

**Recent Archaeological  
Investigation of Land off  
Stamford Road, Oakham,  
Rutland:**

**An Interim Statement**

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit  
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An Interim Statement**

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## Recent Archaeological Investigation of Land off Stamford Road, Oakham, Rutland: An Interim Statement

### *Summary*

*Excavation revealed a series of Iron Age/Romano-British enclosures and associated features located along the southern bank of the stream that forms the northern extent of the site. Archaeological deposits survived largely at the bottom of the valley slope where they were protected from later truncation by ploughing by a build up of colluvium/alluvium, c.1m-thick in places. Further up the hill slope only the most substantial features had survived.*

*The evidence would suggest that flash floods occurred during occupation of the site, necessitating the re-cutting of eaves drip gullies and other more shallow features. Drainage was of obvious importance, as attested by a complex of ditches, orientated north-south, which would have originally drained into the stream.*

### **Introduction**

This report outlines the results of trial trenching and open area excavation on land to the east of the town of Oakham, Rutland, to the north of Stamford Road (centred on NGR SK869086, Figure 1). The work was commissioned by John Samuels Archaeological Consultants on behalf of David Wilson Estates and was undertaken in April-June 2000. A stream formed the northern boundary of the site and work was focused on the southern slope of the small stream valley.

An area excavation (of 2277 sq. m in total) followed extensive evaluation of the site, which included a desk-based assessment (JSC368/98/02), a geophysical survey (Snee, 1999), and a programme of trial trenching. Previous excavation in the vicinity of the site was undertaken in 1996-7 (Ellis, Hewson, and White, 1997).

### The Evaluation

Following a desktop assessment and geophysical survey a total of eight trenches was excavated as part of the programme of trial trenching, with four extra trenches being excavated at the request of the County Archaeological Officer. Archaeological deposits occurred in the trenches concentrated in the northwest corner of the field. Individual trench descriptions are not reproduced in this report, although they are held in the evaluation archive (Accession Number A10.2000). Those trenches containing archaeological features were, with the exception of Trench 6, subsumed within the area excavation and thus in this report have been conflated with the overall results of that work. All finds from the evaluation appear in the tables in this present report.

## Results of Area Excavation (Figure 2)

The following results are presented under period headings based on preliminary spot dating of the pottery and the stratigraphic sequence on the site. They are based on those used in the previous excavation (Ellis, Howson and White 1997, 3). Summary of the finds and the spot dating tables appear at the end of this report. (Appendices I, II and III)

### Phasing

Period 1	Middle Iron Age
Period 2	Late Iron Age - Transitional
Period 3	1 <sup>st</sup> Century AD
Period 4	Late 1 <sup>st</sup> century to 2 <sup>nd</sup> century
Period 5	Post-Roman

### *Period 1: Middle Iron Age*

This period was characterised by an oval pit (F102) and several small linear gullies with U-shaped profiles (F139, F149, F159, F163). A curvilinear feature (F119), possibly the eaves drip gully of a round house, located in the north-western corner of the site, was recut twice (F120, F121). The remaining sections of a second round house gully (F108, F113, and F181) directly to the east did not produce any datable finds. Features of this date were heavily truncated by Period 2 features. As a result of this it has not been possible to create an overall picture of the settlement during this period.

### *Period 2: Late Iron Age - Transitional*

A substantial ditch (F107, F115, F123, F132, F188), orientated north-south, had, in some sections, been recut and realigned (F105, F116, F137, F143). The number of recuts reflects how quickly the ditches silted up – probably due to a combination of hill wash and flash-flooding of the stream. A second large ditch (F187) on a northwest-southeast alignment was picked up in several of the trial trenches located further up the hill slope. This ditch may represent the continuation of a pit alignment located in the north-west corner of the field and may have formed the southern boundary of the settlement. At its intersection with F188 the ditches were filled by the same series of clay-rich silt deposits, suggesting that they were contemporary, although no datable artefacts were recovered.

A series of small gullies (F111, F165, F175, F189, F191) and pits (F106, F125, F126, F127, F162, F167, F184, F190) clustered in the north-west corner of the site may represent the settlement focus. A burnt deposit located at several points along the western lip of the early enclosure ditch suggests the dumping of domestic or industrial waste.

