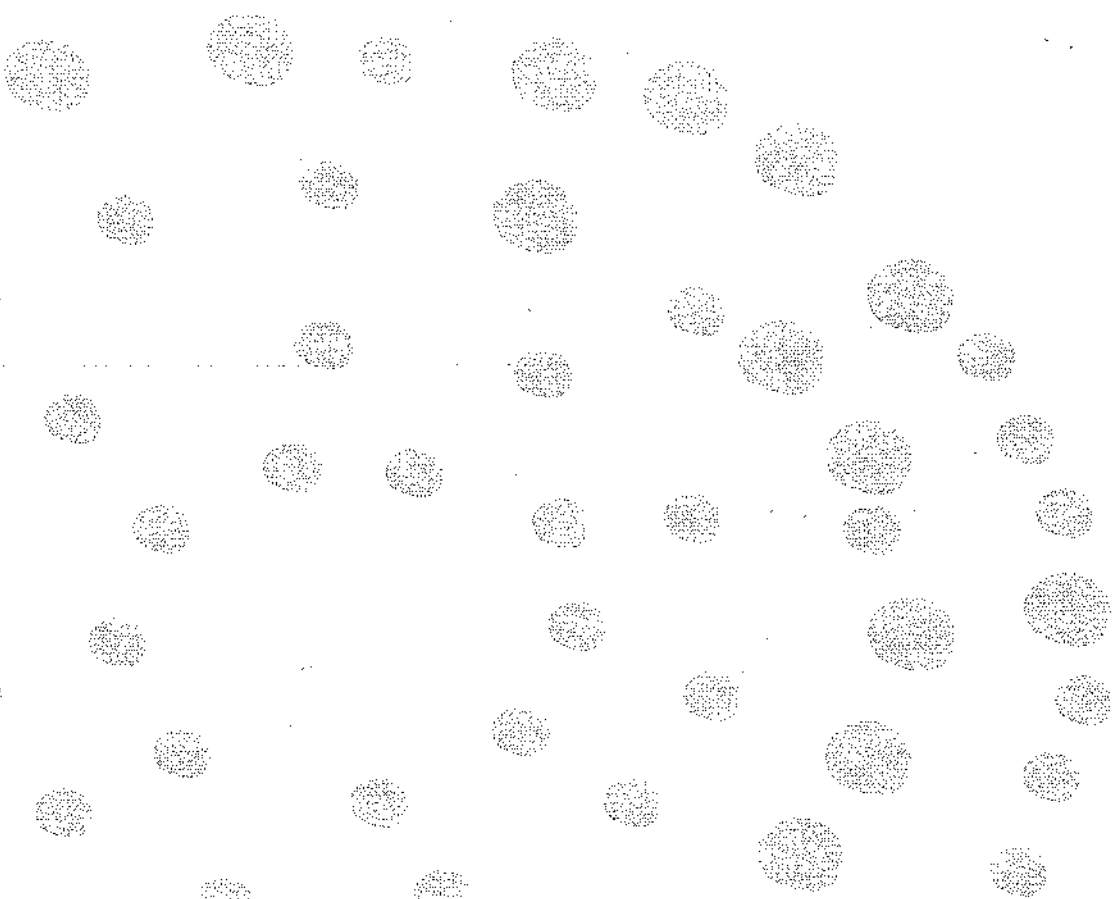


birmingham archaeology



**THE UNIVERSITY
OF BIRMINGHAM**

**A Surface Collection Survey at
Manor Farm, Kemerton,
South Worcestershire.
November 2003.**



Project No. 981

**A Surface Collection Survey at Manor Farm, Kemerton, South
Worcestershire**

16th November 2003

By
Alexander T.O. Lang
With Contributions by Dean Crawford and Robin Jackson

A Project undertaken by The Shotton Project on behalf of
DEFRA, WHEAS and Adrian Darby.

For further information please contact:

Alex Jones (Director)
Birmingham Archaeology
The University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham B15 2TT
Tel: 0121 414 5513
Fax: 0121 414 5516
E-Mail: bham-arch@bham.ac.uk
Web Address: <http://www.barch.bham.ac.uk/bufau>

Contents Page.

1. Summary	Page 1.
2. Introduction	Page 1.
3. Site Location	Page 1.
4. Geological Background	Page 2.
5. Archaeological Background	Page 2.
6. Objective	Page 3.
7. Methodology	Page 3.
8. Results	Page 3.
9. Artefact Recovery Policy	Page 4.
10. Conclusions	Page 12.
11. Acknowledgements	Page 12.
12. Bibliography	Page 12.

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**Manor Farm, Kemerton.
Surface collection survey, Kemerton,
South Worcestershire.
Fields: 7486 (WSM 33525)
& 6063 (WSM 33526).**



16/11/2003

Birmingham archaeology

1. Summary

Systematic surface collection of artefacts was undertaken on a site of approximately 10.4 hectares in two fields close to Manor Farm, Kemerton, Worcestershire in advance of the land being turned over to Woodland under the Woodland Grant Scheme. Finds of prehistoric flint may be associated with activity dating from approximately the Upper Palaeolithic to the Late Bronze Age.

2. Introduction

The following report details the results of archaeological fieldwork close to Manor Farm, Kemerton, Worcestershire. The work consisted of fieldwalking the majority of two fields field 7487 (WSM 33525) centred on [NGR SO 937 360] and field 6063 (WSM 33526) centred on [NGR SO 942 370]. The work, commissioned by the Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeological Service (WHEAS) on behalf of the landowner, consisted of systematic fieldwalking and surface collection of artefacts from the ploughsoil. This was organised by the Shotton Project and undertaken by members of the Shotton Project, WHEAS, the South Worcestershire Archaeology Group (SWAG) and students from the University of Birmingham and University College Worcester.

The fieldwork was designed to provide archaeological information to assist the County planning authority and the landowner before the land is turned into woodland through a Woodland Grant Scheme. The survey was also undertaken by the Shotton Project as part of a research based examination of the Palaeolithic of the Midlands.

