Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire

Fields 7 (East), and 8-9 Trial Trenching 2002

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit
Project No. 219.22
June 2002

Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire
Fields 7 (East), and 8-9
Trial Trenching 2002

by
Eleanor Ramsey

with contributions by Lynne Bevan, Marina Ciaraldi and Annette Hancocks

For further information please contact:
Simon Buteux or Iain Ferris (Directors)
Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit
The University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham B15 2TT
Tel: 0121 414 5513
Fax: 0121 414 5516
E-Mail: BUFAU@bham.ac.uk
Web Address: http://www.bufau.bham.ac.uk

Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire

Fields 7 (East), and 8-9 Trial-Trenching 2002

Contents

Tables (within text)

Figures

Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire

Phase 3 Evaluation

Fields 7 (East), and 8-9 Trial-Trenching 2002

1.0: SUMMARY

The archaeological potential of an area proposed for gravel extraction at Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire (centred on NGR TL 2037/6625) was tested by an evaluation involving trial trenching. The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in February 2002 by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit on behalf of Aggregate Industries Limited, through Entec Limited. Preliminary fieldwalking identified only a small number of flint artifacts, indicating a low-level, episodic use of the landscape in the Neolithic-Bronze Age. Trial trenching in Field 7 (East) identified the eastern side and possible internal features of a rectilinear enclosure of early Roman date, previously identified by aerial photography and sampled by open area excavation in 2001 on its eastern side. Field boundary ditches and post-holes of prehistoric or Roman date were also identified in Fields 8 and 9. This report also contains proposals for further archaeological fieldwork, involving archaeological excavation and salvage recording.

2.0: INTRODUCTION (Figs. 1 and 2)

This report describes the results of the second phase of archaeological evaluation, involving trial-trenching, within Fields 7 (East), and 8-9 (hereafter called 'the site') centred on NGR TL 2037/6625 (Figs. 1-2) within the Phase 3 area at Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire. The work was undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) on behalf of Aggregate Industries Limited through Entec Limited. The methodology adopted follows a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by BUFAU (BUFAU 2002), approved by the County Archaeology Office of Cambridgeshire County Council. The earlier phase of evaluation of Field 7 (East), comprising fieldwalking, has been reported separately (Bevan and Watt 2002), as has the fieldwalking (Bevan and Watt 2001) and trial-trenching (Burrows and Jones 2001) within the remainder of this field.

The results of air photograph analysis are described in a separate report (Air Photo Services 1998). Briefly, the southwestern corner of the site contains part of a rectilinear enclosure, with possibly-associated adjoining field systems. Few cropmarked features have been identified over the remainder of the site. The results of trial-trenching elsewhere within the Phase 3 area have been reported-on separately.

The purpose of the evaluation was to define the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and extent of any archaeological remains within the site, in order to permit the formulation of an appropriate mitigation strategy. Trial-trenching was intended to test the character of the cropmarked features, to recover dating evidence, and to examine those areas for which no archaeological information was available.

3.0: METHODOLOGY

A total of fifteen trial-trenches, each measuring approximately 50m by 2m, was excavated (Fig. 2). Trench 7 was located to test the eastern side of a cropmarked enclosure, excavated on its western side in 2001. The remaining trenches were positioned to test as widely as possible the archaeological potential of areas within the site for which no archaeological information was available. A 360 degree excavator with a toothless ditching bucket was used to remove the ploughsoil and where present, the alluvium, working under archaeological supervision. Where alluvium was present the machining was undertaken in two stages. The first stage involved exposing the uppermost alluvial horizon. After inspection and verification that no features were present, cutting the alluvium, it was removed by machine in a second stage of machining, in order to locate any features sealed beneath the alluvium. Where alluvium was not present, machining exposed the uppermost surface of the subsoil. Features, or possible features of archaeological interest were each tested by hand-excavation.

Recording was by means of pre-printed pro-formas for contexts and features, supplemented by plans (scale 1:50) and sections (scale 1:20, 1:50 and 1:100), monochrome print and colour slide photography.

4.0: THE SITE AND ITS SETTING

This evaluation forms part of the fifth stage of the evaluation of the Phase 3 area within the overall quarry concession. The adjoining Field 7 (West) was evaluated in 2001 (Burrows and Jones 2001). Fields 5-6 (North) were evaluated in 1999/2000 (Jones and Burrows 2000), Field 5 (South) was evaluated in 1998 (Dingwall and Jones 1998), and Field 6 (South) was evaluated in 1999 (Cuttler and Jones 1998). The Phase 1-2 areas of the quarry were evaluated in 1992 (Leach 1992; Jones 1992). A series of excavations undertaken after that date in advance of quarrying (Jones and Ferris 1994, Jones 1995, Jones 1998, Jones 2001, Jones forthcoming) has investigated settlement and activity dating from the Neolithic to the Romano-British periods. Neolithic activity was represented by clusters of small pits, possibly forming pit circles (Area B: Jones 1995, fig. 3), and by flint artifacts found more widely within the ploughsoil. The Mid-Late Iron Age is represented by farmstead enclosures (Area B: Jones 1995, Area E-F: Jones forthcoming), as well as by the associated field systems and a probable square barrow (Jones 1998). Early Romano-British activity, mainly comprising a ladder enclosure, was located in the south of the Phase 1-2 area (Jones and Ferris 1994).

The on-going programme of excavation is intended to determine the changing function and economy of the area, in particular focusing upon the potential for future comparison of the structural and economic data from the four discrete Iron Age *foci*. Integrated analysis of settlement patterning is also intended to contribute towards a broader, multi-period, landscape-based study of changes in settlement in the Great Ouse Valley.

5.0: RESULTS

5.1: Trial-trenching (Figs. 2-5)

Details of the flint (Tables 1-3) and pottery (Table 4) finds are tabulated.

5.1.1: Field 8 (Trenches 1-5)

Trench 1

Trench 1 was orientated east-west. The subsoil in this trench comprised an orange-brown silt and gravel (1302), exposed at a depth of approximately 11.6m AOD. A number of features, all cutting the subsoil, were identified towards the eastern end of the trench. For simplicity these are described from east to west. The easternmost feature was a small sub-circular pit or post-hole (F150). It measured approximately 0.28m in diameter and 0.24m deep. The fill was a dark grey brown clayey-silt (1303), with small angular stones and charcoal flecks throughout. Part of a possible curvilinear gully (F151) adjoined feature F150. Feature F151 was approximately 0.56m wide and 0.13m deep, with sloping sides and a rounded base. The fill was a mid grey-brown clayey silt (1304), with occasional small stones and charcoal flecks. It is likely that both these features represent root or animal disturbance. To the west was a second possible curvilinear feature (F152). This feature was approximately 0.65m wide and 0.2m deep with steep sides and a curved base. The fill was very clean light brown silt (1305), and may represent a change in the natural subsoil.

Overlying the subsoil in the westernmost 20m of the trench only was a layer of orange brown clay alluvium (1301). This layer was a maximum of 0.3m deep and was sealed by a 0.3m deep layer of dark brown silt and gravel topsoil (1300).

Trench 2

Trench 2 was orientated north-south. The subsoil in this trench comprised a yellow brown sand and gravel (1352), exposed at a depth of approximately 11.9m AOD. Overlying the subsoil throughout the trench was a layer of orange brown silt alluvium (1351), which was uniformly 0.4m deep.

A possible post-hole (F200) was identified at the southern end of the trench, cutting the subsoil. This post-hole was approximately 0.7m diameter and 0.2m deep and had curving sides, and a flat base. The fill was a dark grey brown sandy-silt (1353), with burnt stones and charcoal. The remains of evenly-spaced, east-west aligned linear features were identified throughout the trench. These features were filled with a brown silt-sand and gravel material and where tested were shown to be very shallow, with a maximum depth of 0.1m. These linear features are likely to be the remains of plough furrows. The subsoil and backfilled linear features were sealed by a 0.3m deep layer of dark grey brown silt and gravel topsoil (1300).