A small enclosure (F142, F171, F173), c. 15m in diameter, to the east of the main settlement may have been used for livestock. The ditch had rounded terminals at the entrance (F155, F173), was U-shaped in profile and c.0.2m deep. A small curvilinear

gully (F152) was the only internal feature associated with this enclosure. The enclosure ditch had been re-cut several times (F147, F148, F150, F151) on its southern side during its life span.

#### *Period 3: 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD*

By this date the series of Period 2 ditches had silted up and a small V-shaped curvilinear gully (F170), c.0.5m wide and 0.3m deep, had been cut through the top of them. The gully was in turn cut by a large V-shaped ditch (F114, F122, F133, F179), c.1.45m wide and c.1m deep, that followed the same north-south alignment as the Late Iron Age ditches. A small straight-sided pit with flat base (F168), containing Roman material, was located within this new enclosure.

#### *Period 4: Late 1<sup>st</sup> Century – 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD*

The large Period 3 ditch (F114, F122, F133, F179) was recut during this period by a more shallow gully (F104, F157, F186, F193) with a bowl-shaped profile. It followed the inner lip of the original ditch and returned west at the southern end of the former ditch creating a possible enclosure.

#### *Period 5: Post-Roman*

Medieval ridge and furrow was preserved beneath a layer of colluvium that had protected it from modern ploughing regimes. The ridge and furrow truncated an earlier layer of colluvium into which features from dating from Periods 1-4 were. Quantities of residual Roman material suggest truncation and a general mixing of deposits in this period. Two small pits (F128, F197) in the north-west corner of the site also contained post-medieval pottery.

### **Discussion**

Discussion of the results will be presented in full, along with an assessment of the finds and environmental material from the site, in the Post-Excavation Assessment Report which is currently in preparation.

### **Acknowledgements**

John Samuels Archaeological Consultants on behalf of David Wilson Estates commissioned this project. Thanks are due to John Samuels and Forbes Marsden who monitored the project on behalf of John Samuels Archaeological Consultants, also Anne Graf who monitored the project for Leicestershire County Council. Work on site was carried out by R.Cuttler, M.Duncan, P.Mann, H.Martin, L.Mather, E.Newton, K.Nichol, C.Nielson, U.Roberts. Kirsty Nichol produced the written report, which was illustrated by Mark Breedon, and Annette Hancock produced the spot dating of the finds. The report was edited by Iain Ferris, who also monitored the project for BUFAU.

## **Bibliography**

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## APPENDIX I

### Summary of finds

Find type	Quantity
<i>Pottery</i>	
Prehistoric	919
Roman	356
Medieval	4
Post-medieval	23
<b>Total</b>	1302
Fired clay/daub	123
Animal bone	444g
Clay pipe	3
Coins	3
Iron	2
Copper Alloy brooch	1
Lead	4
Slag	68
Flint	86
Other stone	27
Charcoal	26
Miscellaneous	1