3. Site location

Kemerton is a long narrow parish lying on the south side of Bredon Hill on the southern border of Worcestershire. The parish runs from the upper slopes of the hill to flat meadows lying along the north side of the Carrant Brook, a tributary of the River Avon. Both fields lie between the towns of Bredon to the West, and Kemerton to the East, and are within a triangular area created by three roads: the Cheltenham road to the West (B4079) the Kemerton Road to the North and Kinsham Lane to the East (Figs. 1 & 2).

4. Geological Background

The fields in question lie within the Carrant Valley, which cuts into the Lower Lias Clay, between the outliers of the Cotswold scarp to the south and Bredon Hill to the north (Briggs *et al* 1975, 1). The Carrant brook flows westward through the valley before joining the Warwickshire-Worcestershire Avon north of its confluence with the River Severn. The majority of terrace deposits in this valley relate to Avon terrace 2 attributed to the mid-Devensian of the Quaternary period, with a date of 26 000 BP from Aston Mill quarry (Whitehead 1989). The fields lie on the northern side of the Carrant Valley with underlying deposits relating to terrace 2 or 3, whilst the deposits of field 2 also possibly relate to the fan gravels derived from the slopes of Bredon hill to the north.

5. Archaeological Background (Alex Lang and Robin Jackson)

The area has a high concentration of archaeology, notably prehistoric, that provide important examples within the County record.

A large number of Lower, Middle and Upper Palaeolithic artefacts have been recovered from the Carrant Valley from two (now land-filled) quarries at Aston Mill [NGR SO 94 35] to the South of the study area, and Beckford [NGR SO 98 36] further East. These tools were picked up in the majority by Paul Whitehead during the 1970s and '80s (although one was recorded as coming from Beckford Quarry in 1959 – Grinsell 1960) which constitutes approximately 90 % of the Palaeolithic finds from the County, including numerous Lower and Middle Palaeolithic bifaces and important Upper Palaeolithic finds including an Aurignacian shouldered scraper (Whitehead 1988; Jacobi & Pettit 2000). This was followed by the discovery of a Lower Palaeolithic handaxe picked up during a *Time Team* programme in 1998. None of the tools were recorded *in situ* and must therefore be assumed to be derived from earlier deposits (in the case of the Lower Palaeolithic much earlier deposits) and transported by glacial or fluvial processes.

In the vicinity of the two fields surveyed in 2003 the archaeology is dated to more recent periods. There have been two major investigations in fields adjacent to those in question (Fig. 2). The first is within the confines of a former Huntsmans Quarry. This site recorded human activity from the Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic onwards. Excavations also revealed a ring ditch and several pits that were dated to the Late Neolithic/Beaker period. A number of, potentially associated, sub-rectangular enclosures were also recorded and given a Late Bronze Age date. This period of activity also recorded a large complex of post holes and substantial pits or waterholes which contained significant quantities of well preserved domestic debris. This activity covered the entire area investigated and there is little evidence of Iron Age and Roman activity bar alterations in the field patterns. The *Time Team* investigations in a field north of the Huntsmans quarry dated a small enclosure to the Middle Iron Age and a larger series of enclosures to the Late Iron Age and Roman periods. There is also a well-defined cropmark enclosure and ditched trackway to the south that may be of Iron Age or Roman date (WSM 212).

Two Anglo-Saxon cemeteries were recorded at Beckford in the 1950s, whilst at Aston Mill a *grubenhaus* represented the first rural settlement of this type to be recorded in the county, one has since been recorded north-west of Aston Mill. From the later Saxon and Medieval period onwards evidence for occupation becomes increasingly abundant. Late Saxon boundaries are still visible today as modern parish boundaries and evidence for more intensive agricultural practices, in the form of ridge and furrow survives extensively throughout the parish.

6. Objective

The objective of the surface collection survey was to provide information to help determine the nature, extent, character and date of any potential below-ground archaeological features on the site.

7. Methodology

Initially a 100m baseline was created from the Southwest corner of field 1 and surveyed into the national grid. From this baseline, 20 x 20m grids were laid in a south-easterly direction across the field. Each 20m interval on the base line was labelled with a letter (Figs 2;3;6). These were designated transects that were walked in 20m stints. In Field 2 a similar methodology was followed but as this was a larger field the size of the transects were increased to 25m. Modern artefacts, including brick and tile, were not collected, but their presence was noted. All other material was collected. A metal detectorist (Dean Crawford) was also employed to survey the fields at the same time.

Both fields had been ploughed and sown with a crop of winter wheat prior to the fieldwalking, which had just begun to sprout. Conditions underfoot were generally good and the weather conditions were dry and clear, conditions therefore suitable for fieldwalking.

8. Results

Metal Detecting Finds (*Dean Crawford*)

Metal detecting was carried out alongside fieldwalkers on both fields. Field 1 in the morning and Field 2 in the afternoon. Conditions were very good for metal detecting surface finds and quite a few finds were made. No Iron Age material was recovered, and very little in the way of Roman finds although one coin was found on the second field and a few sherds of Severn Valley Ware were collected from both fields. Medieval finds comprised the majority of the more interesting finds made. It was also observed that a metal detector had very recently been used on the first field prior to our survey although only three 'dig holes' were noted, two of which still contained an iron horse shoe and plough shear.

Finds and locations as follows:

Field 1:

1. Cut longcross half penny of Henry III, class 5c. struck at London between **1251** and **1272** [SO 93489 36551].
2. Unidentified copper alloy artefact (incomplete) of medieval date or earlier [SO 93486 36556].
3. Royal Marines artillery button [SO 93500 36502].
4. George III halfpenny, poor condition [SO 93508 36516].
5. Medieval copper alloy strap end buckle [SO 93666 36650].
6. George III penny **1936** [SO 93622 36631].
7. Edward I farthing, class 6-7 of London. Withers type 16, was struck between **1291** and **1294** AD [SO 93624 36595].
8. Pewter whistle 19thC [SO 93590 36595].

