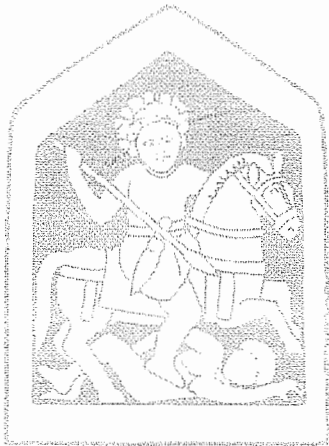


RYALL QUARRY,
RIPPLE, WORCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

PHASE II

BY
DAVID KENYON
FOR
RMC WESTERN AGGREGATES LTD



*Cotswold
Archaeological
Trust*

RYALL QUARRY,
RIPPLE, WORCESTERSHIRE.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

PHASE II

C.A.T. JOB: 0700
C.A.T. REPORT: 98940

SEPTEMBER 1998

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Headquarters Building, Kemble Business Park, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6BQ
Tel. 01285 771022 Fax. 01285 771033 E-mail. cots.arch@virgin.net

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SUMMARY

In September 1998 an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeological Trust of land at Saxon's Lode Farm, south of Ryall Quarry, Ripple, Worcestershire. The work was commissioned by Western Aggregates Ltd, in accordance with a brief issued by the Archaeology Section of Worcestershire County Council and a project design prepared by CAT. This fieldwork was in addition to previous evaluation work carried out by CAT in January 1998 and covers portions of the site not accessible in January due to crop cover.

Fourteen trenches were machine-excavated, totalling 500m in length, positioned to sample a number of linear and circular anomalies, previously detected from geophysical survey and cropmark evidence.

Dated archaeological remains were identified in several trenches. Romano-British ditches, gullies and pits were recorded, together with an undated hearth or oven base. Roman pottery was also recovered from ploughsoil levels. The retrieval of fresh, unabraded, Roman pottery from several features suggests that a settlement from this period covers part of the evaluation area.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Introduction*

1.1.1 This report presents the results of a second phase of archaeological evaluation carried out in September 1998 at Ryall Quarry, near Ripple, Worcestershire, (centred on NGR SO 866 391) (Fig. 1). The evaluation was required to provide sufficient archaeological information for the Planning Authority to assess the implications of an application for a southern extension to the quarry, for the extraction of sands and gravel. The first phase of the evaluation had demonstrated that across much of the area evaluated archaeological remains were absent (Kenyon 1998). Many of the features previously detected from aerial photography and geophysical work were shown to be geological in origin. In one part of the site, however, a substantial linear feature running east to west was detected. This produced Roman pottery, and lay immediately adjacent to the area described in this report. When the first phase of trenching was undertaken in January 1998 several fields in the southern portion of the proposed gravel extraction area were not accessible due to crop cover, and it was these areas that were investigated in this second phase of work.

1.1.2 The second stage of evaluation trenching covered two fields totalling c.6ha. in area. The site is bordered to the east and south by oil storage tanks, to the west by the River Severn and to the north by the previously evaluated farmland bordering the existing Ryall Quarry site. Within the study area the western field had recently been under arable cultivation, whilst the field to the east lay under pasture.

1.2 *Geology and topography*

- 1.2.1 The proposed gravel extraction area lies on relatively flat ground with little marked relief at a height of approximately 69-70m OD. The channel of the River Severn passes immediately to the west, but some metres lower than the surface of the site, which sits on a gravel terrace. The natural substrate in the area is mapped as drift deposits of terrace sands and gravels over Mercian Mudstone (Institute of Geological Sciences 1977, 1979). Natural sands, gravels and sandy-clays were identified in all of the evaluation trenches, below the ploughsoil, at depths averaging 0.30-0.50m.

1.3 *Archaeological background*

- 1.3.1 The archaeological background of the quarry extension area is set out within the evaluation brief (HWAS 1997). Four entries in Hereford and Worcester SMR within or near the site indicate the archaeological potential of the proposed extraction area. All were based on aerial photographic cropmark evidence. These included linear features (PRN 5498, and 5499), possibly representing trackways or enclosures, and ring-ditch features (PRNs 1433 and 5735).
- 1.3.4 Further cropmark evidence suggests extensive prehistoric and Romano-British activity in the wider locality. A ring ditch is recorded 150m to the south of the proposed extraction area, (PRN 1320). A large cropmark complex, (PRN 1437) also lies 500m to the south of the proposed extraction area, possibly indicating prehistoric settlement including enclosures and trackways. A Roman road is also recorded (PRN 7628) passing east to west immediately to the south of the proposed extraction area, possibly leading to a river crossing at Saxon's Lode. Evidence of prehistoric and Romano-British activity to the north of the proposed extraction area was recovered during archaeological work prior to gravel extraction at the current quarry. This took

the form of a probable manuring scatter including worked flint and Romano-British pottery (PRN 8770).

