

ON

NYCC HER	
SNY	19243
ENY	671
CNY	
Parish	8073
Rec'd	

Archaeological Watching Brief

**Smaws Quarry
Tadcaster**

1993

SMAWS QUARRY TADCASTER

Archaeological Watching Brief

Contents

Page

Figure List	2
Abstract	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Excavation Methods	6
3. Excavation Results	7
4. Conclusions	11
5. Recommendations for further work	12
6. Bibliography	13
Appendices	
Appendix 1 – Context listing	14
Appendix 2 – Finds Catalogue	15

Figure List

Page

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1.. General location plan | 4 |
| 2. Aerial photographic plots | 5 |
| 3. Site location plan | 5 |
| 4. Distribution of finds for 1992 and 1993 seasons | 8 |
| 5. Distribution of flint and prehistoric/roman pottery
for 1992 and 1993 seasons | 9 |

Abstract

A geophysical survey of the proposed extension area to Smaws Quarry in 1992 had indicated the presence of anomalies indicative of ditches and pits (Shiel 1992). The area of the geophysical survey was topsoil stripped under archaeological supervision by A E Finney of MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. All the anomalies shown on the survey were of a geological nature: apart from a random scatter of pottery ranging in date from the prehistoric to modern period and a number of flint artefacts, no archaeological features were located. A further watching brief was undertaken in 1993 for the area directly to the north of the area observed in 1992.

SMAWS QUARRY TADCASTER

Archaeological Watching Brief

Introduction

The site of Smaws Quarry (NGR SE 4625 4300) is situated in the parish of Tadcaster West, to the west of the town of Tadcaster and just to the north of the Ilkley to Tadcaster road (A 659), which follows the line of a Roman Road and to the east of Rudgate, which again follows the line of a Roman highway (Fig. 1).

