | >1.5 | 1.4 | 0.6 | Pale sandy and mottled light grey silt and clay primary fill of ditch [821]. |
| 819 | 8 | Layer | >1.7 | >1.5 | 0.05 | Dark grey clayey silt spread over layer (816) and surface (820). Contained finds of 240 plus date. |
| 820 | 8 | Surface | >1.7 | >1.5 | 0.19 | Chalk rubble layer. It is probable that the compact layer is a yard or track surface. The layer was cut by the latest enclosure ditch phase. |
| 821 | 8 | Cut | >1.5 | 1.4 | 0.6 | U-shaped ditch re-cutting ditch [812] and recut by ditch [815. Undated by finds. Phase of enclosures ditch (as seen on geophysical survey). |
| 822 | 8 | Cut | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | Post or stake-hole at the base of pit [809]. Possibly an associated structural component. |
| 823 | 8 | Fill | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | Dark grey silty clay fill of [822]. |
| 901 | 9 | Layer | >50 | >1.5 | 0.2 | Brown clayey silt ploughsoil. Produced four sherds of late Roman pottery. |
| 902 | 9 | Fills | >50 | >1.5 | 0.35 | Spread of furrow fill across entire trench. |
| 903 | 9 | Layer | >24.5 | >1.5 | c.0.2 | Dark grey/ black clayey silt occupation layer sealing features within the Roman enclosure. Produced 205 sherds of 4th century pottery and several late Roman coins. Good evidence for hearth clearance and domestic activity within the enclosure. |
| 904 | 9 | Fill | 0.13 | c.0.13 | 0.09 | Dark grey clay silt post hole fill. |
| 905 | 9 | Cut | 0.13 | c.0.13 | 0.09 | Post hole cut into probable surface (949) |

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 906 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 1.09 | 0.3 | Dark grey clayey silt secondary fill of [908]. Produced 4th century pottery. |
| 907 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 1.09 | 0.2 | Dark grey clayey silt primary fill of [908]. Produced ?mid-late pottery. |
| 908 | 9 | Cut | >0.5 | 1.09 | 0.5 | Possible ditch or pit. U-shaped profile. |
| 909 | 9 | Fill | >0.7 | 0.75 | 0.54 | Dark grey clayey silt sole fill of pit [910]. Contained 16 sherds of mid 3rd-4th century date. |
| 910 | 9 | Cut | >0.7 | 0.75 | 0.54 | Oval pit with a U-shaped profile. |
| 911 | 9 | Fill | >1.5 | 2.8 | 0.4 | Dark grey clayey silt upper fill of ditch [912]. Contained 37 sherds of 240 plus pottery. |
| 912 | 9 | Cut | >1.5 | 2.8 | 0.85 | Part of the perimeter enclosure ditch of enclosure 2 on its western side. Late Roman in later phases. Earliest fill produced a single 2nd century plus sherd.. |
| 913 | 9 | Fill | >1.5 | 2.8 | 0.3 | Light grey clayey silt final silting up of ditch [915]. Produced 8 sherds of 4th century pottery. |
| 914 | 9 | Fill | >1.5 | 1.6 | 0.6 | Pale brown clayey silt fill of ditch [915]. Upper 0.3m (914A) was slightly more stony and produced 3 sherds of late Roman pottery. |
| 915 | 9 | Cut | 2.2 | >1.5 | 0.9 | Large U-shaped ditch orientated NE/SW. Probable trackway/ drove around the perimeter of enclosure 2. |
| 916 | 9 | Layer | >0.5 | 1.95 | 0.04 | Limestone rubble deposit. Hardstanding of some kind. Contained 2 sherds of late Roman pottery. May be associated with stake holes [926] and [928] which truncate the surface. |
| 917 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 1.8 | 0.14 | Dark grey clayey silt tertiary fill of ditch [912]. |
| 918 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 1.8 | 0.14 | Dark grey clayey silt secondary fill of ditch [912], possibly within a recut. Contained fifteen sherds of mid/late 3rd century plus pottery. |
| 919 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 0.2 | 0.5 | Mottled grey and light brown clayey silt primary fill of ditch [912]. Contained a 2nd century plus sherd. |
| 920 | 9 | Cut | 0.7 | >0.4 | 0.12 | Sub circular pit below sealing layer (903). Contained 7 sherds of 2nd century plus pottery. |
| 921 | 9 | Fill | 0.7 | >0.4 | 0.12 | Mid grey clayey silt fill of [920]. Produced 5 2nd century plus sherds. |
| 922 | 9 | Cut | 1.85 | >0.7 | 0.11 | Shallow pit or hollow. Produced seven sherds of 4th century Roman pottery. |
| 923 | 9 | Fill | 1.85 | >0.7 | 0.11 | Mid grey clayey silt fill of [922]. Uncertain relationship with (925). |
| 924 | 9 | Cut | c.0.6 | >0.4 | 0.11 | Sub square(?) shallow pit with an uncertain relationship with pit/hollow [922]. Contained 3 sherds of 2nd century plus pottery. |
| 925 | 9 | Fill | c.0.6 | >0.4 | 0.11 | Mid –dark grey clayey silt fill of [924]. |
| 926 | 9 | Cut | 0.1 | 0.11 | 0.08 | Stakehole. Possibly associated with surface (916). |
| 927 | 9 | Fill | 0.1 | 0.11 | 0.08 | Mid-dark grey clayey silt fill of [926]. |
| 928 | 9 | Cut | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.05 | Stakehole cut into surface (916) and possibly associated. |
| 929 | 9 | Fill | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.05 | Greyish brown clayey silt fill of [927]. |

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 930 | 9 | Cut | c.7.5 | >0.5 | >0.76 | Large pit with cut sides at c.45 degrees. Not excavated to its base due to substantial depth of overall sequence (over 1.4m). The secondary and tertiary excavated fills (951) and (950) produced a single ?late bronze age/iron age sherd and eight sherds of iron age pottery. These finds suggest a prehistoric date for the feature. The pit may therefore represent a pre Roman phase of activity here. |
| 931 | 9 | Fill/ layer | 2.5 | >0.5 | 0.3 | Dark grey clayey silt upper fill of [930],with 38 4th century sherds (3 residual iron age). This fill appears to fill a hollow caused by slumping of the prehistoric fills below. |
| 932 | 9 | Fill/ layer | >0.5 | 0.8 | 0.02 | Thin layer of degraded mortar/ limestone below (931) and above (950). |
| 933 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 0.6 | 0.4 | Mid grey clayey silt fill of primary fill of ditch [912] |
| 934 | 9 | Layer | 0.9 | >0.5 | 0.1 | Sandy/ mottled grey clayey silt trample on the edge of pit [930]. Overlaid by (931). Contained sherds of mid 3rd-4th century pottery. |
| 935 | 9 | Cut | >1.5 | >0.5 | 0.42 | Probable ditch which was recut on its eastern side by Roman ditch [915]. Undated. |
| 936 | 9 | Fill | >1.5 | >0.5 | 0.42 | Light greyish brown fill of ditch [935]. |
| 937 | 9 | Layer | >1.5 | 3.2 | 0.13 | Brownish grey silty clay sealing layer over ditches [938] and [940]. Contained late1st/early2nd century plus sherds. |
| 938 | 9 | Cut | >0.5 | 1.1 | 0.37 | Shallow ditch orientated NE/SW to the west of enclosure flanking ditch [915]. Undated. |
| 939 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 1.1 | 0.37 | Light grey clayey silt fill of [915]. |
| 940 | 9 | Cut | >0.5 | 1.6 | 0.22 | Flat bottomed possible ditch or pit cutting [938]. Undated |
| 941 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 1.6 | 0.22 | Light grey clayey silt fill of [940]. |
| 942 | 9 | Fill | >1.5 | 3.2 | 0.18 | Mid-dark clayey-silt upper fill of ditch [946]. Produced 16 sherds of mid-late 3rd century plus sherds. |
| 943 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 3.0 | 0.3 | Dark grey clayey silt tertiary fill of ditch [946]. |
| 944 | 9 | Fill | >1.4 | >0.5 | 0.7 | Dark grey clayey silt secondary fill of ditch [946]. Produced 7 sherds of late 1st/2nd century plus pottery. |
| 945 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 0.2 | 0.33 | Greyish brown clayey silt primary silting fill of ditch [946]. Produced a sherd of 2nd century or later Roman pottery. |
| 946 | 9 | Cut | >1.5 | 3.1 | 0.92 | Wide U-shaped Roman ditch. Upper fills contain late Roman finds, lower ones 2nd century plus which may or may not be much earlier. It is unclear whether this ditch replaced ditch [912] of enclosure 2 or was contemporary as a double ditch. |
| 947 | 9 | Cut | >0.08 | 0.1 | 0.05 | Stake-hole possibly associated with stake-holes [928] and [926] to the east. |
| 948 | 9 | Fill | >1.5 | 3.1 | 0.92 | Dark brown clayey silt fill of [947]. |

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 949 | 9 | Layer | >3.6 | >0.5 | c.0.25 | Chalk surface resting directly on the natural. Same as (820) in Trench 8 immediately to the south east. Undated but likely to be associated with the enclosure as a track or hardstanding. May possibly link with a similar surface in Trench 12 to the north. |
| 950 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 2.2 | 0.2 | Mid-dark grey clayey silt tertiary recorded fill of pit [930]. Contained iron age pottery. |
| 951 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 3.2 | >0.27 | Mid-dark grey clayey silt secondary recorded fill of pit [930]. Produced a ?residual late bronze age/iron age sherd. |
| 952 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 0.4 | 0.45 | Mid grey clayey silt edge collapse within pit [930]. |
| 953 | 9 | Fill/layer | - | 0.9 | 0.5 | Grey clayey silt probable fill of unrecognised feature in trench section. Produced a 2nd century plus sherd. |
| 954 | 9 | Fill/layer | - | 0.3 | 0.25 | Grey sandy silt deposit, was probably within a cut but not seen in plan. |
| 955 | 9 | Fill/layer | - | 0.4 | 0.15 | Mid grey clayey silt deposit. May have been within a separate cut but not seen in plan. |
| 956 | 9 | Fill/layer | - | 0.44 | 0.04 | Deposit of light grey sandy silt above (955). |
| 957 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 0.34 | >0.38 | Light grey clayey silt fill of [930]. |
| 958 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 2.4 | >0.36 | Grey clayey silt fill of pit [930], not fully excavated. Undated. |
| 959 | 910 | Fill/layer | 0.2 | - | 0.15 | Dark grey clayey silt fill/ deposit over pit [930]. |
| 960 | 9 | Layer | >50 | >1.5 | - | Clay and sandstone natural. |
| 961 | 9 | Fill | >0.5 | 0.8 | 0.4 | Pale brown silty clay with common sandstone frags fill of [962] |
| 962 | 9 | ?Cut | >0.5 | 0.8 | 0.4 | Possible pit or ditch cutting [940] and cut by [935]. Undated. |
| 1001 | 10 | Layer | >33.5 | >24 | 0.3 | Mid brown clayey silt ploughsoil. Produced four late Roman sherds and 21 Roman tile fragments. |
| 1002 | 10 | Layer | >33.5 | >24 | 0.3 | Pale yellow clayey silt natural. |
| 1003 | 10 | Layer | 6 | >0.7 | - | Stony patch of natural. |
| 1004 | 10 | Arbitrary Layer | >c.21.5 | 9.4 | c.0.01 | Cleaning layer over 'internal floor' area Produced 4 sherds of mid/late 3rd century plus pottery. |
| 1005 | 10 | Layer | >c.19.2 | 11.5 | 0.05 | Thin layer of grey clayey silt which appears to represent a trampled demolition layer. Contains a large amount of wall plaster/ mortar fragments in an area between walls 1008 to the north and 1014 to the south, also extends as patches 18m to the west within Trench 10B. Produced ten sherds including mid 3rd century plus pieces. |
| 1006 | 10 | Layer | >4.8 | >1.5 | 0.04 | Thin deposit of trampled greyish brown clayey silt. No wall plaster or charcoal inclusions as with (1005). Found on the northern side of wall 1008 and considered likely to be an external trample layer. Produced a sherd of ?3rd-4th century Roman greyware. |

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1007 | 10 | Cut | >0.4 | *c.*0.55 | Not Excavated. | NW/SE orientated wall cut for wall 1008. Not excavated but considered likely to be an external foundation for a Roman building equivalent to foundation [1011] for the southern edge of the structure. |
| 1008 | 10 | Structure | >0.4 | *c.*0.55 | Not excavated | Chalk rubble wall foundation within cut [1007]. Wall orientated NW/SE appears to have been robbed out to the west of the surviving fragment. Likely to represent the northern edge of the Roman structure. |
| 1009 | 10 | Cut | >1.5 | 0.65 | 0.56 | Linear cut orientated NW/SE. Steep sides to a U-shaped base. Contains moderate density of small to medium chalk lumps which were initially thought to be in situ foundation material. The feature post dates the demolition layer (1005) and is thought to be a wall robber trench for a wall of the Roman structure. Contained seven sherds of mid 3rd century plus pottery (probably 4th century). |
| 1010 | 10 | Fill | >1.5 | 0.65 | 0.56 | Mid brown silty clay with common pea grit and chalk fragments up to *c.*10cm. Backfill of probable robber trench [1009]. |
| 1011 | 10 | Cut | >1.5 | 0.8 | 0.2 | Shallow linear feature orientated NW/SE. Might possibly represent a shallow robber trench for an internal wall of the Roman structure as cuts through layer (1005) and contains chalk debris. Contained four sherds of mid 3rd century plus pottery. |
| 1012 | 10 | Fill | >1.5 | 0.8 | 0.2 | Dark brown clayey silt with common gravel and mortar inclusions. Also contained small chalk rubble frags. Possible robber trench backfill. |
| 1013 | 10 | Cut | >4 | 0.6 | 0.4 | Vertical sided cut orientated NW/SE for a wall foundation (1014). A possible corner of the foundation to run NE/SW may be represented at the eastern end. The excavated segment shows that the wall was constructed to form the southern side of a hypocaust room at that point. Cuts the natural. |
| 1014 | 10 | Structure | >4 | 0.6 | 0.4 | Wall foundation of large chalk blocks (up to 40x30x20cm) with no bonding. Forms the outside wall of the Roman structure but also one side of the underground chamber [1034] for a hypocaust. The northern side of this internal room appears to be represented by bonded wall orientated north/south. |
| 1015 | 10 | Cut | >4.8 | 0.45 | 0.4 | Linear cut with steep sides to a rounded base. Contains a high density of limestone and chalk fragments and Roman tile. This rubble appears to be foundation material for a wall. The feature cuts across the backfill of underground chamber [1034] and therefore represents a late phase post dating the disuse of the hypocaust. |

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1016 | 10 | Fill | >4.8 | 0.45 | 0.4 | Loose rubble within a soil matrix. Contained 18 pieces of Roman tile within the excavated section. Probable wall foundation material within foundation cut [1015]. |
| 1017 | 10 | Cut | >1.2 | 0.9 | 0.7 | Linear cut orientated NW/SE as far as the remnant of wall 1008. Appears to have removed the wall to this point as a robber trench. The cut is wider than the wall foundation and contains a significant amount of small chalk fragments and plaster fragments within its backfill (the larger chalk blocks having been removed). The fill produced eight sherds of late 3rd century plus pottery. |
| 1018 | 10 | Fill | >1.2 | 0.9 | 0.7 | Dark brownish grey silty clay with common chalk fragments and plaster particles. Backfill of probable robber trench [1017]. |
| 1019 | 10 | Cut | ?0.3 | >0.2 | 0.5 | 45 degree cut on north side of hypocaust lowered floor [1034]. Appears to have removed the upper levels of wall 1033 implying that this was 'robbed'. No difference within backfill 1029 and therefore the wall was partially removed before the underfloor area was backfilled. |
| 1020 | 10 | Fill | - | - | - | Same as 1028. Was numbered separately when it was thought that robber cut 1019 was cut through layer 1028. |
| 1021 | 10 | Floor | - | - | - | Not used. |
| 1022 | 10 | Layer | - | - | - | Same as 1035. |
| 1023 | 10 | Layer | - | - | - | Same as 1035. |
| 1024 | 10 | Cut | >22 | c.6 | 0.2 | Post-medieval furrow orientated approx N/S. |
| 1025 | 10 | Fill | >22 | >6 | 0.2 | Greyish brown clayey silt fill of [1024]. |
| 1026 | 10 | Cut | >1.5 | >2.9 | >0.1 | Unexcavated ditch – same as [915]/[935] in Trench 9. |
| 1027 | 10 | Fill | >1.5 | >2.9 | >0.1 | Greyish clayey silt fill of [1026]. |
| 1028 | 10 | Fill | >0.3 | 3.2 | 0.7 (max) | Deliberate and rapid backfilling episode for underfloor heating area [1034]. Contained a substantial quantity of Roman tile, mainly box flue, painted wall plaster and a smaller quantity of 4th century Roman pottery. Consisted of light greyish brown silt with frequent pea grit (from mortar), tile, stone fragments and plaster fragments. |
| 1029 | 10 | Structure | >0.3 | 0.65 | 0.37 | Limestone and tile built pillar or wall partially exposed within the excavated slot. Exposed by not removed. Build is bonded with mortar at upper level (at least). Interpreted as a support for they hypocaust room's floor associated with possible pillar base (1046) 1m to the north. |
| 1030 | 10 | - | - | - | - | Same as 1049. |

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1031 | 10 | Cut | 0.6 | >0.3 | 0.2 | Apparent cut through the lower backfill (1047) and floor (1045) of underfloor are [1034]. Contains ashy deposits (1032) which may be associated with the furnace used to heat the floor. |
| 1032 | 10 | Fill | 0.6 | >0.3 | 0.2 | Several dark ashy silt tips with clayey silt bands between fills [1031] and abuts wall/pillar (1029). Contained a late Roman sherd. |
| 1033 | 10 | Structure | 0.34 | >0.3 | 0.25 | Two courses of limestone built wall on the north side of [1034] within a vertical cut. The blocks were mortar bonded and were roughly faced into rectangular blocks. The upper levels appear to have been removed by 'robber cut' [1019]. Forms one side of the underfloor area, the other is defined by wall 1014. |
| 1034 | 10 | Cut | >0.3 | 2.9 | 0.7 | Large vertical sided cut for a underfloor heating system. Lined by limestone wall 1033 on its north side. A mortar floor 1045 was excavated on its base whilst two 'pillars' or supporting walls were spaced equidistantly within to provide supports for the assumed floor above. A substantial quantity of flue tiles from the heating of the room above and a 'bipedalis' pillae capping tile (fragment) were found within its backfill in addition to painted wall plaster. |
| 1035 | 10 | Layer | 8.1 | >1.5 | 0.04 | Greyish brown clayey silt with frequent pea grit and plaster inclusions. Overlays the backfill of underfloor room [1034] and appears to comprise of 'destruction' material following the abandonment of the Roman building. Overlays fill of ditch [1036] also. |
| 1036 | 10 | Cut | >10 | *c.*1.2 | 0.35 | Linear ditch orientated NW/SE. U-shaped profile. Fill contained Roman finds. Not exposed within trench but most have a relationship with the Roman structure. |
| 1037 | 10 | Cut | ?>0.6 | *c.*1.0 | 0.3 | Probably a part of ditch [2036] although the excavator considered it to be possibly a separate ditch. Not clear as sealed below furrow fill (1025). |
| 1038 | 10 | Fill | >1.6 | 0.5 | 0.32 | Mid brown clayey silt fill of [1036A]. Produced three late 3rd/4th century pottery sherds. |
| 1039 | 10 | Fill | >0.5 | 1.1 | 0.35 | Mid brown clayey silt fill of [1036B]. Produced 8 late Roman pottery sherds. |
| 1040 | 10 | Fill | >0.5 | 1.1 | 0.30 | Mid brown clayey silt fill of [1036C]. |
| 1041 | 10 | Fill | >0.5 | 1.0 | 0.3 | Mid brown clayey silt fill of [1036D]. |
| 1042 | 10 | Layer | >19 | >5 | 0.08 | Mid/light brown clayey silt interface layer with the underlying natural. Found to the south and east of the Roman building and probably also to the north. |
| 1043 | 10 | ?Cut | >0.3 | 0.3 | 0.04 | Hollow or depression. |
| 1044 | 10 | Fill | >0.3 | 0.3 | 0.04 | Greyish brown clayey silt fill of [1043]. |
| 1045 | 10 | Layer | >0.3 | 1.15 | 0.04 | Buff sandy silt/mortar compact floor level above the compacted natural of cut [1034]. Butts in situ floor tile 1046. |

