

3.0 Background

3.1 Site Location (NGR SE 640 644)

The site lies to the north of Lilling Low Lane c.0.9km southwest of the village of West Lilling in the County of North Yorkshire (NGR SE 640 644, see Figure 1). The site is located on a discrete area of sand and gravel surrounded by warp and lacustrine clay, which overlies Bunter and Keuper Sandstone (see Figure 2, below). The site is situated at the foot of the Howardian Hills, which rise to the north, and some 200 metres from the River Foss, to the south and west. The area is currently arable land.

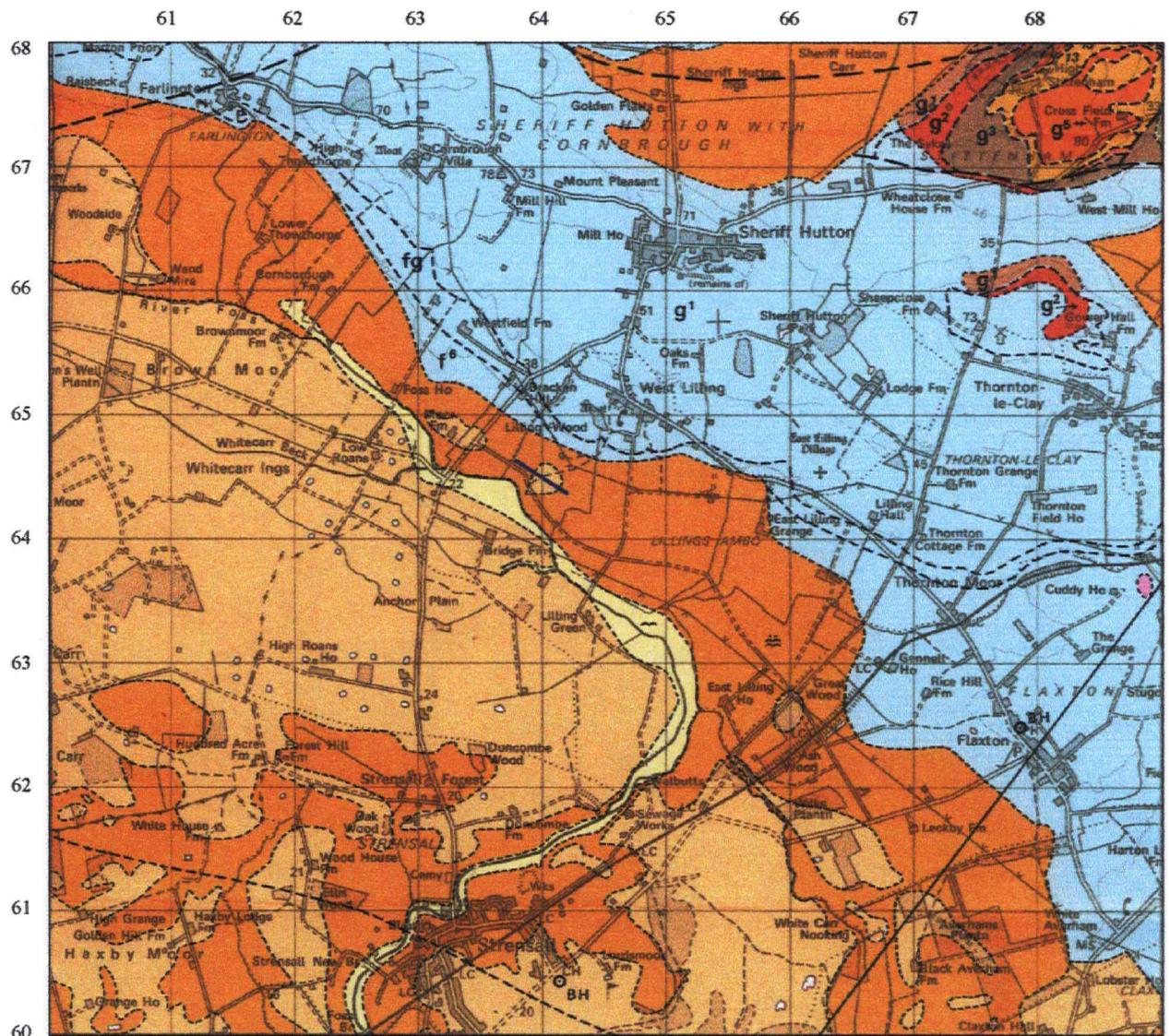


Figure 2. Geology of immediate vicinity. Extract from British Geological Survey Sheet 63. Blue line indicates site location.