Trench 3

Trench 3 was orientated approximately east-west. The subsoil in this trench comprised an orange brown silt and gravel (1401) which was exposed at a depth of approximately 12.00m AOD. A cluster of three possible post-holes was identified towards the western end of the trench, cutting the subsoil (1401). Post-hole F250 was circular in plan with a diameter of 0.3m. It was 0.25m deep with steep sides and a 'U'-shaped base. The fill was a dark brown silt (1402) with occasional small angular stones and charcoal flecks. Further to the east, a second posthole was identified (F251). This posthole was sub-circular in plan with a diameter of 0.48m. It was 0.13m deep with sloping sides and a rounded base. The fill was a dark orange brown clay silt (1403) with occasional small stones. Immediately to the south of this feature was a further sub-circular post-hole was identified (F252). This feature was approximately 0.6m wide and 0.1m deep with sloped sides and a rounded base. The fill was a dark brown clay silt (1404), with occasional small stones. An east-west aligned gully (F253) was identified at the eastern end of this trench. This linear was approximately 1.1m wide and had a maximum depth of 0.1m with sloping sides and a flattish base. The fill was a light orange brown clay silt (1405) with frequent small stones.

Overlying the subsoil throughout the trench, and the three backfilled post-holes was a layer of dark brown silt and gravel topsoil (1400).

Trench 4

Trench 4 was orientated north-south. The subsoil in this trench comprised a yellow brown sand and gravel, with irregular patches of discoloured silt (1451) which was exposed at a depth of approximately 11.7m to 12.1m AOD.

Two east-west aligned ditches were identified in the centre of Trench 4, cutting the subsoil (1451). The southernmost ditch (F300) was approximately 1.2m wide and 0.3m deep. It had gently curving sides and a round base. The fill was a mid-grey brown sandy-silt (1453) with charcoal flecking. This ditch may represent an abandoned field boundary. Immediately to the north of this ditch was a shallow gully (F301). This gully was approximately 1.45m wide and a maximum of 0.1m deep with very gently sloping sides and a flat base. The fill was a mid-yellow brown silty-sand (1454). It is likely that this feature represents the base of a plough furrow. Overlying the subsoil in the northernmost 20m of the trench only was a layer of brown-orange silt-sand alluvium (1452), measuring a maximum 0.45m in depth. The alluvium and two backfilled ditches were sealed by a 0.3m deep layer of dark brown silt and gravel topsoil (1400).

Trench 5 (Figure 3)

Trench 5 was orientated east-west. The subsoil in this trench comprised a brown orange silt and gravel with irregular patches of discoloured silt (1502) which was exposed at a depth of approximately 11.6m to 12.1m AOD.

Three features were identified at the eastern end of this trench, cutting the subsoil (1502) and sealed by the topsoil (1500). A ditch (F351) was aligned northwest-southeast. Feature F351 was approximately 0.5m wide and 0.2m deep with curving

sides and a round base. The fill was a grey brown sandy silt (1504), again with gravel and charcoal flecking. Located to the south of this feature was a sub-circular pit (F352). This pit was 1.3m long, 0.85m wide and 0.2m deep, with curving sides and a flat base. The fill of this feature was a very clean brown grey sandy-silt (1505) with little gravel and charcoal flecking. Shallow ditch F350 was aligned north-south, cutting backfilled feature F351. Ditch F350 was approximately 1.3m wide and 0.3m deep, with curving sides and a flat base. The fill was a light grey brown silt (1503), with occasional pockets of gravel and charcoal flecking. Towards the centre of Trench 5 several possible features were also investigated (not illustrated), but these were found to be caused by changes in the natural subsoil, animal or root activity.

Overlying the subsoil at the western end of the trench was a layer of brown orange silt alluvium (1501). This layer was a maximum of 0.3m deep and was sealed by a 0.3m deep layer of brown silt and gravel topsoil (1500), which overlay the subsoil over the remainder of the trench.

5.1.2: Field 9 (Trench 6)

Trench 6

Trench 6 was orientated north-south, and was the only trench dug in this field. The subsoil in this trench was a light yellow silty sand with patches of reddish brown silty clay (1553) that was exposed at a maximum depth of 11.9m to 12.1m AOD. Two east-west aligned gullies were identified towards the north of the trench, cutting the subsoil. The northernmost feature (F404) was approximately 1.8m wide and 0.35m deep. It had sloping sides and an irregular base. The fill was a light yellow grey silt clay (1554), which was very clean and uniform and was similar in composition to the overlying alluvial layer (1552, see below). Located to the south of this feature was a second east-west aligned gully (F400). Gully F400 was 2.6m wide and 0.22m deep and had sloping sides and a flattish base. The fill was a green grey silt clay (1550) with some small stones. Towards the southern end of Trench 6 several other possible features were also investigated and found by hand-excavation to be changes in the natural subsoil.

Overlying the subsoil throughout the trench and the infilled features was a layer of brown grey clay-silt alluvium (1552), approximately 0.4m to 0.6m deep, sealed by a 0.4m deep layer of brown silt and gravel topsoil (1551).

5.1.3: Field 7 ((East) Trenches 7-15)

Trench 7 (Figures 2, 4 and 5)

Trench 7 was orientated northeast-southwest. It was located to test the eastern side of the cropmarked enclosure partly excavated in 2001 on its western side. The trench was extended, forming a T-shape to investigate a group of features close to the southern side of the enclosure. The subsoil in this trench was a mid orange yellow sand and gravel (1002) that was exposed at a depth of 12.1m to 12.2m AOD.

Three groups of features were identified in this trench, all cutting the subsoil. The northeastern feature group comprised three ditches (F108/F105, F108 and F116), cut

on slightly different alignments. Ditch F109 was aligned north-south, and measured 2.1m in width and 0.85m deep. It was backfilled with black silty-clay (1019) with wood/charcoal inclusions, sealed by a layer of mid grey brown compact silty-clay with occasional charcoal flecking (1018). Above was a layer of stones (1017) measuring between 10-15 cm in width. It is possible that these stones represent a lining of the ditch. The stones were sealed by a mid-brown clay-silt with much gravel (1016). Unexcavated ditch F116 was slightly mis-aligned with the former feature. Ditch F116 was approximately 0.7m wide and its uppermost fill was a light brown yellow silty-clay (1030). The southeastern feature of this group was represented by a re-cut ditch (F105, F108). The primary ditch (F108) was cut to a U-shaped profile, and measured approximately 0.9m wide and 0.7m deep. It was backfilled with grey-brown silt (1015). Ditch F108 was a later re-cut (F105), measuring approximately 1.5m wide and 0.5m deep, with sloping sides and a flat base. The ditch was backfilled with brown sandy silt (1014), sealed by a layer of grey-brown silt (1010), overlain by a dark brown sand-clay-silt (1009).

The second feature group, located towards the centre of the trench comprised a re-cut ditch (F103, F106) a gully (F107), a further ditch (F110), a possible pit (F111), and a post-hole (F101). Ditch F106 was aligned east-west, and measured 1.3m wide and 0.75m deep. It was backfilled with grey sandy-silt (1012), sealed by redeposited orange sand and gravel (1011). Re-cut F103 followed the alignment of the earlier ditch (F106). The re-cut was approximately 1.5m wide and 0.7m deep. It was backfilled with grey brown clay-silt (1006). Gully F107 was cut at a tangent to the ditch. This gully was 0.35m wide and 0.3m deep, and was backfilled with orange-brown sandy-silt (1013). North-south aligned ditch F110 was 1m wide and 0.4m deep. It was backfilled with orange-brown silty-gravel (1021), sealed by dark brown clay-silt (1020). Pit F111 was 0.8m in diameter and 0.14m deep, with curving sides and a round base. It was backfilled with brown clay-silt (1023) with some gravel. The westernmost feature of this group was a roughly circular post-hole (F101). It measured 0.55m in diameter and 0.25m deep. It was backfilled with red-brown clay-silt (1004) with occasional gravel.

