

MARFIELD QUARRY, MASHAM
Archaeological Watching Brief 1993.

Areas C & D

NYCC HER	
SNY	923
ENY	712
CNY	2095
Parish	6003
Rec'd	12/02/97

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MARFIELD QUARRY, MASHAM

Archaeological Watching Brief

Introduction

The site of Marfield Quarry (NGR SE 8277 2110) is situated in the parish of Masham, North Yorkshire, north-west of the town of Masham and just to the north of the A6108, Ripon to Leyburn road (Fig. 1).

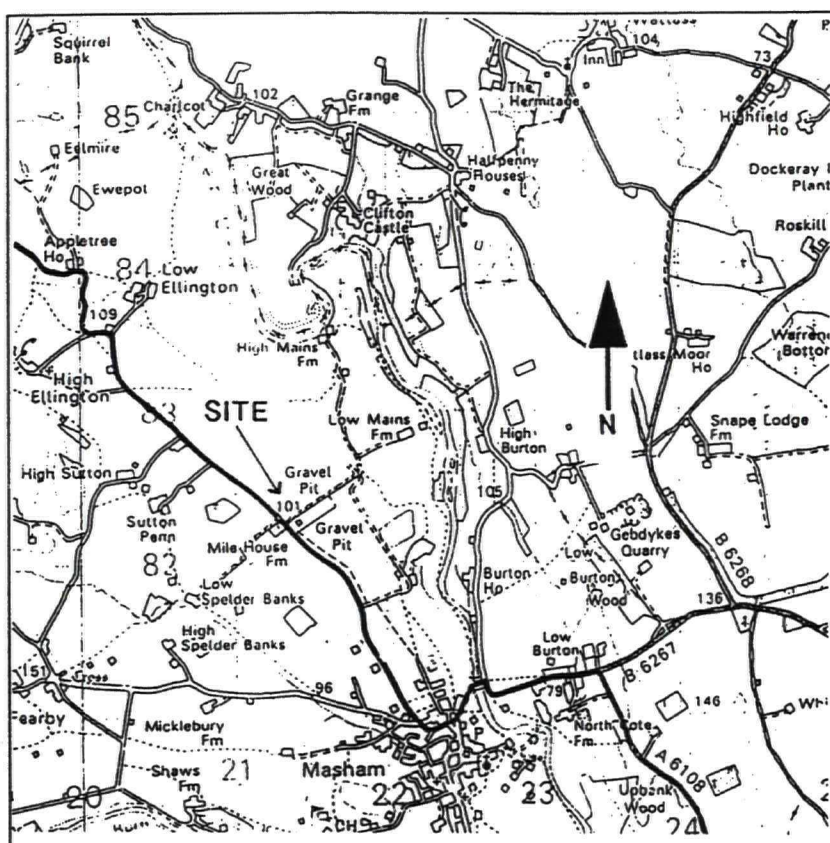


Figure 1.

Site Location Plan, Scale 1:50000

The geology of the site is deep, well drained, coarse loamy and sandy soils, locally over gravel, overlying glaciofluvial or river terrace drift (Mackney et al 1983).

In accordance with a planning constraint placed on Redland Aggregates, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the topsoil stripping of an area measuring approximately 300m by 20m (Fig. 2).

All work was funded by Redland Aggregates.

