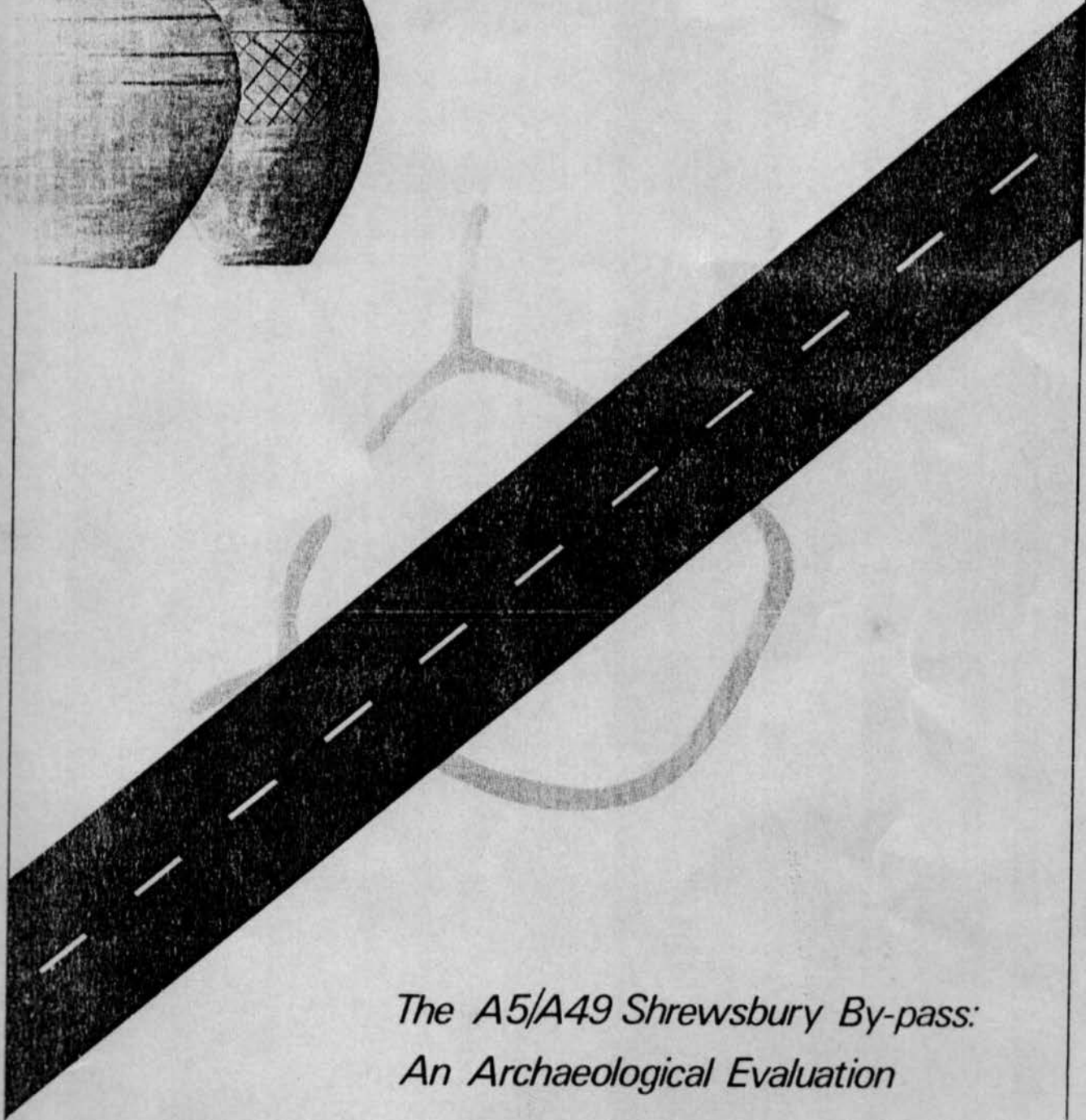
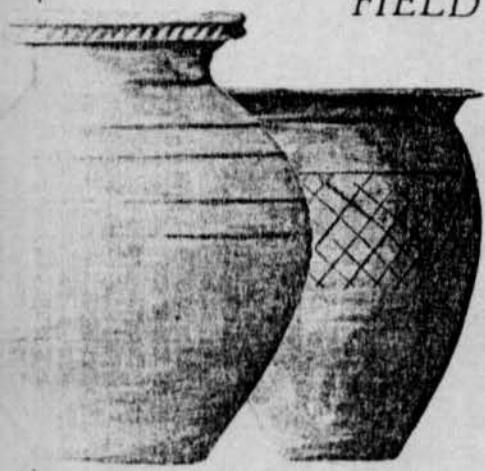


BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY
FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT



*The A5/A49 Shrewsbury By-pass:
An Archaeological Evaluation*

B.U.F.A.U.



THE A5/A49 SHREWSBURY BY-PASS: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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This report describes the evaluation of the archaeological sites which will be destroyed, wholly or in part, by the planned construction of the Shrewsbury by-pass. The background to this evaluation programme is described in the initial research design and is summarised below.

The sites described lie in the Tern and Severn Valleys. Indeed, most of the identified archaeology of lowland Shropshire is found in this area. The vast majority of settlement evidence, including all the evaluated sites, has been produced by aerial photography, which has recorded some 330 enclosures. Only two of these enclosures have previously been sampled by excavation, and the problem of characterising this type of site in terms of chronology and cultural context remains.

The report is divided into three sections. The first describes the excavation and survey of six priority sites carried out in November 1988. Section 2 lists and describes all threatened sites, categorised by the type of further action required. A third section proposes a programme of further evaluation and excavation. A separate appendix describes the detailed results of the geophysical surveys carried out on the excavated sites.

The evaluation programme described in Section 1 was commissioned by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission, England. The excavations were supervised by Hugh Hanniford and Jon Sterenburg. This report was prepared by Jon Cane in consultation with Mike Watson, Shropshire County Council.

Special thanks are due to the owners and tenants of the land where the field evaluations took place for their permission to excavate, co-operation and interest.

We are also grateful to D. Best for his analysis of the field walking results, to Q. Hutchinson for his geophysical work on SA.2354 and SA.20, to John Chadderton (Wroxeter Archaeological Project) for his note on the Severn Valley Ware pottery, and to Hilary Thompson for processing the finds from fieldwalking.

SECTION 1

Of the seventeen sites targeted for further work, six were chosen for intensive study. Of these six, four were considered possible enclosure sites. The remaining sites were putative field systems. The selection of the sites to be investigated was determined mainly by the problems of characterising enclosure types.