3.2 *Previous Work: geophysical survey and trial trenching*

Further to the identification of the various cropmarks in the immediate vicinity of the site, a fluxgate gradiometer survey of the current investigation area was commissioned as part of the BP pipeline works.

This geophysical work revealed a number of anomalies, mainly concentrated at the western end of the survey area. These included ditch and pit type anomalies. While these results bear no obvious correlation to the cropmarks on the site, they are in a similar location and may therefore be associated. See Ovenden-Wilson, 1998, for full details and an interpretation of the geophysical results.

An evaluation of the site was undertaken by On Site Archaeology during January and February of 1999, which consisted of five trenches excavated along the pipeline route. The results of this evaluation are summarised below; for a detailed discussion of the evaluation see Hopkinson & Tyler, 1999. The trench descriptions from the evaluation report text are reproduced in section 5.2.1, below, as the preliminary results listed in this document draw from both the evaluation and excavation data.

Evaluation Trench 1 revealed only a single furrow.

The earliest features in Trench 2 consist of a series of ditches. At the northwest end of the trench was a north - south aligned ditch. Towards the centre of the trench was a second ditch, aligned approximately east - west, and thought to be related. The fills of these ditches were waterlogged and rich in organic material. The ditches were sealed by a 0.30m thick deposit containing Romano-British pottery. An intersection between two further ditches, aligned northeast - southwest and east - west, was also apparent further along the trench. A 0.5m wide slot through the intersection revealed a waterlogged fill similar to the other two ditches. Part of a cobble spread, possibly a surface, truncated by a furrow was situated at the northwestern end of the trench.

Two east - west aligned ditches were found in Trench 3, one situated at the southeastern end and the other towards the northwestern end of the trench. Located between them was a third ditch aligned approximately north - south. A cobble spread, truncated by a furrow, was situated at the southeastern end of the trench.

Two ditches, one aligned approximately north - south and the other east - west, were located in Trench 4. The ditches were thought to be related. Romano-British pottery was recovered from the fill of the east - west ditch. A row of three postholes, aligned east - west, were situated at the southeastern end of the trench and may be associated with the ditches. The ditches and one of the postholes were sealed by the remains of a relic soil horizon containing Romano-British pottery and a small dump of painted plaster fragments. Towards the centre of the trench was a stone structure set within a cut. This was only partially revealed during the evaluation, and little can therefore be suggested as to its origin or function. Cut into the relic soil horizon were two wall foundations aligned approximately northeast - southwest.

The foundations bounded a cobble surface packed with clay which incorporated an earlier east - west aligned wall foundation. A pit containing a quantity of charcoal and burnt clay was sealed by the earlier wall foundation. The foundations were overlain by a spread of demolition debris containing lumps of *opus signinum* and tile.

Evaluation Trench five contained two ditches, one aligned north - south and the other northeast - southwest, and a ditch terminal. A cobble spread partially overlay the north - south ditch. A curvilinear slot and a narrow gully were situated at the southeast end of the trench.