The third feature group, at the southwestern end of the trench, comprised a curvilinear ditch (F102/F112), a pit (F113), and later features (F114, F115). The main feature identified was a curvilinear ditch (F102/F112). This measured 3.4m wide and 0.64m deep. It was cut to a U-shaped profile, with a pronounced rounded 'shoulder' and a rounded base. This feature was backfilled with black silt-sand (1026), sealed by a deep deposit of mottled grey and orange silt clay sand with pockets of gravel (1025/1005). Above was a thin band of grey silt (1024). A small pit (F113) adjoined the northern ditch edge. This pit was 0.9m wide and 0.3m deep with curving sides and a flattish base. The fill comprised lenses of grey silt and clay (1027) with white and orange gravel.

Overlying the subsoil throughout the trench, and the backfilled features was a layer of yellow brown sandy-silt-alluvium (1001). This layer varied in depth between 0.1m and 0.4m and was sealed by 0.1m to 0.25m of topsoil (1000). Two parallel disturbances (F114, F115) cut through the alluvium were also tested by hand-excavation. These features may be interpreted as plough furrows. The alluvium was sealed by 0.1m to 0.25m of topsoil (1000).

Trench 8

Trench 8 was orientated north-south. The subsoil in this trench comprised an orange yellow sand and white gravel (1052) which was exposed at a depth of approximately 12.0m AOD. Overlying the subsoil was a 0.4m deep layer of orange brown clay alluvium (1051). This in turn was sealed by 0.3m of dark grey-brown clay-silt topsoil (1050).

No archaeological features were identified in this trench.

Trench 9

Trench 9 was orientated north-south. The subsoil in this trench comprised an orange-yellow sand and white gravel with bands of blue-grey clay (1152) which was exposed at a depth of 11.7 to 11.9m AOD. Overlying the subsoil was a 0.3m deep layer of orange brown clay-silt alluvium (1151). This layer was sealed by 0.25m of mid-brown clay-silt topsoil (1150).

No archaeological features were identified in this trench, and no finds were recovered.

Trench 10

Trench 10 was orientated east-west. The subsoil in this trench comprised an orange yellow sand and gravel (1201) which was exposed at a depth of 11.8m to 12.0m AOD. Overlying the subsoil was a 0.2m deep layer of mid brown silt-clay topsoil (1200).

No archaeological features were identified in this trench.

Trench 11

Trench 11 was orientated north-south. The subsoil in this trench comprised orange sand and gravel (1652) which was exposed at a depth of approximately 11.3m AOD. Overlying the subsoil was a 0.3m to 0.35m deep layer of green-grey clay-silt-alluvium (1651). This layer was sealed by a 0.15m deep layer of dark brown clay-silt topsoil (1650).

A northeast-southwest aligned linear (F450) was identified cutting the subsoil approximately 18m from the southern end of the trench. This feature was 1.45m wide and 0.25m deep with sloping sides and a flat base. The fill (1653) was a green brown silt clay with occasional gravel inclusions. No other archaeological features were identified within this trench.

No finds were recovered from this trench.

Trench 12

Trench 12 was orientated east-west. The subsoil in this trench comprised a yellow brown sandy gravel (1102) which was exposed at a depth of approximately 11.7m AOD. Overlying the subsoil was a 0.45m-0.5m deep layer of brown clay-silt alluvium

(1101). This layer was sealed by a 0.1m deep layer of light brown clay-silt topsoil (1100).

No archaeological features were identified within this trench.

Trench 13

Trench 13 was orientated north-south. The subsoil in this trench comprised a dirty orange silt and gravel with bands of dark blue-grey clay (1602) that was exposed at a depth of approximately 11.3m AOD. Overlying the subsoil was a layer of mid orange brown clay alluvium (1601). This varied in depth between 0.25m at the southern end of the trench and 0.5m at the northern end of the trench. This alluvial layer was sealed by 0.2m of dark brown silt topsoil (1600).

No archaeological features were identified within this trench.

Trench 14

Trench 14 was orientated east-west. The subsoil in this trench comprised an orange silt-sand-gravel (1252) which was exposed at a depth of approximately 11.4m to 11.8m AOD. Overlying the subsoil was a layer of orange brown clay alluvium (1251). This varied in depth between 0.3m at the eastern end of the trench and 0.5m at the western end of the trench. The alluvial layer was sealed by 0.15m to 0.2m of dark brown silt topsoil (1250).

No archaeological features were identified within this trench, and no finds were recovered.

Trench 15

Trench 15 was orientated northwest-southeast. The subsoil in this trench was an orange silt clay and gravel (1702) which was exposed at a depth of approximately 11.8m AOD. Overlying the subsoil was a 0.55m to 0.6m deep layer of light green brown clay alluvium (1701). This layer was sealed by 0.15m to 0.2m of dark brown clay topsoil (1700).

No archaeological features were identified within this trench.

Details of the testing of the artifactual content of the topsoil are to be found in Section 5.3 below (Tables 1 and 3). Flint was the only artifact type collected.

5.3: Flint by Lynne Bevan

A total of 92 pieces of humanly worked flint was recovered, the majority of which was unstratified material derived from the overburden in Trenches 1-6 and 8 (Table 1). Table 2 shows the occurrence of flint from stratified contexts. Table 3 provides the artifactual composition of the whole assemblage.

TABLE 1: Unstratified Flint

Tr. No.	*Count/Wt. (g.)*	*Activities represented*	*Dating*
1	18/167g	Primary knapping	?LN/EBA
2	11/110g	Flint knapping	
3	22/434g	Knapping, Settlement *foci*	?MBA-LBA
4	16/278g	Settlement *foci*	LM/EN blade core
5	6/70g	Flint knapping	LM/EN blade
6	8/60g	-	-
8	4/30g	Flint knapping	LM/EN core frag

Key, LN=Late Neolithic; EBA=Early Bronze Age; MBA=Middle Bronze Age; EN=Early Neolithic

TABLE 2: Flint from stratified contexts

Tr. No.	*Count/Wt. (g.)*	*Datable material*	*Dating*
5	4/42g	(1) Core trimming flake (2) Pressure-flaked knife	LN/EBA Neolithic
7	3/14	-	-

TABLE 3: Artifactual composition of all flint

Trench	*Flakes*	*Chunks*	*Cores*	*Scrapers*	*Other Retouched*
1	7	2	2	2	5
2	5	1	2	2	1
3	13		1	4	4
4	5	3	4	3	1
5	3	2		1	4
6	6	1			1
7	3				
8	2	2			
Totals:	**44**	**11**	**9**	**12**	**16**

Raw material

The raw material was of a fairly good quality gravel flint, ranging in colour from light to dark brown and medium to dark grey. When present, the cortex was thin and compacted and characteristic of gravel flint from a secondary source, probably local river pebbles.

Dating and function

Some of the larger collections of unstratified flint include cores and knapping debris, scrapers and some broadly datable artefacts (Table 1). Cores and knapping debris including four primary flakes were found within Trench 1 (Table 3), the morphology of which is suggestive of a Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date. By comparison, the flint from Trench 3, which includes a large flake core and unskilled knapping debris, appears to date from a later period, probably the Middle to Late Bronze Age. Scrapers, indicative of habitation *foci*, were recovered from Trenches 1-5.