Figure 1 Location map of all sites referred to in the text

Method

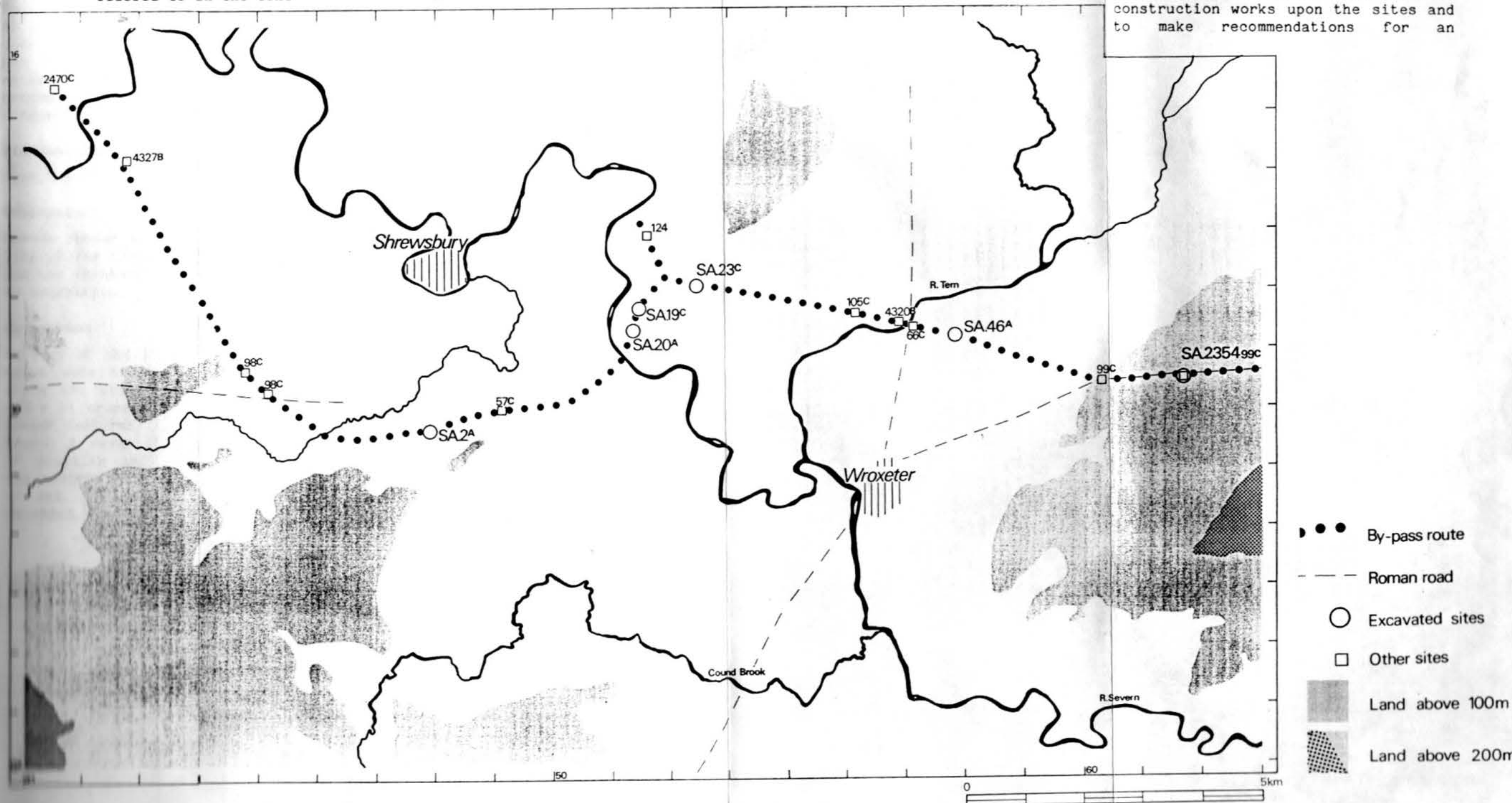
The same techniques were used on all sites to ensure comparability. The fieldwork was carried out in November 1988 by members of the Unit's Roving Team. It was preceded on all sites by geophysical surveys carried out by A. Bartlett. These were undertaken with a fluxgate magnetometer, directly interfaced to an on-site computer. Readings were recorded at 0.45m intervals, with a

traverse interval of 1.0m. Each survey is based on a 30m grid. The preliminary results of these surveys helped to determine the position of the excavation trenches, and the detailed results of the full surveys are presented in a separate appendix. Where relevant, summaries of the results are given for individual sites.

Where possible, fieldwalking surveys were carried out and the results are

reported here in summary. A detailed report of the field-walking programme is lodged with the archive. Excavation and fieldwork was carried out on the six sites with three main aims:

1. to locate the physical remains which produced the cropmarks;
2. to assess the survival and character of archaeological deposits, features, artefacts, and environmental evidence each site;
3. to assess the likely impact of road construction works upon the sites and to make recommendations for an



Site No: SA 2
 Site name: Meule Brace
 Grid ref: SJ 523114

Description (Fig 2)

The site lies to the east of the A.49, just to the south of Meule Brace, and is threatened by the A5 road enhancement which is planned to join the A49 at a proposed roundabout to the west.

The site was identified on an aerial photograph as three linear crop-marks. None of these are parallel but all run in a roughly NW-SE direction. Although quantities of Romano-British material had been recovered from the field, notably by local amateurs, the cropmarks themselves were neither diagnostic nor very promising.

Fieldwalking

None, as site was still under stubble.

Geophysical

Survey showed strong anomalies on the line of the crop-mark but surprisingly did not locate other features revealed by excavation.

Excavation

As part of the A5 evaluation, two 1.5 metre wide trenches were excavated along the proposed line of the road where it crossed the two northernmost linear features. Intensive cleaning of trench A revealed a complex sequence of deposits and features (Fig 3). At the eastern end of trench A a series of well preserved laid surfaces was recorded. These were made of compacted

and worn pebbles with small quantities of Romano-British pottery and tile trodden into their surfaces. At least two periods of surfacing were evident, and the earlier surfaces [1007] were either cut by, or respected an unexcavated linear feature which may have been a ditch. Further to the west, there was some evidence that building traces may have survived on top of the later surface [1006].

Cleaning of trench B revealed a zone of the natural which had been worn, with possible wheel ruts still definable, and patched with cobbling. No negative features were identified. In trench A, to the west of these surfaces a series of substantial post-holes cut into the gravelly clay natural. Two of these [F.6/7] probably formed part of a building and were well preserved, with sandstone post-packing in situ. F.6 had a large pad stone in the bottom. Various ill-defined scoops and patches of clay in the area may have belonged to the same structure. The two remaining post-holes were very large, deep and circular features, one with a massive post pad in the bottom. Although very widely spaced, these features were so similar both in shape and depth, that it seems likely that they also belong to a large structure. Between them was a spread of very worn pebbles and sandstone rubble, with a small fragment of plaster in situ.

The surfaces were sealed by a well-defined layer of orange brown clay soil which contained Romano-British pottery. This layer was cut by a shallow, sub-rectangular feature (F.2)



Figure 2 SA.2 location map



Figure 3 SA.2 trench plan



containing patches of disturbed, burnt clay. Its function is uncertain but it was similar in form to a better preserved feature to the west (F.3). This was an equally shallow, clay-filled feature with a fragmentary clay floor. Associated with this, and possibly joined to it, was the heavily burnt clay base of a flue or furnace. By analogy with F.2 to the east, F.3 may be later than the activities represented by the surfaces. Small quantities of charcoal were recovered from the fills of F.3. The function of these features is unclear but they may have been stoking pits of ovens or kilns.

Finds

Small quantities of Romano-British pottery, mostly coarse wares but with some fine wares, were recovered (Table 1). In addition, a small fragment of glass was found in the fills of post-hole F.4.

appears to be good, demonstrable plough damage being minimal. The present farmer comments that it is not worth deep ploughing the field due to the amount of stones. This suggests more extensive horizontal strata, eg cobbled surfaces, and also implies that plough damage will be equally limited over the whole area.

Recommendations

The full significance of the site is impossible to assess at this stage. Its proximity to the known sequence at Sharpstones Hill and to Shrewsbury itself, enhances its importance. The site clearly demands area excavation on a considerable scale. However, the lack of any definable limits to the settlement means that the first stage of such an operation must be further work to decide on a meaningful sample size. This should involve a further series of small exploratory trenches along the 300 metre zone threatened by the road works in this field.