## APPENDIX II

Context	Description	Date/Date range	Prehistoric	Roman	Animal bone (g)	Other
1000	LAYER	PM (16TH-18TH CENT)				PM pot, lead, flint x 1
1001	LAYER	PM (16TH-18TH CENT)		14		4 PM pot, clay pipe, coins x2 (SF 6, flint x 5 (SF 1 and 2)
1002	F100 FURROW	ROMAN		2		Fired clay
1003	F101 FURROW	PM (16TH-18TH CENT) WITH RESIDUAL ROMAN		1		M and PM pot
1004	F102 PIT	MID-LATE IRON AGE	9			3 Slag and flint x 1
1005	F103 FURROW	LATE MED (13TH-15TH CENT) WITH RESIDUAL L ROMAN		8		Fired clay and med pot
1006	F104 DITCH	ROMAN	1	53		8 Fired clay, flint x 2
1007	F101 FURROW	PM (16TH-18TH CENT)				Clay pipe x 2
1008	F105 DITCH	ROMAN		24		Slag
1009	F133 LAYER	LATE 1ST-EARLY 2ND		61		1 Fired clay, slag
1010	F104 DITCH	MID 1ST CENT		14		5 Fired clay, flint x 1
1012	F104 DITCH	ROMAN		2		Fired clay, flint x 1
1014	F106 PIT					Fired clay, slag and flint x 1
1015	F106 PIT	LIA	4			Fired clay, slag
1017	LAYER	LIA	5			Fired clay, flint x 2, worked stone
1018	F108 GULLY					Flint x 2
1019	F107 DITCH	LIA	5			Slag, flint x 4 and worked stone
1020	F125 PIT	LIA	20			Fired clay
1021	F135 DITCH		2	8		Fired clay, slag, flint x 1
1022	F105 DITCH	LIA	11			
1023	F134 DITCH	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL LIA	2	5		1 Ceramic tile and slag
1024	F110 HEARTH	LIA	3			
1025	F111 GULLY	LIA	1			Flint x 1
1029	F107 DITCH	LIA	91			3
1032	F133 DITCH	ROMAN		13		Fired clay
1033	F133 DITCH	TRANSITIONAL	133			Fired clay, slag
1034	F114 DITCH	TRANSITIONAL		22		1 Slag, flint x 2 and worked stone
1035	F114 DITCH	ROMAN		1		4 Fired clay and slag
1036	F115 DITCH	LIA	1			
1038	F117 DITCH					Flint x 1
1039	F134 DITCH	ROMAN		4		1 Slag
1040	F118 DITCH					18
1041	F118 DITCH	PM (16TH-18TH CENT)				PM pot
1042	F119 GULLY	MID-LATE IA	13			Flint x 1 and worked stone
1045	F121 GULLY	IA	3		62	
1046	F122 DITCH	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL TRANSITIONAL	5	38		Copper alloy (Brooch SF 1) and slag
1047	F133 DITCH	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL IA	14	2		1 Fired clay, slag and worked stone
1048	F133 DITCH	LIA	10			3 Fired clay, slag and worked stone
1049	F107 DITCH	LIA	3			Slag and worked stone
1050	F103 FURROW	LATE 1ST-EARLY 2ND	71	33		5 Fired clay, slag, flint x 3
1051	F122 DITCH	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL TRANSITIONAL	15			1 x flint
1052	F123 DITCH	LIA	4			1 Slag
1053	F123 LAYER	ROMAN		2		

Context	Description	Date/Date range	Prehistoric	Roman	Animal bone (g)	Other
1054	F115 DITCH	IA	5			Fired clay, slag, flint x 1 and worked stone
1057	F126 PIT	TRANSITIONAL	16			6 Fired clay, flint x 1 and charcoal
1058	F127 PÖSTHOLE	TRANSITIONAL	2			17 Fired clay
1059	F128 PIT	LIA WITH INTRUSIVE PM (16TH-18TH CENT)	1			Intrusive PM pot, fired clay, flint x 5, worked stone and charcoal
1060	F129 PIT					Fired clay
1065	F122 DITCH					SF 4 Iron ring
1072	F138 DITCH	LJA	4			Fired clay, slag, flint x 1, worked stone and charcoal
1073	F139 DITCH	LJA	9			Fired clay, slag, flint x 2
1074	F138 DITCH	TRANSITIONAL	3			Flint x 3
1076	F142 DITCH	LJA	6			
1077	F143 DITCH	LJA	12			5 Worked stone
1079	F148 PIT	LJA	1			Fired clay
1080	F146 GULLY	TRANSITIONAL	2			
1081	F149 DITCH	MID-LATE IA	41			2 Fired clay, slag, flint x 2
1083	F147 DITCH	TRANSITIONAL	7			Flint x 3 and worked stone
1084	F148 DITCH	LJA	11			Fired clay, flint x 2 and charcoal
1088	F155 DITCH	LJA	14			Fired clay
1091	F156 PIT	LJA	4			1 Fired clay
1092	F157 DITCH					32
1093	F157 DITCH	LATE 1ST CENTURY AD		7		158 Fired clay and slag
1094	F158 DITCH	LJA	1			
1095	F155 DITCH	LJA	6			
1096	F159 GULLY	MID-LATE IA	14			Flint x 1
1098	F161 GULLY	MID-LATE IA	4			Flint x 3
1099	F159 DITCH	MID-LATE IA	9			Flint x 1
1101	F162 PIT	LJA	1			1 Slag
1102	F163 DITCH	MID-LATE IA	74			Fired clay, SF 5 (iron), slag, flint x 5 and charcoal
1103	F159 GULLY	LATE IA	3			Fired clay
1104	F164 GULLY	LATE IA	4			Fired clay
1105	F165 DITCH	LATE IA	2			1 Fired clay, slag, worked stone and
1107	F167 PIT	LATE IA	8			
1110	F168 PIT	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL LJA	8	1		Fired clay
1111			1			
1112		ROMAN		4		Fired clay, flint x 1
1113	F171 GULLY	LJA	2			
1115		LJA	8			
1116	F174 GULLY		2			4
1117	F175 GULLY	LJA	1			Flint x 1
1119	F177 GULLY	PM (16TH-18TH CENT) WITH RESIDUAL ROMAN	2			3 PM pot
1121	F178 DITCH					Slag, worked stone and charcoal
1122	F179 DITCH	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL TRANSITIONAL	6	10		3 Fired clay, worked stone
1123	F179 DITCH	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL TRANSITIONAL				Flint x 1
1125	F180 PIT	INDUT	1			Flint x 1
1127	F182 GULLY	LJA	12			Fired clay, worked stone and charcoal