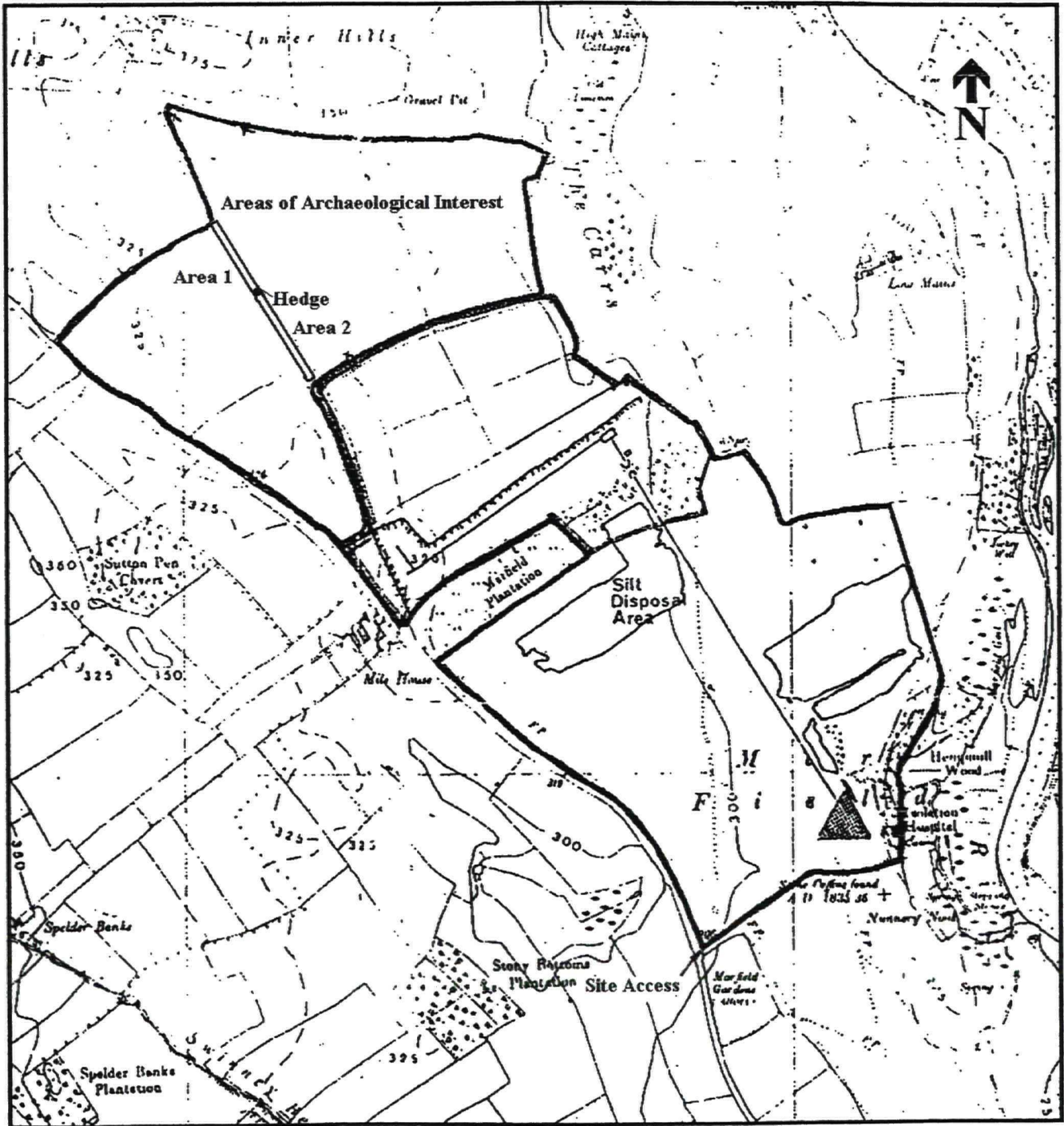


Figure 2.
 Map of Marfield Quarry showing areas of Archaeological Interest, Scale 1:10000.

Excavation Methods and Techniques

The site was mechanically topsoil stripped using a tracked rear-acting excavator with a toothless bucket. The stripped area was then shovel scraped and selected areas were trowelled. The hedge separating Area 1 from Area 2 was used as a baseline for measuring in the position of finds.

Finds located within Layer 1002 exposed by the stripping process are displayed by artefact category (Figs. 3 & 4).

Excavation Results

The turf/vegetation, context 1001, and the topsoil, a silty sandy clay loam, context 1002, varied in depth over the site from 0.25m to 0.32m. This layer sealed a friable silty sand subsoil, context 1003, with a depth of 0.28m. Below the plough and subsoil was a deposit of grey clay, context 1004, with boulders and cobbles up to 0.50m in diameter. A sample of this layer was taken. Beneath the clay deposit lay undisturbed sand and gravel deposits.

The finds assemblage recovered during the Watching Brief does not indicate any activity on the area prior to the post-medieval period (Figs. 3 & 4). The majority of pottery located dated from the post-medieval period with only one sherd of modern pottery and no medieval pottery.