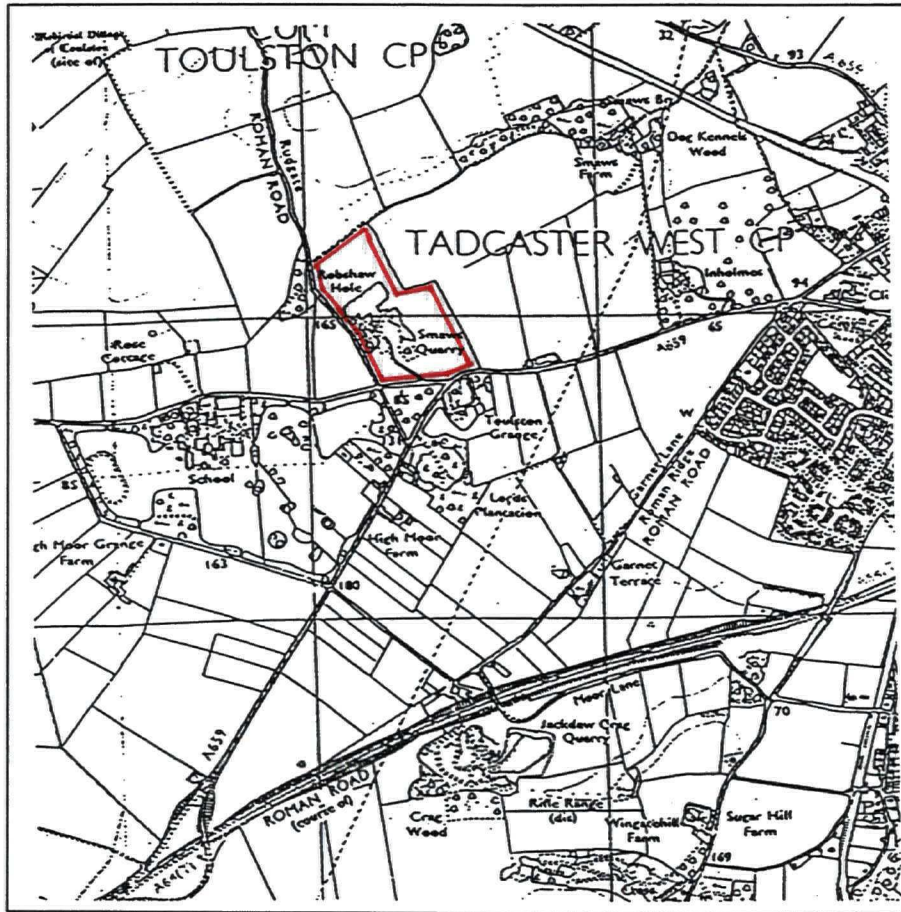


Figure 1 – Scale 1:25000

Aerial photographic reconnaissance of the area surrounding the quarry (Fig. 2) indicates the presence of an enclosure to the south-west of the site and a further series of cropmark enclosures and trackways to the east.

The geology of the site is shallow brown calcareous earths of the Aberford Association overlying the upper Magnesian Limestone of the Permian age (Jarvis et al., 1984; Mackney et al 1983).

In accordance with the planning constraint placed on Redland Aggregates an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the topsoil stripping of an area measuring approximately 240m by 20m (Fig. 3) immediately adjacent to the area of similar size which was geophysically surveyed in 1992 and observed during stripping (Finney 1992).