The flint from Trenches 4, 5 and 8 include earlier cores and blades characteristic of Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic industries. A blade core from Trench 5 is of a well-prepared pyramidal form. A pressure-flaked Neolithic knife, also recovered from Trench 5, is a particularly finely worked and aesthetically pleasing object, its style being suggestive of more than a strictly utilitarian function.

5.4: The pottery by Annette Hancocks

Spot-dating of the pottery is provided in Table 4.

TABLE 4: Pottery spot-dating

Tr	*Feature*	*Context*	*Description*	*Dating*
1	-	Topsoil	1x body sherd	Roman
2	-	Topsoil	1x body sherd	Roman
3	F253	1405	2x medieval body sherds	12th/13th century AD
5	F351	1504	1x shell tempered ware	Roman
7	-	1001	12x greyware body sherds; 1x oxidised ware base angle; 1x oxidised ware base angle with white slip; 2x greyware rims (including necked jar); 1x very abraded samian body sherd	Mid-late Antonine
7	F100	1003	9x oxidised body sherds; 4x shell-tempered body sherds; 1x greyware body sherds; 1x grog tempered body sherds; 1x lid-seated shell tempered rim	2nd/3rd century AD
7	F101	10041	1x greyware body sherd	Roman
7	F102	1005	45x shell tempered body sherds; 1x shell tempered base angle; 36x greyware body sherds; 12x oxidised body sherds; 2x greyware base angle; 4x whiteware body sherds; 1x fine shell tempered body sherd; 3x rouletted decorated Lower Nene Valley Colour-coated ware; 2x Lower Nene Valley body sherds from folded beaker; 2x greyware rims from bead and flange rimmed bowl with white slip; 1x Black-burnished ware dog dish; 6x greyware rims, including dog dish; 4x shell tempered ware rims; 1x shell tempered ware decorated body; 3x greyware decorated body sherd; 1x oxidised ware rim from necked jar; 2x oxidised ware rim from bead and flange bowl; 1x oxidised ware flagon with handle scar; 1x Lower Nene Valley ware beaker; 1x samian body sherd	2nd/3rd century AD
7	F103	1006	26x greyware body sherds; 12x shell tempered body sherd; 1x whiteware body sherd; 7x greyware rim from necked jar; 11x oxidised body sherds; 1x oxidised rim from necked jar; 1x greyware bead and flange rimmed bowl; 1x shell tempered rim from necked jar; 1x greyware beaded rim dish/bowl; 1x oxidised ware rim	2nd/3rd century AD
7	F104	1008	10x greyware body sherds; 8x oxidised ware body sherd; 1x Black-burnished ware body; 8x grog tempered ware body; 5x shell tempered ware body; 1x greyware base angle; 2x sandy oxidised tempered ware body; 1x Dressel 20 amphorae body sherd; 1x sandy oxidised tempered ware base angle; 1x Lower Nene Valley body sherd; 4x greyware rims; 1x Nene Valley mortaria; 1x grog tempered ware rim from necked bowl/jar	Late1st/ early 2nd century AD

7	F105	1009	8x greyware body sherd; 11x oxidised ware body sherds; 2x coarse grog tempered body sherds; 4x fine grog tempered body sherds; 1x whiteware rim from bead and flange bowl; 1x grog tempered ware rim from jar; 1x greyware bead and flange rimmed bowl; 1x greyware dog dish; 1x shell tempered ware rim; 2x mortaria	3rd/4th century AD
7	F105	1010	1x shell tempered base angle; 2x shell tempered body sherds; 15x fine grog tempered body sherds; 1x fine grog tempered base angle; 1x greyware base angle; 4x coarse grog tempered ware body sherds	Transitional / Late 1st century AD
7	F107	1013	6x greyware body sherds; 1x whiteware body sherds; 4x shell tempered body sherds; 3x oxidised body sherds; 1x samian base angle	2nd century AD
7	F108	1015	1x large grog tempered storage jar	Late 1st century AD
7	F109	1016	3x greyware body sherds	Roman
7	F109	1018	1x greyware base angle; 1x coarse grog tempered body sherd; 1x oxidised body sherd; 2x greyware rims	Roman
7	F110	1020	15x greyware body sherds; 6x greyware rims; 1x coarse sandy ware; 1x greyware body; 2x shell tempered body sherds; 1x oxidised body sherds; 1x grog tempered body sherds; 1x Lower Nene Valley beaker base; 1x grog tempered lid-seated jar	2nd/3rd century AD
7	F111	1023	1x shell tempered body sherd; 1x shell tempered rim	Roman
7	F112	1025	54x shell tempered body sherds; 84x greyware body sherds; 8x greyware rims; 1x Black-burnished ware dog dish; 2x Black burnished ware base angle; 6x shell tempered base angles with hole in base; 2x shell tempered rim from large storage jar; 4x shell tempered rims; 2x sandy oxidised rims from necked jar; 2x sandy oxidised base angles; 1x sandy oxidised body sherd; 1x grog tempered rim; 1x shell tempered rim with rilling; 1x grog tempered jar with bifurcated rim; 2x amphorae; 1x Lower Nene Valley Colour-coat castor box lid; folded beaker, cornice rim beaker; rouletted decorated body sherd; base angle	2nd/3rd century AD
7	F112	1026	3x greyware body sherds	Roman
10	U/S		1x miscellaneous oxidised ware body sherd	Roman
12	Topsoil		3x whiteware body sherds; 1x greyware body sherd; 1x oxidised body sherds	Roman
12	-	1101	2x shell tempered body sherds	Roman
13	-	Topsoil	1x greyware body sherd	Roman
15	-	Topsoil	2x whiteware body sherds	Roman
15	F400	1550	5x sandy body sherds; 3x rim from ovoid jar	Late Iron Age

Note: Post-medieval pottery is not included.

5.5: Charred plant remains by Marina Ciaraldi

Five soil samples, mainly from the Roman cropmarked enclosure, each of 10 litres, were processed to recover plant remains. A preliminary analysis of the plant remains was undertaken in order to assess their preservation and to target the sample strategy in future excavations. The results of the assessment are summarised in Table 5.

Plant remains in the five samples were preserved exclusively as charred and, as already noticed in the case of charred remains from previous excavations at Little

Paxton (Ciaraldi 2000), their preservation was poor. Cereal grains, in particular, were very corroded and, in most cases, not identifiable.

Charred plant remains were overall absent or scarce and only in one case (sample F109/1018) they were relatively more abundant. This assemblage was formed mainly by chaff. Some of the glume bases, were clearly identifiable as those of spelt (Triticum spelta L.). Amongst the cereal grains bread wheat (Triticum aestivum s.l.) and barley (Hordeum vulgare L.) were also present. Well-preserved land snails were observed in samples F103/1006 and F109/1018.

The information that charred plant remains can provide on the site is limited by the poor preservation. There are cases, however, in which they seem to preserve better (e.g. sample F109/1018) and these types of samples can provide some useful information on the reconstruction of the site economy and areas activity.

On the basis of the results discussed above, it is suggested that, in future excavations, it is worth collecting soil samples from charcoal-rich layers and well-defined contexts (e.g. ovens, hearths etc.). It might also be worth exploiting the good preservation of land snails.