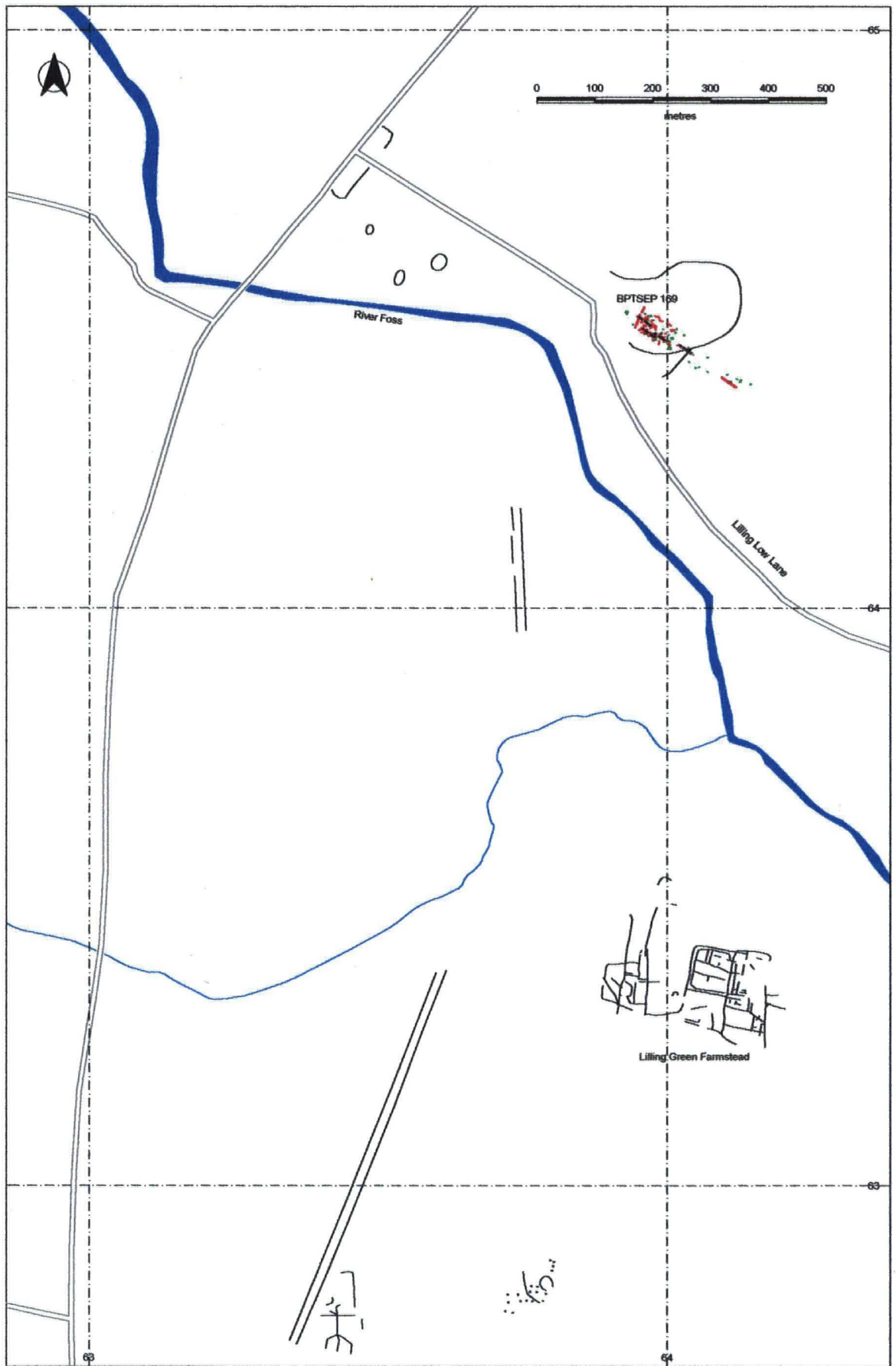


Figure 3. Archaeological environs of the site.

3.3 *Circumstances of the Project*

This project was brought about through the necessity to establish a pipeline for transporting ethylene gas from Teesside to Saltend in order to link BP Chemicals' major operations at Wilton, near Middlesborough, and Saltend, near Hull. A Pipeline Construction Authorisation (PCA) was therefore submitted to the Department of Trade and Industry.

One of the conditions attached to the PCA consent was that any archaeological sites along the pipeline route should be investigated and recorded, and a number of archaeological contractors were appointed to carry out work along various stretches of the pipeline route, On Site Archaeology being assigned the stretch of the route within the administrative districts of Ryedale and York City.

On the basis of the archaeological evidence from the evaluation undertaken at West Lilling between 1st and 22nd February 1999, summarised above, a further mitigation strategy was instigated by BP Chemicals and the Heritage Unit of North Yorkshire County Council. This consisted of the hand excavation of approximately a 400 metre length of the pipe trench.

Work commenced at the western edge of this stretch in November 1999 and was continued after the millennium break, finishing in March 2000.

4.0 Fieldwork Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The methodologies employed during the excavation have primarily been dictated by the need to fully excavate and record deposits which were threatened by the pipe laying process. In addition the methodological strategy has been informed by the stated research aims and objectives set out in the initial project design, and have been designed in order to extract the optimum level of information from the site in order to fulfil these aims. In this way the relationship between the data recovered, the methodologies employed and the way that this will fulfil the research aims will be clearly stated (in accordance with *Management of Archaeological Projects* English Heritage 1991).

During the course of the evaluation of the site it was realised that extensive Romano-British deposits existed at this site and that these appeared to represent the remains of features associated with a habitation site of fairly high status, possibly a villa. As a result a condition of preservation by record was imposed on the entire area to be affected by the development where these deposits survived. The resulting excavation covered an area of approximately 833 square metres. The excavation methodology is included in this report as Appendix 8.

4.2 Excavation

The evaluation showed that archaeological deposits are sealed below a depth of approximately 300 mm of modern plough soil. Below this are traces of the medieval plough soil which at times is filling furrows cut into the natural and/or earlier archaeological deposits. The plough soil was removed down to the surviving archaeological deposits or the natural sand with a 180° back acting mechanical excavator using a toothless 1.80 metre wide dyking bucket.

