Burton Dassett Southend

Part 2 Section 6

Background

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6.3 Earthwork Survey
by Nicholas Palmer

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The results of the excavations conducted at Burton Dassett Southend 1986-88, together with subsequent fieldwork (fieldwalking, and recording of the Chapel and Priest's House) are disseminated in two parts.

Part 1 is the printed volume *Burton Dassett Southend, Warwickshire: A Medieval Market Village* by Nicholas Palmer and Jonathan Parkhouse, Society-for Medieval Archaeology Monograph 44 (2022). The printed volume contains the following sections:

1. Introduction and background (aims and origin of the project, key issues, archaeological and historical contexts, fieldwork scope and methodology, summaries of earthwork survey and fieldwalking)
2. The archaeological sequence (summary of the structural evidence, ordered by phase)
3 Spatial organisation and the buildings at Southend
4 Daily life and economy at Southend
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Part 2 consists of a series of digital files in .pdf and .xlsx format, available via the Archaeological Data Service at https://doi.org/10.5284/1083492. Whilst Part 1 is a free-standing narrative, Part 2 includes the detailed descriptions and specialist analyses underpinning the printed volume. It consists of the following sections:

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6.3 Earthwork survey by Nicholas Palmer
6.4 Excavation methods by Nicholas Palmer
6.5 Dovehouse Close fieldwalking 1987 & Chapel Ground fieldwalking 1991 by Nicholas Palmer
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8.6 Lead objects by Nicholas Palmer
8.7 Ironwork by Dr Ian H Goodall, with spurs by Blanche Ellis
8.8 Bone, jet, glass and miscellaneous by Iain Soden and Nicholas Palmer
8.9 Domestic stonework by Iain Soden, John Crossling and Nicholas Palmer
8.10 Architectural stonework by Iain Soden
8.11 Stone roofing material by Nicholas Palmer
8.12 Roof tiles and ceramic artefacts by Susan Lisk
8.13 Archaeometallurgical investigation of the smithy and other evidence by Dr J G McDonnell and Alison Mills
8.14 Coal by Dr A H V Smith
8.15 Human remains by Ann Stirland
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8.17 Flint by Dr L H Barfield
8.18 Late Bronze Age pottery by Alistair Barclay
8.19 Roman and Saxon pottery by Paul Booth
8.20 Faunal remains by Julie Hamilton
8.21 Plant economy by Lisa Moffett
8.22 Radiocarbon dating of spelt wheat by Rupert Housley
8.23 Archaeomagnetic dating of hearths by Paul Linford
9. Miscellaneous data tables

The bibliography, incorporating all the works cited in Part 1 and Part 2, is also available digitally.

6.1 GEOLOGY *by John Crossling*

The solid geology in the area around Burton Dassett is restricted in stratigraphic range from Upper Triassic to Middle Jurassic, but despite this a wide variety of rock types can be found (Edmonds *et al* 1965; Old *et al* 1987) (Figure 6.1.1).

The oldest rocks, the Triassic Mercia Mudstone Group (formerly Keuper Marl), are situated in the extreme north-west of the area and form the low lying land of the Avon Valley. They consist primarily of red-brown blocky mudstones with minor green and laminated mudstones and several thin siltstones and sandstones. The group as a whole is some 200m thick in this area. The uppermost 5-7m of the sequence, made up of a pale grey green silty mudstone, is known as the Blue Anchor Formation (formerly Tea Green Marls).

The Penarth Group of the Triassic lies directly upon the Blue Anchor Formation and forms a NW-SE trending escarpment that is closely followed by the route of the Fosse Way. The Penarth Group used to be known as the Rhaetic and is now divided into three: the Westbury Formation, predominately dark grey fissile mudstones; the Cotham Member which is green-grey calcareous mudstone and the Langport Member, formerly `White Lias′, a hard porcellaneous limestone. The latter forms the cap-rock to the escarpment and has been locally exploited as a building stone and for roofing material (stone slates) since the Roman period (Besterman forthcoming).

All strata to the south and east of this escarpment are of Jurassic age and get progressively younger towards the south east. The sequence commences with strata of the Lias Group consisting of some 20m of grey mudstones which merge into the distinctive alternating succession of soft dark grey mudstones, often laminated, and harder pale grey limestones or cementstones. Collectively these rocks are known at the Blue Lias Formation and total some 45m in this area. These hard limestones have been used as a local building material since at least Roman times (Besterman forthcoming) and recently have been the primary source of lime for the county′s cement industry. They are the main building stone in the villages to the north and west of Burton Dassett, from Kineton to Bishop′s Itchington. Although they outcrop on the edge of Burton Dassett parish they have not been much used there for building.

Above the Blue Lias Formation the strata revert back into a continuous sequence of grey mudstones, locally some 100m thick, known as the Charmouth Mudstone formation. This makes up the bulk of the remaining surface strata in this area. It is typified by rich gently undulating arable farmland as it weathers to a dark clay which in turn breaks down to give thick fertile soils.

Towards the south-east of the area the Lias Group is represented by the Dyrham Formation, a sequence of soft silty or sandy mudstones. They have been used for brick making at Napton on the Hill just to the north-east of this area. This formation may have been eroded away were it not for the protection of the substantially harder Marlstone Rock Formation which has acted as a cap rock. This latter bed is the reason for the local hills and escarpments where it is found. Its resistance to weathering and erosion has left it as isolated outliers above the plateau of softer rocks of the Lias Group.