1.4 Methodology

- 1.4.1 A single project design was prepared for both phases of work by Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT 1997) in line with the '*Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*' issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 1994), and in response to a brief for field evaluation issued by the former Hereford and Worcester County Council (H&WAS, 1997). The aim of the evaluation was to establish whether archaeological deposits lay within the study area and, if so, to determine their extent, date, character, and degree of preservation. This information would assist the Planning Authority in determining the planning application.
- 1.4.2 Initially, a geophysical survey was undertaken over parts of the site (Barker 1997). Several areas were targeted on the basis of the cropmark evidence and surveyed using magnetometry and soil resistivity techniques. The results of this work, however, were inconclusive serving to confirm in some areas the location of features visible as cropmarks, but not revealing much new information. The first phase of the evaluation showed that many of the cropmarks and geophysical anomalies in the northern part of the area were natural in origin. Only one definite archaeological feature was identified during the Phase I trenching; a Romano-British ditch running east to west across the southern part of the site (Kenyon 1998, 14).
- 1.4.3 In the second phase of evaluation, thirteen trenches were excavated, using a tracked excavator, in the previously inaccessible portion of the proposed extraction area. As in the first phase of evaluation they were located to investigate cropmarks and/or geophysical anomalies (Fig. 2). These totalled 500m in length; seven trenches were 50m in length and 1.6m wide, (Trench 22 being split into two sections, 30m and 20m long, as trenches 22A and

22B), and six trenches (targeting geophysical anomalies) were 25m long and 3.2m wide. Trenches 22 and 15 were repositioned slightly to avoid extant boundaries and overhead power cables. The trenches represent a *circa* 2% sample of the area proposed for gravel extraction. The numbering of the trenches, commencing at 15, reflects the fact that 14 trenches were excavated in the first phase of the project, to the north. Description in this report, however, is limited to the Phase II trenches (for Phase I see Kenyon 1998).

1.4.4 All recording was undertaken in accordance with the CAT Technical Manual 1: *Site Recording Manual*. Levels taken on site were related to an O.S. benchmark on the bridge over the disused railway to the south of the site.

1.4.5 All artefacts recovered were retained for processing and analysis in accordance with the CAT Technical Manual: *Treatment of Finds immediately after Excavation* and are listed in Appendix I. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the finds and site archive will be deposited in Worcester County Museum under accession number HWCM 26283.

2. RESULTS

2.1 *The eastern field*

2.1.1 No definite archaeological features were identified in this field (Trenches 15-21, 22b, and 27). A series of cropmarks and geophysical anomalies had previously been detected in this area but only in one case could an excavated feature be discerned in the location suggested by geophysics or aerial photographic evidence. This was in Trench 20 where the anomaly reflected a modern geotechnical test pit. It is therefore likely that the other potential features reflect geological or ploughsoil anomalies not readily identifiable by archaeological means. Several features were uncovered independent of the known anomalies: a shallow depression in Trench 19 [1904], a circular scoop

in Trench 20 [2004], and a modern drainage feature in Trench 27 [2704]. In the absence of dated finds from these features it is not possible to attribute much archaeological significance to them, given the prevalence of natural geological, and modern agricultural features on the site. Three squared stones were recovered from feature [2704] which have been tentatively identified as *tesserae*, but the fill and character of the feature itself suggest a modern field drain so if these are of Romano-British date they are likely to be residual.

2.2 *The western field*

- 2.2.1 A range of Romano-British cut features was encountered in this field and their correspondence with previously identified cropmarks was quite good. In addition, several of the undated features corresponded to cropmarks, some of which are likely to be of natural origin, as was the case with those in the eastern field, while some may reflect Roman activity. A detailed plan of the excavated features in this field and their relationship with cropmarks and geophysical anomalies forms Figure 3.
- 2.2.2 The densest concentration of dated archaeological features was found in Trench 22a. Here a series of parallel linear features was uncovered, running north to south. These included a substantial ditch [2208]/[2215] nearly 2m wide showing evidence of re-cutting, and three gullies on the same alignment. Two of these, [2204] and [2213] produced Roman material, while the third [2206] was sufficiently similar to be confidently associated with the dated features. A series of other postholes and pits, some containing Roman pottery was also excavated and these are likely to be linked to the gully and ditch. It is notable that none of these features was previously identified as cropmarks.
- 2.2.3 By contrast the geophysical anomalies highlighted in Trench 23 corresponded well with cut features. Another large ditch, 3m wide, was identified [2304] with a series of fills all containing Roman pottery. This feature appeared to be aligned north to south where it crossed the trench, but the circular shape of the

geophysical anomaly and the presence of a further cut [2306], crossing the north-eastern end of the trench east to west, raises the possibility that the ditch returns to the east. A small pit or gully terminal was also uncovered at the south-west end of this trench and this may relate to the linear cropmark extending westwards, although no dating evidence was recovered from this feature.

2.2.4 Further features, associated with known cropmarks, were excavated in Trench 24. No datable material was recovered from this trench, but while some of the more amorphous undated features may be natural tree-throw holes, one feature is certainly archaeological. A circular cut [2404] was uncovered containing a lining of blue clay and fills of charcoal and burnt soil. This has been interpreted as a hearth or oven-base, and while undated, quite possibly relates to the nearby Romano-British activity.