TABLE 5: Charred plant remains

Trench/ Feature	*Contexts*	*Vol. Processed (L.)*	*TAXA*	*Charcoal*	*NOTES*
Tr.7/ F103	1006	10	*Hordeum vulgare* (barley - 1), cereal (1), *Euphrasia/Odontites* (2), ?emmer forklet (1), emmer/spelt glb (2)		Very small sample. Well preserved land snails. 100% scanned
Tr.7/ F109	1018	10	*Triticum aestivum-compactum* (Bread wheat – 1), *Hordeum vulgare* (barley - 1), *?Ttiticum dicoccum* (emmer – 1), cereal (7), *Vicia/Lathyrus* (1), *Phleum* sp. (1), *Rumex* sp. (4), oats awn, wheat rachi internodes (1), Spelt glume bases (9), emmer/spelt glume bases (20)	A few largish pieces	All cereal grains very damaged. Well preserved land snails 100% scanned
Tr.7/ F112	1025	10	Cereals (9), spelt/emmer glume bases (6), oats awn (1)		Small sample probably partly waterlogged. No waterlogged seeds observed. Cereal grains very damaged. 100% scanned
Tr.5/ F351	1504	10			No botanical remains
Tr. 6/ F400	1550	10			No botanical remains

6.0: DISCUSSION

6.1: Fieldwalking

The fieldwalking collection from Field 7 (East) mainly comprised post-medieval brick, pottery and tile, probably mostly derives from manuring. A total of ten flint items were also recovered. The flint finds were too small in quantity to suggest more than occasional activity in early prehistory. Fields 8-9 were not fieldwalked. Flint collection from the overburden within Trenches 1-6 within those fields has recovered an informative group of material, including flint of Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date (Trench 1) and Middle-Later Bronze Age date flintwork from Trench 3. Flint scrapers were recovered from Field 8 (Trenches 1-5), indicating habitation. Little flint was recovered from the remainder of the site (Field 7 (East)) confirming the largely negative results from fieldwalking (Bevan and Watt 2002).

6.2: Trial-trenching

Within Field 8 features were recorded in Trenches 2-5. The main feature concentrations were in Trench 3 (three post-holes and a gully) and Trench 5 (two ditches and a pit). The gully in Trench 3 was dated by two sherds of medieval pottery, and it is possible that the post-holes were contemporary. Gully F351 in Trench 5 contained Roman pottery, and the other features in this trench may have been contemporary. There was no evidence for a northward continuation of the Iron Age settlement excavated in 2000 to the south of Field 8, during the current phase of trial-trenching. Two parallel gullies were recorded in Field 9 (Trench 6).

Measuring a maximum of approximately 75m by 95m, the rectilinear cropmarked enclosure (Figure 2), tested by Trench 7 towards its northeastern corner is one of the largest enclosures identified at Little Paxton. The eastern side of this enclosure was excavated in 2001. The double ditches forming the eastern side of the enclosure were represented by features F109 (outer ditch) and F105/F108 (inner ditch), which corresponded with the position and alignment of the plotted cropmarks. Ditch F111 was cut within the interior of the enclosure, following the alignment of its eastern side. Re-cut ditch F103/F106 and adjoining palisade trench F107 may have formed a division within the enclosure interior. Curvilinear ditch F112 was located towards the southern limit of the enclosure, although the relationship between this curvilinear feature and the enclosure ditch could not be established within the trench.

A notable feature of this evaluation has been the recovery of fairly substantial quantities of Roman pottery. Fragments of Roman roof tile were also collected, suggesting the presence nearby of a substantial building, although, curiously, little tile was collected in 2001 from the western, excavated sector of the same Roman enclosure. The pottery dating from the evaluation suggests that the main *floruit* of the enclosure was in the 2nd-3rd century.

No features could be identified either cutting the alluvium, or sealed beneath it within the remainder of Field 7 (East), although it is possible that features such as field systems could be located within areas of that field which have not been tested by evaluation.

7.0: IMPLICATIONS AND PROPOSALS

7.1: Implications

With the exception of the cropmarked Roman enclosure, the evaluation (fieldwalking and trial-trenching) has demonstrated a fairly low-level of activity within the site, although some features of probable pre-medieval date were recorded in Trench 5 (Field 8) and Trench 6 (Field 9). The flint scatters recorded by fieldwalking may derive from features obliterated by plough truncation, as recorded elsewhere at Little Paxton, although it is possible that some features of early prehistoric date may be identified in a subsequent phase of fieldwork, particularly within Field 8.

In the context of the multi-period, landscape-based archaeological project at Little Paxton, the detailed recording of the early Romano-British enclosure and its environs are particularly important, as is achieving an understanding of the possible unenclosed settlement foci identified within Trenches 5 and 6. Examination of these features and the enclosure as well as any associated field boundaries may contribute towards an understanding of the Late Iron Age-Early Romano-British transition, as well as providing an opportunity for comparison with the other early Romano-British settlements located within the quarry (mainly within Field 2 to the southeast, Jones forthcoming). The cropmarked Roman enclosure within Field 7 represents a different scale of settlement to the extensive group of similarly-dated enclosures recorded within Field 2 at Little Paxton, which appeared to be associated with groups of ditch-defined livestock pens.

7.2: Proposals

None of the identified remains merits preservation in situ. A strategy for their preservation by record (excavation or salvage recording, followed by post-excavation analysis and publication) is proposed below. For the purposes of formulating proposals the site is divided into discrete zones, according to the proposed mitigation response, following the strategy adopted in recent seasons of work at the quarry.

***Zone A**: Eastern side of cropmarked enclosure. This area, measuring a maximum of 100 x 80m should be stripped of topsoil under archaeological control, preparatory to an area excavation which will involve hand-sampling of identified features, following a methodology to be agreed with the County Archaeology Office. This excavation would complete the excavation of the enclosure, whose western side was investigated by area excavation in 2001.*

The excavation would be followed by post-excavation assessment, and full analysis of the results, and publication (both stages to be undertaken concurrently with the results of other work in the Phase 3 area).

***Zone B**: Area surrounding Zone A. A contingency should be allowed for limited salvage recording to identify, plan and sample-excavate any features such as field systems, associated with the cropmarked enclosure.*

Zones C 1 and C2: *Areas surrounding Trench 5 (Field 8) and Trench 6 (Field 9). An area measuring 40m square centred on each trench should be stripped of topsoil under archaeological control. A base-plan of any features would be prepared, and a review meeting held with the County Archaeology Office to determine the strategy for further investigation, if appropriate. If little or no other features of archaeological interest were identified, no further work may be appropriate. If features of archaeological interest were identified, the further investigation could involve sample hand-excavation and recording following a detailed strategy to be agreed with the County Archaeology Office.*

Zone D*: remainder of Field 7 (East), and Fields 8-9. A watching brief during topsoiling is recommended within this zone, to identify, plan and sample by hand-excavation any archaeological features present.*

8.0: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation was sponsored by Aggregate Industries Limited through Entec Ltd. The evaluation was monitored for Entec by Simon Atkinson, and by Andy Thomas for Cambridgeshire County Council. The fieldwork was managed by Alex Jones. The fieldwork was supervised by Eleanor Ramsey, with the assistance of Suzy Blake, Chris Hewitson, Erica Macey, Roy Krakowicz and Steve Williams. The illustrations were prepared by Nigel Dodds and the text was edited by Alex Jones.

9.0: REFERENCES

Air Photo Services. 1998. *Little Paxton Quarry, Phase 3 Area. Aerial Photographic Assessment.*

Bevan, L. and Watt, S. 2001. *Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire. Field 7 (West) Fieldwalking 2002.* BUFAU Report No. 219.20.

Bevan, L. and Watt, S. 2002. *Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire. Field 7 (East) Fieldwalking 2002.* BUFAU Report No. 219.21

BUFAU 2002. *Research Design/Specification. Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire. Phase 3 Evaluation, Field 7 (East), Field 8 Evaluation.* Unpublished.

Burrows, R. and Jones, A. E. 2001. *Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire, Phase 3 Evaluation, Field 7 (West) Trial-Trenching 2001.* BUFAU Report No. 219.20.