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1046 | 10 | ?Structure | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.03 | Single floor tile (pilae 'in situ' on the base of cut [1034] with floor 1045 constructed against it. Traces of mortar on its exposed surface suggest that it was structural as a probable pillar to support the heated floor. |
| 1047 | 10 | Layer | >0.3 | 1.15 | 0.08 | Light brown clayey silt with occasional mortar. Tramples layer of replacement floor? |
| 1048 | 10 | Layer | >0.3 | 1.65 | 0.02 | Compacted clay floor (trampled natural) burnt below cut [1031] indicating in situ heat. |
| 1049 | 10 | ?Layer | 2.0 | >1.0 | N/A | Unexcavated patch of chalk rubble with a high density of mortar fragments. Possible heavily plough damaged wall remnant. Produced 2 sherds of late Roman pottery. |
| 1101 | 11 | Layer | >15 | >1.5 | 0.25 | Dark brown clayey silt ploughsoil. |
| 1102 | 11 | Layer | >15 | >1.5 | - | Natural silty clay. |
| 1103 | 11 | Cut Group | >1.5 | 3 | 0.15 | Cut group for two furrows within Trench 11. |
| 1104 | 11 | Fills | >1.5 | 3 | 0.15 | Mid grey clayey silt furrow fills in Trench 11. |
| 1105 | 11 | Cut | >1 | 0.6 | 0.15 | Shallow gully/linear. Probably a furrow remnant. Undated. |
| 1106 | 11 | Fill | >2 | 0.6 | 0.15 | Grey clayey silt fill of [1105]. |
| 1201 | 12 | Layer | >11 | >1.5 | 0.25 | Brown clayey silt ploughsoil. Produced 7 sherds of late Roman pottery. |
| 1202 | 12 | Layer | >11 | >1.5 | - | Probable post-medieval ridge and furrow layer. |
| 1203 | 12 | Layer | 6.2 | >1.5 | 0.15 | Dark greyish brown clayey silt layer sealing surface (1204). Produced 9 sherds of mid-late 3rd century pottery and late Roman coins. |
| 1204 | 12 | Layer | 6.2 | >1.5 | c.0.05 | Chalk rubble with flint cobbles and tile metalled surface. Possibly a track or yard area associated with the Roman structure of Trench 10. |
| 1205 | 12 | Fill | >1.5 | >1.4 | 0.14 | Light grey sandy silt furrow fill. |
| 1206 | 12 | Cut | >1.5 | >1.4 | 0.14 | Post-medieval furrow. |
| 1207 | 12 | Layer | >11 | >1.5 | - | Natural pale yellow silty sandy clay with sandstone patches. |
| 1301 | 13 | Layer | >10 | >1.5 | 0.25 | Brown silty clay ploughsoil. |
| 1302 | 13 | Layer | >10 | >1.5 | - | Silty/clay natural. |
| 1401 | 14 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | 0.21 | Brown clayey silt ploughsoil. |
| 1402 | 14 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | - | Sandy yellow clayey silt natural. |
| 1403 | 14 | Fill | >30 | >1.5 | c.0.2 | Light grey silt furrow fill. Fill of [1406]. |
| 1404 | 14 | Cut | >19.8 | >1.5 | 0.52 | Linear flat bottomed ditch running NE/SW before versing away to the south at its southern extent within Trench 14. Same as [1050]/[1503] in Trench 15. Produced 31 sherds of late Roman pottery. |
| 1405 | 14 | Fill | >19.8 | >1.5 | 0.52 | Dark greyish brown clayey silt fill of [1404]. |
| 1406 | 14 | Cut | >30 | >1.5 | 0.2 | NE/SW orientated post medieval furrow. |
| 1501 | 15 | Layer | >45 | >1.5 | 0.3 | Brown clayey silt ploughsoil. |
| 1502 | 15 | Layer | >45 | >1.5 | - | Yellowish grey clayey silt natural. |

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1503 | 15 | Cut | >1.5 | 0.8 | 0.25 | Linear ditch truncated on its east side by Late Roman ditch [1505]. Undated but very likely to be Roman earlier phase of [1503]. Produced 8 sherds of mid/late 3rd-4th century pottery. |
| 1504 | 15 | Fill | >1.5 | >1.55 | 0.4 | Mid grey clayey silt fill of ditch [1503]. |
| 1505 | 15 | Cut | >1.5 | >1.55 | 0.4 | Flat bottomed ditch orientated NE/SW. Same as ditch [1404]. But here recuts an earlier ditch [1503]. |
| 1506 | 15 | Fill | >1.5 | 0.8 | 0.25 | Dark grey clayey silt fill of [1505]. |
| 1507 | 15 | Fill | >1.5 | ? | c.0.35 (max) | Light grey clayey silt fills of furrows within Trench 15. |
| 1508 | 15 | Cut | >0.5 | c.1.0 | 0.1 | Probable furrow cut orientated c.NE/SW. Recut by later furrow [1527]? |
| 1509 | 15 | Fill | >0.5 | c.1.0 | 0.1 | Greyish clayey silt fill of [1508]. |
| 1510 | 15 | Fill | >1.5 | >2.7 | 0.2 | Mid grey clayey silt fill of furrow [1527]. |
| 1511 | 15 | Layer | 8.20 | >1.5 | 0.29 | Dark blackish grey clayey silt. Occupation layer within a shallow depression into the natural. Overlays a layer of compact stone. Possibly trampled natural (1528) or deliberate surfacing of a ?yard area. Produced a low density (only 13 sherds) of mid/late 3rd century+ pottery. |
| 1512 | 15 | Cut | 0.22 | 0.2 | 0.23 | Vertical sided square post hole with several packing stones. Presumed to be Romano-British. |
| 1513 | 15 | Fill | 0.22 | 0.2 | 0.23 | Dark grey silty clay fill of [1512]. |
| 1514 | 15 | Cut | 0.26 | 0.5 | 0.25 | Vertical sided rectangular post hole filled with packing stones. Next to but not cutting [1512]. |
| 1515 | 15 | Fill | 0.26 | 0.5 | 0.25 | Blackish grey silt fill of [1514]. |
| 1516 | 15 | Cut | 0.36 | 0.24 | 0.3 | Vertical sided oval post hole with several large padding stone. Adjacent to [1514]. |
| 1517 | 15 | Fill | 0.36 | 0.24 | 0.3 | Dark blackish grey silty clay fill of [1516]. |
| 1518 | 15 | Cut | 0.38 | 0.26 | 0.22 | Vertical sided oval post hole cut into. (1528). |
| 1519 | 15 | Fill | 0.38 | 0.26 | 0.22 | Blackish grey silty clay fill of [1518]. Contains packing stones. |
| 1520 | 15 | Cut | 0.24 | 0.28 | 0.25 | Vertical sided rectangular post hole with packing stones. Adjacent to [1518] and [1523]. |
| 1521 | 15 | Fill | 0.24 | 0.28 | 0.25 | Light grey clayey silt fill of [1520]. |
| 1522 | 15 | Layer | 2.4 | >1.5 | 0.24 | Light grey clayey silt. Probably same layer as (1511) but at eastern extent less organic content thus paler grey colour. |
| 1523 | 15 | ?Cut | 0.25 | 0.28 | 0.02 | Cut no. for depression filled by (1511). |
| 1524 | 15 | Cut | >0.2 | 0.18 | 0.02 | Cut no. for depression filled by (1511). |
| 1525 | 15 | Fill | 1.5 | 4.8 | 0.15 | Greyish brown clayey silt furrow fill [1527]. |
| 1526 | 15 | Fill | >1.5 | 0.9 | 0.2 | Light grey clayey silt fill of furrow [1527]. |
| 1527 | 15 | Cut | >1.5 | 4.8 | 0.3 | NE/SW orientated furrow of probable post medieval date. |
| 1528 | 15 | Layer | 10.6 | >1.5 | Unex | Compacted chalk natural or perhaps deliberate yard surface within a hollowed area below dark layer 1511. The compaction of this layer was perhaps caused by animal trample. Such trampling may have caused the erosion of this hollow. |
| 1601 | 16 | Layer | >3.0 | >1.5 | 0.28 | Greyish brown clayey silt ploughsoil. |

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1602 | 16 | Cut | 6.2 | >1.5 | 0.15 | Cut no. for furrow feature at western end of Trench 16. |
| 1603 | 16 | Fill | 6.2 | >1.5 | 0.15 | Light brown clayey silt fill of [1602]. |
| 1604 | 16 | Fill | - | - | - | Same as 1610. |
| 1605 | 16 | Cut | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.06 | Irregular scoop or pit. Produced a single late Roman sherd. Cut into ditch [1611]. |
| 1606 | 16 | Fill | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.06 | Dark greyish brown clayey silt fill of [1605]. |
| 1607 | 16 | Fill | >1.5 | 0.82 | 0.36 | Grey silty clay fill of ditch [1611]. (Same as 1610). Produced two 2nd century+ sherds. |
| 1608 | 16 | Cut | >0.3 | 1.0 | 0.3 | Oval pit cut into ditch [1611]. Filled with sand and gravel, plausibly the constituents of mortar. The pit may have been a repository for waste from a nearby building construction. |
| 1609 | 16 | Fill | >0.3 | 1.0 | 0.3 | Orange sand and gravel fill of pit [1608]. |
| 1610 | 16 | Fill | - | - | - | Same as 1607. |
| 1611 | 16 | Cut | >1.5 | 0.82 | 0.36 | Ditch feature orientated north-east/south-west. Probable plot/field boundary dated to 2nd century plus. Filled by 1607=1610. |
| 1612-1613 | 16 | - | - | - | - | Re-numbered. |
| 1614 | 16 | Fill | - | - | - | Same as 1626. Produced sherds of late Roman pottery. |
| 1615 | 16 | - | - | - | - | Re-numbered. |
| 1616 | 16 | Fill | - | - | - | Same as (1632). Produced 1 sherd of Roman 2nd century plus pottery. |
| 1617-1621 | 16 | - | - | - | - | Re-numbered. |
| 1622 | 16 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | - | Clayey sand with stony patches. Natural. |
| 1623 | 16 | Cut | >1.5 | 5.0 | 0.25 | Post medieval furrow. |
| 1624 | 16 | Fill | >1.5 | 5.0 | 0.25 | Greyish brown fill of [1623]. |
| 1625 | 16 | Cut | 2.6 | >0.7 | 0.25 | Shallow oval pit. Produced seven Roman sherds. Fill 1626 was burnt suggesting possible industrial use. |
| 1626 | 16 | Fill | 2.6 | >0.7 | 0.25 | Reddish brown (burnt) clayey silt. |
| 1627 | 16 | Cut | >1.5 | 0.3 | 0.35 | NE/SW orientated gully. Probable drainage features. Undated. |
| 1628 | 16 | Fill | >1.5 | 0.3 | 0.35 | Dark greyish brown sand silt fill of [1627]. |
| 1629 | 16 | Cut | >0.5 | 0.3 | 0.24 | Small pit or post hole. Undated. Cuts (1638). |
| 1630 | 16 | Fill | >0.5 | 0.3 | 0.24 | Light brown sandy silt fill of [1629]. |
| 1631 | 16 | Cut | >0.82 | *c.*1.0 | 0.1 | Shallow cut into the backfill of [1637]. Fill comprised sand and gravel or ?mortar dump. Similar to pit {1608]. |
| 1632 | 16 | Fill | >0.82 | *c.*1.0 | 0.1 | Sandy grey clay/silt with gravel (?mortar particles). |
| 1633 | 16 | Cut | >0.5 | 0.4 | 0.3 | Linear gully like feature feeding into cut [1637]. Possible leat of an industrial process. Perhaps associated with construction. |
| 1634 | 16 | Fill | >0.5 | 0.4 | 0.3 | Dark grey clayey silt fill of [1633]. Possibly contemporary with (1634). |
| 1635 | 16 | Cut | >0.85 | 0.32 | 0.35 | Gully feature, possible associated with an industrial process with gully [1633]. |
| 1636 | 16 | Fill | >0.85 | 0.32 | 0.35 | Dark grey clayey silt fill of [1635]. |
| 1637 | 16 | Cut | *c.*1.5 | *c.*1.0 | 0.27 | Amorphous feature filled by (1638) and (1639). Possible industrial function. |
| 1638 | 16 | Fill | *c.*1.5 | *c.*1.0 | 0.27 | Mid grey clayey silt fill of [1637]. |

| Context No. | Trench No. | Category | Length (m) | Width (m) | Thickness (m) | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1639 | 16 | Fill | 0.3 | >0.2 | 0.2 | Dark brown clayey silt secondary fill of [627]. |
| 1701 | 17 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | 0.35 | Brown silty clay ploughsoil. |
| 1702 | 17 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | - | Clayey silt natural. |
| 1703 | 17 | Cut group | >1.5 | c.4.0 | c.0.2-0.3 | Group no. for three post medieval furrows within Trench 17. |
| 1704 | 17 | Fill group | >1.5 | c.4.0 | 0.2-0.3 | Dark brown sandy silt fills of [1703]. |
| 1705 | 17 | Fill | >1.75 | >0.5 | 0.15 | Dark brown clayey silt deposit below furrow fill (1704) at the west end of Trench 17. May be a deep furrow or possible the fill of an earlier feature below. Produced two sherds of Roman pottery. |
| 1706 | 17 | Cut | 2.0 | >0.7 | 0.4 | Partially exposed pit filled with limestone rubble. Possible construction stone left over from a structure and disposed of in a pit. |
| 1707 | 17 | Fill | 2.0 | >0.7 | 0.4 | Mid grey sandy clay with tightly packed limestone sloping into the pit centre (up to 30x10x10cm). Produced a Roman sherd. |
| 1801 | 18 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | c.0.3 | Brown silty clay ploughsoil. |
| 1802 | 18 | Layer | >30 | >1.5 | - | Pale yellowish grey clayey silt. Natural. |
| 1901 | 19 | Cut | 0.28 | 0.27 | 0.1 | Possible small post hole. Contained two Roman sherds. |
| 1902 | 19 | Fill | 0.28 | 0.27 | 0.1 | Blackish silt fill of [1901]. |
| 1903 | 19 | Cut | 0.4 | 0.28 | 0.12 | Sub oval possible post hole. Produced two 2nd century+ sherds. |
| 1904 | 19 | Fill | 0.4 | 0.28 | 0.12 | Blackish grey silt fill of [1903]. |
| 1905 | 19 | Layer | c.1 | >1.5 | 0.07 | Brownish green silty clay with common sandstone fragments. Interfacial layer between natural and ploughsoil, produced 16 sherds of iron age pottery. |
| 1906 | 19 | Layer | >1.5 | >30 | 0.3 | Ploughsoil. |
| 1907 | 19 | Cut/fill | >1.5 | c.4.0 | c.0.3 | Group no. for post medieval furrows within Trench 19. |

# Appendix 2

## Finds Table

## Appendix 2: Finds Table

**Abbreviations:**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UD - | Undated | Med - | Medieval |
| Neo - | Neolithic | PM - | Post-medieval |
| BA - | Bronze Age | E - | Early |
| IA - | Iron Age | M - | Middle |
| Prehist - | Prehistoric | L - | Late |
| Ro - | Roman | | |

| Context No. | Category | No. of Sherds/ Fragments | Date | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Trench 1** | | | | |
| 101 | Tile | 4 | PM | Peg tile |
| 101 | Pottery | 12 | PM | 18-19th century |
| **Trench 2** | | | | |
| 201 | Pottery | 6 | Ro/med | 5 Ro, 1 med |
| 201 | Flint | 1 | Prehist | Blade |
| **Trench 3** | | | | |
| 301 | Flint | 1 | Prehist | Blade |
| **Trench 4** | | | | |
| 402 | Pottery | 3 | Ro | Ro 2nd century plus |
| 404 | Pottery | 23 | IA | MIA |
| 406 | Flint | 5 | ?E Neo | Flakes ?E Neo |
| 406 | Burnt flint | 2 | Prehist | Burnt flint |
| 406 | Pottery | 18 | ?E Neo | Flint tempered sherds (may alternatively be of BA date) |
| **Trench 5** | | | | |
| 502 | Pottery | 6 | PM/Ro | PM |
| 504 | Iron object | 1 | ?Mod | 1 metal loop |
| 504 | Glass | 1 | PM | 1 brown glass fragment |
| 506 | Pottery | 4 | IA | ?M IA body sherds |
| 508 | Iron object | 1 | UD | Hob nail (possibly Ro) |
| 508 | Pottery | 6 | MIA | Body sherd |
| 509 | Pottery | 1 | ?MIA | MIA |
| **Trench 6** | | | | |
| 601 | Pottery | 14 | IA/Ro/PM | PM=18th/19th century |
| 601 | Flint | 1 | Prehist | Undiagnostic |
| 601 | Tile | 1 | Ro | - |
| 601? | Iron object | 2 | UD | Iron nails |
| 601? | Iron object | 1 | UD | Lead object |
| 601? | Iron object | 1 | Ro | Late Ro coin |
| 604 | Pottery | 24 | IA/Ro | 6 IA/18Ro |
| 604 | Tile | 6 | Ro | Ro tile |
| 604 | Iron object | 1 | Ro | Nail |
| 604 | Bone | 10 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 606 | Bone | 4 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 606 | Pottery | 9 | Ro | L Ro |
| 607 | Bone | 23 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 607 | Flint | 3 | Prehist | Undiagnostic |
| 607 | Iron object | 21 | Ro | Iron nails |
| 607 | Pottery | 43 | Ro | L Ro |

| Context No. | Category | No. of Sherds/ Fragments | Date | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Trench 7** | | | | |
| 701 | Pottery | 6 | Ro | L Ro |
| 701 | Tile | 3 | Ro/PM | - |
| 703 | Tile | 4 | Ro/PM | Peg tile |
| 705 | Pottery | 9 | Ro | ?2nd century (E Ro) |
| 705 | Bone | 1 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 705 | Flint | 1 | Prehist | Undiagnostic |
| **Trench 8** | | | | |
| 801 | Pottery | 21 | IA/Ro | 2IA/19 L Ro |
| 801 | Tile | 3 | | - |
| 801 | Metal | 2 | L Ro<br>? | 1 L Ro coin<br>1 fragment of lead |
| 806 | Bone | 10 | - | Animal bone |
| 806 | Pottery | 2 | ?IA | Body sherds |
| 806 | Tile | 8 | Ro | - |
| 808 | Bone | 2 | ?Ro | Animal bone |
| 808 | Tile | 2 | Ro | - |
| 810 | Bone | 1 | ?Ro | Animal bone |
| 810 | Pottery | 12 | Ro | L Ro |
| 811 | Iron object | 1 | Ro | Nail |
| 811 | Bone | 3 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 811 | Pottery | 4 | Ro | L Ro |
| 811 | Charcoal | 1 | Ro | - |
| 813 | Pottery | 3 | Ro | ?2nd century plus |
| 813 | Bone | 1 | Ro | Shell |
| 816 | Bone | 26 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 816 | Pottery | 64 | IA/Ro | 1 IA/63 L Ro |
| 816 | Tile | 1 | Ro | Ro |
| 816 | Iron object | 1 | Ro | Nail |
| 816 | Charcoal | 1 | Ro | - |
| 817 | Bone | 45 | Ro | Animal bone including 1 shell fragment |
| 817 | Pottery | 10 | Ro | 2nd century plus |
| 819 | Pottery | 6 | Ro | L Ro |
| 819 | Tile | 3 | Ro | Ro |
| 819 | Flint | 1 | ?Prehist | Burnt flint |
| **Trench 9** | | | | |
| 901 | Pottery | 5 | Ro | L Ro |
| 901 | Metal | 8 | Ro | 4 Ro coins and 3 lead and 1 nail |
| 901 | Flint | 1 | ?Prehist | Burnt flint |
| 902 | Metal | 1 | L Ro | L Ro minim |
| 902 | Pottery | 1 | Ro | Ro greyware |
| 902 | Tile | 2 | PM | PM peg tile |
| 903 | Pottery | 205 | Ro | 4th century |
| 903 | Tile | 46 | Ro | - |
| 903 | Bone | 28 | Ro | Animal bone including 1 shell fragment |
| 903 | Iron Object | 7 | Ro | Iron nails |
| 903 | Flint | 1 | Prehist | Undiagnostic |
| 903 | Metal | 5 | Ro | 5 Late Roman Coins |
| 906 | Bone | 3 | Ro | Animal bones |
| 906 | Pottery | 6 | Ro | 4th century |
| 906 | Tile | 1 | Ro | - |
| 907 | Bone | 1 | Ro | Animal bone |

| Context No. | Category | No. of Sherds/ Fragments | Date | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 907 | Pottery | 2 | Ro | ?E Ro |
| 909 | Pottery | 16 | Ro | L Ro |
| 909 | Bone | 3 | Ro | - |
| 911 | Bone | 13 | Ro | Animal bone including 1 shell fragment |
| 911 | Iron object | 14 | Ro | Including 1 Ro coin, 7 Ro nails and iron objects |
| 911 | Pottery | 37 | Ro | L Ro |
| 911 | Tile | 3 | Ro | - |
| 912 | Iron object | 1 | Ro | Iron object |
| 913 | Bone | 12 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 913 | Pottery | 8 | Ro | 4th century |
| 914a | Pottery | 3 | Ro | L Ro |
| 914a | Bone | 4 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 914b | Bone | 15 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 914b | Tile | 3 | Ro | - |
| 916 | Pottery | 2 | Ro | L Ro |
| 916 | Bone | 6 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 918 | Tile | 1 | Ro | - |
| 918 | Bone | 17 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 918 | Iron object | 3 | Ro | Iron nails and iron strip |
| 918 | Pottery | 15 | Ro | L Ro |
| 919 | Pottery | 1 | Ro | 2nd century plus |
| 923 | Pottery | 7 | Ro | L Ro |
| 923 | Bone | 3 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 925 | Pottery | 3 | Ro | 2nd century plus |
| 925 | Bone | 1 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 931 | Bone | 53 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 931 | Pottery | 41 | IA/Ro | 3 IA and 38 4th century |
| 931 | Iron object | 5 | Ro | 4 nails and 1 object |
| 931 | Metal | 1 | Ro | L Ro coin |
| 934 | Bone | 7 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 934 | Pottery | 4 | IA/Ro | 1 IA and 3 L Ro |
| 937 | Pottery | 3 | Ro | E Ro |
| 939 | Iron object | 1 | Ro | Iron object |
| 942 | Pottery | 12 | Ro | 4 Ro |
| 942 | Tile | 10 | Ro/PM | Including intrusive PM tile |
| 942 | Metal | 1 | ?Ro | Lead object |
| 944 | Pottery | 7 | Ro | E Ro plus |
| 945 | Pottery | 1 | Ro | ?1st-1nd century plus |
| 950 | Bone | 45 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 950 | Pottery | 4 | IA/?Ro | 3?MIA/?1st/2nd century |
| 951 | Bone | 4 | ? | Animal Bone |
| 951 | Pottery | 1 | LBA or IA | ? LBA/IA |
| 951 | Flint | 1 | Prehist | Flake |
| 953 | Pottery | 1 | Ro | ?1st–2nd century |
| **Trench 10** | | | | |
| Cleaning | Pottery | 7 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1010 | Tile | 21 | Ro | - |
| 1001 | Pottery | 2 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1001 | Metal | 2 | Ro | Coins |
| 1001 | Metal | 2 | Med Mod | Buckle Button |