Field 2:

1. Pot repair, possibly roman [SO 94109 36967].
2. Pewter whistle 19thC [SO 94206 37032].
3. Farm Token - Richard Guilding Kemerton [SO 94099 37080].
4. Cut short-cross halfpenny of King John **1199** - **1216**, too worn to precisely identify the mint but it is class 5 or 6 and the moneyer is RAVF (probably London) [SO 94350 36982].
5. Roman coin... Constantine II, Radiate AE3, **323** - **324**, London, Officina 1. CONSTANT_INVS IVN N C Radiate, draped, cuirassed bust left. BEAT . TRA_N . QLITAS Altar inscribed VOT | IS | XX, surmounted by globe with + pattern and pellets along the base of the globe, *** above. PLON in exergue [SO 94287 36955].

9. Artefact recovery policy

All artefacts from the area of fieldwalking were retrieved by hand and retained in accordance with the Service manual (CAS 1995 as amended).

Method of analysis

All finds were recorded by grid square and transect number, examined and a primary record was made on a Microsoft Access 2000 database. Artefacts were identified, quantified and, where possible, dated.

Pottery was examined under x20 magnification and recorded by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by the service (Hurst and Rees 1992).

Artefactual analysis

A summary of the artefacts recovered can be seen in table F1 below. The pottery assemblage retrieved from the fieldwalking (fields 1 and 2) ranges from the Roman period to the modern, with the majority dating from the post-medieval and modern period (82.9%). While the post-medieval – modern assemblage exhibited generally good preservation, the Roman, early medieval and medieval fabrics exhibited various levels of abrasion.

Ceramic building material such as brick and tile formed the second largest material group with a total of 76 fragments retrieved. This material was mainly attributed to modern building materials from the 18th to 20th century while two fragments were identified as medieval.

Pottery constituted 63.9% of the assemblage. Sherds were identified and grouped by fabric (see table F2 below). The majority of the sherds were undiagnostic but could be dated between the 2nd and 20th centuries on the basis of fabric type.

In addition 8 pieces of vessel glass were retrieved and were identified as bottle glass from various modern types. Other finds included a fragment of cast iron, a piece of copper slag, one piece of flint and another of limestone. Two fragments of animal bone and a bent aluminium spoon were also recovered.

Discussion of the Artefacts

Lithics:

The worked flint is extremely varied in its appearance. The local geology of the region means that there is a large amount of quartzite and patinated 'drift' flint lying on the surface of the fields (most notably field 1) probably derived from the Oadby till of the Anglian glaciation, before finally coming to rest in reworked deposits attributed to the

Late Glacial Maximum (LGM) the general age offered for the terrace upon which the flints lie. Some flint is deeply patinated and has the appearance of poor quality drift flint, of which one struck chunk is a good example. The difference in flint colouration varies from deep patination right through to the lustrous black of good quality flint. This also shows that with local flint being of such poor quality, raw material may have been brought in from elsewhere to be worked. There is also one piece of burnt 'mahogany' flint (a broken flake D3).

The discussion below is a summary of the finds and associated location by period. Where possible, dates have been allocated based on the evidence recorded and the importance of individual finds commented upon as necessary.

Field 1 (WSM 33525) (Figs. 3 & 5)

Prehistoric (Fig. 4)

Twelve humanly worked flints were recovered during the surface collection survey. The major finds include a Mesolithic blade core, with working apparent on just one side. The core was a piece of poor quality flint, patinated to a light brown colour. Alongside this, a 'retouched flint' piece made from a corticated flake had no signs of patination. There was also a number of broken flakes, a corticated thumbnail scraper and a broken blade which represents the most intriguing find. It is lightly patinated but due to its break is fairly undiagnostic, although it is possible it could be of Upper Palaeolithic date.

Roman

Roman pottery and possible tile were recovered during the fieldwalking, all of which were heavily abraded suggesting an extensive period of surface exposure and continuous damage from ploughing.

In total 11 sherds of Roman pottery, including 2 rim sherds, were recovered. It was not possible to identify any forms, so the pottery has been dated by fabric type only. Of the 11 sherds, 7 were of Severn Valley ware (fabric 12) dating from the mid 1st – 4th century. Two sherds were undecorated but could be identified as Oxfordshire red and brown colour-coated ware (fabric 29) dating from the 3rd – 4th century. The final two sherds were difficult to place within the fabric series due to their small size but exhibited traits that would place them as either fabric 12 or 29.

Medieval

Only two artefacts were identified as medieval in date. These consisted of a fragment of Malvernian roof tile (fabric 3, 14th -15th century) and a piece of copper speckled glazed pottery with traces of white slip decoration. This sherd can only be placed within the broad fabric grouping of miscellaneous medieval wares (fabric 99).

Post-medieval

The post-medieval assemblage was composed of 19 fragments evenly distributed across the search area. All sherds were small in size but in good condition. Few forms were identifiable so dating was derived from fabric type. Four different fabrics were identified. The most common fabric was red sandy ware (fabric 78.1), constituting 66.6% of the post medieval ceramics. The others were fairly evenly represented by fabrics of Nottingham stoneware (81.3), oxidized glazed Malvernian ware and post-medieval buff wares (91). A broad dating covering these fabrics can be given of 16th – 18th century manufacture.

A piece of post-medieval roof tile was also recovered and identified as fabric 2C datable to between the late 15th -early 17th century.

Modern

Modern pottery and ceramic building material comprised the largest percentage of finds recovered in field 1 (61.8%). Seventeen sherds of modern pottery were recovered and quantified by fabric only. These constituted five sherds of miscellaneous late stoneware (fabric 81.4); six sherds of porcelain (fabric 83); five sherds of modern stone china (fabric 85) and one sherd of miscellaneous modern ware (fabric 101).

A large quantity of roof tile fragments was included in the modern assemblage (38 fragments). Other materials identified as modern included brick fragments, a piece of cast iron, copper slag and pieces of field drain.

The good condition and broad dispersal across the site of finds suggests that the modern assemblage was also the result of manuring or waste discard.

Field 2 (WSM 33526)(Fig. 6)

Prehistoric

Flints recovered from this field amount to one broken lightly patinated flake, with evidence of some retouch. A general late Prehistoric date (Neolithic to Iron Age is assumed).

Roman

In total, 11 sherds of Roman pottery, including 2 rim sherd fragments, were recovered. It was not possible to identify any forms so the pottery has been dated by fabric type only. Of the 11 sherds 9 were of Severn Valley Ware (fabric 12) dating from the mid 1st – 4th century. The remaining two sherds were one each of Malvernian metamorphic (fabric 3, 1st -3rd century) and wheelmade Malvernian Ware (fabric 19, late 2nd-4th century).