The hard Marlstone Rock Formation which forms the main cap-rock to well known local landmarks such as the Burton Dassett Hills and Edge Hill, is an iron-rich sandy limestone which is oolitic in part. This unit is only some 4m thick but it extends over a wide area

outside of Warwickshire. It is generally called an Ironstone and these local outliers form the fringe of the continuous Oxfordshire/Northamptonshire Ironstone. These stones, which are blue green when fresh but weather (rust) to a rich ochreous brown, have been extensively worked as a building stone, forming the main building stone in the Banbury region, including Burton Dassett (Wood-Jones 1963, 3-4, fig 1). They are known locally as 'Hornton Stone' after a village in North Oxfordshire which was the centre of the quarrying industry. It is still being worked for this purpose on top of Edge Hill although much of the stone is now used for decorative purposes - facings and gravestones etc. There are a series of small disused quarries along the Burton Dassett Hills which presumably provided building stone for the local villages in the medieval period and later. In Burton Dassett there are quarries at SP 39735150, SP 39885200, SP 40005133, SP 40035148 and SP 40055137; in Avon Dassett at SP 40505110, SP 40625091 and SP 40755070; and in Fenny Compton at SP 40625160, SP 40755146, SP 40925140, SP 41005127 and SP 41735052. Wood-Jones (1963, 3) implies that Burton Dassett was an important centre for quarrying, but there is no evidence of production for more than local use. The stone contains a high content of iron in the form of chamosite (iron carbonate). On the Burton Dassett Hills it was worked for iron for a period during the last century and up until just after the first world war (Tonks 1988, 232-41). Subsequent to that the price of iron dropped to such an extent that it was no longer viable to work this ore although substantial reserves remain. The extensive remains of these workings are centered at SP 39655202.

Small patches of grey mudstones and siltstones of the Whitby Mudstone Formation are found on the flanks of the highest points of the Burton Dassett Hills. This sequence is about 50m in thickness in this area and forms the slopes above the Marlstone Rock plateau. The Whitby Mudstone Formation is again capped by the harder Northampton Sand Formation which are the youngest rocks in the vicinity.

This latter formation consists of a sandy, oolitic limestone which represents the lowest unit in the area of the Inferior Oolite of the Middle Jurassic period which are characterised elsewhere by the honey coloured 'Cotswold Limestones'. The Northampton Sands are sandy limestones similar to those in the Cotswolds but locally have far higher concentrations of sand and iron and correspondingly less calcium carbonate. The Northampton Sands within the Burton Dassett area are restricted to the highest points of the Burton Dassett Hills and are consequently only 2-3m thick, although further south they reach almost 7m in thickness.

Overlying the solid geology are a sequence of drift deposits from the Quaternary period. The vast majority of these deposits are to be found in the north west quarter of the area. This is because the Jurassic escarpment formed a natural barrier first to the glaciers and later to the rivers. There is little recent work on the glacial deposits this far south in Warwickshire but from evidence at a site near Harbury it is likely that much of these deposits belong to the Wolston Formation and consist of sands gravels and clays of the Wolston Member and possibly tills of the Oadby Till Member. The few isolated patches of gravel on the Jurassic plateau have been tentatively assigned to the Dunsmore Gravel Member. There is one small patch of post- glacial river terrace material north-west of Lighthorne which is from the Wasperton Sand and Gravel Member. This material elsewhere has yielded cold climate fossils and has yielded radiocarbon dates of *c*30,000 BP. It can be up to 5m in thickness. The final superficial deposits are the recent alluviums which develop in most river valleys and tend to reflect local sources of material of both superficial and solid origin.