Ciaraldi, M. 2000. Charred plant remains, in Jones, A. E. 2000. *Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire, Excavations 1992-1998. Iron Age Settlements (Areas B-E/F). Post-Excavation Assessment.* BUFAU Report No. 596.03, 39-54.

Cuttler, R. and Jones, A. E. 1998. *Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire. Phase 3 Evaluation 1998. Field 6 (South).* BUFAU Report No. 219.14.

Dingwall, L. and Jones, A. E. 1998. *Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire. Phase 3 Evaluation 1998. Field 3 (South).* BUFAU Report No. 219.10.

Jones, A. E. 1992. *Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire. Phase 2 Archaeological Assessment.* BUFAU Report No. 223.

Jones, A. E. 1995. Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire: Archaeological Excavations 1992-3. Second Interim Report: The Southwest Area. Settlement and Activity From the Neolithic to the Iron Age. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* LXXXIII, 7-22.

Jones, A. E. 1998. An Iron Age Square Barrow at Diddington, Cambridgeshire. Third Interim Report of Excavations at Little Paxton Quarry: 1996. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* LXXXVI, 5-12.

Jones, A. E. 2001. A Romano-Celtic Shrine and Settlements at Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* , XC, 5-27.

Jones, A. E. in preparation. *Iron Age and Romano-British landscapes in the River Great Ouse Valley. Excavations at Little Paxton Quarry, Cambridgeshire 1992-1998.* British Archaeological Reports, British series.

Jones, A. E. and Burrows, R. 2000. *Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire. Phase 3 Evaluation 1999. Fields 5-6 (North).* BUFAU Report No. 219.18.

Jones, A. E. and Ferris, I. M. 1994. Archaeological Excavations at Little Paxton, Diddington, Cambridgeshire. First Interim Report. The Romano-British Period. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* LXXXII, 55-66.

Leach, P. J. 1992. *Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire. Archaeological Assessment, Phase 1.* BUFAU Report No. 219.

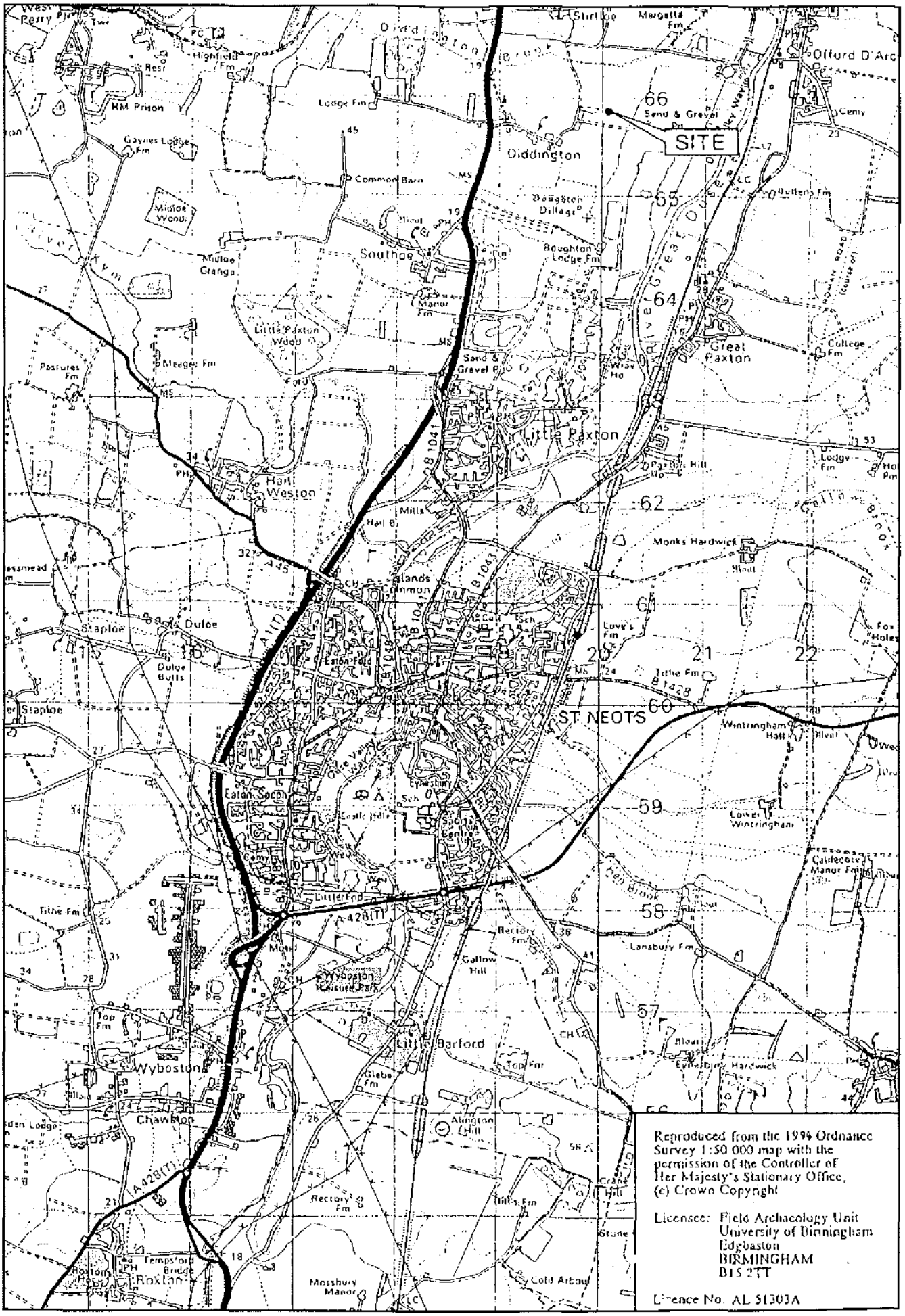
SITE
Diddington
Great Paxton
Little Paxton
Hail Weston
ST NEOTS
Eaton Socon
Eaton Ford
Wyboston
Little Barford
Chawston
Roxton
Staploe
Dulce
Monks Hardwick
Wintringham
Lower Wintringham
Offord D'Arc
Southoe
Reproduced from the 1994 Ordnance Survey 1:50 000 map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office, (c) Crown Copyright
Licensee: Field Archaeology Unit
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
BIRMINGHAM
B15 2TT
Licence No. AL 51303A