POTTERY TYPES

SITE/CONTEXT	TOTAL Wt	Prehist	S.Valley	BB	Samian	Grey Ware	Other
SA.2/1009	529		262	196	28	19	24
1000	439		224	72	25	5	13
1001	53		23	30			
1004	238		95	106	42	5	
1005	66		40	16		11	
1006	55		47	8			
1010	25		25				
1011	17		6	11			
1016	251		141	10			100
U/S	502		158				344
	2185		1021	449	95	40	481
	%		46.7	20.5	4.3	1.8	22

Discussion

The results of the excavations, coupled with reports from local amateurs suggest the presence of a large and fairly complex Romano-British settlement. Building materials including flue tiles are reported from the vicinity (E.Jenks, pers comm) and this evidence combined with the structural remains from excavation, suggest very substantial buildings. The level of survival of deposits

Table 1 SA.2 pottery abundance by weight

Site No: SA.19
 Site name: Preston Farm
 Grid ref: SJ 524117

Description (Fig 4)

A series of cropmarks in the field to the west of Preston Fm. The only threatened feature is a linear outlier, presumably part of a field system.

Fieldwalking

None, as field under pasture.

Geophysical

Negative.

Excavation

A trench was dug by machine across the feature, but the 'ditch' was not positively identified. A shallow irregular scoop had been dug into the clayey natural gravel and this may be the remains of a very truncated ditch. No artefacts were recovered.

Recommendation

If the initial identification of the crop-mark is correct, then severe plough damage seems to have made feature survival negligible. Further work should be restricted to watching brief or salvage recording during disturbance.



Figure 4 SA.19 and
 SA.20 location map

Site No: SA.20
 Site name: Preston Farm
 Grid ref: SJ 523114

Description (Fig 4)

Cropmark of a large rectilinear, round-cornered enclosure with an entrance on the SW side and two intersecting 'wing' ditches. Only the northern edge of the enclosure is threatened by the road scheme.

Fieldwalking

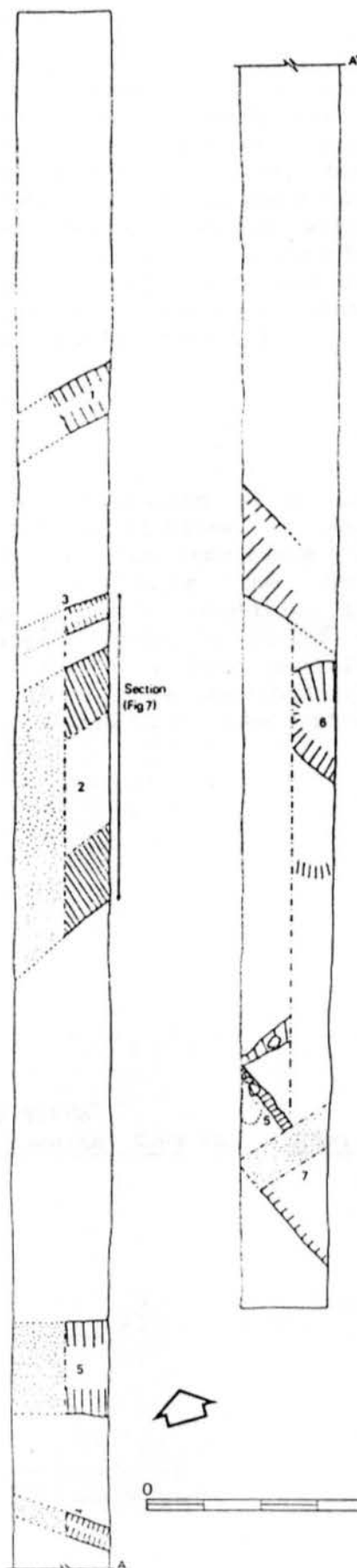
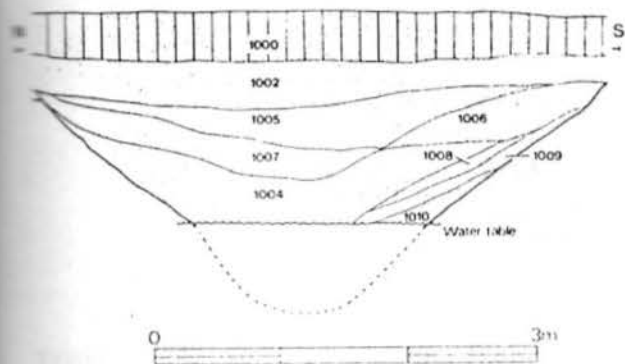
The field had been recently ploughed and the full extent of the enclosure was walked ($22,500\text{m}^2$). 2m interval transects were walked within a 50m grid system, the same method as employed on other sites. Conditions were not ideal, as a potato crop had only just been removed. The majority of the material collected was late or post-Medieval pottery and tile. Two sherds of Romano-British coarse ware were recovered as well as a possible prehistoric sherd. No flint was recovered. (Best, 1989)

Geophysical

The ditches, including the 'wings' show well and there was some

Figure 5 SA.20 trench plan (stipple represents unexcavated features)

Figure 6 SA.20 ditch F.2 north-facing section.



suggestion of activity zones inside the enclosure.

Excavation (Fig 5)

A machine was used to remove the topsoil from a 50 metre long trench positioned across the northern corner of the enclosure. The natural was a bright orange sandy gravel and feature definition was reasonable. The enclosure ditch [F.2] was successfully identified and partly excavated on the eastern side. This feature was c.4m wide and at least 2m deep with a complex sequence of silty gravel fills (Fig.6). Two shallow gullies ran parallel to its outside (N) edge. The nearest [F.3] may have been cut by the enclosure ditch. Further small linear features were excavated within the enclosure but no structural evidence was recovered. The definition of the southern enclosure ditch was more difficult and not satisfactorily resolved. There were linear features and hints of edges at the southern end of the trench but none resembled the excavated ditch to the north.

Finds

Several sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered from the fills of the enclosure ditch, as well as fragments of slag (Table 2). The identification of the single, very small fragment of Romano-British pottery from the ditch is uncertain.

Discussion

The site appears to be well defined, both by geophysical survey and excavation. Only a small area on the edge of the interior was excavated, with no positive results, but the magnetometer survey suggests clusters of albeit small anomalies which may represent intact archaeological features. The majority of the pottery from the site suggests that the enclosure may be pre-Roman.

Recommendation

Although only a small area of the enclosure will be directly affected by the road, excavation of a somewhat larger area would allow the whole NW quadrant of the enclosure to be examined, including the area of possible activity identified by the geophysical survey. A 20-25% sample should provide a more satisfactory context for those portions of the enclosure which have to be destroyed.

POTTERY TYPES

SITE/CONTEXT	TOTAL Wt	Prehist	S.Valley	BB	Samian	Grey Ware	Other
SA20/1000	17		17				
1002	33	33					
1003	15	15					
1004	21	3	18				
	86	18	35				
	%	59.3	40.6				

Table 2 SA.20 pottery abundance by weight

Site No: SA 23a/b
 Site name: Preston Fm
 Grid ref: SJ 535121

Description (Fig 7)

A complex and extensive group of cropmarks in a field to the east of Preston Farm. Most are fragmentary linear features, possibly field boundaries. Some are irregular enough to suggest a geological origin. The proposed line of the A5 enhancement runs parallel to the railway at this point, and in fact misses the most coherent feature, a double ring-ditch. However, the ring-ditch is bisected by the road to Preston Farm and presumably continues into the field to the north, where it may be disturbed by the roadworks.

Fieldwalking

The entire threatened area was walked on the usual 50m grid system. Only very small quantities of post Medieval pottery were recovered.