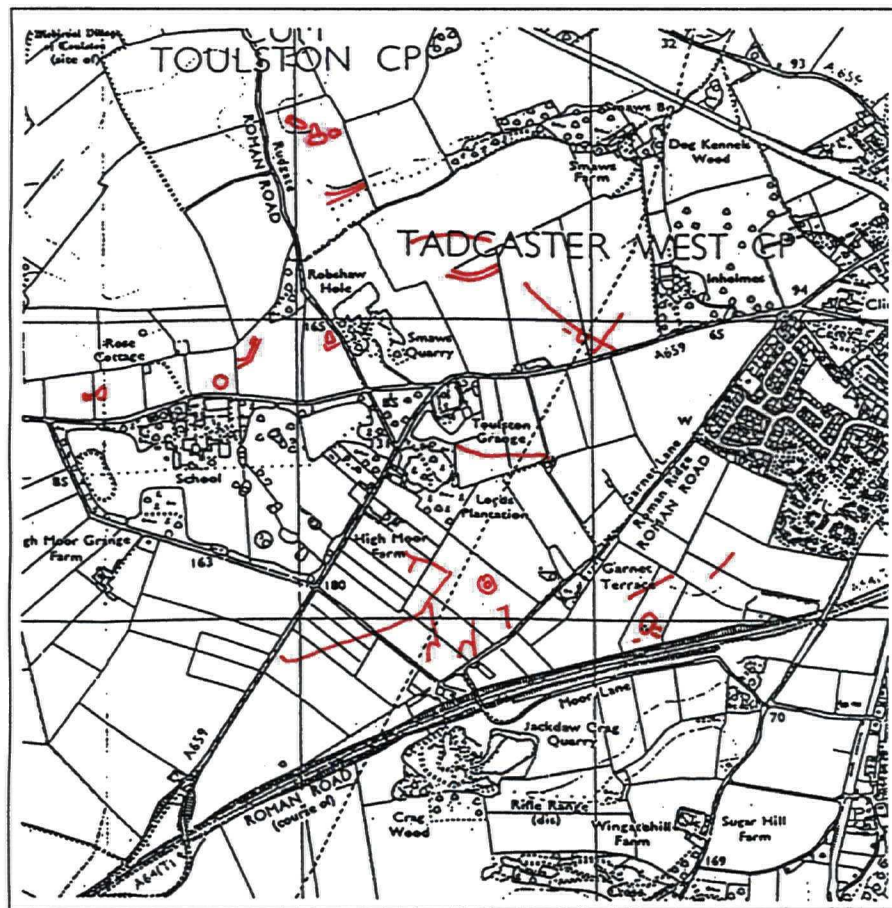


Figure 2 - Scale 1:25000

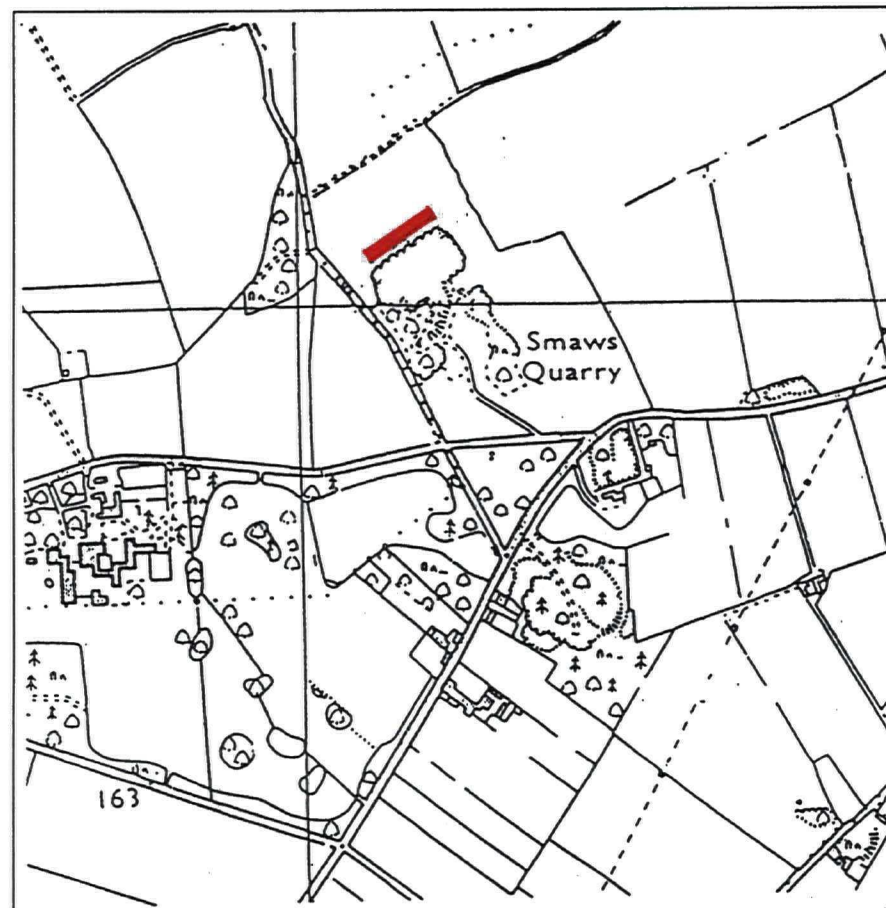


Figure 3 - Scale 1:1250

Excavation Methods and Techniques

The site was mechanically topsoil stripped using a Komatsu machine with a 1.2m wide toothless bucket. The stripped area was then shovel scraped and selected areas were trowelled. The to the north of the area was used as a baseline for surveying in the distribution of finds.

Finds located within Layer 2 exposed by the stripping process are displayed by artefact category (Figs. 4 & 5).

Excavation Results

The topsoil a silty sandy clay loam (layer 1) varied in depth over the site from 0.12m to 0.35m. This layer sealed a stone free sandy clay loam with charcoal flecks (layer 2), which again varied in depth from 0.15m in the west and central portion of the site, decreasing to 0.03m at the extreme eastern end of the site. This variation in depth can be explained by the topography; which measured 47.29m OD at the extreme west of the site gradually decreasing to 46.79 OD at 220m East and then rising fairly sharply to 47.26m OD at the extreme eastern end of the site.

Due to the shallowness of Layer 1, Layer 2 had been effected by the plough, with damage extending to a depth of 0.05m.

There was evidence for archaeological features on the site, in the form of two localised patches of burning which may represent occasional fires. No artefacts were found associated with the features and therefore the dating proves problematic.

The recovered finds assemblage does indicate man's presence from the prehistoric period through to modern times (Figs 4 & 5). During the 1993 season the majority of pottery located dated from the modern period with only a small amount from the post-medieval period and no medieval pottery. The Roman period is represented by 3 sherds of pottery (Fig. 4), 2 Samian sherds and a single colour coated sherd, the Samian dates to the 2nd century A.D. where as the colour coated wares are common from the 2nd through to the 4th century A.D. in date. Prehistoric activity at the site is illustrated by a number of flint artefacts (6 items) of which the assemblage consisted of 4 tools and 2 flakes, a ratio of tools to flakes of 3:1. Two categories of flint can be distinguished of which the most common type is mottled grey (5 items: 85%), and 1 of grey/brown translucent flint (15%). Artefacts of the mottled type have a widespread distribution within the north of England, the nearest source of which is the Yorkshire Wolds. The high quality coloured translucent flint has a known source at Flamborough Head in Humberside.