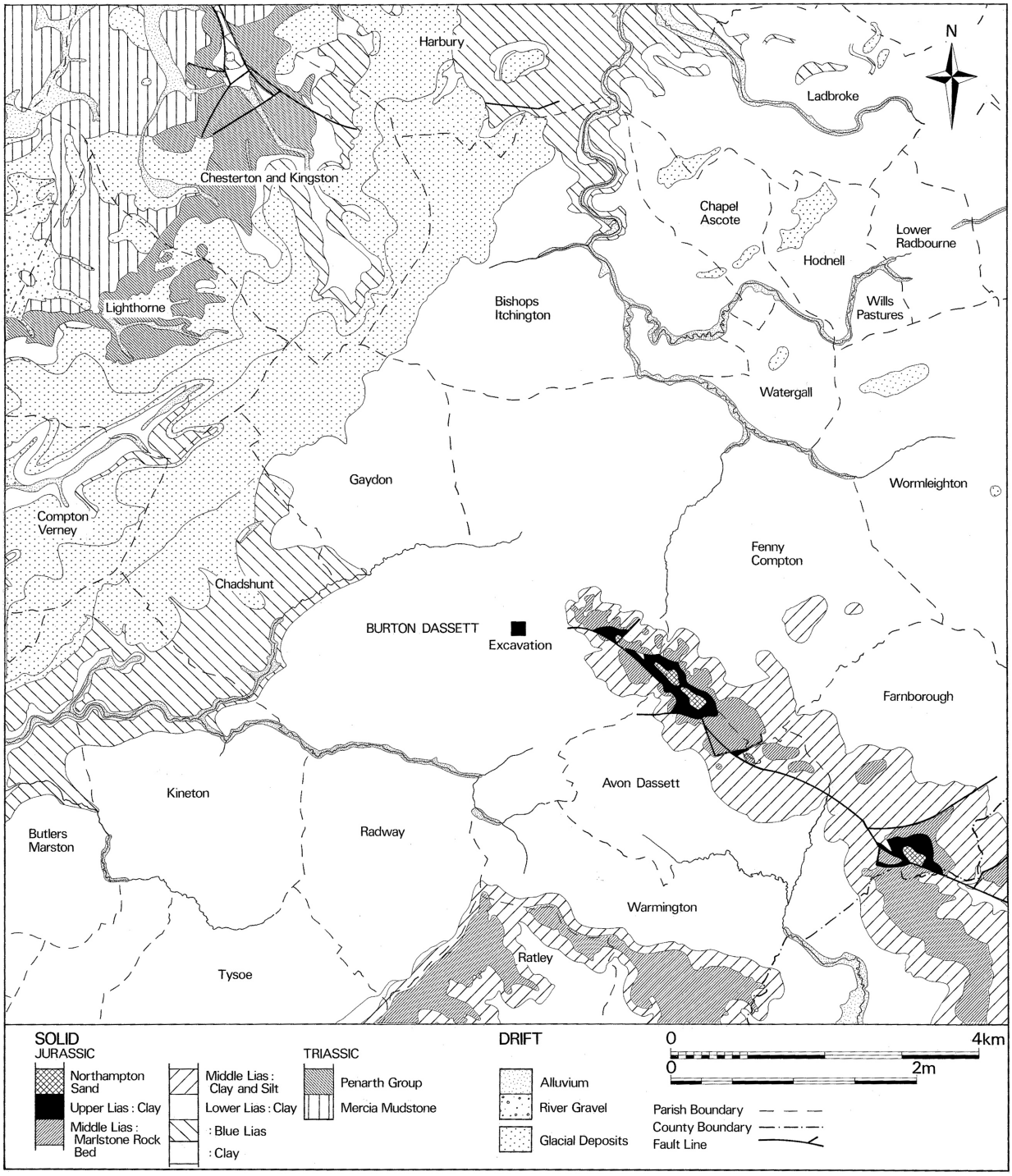

Figure 6.1.1

Geology of the Burton Dassett area (contains British Geological Survey © UKRI 2021. All Rights Reserved.
https://webapps.bgs.ac.uk/data/maps/maps.cfc?method=viewRecord&mapId=9775 and
https://webapps.bgs.ac.uk/data/maps/maps.cfc?method=viewRecord&mapId=9807)

6.2 SOILS *by Magdalen Snape*

A variety of soils exist in the Burton Dassett area, with differences in soil development being influenced mainly by relief and parent material (Ragg et al 1988; Whitfield 1974). During the excavation a survey of the soils in the vicinity of the site was carried out (Figure 2.2). A soil pit was dug in Chapel Ground to the north-west of the excavation and clear of the settlement.

Within the parish, on the upstanding areas where the ironstone of the Marlstone Rock Formation outcrops, there are brown earth soils of the Banbury Association, while on the lower-lying plain heavy, poorly drained soils of the Denchworth Association predominate (Figures 6.2.1 - 6.2.2). Each association consists of a number of soil series grouped together for the purposes of mapping.