Exposed surfaces revealed by the plough soil/sub soil strip were cleaned by hand using hoe and trowel, excavation thereafter was carried out entirely by hand and undertaken according to stratigraphic principles. Extensive areas of homogenous material were excavated in spits, whereas discrete features such as post holes and pits were fully excavated. The latter were half sectioned in the first instance where this was practically possible.

4.3 Recording

A full written, drawn and photographic¹ record was made of all material and features encountered during the course of the excavation. This was carried out according to standard OSA recording strategies. In this way the character of each discrete context was recorded on *pro forma* context sheets along with their stratigraphic relationship with others. This was complemented by a series of photographs and drawn plans and sections.

¹ On occasions poor weather conditions prevented a full photographic record being maintained.

The photographic record consists of both black and white and colour slide film. Although digital photography was occasionally used, this was an adjunct to, rather than a core part of the recording strategy.

The drawn record of the excavation consists of plans, drawn at a scale of 1:20 and sections drawn at a scale of 1:10. Occasionally plans were drawn at a scale of 1:50. As a rule, single context planning was undertaken but in some cases discrete features cut into the natural sand will appear on multi-context plans of specific areas. All drawings were produced on permatrace according to established OSA drawing conventions.

Contexts were numbered using a continual block of numbers allocated to the excavation. During the earlier evaluation of the five trial trenches, each trench was allocated a block of numbers according to trench number e.g. Trench 1 was allocated 1000-1999, Trench 2 2000-2999 etc. For the sake of continuity, and to avoid later confusion, the contexts from the excavation were allocated the next block of numbers, i.e. 6000 onwards.

4.4 *Environmental Sampling*

A strategy for the recovery and sampling of environmental remains was agreed with the Environmental Archaeology Unit (EAU), University of York, prior to the excavation commencing.

This required an appropriate representative sample to be taken from all archaeological deposits;

- which were the fills of features (and certainly in the case of primary fills)
- which, like hearth accumulations, were thought to represent discrete activities
- which were thought to represent naturally forming deposits such as soils or beds of peat
- or which, like dumps, were thought likely to contain refuse from human occupation.

In most cases one tub of sediment was taken as a sample, usually representing 5-10 kg of material. In some cases a larger than average sample was taken (2-4 tubs) in order to maximise the information that might be retrieved from such contexts and to address some of the specific research questions outlined below, or when the nature of a context was unclear during excavation.

4.5 *Finds Recovery*

The vast majority of artefacts recovered during the excavation were recorded by context rather than three dimensionally.

4.6 *Survey*

The extents of the excavation trench were surveyed using a Leica EDM, as were a number of local landmarks in order to tie the trench location in to the Ordnance Survey (OS) national grid. A base line running the length of the trench was established from which plans were drawn.

4.7 *Storage, Curation and Discard*

BP Chemicals or their archaeological representative are responsible for approaching the landowner (Robin Barker) regarding agreement to the deposition of the finds, and Malton Museum has agreed in principal to receive the archive. The exact details and cost implications of archive deposition cannot be established until all the artefacts have been completely processed, stabilised, conserved and packaged, a discard policy has been established (once final analysis has been completed), and the landowner's permission has been granted. It is also intended to lodge copies of the project archive with the SMR housed with the Heritage Unit of North Yorkshire County Council and with the National Monument Record.

All finds have been recorded and bagged according to standard OSA field recording guidelines. They will be cleaned, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidelines set out in United Kingdom Institute for Conservation's *Conservation Guidelines No.2*. Any specialised conservation requirements will be discussed both with the relevant specialist and the recipient museum

The pottery assemblage amounts to approximately 1000 pieces, the vast majority of which derive from stratified contexts. There is, therefore, little of the assemblage which it would be appropriate to discard.

The registered finds assemblage amounts to 115 artefacts. None of these are at present thought suitable for discard.

The CBM (ceramic building material) assemblage amounts to some 511 pieces. After full recording it may be appropriate to discard those pieces which are of little diagnostic value.

5.0 Quantification, Summary of Results & Assessment of Potential

The following section quantifies and assesses the data collected during fieldwork. Particular attention will be paid to the potential that this data contains and the ways in which it may be able to address the research aims set out in the initial Project Design. It will begin, however, with a detailed descriptive breakdown of the quantity and character of the material recovered. Each of the relevant specialist reports will appear in full in the appendix and here their contents are summarised.

5.1 *Quantification of Data*

For the purposes of describing the nature of the material recovered during excavation the archive has been divided into separate and distinct material categories. Each will be quantified and described separately.

5.1.1 *The Stratigraphic Record*

There are a total of 308 contexts recorded from the excavation. These are broken down as follows according to their type.

Layer:	23
Cut:	124
Fill:	160
Skeleton:	1 (modern cow burial)

There are a total of 131 contexts recorded from the evaluation. These are broken down as follows according to their type.