Early medieval

The assemblage contained only one sherd of early medieval pottery (field 2, grid M5). It was undiagnostic of form but identified as Cotswolds unglazed ware (fabric 57).

Medieval

Five sherds of medieval pottery were identified within the field 2 assemblage. Two were of oxidized glazed Malvernian Ware (fabric 69) and one of Malvernian unglazed ware (fabric 56) datable to the 12th -14th century. The remaining two were of unknown type but attributable to the medieval period by fabric (miscellaneous medieval ware, fabric 99).

A single abraded fragment of Malvernian roof tile (fabric 3) was also recovered but can only be loosely dated to the 13th - 16th century.

Post-medieval

The post-medieval assemblage was composed of 43 recovered fragments evenly distributed across the search area. All sherds were small in size but in good condition. Few forms were identifiable so dating was derived from fabric type. Four different pottery fabrics were identified. The most common fabric was red sandy ware (fabric 78.1), constituting 54.8% of the post-medieval ceramics from field two. Other fabrics recovered were; oxidized glazed Malvernian Ware (fabric 69, 17sherds), post-medieval buff wares (fabric 91, 5 sherds) and a single sherd of Westerwald stoneware (fabric 81.2). A broad dating covering these fabrics can be given of 16th – 18th century manufacture.

Modern

Modern pottery finds recovered consisted of 50 sherds, with the majority (35 sherds) being of modern stone china (fabric 85). Three sherds of miscellaneous modern wares (fabric 101), five sherds of porcelain (fabric 83) and five sherds of miscellaneous stoneware (fabric 81.4) could also be attributed to the modern period.

Other finds from the modern assemblage included 28 fragments of modern roof tile and brick, bottle glass (8 shards), and a small aluminium spoon of salt cellar size.

Significance

A scant episodic use of the landscape during the prehistoric period is suggested by the small flint assemblage, with a number of finds dating from different periods in late prehistoric Britain. There is little to suggest any basic contemporaneity within the lithics assemblage.

The examination of all ceramic and other finds, alongside the results of the quantification indicate that there is no evidence for significant on-site activity from the Roman through to the modern period. All finds, in the absence of distinct concentrations and in light of known settlement activity in the region, appear to be the result of manuring or the discard of general rubbish. The good condition of the finds from the post-medieval through to

modern period also suggests that the fields have not been intensively ploughed over the last 200 years.

Blade Core	Blade	Flake	Waste Flake	Scraper	Worked Flint	Struck Chunk	Misc.
C3	I1	D3	G5	I1	O5	C3	J4
		F2	M8				M0
		H4 (field 2)					O3

Table L1: Lithic artefacts recovered during the surface collection survey.

Field	Material	Type	Total	Weight (g.)
1	Ceramic building material	Field drain	5	122
1	Ceramic building material	Concrete	1	128
1	Stone	Limestone	1	134
1	Roof tile	Medieval	1	45
1	Roof tile	Modern	38	1368
1	Brick/tile	Modern	1	3
1	Copper	Slag	1	4
1	Iron	Cast iron pipe	1	92
1	Pottery	Roman	11	33
1	Pottery	Medieval	1	21
1	Pottery	Post-medieval	19	215
1	Pottery	Modern	17	293
2	Aluminium	Spoon	1	4
2	Bone	Animal	2	3
2	Stone	Flint	1	1
2	Roof tile	Medieval	1	33
2	Roof tile	Post-medieval	1	36
2	Roof tile	Modern	24	422
2	Brick	Modern	4	44
2	Glass	Bottle	8	86
2	Pottery	Roman	11	40
2	Pottery	Saxon	1	4
2	Pottery	Medieval	5	24
2	Pottery	Post-medieval	43	564
2	Pottery	Modern	50	364

Table F1: Quantification of fieldwalking assemblage by field.

Field	Fabric name	Fabric	Total	Weight (g)
1	Miscellaneous modern wares	101	1	9
1	Severn Valley Ware	12	7	26
1	Severn Valley or Oxfordshire red/brown colour coated Ware	12/29	2	3
1	Oxfordshire red/brown colour coated Ware	29	2	4
1	Oxidized glazed Malvernian Ware	69	2	29
1	Red sandy ware	78.1	12	112
1	Nottingham stoneware	81.3	1	9
1	Miscellaneous late stoneware	81.4	5	215
1	Porcelain	83	6	34
1	Modern stone china	85	5	35
1	Post-medieval buff wares	91	4	65
1	Miscellaneous medieval wares	99	1	21
2	Miscellaneous modern wares	101	3	6
2	Severn Valley Ware	12	9	31
2	Wheelthrown Malvernian Ware	19	1	3
2	Malvernian metamorphic	3	1	6
2	Malvernian unglazed Ware	56	1	3
2	Cotswold unglazed Ware	57	1	4
2	Oxidized glazed Malvernian Ware	69	17	108
2	Red sandy ware	78.1	23	414
2	Westerwald stoneware	81.2	1	2
2	Miscellaneous late stoneware	81.4	5	211
2	Porcelain	83	6	16
2	Modern stone china	85	35	129
2	Post-medieval buff wares	91	5	48
2	Miscellaneous medieval wares	99	2	15

Table F2: Quantification of assemblage fabrics.

10. Conclusions

The archaeological information recovered from fields 1 (WSM 33525) and 2 (WSM 33526) compares well with other evidence from across the parish. There is slight evidence covering all periods from the Neolithic to Modern, excluding the Iron Age. This suggests that at various times throughout the last five thousand years there have been settlements or communities in the vicinity of the area surveyed. There is little to suggest that there was any settlement sites within the fields themselves, although we know there were settlements close by. Two lithic finds, the Mesolithic core and the blade of possible Upper Palaeolithic date, represent evidence of the area being used by earlier Hunter-Gatherers after the end of the last Ice Age and before the advent of agricultural societies in the Country. It is unfortunate that no conclusive evidence was found of Lower and Middle Palaeolithic visitors to the area, especially when it is well documented in the past. With little direct evidence of settlements from any periods it is perhaps likely that it was originally an area of woodland surrounding areas of settlement. This seems somewhat appropriate as it is due to return to that status in the near future.

11. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was organised by Alex Lang and David Keen from the Shotton Project, Darren Miller and Robin Jackson from WHEAS and Nicky Gooch from S.W.A.G. Special thanks go to Nicky Gooch and the members of S.W.A.G. for participating alongside students from The University of Birmingham and University College Worcester. The finds were processed by Tim Evans and Mark Kincey and identified by Alex Lang, Dean Crawford, Robin Jackson and Lawrence Barfield. Figures were prepared by Alex Lang and Bryony Ryder. This report was kindly edited by Kirsty Nichol.

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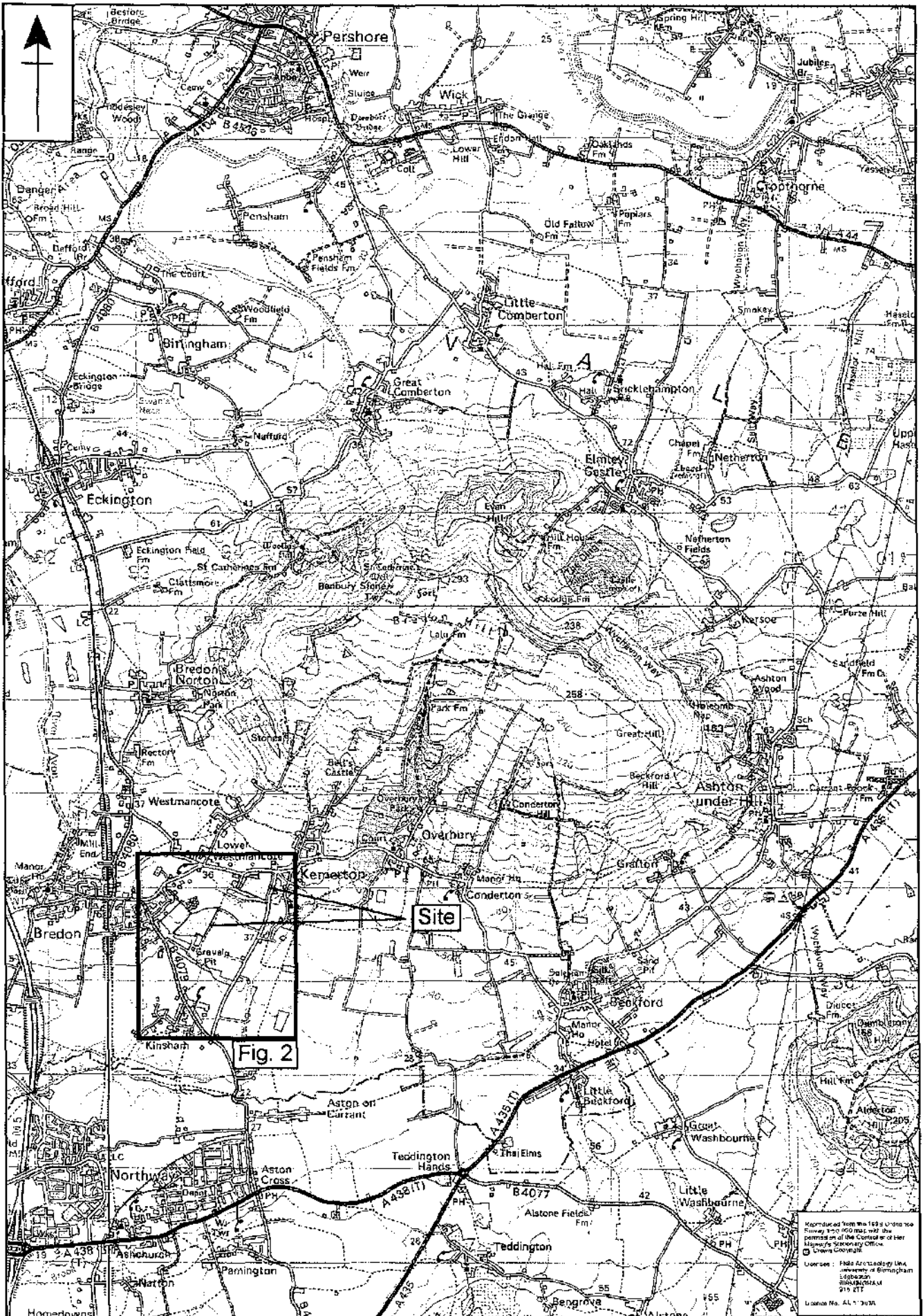


Fig. 1: The location of Fields 7486 (WSM 33525) and 6063 (WSM 33526) in a wider geographical context.