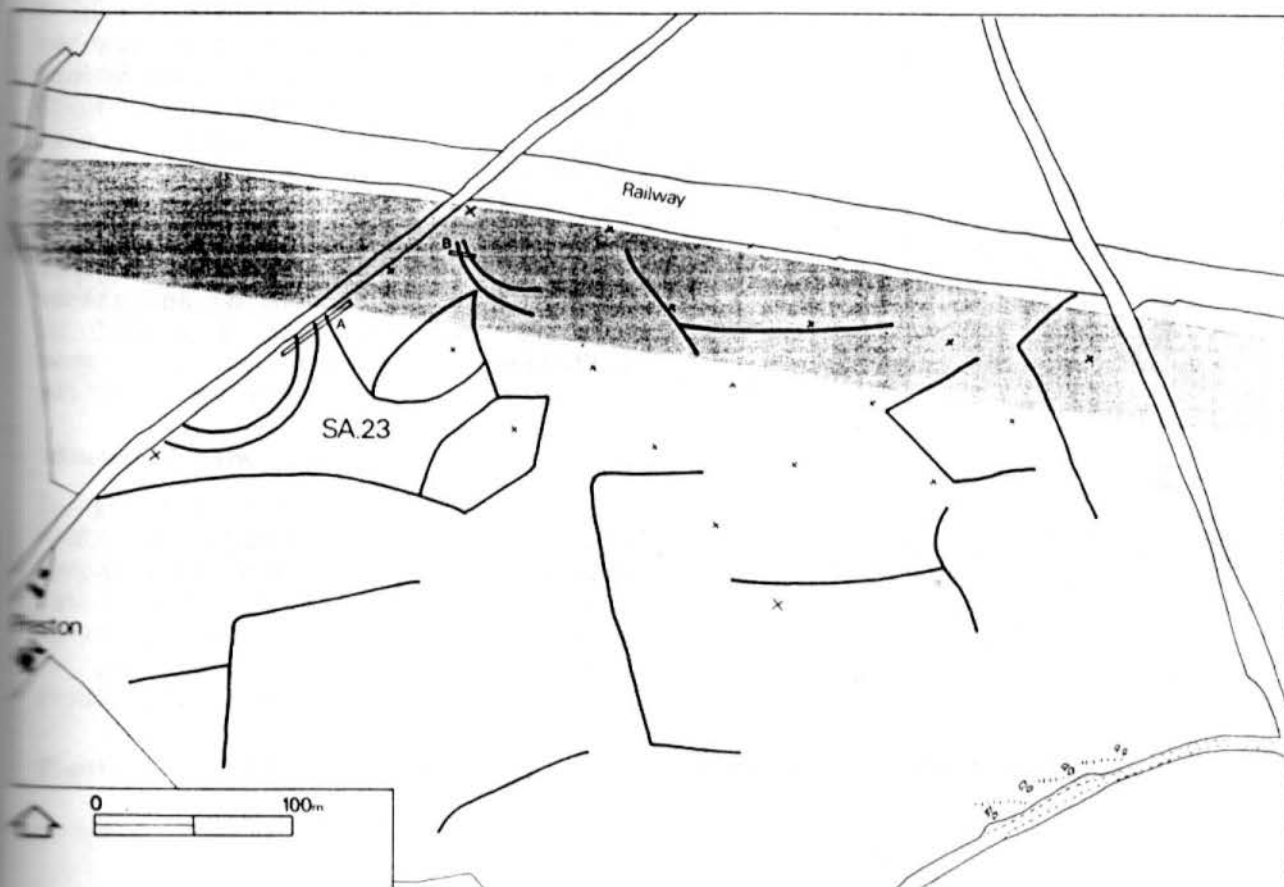
Geophysical

Magnetometer survey revealed no strong correlation with crop-marks or excavated features.

Excavation (Fig.8/9)

Excavation to locate the double ring-ditch was not possible in the field to the north because of sowing. This feature was therefore tested along the southern side of the road with a metre wide trench (SA.23a Fig 8). The natural subsoil at this point varied from soft sand at the west end of the trench to hard clayey gravel at the east. This made feature definition difficult. Four linear features were identified in the eastern half of the trench. Definition varied from difficult to almost impossible, but the correlation between these features and the cropmarks is acceptable. The shallow gullies that may correlate with the ring-ditch cropmark are represented by F.7 and F.3. Both were filled with compact clay and produced

Figure 7 SA.23a/b location map



no finds. Gulley F.2 was better defined and produced a fragment of possible Romano-British tile from its fill.

In the western half of the trench, a ditch running parallel to the road was partly excavated. It probably represents a modern field ditch. A pit (F.1) cuts its fills and is possibly associated with it.

A second trench (SA.2354b) was excavated to the north east across another, less convincing double-ditch arrangement (Fig 9). The natural at this point was hard yellow clay and three features were identified. At the eastern end a convincing, if shallow, gulley was excavated (F.8). At the western end the very truncated remains of another gulley ran across the trench. This was only a few centimetres deep. Between the two features was a shallow depression filled with more friable clay [1012] which sealed a scatter of pebbles [1013]. This was probably a natural phenomenon but is possibly the remains of a man-made surface.

Discussion

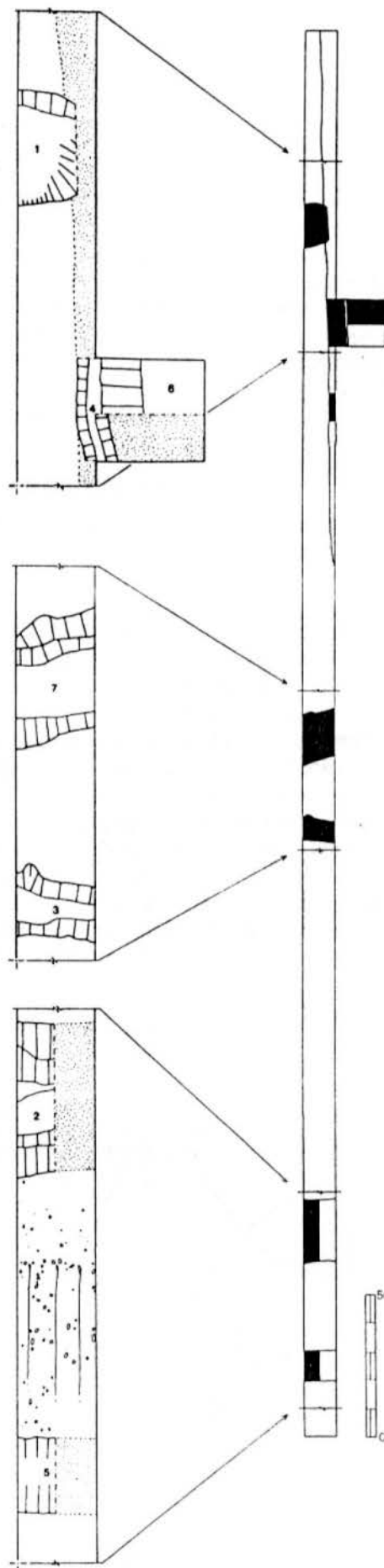
Trench A revealed features which could correspond to those seen on the aerial photograph, that is, the double ring ditch and adjacent field boundary. This identification is not unequivocal, however, because plough damage in the area has been considerable. Feature definition was made additionally difficult by the variations in the natural subsoil. In Trench B the crop-mark features were not satisfactorily identified, although features were defined.

Recommendations

In general, the uncertain status of features (confirmed by the poor geophysical results) and the almost total lack of artefacts suggests that further work, beyond a watching brief or salvage recording during initial roadworks, is not desirable.

Figure 9 SA.23b trench plan

Figure 8 SA.23a trench plan



Site No: SA.46
 Site name: Duncote Fm
 Grid ref: SJ 57801130

Description (Fig 10)

A complex series of cropmarks lying in a field to the west of Duncote Fm. They comprise a large rounded rectilinear enclosure, an associated possible field system to the west and a small ring-ditch to the south. The site lies on gently undulating ground levelling out to the south, the enclosure occupying the side and top of an area of slightly higher ground. About half the enclosure and a large area of field system is threatened by the A5 enhancement. The ring-ditch is not directly threatened.