Layer:	34
Cut:	34
Fill:	59
Structure:	4

For each context there exists a *pro forma* context sheet as well as a drawn plan and section (where appropriate).

5.1.2 *Archives*

The following table details the contents of the site archives from the evaluation and excavation:

	Evaluation	Excavation	Total
The Paper Archive			
<i>Drawings</i>			
Total drawings	22	134	156
Sections and profiles @ 1:10	10	62	72
Sections and profiles @ 1:20	-	1	1
Plans @ 1:20	9	69	78
Plans @ 1:50	3	1	4
A3 permatrace sheets	22	79	101
<i>Registers</i>			
Context Register	5 sheets	13 sheets	18 sheets
Sample register	1 sheet	2 sheets	3 sheets
Drawing register	1 sheet	4 sheets	5 sheets
<i>Records</i>			
Context sheets	131 sheets	308 sheets	439 sheets
Sample Record Sheets	2 sheets	54 sheets	56 sheets
Levels Sheets	-	26 sheets	26 sheets
<i>Photographic</i>			
B/W films	-	10 films	10 films
Colour transparency films	4 films	10 films	14 films
Photographic record sheets	4 sheets	21 sheets	25 sheets
Finds and Samples			
<i>Finds</i>			
Pottery	337 sherds	642 sherds	979 sherds
Whole pottery artefacts	-	1 (oil lamp)	1 object
Ceramic Building Material	165 fragments	304 fragments	469 fragments
Stone Building Material	6 fragments	6 fragments	12 fragments
Plaster/daub	29 fragments	1 fragment	30 fragments
Fe Objects	26 objects/fragments	68 objects/fragments	94 objects/fragments
Pb Objects	1 object	-	1 object
Cu Objects	1 object (shears)	-	1 object
Coins	1 object	-	1 object
Glass	4 fragments	5 fragments	9 fragments
Flint artefacts	-	7 objects	7 objects
Worked Stone objects	-	1 object (axe frag.)	1 object
Total finds by context	570	1035	1605
<i>Samples</i>			
Samples for biological analysis	2	54	56
Hand collected bone	61 fragments	141 fragments	202 fragments

The archive has been checked and cross referenced and an index has been compiled for each individual component. The primary (paper) archive is being kept at Quarter Cottage, 30 Sherburn Street, Cawood, York.

The majority of the written archival records and context information from the excavation have been computerised and placed into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The drawings from both the excavation and evaluation have been digitised and are currently held in AutoCAD Release 14 format.

5.2 *Summary of Results*

5.2.1 *Archaeological Findings*

The total area investigated during the evaluation and excavation at this site amounts to some 1103 square metres, 270m² during the evaluation and 833m² during the excavation. This was excavated through a total of six trenches, five from the evaluation, each measuring c.30 metres by 1.80 metres, and one from the subsequent excavation measuring c.400 metres by 1.80 metres. For the purposes of this discussion, the results are presented by trench. To enable easier discussion of the findings from Trench 6 (the excavation) this trench has been divided into three areas, this is purely to aid discussion and has no interpretative basis. The three areas are identified according to the extent of the site baseline they cover. While the following discussion of trenches 1-5 is fairly comprehensive, the discussion of the excavation results (Trench 6) is presented as a general overview, the vast majority of the analysis not yet being complete.

5.2.1.1 *Trench 1*

The only archaeological feature in Trench 1 was a furrow [1003], aligned approximately north - south, and filled with [1002]. The furrow remained unexcavated. The base of the trench was criss-crossed with modern land drain cuts, one of which was investigated as a control.

5.2.1.2 *Trench 2 (see Figure 4)*

A number of ditches were revealed in Trench 2. Towards the northwest end of the trench was a north - south aligned ditch [2026] filled with dark brownish grey silty clay [2025]. A sample of this fill, taken for general biological analysis (GBA), showed it to be rich in organic material, including plant remains, charred cereal grains and various invertebrate remains. Full excavation of ditch [2026] proved impossible due to ground water inundation. In addition, records were not completed due to catastrophic section collapse resulting in the total backfilling of the excavated slot. Any results discussed below pertaining to the ditch have been obtained from the photographic archive.

Further along the trench to the southeast was an east - west aligned ditch [2017]. The basal fill [2008] comprised waterlogged dark brownish grey silty clay containing charcoal and organic material including fragments of twigs. Fill [2008] was sealed by a thin layer of dark grey sandy clay containing charcoal flecks [2007] which, in turn, was overlain by a layer of mottled mid bluish grey silty sand [2006], also containing charcoal.