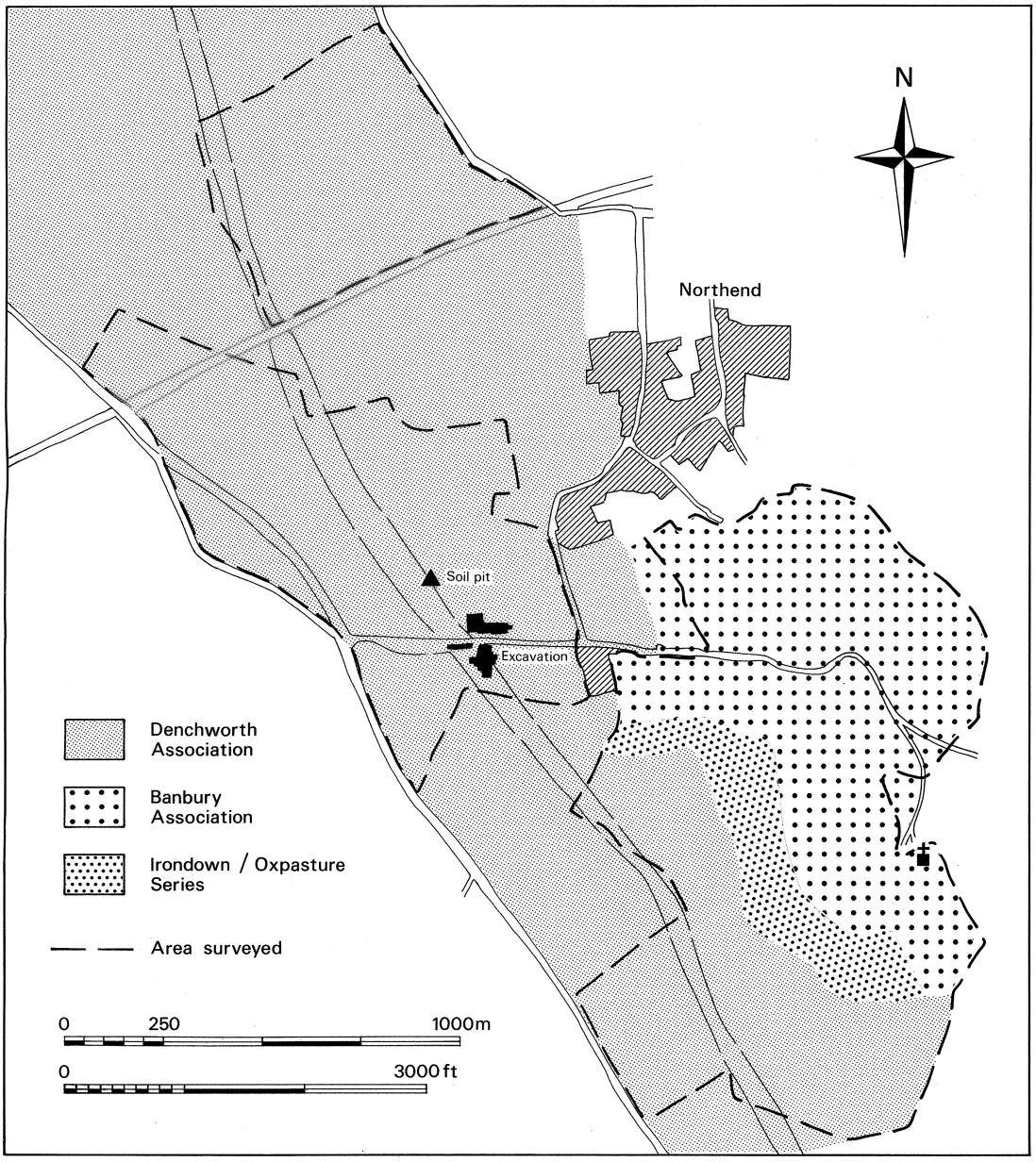

Figure 6.2.1
Soils in the vicinity of the excavation

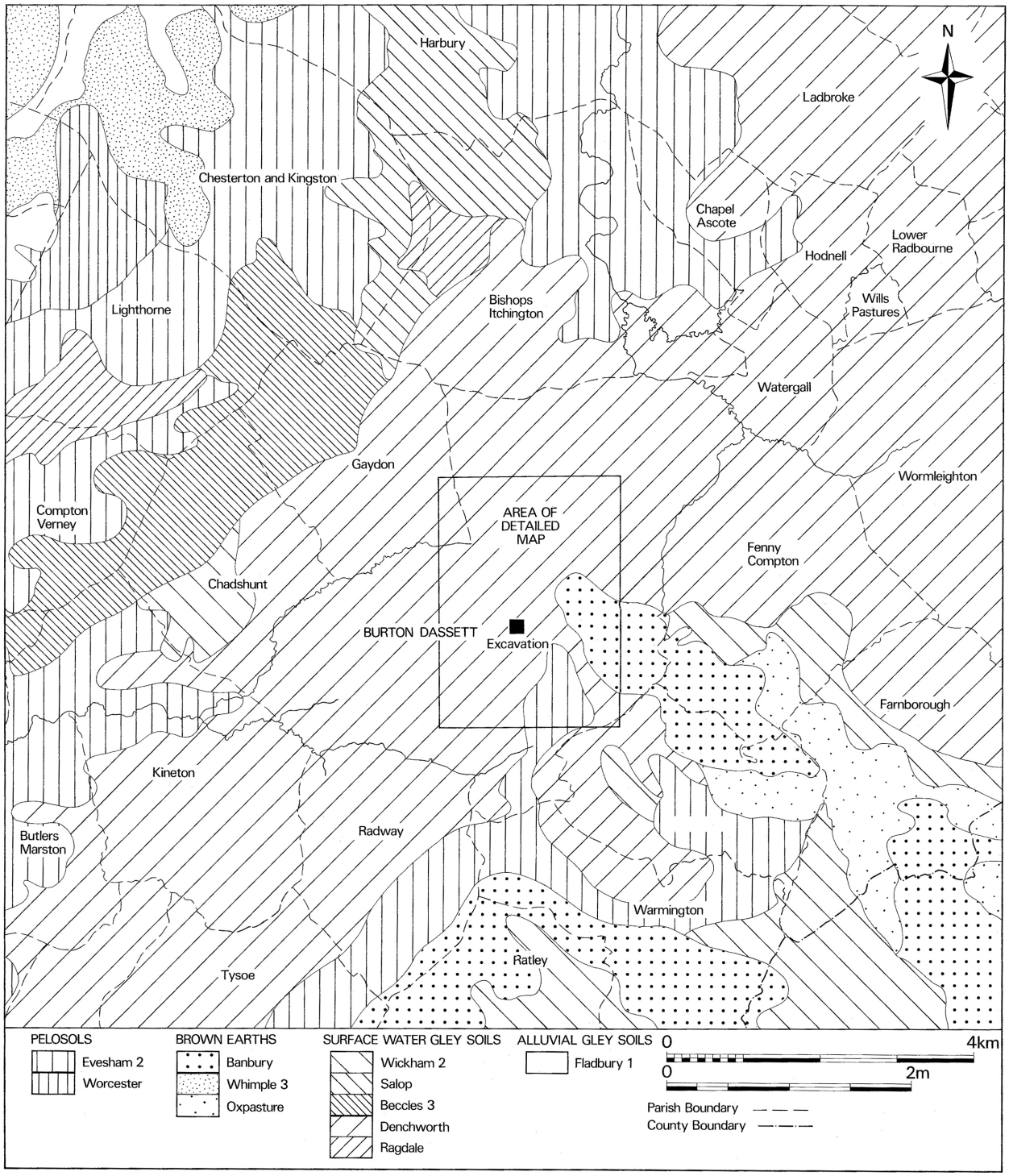

Figure 6.2.2
Soils in the Burton Dassett area

The medieval settlement of Southend and its associated field system which extended westwards from the settlement, are sited in the lowland area dominated by soils of the Denchworth Association in which the major soil series are Denchworth and Lawford series, both pelostagnogleys, or clayey, non-alluvial, seasonally waterlogged, slowly permeable

soils. Wickham series, typical stagnogleys, and Oxpasture series, stagnogleyic argillic brown earths, both with clay loam upper horizons, also occur.

The profile in a soil pit to the north-west of the excavation (Appendix A below) was closest to Wickham series, although elsewhere in the field, and in the vicinity, augered profiles were more like Denchworth series.

Denchworth, Lawford and Wickham soils are slowly or moderately permeable in the topsoil, slowly permeable at depth and waterlogged for prolonged periods in winter and in the growing season. On a scale from Class I, well-drained, to Class VI, almost permanently waterlogged they fall into Wetness Classes IV and V (Ragg *et al* 1984, 62, Table 7). Under modern conditions the soils will yield moderately good crops of grass or cereals if carefully managed and drained. Topsoils are slow to dry and prone to structural damage when wet and for this reason cultivation is best done in autumn as the land is rarely dry enough to work in spring. Timing of cultivation is vital as when wet, the soil is vulnerable to smearing and compaction; cloddy seedbeds and ploughpans can result which further impede drainage, lessen seed germination and restrict root growth. When dry the soils can be hard and difficult to cultivate. Denchworth soils poach easily especially in the troughs of ridge and furrow. This surface wetness and a weak soil bearing strength limit stocking density and shorten the length of the grazing season. The series tends to be slightly acid in the surface but the pH increases with depth and the soil may be neutral or alkaline within 1m of the surface.

Soils of the Denchworth Association extend over a wide swathe of land in the area (Figure 6.2.2) from Ladbroke to Wormleighton to Tysoe, coinciding with the Charworth Mudstone Formation clays.

In contrast, the Burton Dassett Hills to the south-east of the parish, are characterised by soils of the Banbury Association, as is Edge Hill in Ratley further south. The soils on the Burton Dassett Hills, formed on steep slopes, are subject to active erosion and soil movement particularly where vegetation is sparse and there is abundant evidence of terraces, soil slips and debris fans. The soils are shallow, well drained and in some cases calcareous due to the release of calcium from the outcropping ironstone.