| Context No. | Category | No. of Sherds/ Fragments | Date | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spoil | Iron object | 1 | ?Ro | Nail |
| 1004 | Pottery | 4 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1004 | Tile | 4 | Ro | - |
| 1005 | Pottery | 10 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1005 | Iron object | 1 | Ro | Iron nail |
| 1005 | Metal | 1 | Ro | Minim coin |
| 1006 | Pottery | 1 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1006 | Tile | 3 | Ro | - |
| 1006 | Flint | 1 | Prehist | Undiagnostic |
| 1010 | Pottery | 7 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1010 | Tile | 1 | Ro | - |
| 1010 | Iron object | 1 | Ro | Nail |
| 1010 | Bone | 5 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 1012 | Pottery | 4 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1016 | Tile | 18 | Ro | - |
| 1016 | Bone | 1 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 1016 | Iron object | 1 | Ro | Nail |
| 1018 | Bone | 6 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 1018 | Tile | 10 | Ro | - |
| 1018 | Pottery | 8 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1018 | Metal | 1 | Ro | L Ro coin |
| 1020 | Pottery | 6 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1028 | Bone | 2 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 1028 | Pottery | 10 | Ro | 4th century |
| 1028 | Tile | 63 | Ro | Including box flue, tegula, imbrex and floor tile |
| 1028b | Painted wall plaster | 6 | Ro | Painted wall plaster, 3 fragments of Pompei Red (one with white paint beneath), 2 fragments with orangish yellow paint (one with a splash of red over the yellow) and one cream/white painted. Total weight 470gm |
| 1029 | Tile | 8 | Ro | - |
| 1032 | Pottery | 1 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1032 | Tile | 2 | Ro | - |
| 1033 | Tile | 2 | Ro | - |
| 1038 | Tile | 9 | Ro | - |
| 1038 | Pottery | 3 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1038 | Bone | 2 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 1039 | Bone | 6 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 1039 | Pottery | 8 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1039 | Tile | 13 | Ro | - |
| 1040 | Tile | 2 | Ro | - |
| 1040 | Iron object | 1 | Ro | Nail |
| 1041 | Pottery | 7 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1042 | Pottery | 1 | Prehist | Fragment |
| 1042 | Bone | 1 | UD | Animal bone |
| 1049 | Pottery | 2 | Ro | L Ro |
| **Trench 11** | | | | |
| Spoil | Metal | 1 | Ro | Minim coin (L Ro) |
| 1101 | Pottery | 1 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1103 | Pottery | 1 | Ro | L Ro |

| Context No. | Category | No. of Sherds/ Fragments | Date | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1103 | Coin | 1 | Ro | L Ro coin |
| 1103 | Metal | 1 | Ro | Minim coin ( L Ro) |
| **Trench 12** | | | | |
| 1201 | Pottery | 7 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1201 | Metal | 3 | Ro | 1 L Ro coin, 1 lead fragment and 1mod button |
| 1203 | Bone | 39 | Ro | Inclu 1 oyster shell frag |
| 1203 | Pottery | 9 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1203 | Tile | 24 | Ro | - |
| 1203 | Metal | 2 | Ro | L Ro Coins |
| **Trench 13** | | | | |
| 1301 | Pottery | 2 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1301 | Tile | 2 | Ro | - |
| **Trench 14** | | | | |
| 1405 | Iron objects | 4 | Ro | Nails |
| 1405 | Bone | 18 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 1405 | Pottery | 31 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1405 | Tile | 3 | Ro | - |
| 1405 | Flint | 1 | Prehist | Undiagnostic |
| **Trench 15** | | | | |
| 1501 | Pottery | 8 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1501 | Iron object | 1 | ?Ro | Nail |
| 1504 | Pottery | 8 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1504 | Tile | 3 | Ro | - |
| 1504 | Bone | 7 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 1509 | Pottery | 1 | ? | Uncertain |
| 1509 | Tile | 8 | Ro | - |
| 1511 | Bone | 42 | Ro | Animal bone including 1 burnt fragment |
| 1511 | Pottery | 13 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1511 | Tile | 12 | Ro | - |
| 1511 | Flint | 3 | Prehist | Undiagnostic |
| 1511 | Iron object | 5 | Ro | Nails |
| **Trench 16** | | | | |
| 1604 | Pottery | 1 | PM | 18th century |
| 1604 | Tile | 2 | Ro | - |
| 1604 | Bone | 1 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 1606 | Bone | 1 | Ro | Animal bone |
| 1606 | Pottery | 2 | Ro | L Ro |
| 1607 | Pottery | 2 | Ro | Mid 2nd century |
| 1614 | Pottery | 3 | Ro | ?3rd–4th century (L Ro) |
| 1614 | Tile | 1 | Ro | Plus burnt sandstone |
| 1616 | Pottery | 1 | Ro | 2nd century plus |
| 1616 | Tile | 2 | Ro | - |
| **Trench 17** | | | | |
| 1705 | Pottery | 2 | Ro | Undiagnostic |
| 1707 | Pottery | 1 | Ro | - |
| 1707 | Iron object | 11 | ? Ro | 2nd century or later |
| 1708 | Pottery | 2 | Ro | 2nd century or later |
| **Trench 19** | | | | |
| 1902 | Pottery | 2 | Ro | 2nd century plus |
| 1904 | Pottery | 2 | Ro | 2nd century plus |
| 1905 | Pottery | 16 | IA | ?MIA |

# Appendix 3

## Geophysical Survey Results by Stratascan

A Report for

# RPS CONSULTANTS

on a

Geophysical Survey

carried out at

## Didcot West,
## Oxfordshire

Sept./Oct. 2000

Job Ref. No. 1490

Authors P P Barker C.Eng MICE MIWEM MIFA
E J F Mercer BA MSc

GEOPHYSICAL & SPECIALIST SURVEY SERVICES

A Report for

# RPS CONSULTANTS

on a

Geophysical Survey

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## CONTENTS

# 1 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The magnetic susceptibility survey located a broad area of enhancement through the centre of the survey area. This was targeted with detailed magnetometry which showed a number of low contrast anomalies in the southern half of the survey reminiscent of a series of ditched features possibly belonging to settlement enclosures. An area of possible archaeological activity was also targeted with resistivity wherein a number of high resistance features were located, some of which correlated with magnetometer anomalies, and may be of archaeological significance.

# 2 INTRODUCTION

## 2.1 Background synopsis

Stratascan were commissioned to carry out a geophysical survey as part of an archaeological investigation being undertaken by RPS Consultants. This concentrates on a site of archaeological interest which is situated within an area being put forward for possible future developments in Didcot.

## 2.2 Site location

The site is west of Didcot which is located south of Abingdon at OS ref. SU 5085 9015.

## 2.3 Description of site

The site under investigation is arable land measuring approximately 14.4ha in area and bounded to the north by trackway and hedgerow and top the east by Slade Road. It is located on a broad plateau lying between approximately 80-84 AOD with the ground sloping away to the west and north. At the time of survey the ground was heavily ploughed. The underlying geology is well drained loam overlying upper greensands.

## 2.4 Site history and archaeological potential

The site under investigation produced evidence indicative of a possible Roman settlement including an important Roman gold coin hoard as well as sherds of Roman pottery and other possible pieces of hypocaust. There are also cropmarks in the vicinity of archaeological interest, namely a possible circular shaped cropmark at SU 506 901 and a possible rectilinear shaped cropmark at SU 507 900. Furthermore, a Romano-British settlement containing first-century artefacts was located approximately 500 metres to the south-west of the evaluation area by Cotswold Archaeological Trust during a watching brief on a sewerage pipeline in 1997-8.

## 2.5 Survey objectives

The objective of the survey was to locate any features of archaeological significance which may be affected by invasive development.

2.6 Survey methods

A magnetic susceptibility survey was carried out over the whole of the site as a reconnaissance technique. From the results, the area of enhancement was targeted with detailed magnetometry. A small area of resistivity was also carried out over an area of archaeological activity, possibly containing a structure. More information regarding these techniques are included in the Methodology section below.

# 3 METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Date of fieldwork

The fieldwork was carried out over thirteen days from Thursday 14th September 2000 and Monday 18th September 2000 to Wednesday 4th October 2000.

## 3.2 Grid locations

The location of both the magnetic susceptibility survey grid and detailed magnetometry grids have been plotted in Figure 3 along with referencing information.

## 3.3 Description of techniques and equipment configurations

### 3.3.1 *Magnetic Susceptibility*

Alteration of iron minerals in topsoil through biological activity and burning can enhance the magnetic susceptibility (MS) of that soil. Measuring the MS of a soil can therefore give a measure of past human activity and can be used to target the more intensive and higher resolution techniques of Magnetometry and Resistivity. Measurements of MS were carried out using a field coil which provides a rapid scan and has the benefit of allowing "insitu" readings to be taken.

The equipment used on this contract was an MS2 Magnetic Susceptibility meter manufactured by Bartington Instruments Ltd. A field coil known as an MS2D was used to take field readings. This assessed the top 200mm or so of topsoil. To overcome the problem of ground contact all readings were taken 4 or 5 times and an average taken. All obvious localised "spikes" were ignored.

### 3.3.2 *Magnetometer*

Although the changes in the magnetic field resulting from differing features in the soil are usually weak, changes as small as 0.2 nanoTesla (nT) in an overall field strength of 48,000nT, can be accurately detected using an appropriate instrument.

The mapping of the anomaly in a systematic manner will allow an estimate of the type of material present beneath the surface. Strong magnetic anomalies will be generated by buried iron-based objects or by kilns or hearths. More subtle anomalies such as pits and ditches can be seen if they contain more humic material which is normally rich in magnetic iron oxides when compared with the subsoil.

To illustrate this point, the cutting and subsequent silting or backfilling of a ditch may result in a larger volume of weakly magnetic material being accumulated in the trench compared to the undisturbed subsoil. A weak magnetic anomaly should therefore appear in plan along the line of the ditch.

The magnetic survey was carried out using an FM36 Fluxgate Gradiometer, manufactured by Geoscan Research. The instrument consists of two fluxgates mounted 0.5m vertically apart, and very accurately aligned to nullify the effects of the earth's magnetic field. Readings relate to the difference in localised magnetic anomalies compared with the general magnetic background.

3.3.3 *Resistance Meter*

This method relies on the relative inability of soils (and objects within the soil) to conduct an electrical current which is passed through them. As resistivity is linked to moisture content, and therefore porosity, hard dense features such as rock will give a relatively high resistivity response, while features such as a ditch which retains moisture give a relatively low response.

The resistance meter used was an RM15 manufactured by Geoscan Research incorporating a mobile Twin Probe Array. The Twin Probes are separated by 0.5m and the associated remote probes were positioned approximately 15m outside the grid. The instrument uses an automatic data logger which permits the data to be recorded as the survey progresses for later downloading to a computer for processing and presentation.

Though the values being logged are actually resistances in ohms they are directly proportional to resistivity (ohm-metres) as the same probe configuration was used through-out.

3.4 Sampling interval, depth of scan, resolution and data capture

3.4.1 *Sampling interval*

*Magnetic susceptibility*
The magnetic susceptibility survey was carried out on a 20m grid with readings being taken at the node points.

*Magnetometer*
Readings were taken at 0.5m centres along traverses 1m apart. This equates to 800 sampling points in a full 20m x 20m grid. All traverses are surveyed in a "parallel" rather than "zigzag" mode to avoid heading error.

*Resistivity*
Readings were taken at 1.0m centres along traverses 1.0m apart. This equates to 400 sampling points in a full 20m x 20 grid. All traverses were surveyed in a "zigzag" mode.

3.4.2 *Depth of scan and resolution*

*Magnetic Susceptibility*
The MS2D coil assesses the average MS of the soil within a hemisphere of radius 200mm. This equates to a volume of some $0.016m^3$ and maximum depth of 200mm. As readings are only at 20m centres this results in a very coarse resolution but adequate to pick up trends in MS variations.

*Magnetometer*
The FM36 has a typical depth of penetration of 0.5m to 1.0m. This would be increased if strongly magnetic objects have been buried in the site. The collection of data at 0.5m centres provides an optimum resolution for the technique.

*Resistivity*
The 0.5m probe spacing of a twin probe array has a typical depth of penetration of 0.5m to 1.0m The collection of data at 1m centres with a 0.5m probe spacing provides an optimum resolution for the technique.

3.4.3 *Data capture*

*Magnetic susceptibility*
The readings are logged manually on site, and then transferred to the office where they are entered into a computer and grey scale plots are produced.

*Magnetometer*
The readings are logged consecutively into the data logger which in turn is daily down-loaded into a portable computer whilst on site. At the end of each job, data is transferred to the office for processing and presentation.

*Resistivity*
The readings are logged consecutively into the data logger which in turn is daily down-loaded into a portable computer whilst on site. At the end of each job, data is transferred to the office for processing and presentation.

3.5 Processing, presentation of results and interpretation

3.5.1 *Processing*

*Magnetic susceptibility*

No processing of the data has been undertaken.

*Magnetometer*
Processing is performed using specialist software known as *Geoplot 3.* This can emphasise various aspects contained within the data but which are often not easily seen in the raw data. Basic processing of the magnetic data involves 'flattening' the background levels with respect to adjacent traverses and adjacent grids. 'Despiking' is also performed to remove the anomalies resulting from small iron objects often found on agricultural land. Once the basic processing has flattened the background it is then

possible to carry out further processing which may include low pass filtering to reduce 'noise' in the data and hence emphasise the archaeological or man-made anomalies.

The following schedule shows the basic processing carried out on all processed magnetometer data used in this report:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Zero mean grid* | *Threshold = 0.25 std. dev.* |
| *Zero mean traverse* | *Last mean square fit = off* |
| *Despike* | *X radius = 1  Y radius = 1* |
| | *Threshold = 3 std. dev.* |
| | *Spike replacement = mean* |

*Resistivity*
The processing was carried out using specialist software known as *Geoplot 3* and involved the 'despiking' of high contact resistance readings and the passing of the data though a high pass filter. This has the effect of removing the larger variations in the data often associated with geological features. The nett effect is aimed at enhancing the archaeological or man-made anomalies contained in the data.

The following schedule shows the processing carried out on the processed resistance plots.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Despike* | *X radius = 1* |
| | *Y radius = 1* |
| | *Spike replacement* |
| *High pass filter* | *X radius = 10* |
| | *Y radius = 10* |
| | *Weighting = Gaussian* |

### 3.5.2 *Presentation of results and interpretation*

*Magnetic susceptibility*
The presentation of the data for this site involves a grey scale plot of the field measurements overlain onto a site plan (see Figure 4).

*Magnetometer*
The presentation of the data for each site involves a print-out of the raw data both as grey scales (Figures 5-7) and trace plots (Figure 8 and 9), together with a grey scale plots of the processed data (Figure 10-12). Magnetic anomalies have been identified and plotted onto the 'Abstraction and Interpretation of Magnetometer Anomalies' drawing for the site (Figure 16).

*Resistivity*
The presentation of the data for the site involves a print-out of the raw data as a grey scale plot (Figures 13 and 14), together with a grey scale plot of the processed data (Figure 15). Anomalies have been identified and plotted onto the 'Abstraction and Interpretation of Resistivity Anomalies' drawing (Figure 17).

# 4 RESULTS

*Magnetic susceptibility*
The results from the magnetic susceptibility survey shows a band of enhancement through all three fields included in the survey area. Therefore, the decision was taken to survey the whole of this area with detailed magnetometry.

*Magnetometer*
Overall, the anomalies seen in the magnetometer data are of a very low contrast. In reproducing the data in AutoCAD some of this contrast has been reduced further. Therefore, a plot of the raw data as produced in the data processing software *Geoplot* has been provided to accompany Figure 5 and aid in the abstraction and interpretation.

However, from a detailed analysis of the magnetometer data a number of weak positive linear anomalies have been abstracted in Figure 16. Five such anomalies can be seen in the south eastern field respecting a parallel and equally spaced alignment which suggests that they belong to land drainage.

Other positive linear anomalies scattered across the survey area are more difficult to interpret due to their feint appearance and lack of any arrangement or pattern. It is possible that some of these anomalies are of an archaeological origin but it is not possible to distinguish these from those anomalies that are a result of agricultural activity.

There are some positive linear anomalies to the south end of the survey that have been interpreted as being possible archaeology. The characteristics of these anomalies in their form and arrangement suggests a series of ditched features reminiscent of settlement enclosures. Indeed, the low contrast of the anomalies hinders a more comprehensive interpretation but it is suggested that it may belong to a phase prior to the possible Roman occupation.

The evidence found over the site during previous investigations suggested a possible presence of remains of structures from the Roman period. However, there are no immediate rectilinear arrangements of anomalies seen in the data resembling structures. If there are remains of structures they may consist of stone.

*Resistivity*
An area containing a 'hotspot' of finds seen in the ploughsoil and an area containing anomalies in the magnetometer data was targeted with resistivity in an attempt to resolve the possibility of stone structures.

From the data a number of high resistance linear anomalies have been abstracted in Figure 17. As with the magnetometer data some of these anomalies may be associated with agricultural activity, such as ridge and furrow, although there is a possibility that some may be of archaeological significance. In a similar way to the magnetometry, the resistivity data shows low contrast anomalies and this together with a lack of any determining characteristics makes interpretation difficult. Understanding the anomalies more fully would be better resolved through trenching.

In combining the results from the two surveys in Figure 18 it is apparent that there is a correlation of some of the anomalies. Situated in the south west of the resistivity survey area positively magnetic anomalies can be seen to correlate with high resistance anomalies. Such high resistance anomalies can be associated with walls and being positively magnetic would suggest it is made of fired brick.

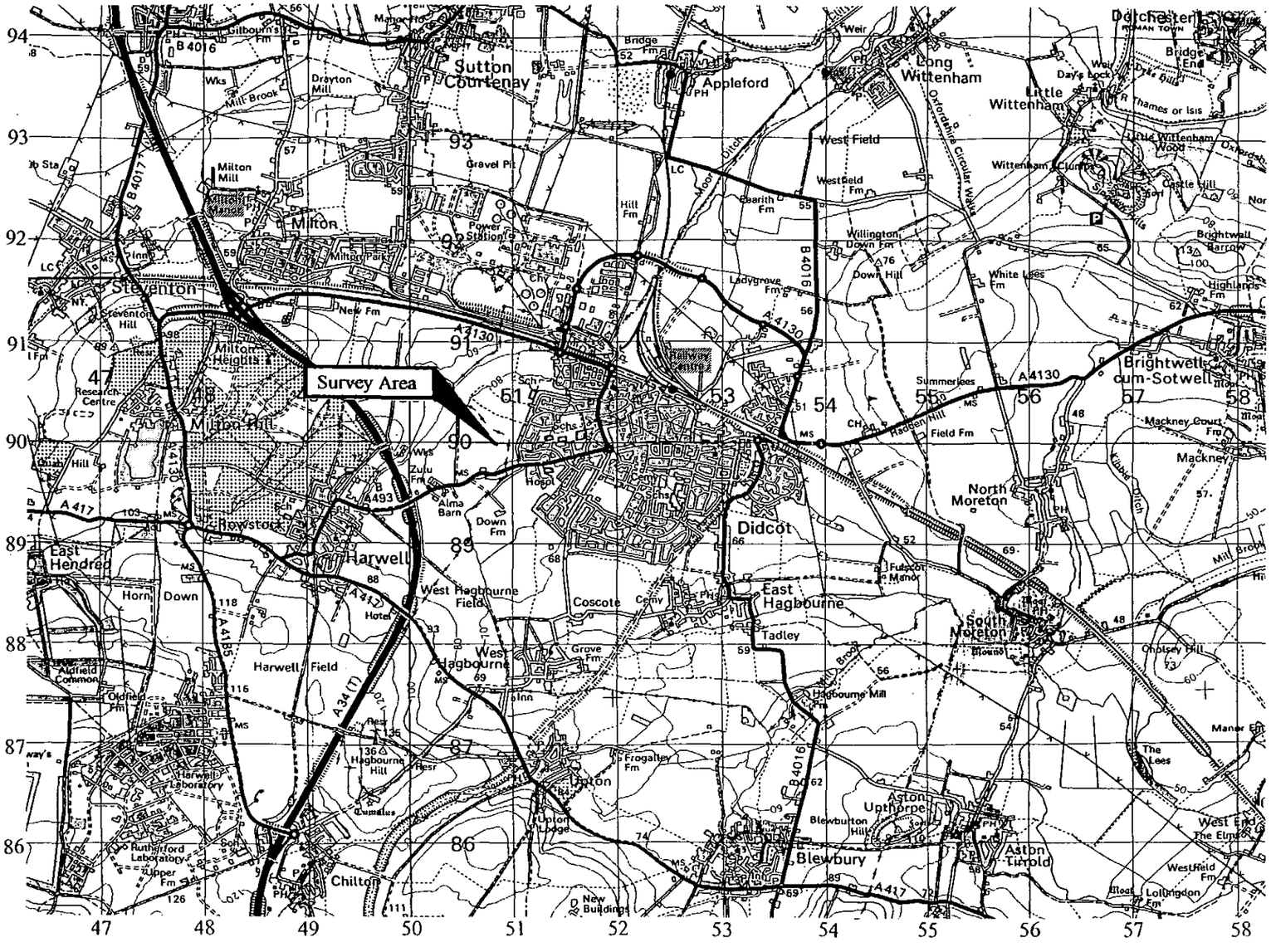
It would therefore seem that the other positively magnetic anomalies abstracted may also belong to structures. Therefore, further survey with resistivity may have been beneficial.

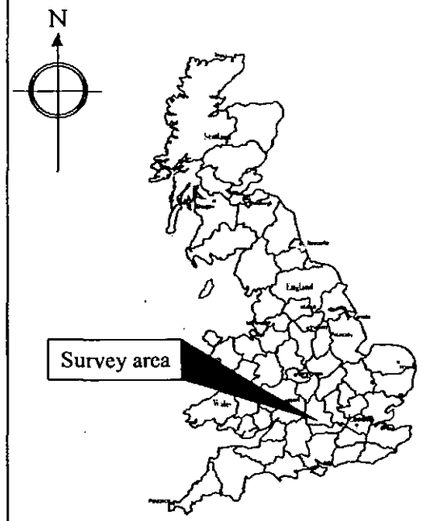
## 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The magnetic susceptibility results showed an area of enhancement through the centre of the survey area which was targeted with detailed magnetometry. The results of the magnetometer survey showed the anomalies located to be of a very low contrast. Therefore, any weak magnetic features will be masked and only the stronger features abstracted. This means that interpretation of the anomalies abstracted is difficult. Nevertheless, within the southern half of the survey area there are a number of anomalies which have been interpreted as being of possible archaeological significance. Their characteristics were at first thought to be more reminiscent of settlement enclosures and their did not appear to be any anomalies recognisable as remains of buildings.