Layer [2006] and fill [2025] were overlain by a deposit of dark brownish grey silty sand [2002], containing frequent ferrous nodules and occasional cobbles and sandstone fragments. Artefacts recovered from [2002] include calcite-tempered and Huntcliffe wares, all of which date to the 4th century AD. The deposit appeared to represent the uppermost fills of ditches [2026] and [2017] since it was bounded by the western edge of ditch [2026] and the southern edge of ditch [2017]. It was, however, also present in the area between the two ditches. A

thin layer of mid bluish grey silty sand containing charcoal [2030] was situated between the overlying deposit [2002] and the natural [2028] in this area. Layers [2030] and [2006] were very similar in composition and depth and may represent a diffuse interface between layer [2002] and the respective underlying deposits.

Towards the southeast end of the trench was an east - west aligned irregular linear feature that was initially interpreted as a single ditch. Intrusive investigation revealed a possible intersection between northeast - southwest and east - west aligned ditches represented by a spur of natural in the base of a 0.5m wide slot. The basal fill of the slot consisted of waterlogged dark brown silty sand containing charcoal and organic material including fragments of twigs [2016]. Overlying fill [2016] was a wedge of redeposited natural [2015]. This was in turn overlain by a layer of dark grey brown silty sand [2014] and a layer of mid grey sand [2013]. The uppermost fill consisted of mid brownish grey silty sand with frequent ferrous nodules [2012] similar to deposit [2002]. Following the limited investigation of the ditch intersection feature [2029], excavation was discontinued on the basis that the feature was too large and complex to be effectively evaluated within the confines of the trench.

Situated at the northwest end of the trench was a shallow cut [2027] containing a cobble spread [2023] overlain by a layer of mid grey slightly silty sand [2024].

Deposit [2002] was sealed by a layer of mid brownish grey silty sand [2005] which in turn was possibly overlain by layer [2010]. The boundary between layers [2005] and [2010] was impossible to define with any degree of certainty due to the similarity in composition between the two layers. The lower boundaries of deposit [2010] sloped down towards a field drain. Deposit [2010] was overlain by a layer of mid greyish brown silty sand [2011] very similar in composition to layer [2005].

A north - south aligned furrow [2019] cut deposit [2002] and the ditch feature [2029]. The furrow was filled with mottled dark grey and brown slightly silty sand [2020] and dark grey silty sand containing ferrous nodules [2018]. The upward continuation of cut [2019] through layer [2011] was indistinct.

The cobble spread [2023] and layer [2024] were truncated by a northeast - southwest aligned furrow [2004]. The furrow was filled with mid greyish brown silty sand [2003] containing flecks of charcoal and ceramic building material (CBM).

At the southeastern end of the trench was a third furrow [2022] filled with [2021].

The archaeological features were sealed by a layer of subsoil [2001] which in turn was overlain by the topsoil [2000].

5.2.1.3 Trench 3 (see Figure 4)

Trench 3 contained two east - west aligned ditches [3013] and [3010] with a third ditch [3008], aligned approximately northeast - southwest, located between them.

The primary fill of ditch [3013] consisted of redeposited natural material [3020]. This was overlain by a layer of slightly mottled mid brownish grey sand containing lenses of dark brown silt [3019] which, in turn, was overlain by a layer of mottled mid greyish brown sand [3012]. The uppermost fill comprised mid reddish brown silty sand containing occasional CBM fragments and charcoal [3011]. A small dump of mid reddish brown clay [3025] which showed signs of burning was situated over fill [3011].

The primary fill [3007] of ditch [3008] and the overlying fill [3006] comprised redeposited natural material. This was overlain by a tear-shaped deposit of mottled light greyish brown sand [3005] which filled a shallow scoop in the surface of fill [3006]. The scoop may have been formed by water running down the side of the ditch and subsequently filled by deposit [3005]. A fill of mottled light brownish grey sand containing lenses of light brown sand [3004] sealed deposit [3005]. Fill [3004] had a similar shallow scoop in its surface in the same position as that in fill [3005]. Overlying deposit [3004] was a deposit of slightly mottled mid brownish grey silty sand containing lenses of darker siltier sand and light grey sand [3003]. The uppermost fill consisted of mottled greyish brown silty sand [3002].

Ditch [3010] was filled with mid greyish brown silty sand containing frequent cobbles and sandstone fragments [3009].

Towards the southeast end of the trench was a cobble spread [3017] overlain by mid reddish brown silty sand [3018] similar in composition to the uppermost fill [3011] of ditch [3013]. The cobble spread sloped upwards towards the end of the trench and had been disturbed by modern ploughing.