2.2.5 Two further north to south ditches corresponding to cropmarks were identified in Trenches 25 and 26. The ditch in trench 25 [2504] contained substantial quantities of unabraded Roman material, while that in Trench 26, [2604] was undated. The other features in these two trenches are more likely to be natural in origin. In particular the ring cropmark at the west end of Trench 26 was shown to consist of clean sand and is almost certainly geological in origin.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 *General*

3.1.1 In the eastern field the evaluation failed to detect any evidence for significant archaeological activity. Those features that were detected were either recent, or so amorphous that a natural origin seems likely. No evidence was found to support the contention that the circular anomalies explored in trenches 17, 19, and 21, are archaeological, and a natural origin seems certain.

3.1.2 The results from trenches 22a-25, by contrast, provide evidence of Romano-British activity over parts of the western field, (an area approximately corresponding to Fig 3.). The series of ditches uncovered shows that this is likely to consist at the very least of a series of enclosures, although it is not possible to determine the precise layout of these on the evidence accumulated so far. In addition to this the possible hearth/oven feature in Trench 24 (if this is contemporary with the ditches) suggests that within this enclosure system the area around Trenches 22a, 23, 24, and 25 may have been a focus of greater activity, and possibly settlement. This is supported by the unabraded pottery recovered from Trench 25. If this is the case some of the undated amorphous features found elsewhere in this zone, that might otherwise be interpreted as tree-throw holes or other land clearance features, might possibly be contemporaneous with the settlement activity, and represent truncated pits or postholes. Alternatively, the presence of two unstratified struck flints in the topsoil in Trenches 24 and 25 may suggest a prehistoric date for some of these.

3.1.3 From a broader technical viewpoint it is notable that the correspondence between archaeology, and cropmarks or geophysical anomalies is not always very good. In several areas anomalies have been shown to be the product of natural geological variations, such as at the west end of Trench 26, or to be completely indiscernible on excavation, as was the case in Trenches 17,19 and 21. Equally in Trench 22a a series of archaeological features including a large ditch passed undetected prior to excavation. Some areas, however, such as Trenches 23, 24, and 25 produced close correspondences. These relationships may not appear exact on plan, but within the margin of error allowable for the plotting of aerial photography, mismatches of one or two meters are quite acceptable when relating anomalies to cut features.

3.2 *Mitigation statement*

3.2.1 The lack of archaeological evidence from the eastern field (Trenches 15-21, 22b, and 27) suggests that significant archaeological deposits are absent from this area. Consequently, no further work is proposed in this area.

3.2.2 The evidence from the western field (trenches 22a-26), however, suggests that significant archaeological deposits are present in this area. It is therefore suggested that this western field is excluded from the area of proposed gravel extraction and the archaeological deposits preserved *in situ*.

4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cotswold Archaeological Trust would like to thank; Tony Rowley and Alison Pritchard of Western Aggregates Ltd; and Jason Bowen, Manager of Ryall Quarry; Mike Glyde and Malcolm Atkin of the Worcestershire County Council Archaeological Service, for their assistance throughout the project.

Fieldwork was carried out by Alistair Barber, Tim Havard, David Kenyon, Julie Martin and Tim Robey and the report was compiled by David Kenyon and Alistair Barber, with illustrations by Peter Moore.