However, an area was targeted with resistivity in order to determine the presence of any non-magnetic structural remains, for example stone buildings, wherein a number of high resistance linear anomalies were located. The strongest of these anomalies coincided with the magnetometer anomalies thought to be of archaeological interest. It is therefore possible that these combined anomalies represent a fired brick wall. This then begs the question as to the significance of the remaining positively magnetic anomalies highlighted as possible archaeology, i.e. are they enclosure ditches or could they be structural remains? In order to determine the significance of the anomalies found both in the magnetometer and resistivity surveys it is suggested that they are trenched.

OS 100km square = SU




Site centred on NGR SU 5085 9015

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

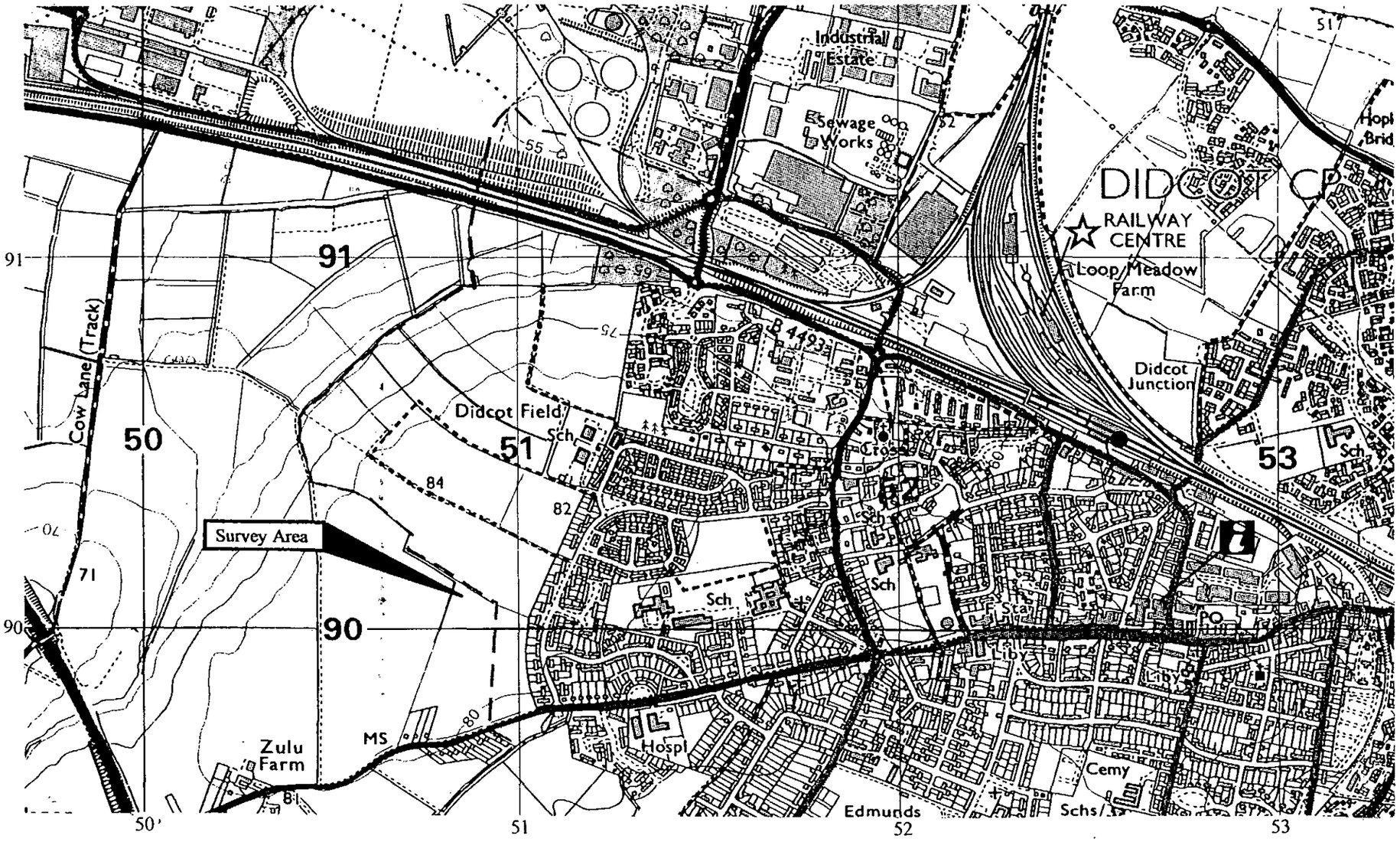
Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
GENERAL LOCATION PLAN

Scale
1:50 000

0m 1km 2km

STRATASCAN™
GEOPHYSICAL & SPECIALIST SURVEY SERVICES
Vineyard House
Upper Hook Road
Upton Upon Severn
Worcestershire
WR8 OSA
Tel. No. +44(0)1684 592266
Fax +44(0)1684 594142
E-Mail info@stratascan.co.uk






Site centred on NGR SU 5085 9015

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
DETAILED LOCATION PLAN

Scale
1:25 000

0m 20 40 60 80 100m

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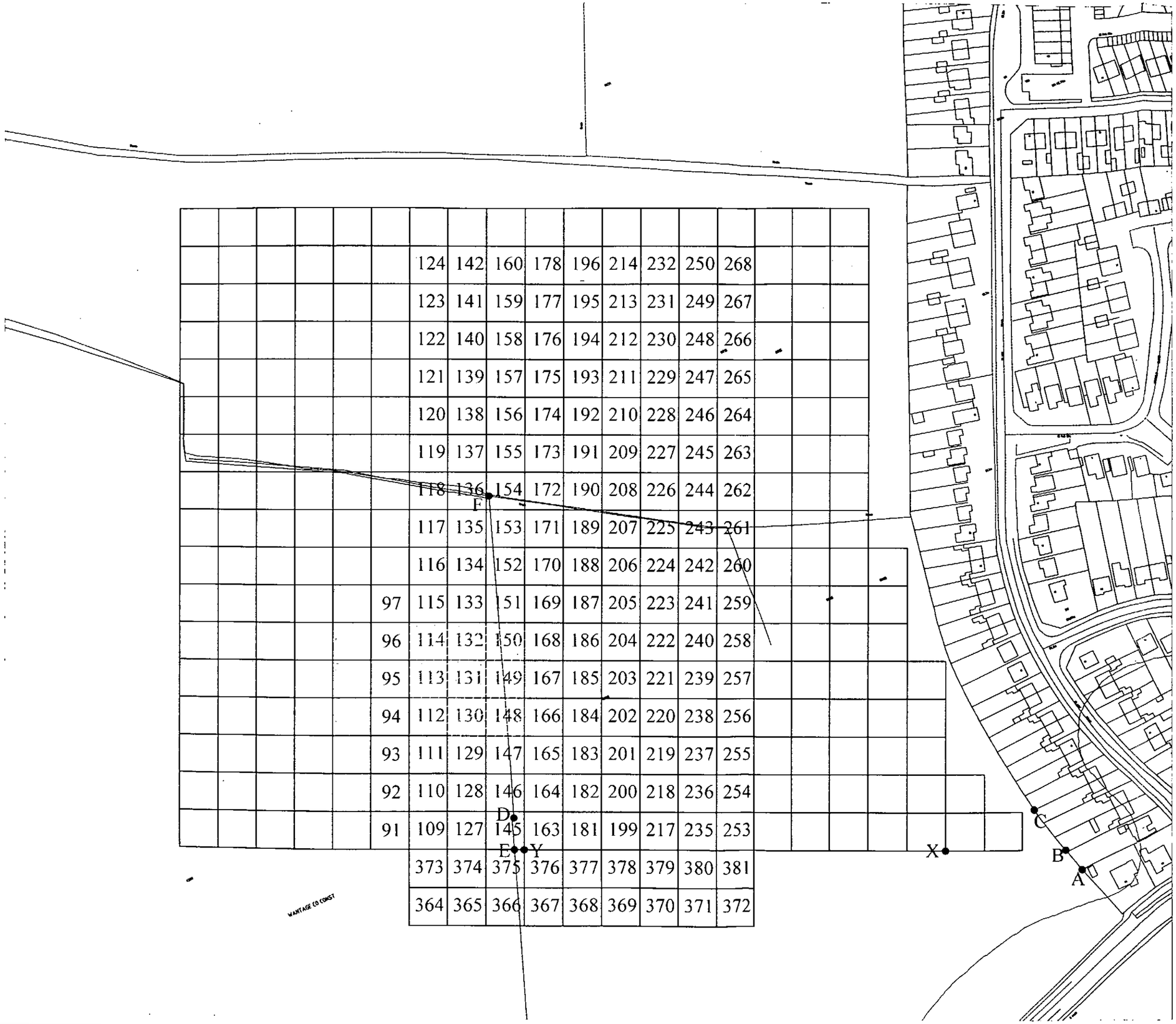
E-Mail info@stratascan.co.uk




N

| REFERENCING INFORMATION | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A-B | 31.3m | A-X | 71.75m | B-X | 62.6m |
| C-X | 51.0m | D-E | 16.75m | D-F | 171.1m |
| D-Y | 17.55m | E-Y | 5.05m | F-Y | 188.25m |
| X&Y | Grid node pegs 220m apart | | | | |
| X&Y | Baseline points | | | | |
| A,B,C | Intersection of garden fenceline/wall | | | | |
| D&F | Intersection/end of fenceline | | | | |
| E | Referencing point on fenceline | | | | |
| GRID INFORMATION | | | | | |
| 192 | Grids surveyed with magnetometry | | | | |
| | Grids also surveyed with resistivity | | | | |

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
SITE PLAN SHOWING
LOCATION OF SURVEY
GRIDSAND REFERENCING

Scale
1:2000

0m 20 40 60 80 100m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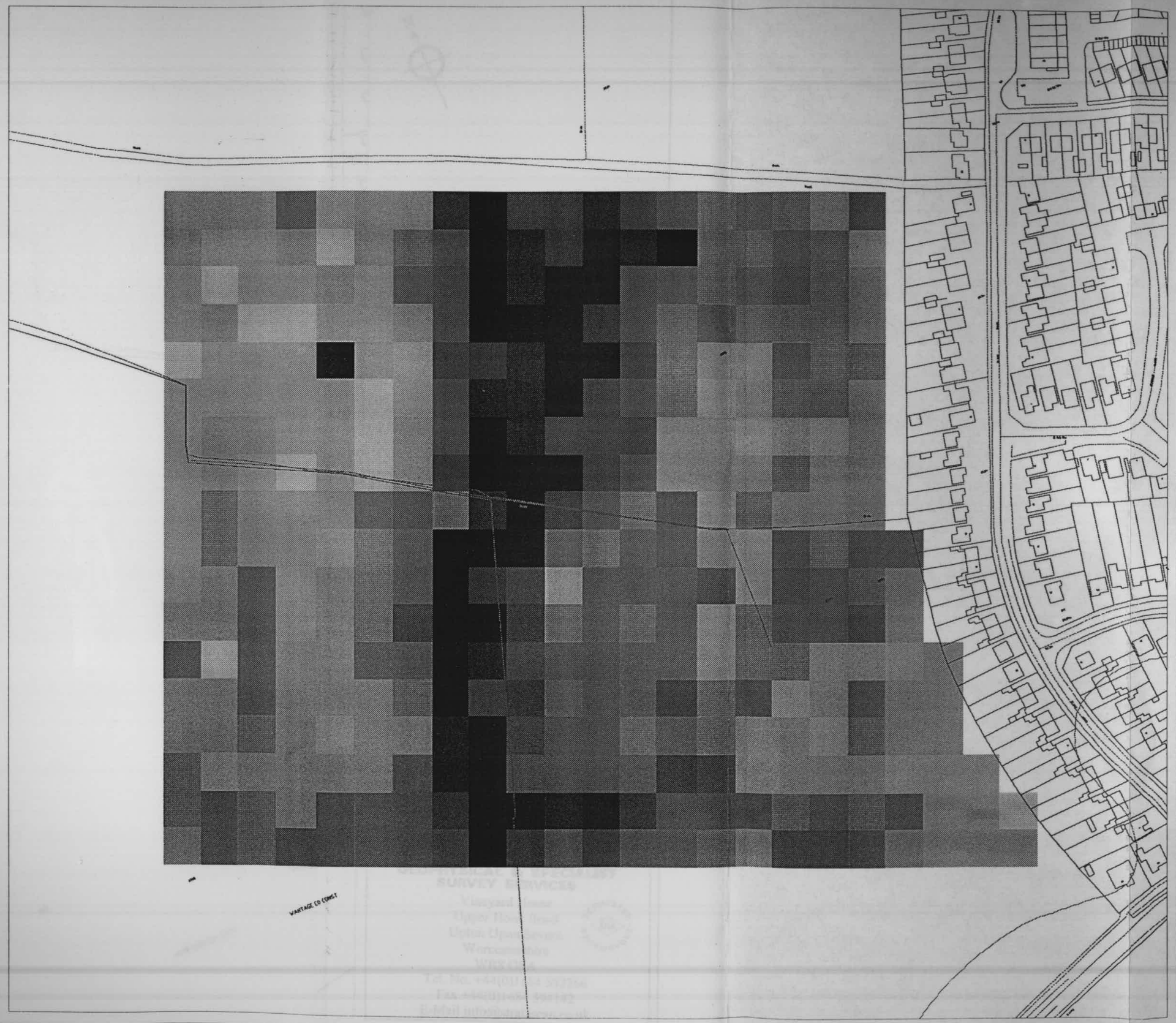
E-Mail info@stratascan.co.uk




Plotting parameters
Minimum 3 $10^{-4}$ SI (white)
Maximum 20 $10^{-4}$ SI (black)

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
PLOT OF MAGNETIC
SUSCEPTIBILITY DATA

Scale
1:2000

0m 20 40 60 80 100m

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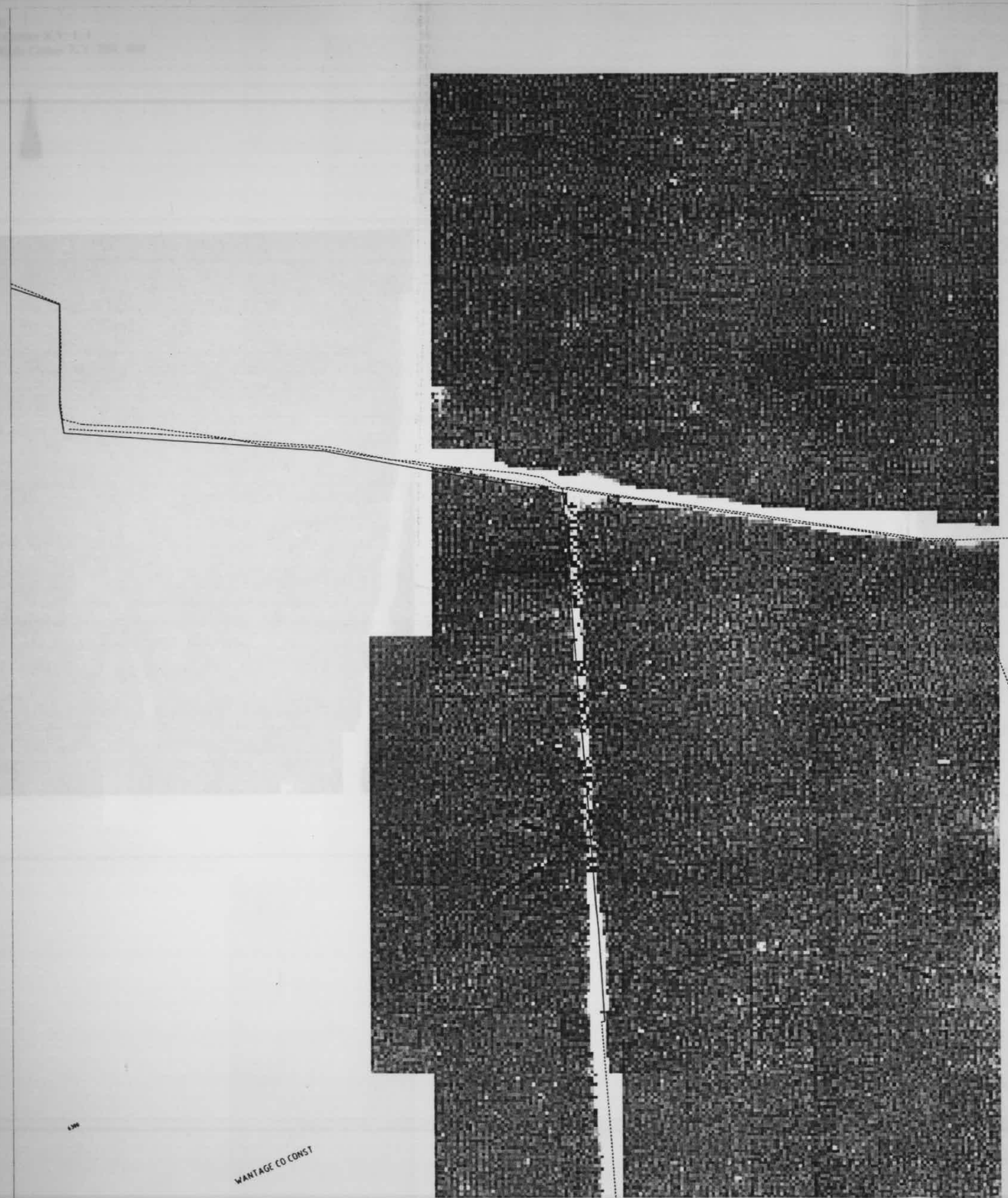


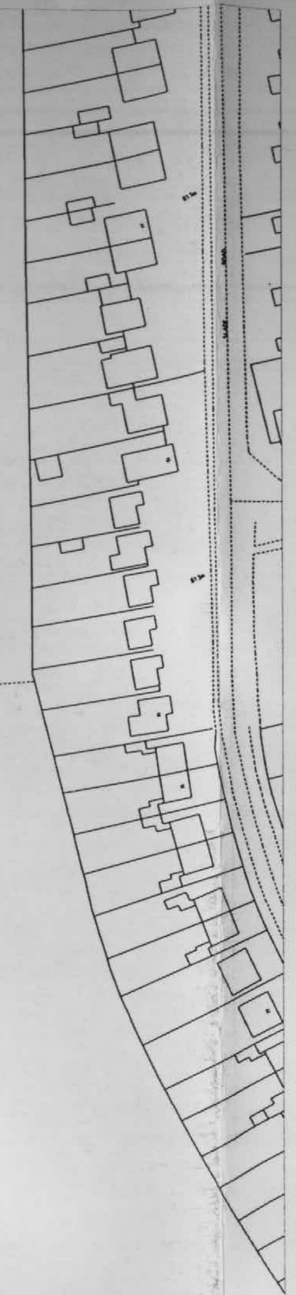

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Plotting parameters
Minimum -3.4nT (white)
Maximum +4.7nT (black)

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
PLOT OF RAW
MAGNETOMETER DATA

Scale
1:1500

0m 10 20 30 40 50 60m

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Tel. No. +44(0)1684 592266
Fax +44(0)1684 594142
E-Mail info@stratascan.co.uk

REGISTERED ORGANISATION IFA

Geoplot 3.0 - Gradiometer Data - c:\geoplot\comp\1490-m\1.cmp +++

**Data Set:**
Top Left Corner X,Y: 1, 1
Bottom Right Corner X,Y: 360, 400

**Display Parameters**
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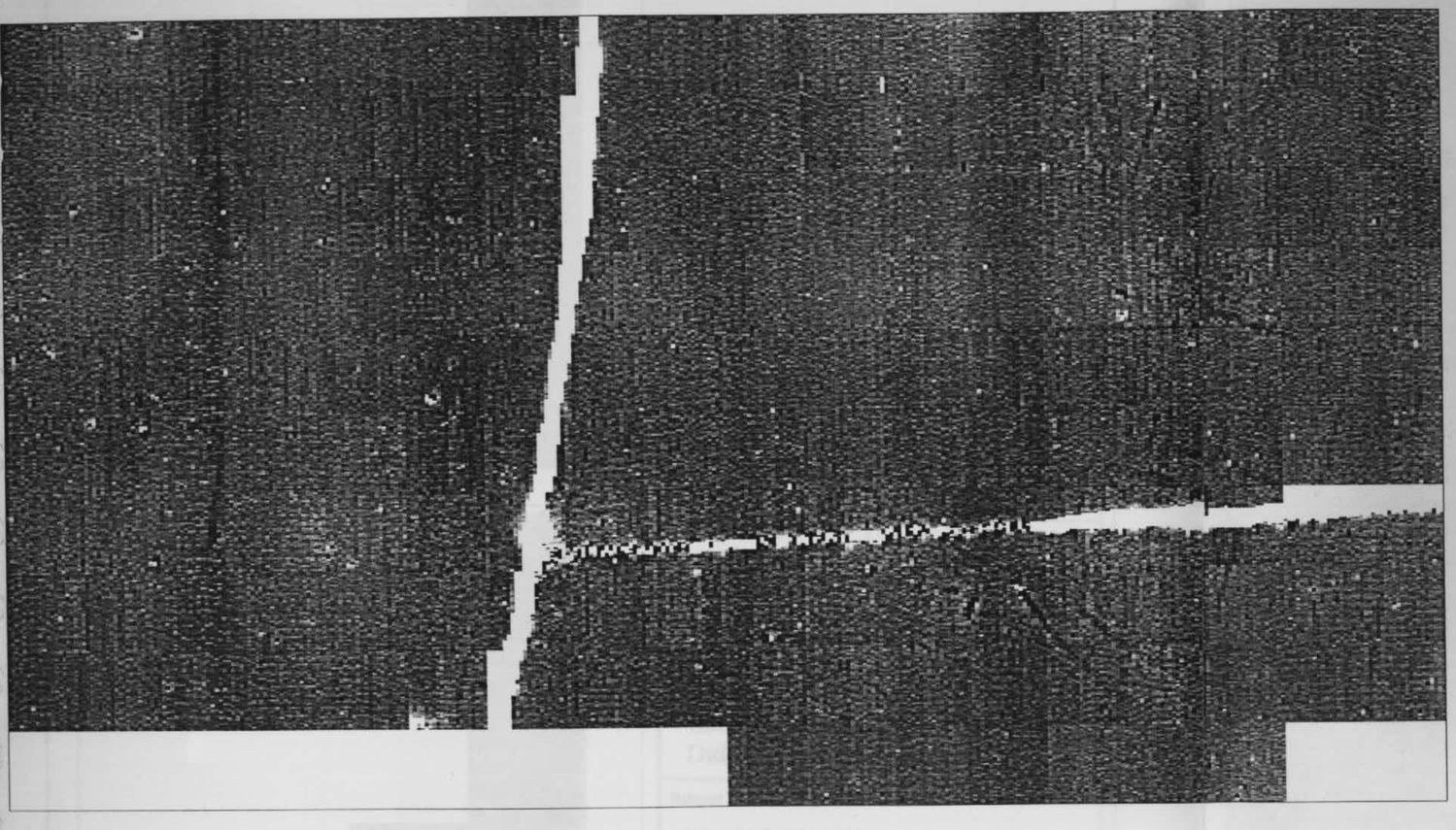
Maximum: 1
Contrast: 1
Units: Std Dev
Palette: grey55.ptt
Palette Option: Normal
Plotting Scale: 1:1500
Printer Resolution (X): 600dpi
Printer Resolution (Y): 600dpi