Context	Description	Date/Date range	Prehistoric	Roman	Animal bone (g)	Other
1130	F183 DITCH					1 x flint
1131	F184 PIT	LIA	41			13 Fired clay, flint x 3 and charcoal
1133	F185 PIT					15
1135	F189 GULLY	LIA	63			34 Fired clay and flint x 1
1137	F188 DITCH					Flint x 1
1140	F189 GULLY	LIA	4			1 fired clay and slag
1141	F190 PIT	LIA	13			
1142	F191 GULLY	LIA	1			
1143	TREEBOLE	E ROMAN	2	2		
1144		LIA	39			9 Fired clay, flint x 2
2201		MED				Med pot
2204						1 x flint
2501		PM		8		14 PM pot and flint x 2
E0016		LIA	7			Worked stone
E0024		LIA	12			
E0032		E ROMAN		4		
L/S			6	12		Fired clay, slag and flint x 12

KEY: IA (Iron Age)  
LIA (Late Iron Age)  
E ROMAN (early Roman)  
MED (Medieval)  
PM (Post-Medieval)  
INDET (Indeterminate)

APPENDIX III

Strat unit	Construct nu	Date/Date range
1000		POST MED (16TH-18TH CENT)
1001		POST MED (16TH-18TH CENT)
1002	F100	ROMAN
1003	F101	POST MED (16TH-18TH CENT) WITH RESIDUAL ROMAN
1004	F102	MID-LATE IRON AGE
1005	F103	LATE MED (13TH-15TH CENT) WITH RESIDUAL EARLY ROMA
1006	F104	ROMAN
1007	F101	POST MED (16TH-18TH CENT)
1008	F105	ROMAN
1009	F133	LATE 1ST-EARLY 2ND
1010	F104	MID 1ST CENT
1012	F104	ROMAN
1015	F106	LATE IRON AGE
1017		LATE IRON AGE
1019	F107	LATE IRON AGE
1020	F125	LATE IRON AGE
1022	F105	LATE IRON AGE
1023	F134	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL LIA
1024	F110	LATE IRON AGE
1025	F111	LATE IRON AGE
1029	F107	LATE IRON AGE
1032	F133	ROMAN
1033	F133	TRANSITIONAL
1034	F114	TRANSITIONAL
1035	F114	ROMAN
1036	F115	LATE IRON AGE
1039	F134	ROMAN
1041	F118	POST MED (16TH-18TH CENT)
1042	F119	MID-LATE IRON AGE
1045	F121	IRON AGE
1046	F122	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL TRANSITIONAL
1047	F133	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL IRON AGE
1048	F133	LATE IRON AGE
1049	F105	LATE IRON AGE
1050	F140	LATE 1ST-EARLY 2ND
1051	F122	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL TRANSITIONAL
1052	F123	LATE IRON AGE
1053	F123	ROMAN
1058	F127	TRANSITIONAL
1054	F115	IRON AGE
1057	F126	TRANSITIONAL
1059	F128	LATE IRON AGE WITH INTRUSIVE PMED (16TH-18TH CENT)
1072	F138	LATE IRON AGE
1073	F139	LATE IRON AGE
1074	F138	TRANSITIONAL
1076	F142	LATE IRON AGE
1077	F143	LATE IRON AGE
1081	F149	MID-LATE IRON AGE
1079	F148	LATE IRON AGE
1080	F146	TRANSITIONAL