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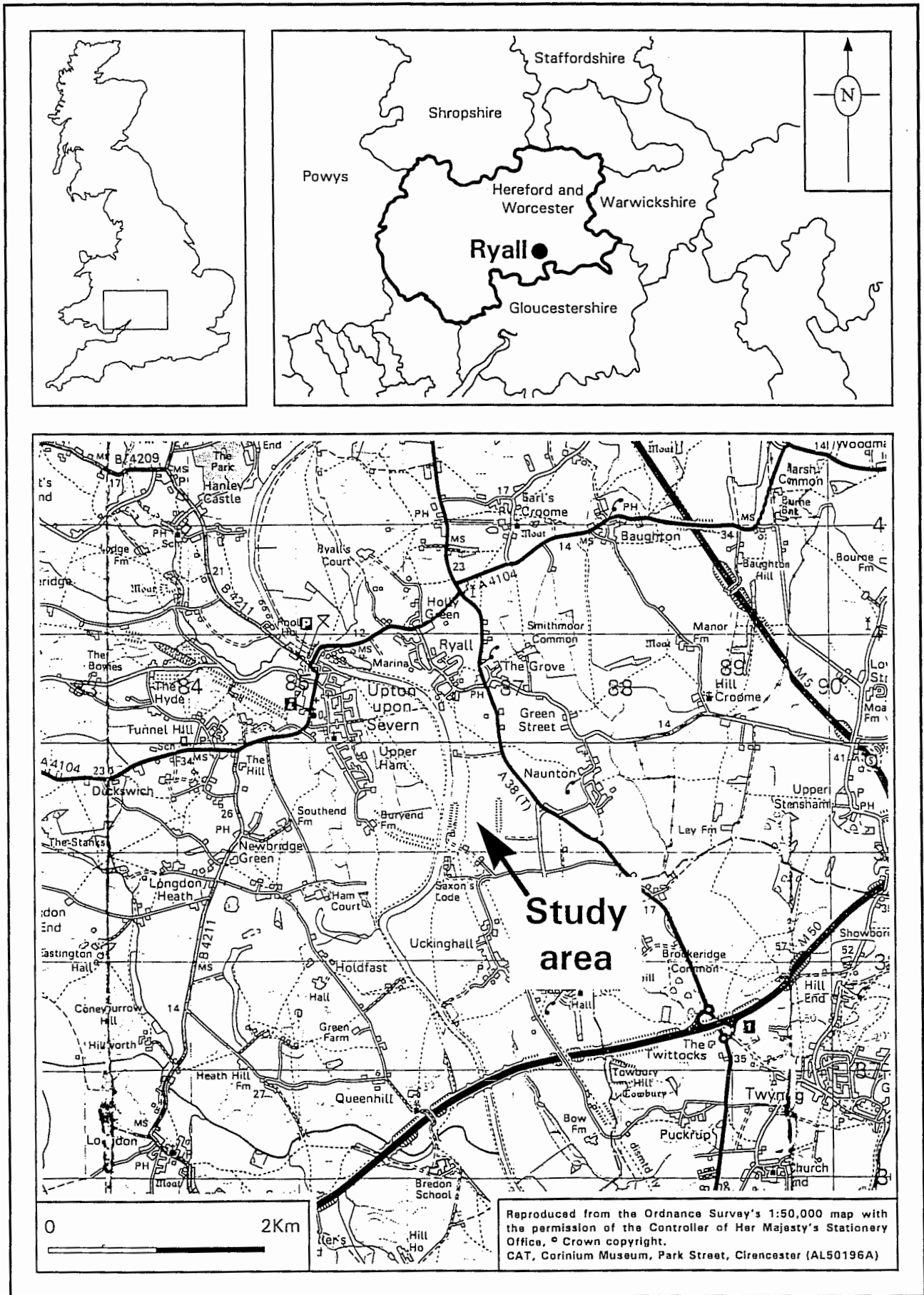