4.68
4.01
3.34
2.67
2.00
1.33
0.66
-0.01
-0.69
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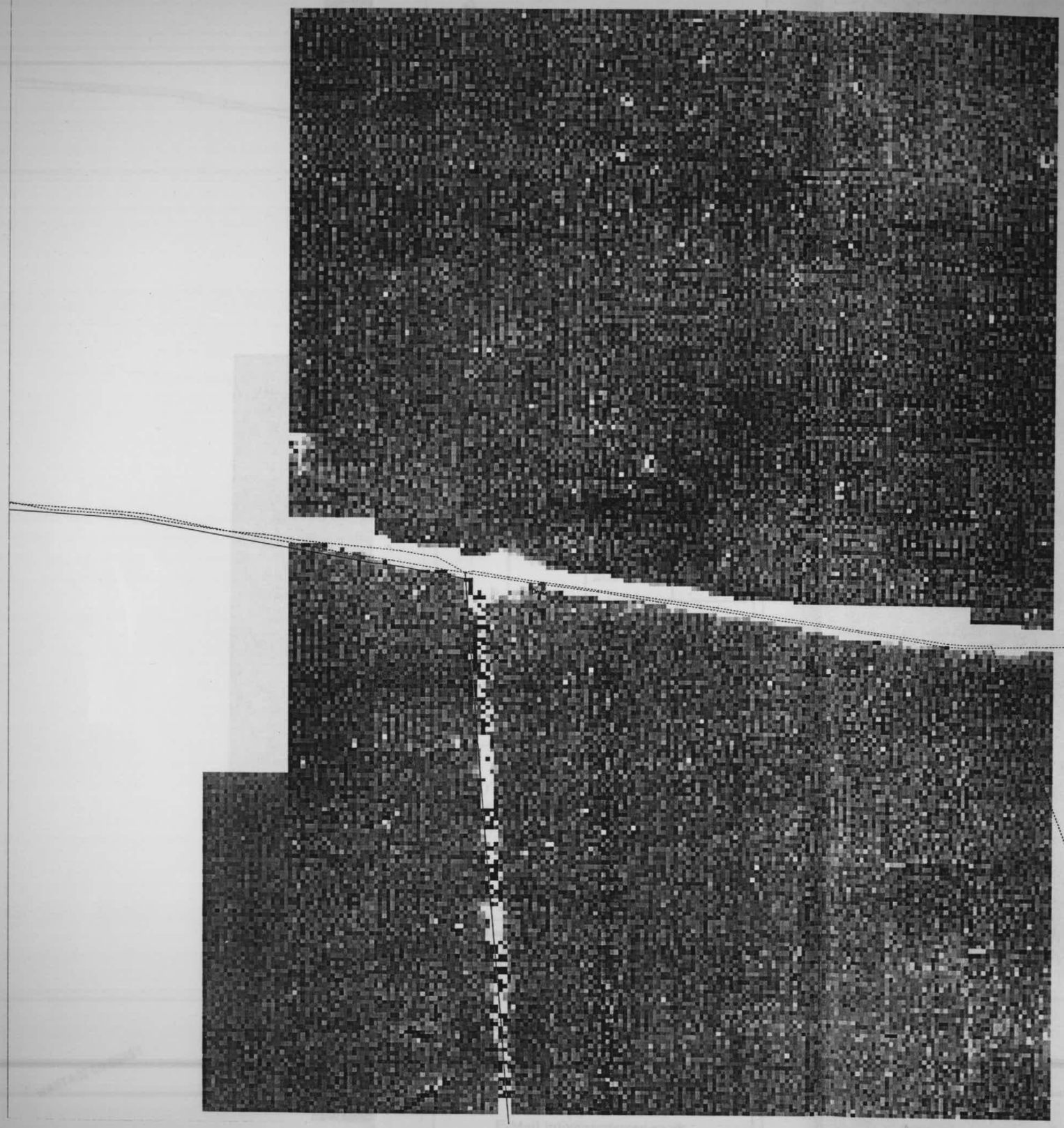
-2.03
-2.70
-3.37
nT



Plotting parameters
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Maximum +4.7nT (black)

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
PLOT OF RAW
MAGNETOMETER DATA -
NORTH END OF SURVEY

Scale
1:1000

0m 10 20 30 40 50m


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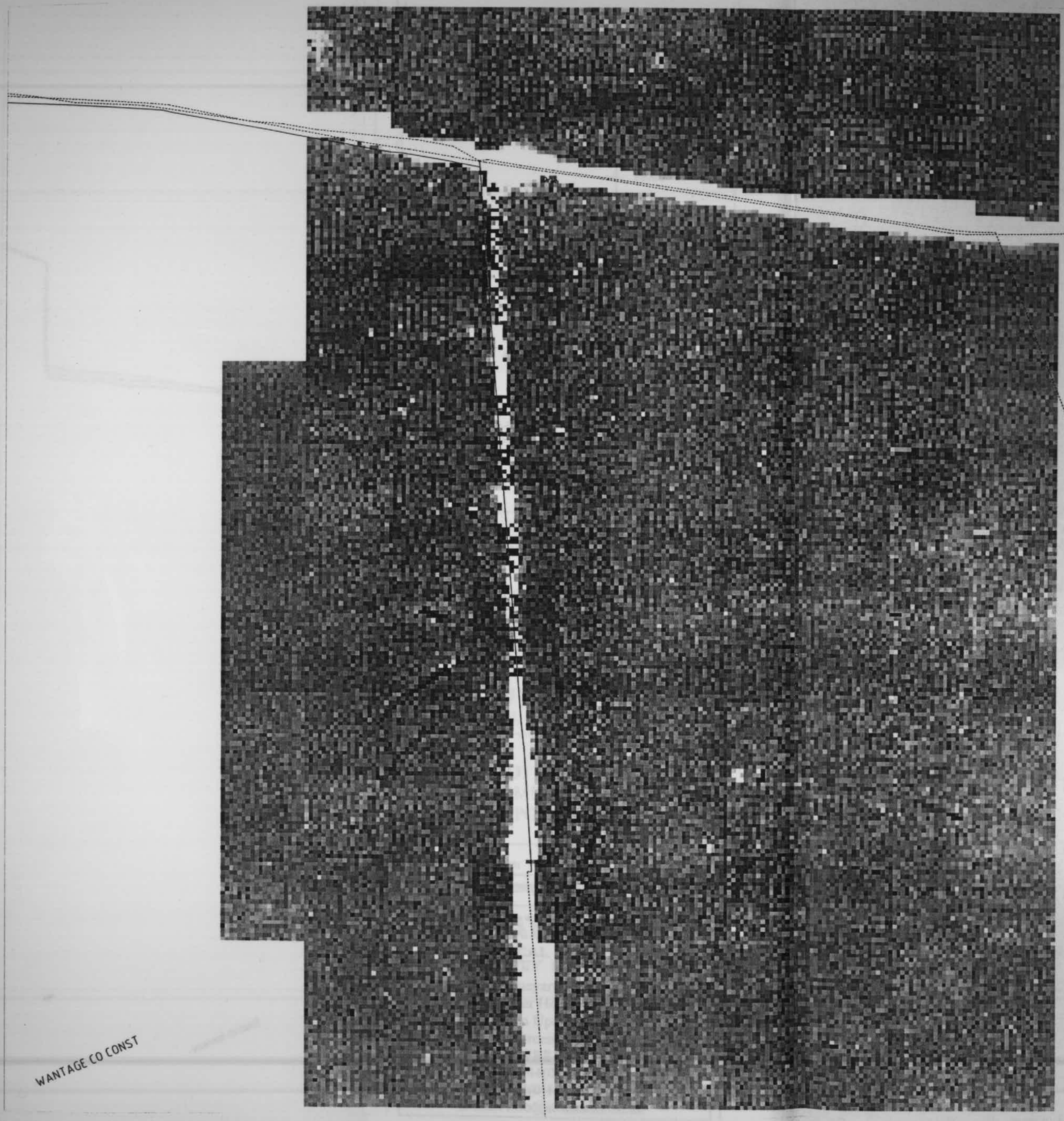
Fax +44(0)1684 594142
E-Mail info@stratascan.co.uk

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Plotting parameters
Minimum -3.4nT (white)
Maximum +4.7nT (black)

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
PLOT OF RAW MAGNETOMETER DATA - SOUTH END OF SURVEY

Scale
1:1000

0m 10 20 30 40 50m

STRATASCAN™
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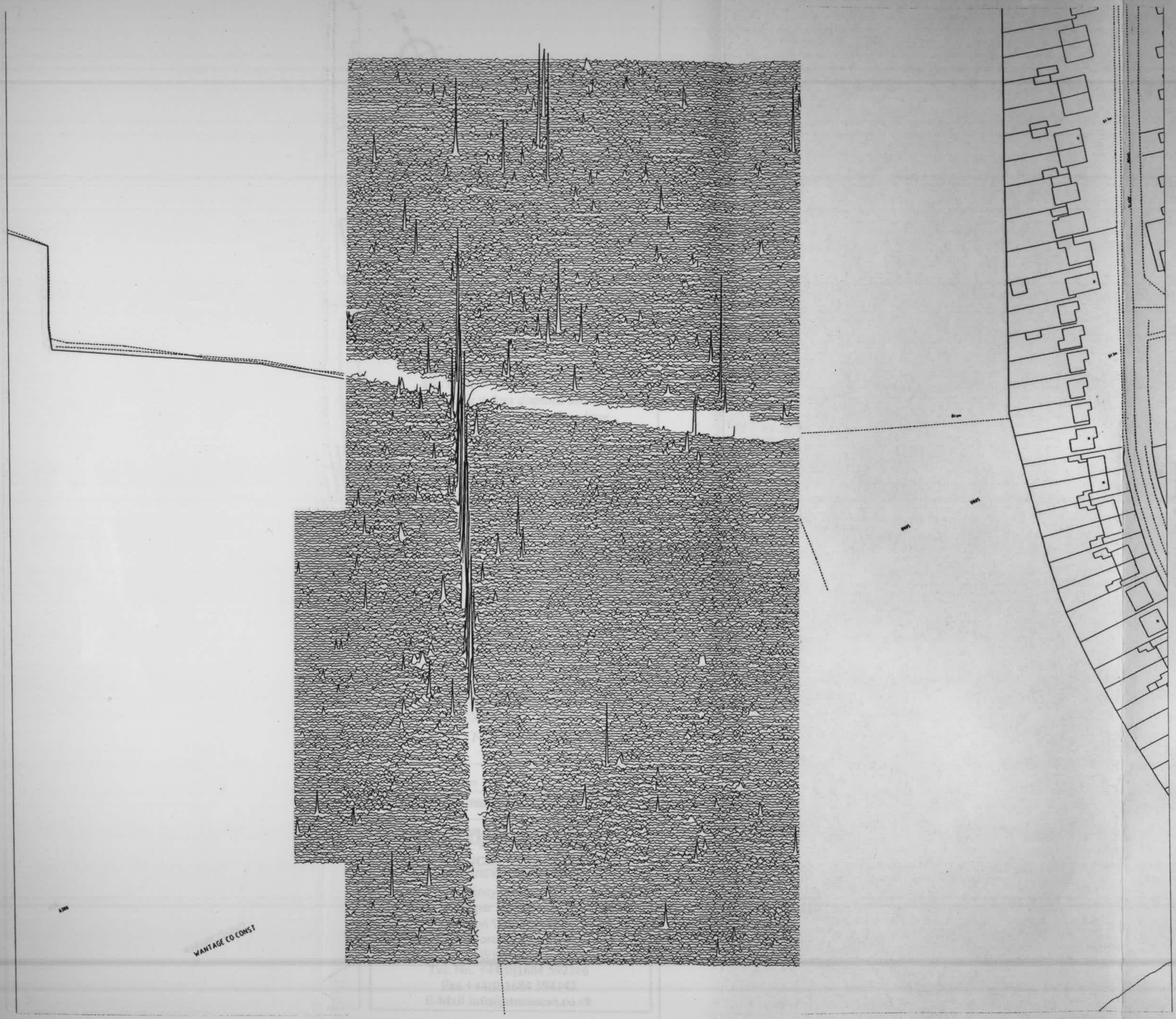
Fax +44(0)1684 594142
E-Mail info@stratascan.co.uk




N

200nT
240nT
180nT
120nT
60nT
0nT

Plotting parameters
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*(Positive values displace above the trace line. Hidden values have not been plotted)*

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
TRACE PLOT OF RAW MAGNETOMETER DATA SHOWING POSITIVE VALUES

Scale
1:1500

0m 10 20 30 40 50 60m

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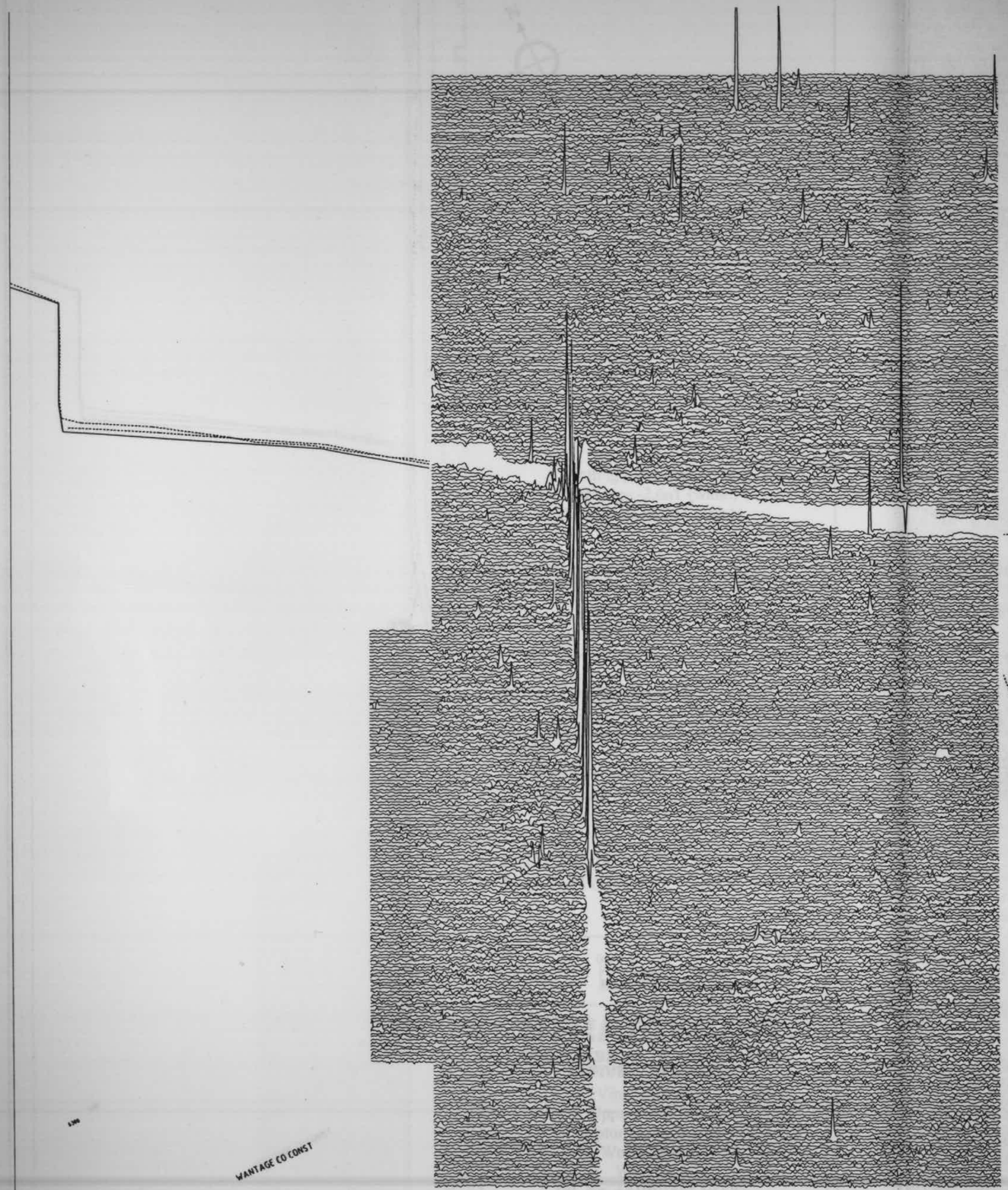
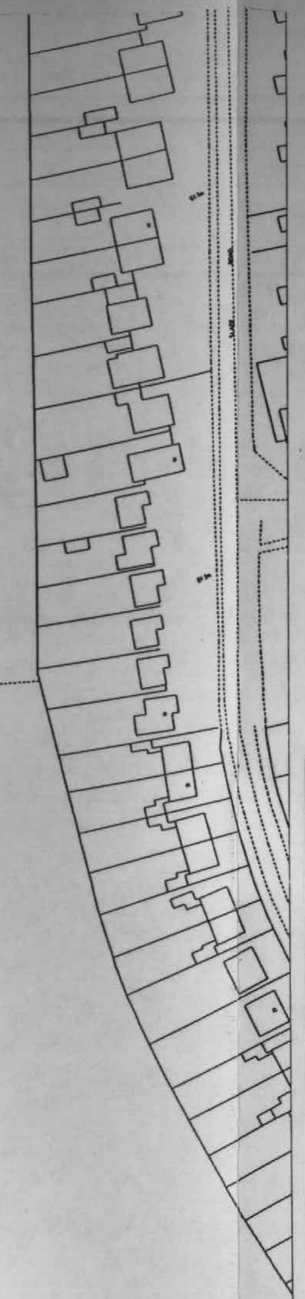
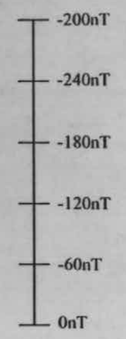
REGISTERED IFA ORGANISATION




Plotting parameters
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*(Negative values displace above the trace line. Hidden values have not been plotted)*

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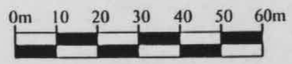
|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
TRACE PLOT OF RAW MAGNETOMETER DATA SHOWING NEGATIVE VALUES

Scale
1:1500

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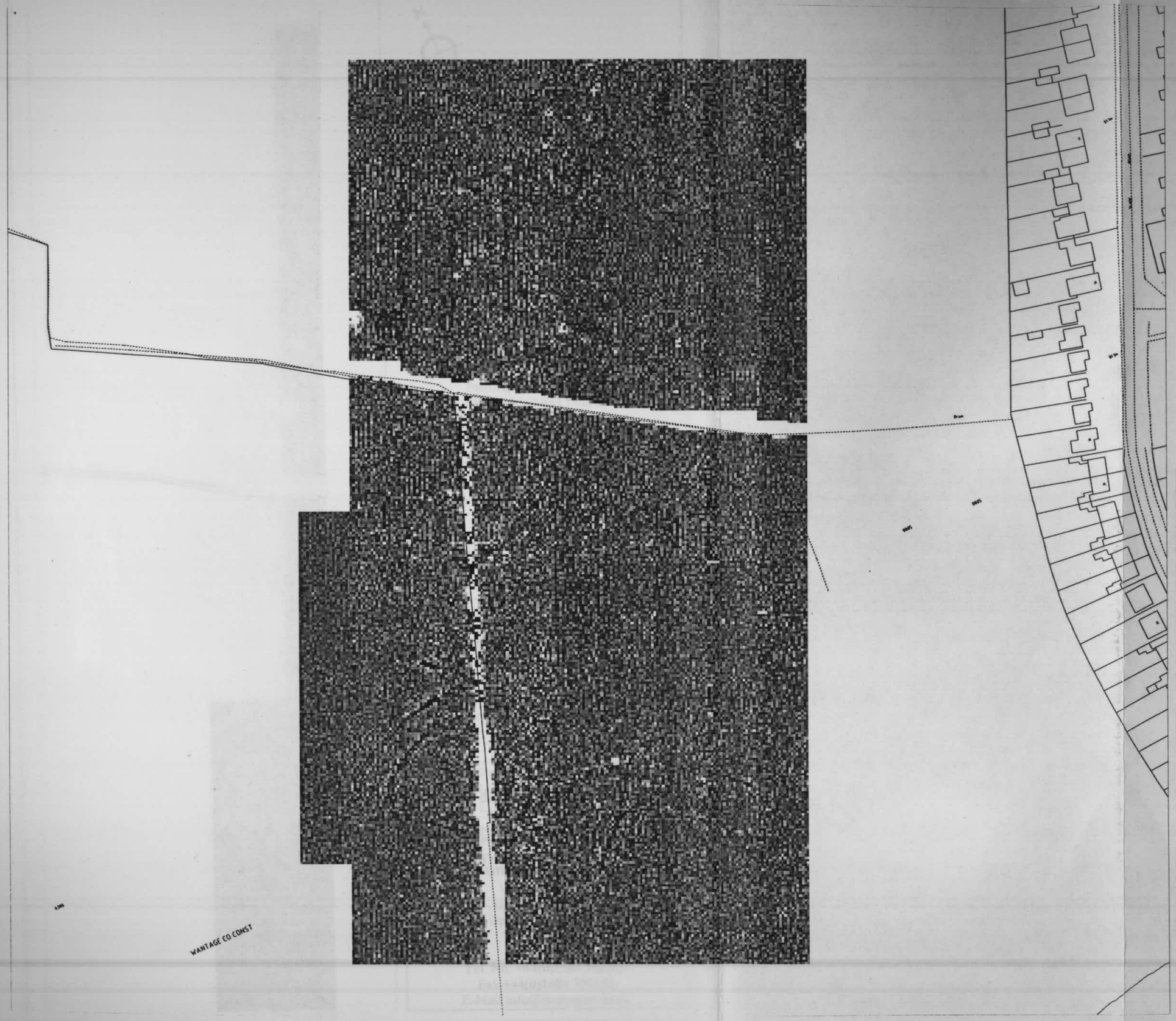