The principal soils of the Banbury Association are Banbury and Tadmarton series, both ferritic brown earths. The main associated soils are Irondown series, stagnogleyic argillic brown earths, and there are also patches of Harlestone and Oxpasture soils.

Harlestone soils are shallow, having limestone within 300mm of the surface and a coarse, loamy texture. They are found on the steepest slopes of the Hills and on rock outcrops in conjunction with soils of the Moreton series. Moreton soils are typical brown calcareous earths. They are mapped in the Evesham 1 Association north of the Burton Dassett area but were too small in extent on the Hills to be separated from the Banbury Association.

On the gentler slopes to the south east, soils become deeper giving Banbury and Tadmarton profiles. These series are both stony, well drained, fine and coarse, loamy, ferritic brown earths, resting on shattered ironstone at 500-700mm depth. They fall into Wetness Class I: water drains rapidly into the porous bedrock and downslope and no drainage is necessary apart from occasional subsoiling to break up ploughpans on arable land. Free drainage promotes leaching and the soils can become more acid as the effect of the calcareous parent material decreases with increased depth. Most of the land is arable, mainly under autumn sown cereals and ley grassland with potatoes and some sugar beet on less stony

land. The Burton Dassett Hills themselves are under permanent pasture due to the limiting factors of steep slopes, stoniness and shallow soils.

Banbury and Tadmarton soils are slightly droughty for most crops and moderately droughty for grass. Soil water reserves are usually adequate for cereals but are insufficient for satisfactory grass growth and yields are reduced. The intensity of pasture use is not influenced by poaching risk, as on the heavy soils of the plain, but by moisture reserves which are insufficient to maintain growth in most summers. These dry soils allow the outwintering of stock and they warm up early in the spring allowing early sowing and rapid establishment of arable crops.

On the south-western slopes of the hills there is an area of Irondown/Oxpasture soils between the Denchworth and Banbury Associations. These soils could have been mapped in either association and form a merging boundary between the two. Irondown and Oxpasture series are both stagnogleyic argillic brown earths, ie brown soils with a clay-enriched, slowly permeable subsoil. The slowly permeable subsoils impede downward drainage and topsoils become waterlogged after prolonged periods of winter rainfall. Irondown soils, for example, fall into Wetness Class III. Surface water flows laterally above the clay subsoil and there are springs in places around the Hills.

Further along the ridge to the south-east there are soils of the Oxpasture Association covering the Dyrham Formation clays. Here the fine loamy over clayey Oxpasture series, stagnogleyic argillic brown earths, predominate with the similar but wetter Wickham series, typical stagnogley, locally extensive. There are also Holdenby, typical argillic pelosols, and Denchworth soils. Oxpasture and Holdenbury soils have slowly permeable subsoils and even after drainage are seasonally waterlogged. The soils are slightly acid in the surface when unlimed but are often neutral or slightly alkaline within 1m.

With efficient underdrainage and good management, moderately good yields of grass and cereals can be obtained on these soils. Autumn sown crops, mainly wheat barley and oilseed rape, are preferred as cultivations need to be carefully timed to avoid structural damage. Use of grassland is governed by droughtiness in summer and poaching risk, both of which lower the stocking density and restrict the grazing season. Oxpasture soils have only minor limitations to pasture use but Holdenby, Wickham and Denchworth soils are easily damaged.

Covering the Charmouth Mudstone Formation clays on the north-east and south-east slopes of the escarpment are soils of the Wickham 2 Association. This consists mainly of fine loamy over clayey, typical stagnogleys of the Wickham series, but Denchworth soils are common. Stagnogleyic argillic brown earths of the Oxpasture series and Evesham series calcareous pelosols also occur. Wickham and Denchworth soils are slightly acid but Evesham soils are neutral to slightly alkaline. Over much of the association the land is used to grow cereals and ley grassland, with oilseed rape providing an alternative break crop. There is little opportunity for spring cultivation so most cereals are autumn sown. Slight droughtiness may reduce cereal yields. The soil structure is easily damaged when wet, and cultivations need to be carefully timed. Grass yields are restricted by low soil moisture reserves and the grazing period is limited in spring and autumn due to the risk of poaching.

Soils of the Evesham 2 Association are found in two areas, to the south of Burton Dassett over Charmouth Mudstone clays in the Warmington valley and along the lower slopes of Edge Hill further south, and over the Blue Lias Formation and Penarth Group mudstones and limestones to the north and west. The association consists mainly of Evesham series

calcareous pelosols and Denchworth soils along with Wickham and Oxpasture series. Evesham soils are slowly permeable and usually seasonally waterlogged. They are usually neutral or alkaline in reaction. Winter cereals and grass are the dominant crops, with pasture particularly on low-lying land. In recent times minimal cultivations and direct drilling have allowed large areas to be brought into regular cultivation but timing is critical. The potential grass yield is large but waterlogging and the risk of poaching reduce the grazing period. Over the Wolstonian glacial deposits to the north west of Burton Dassett, extending from Compton Verney to Harbury, the soils belong to the Beccles 3, Ragdale and Salop Associations. The Beccles 3 Association consists mainly of Beccles series typical stagnogleys and similar stagnogleyic argillic brown earths of the Ashley series. Hanslope series, a typical calcareous pelosol, is a common associate. All three have slowly permeable subsoils (Wetness Class III) and their agriculture and problems are similar to the Wickham Association. The Ragdale Association consists mainly of Ragdale series pelo- stagnogleys, developed in till which has a grey clayey matrix containing chalk stones and some lenses of fine loamy material. Other soils include Hanslope and Faulkbourne series. Crops and problems here are similar to Denchworth Association, as are those of the Salop Association which also consists mainly of stagnogley soils with slowly permeable subsoils (Wetness Class IV).

The clay soils continue further to the north-west over the Mercia Mudstone, belonging here to the Worcester Association, typical argillic pelosols (Wetness Class III), the Whimple 3 Association, fine loamy over clayey, stagnogleyic argillic brown earths (Wetness Class III), and the Fladbury Association, pelo-alluvial gley soils, clayey throughout (Wetness Class IV).