Strat unit	Construct nu	Date/Date range
1083	F147	TRANSITIONAL
1084	F148	LATE IRON AGE
1088	F155	LATE IRON AGE
1094	F158	LATE IRON AGE
1091	F156	LATE IRON AGE
1093	F157	LATE 1ST CENTURY AD
1095	F155	LATE IRON AGE
1096	F159	MID-LATE IRON AGE
1098	F161	MID-LATE IRON AGE
1099	F139	MID-LATE IRON AGE
1101	F162	LATE IRON AGE
1102	F163	MID-LATE IRON AGE
1103	F159	LATE IRON AGE
1104	F164	LATE IRON AGE
1105	F165	LATE IRON AGE
1107	F167	LATE IRON AGE
1110	F168	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL LATE IRON AGE
1113	F171	LATE IRON AGE
1117	F175	LATE IRON AGE
1119	F177	POST MED (16TH-18TH CENT) WITH RESIDUAL ROMAN
1122	F179	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL TRANSITIONAL
1123	F179	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL TRANSITIONAL
1125	F180	INDET
1127	F182	LATE IRON AGE
1131	F184	LATE IRON AGE
1135	F189	LATE IRON AGE
1140	F189	LATE IRON AGE
1141	F190	LATE IRON AGE
F100	F100	ROMAN
F101	F101	POST MED (16TH-18TH CENT)
F102	F102	MID-LATE IRON AGE
F103	F103	LATE MED (13TH-15TH CENT) WITH RESIDUAL EARLY ROMA
F104	F104	EARLY ROMAN
F105	F105	LIA/ROMAN (RECUT?)
F106	F106	LATE IRON AGE
F107	F107	LATE IRON AGE
F110	F110	LATE IRON AGE
F111	F111	LATE IRON AGE
F114	F114	TRANSITIONAL/EARLY ROMAN
F115	F115	LATE IRON AGE
F118	F118	POST MED (16TH-18TH CENT)
F119	F119	MID-LATE IRON AGE
F121	F121	IRON AGE
F122	F122	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL TRANSITIONAL
F123	F123	ROMAN
F125	F125	LATE IRON AGE
F126	F126	TRANSITIONAL
F127	F127	TRANSITIONAL
F128	F128	POST MED (16TH-18TH CENT)
F133	F133	LATE IRON AGE/ROMAN (RECUT?)

Strat unit	Construct nu	Date/Date range
F134	F134	ROMAN
F138	F138	LATE IRON AGE/TRANSITIONAL
F139	F139	MID-LATE IRON AGE
F140	F140	LATE 1ST-EARLY 2ND
F142	F142	LATE IRON AGE
F143	F143	LATE IRON AGE
F146	F146	TRANSITIONAL
F147	F147	TRANSITIONAL
F148	F148	LATE IRON AGE
F149	F149	MID-LATE IRON AGE
F155	F155	LATE IRON AGE
F156	F156	LATE IRON AGE
F157	F157	LATE 1ST CENTURY AD
F158	F158	LATE IRON AGE
F159	F159	MID-LATE IRON AGE
F161	F161	MID-LATE IRON AGE
F162	F162	LATE IRON AGE
F163	F163	MID-LATE IRON AGE
F164	F164	LATE IRON AGE
F165	F165	LATE IRON AGE
F167	F167	LATE IRON AGE
F168	F168	ROMAN WITH RESIDUAL LATE IRON AGE
F171	F171	LATE IRON AGE
F175	F175	LATE IRON AGE
F177	F177	POST MED (16TH-18TH CENT) WITH RESIDUAL ROMAN
F180	F180	INDET
F182	F182	LATE IRON AGE
F184	F184	LATE IRON AGE
F189	F189	LATE IRON AGE
F190	F190	LATE IRON AGE
F191	F191	LATE IRON AGE
1142	F191	LATE IRON AGE
1143		EARLY ROMAN
1112		ROMAN
1115		LATE IRON AGE
1144		LATE IRON AGE
E0016		LATE IRON AGE
E0024		LATE IRON AGE
E0032		EARLY ROMAN