Fig. 1 Location plan

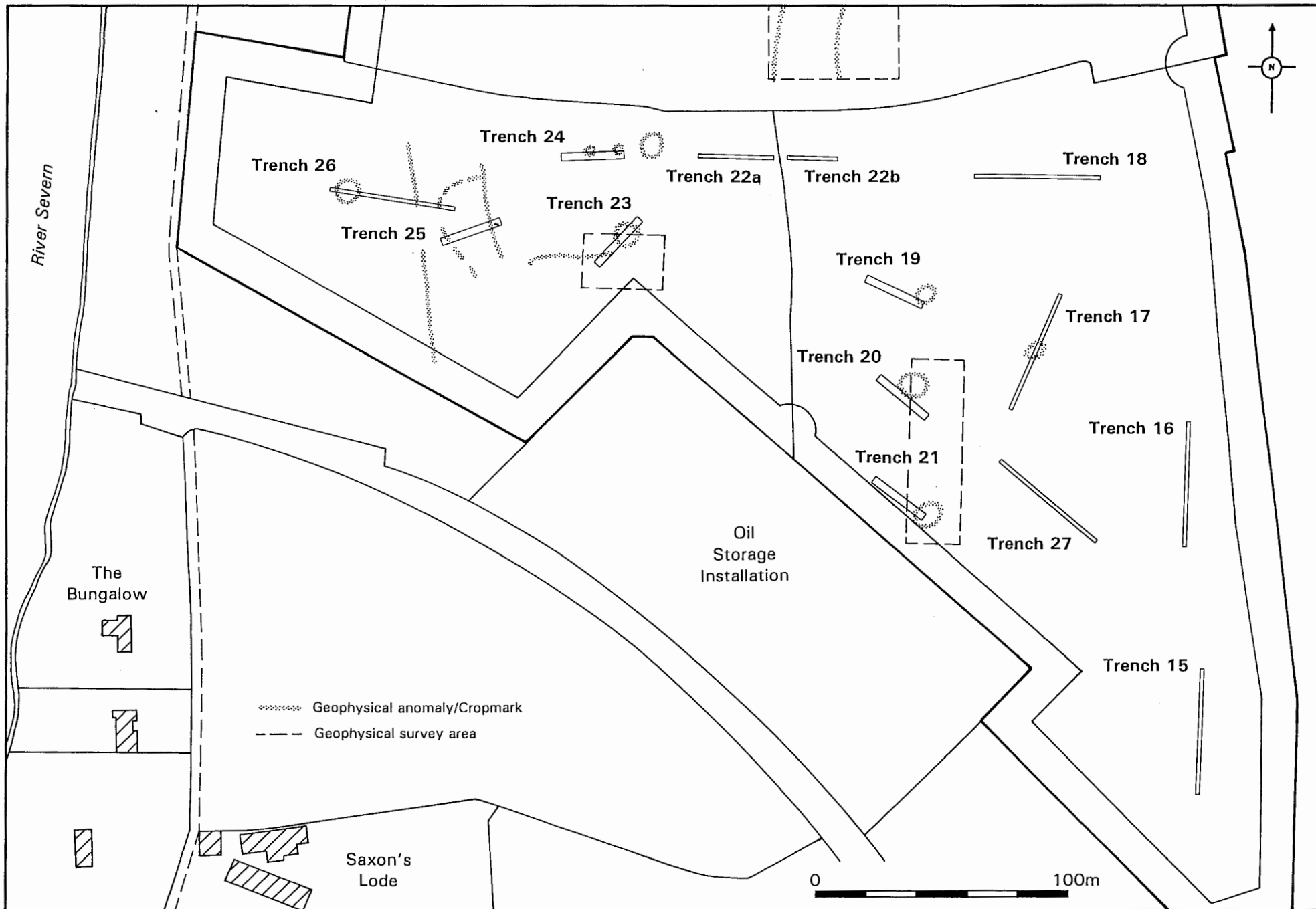


Fig. 2 Location of trenches

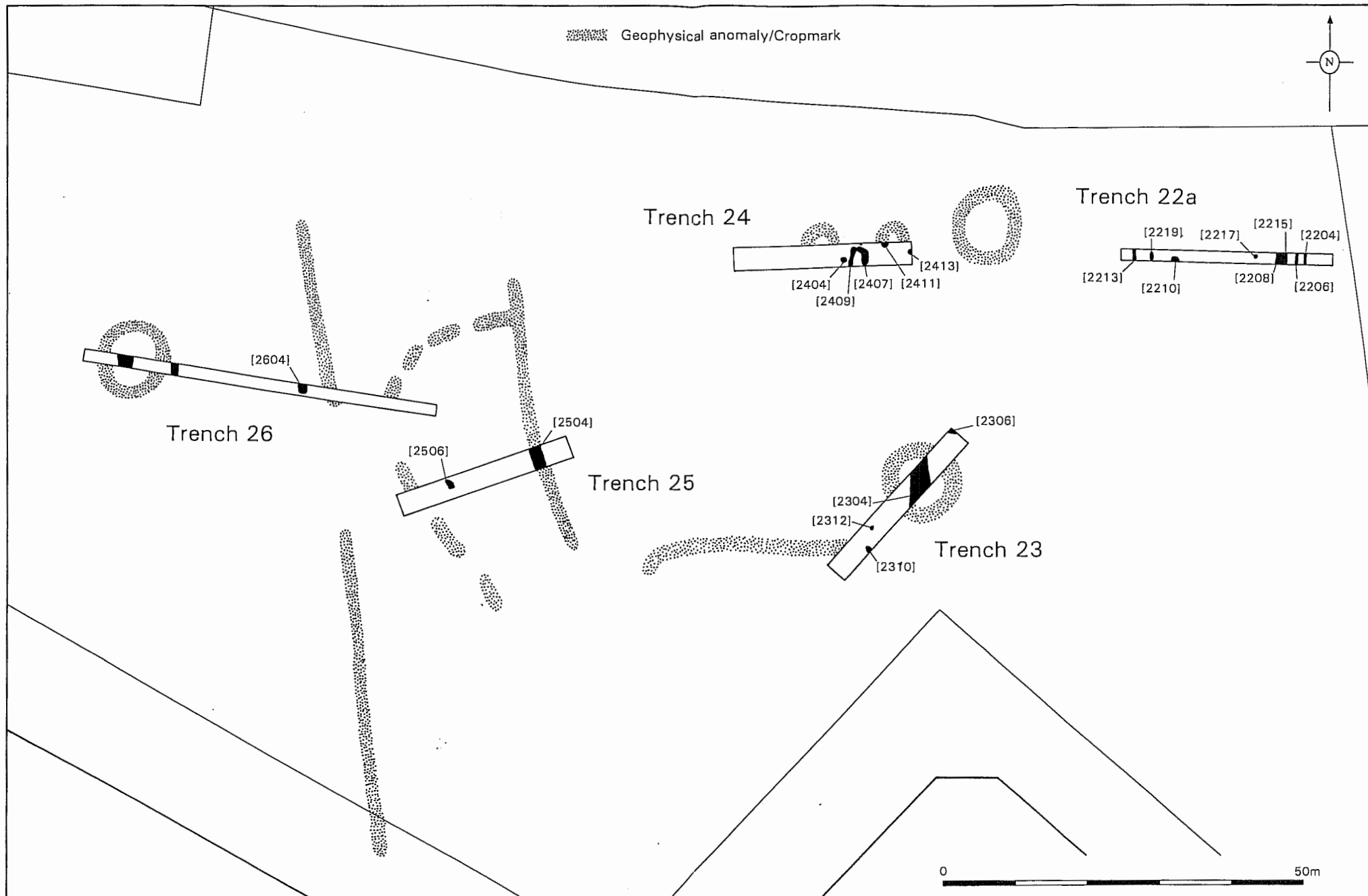
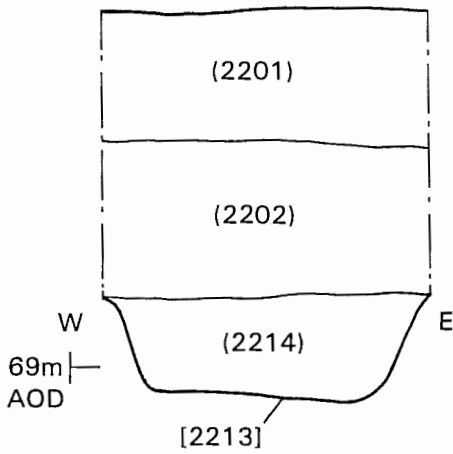