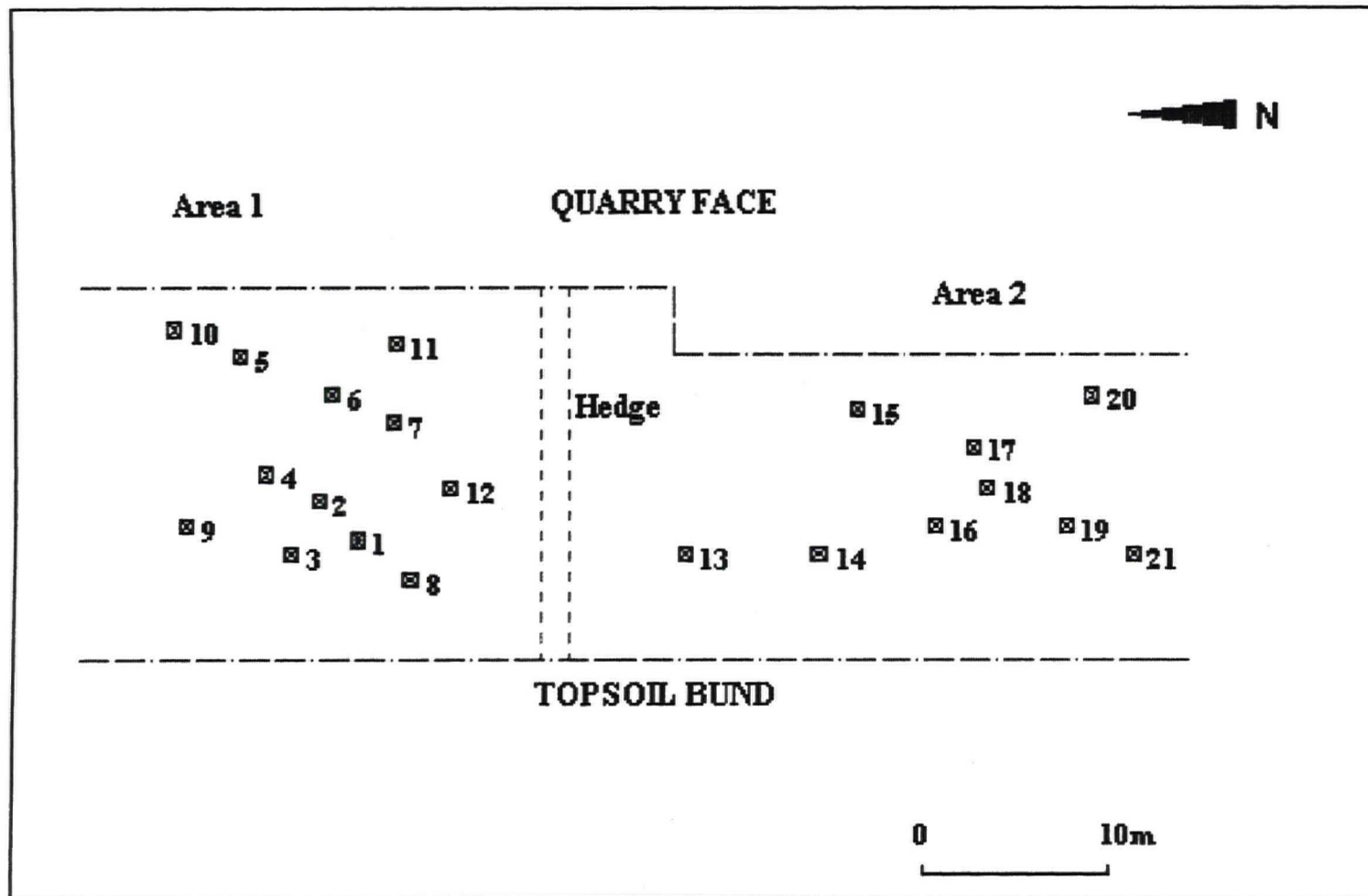


Figure 3.
Finds Distribution.