Appendix: Soil pit profile description

Grid reference: SP 38558 52104
Elevation: 104.82m Slope and aspect: West 260˚, straight Land use: Permanent grassland

0-160mm Ah
: Dark brown 10YR4/3. Mull humus-organic matter intimately mixed with mineral fraction. Friable, crumb to moderately developed, fine sub-angular blocky structure. Stoneless clay loam to clay. Abundant, fine, fibrous grass roots.

160-220mm Eg
: Greyish brown, paler than Ah. Fewer roots, faint occasional mottles. Moderate fine sub-angular blocky structure. Stoneless clay.

220-600mm
: Brown 10YR5/3 prominent ochreous 10YR5/6 yellowish brown and grey 5YR5/1 mottles, moderate medium sub-angular blocky structure, few roots, soil more compact and dense, clay.

600-790mm
: Greyish brown 10YR5/2 with prominent, abundant ochreous 10YR5/8 red mottles. Weak coarse angular blocky structure, slightly stony clay.

790-1000mm
: Grey 5YR5/1 to dark grey 5YR4/1 with abundant prominent ochreous yellow 10YR7/8 mottles. Weak coarse prismatic to massive structure, slightly stony clay.

6.3 EARTHWORK SURVEY *by Nicholas Palmer*

The earthwork remains of Burton Dassett Southend cover *c*30ha in the six modern fields surrounding the former chapel of St James, with the largest area to the north-west in the field now called Chapel Ground, but which was formerly known as Town Field (Figure 6.3.1). The earthworks were first surveyed by Bond in 1973 (Bond 1982, fig 7.3). This was a sketch survey, and, although it shows all the main features and their relationship to each other, it is not metrically accurate. A series of measured surveys of the earthworks was therefore carried out in conjunction with the excavation.

When surveyed all the fields were under pasture, with the exception of Dovehouse Close which was surveyed in 1987 after it had been ploughed for the first time in some years.

In Chapel Ground the whole strip affected by the motorway was surveyed in detail, together with the blocks of earthworks along the south and east sides of the field which seemed to represent the main areas of settlement. In these areas a 20m grid was laid out across the site and the earthworks were drawn using measuring tapes; a contour survey was also made by levelling the grid at 2m intervals. The contour survey was designed to provide an objective check on the more interpretative hachured plan. The readings from the contour survey were transferred to the Warwickshire County Council mainframe computer and then plotted out using the surveying package BIPS (with the assistance of Roy Emmerson of the County Engineer's Department). The results of the contour survey are not presented here but are available in the site archive.

The northern part of Chapel Ground and the other fields were surveyed in less detail using a Total Station instrument. The earthworks were also studied using air photographs taken between 1969 and 1989 (Cambridge University Committee AWV38-40, February 1969;, CCA10-12 (April 1978); Warwickshire Museum WAN5529/4A-6A, 12A-15A, 20A (July 1986); WAN5538/21-32, WAR5545/16-22 (April 1989); WAN5539/17-21, WAN5542/24-29 and WAR5546/3-5, 7-8 (May 1989). The most useful were those taken by Cambridge University in 1969 and 1978 (Figures 6.3.2 - 6.3.3).

Chapel Ground

The earthworks in Chapel Ground varied in character across the field. The main settlement earthworks lay to the south and east against the modern roads across the site, which seemed to follow the lines of the main medieval streets. These settlement earthworks formed a number of subrectangular blocks: one in the south-east corner to the north-west of the chapel, with a second to the north and a third to the west. To the west of the second block there was another rectangular area but this seems to have contained crofts or paddocks rather than building plots. The third block was the most regular and also one where the main excavation in Chapel Ground took place. To the west of this there was an area of more enigmatic earthworks, but which appeared to contain some building platforms. The rest of the field to the north and west contained a variety of non-settlement earthworks.