Fieldwalking

None, as field currently under pasture.

Geophysical

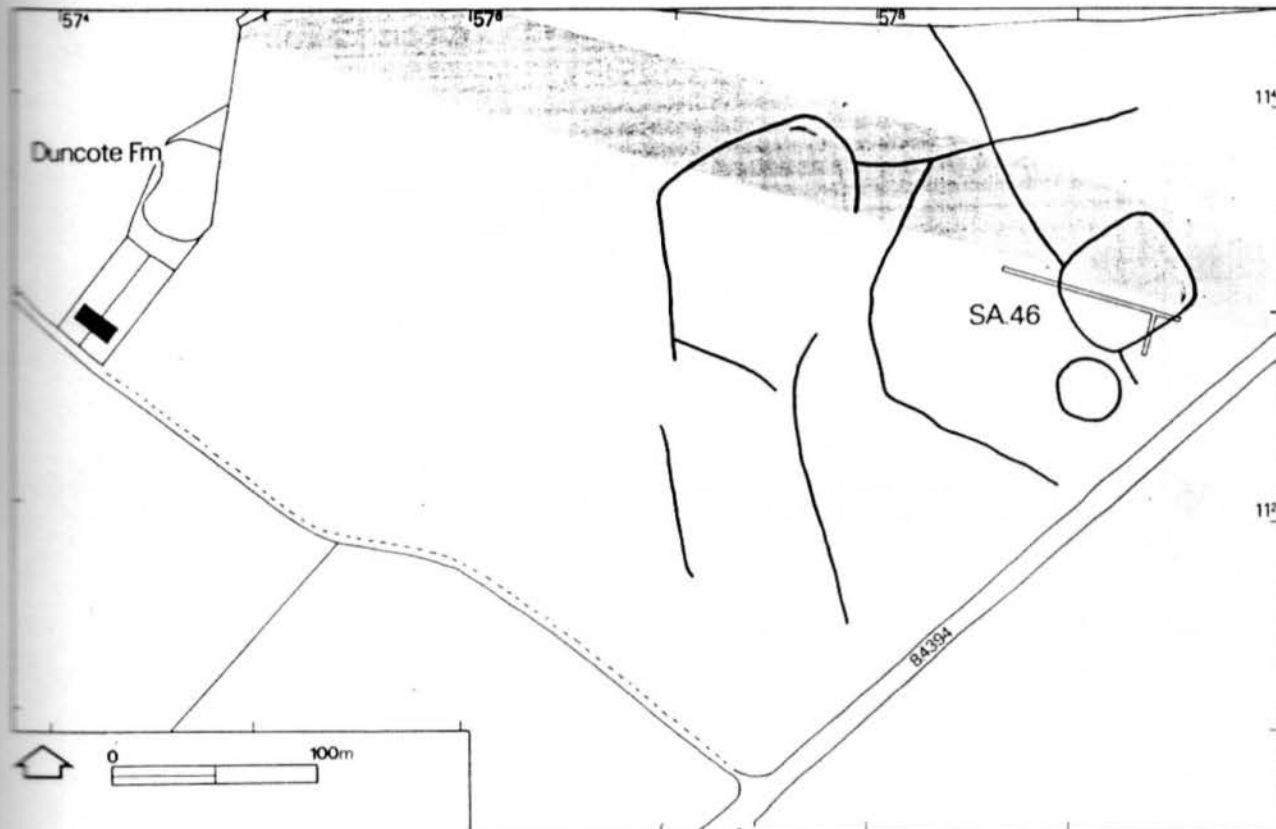
Magnetometer survey revealed the enclosure ditch and the ditch which crosses it. No distinction was obvious between the interior and exterior of the enclosure and no strong evidence for internal features was apparent. The survey revealed that the site is actually c.10 metres to the north of its aerial photograph plot.

Excavation (Fig 11)

Trenches were positioned to test the nature of the enclosure itself. A 20m trench was initially dug by hand along the line of the road, across the eastern edge of the enclosure. After removal of topsoil, definition of features was fairly good. The ditch was contacted at the eastern end of the cutting and a scatter of smaller, presumably internal features were excavated. These were post-holes and shallow gullies. No structures, or apparently structural features were identified.

The trench was then extended by machine to try and define the western and southern arms of the enclosure. A

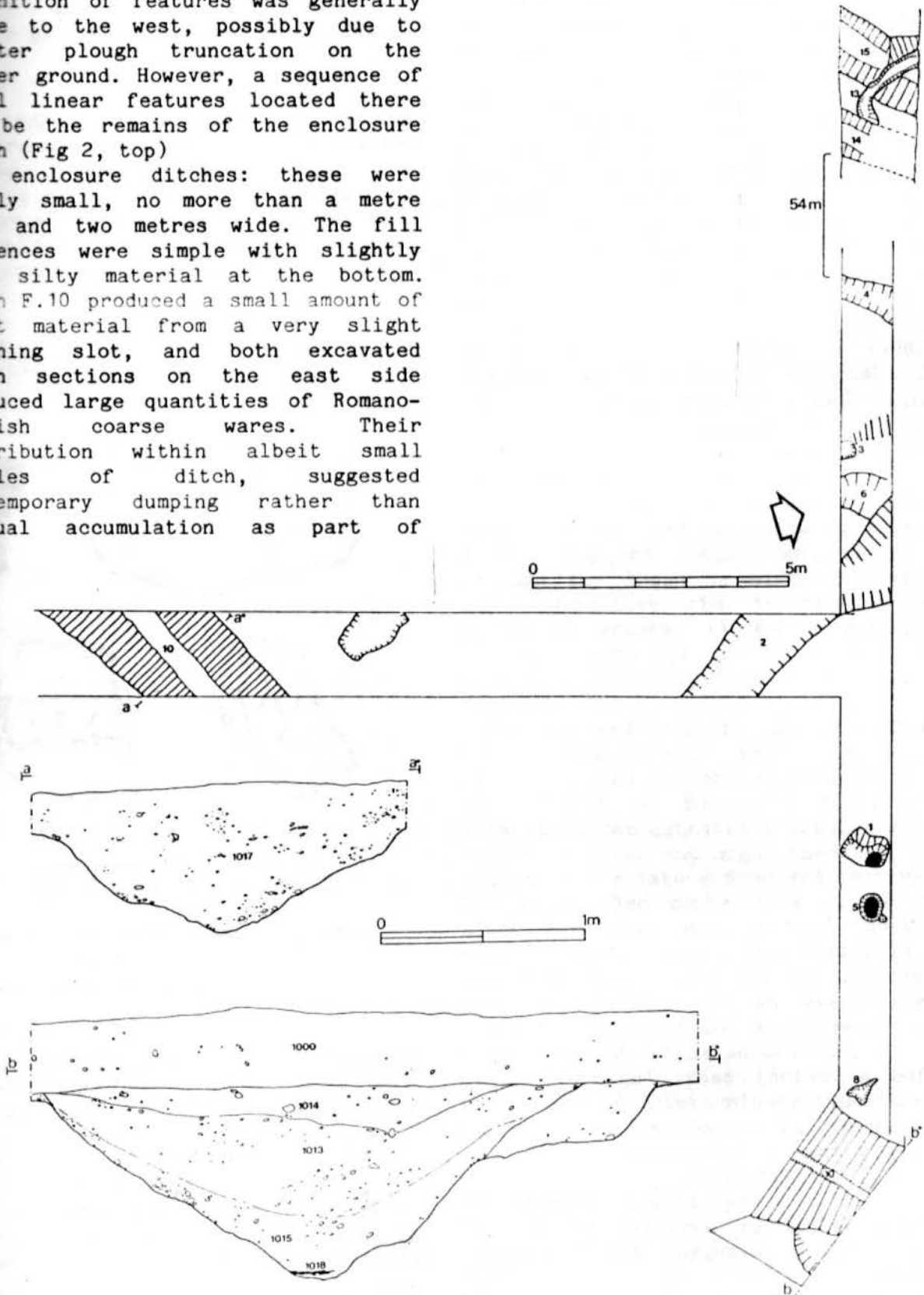
Figure 10 SA.46 location map



perpendicular trench to the south located the cropmark ditch but the identification of the ditch in the western extension was more doubtful. Definition of features was generally worse to the west, possibly due to greater plough truncation on the higher ground. However, a sequence of small linear features located there may be the remains of the enclosure ditch (Fig 2, top)