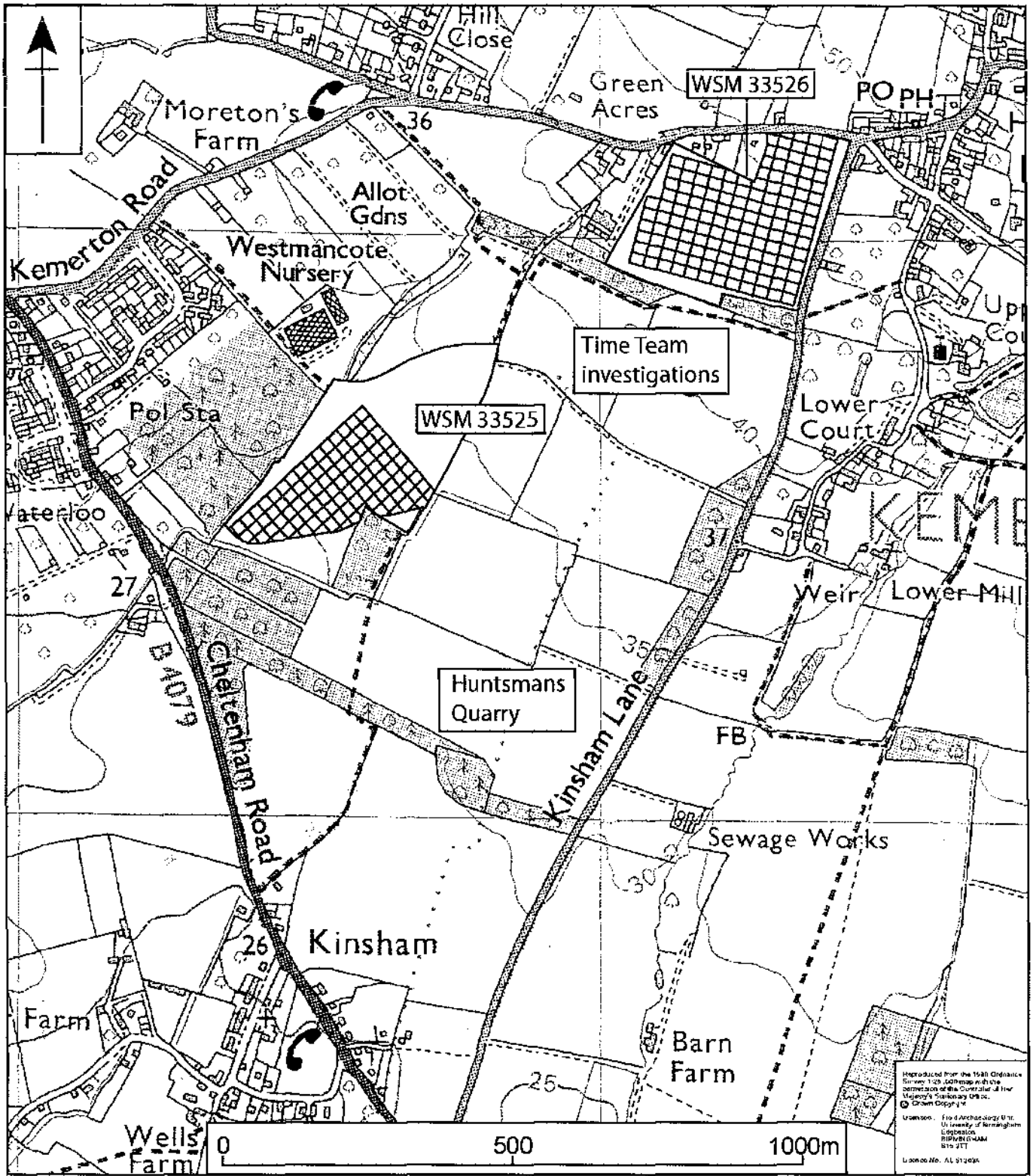


Fig. 2: The two fields covered by the surface collection survey.

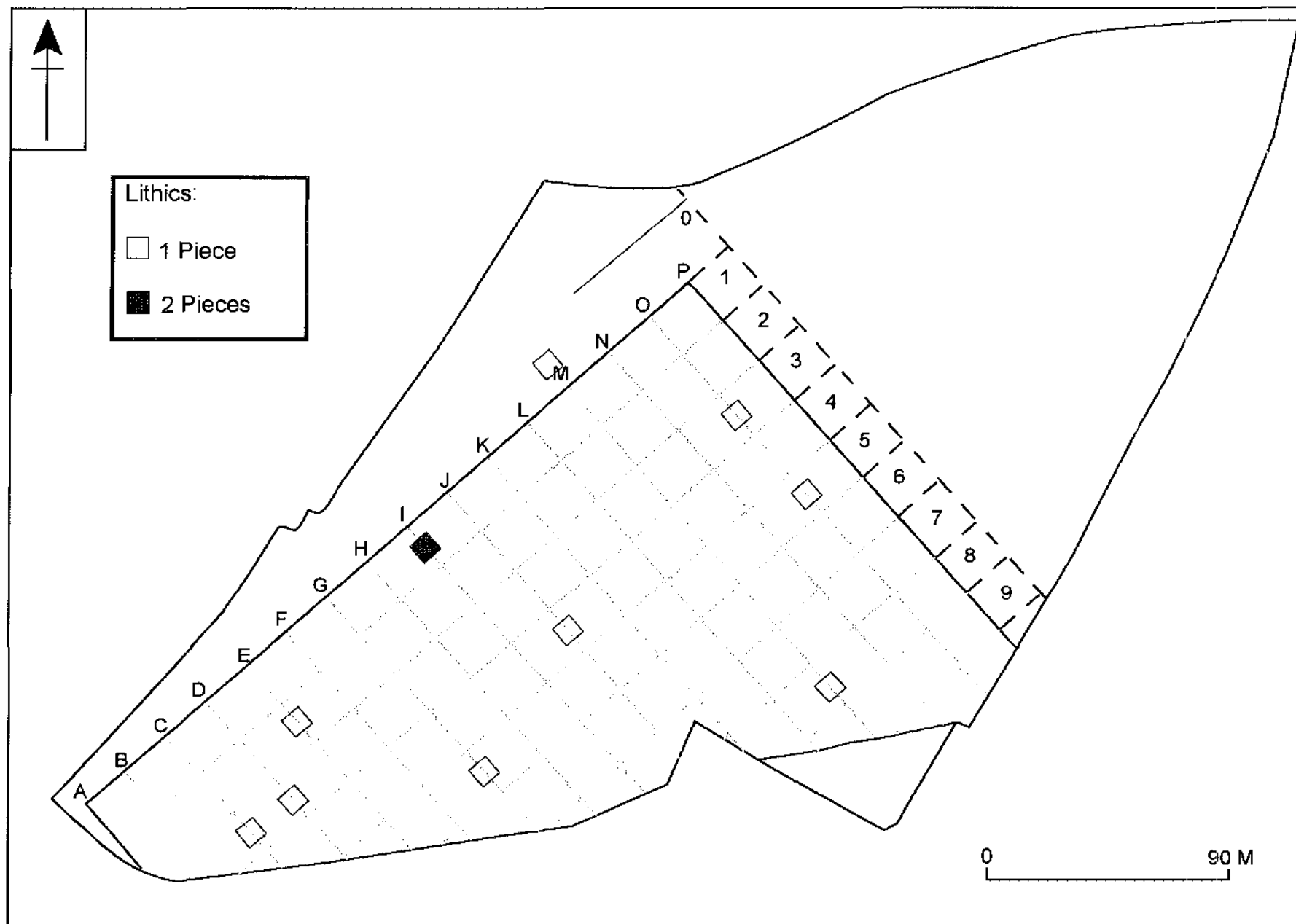


Figure 3: Field 1 (WSM 33525) (lithics), Kemerton Surface Survey 16/1/2003.