The spatial occurrence of the flint assemblage is not reflected in the distribution of other artefacts collections at the site which appear to be of a more random nature and the result of modern manuring.

In addition to material discarded at knapping sites, flint tools enter the archaeological record through being discarded or lost at the places where they were used. Two broad categories of use may be conjectured, use during the process of raw materials and manufacture of equipment, and use during the procurement of resources. Examples of the former kind are scrapers and butchery knives, while arrowheads and sickle blades may be said to fall into the second category. Processing, manufacturing and maintenance often take place at settlements, while the procurement takes place elsewhere (Smith forthcoming). The assemblage from the 1993 watching brief includes examples of the initial category but its small size hampers interpretation.

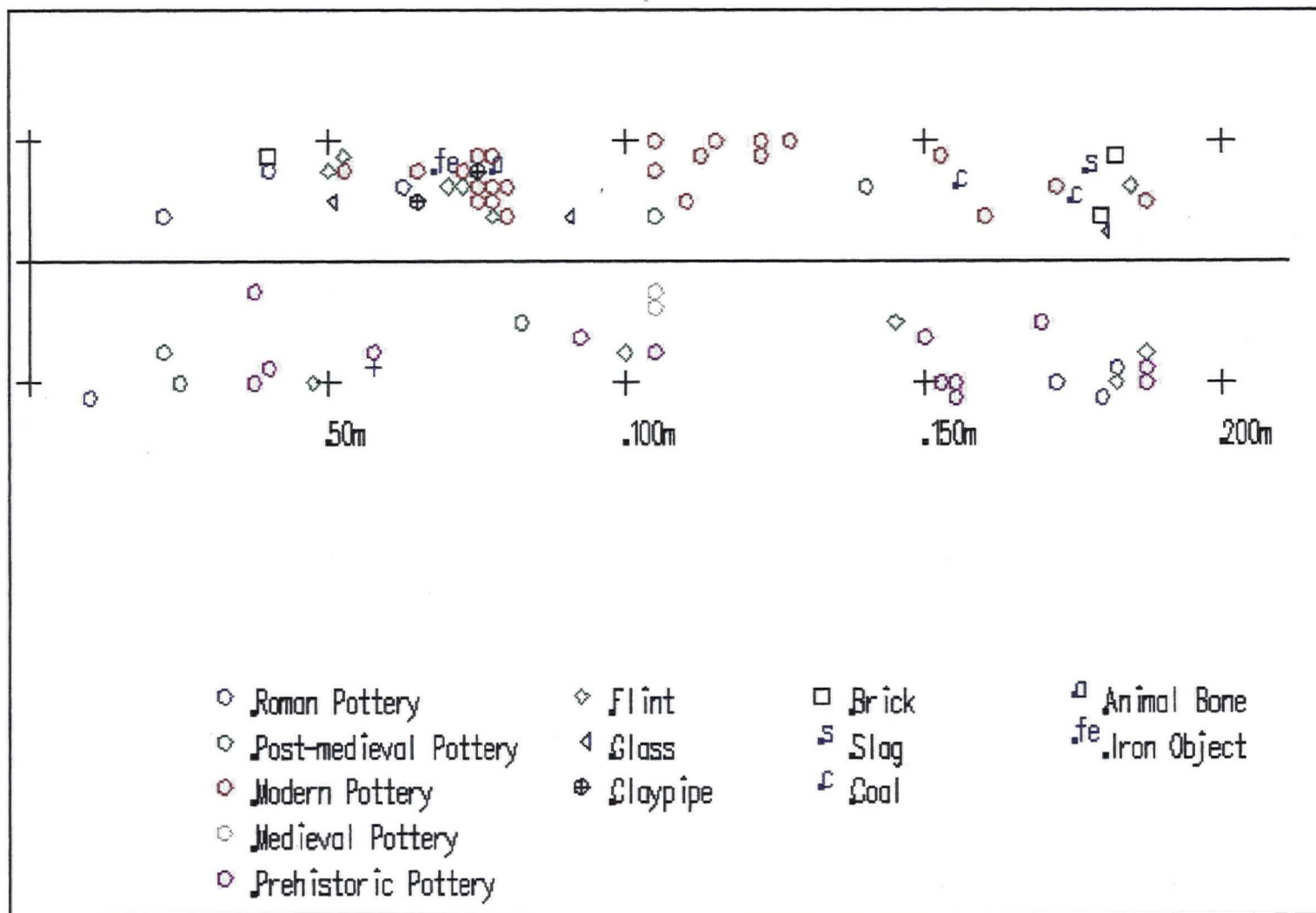


Figure 4

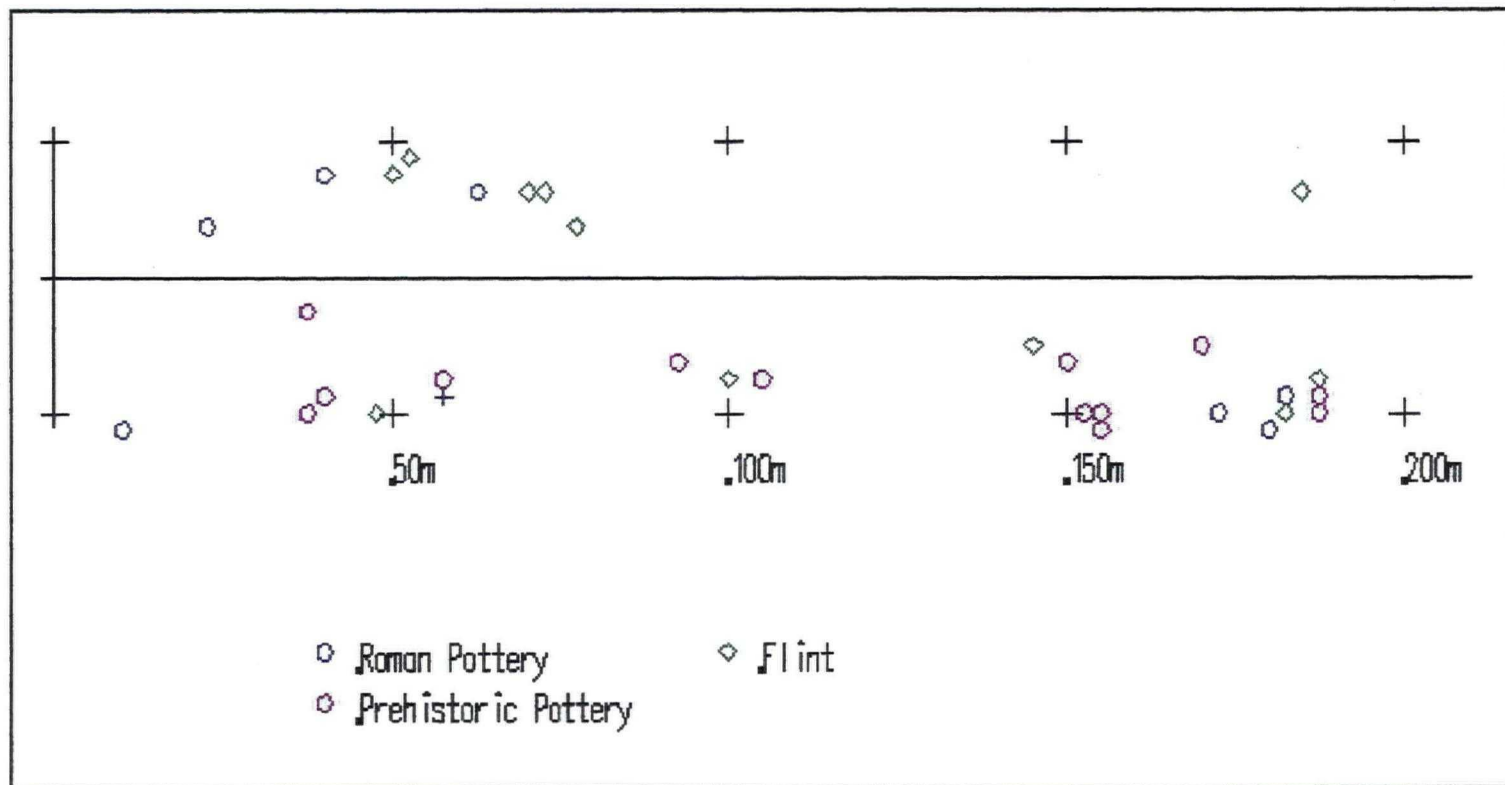


Figure 5

A consideration of the previous years results (Figs 4 and 5) shows that the finds assemblage was dominated by prehistoric pottery which was absent from the 1993 results, the Roman assemblage consisted of 4 Coarseware sherds whereas the 1993 assemblage is of high quality tablewares. Again no medieval material was located and the later period in 1992 was represented by 5 post medieval sherds and a single clay pipe stem, as opposed to 24 modern sherds, 4 post medieval and 2 clay pipe stem fragments observed in 1993.

The marked increase in modern material in the assemblage is probably due to the recent manuring as attested by a high occurrence of modern plastic and paper within the plough soil. The distribution of the flint and pottery from the site form random scatters, although in the 1993 assemblage the majority of the flint comes from the west of the site.

Conclusions