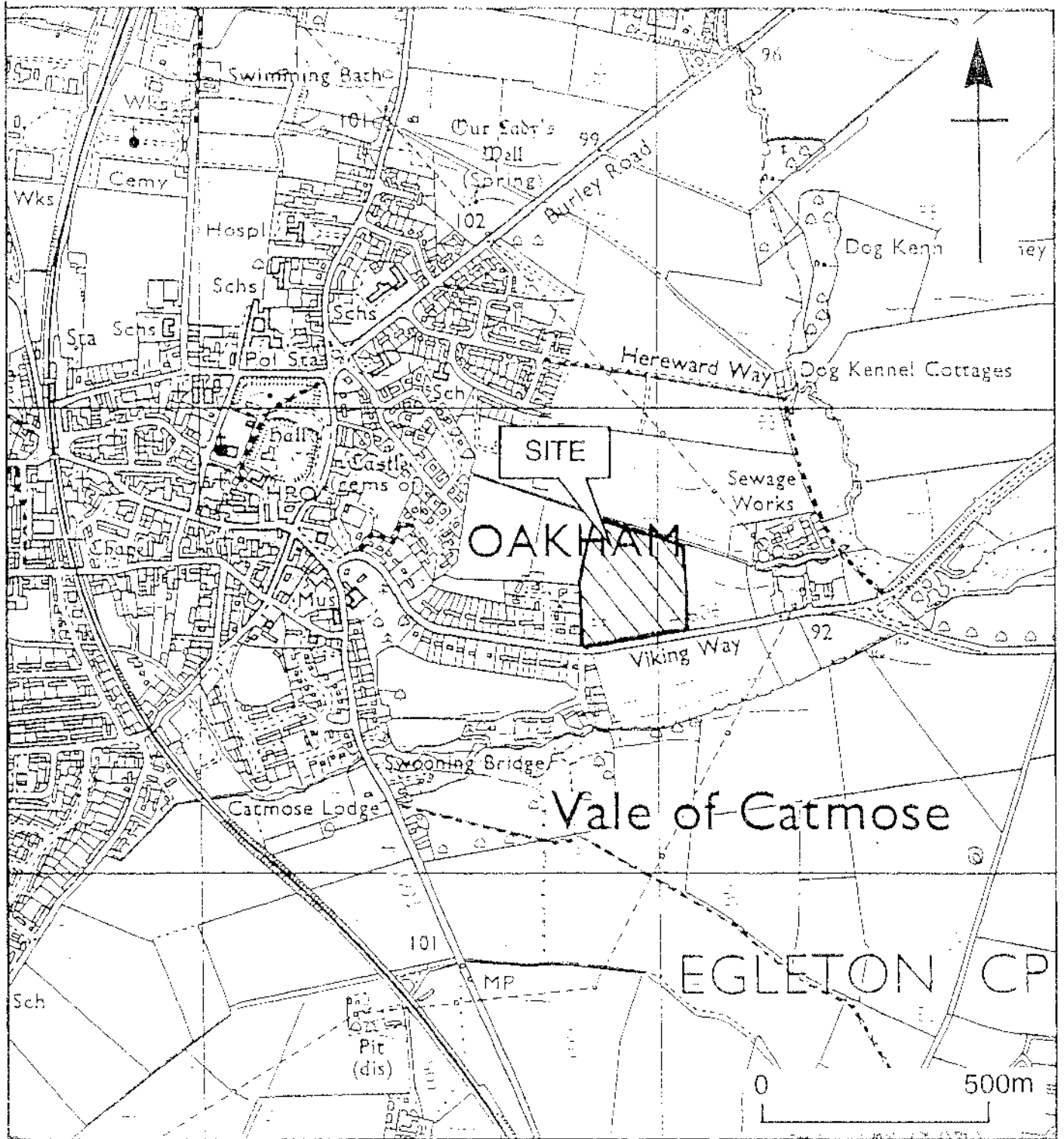


Figure 1