Plotting parameters
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Maximum +2.5nT (black)

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
PLOT OF PROCESSED
MAGNETOMETER DATA

Scale
1:1500

0m 10 20 30 40 50 60m

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Plotting parameters
Minimum -2.6nT (white)
Maximum +2.5nT (black)

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 11 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
PLOT OF PROCESSED MAGNETOMETER DATA - NORTH END OF SURVEY

Scale 1:1000

0m 10 20 30 40 50m


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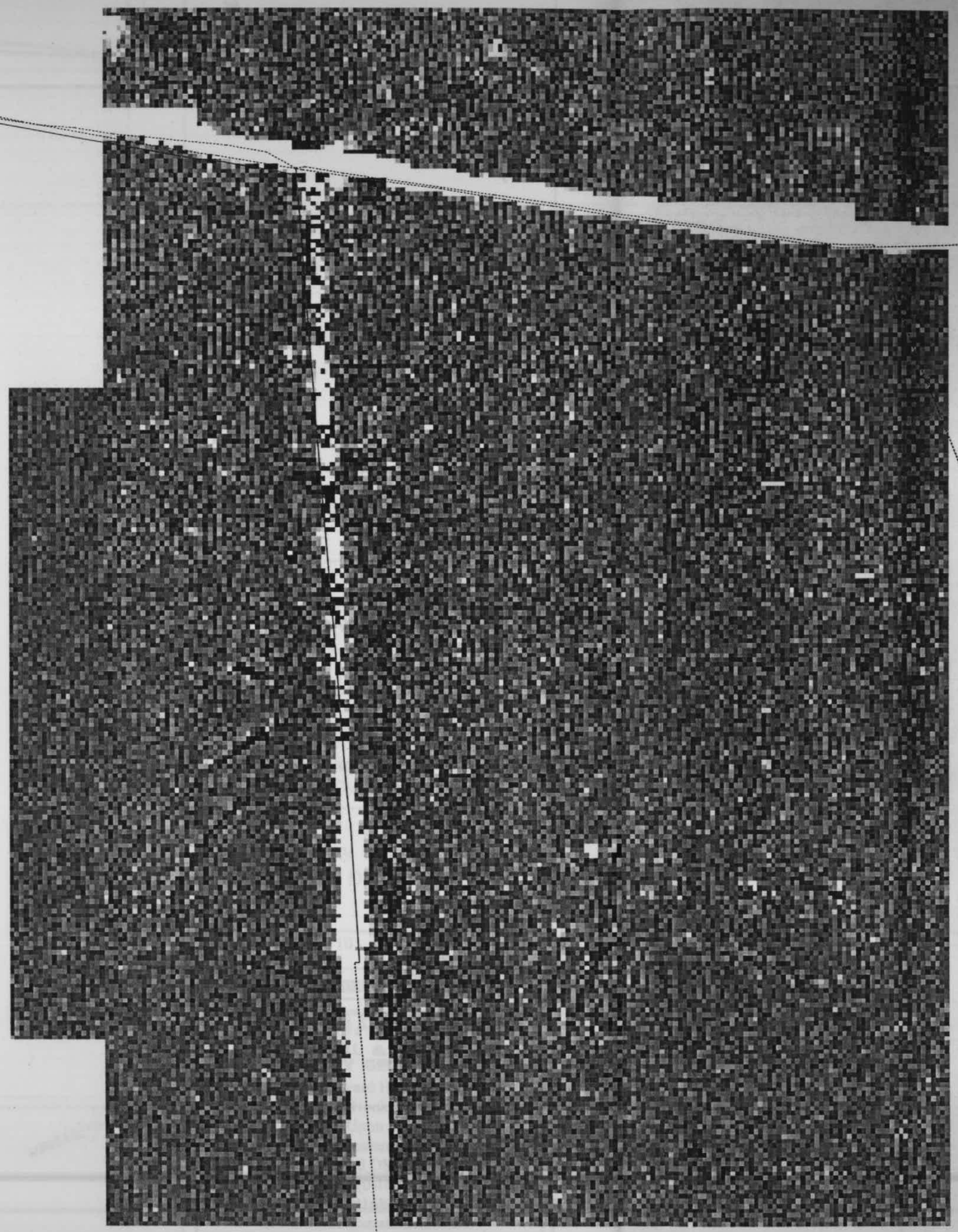


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Plotting parameters
Minimum -2.6nT (white)
Maximum +2.5nT (black)

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
PLOT OF PROCESSED MAGNETOMETER DATA - SOUTH END OF SURVEY

Scale
1:1000

0m 10 20 30 40 50m

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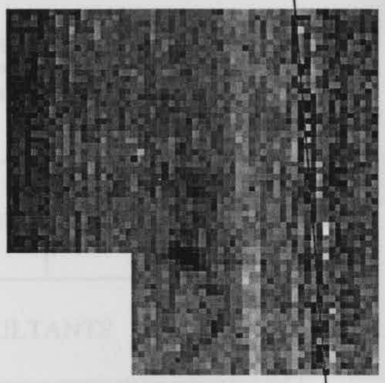





Plotting parameters
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Maximum +16.7Ω (black)

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
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Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
PLOT OF RAW
RESISTIVITY DATA

Scale
1:1000

0m 10 20 30 40 50m

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6300

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Plotting parameters
Minimum +8.9Ω (white)
Maximum +14.1Ω (black)

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
PLOT OF RAW RESISTIVITY DATA WITH NARROWER PLOTTING PARAMETERS

Scale 1:1000

0m 10 20 30 40 50m


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Plotting parameters
Minimum -2.0Ω (white)
Maximum +2.1Ω (black)

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

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Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
PLOT OF PROCESSED
RESISTIVITY DATA

Scale
1:1000

0m 10 20 30 40 50m

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| | |
|---|---|
| | Positive linear anomaly - possible archaeology |
| | Positive linear anomaly - cut features of unknown origin |
| | Land drains |
| | Positive discrete anomaly with negative return - ferrous objects |
| | Linear anomaly with both positive and negative response - boundary |

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
ABSTRACTION AND INTERPRETATION OF MAGNETOMETER ANOMALIES

Scale
1:1500

0m 10 20 30 40 50 60m

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N

| | |
|---|---|
| | Area of high resistance - probably geological/pedological effect |
| | Area of low resistance - probably associated with ploughing headland |
| | Area of high resistance - associated with field boundary |
| | High resistance linear anomalies - probable archaeology |
| | High resistance linear anomalies - of possible archaeological interest |
| | High resistance linear anomalies - possible ridge and furrow |

| Figure No. | Job no. | Date | Drawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
ABSTRACTION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESISTIVITY ANOMALIES

Scale 1:1000

0m 10 20 30 40 50m

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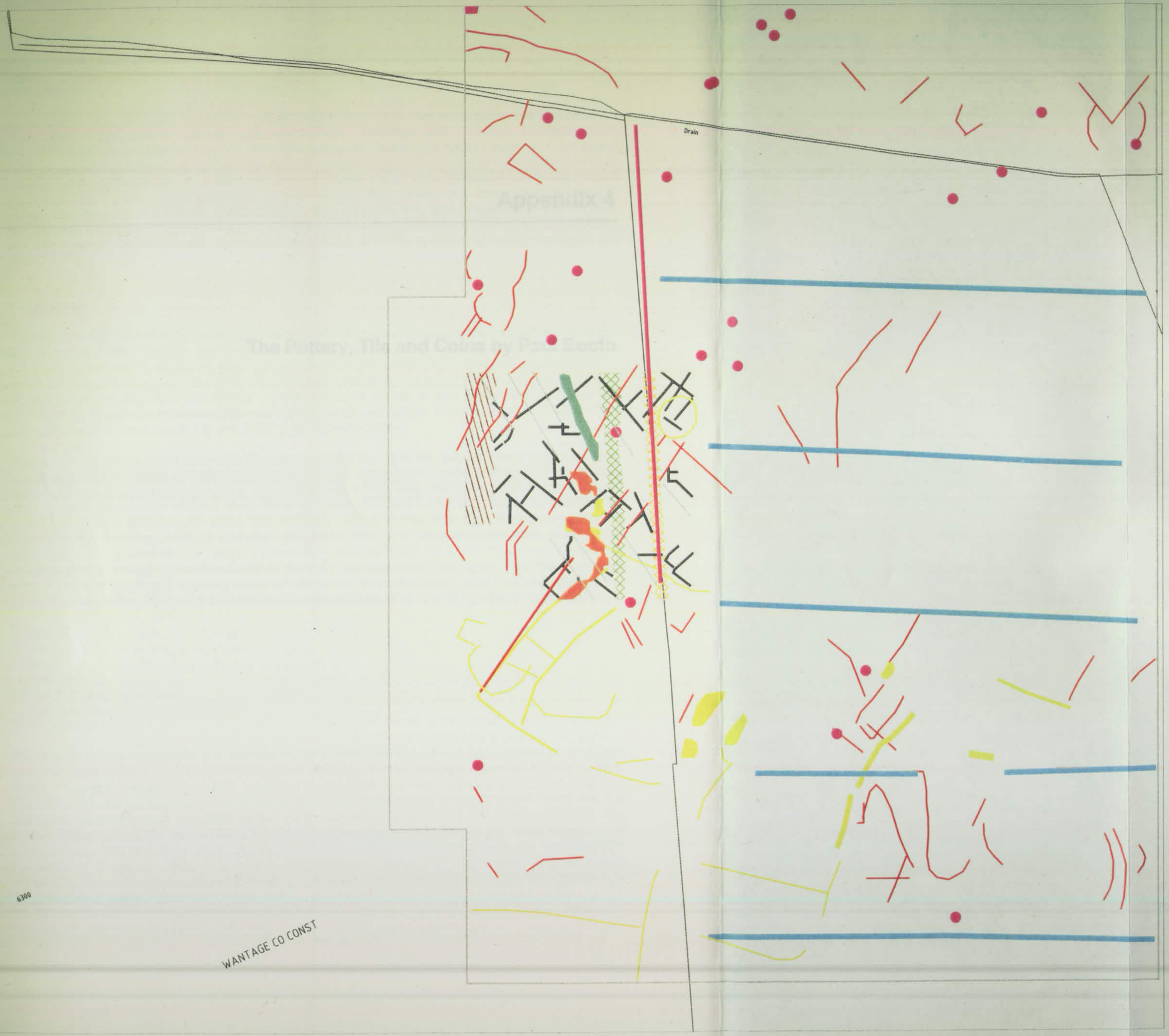


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| 18 | 1490 | Sept./Oct. 2000 | EJFM |
| | | | Checked PPB |

Client
RPS CONSULTANTS

Project Title
Geophysical Survey,
Didcot West, Oxfordshire

Subject
COMPARISON OF
MAGNETOMETER AND
RESISTIVITY ANOMALIES

Scale
1:1000

0m 10 20 30 40 50m

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DIDCOT WEST EVALUATION: THE POTTERY AND CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

## Introduction

Some 853 sherds (9061 g) of prehistoric and Roman pottery were recovered during the evaluation. A single sherd (1 g) in a sandy oxidised fabric was probably of medieval date and three red earthenware sherds (106 g) were assignable to the 18th-19th centuries. These four pieces were all from topsoil contexts and are not considered further. The remaining material consists of a group of handmade sherds, probably mostly of Middle Iron Age date, and a larger Roman assemblage, principally of the late Roman period but with a small 1st-2nd century component as well. The material is in reasonable condition in terms of preservation of surfaces; abraded sherds were generally rare and occasional groups of such material were quite distinctive, but the average sherd weight for the assemblage (10.6 g) is not particularly high for a domestic settlement site. The Roman assemblage is for the most part typical for the region and period.

## Methodology

The pottery was scanned quite rapidly and recorded by context using a simplified version of the Oxford Archaeological Unit's Iron Age and Roman pottery recording system, which by applying standardised codes for fabrics and forms allows easy comparison between assemblages from different parts of the region. Aspects of this are amplified below. Quantification was by sherd count, weight and a rapid count of vessels based on individual rim sherds. Presence and/or details of rim, base, handle, spout and decorative types and other characteristics were recorded as appropriate. A summary quantification of the pottery by period for each context is presented in an appendix below.

Prehistoric hand made fabrics were defined in terms of their two most common inclusion types (indicated by letters) and sometimes an indicator of fineness, on a scale from 1 (very fine) to 5 (very coarse), though this was not generally used here. The definition of fabrics using this system does not necessarily serve to identify production sources, since these are generally unknown for Iron Age material within the region. Nor does it automatically follow that identically coded sherds were from the same (unknown) source, merely that their makers exploited very similar clay and tempering resources, indicating a uniformity of potting tradition. The range of inclusion types utilised was broad, but most would have been widely available or have occurred naturally in common clay sources in the region. Few, therefore, and none of the most commonly occurring ones, are diagnostic of specific source areas within or outside the Upper Thames region. The range of inclusion types present, and their identifying letters, were as follows:

A quartz sand.
F Flint.
G Grog.
L Limestone.
S Shell (including fossil shell).
V Vegetable/organic (sometimes voids).
Z indeterminate voids.

The Roman fabrics are placed in a number of major ware groups, defined on the basis of significant common characteristics (for a more detailed account of this aspect of the recording system see Booth et al. 1994, 135-6). The ware groups are usually combined to constitute two main classes of material, fine and specialist wares on the one hand, and on the other the rest of the coarse wares (cf Booth 1991). The fine and specialist ware groups (identified by the initial letter of the fabric code) are: samian ware (S), fine wares - colour-coated, lead glazed, mica coated etc - (F), amphorae (A), mortaria (M), white wares - other than mortaria - (W), and white slipped wares (Q). The remaining coarse ware groups are: 'Belgic type'(in the sense of Thompson 1982, 4-5), usually grog-tempered, fabrics (E), 'Romanised' oxidised coarse wares (O), 'Romanised' reduced coarse wares (R), black-burnished ware (B) and calcareous (particularly shell) tempered wares (C).

Within these classes are hierarchically arranged subgroups, usually defined on the basis of inclusion type, and individual fabrics/wares are then indicated at a third level of precision, both levels of subdivision being expressed by numeric codes. Thus R20 is a general code for sandy reduced coarse wares, while R21 is a specific sandy reduced Oxfordshire product. For the bulk of the present assemblage fabric identification was at the intermediate level of precision, though in some cases coarse ware sherds were not defined beyond the level of major ware group.

**Fabrics, forms and chronology: Prehistoric**

Some 70 sherds (374 g) of hand made pottery were recorded, in the following fabrics.

| Fabric | No. sherds | Weight (g) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | 13 | 86 | C, CB, D |
| AG | 2 | 7 | |
| AL | 3 | 26 | |
| AS | 26 | 97 | C |
| AZ | 2 | 6 | |
| F | 3 | 62 | |
| FA | 2 | 21 | |
| GZ | 16 | 50 | |
| L | 1 | 10 | C |
| SA | 1 | 6 | |
| VA | 1 | 3 | |

The assemblage was dominated by sand-tempered fabrics, of which the most common variant (fabric AS) had sparse small shell fragments as a secondary inclusion type. Other fabrics were scarce, except for GZ, tempered with ?grog and possible organic voids, 16 sherds of which came from context 1905. There was a general absence of chronologically diagnostic pieces in terms of feature sherds and distinctive surface treatment or decoration. Five rim sherds, all probably from jars and all but one very small, were present. A simple ?jar rim occurred in the limestone tempered fabric L and the other four rims were all in sand-tempered fabrics. The most distinctive of these was from a barrel-shaped jar in fabric A. Such a form is characteristic of the Middle Iron Age and the remaining rims are all potentially consistent with such a date. This limited evidence is supported by that of the fabrics, which are also largely of Middle Iron Age character. Flint-tempered sherds are not common at this time in the Oxford region, but do occur south of the Thames in small numbers. The present sherds in these fabrics may therefore be of similar date to the remainder of the group, though the absence of diagnostic pieces makes this difficult to judge. (One flint-tempered sherd had a trimmed edge indicating reuse). It is possible that one or two of these sherds are earlier, perhaps of Late Bronze Age date, but this is speculative and there is a complete absence of the heavily shell-tempered fabrics which are characteristic of the Early Iron Age in the region. On balance, therefore, a Middle Iron Age date is likely, though not conclusively demonstrable, for most of the prehistoric assemblage.

Prehistoric material occurred quite widely across the site and in contexts 404, 506, 508, 509, 806, 951 and 1905 was not associated with any later pottery. Prehistoric sherds were clearly residual in contexts 601, 604, 801, 816, 931, 934 and 950, where they were found with Roman material.

**Fabrics, forms and chronology: Roman**

Some 783 sherds (8687 g) of Roman pottery were recorded. The fabrics present, with quantities, were as follows (note that detailed references to fabric descriptions are not given here):

S. Samian ware (undifferentiated). 1 sherd, 1 g.
S20. South Gaulish samian ware. 4 sherds, 6 g.
S30. Central Gaulish samian ware. 6 sherds, 100 g.
F30. Mica-dusted ware. 1 sherd, 16 g.

F51. Oxford red-brown colour-coated ware. 140 sherds, 970 g.
F52. Nene Valley colour-coated ware. 8 sheds, 31 g.
F54. New Forest colour-coated ware. 1 sherd, 5 g.
M22. Oxford white mortarium fabric. 3 sherds, 113 g.
M31. Oxford white-slipped oxidised mortarium fabric. 7 sherds, 150 g.
M41. Oxford oxidised red-brown colour-coated mortarium fabric. 25 sherds, 420 g.
W10. Fine white ware fabrics (includes Oxford products). 4 sherds, 116 g.
W11. Oxford parchment ware. 1 sherd, 2 g.
W20. Sandy white ware fabrics. 5 sherds, 52 g.
Q21. Oxford oxidised white-slipped ware, 2 sherds 2 g.
E50. Flint-tempered `Belgic type' fabrics. 3 sherds, 9 g.
E80. Grog-tempered `Belgic type' fabrics. 5 sherds, 40 g.
O. General oxidised coarse wares. 10 sherds, 64 g.
OF. Fine oxidised ware, probably fabric F51 with surfaces lost. 2 sherds, 8 g.
O10. Fine oxidised `coarse' wares, mostly Oxford products. 25 sherds, 90 g.
O20. Sandy oxidised coarse wares. 8 sherds, 73 g.
O80. Coarse- (usually grog-) tempered oxidised wares. 12 sherds, 257 g.
O81. Pink grogged ware. 6 sherds, 234 g.
R. General reduced coarse wares. 174 sherds, 1251 g.
R10. Fine reduced `coarse' wares, mostly Oxford products. 32 sherds, 545 g.
R20. Sandy reduced coarse wares. 12 sherds, 290 g.
R30. Moderately sandy reduced coarse wares. 153 sherds, 2138 g.
R39. Alice Holt sandy reduced coarse ware. 4 sherds, 182 g.
R40. Miscellaneous (mostly flint-tempered) reduced coarse wares. 8 sherds, 80 g.
R50. Black-surfaced sandy reduced coarse wares. 23 sherds, 82 g.
R70. Calcareous-tempered reduced coarse wares. 4 sherds, 204 g.
R90. Coarse- (usually grog-) tempered reduced wares. 16 sherds, 209 g.
R95. Savernake reduced coarse ware. 1 sherd, 19 g.
B10. Black-burnished type wares. 8 sherds, 36 g.
B11. Dorset black-burnished ware (BB1). 28 sherds, 411 g.
B30. Wheel-thrown black-burnished type wares. 3 sherds, 46 g.
C. General calcareous-tempered wares. 1 sherd, 18 g.
C10. General shell-tempered wares. 18 sherds, 114 g.
C11. 'Harrold type' late Roman shell-tempered ware. 17 sherds, 266 g.

Small quantities of early Roman material were present. These included sherds in E50 and E80 ware groups, as well as occasional pieces in most of the reduced ware subgroups, since ware types such as R10 and R30 are found throughout the period from the late 1st to the 4th centuries inclusive. Distinguishing early from late Roman body sherds in these ware groups is therefore difficult without diagnostic features, though in some cases it may be possible. The general shortage of distinctive early Roman forms, and the clear evidence that the majority of context groups, including all the large ones, are of late Roman date (even though some may contain a little redeposited earlier material) indicates that early Roman activity is at a relatively low level.

This can be seen also in the relative proportions of the major ware groups. While the assemblage is dominated by reduced coarse wares the proportion of these (54.5% of the sherd count) is significantly lower than would be expected in an early Roman assemblage in the region, in which reduced coarse ware representation of 80% to 90% is common. The relatively high representation of fine and specialist wares (see above) is also chronologically diagnostic in this region, as well as being a potential site status indicator (see further below). Thus fine and specialist ware levels above c. 10% (here they total 26.8% of sherds) are very rare in the early Roman period. Moreover, the great majority of the fine and specialist wares present are Oxford products most of which (fabrics F51, M31, M41 and W11) by definition date after AD 240.

The bulk of the assemblage probably derived from the Oxford industry, though the coarse ware products of that industry are nor particularly distinctive in terms of fabric. Therefore, while the majority of sherds in ware group R30, for example, were probable Oxford products, some may have derived from less well-

known industries in the region with a very similar repertoire of products, such as Compton, in north Berkshire. The products of a number of non-local coarse ware suppliers were certainly identified. These were Alice Holt grey ware (R39), pink grogged ware, from a source or sources in Buckinghamshire (O81), black-burnished ware (B11) and late shell-tempered ware (C11). Some sherds recorded as C10 may also have belonged to this last group. All these fabrics are regular, if not numerous, components of late Roman assemblages in the region. The only imported pottery present was a small quantity of samian ware. Amphorae were completely absent from the assemblage, but in view of its late Roman emphasis this is not surprising.