The enclosure ditches: these were fairly small, no more than a metre deep and two metres wide. The fill sequences were simple with slightly more silty material at the bottom. Ditch F.10 produced a small amount of burnt material from a very slight cleaning slot, and both excavated ditch sections on the east side produced large quantities of Romano-British coarse wares. Their distribution within albeit small samples of ditch, suggested contemporary dumping rather than gradual accumulation as part of

Figure 11 SA.46 trench plan and ditch sections



rubbish disposal.

Other features, including post-holes and small scoops were usually poorly defined and seemed vulnerable to animal disturbance, although the linear gullies were more convincing.

Finds

Two sherds of decorated prehistoric pottery were recovered from a shallow gully (F.4, Fig 12). A total of 7.799Kg of pottery was recovered from the site as a whole (Table 3). Most assemblages were unremarkable groups of Romano-British wares. However, those assemblages recovered from the ditch sections were not only fairly large but also contained waster material.

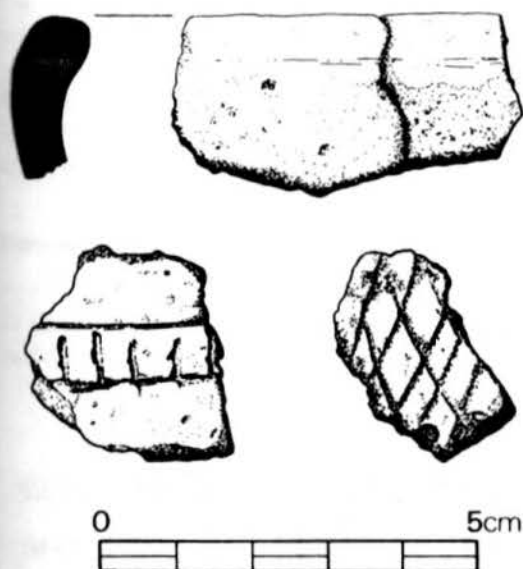


Figure 12 SA.46 Prehistoric pottery (F.4)

The Waster Group (1014)

By John Darlington.

The assemblage appears to represent a waster dump from a kiln (or kilns), predominantly geared to producing Severn Valley ware. Other, 'foreign' items occur within the group and may represent domestic rubbish.

The vast majority of the group is of Severn Valley type and is identical in appearance and form to excavated fabrics from Wroxeter. Almost all the sherds are from jars, especially the wide-mouthed storage vessels so

characteristic of this ware. All the rims are of typical 'turned-over' and wedge-shaped form. Other rims include a possible 'tankard' - a simple upright rim with horizontal groove. Narrow-necked jars are also represented, and rim forms include double-ended or 'pulley' rims and decorated 'bifid' rims.

Severn Valley types are very conservative in their development and many shapes were produced largely unchanged from the early 2nd century right through to the 4th century. This is especially true of the wide-mouthed jars. Decoration on 'body sherds, usually burnished lines, grooves and zones are equally unhelpful chronologically. Rawes (1982) believes, on the basis of material

from Gloucester, that this decoration fades out by the end of the AD 2nd century, but decorated sherds do occur in later contexts at Wroxeter.

The double-ended rim is not a common Severn Valley form but seems to appear in the mid 2nd century and continue through the 3rd. The bifid rim with its distinctive rim decoration was placed by Webster (1976) in the 3rd and 4th centuries and examples from Wroxeter certainly occur in later contexts.

The tankard rim is more helpful. Early examples of this form had vertical sides, which became gradually more flared as the ware developed. This sherd demonstrates a considerable degree of flare and might therefore be placed in the late 2nd or 3rd century. The group also contains a number of Black Burnished ware sherds, mostly from a single vessel. The vessel is a jar of probable early 3rd century type with the remains of an exaggerated 'cavetto' type rim and a suggestion of obtuse-angled lattice decoration.

Other 'foreign' types include a buff ware sherd of indeterminate type (much coarser than the Severn Valley ware), and a body sherd of a white ware mortaria, probably of Mancetter/Hartshill type.

The dating evidence is by no means conclusive but suggests a production date in the late 2nd/3rd centuries. Little is known of Severn Valley production and distribution in the

area around Wroxeter, where the ware is very common. The evidence of pottery production found in 1949 only 2.5km to the south, comprised a much wider range of forms possibly produced in the late 3rd century. It is likely that the SA 46 group belongs part of the same general pottery production area but its nature suggests the presence of kilns closer than the complex described by Houghton.

excavation of the enclosure will be necessary to adequately realise the site's potential. The field systems to the west should also be tested by more limited area excavation, concentrating on areas of high magnetometer anomalies.

Discussion

Survival of strata, though patchy, is generally fairly good, as is feature definition, despite the poor results from the geophysical survey. Although no kilns were identified, the presence of waste material makes this a potentially crucial site for Romano-British pottery studies in the region. In size and shape the enclosure is very similar to SA 20, which has produced mainly Iron Age material. A multi-period settlement appears to exist here, and useful comparisons could be made with SA.20.

Recommendations

Virtually the entire enclosure will be affected by the road works which will undoubtedly destroy the site. Total

SITE/CONTEXT	TOTAL Wt	POTTERY TYPES					
		Prehist	S.Valley	BB	Samian	Grey Ware	Other
SA46/1000	544	11	389	80	4	48	12
1002	5		5				
1004	14			14			
1006	7					7	
1007	33						33
1011	1856		1624	211	21		
1013	140		122				18
1014	242		242				
1015	210		9				201
1016	4711		4376	330			5
1018	33		33				
1019	74		38	4		9	23
	7799	11	6458	639	25	64	272
	%	0.14	82.8	8.1	0.3	0.8	3.4

Table 3 SA.46 pottery abundance by weight

Site No: SA.2354
 Site name: ---
 Grid ref: SJ 616103

Description (Fig 13)

A series of cropmarks to the south of the present A5. Watling Street (SA 99) runs east-west across the field, apparently cutting a possible enclosure (SA.2354a). Further to the south, on the field boundary is another possible enclosure ditch. The plotting of both cropmarks from aerial photographs is of uncertain value. The shape of the southern 'enclosure' is not convincing and it is possible that undulation shadows were plotted.

Field walking

The majority of the southern area of the field was walked, including the line of Watling Street. Small quantities of Roman pottery were collected, as well as a cluster of flint debris in the southern half of

the field. Three scrapers (probably Neolithic or Bronze Age), a core and seven waste flakes were recovered.

Geophysical

Magnetometer survey revealed no evidence of the enclosure or of possible archaeological activity in the survey area.

Excavation

The position of excavations was limited to the edges of the field by recent sowing of the field. This meant that only SA.2354b was available. A metre wide trench was excavated along the SW boundary across the putative enclosure ditch. The topsoil was removed by hand and the subsoil intensively cleaned. No trace of the ditch, or any other archaeological feature was seen. Conversations with local farmers suggest that the field had been sub-soiled, probably at some time after the aerial photographs were taken.