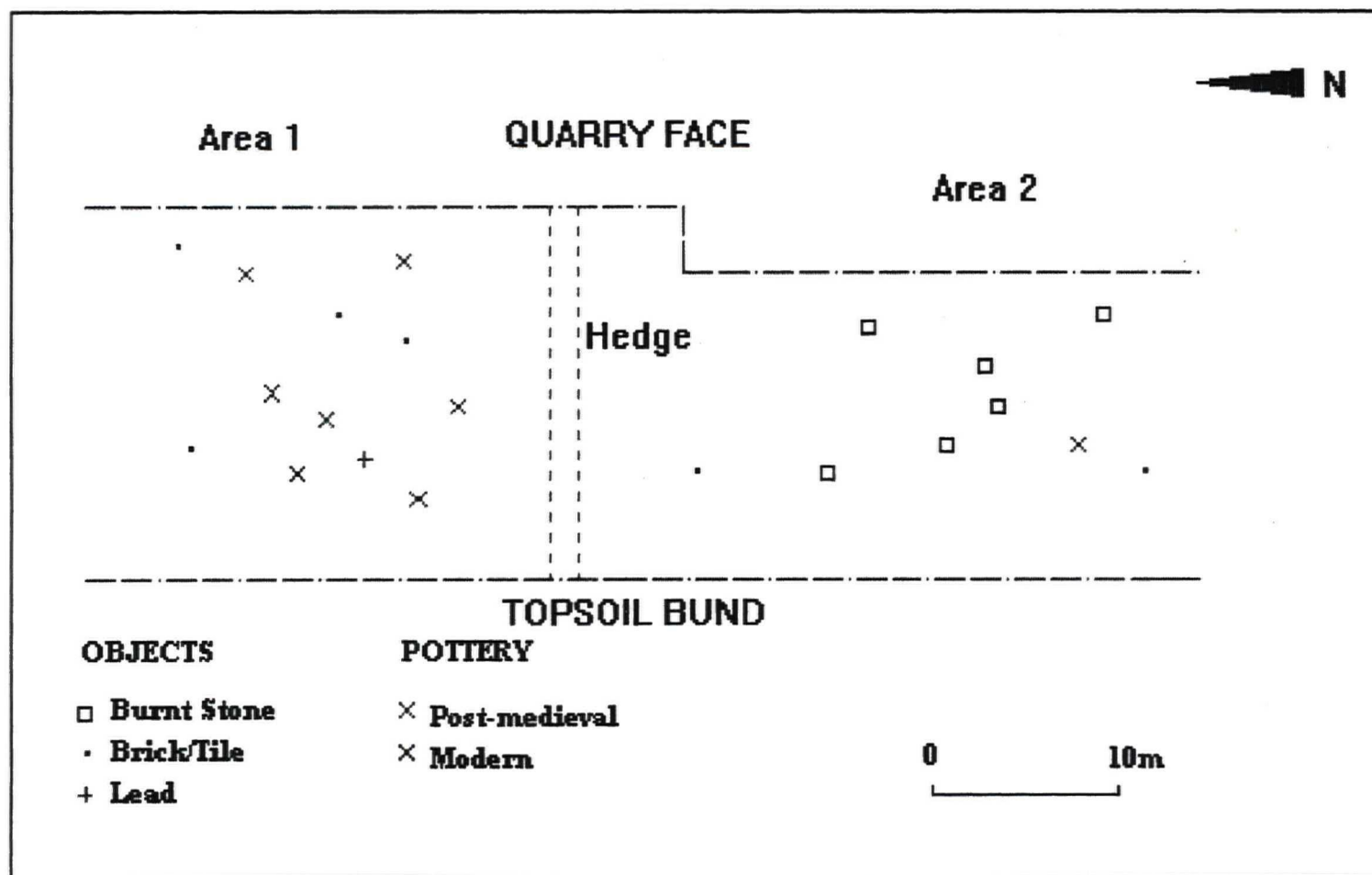


Figure 4.
Artefact Distribution.

Conclusions

No archaeological features were observed in the area covered by the Watching Brief. The only recovered finds dated to the post-medieval and modern periods, and presumably were deposited during manuring.

A previous archaeological watching brief, undertaken by W.Y.A.S. in 1988, located four small pits. These pits containing ash, charcoal and traces of burning and were presumed to be associated with the processing of crops. Although no datable finds were located, the pits were thought to be Iron Age or Romano-British in date. (Weldrake and Turner, 1988).

Recommendations for further work

Although only modern finds and no archaeological features were located during this phase of the watching brief, it is recommended that watching briefs are continued as the quarry expands due to the pits located in 1988.

6. Bibliography

Mackney, D. et al. (1983) Legend for the 1:250000 Soil Map of England and Wales. Soil Survey of England and Wales. Harpenden.

Weldrake and Turner (1988) Watching Brief at Marfield Quarry, West Yorkshire Archaeological Service.

Reference Archaeology Section, North Yorkshire County Council.

Appendix 1

Context Listing

Context	Description
1001	Turf/vegetation.
1002	Plough/topsoil – friable sandy loam, 10YR4/6.
1003	Subsoil – friable silty sand, 10YR5/8.
1004	Deposit – plastic clay, 10YR4/2.
1005	Natural – undisturbed sand and gravel.

Appendix 2

Finds Catalogue

Context 1002

- 1 Lead washer or weight.
- 2 1 body sherd, post-medieval.
- 3 1 base sherd, modern.
- 4 1 body sherd, post-medieval.
- 5 1 body/handle sherd, post-medieval.
- 6 1 fragment, brick/tile.
- 7 1 fragment, brick/tile.
- 8 1 body sherd, post-medieval.
- 9 1 fragment, brick/tile.
- 10 1 fragment, pantile.
- 11 1 body sherd, post-medieval.
- 12 1 base sherd, post-medieval.
- 13 1 fragment, brick.
- 14 1 fragment, burnt stone.
- 15 1 fragment, burnt stone.
- 16 1 fragment, burnt stone.
- 17 1 fragment, burnt stone.
- 18 1 fragment, burnt stone.
- 19 1 body sherd, post-medieval.
- 20 1 fragment, burnt stone.
- 21 2 fragments, brick/tile.