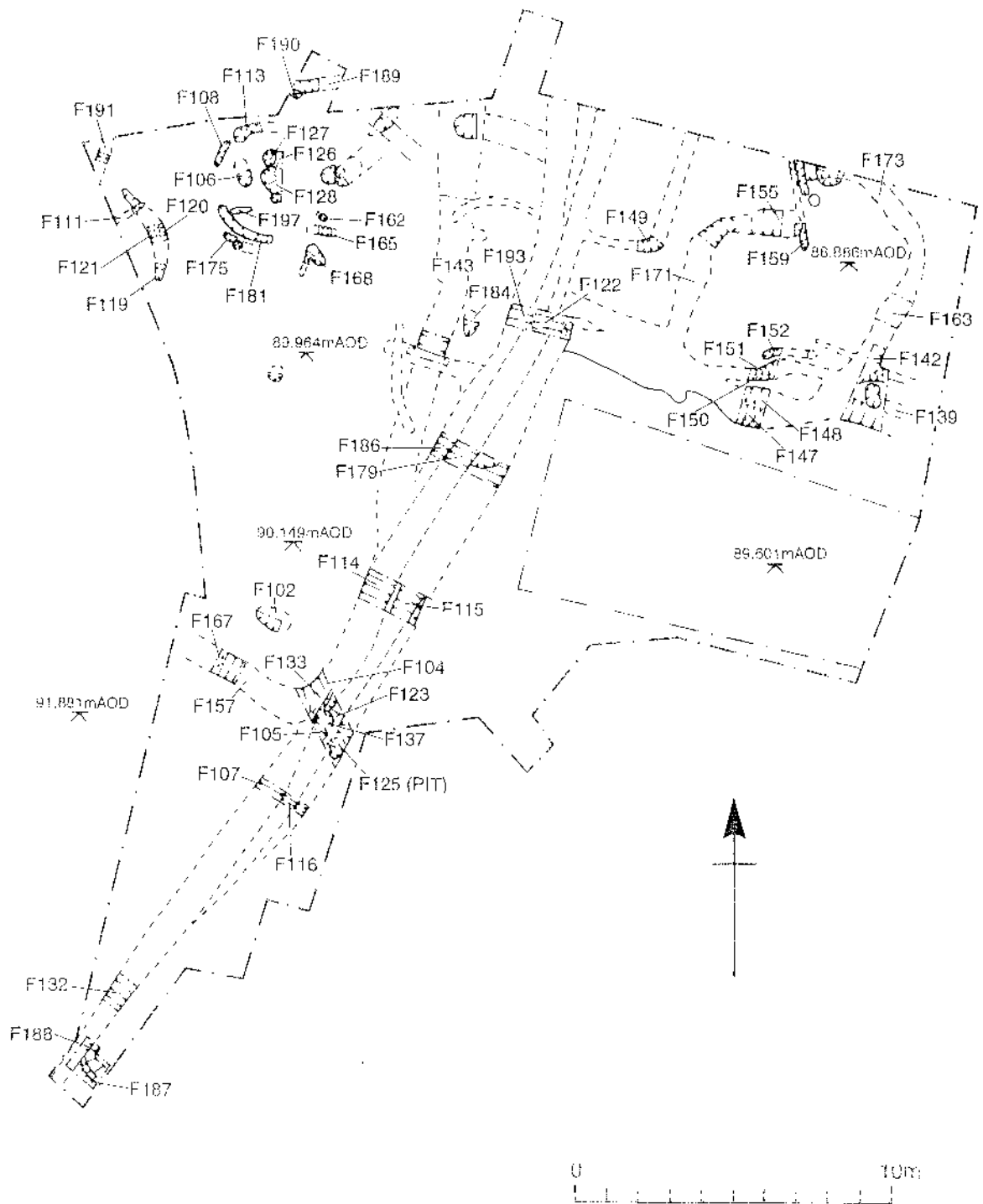


Figure 2