Three north - south aligned furrows [3022], [3024] and [3015], filled by [3021], [3023] and [3014] respectively, were located within the trench.

The archaeological features were sealed by a layer of subsoil [3001] which was overlain by topsoil [3000].

5.2.1.4 Trench 4 (see Figure 5)

The earliest features in Trench 4 were two ditches [4004] and [4013] aligned north - south and east - west respectively. The primary fill of ditch [4013] consisted of redeposited natural material [4020]. This was sealed by fill [4019] which was thought to comprise a naturally deposited mixture of sand and topsoil. A thin layer of dark brown, possibly organic, material (2-5mm thick), confined to the centre of the ditch, was situated at the top of fill [4019] at the interface with overlying deposit [4007]. A few fragments of animal bone and pottery (calcite-tempered and grey wares) were recovered from deposit [4007] immediately above the interface with fill [4019]. Deposit [4007] may represent the deliberate backfilling of ditch [4013]. The deposit was sealed by a layer [4002] which may form the uppermost fill of the ditch or, alternatively, comprise a relic soil horizon slumped into the top of the ditch following the subsidence of underlying unconsolidated ditch fill. The layer contained pottery (oxidised wares and greyware (some quartz tempered)), animal bone and flecks of CBM and *opus signinum*.

Prior to recording the fill sequence within ditch [4004] the section catastrophically collapsed rendering further work impossible. A section was excavated through the same ditch in Trench 5.

At the southwestern end of the trench, and parallel with ditch [4013], was a row of postholes [4015], [4016] and [4017], aligned east - west. Posthole [4015] was filled with clay [4022] and contained a large placed cobble on the northeastern side which provided packing for the post. A rectangular postpipe (0.10m x 0.13m and 0.10m deep), filled with redeposited natural material, formed the bottom part of the posthole. Postholes [4016] and [4017] were shallow cuts which appeared to provide 'seating' for clay postpads [4021] and [4018] respectively. Clay postpad [4018] had a pronounced lip, c.50mm high, on the northwest side, possibly resulting from a post exerting pressure on an area smaller than the total surface area of the pad.

Ditch [4004] was sealed by a possible relic soil horizon [4001] which may be associated with similar deposit [4002]. Deposit [4001] contained fragments of tile and building stone concentrated towards the top of the deposit in addition to pottery, animal bone and rare fragments of *opus signinum*. Towards the southwest limit of the deposit was a small dump of plaster, some of which was painted. At the southwestern end of the trench were two further layers, [4009] and [4010], which may also form part of a relic soil horizon. Both layers had a similar composition to deposit [4002] and contained calcite-tempered, Crambeck and sandy wares. Layer [4009] also contained animal bone and fragments of building stone and tile. Layer [4009] sealed posthole [4015].

Towards the centre of the trench a sub-rectangular cut [4023] contained part of a structure [4014]. This was built of roughly-coursed, dry-stone construction and contained fragments of Crambeck greyware pottery within its upper course. Some of the outer stones were angled c.45 in elevation. The space enclosed by the foundation appeared to be sub-divided by a northeast-southwest aligned row of stones. The quality of the build suggests that it was not intended to bear a large wall, but given the small area exposed it is difficult to ascribe a detailed interpretation. The fill [4008] of the cut was very similar in composition to the relic soil horizon layers and contained occasional fragments of tile and building stone, animal bone and Crambeck greyware and calcite-tempered pottery. There was no evidence within the trench of the relationship between structure [4014] and ditch [4013].

Relic soil horizon [4001] was cut by a northeast-southwest aligned construction cut [4028] containing a trench-built wall foundation [4006] of dry-stone construction comprising sandstone and cobbles with occasional tile fragments. Lumps of mid brown silty clay were packed between the stones. No coursing was apparent.

Relic soil horizon [4002] was cut to the northwest by a northeast - southwest aligned construction cut [4026] containing a trench-built wall foundation [4024]. The foundation was of dry-stone construction and comprised two courses of stones angled at c.45 forming a herringbone pattern when viewed in elevation (imbrecated). The foundation contained lumps

of mid grey brown silty clay packed between the stones. A large fragment of *opus signinum* was contained within the construction cut.

A possible wall foundation [4025], aligned approximately east - west, was situated to the northwest of wall foundation [4024]. The foundation [4025] consisted of a single course of sandstone angled *c.*45 north - south in elevation with occasional cobbles and very occasional fragments of tile bonded with mid grey brown silty clay. The foundation sealed a pit [4034], the fill [4033] of which contained a quantity of charcoal and burnt material. The foundation appeared to have been incorporated within a surface comprising cobbles packed with clay [4027]. The cobble surface [4027] and wall foundation [4006] were sealed by a layer of disuse/ demolition material [4005] which included building stone, tile fragments and frequent flecks of plaster. A number of the tile fragments had *opus signinum* adhering to them.