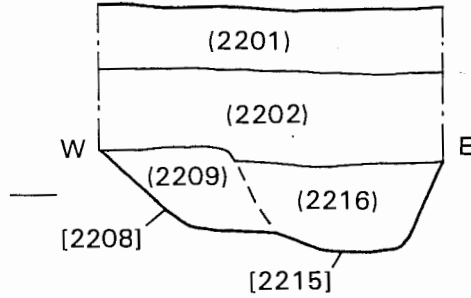
Fig. 3 Detail of area of archaeological significance

Trench 22a

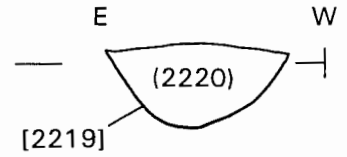
Section 1



Section 2

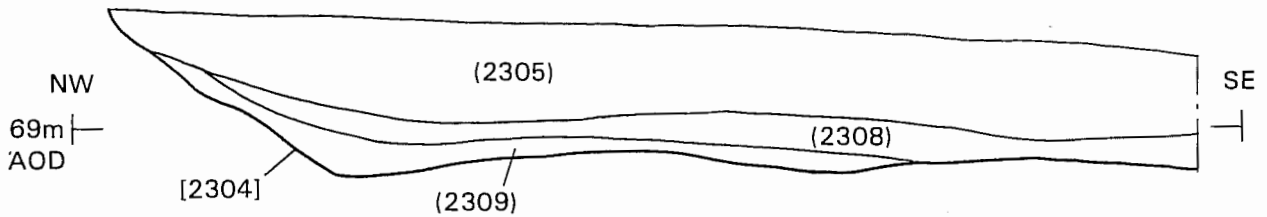


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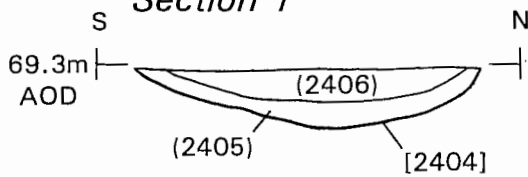
Trench 23

Section 1



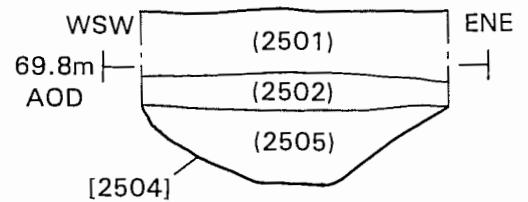
Trench 24

Section 1



Trench 25

Section 1



Trench 26

Section 1

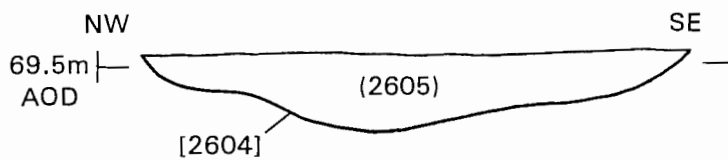


Fig. 4 Sections

APPENDIX I

Bulk Finds

HWCM 26283

RLQ98 Ryall Quarry, Ripple

Context	Description	Pottery		Tile		Other
		No	Wgt	No	Wgt	
2205	Gully 2204	1	46g			
2209/2216	Ditch 2208/ Recut 2215	4	130g			4 fired clay (32g)
2211	Pit 2210	3	13g			
2214	Ditch 2213	3	22g			
2218	Pit/posthole 2217					1 ?fired clay (2g)
2220	Pit 2219	2	3g			
2305	Ditch 2304	39	716g	8	312g	1 stone (100g)
2307	Cut 2306	2	22g			
2308	Ditch 2304	3	87g			
2309	Ditch 2304	4	155g	2	86g	
unstrat	Tr 24	1	1g			
2402	Subsoil	1	17g			
2408/ 2402	Cut 2407/Subsoil					1 flint (6g)
2505	Ditch 2504	17	256g	1	12g	1 slag (9g); 1 stone (303g)
unstrat	Tr 26					1 struck flint (1g)
2705	Gully 2704					3 ?tesserae (118g)

Pottery analysis

RLQ98 Ryall Quarry, Ripple

A small quantity of Roman pottery (80 sherds, 1351g) was recovered. The majority is Severn Valley Ware, although several sherds of Samian and Black Burnished ware are also present. A date in the 2nd/3rd century is likely.