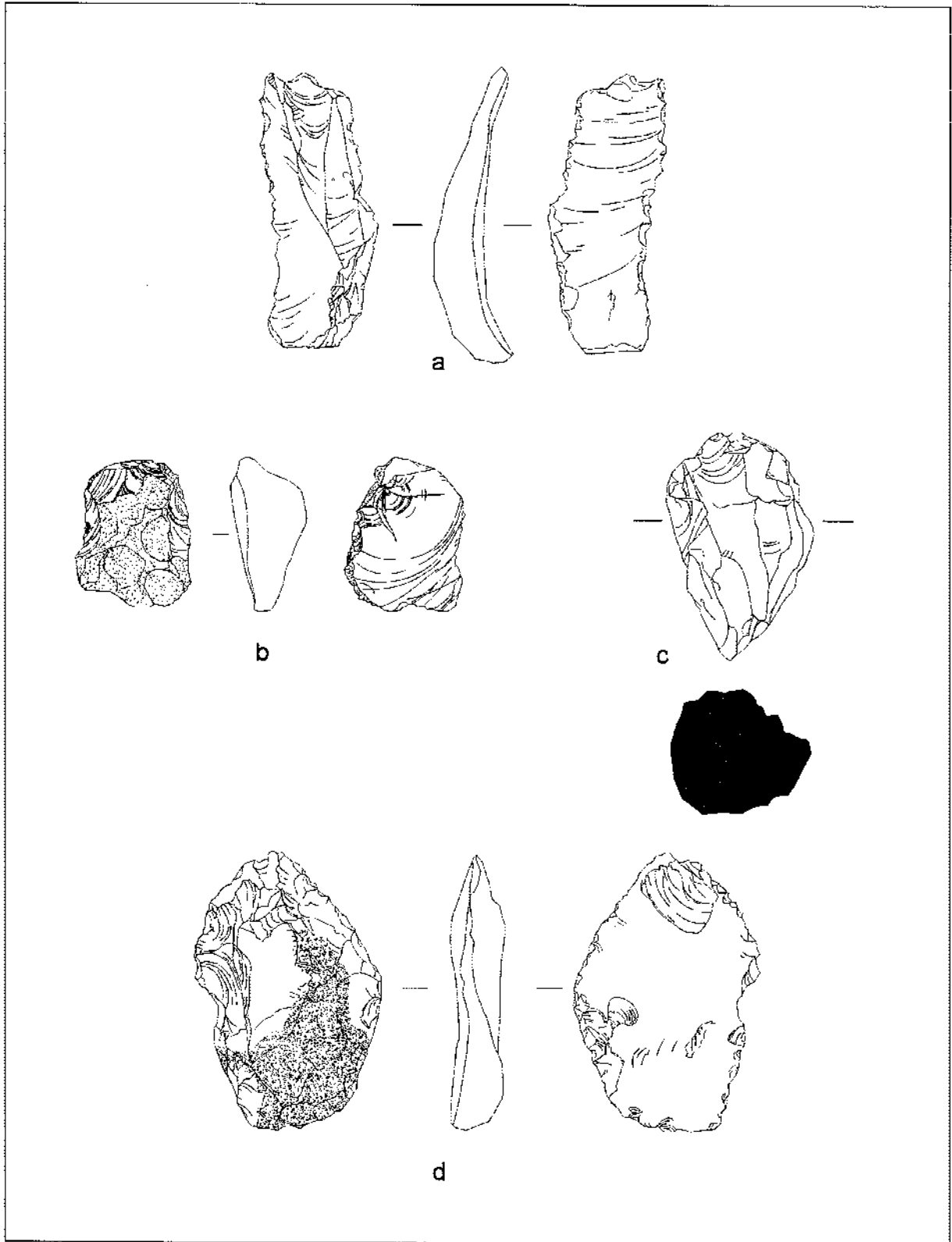


Figure 4: Lithics finds from field 1.
(a. blade; b. thumbnail scraper; c. microlithic core; d. retouched flint)