During the supervision of the topsoil stripping the only features observed where two areas of burning, there was no associated stones etc to suggest that these features had once formed hearths and the intensity of the burning suggested that they only represented occasional fires. No finds were found in association and therefore it is impossible to date the features. The artefacts recorded ranged in date from the Bronze Age through to the modern day. The majority of the material recovered appears to date from the prehistoric period, with surprisingly only a small percentage of Roman material considering the close proximity of the site to two Roman roads. The absence of evidence for medieval presence at the site may suggest that the site was pasture or waste during this period and not used for arable cultivation. The post medieval and modern material observed are the direct result of manuring.

Consideration of the aerial photographic data (Fig. 2) illustrates clearly the high degree of known archaeological activity within the immediate area of Smaws Quarry although it is impossible to equate directly with the assemblages from the watching briefs, it is clear that there was prehistoric settlement close by.

Recommendations for further work

Due to the nature of the results from the two seasons of work at the quarry, it is recommended that a watching brief is also conducted in the remaining portion of land to the north-west of the area to be quarried this coming year.

6. Bibliography

- Finney, A.E., Archaeological Watching Brief: Smaws Quarry – Tadcaster (August 1992). MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd Malton. 1992.
- Jarvis, R.A. et al. Soils and their use in Northern England. Harpenden, 1984.
- Mackney, D. et al. Legend for the 1:250000 Soil Map of England and Wales. Soil Survey of England and Wales. Harpenden, 1983.
- Sheil, D. Smaws Quarry – Tadcaster. Geophysical Survey. Geophysical Surveys of Bradford. 1992.

Appendix 1

Context Listing

Context	Description
1	Silty sandy clay loam. 10 YR 4/6.
2	Sandy clay loam. 7.5 YR 4/3.