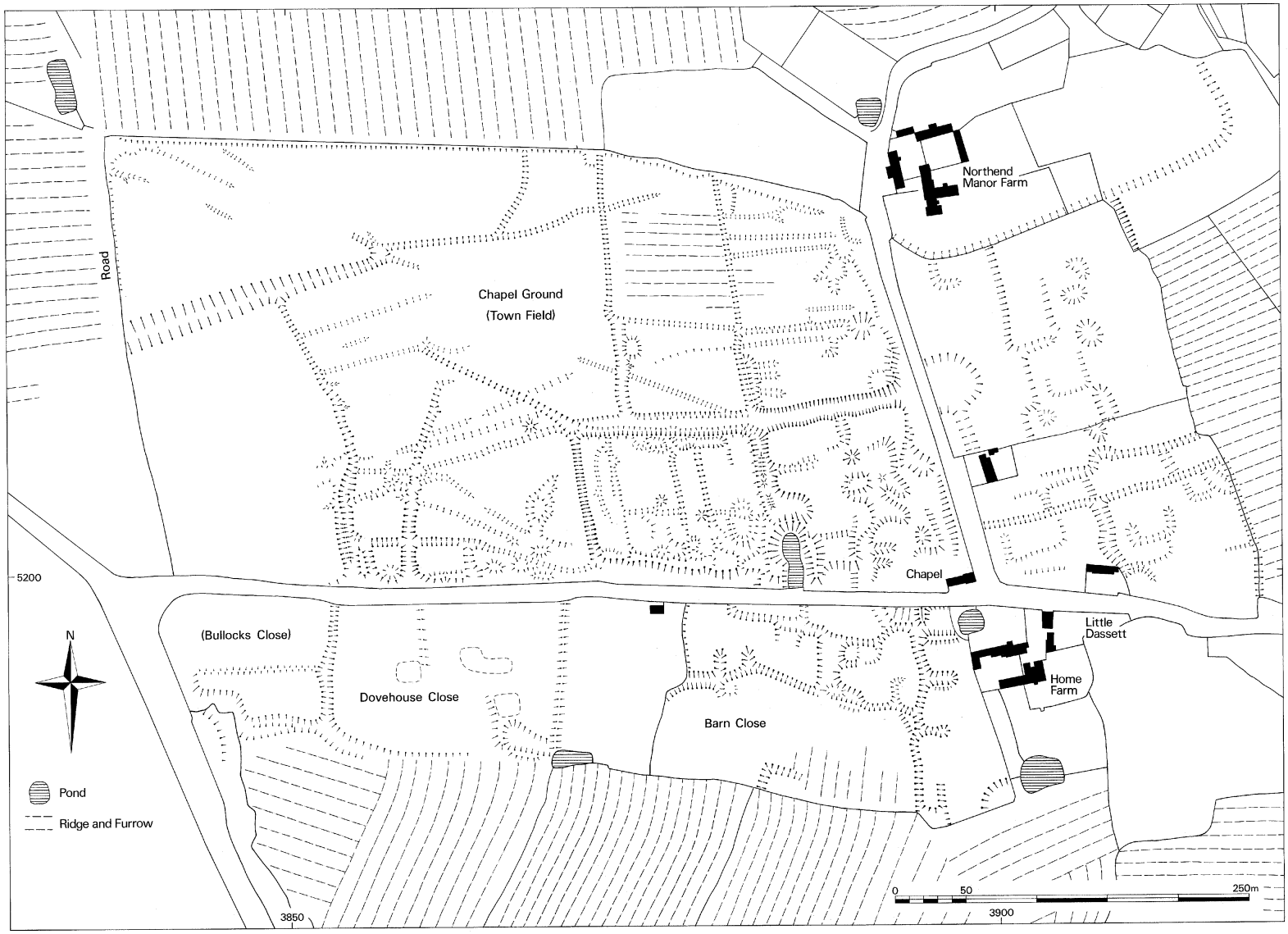

Figure 6.3.1
Earthwork Survey:
General

Figure 6.3.2
Earthworks, aerial view from north-east
(reproduced with permission of the Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography: © copyright reserved; CCA 11, August 1978)

Figure 6.3.3
Earthworks, aerial view from west
(reproduced with permission of the Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography: © copyright reserved; AWV 39, February 1969)

Figure 6.3.4
Earthwork Survey: 1 Tenements to north-west of chapel

Area north-west of chapel (Figure 6.3.4)

The subrectangular block of earthworks, measuring *c*100m east-west x *c*120m north-south, immediately to the north-west of the chapel probably represented the original core of Southend. Although the chapel itself was probably a relatively late feature in the settlement it seems to have been built in the central area.

To the north this block was bounded by a prominent east-west hollow way *c*11m wide. The hollow way was *c*0.35m deep and appeared to have had a drainage ditch along its northern edge. To the west the block was bounded by a deep linear hollow, *c*7-10m wide x *c*0.95m deep, at the south end of which was a pond. This pond was post-medieval, the spoil heaps from its construction to east and west clearly overlying the medieval earthworks. It is probable that the north-south hollow was originally a street or lane but that it had been deepened and converted into a drain when the pond was dug.

The earthworks within the block had no clear pattern and were difficult to interpret. The individual plot boundaries were not clear, although the basic arrangement appears to have been roughly rectilinear and aligned on the block boundaries. On air photographs (Figure 6.3.2) it appears that there were buildings on the east side of the block fronting the north-south road and probably others along the hollow way. There are also some probable building platforms in the centre of the block behind the frontages.

Area north of hollow way (Figure 6.3.1)

To the north of the hollow way there was another subrectangular block of earthworks, *c*150m north-south x *c*100m east-west, running along the north-south road. Its boundary to the west was formed by a ditch on the same line as that of the previous area. This block was divided into a series of east-west properties, with a continuous row of building platforms to the east fronting onto the road, although the frontage appears to have been set well back from the modern line. The tenement boundaries are unclear, being obscured by presumably post-medieval ridge and furrow which gives the block a spuriously regular appearance on the air photographs (Figures 6.3.2 - 6.3.3). The block probably contained between eight and ten tenements. In two places there are hollows immediately behind the building platforms that may represent yards. In the south-west corner of the block there was a linear hollow parallel to the boundary ditch; this, which probably ran across a number of tenements, was perhaps the result of post-medieval quarrying or earthmoving.

To the west of this block of properties there was another subrectangular block of earthworks, measuring *c*175m x *c*85m. It is possible that this western block contained crofts attached to the tenements to the east, but as only one tenement boundary appeared to run on, and that on a slightly different alignment, it is perhaps more likely that the block was divided into two larger, separate paddocks. The northern of these had east-west ridge and furrow, presumably of later date, across it. The southern paddock was flatter, apart from a slight mound on its west side. This was probably because in recent times it had served as the Northend village cricket ground. The cricket pavilion, removed by 1986, is visible on the air photograph (Figure 3.3) taken in 1969. This area was also cut by a vehicle track which ran right across the field and was probably a modern feature.

Excavated tenements (Figure 6.3.5)

On the south side of the field, to the west of the pond, there was another, parallelogram-shaped block of earthworks, measuring *c*122m east-west x *c*95m north-south. This block

contained a well defined series of north-south property boundaries delineating properties fronting the east-west road. The main excavated area in Chapel Ground ran along the south side of these properties. On the surface the block initially appeared to be divided into four tenements, two small and two large, but on excavation it emerged that there were probably originally six tenements of equal size, at least two of which were only later amalgamated. With this knowledge it is possible to see indications of the original six divisions in the surface.

To the north the block was bounded by the continuation of the east-west hollow way which was here *c*7.5m wide and *c*0.35m below the level of the properties. Along this stretch there were drainage ditches on both sides of the hollow way. The western boundary of the block was a deeper boundary ditch, *c*4.5m wide. The southern frontage was set well back from the modern road, by *c*16m to the west and *c*10m to the east.

The western tenement (A) was *c*21m wide x *c*92m long, with a prominent building platform at its south end. The eastern boundary was a ditch which turned into a slight bank to the south. Within the plot there was a shallow, irregular, north-south gully, best explained as a recent animal track.