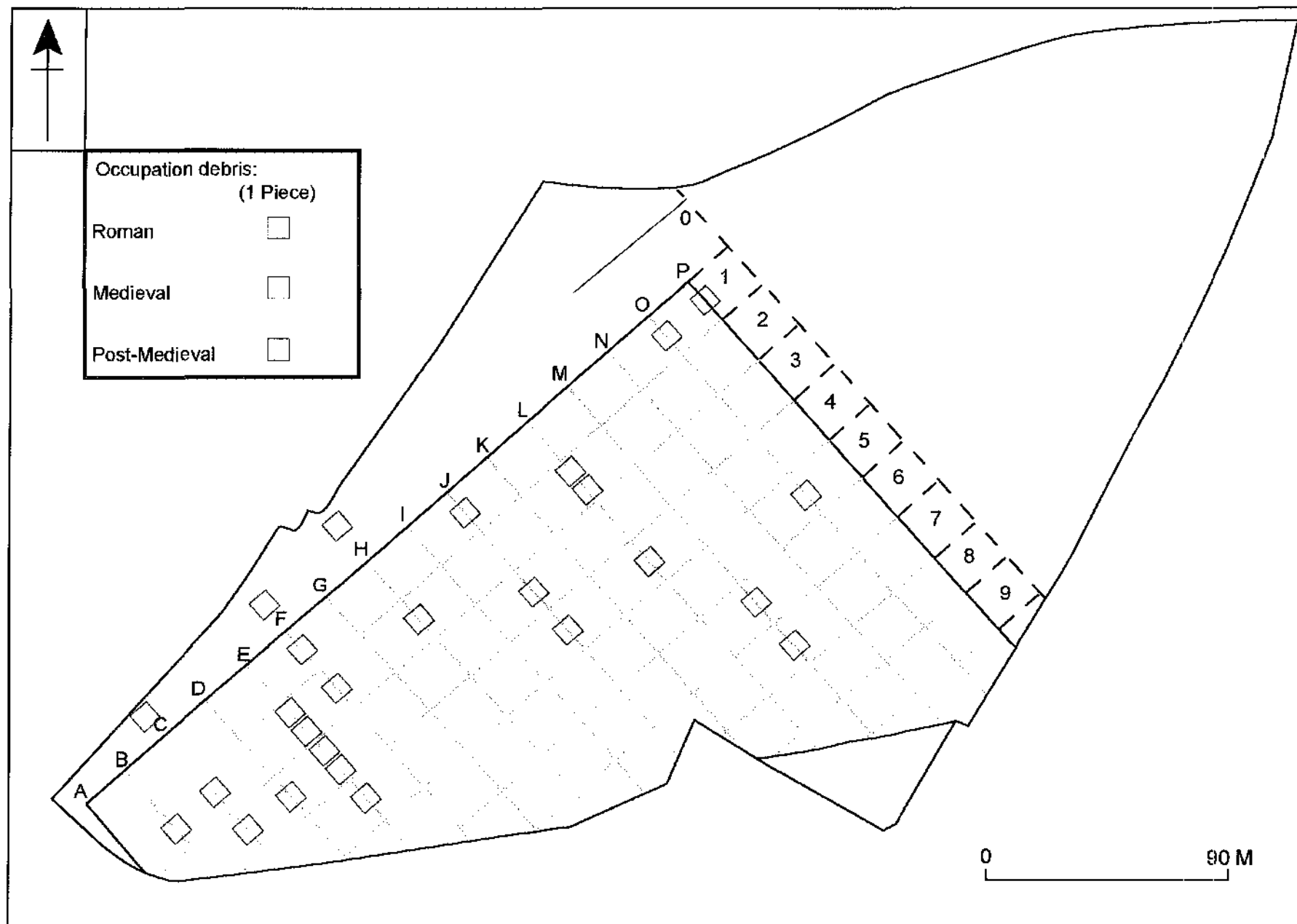


Figure 5: Field 1 (WSM 33525) (ceramic and tile sherds), Kemerton Surface Survey 16/11/2003.

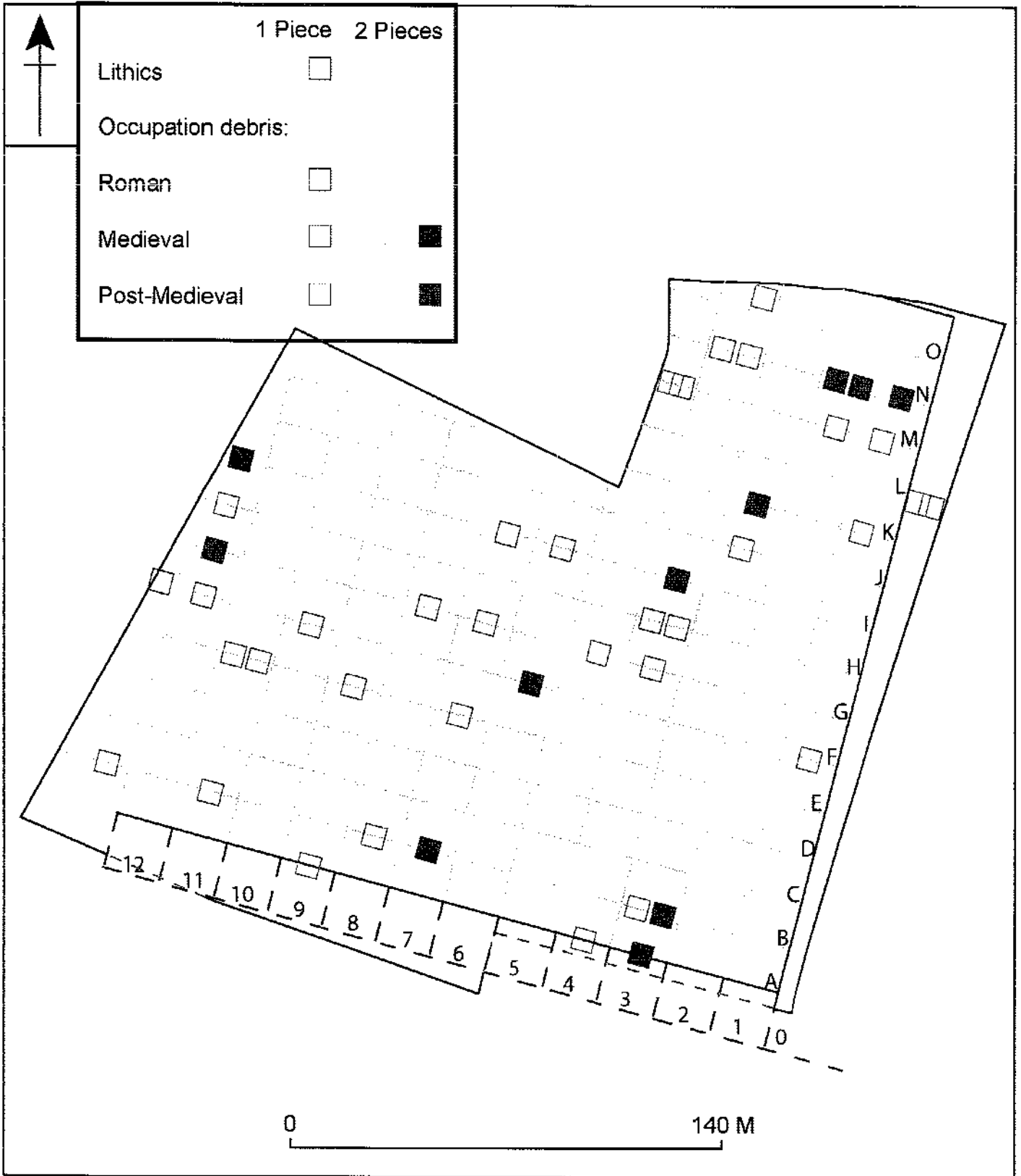


Figure 6: Field 2 (WSM 33526), Kemerton Surface Survey 16/11/2003.