Three furrows [4029], [4030] and [4031], trending approximately north - south, were evident along the length of the trench. The furrows were filled with [4011], [4003] and [4012] respectively.

The archaeological features were sealed by a layer of topsoil [4000].

5.2.1.5 Trench 5 (see Figure 5)

At the northwest end of the trench was a northeast - southwest aligned ditch [5008], the basal fills [5006] and [5007] of which consisted of redeposited natural material. Fill [5006] was overlain by a sequence of thin layers comprising a layer of redeposited natural material [5004] situated between two layers of dark brownish grey sandy silt, fills [5005] and [5003]. A shallow scoop in the surface of fill [5003] was filled by redeposited natural material [5002], sealed by dark brownish grey sandy silt [5022]. The uppermost fill of the ditch consisted of dark reddish brown sandy silt containing occasional cobbles [5021]. Fills [5003], [5005], [5022] and [5021] contained flecks of charcoal. A GBA sample of fill [5005] revealed the presence of charred cereal grains (bread/club wheat, barley and oats) and charred ?heather.

A northeast - southwest aligned ditch [5028] was situated in the centre of the trench cut into a layer of disturbed natural [5013]. The ditch was a continuation of ditch [4004] (see section 4.4 above). The earliest fills comprised redeposited natural material, [5026] and [5027], evident on each side of the ditch. A fill consisting of light brownish grey sand containing occasional cobbles [5025] was situated between these deposits. The uppermost fill consisted of mid yellowish brown silty sand containing charcoal flecks [5024]. The ditch was sealed by a layer of mid greyish brown silty sand containing occasional pebbles, cobbles and charcoal flecks [5023]. This layer was sealed in turn by a layer of cobbles within a sandy silt matrix [5015], which had been partly disturbed by modern ploughing. The cobble spread was concentrated over ditch [5028] and may represent a dump of cobbles to reinforce or level unconsolidated ditch fill.

A north - south aligned ditch terminal [5010] was located towards the southeast end of the trench. The ditch was filled with light greyish brown sand containing a few pebbles and

occasional charcoal flecks [5009]. Adjacent to the ditch terminal, on the southeast side was a narrow curvilinear gully [5012] filled with mid greyish sand [5011]. At the southeast end of the trench was a north - south aligned ?narrow ditch [5019] which terminated within the trench and was filled with dark greyish black silty sand [5018]. Situated between the curvilinear slot/gully and the ?narrow ditch was a northeast - southwest aligned indistinct linear cut [5017] containing concentrated root disturbance [5016]. This feature possibly represents a relic hedge line.

Two north-south aligned furrows [5031] and [5033] filled by [5030] and [5032] respectively were located within the trench.

The archaeological features were sealed by a layer of subsoil [5020] which was overlain by topsoil [5000].

5.2.1.6 Trench 6, Area A (see Figure 6)²

Area A has been defined as roughly the westernmost 200 metres of the excavation area (i.e. easting 0 to 200), a zone in which relatively few archaeological features were encountered. These comprised a number of features of modern origin, furrows associated with the medieval rigg and furrow cultivation system, and a number of pre-medieval features. These features were spread fairly sparsely across the length of Area A, with very few cutting each other. The dating of these features will therefore be dependant primarily on the artefact dating rather than stratigraphic relationships

The earliest features in Area A were a series of ditches ([6015], [6019], [6021], ?[6029], [6076], [6033], [6035], ?[6040]³, and [6096]), gullies ([6008], [6031], [6049], [6051] and [6053]) and pits/post holes ([6003], [6006], [6010], [6013], [6017], [6023], [6069], [6072], [6063], [6081], [6079], [6085], [6083], [6047]). A wide palaeochannel was also evident crossing the trench, filled with context [6100].

Above these features were the vestigial remains of a series of furrows relating to the medieval cultivation pattern of the land. The furrows were aligned approximately north-south.

A number of modern features were evident, including rectangular pits [6043] which contained cow burial [6042] and pit [6045]. A large washout cavity was also evident, caused by a burst land drain (R. Barker, pers comm), which was partially excavated before its origin was ascertained.

5.2.1.7 Trench 6, Area B (see Figure 7)

Area B spans easting 200 to 300, a zone of fairly dense archaeological features including furrows, ditches, gullies, pits and cobble spreads.

² One of the drawings from this area, plan no. 4, is missing from the archive.

³ Very little of this feature was evident within the trench, having been severely truncated by modern intrusions - its date and form can therefore only be guessed, and it may be of modern origin.