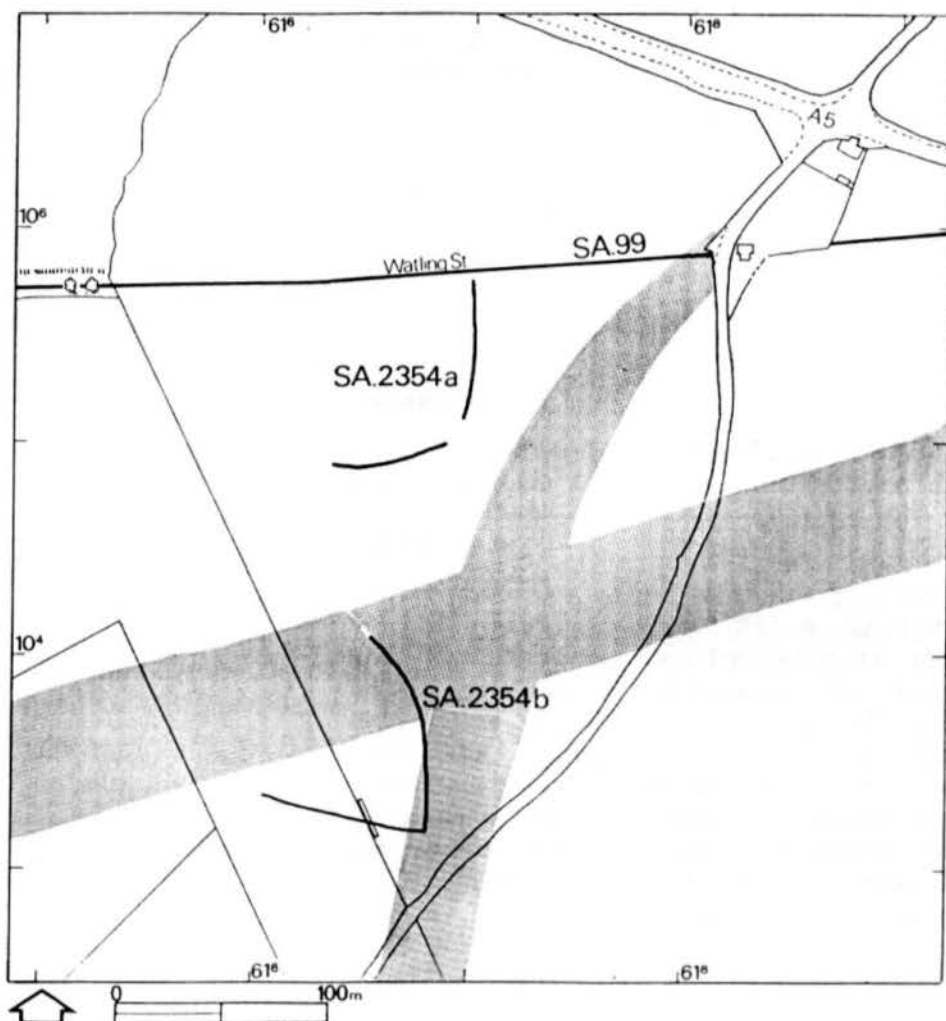


Figure 13
 SA.2354 location map

Discussion

Either the cropmarks of SA.2354b are not of archaeological origin or they have been destroyed by deep ploughing. The latter does not bode well for survival of deposits associated with SA.2354a and SA.99, but it should be noted that there was no opportunity to examine these sites below ground.

Recommendation

Further work should be restricted to watching brief or salvage recording during the initial stages of roadworks.

SECTION 2

The proposed A.5/A.49 by-pass construction has implications additional to the six sites investigated by BUFAU as part of the commissioned evaluation exercise. These comprise a further 11 archaeological sites which merit some action and which are also to be affected by the road. These sites represent a considerable archaeological resource, but one of varying quality. It has been thought desirable to devise a hierarchy of potential merit to ensure the best use of resources in any further response. The total of seventeen sites, including those described above, can be categorised thus.

Category A Sites which merit large scale area excavation in advance of development.

Category B Sites which merit further evaluation before a full assessment can be made of their potential.

Category C Sites which merit a watching brief/salvage recording response during disturbance.

Category A

This includes SA.2, SA.20, and SA.46, all of which are described in Section 1.

Category B

These comprise three sites - S.A 124, SA.4237, and SA.4320. Sites SA.4327 and SA.4320 were not included in the BUFAU evaluation programme as they only came to the attention of the Shropshire SMR subsequent to the drawing up and submission of the project's research design. SA.124 was not included as it was considered not to be complimentary to this research design, though this should in no way be considered a reflection of the relative importance of the site.

Site No: SA.124
Grid ref: SJ 53401270

Description (Fig 14)

Cropmarks of a large single-ditched Roman marching camp with an annexe on its east side. The whole encloses some 50 acres. The proposed by-pass route will cut a 30 x 350m swathe through the camp, including sections of its north-west and south-east defences.

Recommendation

Geophysical survey should be undertaken on that part of the site to be disturbed. This should be supplemented by sample excavation of the threatened sections of the NW and SE defences, and of any further significant features revealed by the geophysical survey.

Figure 14 SA.124 location plan



Site No: SA.4237
Grid ref: SJ 43701441

Description (Fig 15)

An irregular single-ditched enclosure cropmark, with a possible entrance on its west side. the southern half of the site will be affected by the by-pass route.

Recommendation

Geophysical survey and test trenching should be undertaken in the area affected by the road works, in order to determine the nature and scale of any further work that may be required.

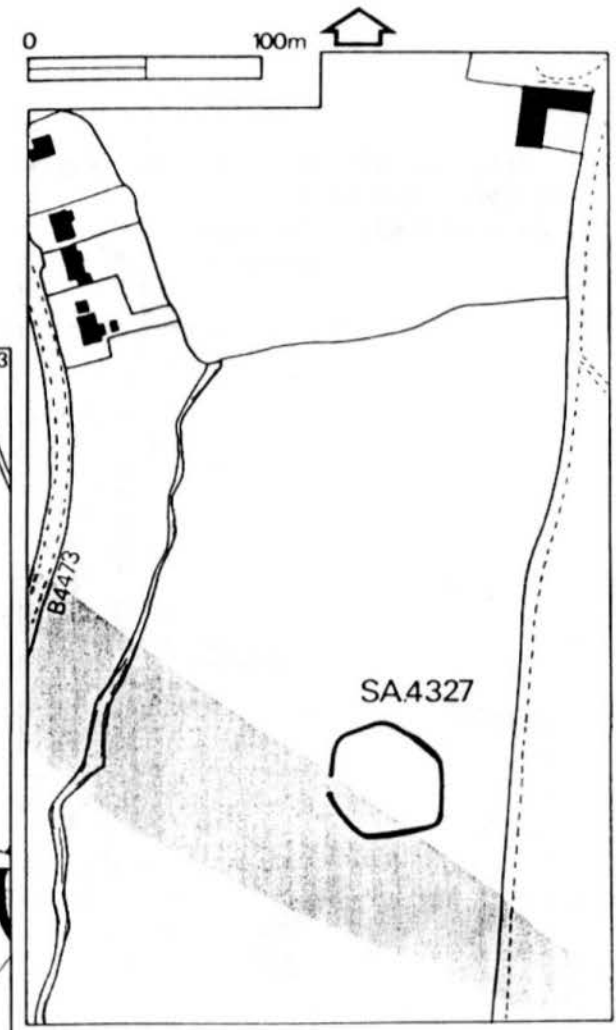


Figure 15 SA.4237 location map

Site No: SA.4320
Grid Ref: SJ 571114

Description (Fig 16)

A postulated 17th/18th century iron working site. Substantial amounts of bloomery waste have been dredged from the R. Tern at Duncote Fm, suggesting the former existence of an iron working site, either on the site of, or in the immediate vicinity of, Duncote Mill.