Fig.1

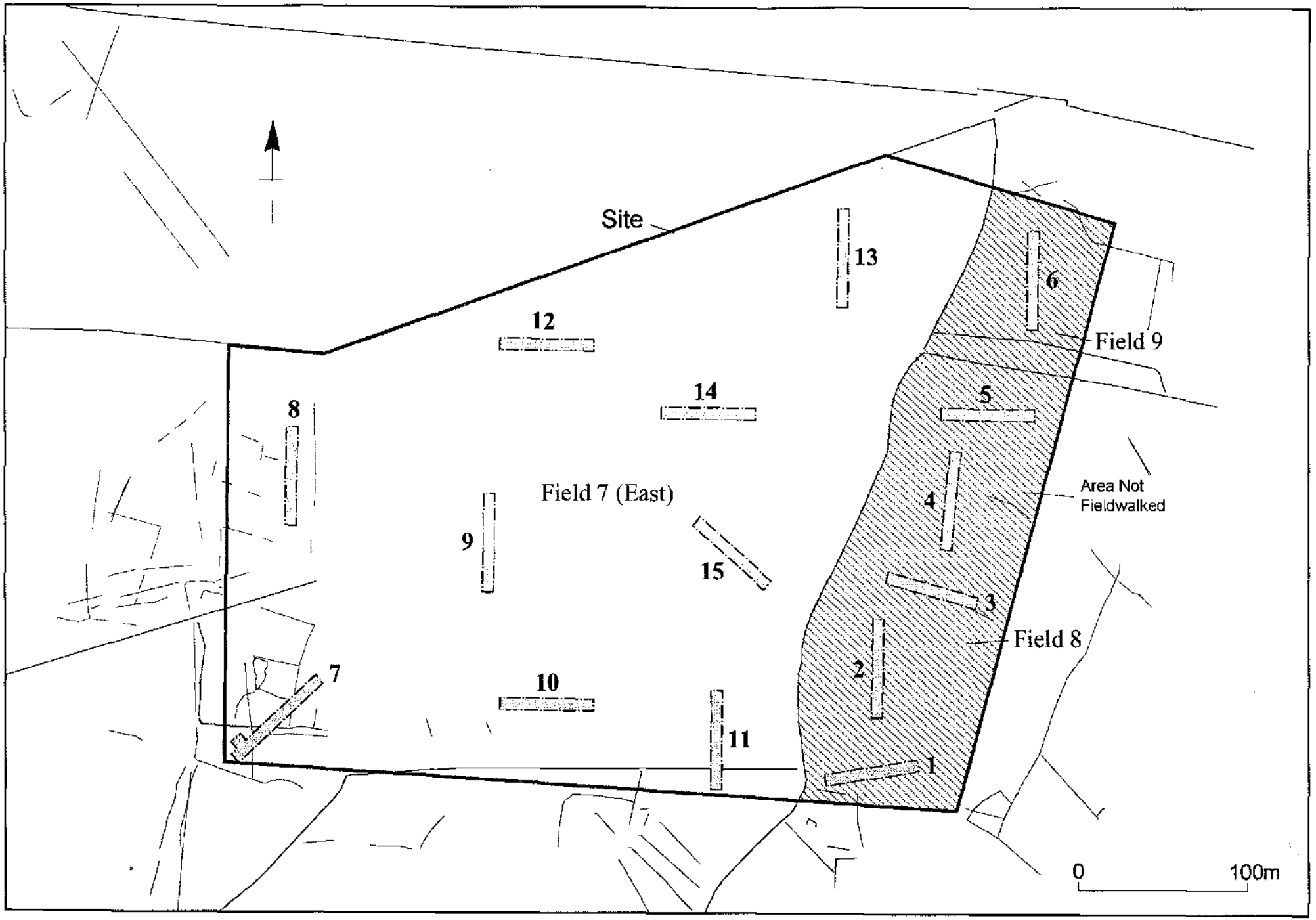
Site
13
6
12
Field 9
14
5
8
Area Not
Fieldwalked
4
Field 7 (East)
9
15
3
Field 8
2
7
10
11
1
0
100m

Fig.2

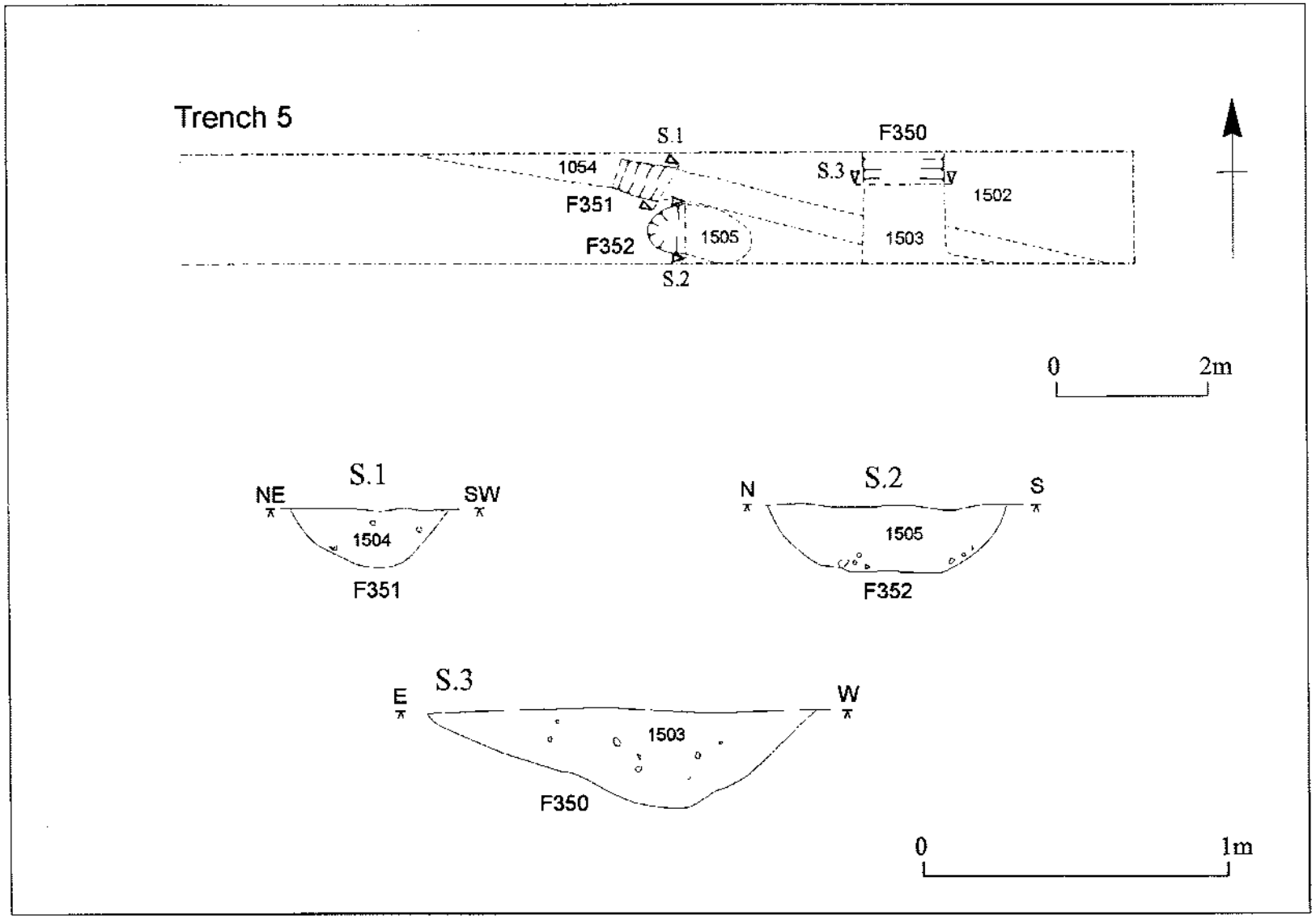
Trench 5
S.1
F350
1054
S.3
1502
F351
1503
F352
1505
S.2
0
2m
S.1
NE
SW
1504
F351
S.2
N
S
1505
F352
S.3
E
W
1503
F350
0
1m