2205	1 SVW sherd	
2209/ 2210	2 SVW sherds, 1 SVW rim, 1 coarseware rim	
2211	2 samian sherds, 1 coarseware	
2214	1 SVW chip, 1 burnt Black Burnished base, 1 coarseware	
2220	2 coarseware sherds	
2305	1 SVW tankard sherd, 1 SVW rim with flange, 5 SVW jar rims, 2 SVW base sherds; 27 SVW sherds; 1 amphora sherd; 1 burnt Black Burnished sherd	
2307	1 SVW tankard rim, 1 SVW sherd	
2308	2 SVW sherds, 1 greyware	
2309	1 samian rim, 1 storage jar rim, 1 greyware	
Tr 24	1 samian chip	
2402	1 samian base	
2505	1 samian chip, 15 SVW sherds, 1 SVW jar rim	

Palaeoenvironmental analysis

A 10 litre bulk sample (weighing 2.5kg) was taken from the silty-sand fill (2405) of hearth/oven base [2404]. The sample was first broken down in a water/hydrogen peroxide solution and then wet sieved, the flot passing through a 0.5mm sieve and the residue through a 1mm sieve. The flot was dried and examined under a binocular microscope. No cereal grains or molluscs were present and, although small pieces of charcoal were noted, the flot was highly contaminated with modern rootlets and weed seeds. The residue was dried and sorted through 11.2mm, 2mm and 1mm sieves. No artefacts or metallic residues (eg hammerscale/slag) were found.

APPENDIX II

Trench Descriptions

Note: stratigraphic descriptions are given from the earliest to the latest deposits. Cut features are designated by square brackets, thus; [000], all other deposits are in round brackets; (000). OD Heights are based on an OS benchmark on a nearby railway bridge (value 75.01m OD.).

Trench 15

No archaeological features were encountered.

Natural geological substrate (1503) of variable reddish-brown to creamy-white gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.35m.

Overlaid by approximately 0.15m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (1502), and by 0.20m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (1501).

Trench 16

No archaeological features were encountered.

Natural geological substrate (1603) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.35m.

Overlaid by approximately 0.15m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (1602), and by 0.20m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (1601).

Trench 17

No archaeological features were encountered. No features corresponding to the recorded cropmarks could be identified.

Natural geological substrate (1703) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.45m.

Overlaid by approximately 0.25m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (1702), and by 0.20m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (1701).

Trench 18

No archaeological features were encountered.

Natural geological substrate (1803) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.50m.

Overlaid by approximately 0.25m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (1802), and by 0.25m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (1801).

Trench 19

Natural geological substrate (1903) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.35m.

Linear cut [1904] was encountered, aligned N-S, 0.75m wide and in excess of 3m long. Its irregular sides dropped to a slightly concave base at a depth of 0.20m. Sandy fill (1905) yielded no finds.

The natural substrate was overlaid by approximately 0.20m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (1902), and by 0.15m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (1901).

No features corresponding to the recorded cropmarks could be identified.

Trench 20

Natural geological substrate (2003) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.35m.

One undated circular feature [2004] was noted. The feature was 0.60m long and 0.50m wide with a shallow bowl shaped profile to a depth of 0.08m. Clayey-sand fill (2005) yielded no finds.

Overlaid by approximately 0.20m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (2002), and by 0.15m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (2001).

A modern geotechnical test pit was also identified which is likely to be the source of the previously identified geophysical anomaly in this trench.

Trench 21

No archaeological features were encountered. No features corresponding to the recorded cropmarks could be identified.

Natural geological substrate (2103) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.35m.

Overlaid by approximately 0.20m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (2102), and by 0.15m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (2101).

Trench 22A

Natural geological substrate (2203) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.40m.

Gully [2213], aligned N-S, was 0.80m wide with steeply-sloping sides and a broadly flat base at a depth of 0.25m. Its clay-sand fill (2214) contained 3 sherds of R-B pottery.

An oval pit [2219], aligned N-S, was 1.3m long and 0.55m wide. It had gently-sloping sides dropping to a concave base at a depth of 0.20m. Clay-sand fill (2220) contained 2 sherds of R-B pottery.

Pit or ditch terminal [2210], N-S aligned, was 1.25m wide and at least 0.80m long. It had steeply-sloping sides and a flat base at a depth of 0.20 m. Its sand/gravel and clay-sand fills (2212) and (2211) contained 3 sherds of R-B pottery.

Pit or posthole [2217] was 0.45m by 0.40m and 0.15m deep. Its clay-sand fill (2218) yielded 1 fired clay fragment.

Ditch [2208], aligned NNE-SSW, was at least 0.70 m wide, with gently-sloping sides and a flat base at

a depth of 0.50m. Its clay-sand fill (2209) was indistinguishable from (2216).