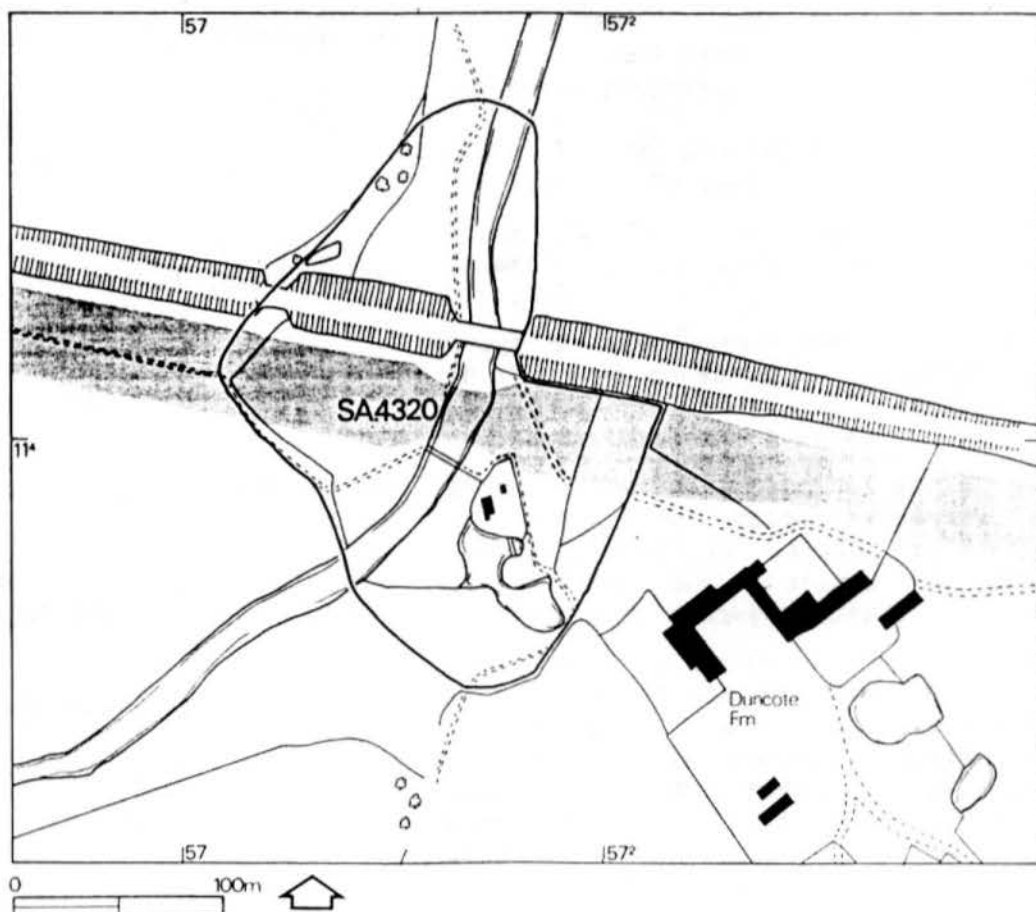
Duncote Mill (SA 4321), of which extensive earthwork and structural remains survive, is known to have had a close association with Upton Forge, established c.1675, about 1km further downstream. The by-pass route runs directly adjacent to the site of Duncote Mill.

Recommendation

Documentary research should be carried out to establish any historical evidence for the postulated iron working site and its exact location. A geophysical survey should also be

carried out along that part of the by-pass route adjacent to the site of Duncote Mill to determine whether any unrecorded industrial features are likely to be affected by it. This should be coupled with a detailed survey and planning at an appropriate scale of existing earthworks and structural features on the site. The result of this work will enable a more accurate assessment to be made of the archaeological implications of the road works.

Figure 16 SA.4320 location plan. The solid line surrounds the area of archaeological interest



Category C

Site No: SA.19
Grid Ref: SJ 524117
 (See Section 1)

Site No: SA.23
Grid Ref: SJ 535121
 (See Section 1)

Site No: SA.57
Grid Ref: SJ 50181006

Description

Section of Roman road, Wroxeter -
 Meole Brace

Site No: SA.66
Grid Ref: SJ 57121155
Description

Section of Roman Road, Wroxeter -
 Chester.

Site No: SA.98
Grid Ref: SJ 46231022
Description

Section of Roman Road, Wroxeter -
 Forden Gaer

Site No: SA.98
Grid Ref: SJ 45841063
Description

Section of Roman Road, Wroxeter -
 Forden Gaer. Postulated alternative
 alignment.

Site No: SA.99
Grid Ref: SJ 61801058
Description

Section of Roman Road, Watling Street
 East.

Site No: SA.99
Grid Ref: SJ 60341029
Description

Section of Roman Road, Watling Street
 East.

Site No: SA.105
Grid Ref: SJ 562117
Description

Possible site of 18th/19th century
 brick kiln (field name evidence).

Site No: SA.2470
Grid Ref: SJ 425155
Description

Cropmark enclosure (circumstantial
 evidence) possibly affected by by-pass
 route.

Site No: SA.2354
Grid Ref: SJ 616103

(See Section 1)

SECTION 3

**The A5/A49 Shrewsbury Bypass:
 Recommendations, January 1989**

To summarise, a four stage programme
 of archaeological response is
 currently proposed.

Stage 1. The preliminary evaluation,
 described in Section 1, is complete.

Stage 2. The evaluation of other
 potentially important sites. (Category
 B sites).

Stage 3. Area excavations in advance
 of the road construction programme on
 sites where this is considered
 necessary (Category A sites).

Stage 4. The archaeological monitoring
 of other known sites by means of
 watching brief or salvage recording
 during the early stages of road
 construction. (Category C).

The high density of known
 archaeological sites within that part
 of the Upper Severn Valley traversed
 by the by-pass route, suggests the
 likelihood of further, as yet
 unrecorded sites and features being
 affected by the road.

Clearly, there is a need for the
 archaeological monitoring of the road

Clearly, there is a need for the archaeological monitoring of the road during construction in order to undertake the salvage recording of both the known, and the as yet unknown archaeological resource to be affected. In recognition of this fact, Shropshire County Council has approved the establishment of a temporary Rescue Archaeology Officer's post within the Leisure Services Department. The post-holder would be responsible for organising and undertaking Stage 4, the watching brief and salvage recording work necessitated by the proposed by-pass scheme, utilising local volunteer assistance wherever possible. The post has been approved, subject to its necessary funding being included in the road scheme budget, and this matter should be afforded a high priority as part of the overall archaeological provision for the A5/A49 Shrewsbury By-pass.

The Department of Transport's projected start date for the road construction is March 1990. If this proves to be realistic, Stage 2 should ideally be complete by early summer, 1989 to enable area excavations (Stage 3) to proceed as soon as possible.

This report has demonstrated a clear requirement for a substantial additional response to the archaeological threat posed by road construction proposals. Several important sites will undoubtedly be destroyed or damaged by the scheme. No detailed proposals or costings have been included here for Stages 3 and 4 in particular, but we would reiterate strongly the need for an archaeological financial provision at an early stage within the road construction budget.

Support for Stage 2 must now be a priority, to enable the completion of this archaeological evaluation. To programme Stage 3 for completion before road construction begins is still quite feasible, but decisions and financial commitments will be required before the end of this year.

J.Cane and M.Watson
January 1989

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