Fig.3

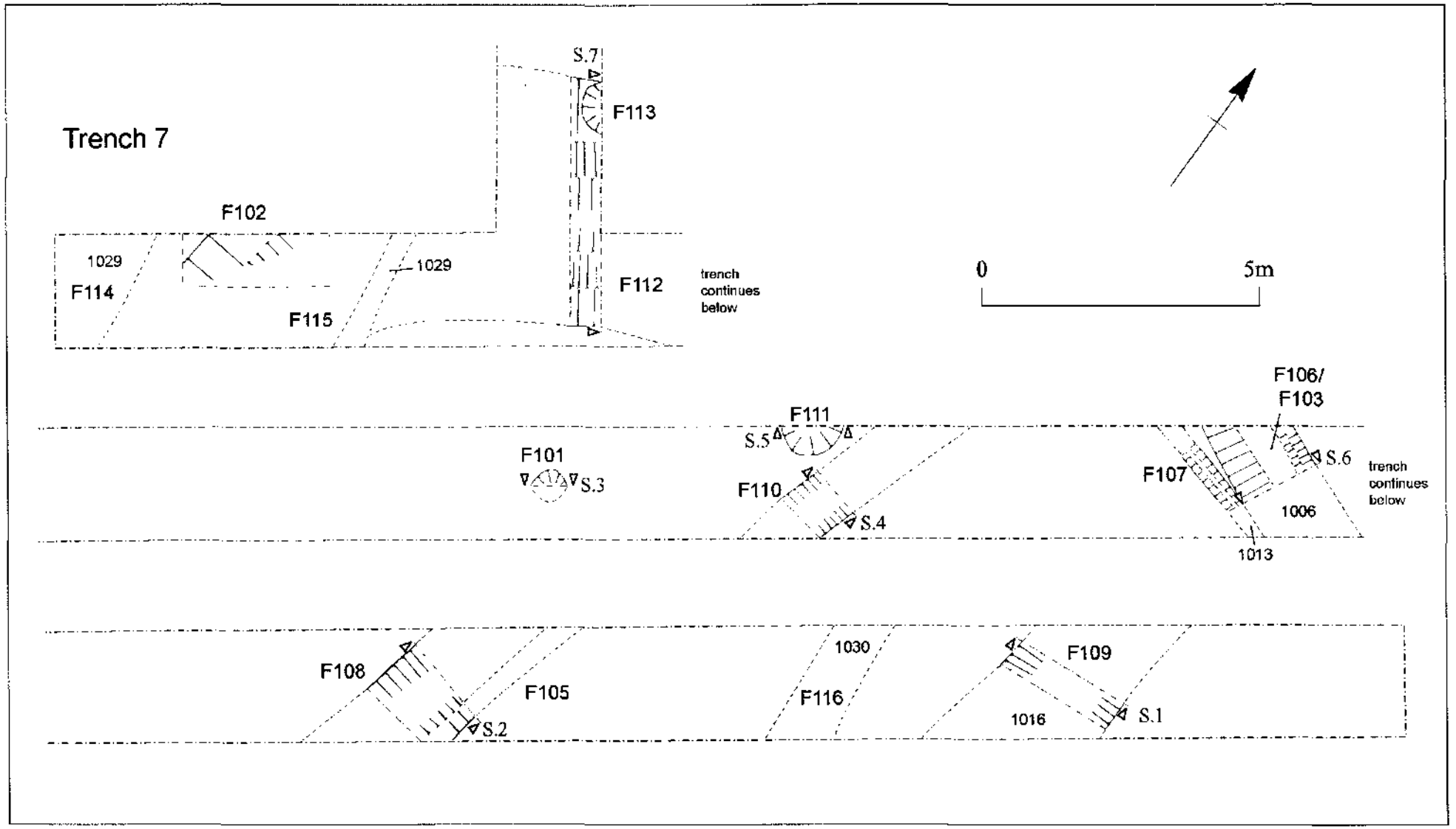
Trench 7
S.7
F113
F102
1029
F114
1029
F115
F112
trench continues below
0
5m
F106/ F103
F111
S.5
S.6
F101
S.3
F110
F107
trench continues below
S.4
1006
1013
F108
F105
1030
F116
F109
1016
S.1
S.2

Fig.4

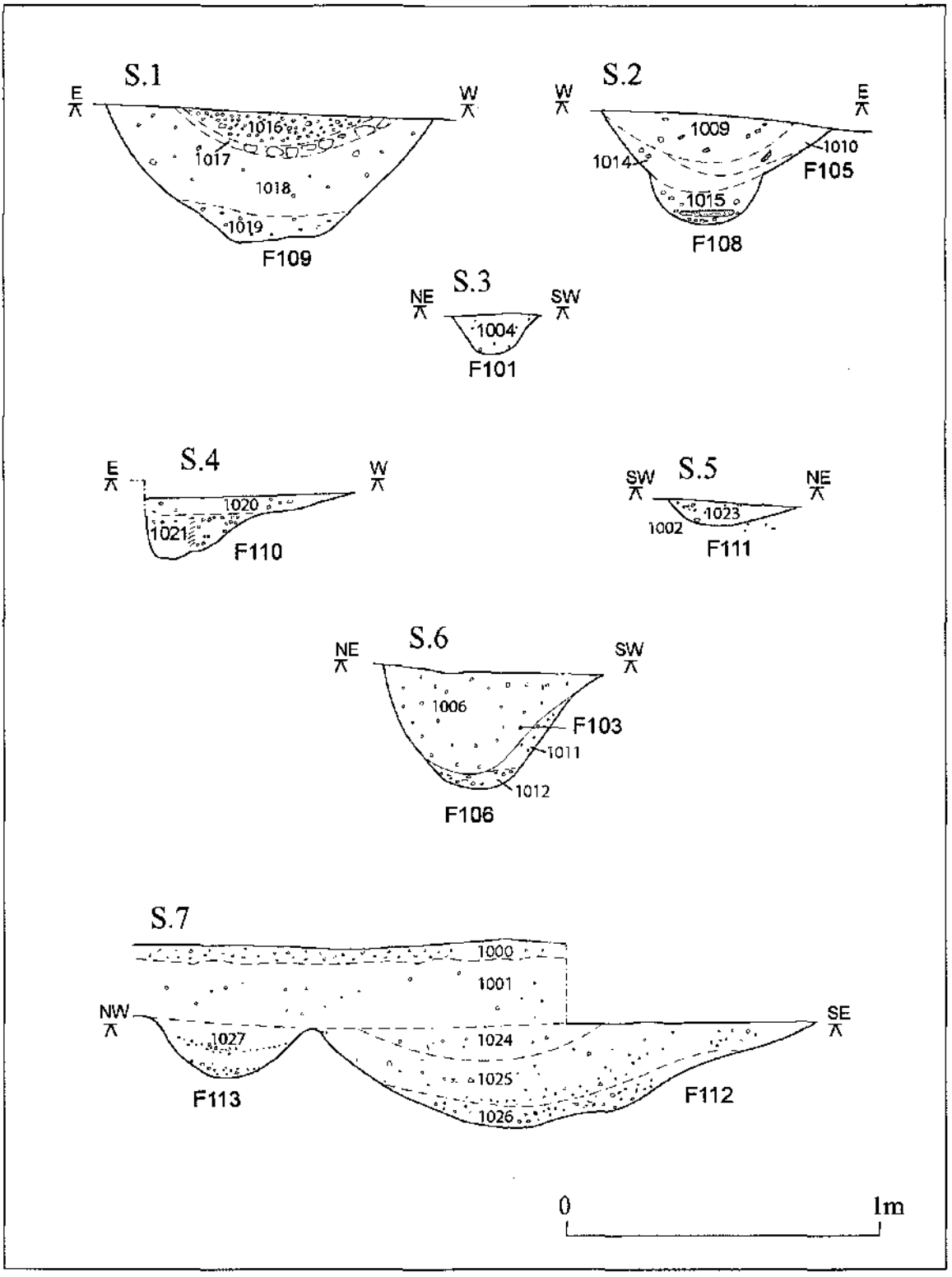
S.1
E
W
1016
1017
1018
1019
F109
S.2
W
E
1009
1010
1014
F105
1015
F108
S.3
NE
SW
1004
F101
S.4
E
W
1020
1021
F110
S.5
SW
NE
1023
1002
F111
S.6
NE
SW
1006
F103
1011
1012
F106
S.7
1000
1001
NW
SE
1027
1024
1025
F113
F112
1026
0
1m

Fig.5