Ditch recut [2215], aligned NNE-SSW, was 1.30 m wide with steeply-sloping sides and a slightly concave base at a depth of 0.55 m. Its clay-sand fill (2216), indistinguishable from (2209), contained 4 sherds of R-B pottery.

Ditch [2206], aligned NNE-SSW, was 0.70m wide with steep, near vertical, sides and a flat base at a depth of 0.45m. Its clay-sand fill (2207) yielded no finds.

Gully [2204], aligned NNE-SSW, was 0.50m wide with steeply-angled sides and a flat base at a depth of 0.15m. Its clay-sand fill (2205) contained 1 sherd of R-B pottery.

Undated posthole/pit [2217] was 0.5m in diameter and 0.17m deep. Contained fill (2218), reddish brown sandy clay with no finds.

All archaeological features were overlaid by approximately 0.20m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (2202), and by 0.20m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (2201).

Trench 22B

No archaeological features were encountered.

Natural geological substrate (2203) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.35m.

Overlaid by approximately 0.20m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (2202), and by 0.15m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (2201).

Trench 23

Natural geological substrate (2303) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.35m.

A shallow undated scoop or gully terminal [2310] was noted extending out of south-western baulk. Its steeply-sloping sides dropped to an irregular but broadly flat base at depth of 0.10m. Sandy fill (2311) yielded no finds.

A shallow undated sub circular area of burning [2312] was also recorded, with an irregular base at a depth of 0.10m. Its fill (2313) yielded no finds.

A N-S aligned linear ditch [2304] was noted, 2.7m in width with gently sloping sides and an irregular but broadly flat base at a depth of 0.35m. Three fills; basal fill (2309) of sands and gravels, a secondary fill (2308) of gravelly silty-sand, and main, tertiary, fill (2305) of silty-sand. Sherds of R-B pottery occurred in all three fills.

A broadly E-W aligned feature [2306] was partially exposed in the NE corner of trench 23. The feature had gently sloping sides and a slightly concave base at a depth of 0.33m. Its clay-sand fill (2307) yielded 2 sherds of R-B pottery.

Overlaid by approximately 0.15m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (2302), and by 0.20m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (2301).

It is likely that cuts [2304], [2306], and [2310] in this trench correspond to the previously identified cropmarks in this area.

Trench 24

The natural geological substrate (1503) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an

average depth of 0.7m.

A circular cut [2404] was noted, 0.80m in diameter with gently sloping sides and a concave base at depth of 0.15m. Contained an unscorched blue-grey clay lining (2406), 0.05m thick, and a fill (2405) of fine sandy-loam with charcoal flecking and patches of burnt soil 0.10m in thickness. This may have formed the base of an oven or hearth, no finds were recovered.

Linear but rather amorphous feature [2409], aligned N-S, 0.50-0.80m wide and 0.25m deep with steeply sloping sides and flat base. Filled by reddish brown sandy clay (2410), no finds recovered.

Sub circular scoop, pit or ditch terminal, [2411]. 1.1m by 0.60m with gently sloping sides and concave base at depth of 0.18m. Filled by yellow brown coarse sandy clay (2412).

Smaller subcircular scoop [2413], 0.60 by 0.40m+ with gently sloping sides and uneven base. Filled by fine yellowish brown sandy silt (2414).

Overlaid by approximately 0.20m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (2402), and by 0.20m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (2401).

It is likely that cuts [2404], [2409], and [2411] in this trench correspond to the previously identified cropmarks in this area.

Trench 25

Natural geological substrate (2503) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.35m.

Possible enclosure ditch [2504], 'U' shaped, aligned N-S, 1.5m wide and up to 0.4m deep. Filled by very gravelly light reddish brown sandy clay (2505) containing R-B potsherds, slag and possibly daub

Irregular sub-circular pit [2506], up to 1.15m in diameter and 0.15m deep, bowl shaped, filled by fine clean silty sand (2507).

Overlaid by approximately 0.15m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (2502), and by 0.20m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (2501).

It is likely that cuts [2504], and [2506] in this trench correspond to the previously identified cropmarks in this area.

Trench 26

Natural geological substrate (2603) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.40m.

Possible pit/terminal [2604], shallow bowl shape 1.4m wide and 0.4m deep, filled by gravelly sand (2605). No finds recovered.

Overlaid by approximately 0.20m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (2602), and by 0.20m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (2601).

It is likely that cut [2604] corresponds to the previously identified linear cropmark crossing the centre of this trench. The circular cropmark feature at the west end matches a lens of natural sand not separately recorded.

Trench 27

Natural geological substrate (2703) of reddish-brown gravels and sands was encountered at an average depth of 0.35m.

Gully [2704], 'U' shaped, 0.6m wide and 0.4m deep, oriented NE-SW. Filled by pale yellow clayey sand (2705), contained square stones, possibly R-B tesserae.

Overlaid by approximately 0.15m of gravelly silty-sand subsoil (2702), and by 0.20m of sandy clay-silt topsoil (2701).