Where diagnostic vessel forms occur these are generally of late Roman date, even in fabrics which potentially span the whole of the Roman period. Thus, bowl and dish forms in a variety of reduced coarse wares and in black-burnished ware are characteristically of late 3rd-4th century types. Jar forms, which are mostly conservative, are more difficult to date closely. A few 1st and 2nd century vessel types do occur, however. One of the most distinctive of these was the base of a reduced ware dish imitating samian form 18 (Young 1977 type R60) with an illiterate potter's stamp.

Roman pottery was widely, but not uniformly, distributed across the site. The principal concentrations were in Trenches 6, 8, 9 and 10. All these trenches had slightly above average (10.6 g) sherd weights, though even these figures never exceeded 12 g. While these were therefore areas of considerable activity this does not seem to have included primary rubbish disposal, and many context groups even in these areas may consist of reworked and redeposited material.

The high representation of fine and specialist wares (26.8% of the sherd total, 22.9% by weight) has already been mentioned. This is well above the average figure for other late Roman assemblages in Oxfordshire (Booth forthcoming, see also Henig and Booth 2000, 173). In part this may reflect the relative proximity of the site to the principal source of these wares, the Oxford industry, which extended as far south as Dorchester. It is as likely, however, that the assemblage, while not producing any exotica, indicates a high status site. This would be consistent with other indications, such as from the building material, that the site is that of a villa or at least contains one building with heated rooms of a type which could occur within a villa complex.

*Quantification of pottery by context and period (number of sherds/weight g)*

| | Period | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Context | Iron Age | Roman | Post-Roman | Ceramic date/comment |
| 101 | | | 1/40 | 18-19C |
| 103 | | | 1/60 | 18-19C |
| 201 | | 5/10 | 1/1 | Medieval |
| 402 | | 2/2 | | ?2C or later |
| 404 | 23/82 | | | MIA |
| 502 | | 3/11 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 506 | 4/64 | | | ?MIA |
| 508 | 6/18 | | | MIA |
| 509 | 1/4 | | | ?MIA |
| 601 | 1/17 | 11/94 | 1/6 | ?19C |
| 604 | 6/34 | 18/201 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 606 | | 9/46 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 607 | | 43/554 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 701 | | 5/39 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 703 | | 1/24 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 705 | | 9/53 | | ?2C |
| 801 | 2/14 | 19/131 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 806 | 2/34 | | | MIA |
| 810 | | 12/82 | | 4C |
| 811 | | 12/142 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 813 | | 2/47 | | ?2C or later |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 816 | 1/10 | 63/857 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 817 | | 9/139 | | mid 2C or ?later |
| 819 | | 5/23 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 901 | | 5/60 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 903 | | 205/1908 | | 4C |
| 906 | | 6/105 | | 4C |
| 907 | | 2/44 | | ?mid-late 1C |
| 909 | | 16/85 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 911 | | 37/639 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 913 | | 8/271 | | 4C |
| 914 | | 3/69 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 916 | | 2/29 | | late 3-4C |
| 918 | | 15/244 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 919 | | 1/11 | | 2C or later |
| 921 | | 5/29 | | mid 2C or later |
| 923 | | 7/40 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 925 | | 3/47 | | 2C or later |
| 931 | 3/23 | 38/500 | | 4C, ?after 350 |
| 934 | 1/7 | 3/15 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 937 | | 3/26 | | ?late 1-2C |
| 942 | | 12/51 | | post-medieval CBM |
| 944 | | 7/52 | | late 1-2C |
| 945 | | 1/9 | | 2C or later |
| 950 | 3/13 | 1/21 | | ?1-2C |
| 951 | 1/4 | | | ?IA |
| 953 | | 1/14 | | ?1-2C |
| 10B cleaning | | 7/71 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1001 | | 2/9 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1004 | | 4/88 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1005 | | 10/162 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1006 | | 1/9 | | ?3-4C |
| 1010 | | 7/41 | | mid/late 3-4C, probably 4C |
| 1012 | | 4/22 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1018 | | 8/92 | | late 3-4C |
| 1020 | | 6/48 | | late 3-4C |
| 1028 | | 10/116 | | 4C |
| 1029 | | 1/24 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1032 | | 1/7 | | ?3-4C |
| 1038 | | 3/21 | | late 3-4C |
| 1039 | | 8/88 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1041 | | 7/88 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1049 | | 2/37 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1101 | | 1/27 | | ?3-4C |
| 1103 | | 1/66 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1201 | | 7/37 | | ?3-4C |
| 1203 | | 9/149 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1301 | | 2/12 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1405 | | 31/328 | | mid/late 3-4C, probably 4C |
| 1501 | | 8/172 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1504 | | 8/41 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1509 | | 1/5 | | uncertain |
| 1511 | | 13/34 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1606 | | 2/54 | | mid/late 3-4C |
| 1607 | | 2/26 | | mid 2C |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1614 | | 3/65 | | ?3-4C |
| 1616 | | 1/6 | | 2C or later |
| 1707 | | 1/3 | | 2C or later |
| 1708 | | 2/10 | | 2C or later |
| 1904 | | 1/5 | | 2C or later |
| 1905 | 16/50 | | | ?MIA |
| | | | | |
| TOTAL | 70/374 | 793/8687 | 4/107 | |
| | | | | |

Note: MIA=Middle Iron Age

**Ceramic building material**

The site produced some 318 fragments (24.377 kg) of ceramic building which was probably or certainly of Roman date. This figure excludes a further 17 fragments (103 g) of uncertain material and 14 fragments (685 g) of post-medieval brick and tile. The material was scanned rapidly by context, and quantified in terms of six main categories (tile types): A tegula; B imbrex; C box flue; D plain flat tile; E miscellaneous fragments; and F brick. Fabrics, which were almost entirely sand-tempered, were not examined in any systematic way. The presence of a few fragments of a distinctive tile fabric was noted, however.

Quantification of Roman tile types by trench (number of fragments/weight g)

| | Tile types | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Trench | A | B | C | D | E | F | TOTAL |
| 5 | | | | | 1/5 | | 1/5 |
| 6 | | | | 3/354 | 9/79 | | 12/433 |
| 7 | 1/141 | | | 1/84 | 2/22 | | 4/247 |
| 8 | | | | 2/106 | 6/74 | | 8/180 |
| 9 | 8/1322 | 3/469 | 1/6 | 4/185 | 36/351 | 1/198 | 53/2531 |
| 10 | 20/2454 | 13/3128 | 38/4614 | 42/5109 | 61/1496 | 3/1147 | 177/17948 |
| 11 | | | | 1/38 | | | 1/38 |
| 12 | 3/455 | 6/288 | | 8/677 | 10/156 | | 27/1576 |
| 13 | | | | 1/49 | | | 1/49 |
| 14 | 2/186 | 1/27 | | 1/63 | 5/31 | | 9/307 |
| 15 | 1/264 | 1/270 | | 4/233 | 15/89 | | 21/856 |
| 16 | 1/114 | 1/11 | | 2/82 | | | 4/207 |
| Total | 36/4936 | 25/4193 | 39/4620 | 69/6980 | 145/2303 | 4/1345 | 318/24377 |

Roofing material (types A and B) was fairly widely distributed across the site, but it is notable that box flue tile and 'brick' (types C and F), the types specifically associated with hypocausts, occurred exclusively in Trenches 9 and 10. The latter trench produced the great majority of all the tile (56% of fragments, 74% by weight), It is possible that type D (plain flat) tiles from other trenches included undecorated hypocaust tile fragments, but the majority of pieces assigned to type D are likely to have derived from tegulae.

No complete tiles were recorded. The average fragment weight (76.7 g) indicates that the material was fairly well broken. Most box flue tiles wee identified on the basis of combed decoration - only rarely were individual pieces large enough to be identifiable on the basis of form alone. The combing on the box flue tiles was mostly quite fine and in simple patterns. A few fragments which had been treated with a large, coarse-toothed comb, but these were all too small for any impression to be gained of the character of the combing. A single imbrex fragment had wavy line combed decoration at one end. Red paint was also noted on one tile fragment. This was in a distinctive grog-tempered fabric (pink grogged ware) deriving from a source or sources in Buckinghamshire. Principally used for pottery (see fabric O81 above) it was also used for tile production, including the manufacture of very large imbrices. It is possible that the small fragments found here (one each in contexts 1028B and 1405) were from such a tile.

Fabric O81 is much more likely to have been in use in the 4th century than earlier. Elsewhere, when tile occurs in ceramically-dated contexts these are without exception of later 3rd to 4th century date.

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Didcot West Evaluation: Roman Coins

Some 25 Roman coins, all low-denomination bronzes of late 3rd-4th century date, were recovered during the evaluation. The coins were examined briefly in order to providing dating evidence and a general assessment of the character of the site. The coins were in variable condition; a significant number were heavily encrusted and therefore illegible without specialist cleaning. Such coins were assigned to general 3rd-4th or 4th century date ranges in the basis of their size. Legible coins ranged from very worn to (in one case) almost mint condition.

The approximate breakdown by issue period (after Reece) is as follows:

| Period | Number of coins |
|---|---|
| 260-275 | 2 |
| 275-296 | 1* |
| 330-348 | 4 |
| 348-364 | 1* |
| 364-378 | 3 |
| 378-388 | 1 |
| | |
| ?4th century | 11 |
| ?3rd-4th century | 2 |

*= irregular issue

Most of the coins are standard late 3rd and 4th century types. An AE4 Votis issue of Arcadius is relatively unusual as a site find, however, compared to the Victoria Auggg and Salus Reipublicae types normally encountered for this emperor. The reverse legend of this piece is unclear, and VOT V MVLT X or VOT X MVLT XX are both possible, depending on the issuing mint. The issue date, between AD 383-7, falls within a period of coin loss usually poorly-represented in Romano-British site finds. The mintmark on this coin is illegible, but it was not struck in the north-west provinces and the nearest sources would be Rome or Aquileia. Other mints certainly represented in the assemblage are Trier and Arles, as would be expected.

The coin issue periods represented are typical of sites occupied in the late Roman period. The earliest issues are of the Tetrici (one each of Tetricus I and II), dated AD 270-273. The absence of coins of the early 4th century is characteristic and does not indicate an absence of occupation at this time. Even in this small assemblage the usual peaks (AD 330-348 and 364-378) are evident, while the normal rarity of coin of the period 378-388 has already been noted. The absence of coins from the last issue period (AD 388-402) is not necessarily significant given the small number of (approximately) dated pieces.

PMB
29.11.2000

Summary of coin dates

| OAU No. | Context | Date | Comment |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Tr 6 spoil | 337-341 | |
| 2 | 801 | ?4C | |
| 3 | 901 | 4C | poss FTR fh (350+) CR |
| 4 | 902 | 3-4C | CR |
| 5 | 903 | 364-378 | CR |
| 6 | 903 | 330-335 | |
| 7 | 903 | 364-378 | CR |
| 8 | 903 | 270-273 | |
| 9 | 903 | 270-295 | Barbarous, CR |
| 10 | 911 | c 375 | |
| 11 | 931 | 270-273 | |
| 12 | Tr 9 spoil | 4C? | CR |
| 13 | Tr 9 spoil | 4C? | CR |
| 14 | Tr 9 spoil | 4C? | CR |
| 15 | Tr 9 spoil | 4C? | CR |
| 16 | 1005 | 4C - poss late? | CR |
| 17 | 1018 | 4C? | CR |
| 18 | Tr 10 spoil | 337-341 | CR |
| 19 | Tr 10 spoil | 4C? | CR |
| 20 | Tr 10B cleaning layer | 4C? | CR |
| 21 | 1103 | 3-4C | CR |
| 22 | Tr 11 spoil | 383-388 | CR |
| 23 | 1201 | 337-341 | |
| 24 | 1203 | 4C? | CR |
| 25 | 1203 | ?350-365 | |
| | | | |

CR = cleaning required

# Appendix 5

## Prehistoric Pottery Report by Nigel Brown

**Didcot West Prehistoric Pottery** N. Brown

The excavations produced twenty-one sherds of prehistoric pottery from context 405. The material is of small sherd size and heavily abraded, in all but three sherds the surfaces are completely missing. Where they survive surfaces are quite well smoothed but with no trace of burnishing, many of the sherds are derived from thin walled vessels. The fabric is tempered with crushed burnt flint and some quartz. The absence of any diagnostic pieces makes dating difficult, on grounds of fabric alone a Neolithic or Bronze Age date might be likely.

# Appendix 6

## The Animal Bone by Emily Murray

# DIDCOT WEST (OXCMS.2000.133): ANIMAL BONE REPORT

*Emily Murray*
*Birmingham University Zooarchaeological Laboratory (BZL)*

*19th December 2001*

## The Animal Bone Assemblage

A small assemblage, 1 box (42 x 30 x 20 cm), of hand-collected animal bones were recovered from the archaeological evaluation at Didcot West. No material from bulk samples was presented for analysis. The majority of the bones were in a good state of preservation although a couple showed signs of root damage and evidence of fresh breakage was frequently noted.

The faunal remains came from various layers (607, 816, 903, 916 & 1203) and fills (817, 906, 913, 914, 925, 942, 1010, 1018, 1038, 1039, 1405 & 1604) that have been roughly dated, on the pottery evidence, to between the second and fourth centuries AD. The 'countable' (see below) fragments from these contexts have therefore been grouped together as a Roman assemblage (Table 1). Material from contexts 931, 951 and 950 was not included as the former two produced residual LBA sherds while context 950 produced several Iron Age pottery sherds. The 'countable' elements from these contexts are listed in Table 2.

## Methods of Analysis & Identification

The animal bone assemblage was recorded using a modified version of a system devised by Davis (Davis 1992: Albarella & Davis 1994). This system considers a selection of anatomical elements as 'countable' while the presence of 'non-countable' specimens of interest are noted. Tooth wear stages (Table 4) for cattle and pig follow Grant (1982) and for caprines follow Payne (1973 and 1987) while the bone measurements (Table 3) follow von den Driesch (1976).

*Sheep/Goat* The differentiation of sheep and goat was attempted on the following elements: $dP_3$, $dP_4$, distal metapodials, distal tibia and calcaneum using the criteria described in Boessneck (1969), Kratochvil (1969) and Payne (1969 and 1985).

*Plover* Plover was represented by two bones: a semi-complete humerus (1010) and a proximal humerus (1028 – 'non-countable'). Neither specimen could be attributed with certainty to species - both were incomplete and showed signs of root damage - and they are therefore recorded simply as 'plover' (*Pluvialis* sp.).

## Results

A total of 31 'countable' elements were recorded and over half of these were teeth, either loose or in mandibles. The species present were cattle, horse, pig, sheep/goat, red deer and plover. Hare was also represented by one 'non-countable' element, the

shaft of a tibia, and no positive goat bones were noted. Four specimens displayed signs of gnawing, either by dog or cat, thereby providing indirect evidence for their presence on site. Red deer was represented by a relatively large second phalanx (Table 3) and a small antler fragment that had been chopped at both ends. Evidence of butchery was recorded on only one countable element, a cattle radius, although other butchered bones were noted including a cattle mandible fragment, a pig fibula and a large rib, probably bovid. There were three pig canines present and based on their morphological characteristics, all three were identified as male. The very limited tooth-wear data (Table 4) shows that at least four sheep/goat mandibles derived from animals aged between four and eight years when slaughtered (Payne 1973) while one neo-natal caprine element - half of an unfused metapodial shaft (non-countable) - was present in the assemblage from context 951.

The assemblage is too small to draw any conclusions about the site economy or husbandry practices except to comment that both domestic and wild animals were exploited while the presence of the neonatal caprine metapodial suggests that sheep/goats were being bred on or close to the site.

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| Element | cattle | sheep/goat | pig | horse | red deer | hare | plover |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teeth (loose) | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | - | - | - |
| Mandible | 2 | 6 | 5 | - | - | - | - |
| Horncore/Antler | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| Cranium | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Atlas | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Axis | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Scapula | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Humerus dist. | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Radius dist. | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Ulna prox. | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Carpal | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Metacarpal dist. | 0.5 | - | 0.5 | - | - | - | - |
| Pelvis acetabulum | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Femur dist. | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Tibia dist. | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Astragalus | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Calcaneum | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - |
| Scafocuboid (cuboid) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Metatarsal dist. | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | - | - |
| Metapodial | 0.5 | - | 0.5 | - | - | - | - |
| Phalanx 1 prox. | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| Phalanx 2 prox. | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| Phalanx 3 prox. | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| ***Total (NISP)*** | ***15*** | ***4*** | ***5*** | ***7*** | ***2*** | * | ***1*** |

Table 1 Body parts, by number of fragments (NISP), for the species recovered from the Roman contexts (see main text) at Didcot West. * Hare was represented by one 'non-countable' fragment.

The 'loose teeth' are all lower (mandibular). A 'mandible' was counted where a tooth was set within a jaw with at least one complete alveoulus adjacent to it or, if there is not an adjacent alveoulus, an amount of bone of equivalent length was present. Half distal metapodials have been counted as 0.5 and pig metapodials are considered the equivalent of cattle and sheep/goat half metapodials. prox. = proximal, dist. = distal.

| species/context | 931 | 950 | 951 |
|---|---|---|---|
| cattle | 1 | 2 | - |
| horse | 1 | - | - |
| sheep/goat | 3 | - | 1 |
| pig | 2 | 1 | - |

Table 2 Didcot West: Number of identified specimens (NISP) from contexts 931, 950 and 951 (see main text).

| species | context | element | GL | Bd | BT | HTC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| cattle | 607 | humerus | - | - | 654 | 608 |
| cattle | 1203 | metatarsal | - | 534 | - | - |
| red deer | 914b | phalanx 2 | 471 | - | - | - |
| sheep | 1405 | calcaneum | 524 | - | - | - |

Table 3 Didcot West: Measurements of animal bones (tenths of a millimetre) after von den Driesch (1976).

| species | context | M/L | P4 | DP4 | M1 | M1W | M2 | M2WA | M2WP | M3 | M3L | M3WA | M3WC | M12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| cattle | 1203 | l | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | k |
| cattle | 607 | l | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | j | 345 | 157 | - | - |
| cattle | 607 | m | g | - | l | - | k | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| cattle | 918 | m | - | j | f | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| sheep/goat | 816 | l | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 11G | - | 79 | - | - |
| sheep/goat | 606 | m | - | - | - | - | 11A | 78 | - | 11G | - | 81 | - | - |
| sheep/goat | 816 | m | 12S | - | 9A | 73 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| sheep/goat | 816 | m | - | - | - | - | 9A | 83 | - | 11G | - | 85 | - | - |
| sheep/goat | 816 | m | - | 13L | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| sheep/goat | 903 | m | 12S | - | 10A | 67 | - | - | - | 11G | - | 84 | - | - |
| sheep/goat | 914b | m | - | - | 9A | 76 | 9G | 79 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| pig | 705 | l | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | b |
| pig | 1039 | m | e | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| pig | 1405 | m | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | d | 299 | 150 | 146 | - |
| pig | 811 | m | - | - | g | - | e | 139 | 147 | - | - | - | - | - |
| pig | 903 | m | - | - | - | - | f | 143 | 144 | b | 306 | 163 | 152 | - |

Table 4 Didcot West: Measurements of teeth (tenths of a millimetre) and teeth wear stages after Grant (1982) for cattle and pig, and Payne (1973 and 1987) for sheep/goat. Pig tooth measurements follow Payne and Bull (1988) and cattle M3 length and width (M3L and M3W) are the maximum length and width of the crown. M/L = in situ in mandible/loose.

# Appendix 7

## Environmental Report by Rob Scaife

# Didcot West (OXCMS.2000): The Charred Plant Remains and Pollen Analysis

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# Didcot West (OXCMS.2000): The Charred Plant Remains and Pollen Analysis

**Robert G Scaife**

## (I.) Introduction

Archaeobotanical remains (pollen and charred plant remains) have been examined from the Romano-British fills of pits and ditches; (606), (705), (811) and (816) and surface spread (607). The principal aim of this evaluation was to ascertain whether pollen and plant macrofossils are preserved in these primary context features and thus provide an indication of sampling requirements prior to more extensive excavation of the site.

## (ii.) Pollen Analysis

Sub-samples of 3ml volume of these contexts were taken in conjunction with material for macrofossil evaluation. Standard techniques were used for the extraction of the sub-fossil pollen and spores (Moore and Webb 1978; Moore *et al.* 1992) with the addition of micromesh sieving (10u) to aid the removal of the substantial clay fraction in the soil/sediments. Pollen was extracted from all of the samples but with highly variable preservation. This was examined and identified using an Olympus biological research microscope fitted with Leitz optics and phase contrast facility. Pollen count data are given in table **. Taxonomy in general, follows that of Moore and Webb (1978) modified according to Bennett *et al.* (1994) for pollen types and Stace (1992) for plant descriptions. These procedures were carried out in the Palaeoecology Laboratory of the Department of Geography, University of Southampton.

## (ii.a.) The Pollen Data

Pollen was obtained from all of the samples analysed, although absolute pollen numbers are small. Numbers were not sufficient to allow even typical assessment counts of 100 grains were sample without spending a disproportionate amount of time. This was especially so with sample 4 (pit 811) where only small numbers were present. Pollen was most abundant (*c.*1500 grains/ml) in sample 5 (816), an apparent finds rich layer from which higher totals could be obtained. Pollen preservation was variable with many grains being typically shrunken and obtaining higher count totals would not appreciably alter the discussion below.