Appendix 2

Finds Catalogue

1992 Season Layer 2

E 58.10m	N 6.54m	Daub
E 155.61m	N -0.32m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 104.80m	N 6.80m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 170.07m	N 11.00m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 187.65m	N 0.33m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 151.48m	N 6.90m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 155.35m	N 0.43m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 38.85m	N 14.35m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 93.24m	N 7.10m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 38.80m	N 3.45m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 154.53m	N -0.15m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 85.55m	N 2.23m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 39.70m	N 1.46m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 189.40	N 3.90m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 57.10m	N 5.40m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 94.20m	N 5.05m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 57.26m	N 4.09m	Pot - prehistoric - calcite gritted
E 9.50m	N -1.25m	Pot - ?Roman
E 179.18m	N -1.48m	Pot - Roman - grey ware
E 173.64m	N -0.80m	Pot - Roman - grey ware
E 183.68	N 3.42m	Pot - Roman - black burnished cooking pot rim
E 104.15m	N 13.25m	Pot - Medieval - abraded Humber ware rim
E 105.10m	N 14.95m	Pot - Medieval - abraded humber ware base
E 82.96m	N 10.88m	Pot - Post medieval
E 42.10m	N -1.10m	Pot - post medieval
E 26.10m	N -0.30m	Pot - post medieval
E 99.95m	N 00.14m	Pot - post medieval
E 22.04m	N 4.16m	Pot - post medieval
E 54.20m	N 3.94m	Clay pipe stem
E 48.70m	N 0.12m	Flint flake - unworked
E 144.75m	N 10.66m	Flint side scraper
E 183.25m	N 0.42m	Flint bladelet fragment
E 188.75m	N 4.14m	Flint flake - unworked
E 98.75m	N 5.98m	Flint blade

1993 Season

E21.9m	N7.00m	1 body sherd, Samian, roman
E40.6m	N14.3m	1 base sherd, colour coated ware, roman
E63.5m	N11.6m	1 body sherd, samian, roman
E141.70m	N12.6m	1 body sherd, white glaze, post-medieval
E152.37m	N17.20m	1 body sherd, white glaze, post-medieval
E91.5m	N12.4m	1 body sherd, coarseware, post-medieval
E105.6m	N8.3m	1 body sherd, coarseware, post-medieval
E51.3m	N16.3m	1 body sherd, Creamware, modern
E63.4m	N13.5m	1 body sherd, white glaze, modern

E67.8m	N3.9m	1 body sherd, white glaze, modern
E70.9m	N18.0m	1 body sherd, blue/white transfer ware
E76.0m	N17.9m	1 body sherd, blue/white transfer ware, modern
E75.3m	N12.4m	1 body sherd, white glaze, modern
E76.6m	N12.8m	1 body sherd, white glaze, modern
E76.9m	N12.8m	1 rim sherd, white glaze, modern
E74.0m	N13.2m	1 body sherd, cream glaze, modern
E78.0m	N12.3m	1 base sherd, white transfer ware, modern
E79.2m	N11.9m	1 body sherd, white glaze, modern
E78.4m	N7.8m	1 base sherd, blue/white transfer ware, modern
E89.7m	N14.7m	1 body sherd, white glaze, modern
E105.4m	N19.3m	1 body sherd, white glaze, modern
E104.9m	N15.4m	1 body sherd, blue/white transfer ware, modern
E110.84m	N11.42m	1 body sherd, white glaze, modern
E113.2m	N18.94m	1 body sherd, blue glaze, modern
E114.5m	N19.25m	1 body sherd, yellow glaze, modern
E121.05m	N18.05m	1 body sherd, white glaze, modern
E121.85m	N16.70m	1 body sherd, blue glaze, modern
E127.22m	N18.88m	1 body sherd, blue glaze, modern
E160.96m	N8.15m	1 body sherd, blue/white transfer ware, modern
E172.29m	N13.8m	1 body sherd, yellow glaze, modern
E187.10m	N10.78m	1 body sherd, blue/white transfer ware, modern
E49.9m	N10.1m	1 green glass bottle fragment
E79.0m	N7.7m	1 green glass bottle fragment
E181.6m	N5.02m	1 beer bottle glass fragment
E79.2m	N11.9m	1 animal bone
E71.4m	N12.4m	1 fe object?
E65.7m	N9.1m	1 clay pipe stem fragment
E75.4m	N13.7m	1 clay pipe stem fragment
E182.72m	N17.98m	brick
E180.68m	N7.20m	brick
E37.7m	N18.1m	1 tile fragment
E40.9m	N12.4m	burnt sandstone
E152.47m	N16.40m	charcoal scatter
E174.35m	N10.81m	coal
E179.32m	N14.9m	slag
E51.6m	N16.2m	flint bladelet - light mottled grey
E53.3m	N17.3m	flint flake - light mottled grey
E70.9m	N17.3m	flint blade - snapped, mottled grey
E75.4m	N14.7m	flint flake - translucent
E185.65m	N13.78m	flint blade - mottled grey