Overall, the pollen spectra in these samples are characterised by the dominance of herbs and fern spores with only sporadically occurring trees and shrubs (oak, elm, alder and hazel). There are, however, clear indications of differential preservation with the preservation of robust taxa such as the Lactucoideae (dandelion types), other Asteraceae (daisy family) types and fern spores (*Pteridium aquilinum*; bracken). This is typical of biologically active soils and poor pollen preserving conditions which causes destruction of many thin walled pollen grains whilst robust taxa may remain and aggregate in the soils (Dimbleby 1988). This can result in skewed pollen./vegetation data and thus, care is required in any environmental interpretation. Furthermore, the

| Context | 606 | 607 | 705 | 811 | 816 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| **Trees** | | | | | |
| Pinus | | 1 | | | |
| Quercus | | | | | 2 |
| Ulmus | | | | | 1 |
| Alnus | 1 | | | | |
| Corylus type | 1 | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| **Herbs** | | | | | |
| Sinapis type | 1 | 2 | | | 1 |
| Chenopodium type | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Plantago major type | | | | | 1 |
| Anthemis type | | | | | 1 |
| Centaurea sp. | | | | | 1 |
| Centaurea scabiosa type | 1 | | | | |
| Cirsium | 1 | | | | |
| Lactucoideae | 11 | 13 | 19 | 7 | 40 |
| Poaceae | 3 | 3 | 1 | | 5 |
| Cereal type | 1 | | | | 2 |
| | | | | | |
| **Spores** | | | | | |
| Monolete | | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| Pteridium aquilinum | 13 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Anthoceras | 1 | | | | |

**Didcot West: Pollen Data**

pollen catchment of such features will be localised and will in the main come from the immediate vicinity of the site.

As noted, Lactucoideae (dandelion types) is the most important taxon which along with poor preservation suggests that the pollen data are skewed. However, some interpretation can be made. The dominance of herbs with few trees and the presence of some less robust taxa such Poaceae suggests an open environment at least local to the site. If woodland was present, a greater representation of ree an shrub pollen might be expected. Overall, the data suggest an open environment which was possibly grassland in the adjacent area although cereal pollen and associated weeds (segetals) are also present. The latter is not surprising given the evidence of cereals obtained from the macro-fossil analysis (see below). However, the pollen may be of secondary/derived origin. Pollen trapped in the husks of cereals may be released during crop processing activities such as winnowing and threshing or from domestic waste (including human and animal ordure) arriving in these ditch/pit contexts. Pollen of *Plantago major* type and Chenopodiaceae are indicators of disturbed ground.

Sample 5 (context 816) contained better preserved and more abundant pollen although even here. there are strong indications of differential preservation. Taxonomic diversity is also greater than in the other samples. This is perhaps a reflection of the fact that the context is not a pit or ditch fill but was described as a 'spread' overlying earlier features and containing abundant artifactual material. It seems likely and possible that this was a soil horizon developed (or dumped and then stabilised ?) on the earlier features during the AD 3rd/4th century. This would account for the greater build up of pollen numbers (and artifacts?) and the sporadic tree pollen-*Quercus* (oak) and *Ulmus* (elm) coming from farther afield. The character of the sample also suggested a soil being friable and with appearance of worm sorting. This contrasted with the fills of the pits which had less soil structure and was more sediment like.

***Summary:*** Pollen preservation is poor with clear evidence of differential preservation of some types and thus the resulting data are skewed. However, when this is taken into consideration some general points can be made. The area in proximity to the site was probably open as shown by dominance of herbs and was probably grassland/pasture. Evidence of arable agriculture is present but this may be from secondary pollen sources (crop processing or waste) or directly from areas farther away with cereal cultivation. Context 816 contained more pollen and may be a soil developed over the earlier underlying features.

**(iii.a.) The Plant Macrofossils**

Sampling for charred plant remains was carried out on the principal fills of the pits and ditches. These preliminary samples of 3 litres were disaggregated with hydrogen peroxide, floated and sieved to 0.5mm. The flot and residues were sorted and plant remains identified under a low power binocular microscope (Wild M3c). All five samples contained small quantities of wood charcoal and small quantities of cereal remains including grain and chaff debris(glumes, spikelet forks). Results of this analysis are give in table **

| Context | | 606 | 607 | 705 | 811 | 816 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |
| **Cereals** | | | | | | |
| Triticum spelta type | Grain | | | | 1 | |
| cf T. spelta type | | | | | 1 | |
| cf Triticum sp. | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| cf Avena | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Unidentified | | | 1 | | 2 | 3 |
| Fragments | | 1 | | 2 | 1 | |
| | | | | | | |
| Triticum spelta | Glumes | | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Triticum cf. spelta | | | | | | 1 |
| T cf.dicoccum | | | | | 1 | |
| Triticum indet. | | | | 3 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Triticum spelta | Spikelet forks | | | 1 | | |
| Triticum indet | | | | 1 | 1 | |
| | | | | | | |
| | Internode fragment | | 1 | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| **Seeds** | | | | | | |
| Vicia/Lathyrus (small) | | | | | 1 | |
| Chenopodium (intrusive) | | 3 | | | | |

**Didcot West: Charred Plant Remains**

**(iii.b.) The Charred Plant Remains**

The samples of 3 litres used in this assessment are rather small but do, however, provide some indication of the potential of the site and its features for preservation of charred plant remains. If present, such remains might be expected to provide evidence of crops being used, the possibility of local/on-site crop processing activities and the character of the agricultural environment. Sample 2 (fill 606) contained only modern, intrusive *Chenopodium* seeds and a single chared gain fragment. The other samples produced some useful information although total numbers of remains were small (see table **). Both grain and chaff remains were recovered although seeds of weeds were almost absent. Grain of *Triticum spelta* type (emmer and spelt wheat) were recorded from context 811 the basal fill of pit (***) and along with the presence of glume bases of spelt (*Triticum spelta* L.) demonstrates that this crop was present. A single glume tentatively identifies as *T.* cf. *dicoccum* (Schubl) (emmer wheat) also suggests the presence of this type. Both wheats, especially the former and *Triticum aestivum* type (bread wheat, not found here) are commonly found in Romano-British contexts and the records here are to be expected (for example Helbaek 1952; Murphy 1977; Scaife 1996). Glumes of spelt were also found in other samples and especially in context 705 along with its spikelet forks. The numbers of individuals is small for each sample. However, their presence albeit in small numbers, still demonstrates the use of these cereal types; especially spelt. Furthermore, the presence of some chaff remains allows determination to species which is not possible from the grain alone. This also suggests that the crop was being processed on-site. However, this need not necessarily show that cereals were being cultivated locally since it has been suggested that spelt may have been harvested and transported as whole ears to its place of use where it was stored before processing and use (Jones 1981). This is the possible reason for the very small number of weed seeds (1 of *Vicia/Lathyrus* type !), the grain having been cleaned at the production site. Reasons for charring/burning of the chaff and grain is conjectural. Since spelt (and emmer) are glume wheats they require parching (scorching) to release the grain from the husks. This somewhat hazardous process in itself may have resulted in accidental burning. Alternatively, waste grain and certainly chaff debris may have been disposed of in fires. Even though the samples used here were small (being av. 3 litres), the small numbers of charred remains found suggests that these are the background scatter of on-site waste debris (noise!). If chaff debris or waste grain was being disposed of deliberately in these contexts, greater numbers of remains would clearly be present. The only other crop type is a tentative identification of Avena (oat). The fact that some cereal remains are present has implications for further work on this site since it is highly likely that richer contexts may be available with which to address the questions of agricultural activity noted above. Even if the same contexts were sampled but using the larger and more accepted sample size of 40 litres, a more accurate and diagnostic data set might be obtained.

**(iv.) Suggested Sampling Strategy**

Pollen and charred crop remains have been found in the evaluation samples and there is clearly some potential for environmental work should the right preservational contexts be found in future excavations.

***(iv.a.) Pollen:*** The pollen assemblages as a whole show a degree of differential preservation and sparsely preserved pollen. The ditch/pit contexts do not appear to offer potential for future work if they are of the same character as those examined here.

However, if more organic basal fills are encountered, these could be of value and should be sampled using monolith profiles. Given that there is some pollen preservation in the existing soils and sediments waterlogged and/or organic lenses may have a much greater potential for environmental reconstruction. The 'spread' (context 607) is interesting because it appears as though this may be a soil profile. This may repay a more detailed examination by a pedologist. Furthermore, pollen was more abundant and it is possible that other samples from the same context may be richer. Certainly, a small number of additional samples (a column ?) would repay some further palynological examination.

***Suggestions:***

-If organic and/or waterlogged basal ditch/pit fills be found, sample these using monolith profiles (white plastic down-pipe with a side cut off is excellent !).

-Obtain a monolith profile of the 'spread layer (context 607) for additional pollen analysis.

-Have context 607 examined by a pedologist (suggest Dr. Helen Keeley).

***(iv.b.) Plant Macrofossils:***

Charred plant remains (largely cereals and chaff) are present although the numbers are small. Note, the sample volumes were also small. The remains found are probably the 'background waste scatter which is found on most sites. This demonstrates, however, that there is potential for future work. Samples of at least 40 litres (according to English Heritage) are the now accepted sample size. Such samples should be obtained from the principal contexts (but not at the expense of contamination from different layers). It is probable that much richer samples will be obtained from the site. If they are not, larger samples will at least be able to add substantially to the evaluation data presented here. Charcoal, present here in small quantities, but not identified, may also be more abundant and might repay analysis to show the status of woodland and management.

***Suggestions:***

-Sample principal contexts (40 litres where possible). On-site processing using flotation might be preferable to transporting such large samples. This will obtain charred cereal remains and seeds.

-Charcoal may be found in larger quantities. Suggest examination by Rowena Gale.

**(v.) References**


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# Appendix 8

## RPS Consultants' Fieldwork Specification

# PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR AN EVALUATION FOR THE PROPOSED DIDCOT WEST EXPANSION – DIDCOT WEST (PARTS OF FIELDS 21, 22 & 23)

CONTENTS



## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 RPS Consultants have been commissioned by the consortium promoting the Didcot West option to undertake an archaeological evaluation on arable farmland in connection with a proposed development of Didcot called the Western Alternative (Didcot West). The location of the site and areas of archaeological investigation are shown on plan RPSC 1.

1.2 An area within the overall area of Didcot West of circa 12.06 hectares, centred on National Grid Reference SU 5085 9015, will be evaluated by means of walk-over and fieldwalking surveys, geophysical surveys and trial trenching. The evaluation has the specific aim of evaluating the area around the find site of an important Roman gold coin hoard, where evidence for Roman settlement has been reported.

1.3 A brief has been prepared for this evaluation by the County Archaeological Officer, Paul Smith, and this specification responds to the requirements of the brief. The brief states that 'the evaluation is required to assist the Council in determining its response to the presence of any significant archaeological remains which may result in further modifications to the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2001'.

1.4 The evaluation site, within the Didcot West area, is situated to the west of Slade Road. Using the field numbers on drawing number 8.xviii (attached) the site is bounded to the north by 'Field 35' and includes parts of 'Fields 21 and 22' to the south east and south west of Field 23. The site lies on a broad plateau between 80 and 84m AOD. The ground slopes down to the north and west from this high ground. The geology comprises drift deposits of loam above Upper Greensand.

1.5 Archaeological Background. The current archaeological evaluation is largely a response to a need to define the archaeological context of the second largest hoard of gold *aurei* to have been found in this country. The hoard was found in 1995 by Mr Darley and consisted of 126 coins which were deposited within a pottery container around 160AD. Mr Darley found the hoard associated with the broken container close to the north east/ south west boundary between field 21 and 22 (around which the evaluation area is situated). Further coin finds were reported 40-60m metres either side of the field boundary by Mr Darley earlier this year, in addition to Roman ceramics and tile which he believed to be Roman hypocaust tile (although the identification of these has not been verified). The coins have been viewed by the County Archaeologist and are broadly dated from the late second to the fourth century. A Saxon Bow Brooch was also found by Mr Darley.

1.6 It may be significant with respect to the coin hoard that a Romano-British settlement site has been located 0.5km to the south-west. The site was identified during pipeline works associated with a sewer by Cotswold Archaeological Trust in 1997-8. The site produced 1st century finds, however, and may pre date the deposition of the hoard. RPS Consultants desk based studies (part of the Environmental Statement for Didcot West) have also located a crop mark of a possible sub-circular enclosure at SU 5060 9010 in the vicinity of the evaluation site. Several Roman sherds were also collected during the RPS Consultants walkover survey at SU 507 901. Paul Smith has additionally noted a possible rectilinear enclosure cropmark at SU 507 900.

## 2. PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 The general aim of the evaluation is to establish whether there are any archaeological sites buried within the evaluation area that might necessitate the implementation of a mitigation strategy. In the event that archaeological remains are encountered then these will be characterised, dated (if possible) and their degree of preservation and significance will be assessed. The primary concern is to establish the location/s, extent, nature and date of any archaeological deposits or features that may be present.

2.2 The specific aim is;

- to determine whether the evidence of the coin hoard is an isolated deposit or whether it is related to Roman occupation or ritual activity at the site, and, if so, to characterise it.

2.3 The evaluation brief states 'that the developer will be responsible for accommodating the significant archaeological remains by:

a) Physical preservation in situ, which can often be achieved through design adaptations or, if this is not possible;

b) by preserving the archaeology through a full recording action. Less significant archaeological deposits may be dealt with through a monitoring and recording exercise carried out during the construction programme'.

## 3. GENERAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 The evaluation is to comprise four stages which will maximise the potential for retrieval of data. The programme of work would entail:

a) Initial walk-over survey,

b) a systematic fieldwalking programme,

c) a rapid geophysical scan, followed by selected areas of detailed survey; and

d) a programme of trial trenching, the extent of which will be informed by the above techniques.

3.2 The evaluation site has been divided into Areas A and B as a two-tiered investigation:

**Area A** comprises the entire study area and will be subject to a walkover survey, 100% magnetic susceptibility survey and 50% coverage by magnetometer survey. In the event of significant surface finds from the walkover the part of Area A beyond the confines of Area B may also require detailed fieldwalking.

**Area B** (about 4.84 HA) will comprise total coverage by fieldwalking and a 1.85% coverage by trial trenching.

3.3 These areas of work will comply with the Institute of Archaeology's Code of Conduct and Standards documents and English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects* MAP2 (1991).

## 4. AREA A

4.1 **The walkover survey** will make note of any landscape features of archaeological or historical interest and significant artefact spreads and/or soil discolourations will be noted. If dense scatters of artefacts are noted within Area A but outside Area B then these will areas will be assessed for suitability for fieldwalking.

4.2 **Magnetic Susceptibility** Survey will be conducted by Stratascan Ltd for 100% coverage of Area. The precise technique adopted will be at the discretion of Stratascan Ltd following their appraisal of ground conditions.

4.3 **Magnetometer Survey** will examine 50% of the entire study area using 40m wide transects spaced 40m apart. Stratascan Ltd will conduct the survey.

4.4 An on site assessment of the data will be made which will present the data during the course of the geophysical survey work.

4.5 Full liaison will be maintained between the Stratascan, RPS Consultants and the County Archaeologist during the course of the geophysical survey work. This will ensure that the potential of the survey is maximised. The geophysical results will be fully incorporated into the evaluation results.

4.6 The standards in English Heritage's *Geophysical Survey in Archaeological Field Evaluation* (1993) will be adhered to.

4.7 Should there be significant results from Area A outside Area B from the above survey techniques then further trial trenching in the locations of these results may be required by the County Archaeological Officer.

## 5. AREA B

5.1 **Systematic Field Walking Survey** will be conducted over the extent of Area B.

5.2 The fieldwalking exercise would entail systematic collection of surface artefacts from the available site area.

5.3 The fieldwalking would take place after ploughing and a period of weathering, to ensure that artefacts are as visible as possible in the soil.

5.4 All artefacts, except for clearly modern artefacts, will be collected and retained for off site processing and analysis. Modern artefacts will be noted by RPS Consultants on pro-forma fieldwalking sheets.

5.5 The fields will be walked on transects based on a 20 metre grid. Finds will be collected, bagged and labelled according to the individual 20 metre grid square unit. Individual field grids will be surveyed perpendicular to appropriate boundaries.

5.6 Finds will be bagged according to grid square location, marked and sorted for specialist analysis.

5.7 Density distributions and standard deviations (using the Essex County Council method – see Appendix 1) for all categories of artefacts will be produced for fieldwalking areas. These will be produced on plans showing Ordnance Survey grid points and will be related to the overall site plan.

5.8 **Trial Trenching** will constitute a 1.85% sample of Area B (900 square metres) in the form of 20, 1.5m by 30m slit trenches. The layout of the trenches will depend on the results of the fieldwalking and geophysical surveys. Any positive results from the above will be specifically targeted by trenching whilst 'blank areas' will also be examined to test the validity of these negative results. A further 90 square metres of trenching may be required within Area B at the discretion of the County Archaeologist should extra trenching be required in order to clarify findings within the initial trial trenches.

5.9 The detailed trench layout will be discussed and agreed with the County Archaeologist and the client prior to their commencement.

5.10 The trenching methodology is as follows:

- Trenches will be excavated using a mechanical excavator utilising a toothless bucket. The machining will work under archaeological supervision.
- Topsoil/ploughsoil will be removed to the level of the natural subsoil or the surface of the uppermost significant archaeological layer, whichever is exposed first.
- The spoil will be scanned for artefacts.
- All trenches will be hand cleaned prior to pre- excavation photography and the compilation of pre-excavation plans, at a scale of 1:20.
- A sample of the archaeological features will be excavated. The percentage of excavation will not exceed the amount necessary to date and characterise the archaeological feature or deposit. The integrity of important archaeological remains will not be compromised by the evaluation stage should protection of the archaeology or larger scale excavation be possible requirements of later mitigation procedures.
- The evaluation trenching will conform to the IFA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations. All finds and other relevant material will be labelled and retained for post excavation analysis.
- Soil samples will be taken for environmental analysis as appropriate, should organic material of high potential be present.
- In the event that human remains were to be encountered the County Archaeologist would be notified and should their excavation be required a Home Office licence will be obtained. As part of the licence requirements deposition and curation of the bones will be agreed with the relevant museum.
- All trenches will be surveyed accurately by a qualified surveyor prior to the commencement of work.
- The trenches will be backfilled after authorization by the County Archaeologist.

## 6. POST FIELDWORK METHODOLOGIES

6.1 Following the completion of the fieldwork the data which has been compiled will be analysed to a level suitable to provide sufficient information from which the County Archaeologist can develop appropriate mitigation strategies.

6.2 Bulk soil samples will be sieved and scanned. The finds will be cleaned, marked and sorted for analysis, these procedures will adhere to the standards within *Dispersal of Archaeological Collections* (1993), *Guidelines for the Preparation of site archives and Assessment for all Finds Other than Clay Vessels.*

6.3 The artefact analysis will be consistent with type series for Oxfordshire with respect to the analysis, cataloguing and quantification.

6.4 The site archive including records and materials will be produced in accordance with Appendix 2 of MAP2 (1991).

## 7. REPORT WRITING

7.1 A full report will be prepared on the results of the field evaluation. Two copies of the report will be supplied to the County Archaeological Officer. This report will include an abstract containing the essential elements of the results.

7.2 All methods used for the compilation of the results will be detailed. The report will conform to the standards detailed in the Association of Archaeological Officer's *Briefs and Specifications for Archaeological Assessment and Field evaluation* (1993) and the IFA's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (1993).

7.3 Sufficient data will be presented within the report format to enable sound interpretation of the results. A context summary table, a finds table and a non-technical summary of the salient results will be included.

7.4 The significance of the results within a local and regional context will be considered. No recommendations for possible mitigation will be proposed.

7.5 The report will be completed within four working weeks after the completion of the fieldwork.

7.6 Publication of the results will be undertaken. This may entail a short note or a longer article in a local, regional or national publication, as appropriate. All reports will acknowledge the curatorial role played in the project by Oxfordshire County Council Archaeological Services and acknowledge information provided by the SMR (copyright of Oxfordshire County Council). The evaluation brief states that 'unless evidence of national or special local significance is revealed, a summary report conforming to the minimum requirements defined in MAP2 Appendix 7.1 should be produced for publication'.

## 8. GENERAL MATTERS

8.1 The work will be undertaken by a team of professional archaeologists with considerable experience of field evaluations. The project will be managed by David Freke MIFA, DipAD, FSA. No unwaged or voluntary staff will be utilised.

8.2 Other personnel will include Robert Masefield AIFA, MA, BSc (Hons) who will direct work on site and Martin Connell MIFA, BSc who will act as site surveyor.

8.3 Details of staffing levels and the number of man days to be spent on each task will be provided when the full extent of the evaluation is decided.

8.4 On site health and safety procedures will conform to those detailed in the RPS Group Plc's *Heath and Safety Manual* (1997). All relevant health and safety regulations will be adhered to.

8.5 Specialist finds analysis will be conducted by local specialists familiar with the relevant finds categories. The specialists to be utilised (if required) are as follows;

Paul Booth – Roman pottery and tile,

Kathy Underwood-Kieval – Saxon and Medieval pottery,

The Ashmolean Museum, coin room – coins,

other relevant specialists will be contacted as appropriate.

8.6 Monitoring arrangements will be made with the County Archaeologist. Oxfordshire County Council Archaeological Services (Department of Cultural Services) will monitor progress and standards throughout the project.

8.7 The recording system to be used will be compatible with those currently used in Oxfordshire and context sheets to be utilised are compatible with those currently used in the county. The computer database will be imputed on Personal computers with Windows 95.

8.8 The site archive will be completed and deposited within six months following the completion of the fieldwork.

8.9 All evaluation costing will include suitable contingency funds for unforeseen circumstances including bad weather.

8.10 Conservation of artefacts will be undertaken as necessary and a contingency for this eventuality will be included in the project costing. Conservation specialists will be contacted as necessary.

8.11 The County Museums Service (Oxfordshire Museums) will be contacted regarding site and accession codes and storage of the archive. Sufficient funding will be secured to cover costs for use of the relevant storage materials and the deposition/ storage of the archive. The County Museums Service will be notified of the expected time of deposition for the archive in advance. Should the landowners concerned wish to keep archive then RPS Consultants shall ensure that full analysis and packaging have been undertaken prior to their deposition with the landowner. A record will be kept of the finds concerned and their location in a written archive/ public record. The written permission of the landowner will be sought for the inclusion of these particulars in order that the Data Protection Act 1984 is not contravened.

8.12 A summary report, details of archive deposition and a representative selection of the site slides will be deposited with the County SMR. A report will also be submitted to the NMR.

8.13 **Timetable.** The initial geophysical surveys and fieldwalking will be instigated by the 14th Sept 2000. It is hoped that the fieldwalking and geophysical surveys can be completed and the trial trenching be arranged and begun before the end of September. Within this timetable it should be possible to complete the minimum 20 30m long trenches by mid October 2000.