The tenement to the east (D) appeared to be double width, *c*42m wide x *c*94m long, although it subsequently became clear that it had originally been two tenements (D1 and D2). There was a continuous building platform along the southern frontage of both tenements, with a low platform to the north on the west side of D2. To the north of this there was a shallow hollow separating slight terraces to east and west. The southern third of the tenements was divided off by an east-west ditch, forming a `toft and croft' arrangement. This ditch had a kink in the middle at the point where the original boundary between D1 and D2 would have been. On D2 just to the north of this ditch there was a subrectangular hollow, and at the north end of the tenement there was a deep hollow, 14m x 5.5m, just south of the northern boundary. Similar hollows also ran across the two plots to the east, suggesting that they were post-medieval features, perhaps the result of quarrying for soil.

To the east of tenement D2 the next property (E), which measured *c*19.5m wide x *c*97m long, had prominent boundary ditches to east and west. It also had a marked building platform along the south frontage with another projecting northwards from it on the west side. This tenement was also divided by an east-west boundary gully, on a similar line to that in tenements D1 and D2, but here the evidence was slighter. The possible quarry hollow at the north end of the tenement measured *c*14m x *c*8m. The easternmost tenement again appeared to be double width, *c*40m wide x *c*98m long. Only part of the western half was excavated (Area F), and there is no definite evidence but it is likely that it was also originally two properties. The vestiges of a boundary can in fact be seen at the northern end. There were again building platforms on the southern frontage of both properties, although they were divided by a gully, and the one to the east was obscured by a spoil heap from the post-medieval pond. On the western property there was another platform on the west side projecting north from the frontage. On the east side of the east property trampling by animals had enlarged the end of the pond hollow, cutting into the tenement and revealing the masonry foundations of an east-west building. This was well behind the frontage and was presumably an outbuilding. To the north and west there were other prominent banks and hollows that were not easy to interpret, but some of which probably represented other outbuildings. Again there were traces of an east-west ditch dividing both properties into `toft and croft', and at the north end the west property was cut by another possible quarry hollow, measuring *c*20m x *c*7m.

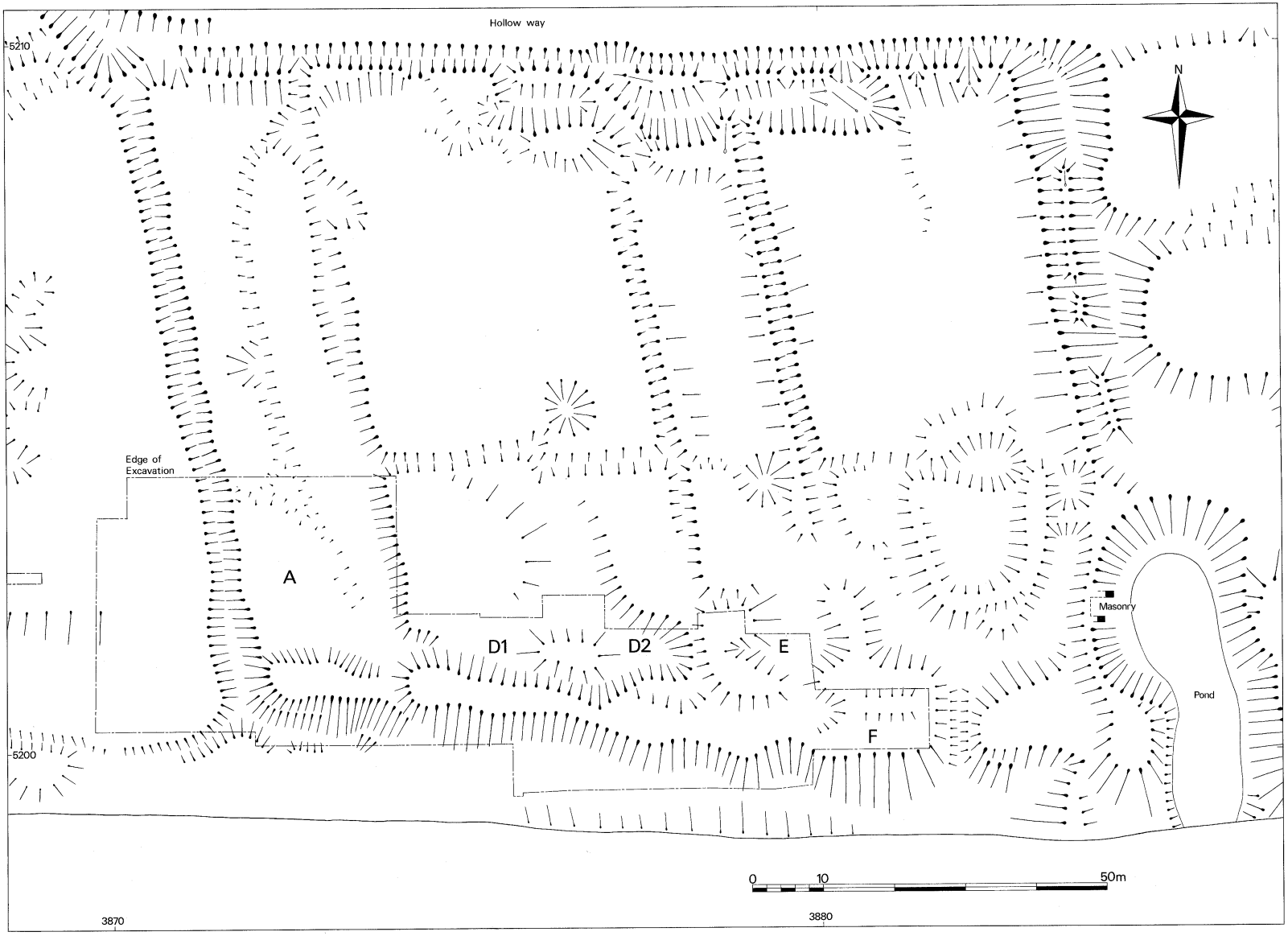

Figure 6.3.5
Earthwork Survey: 2
Excavated tenements

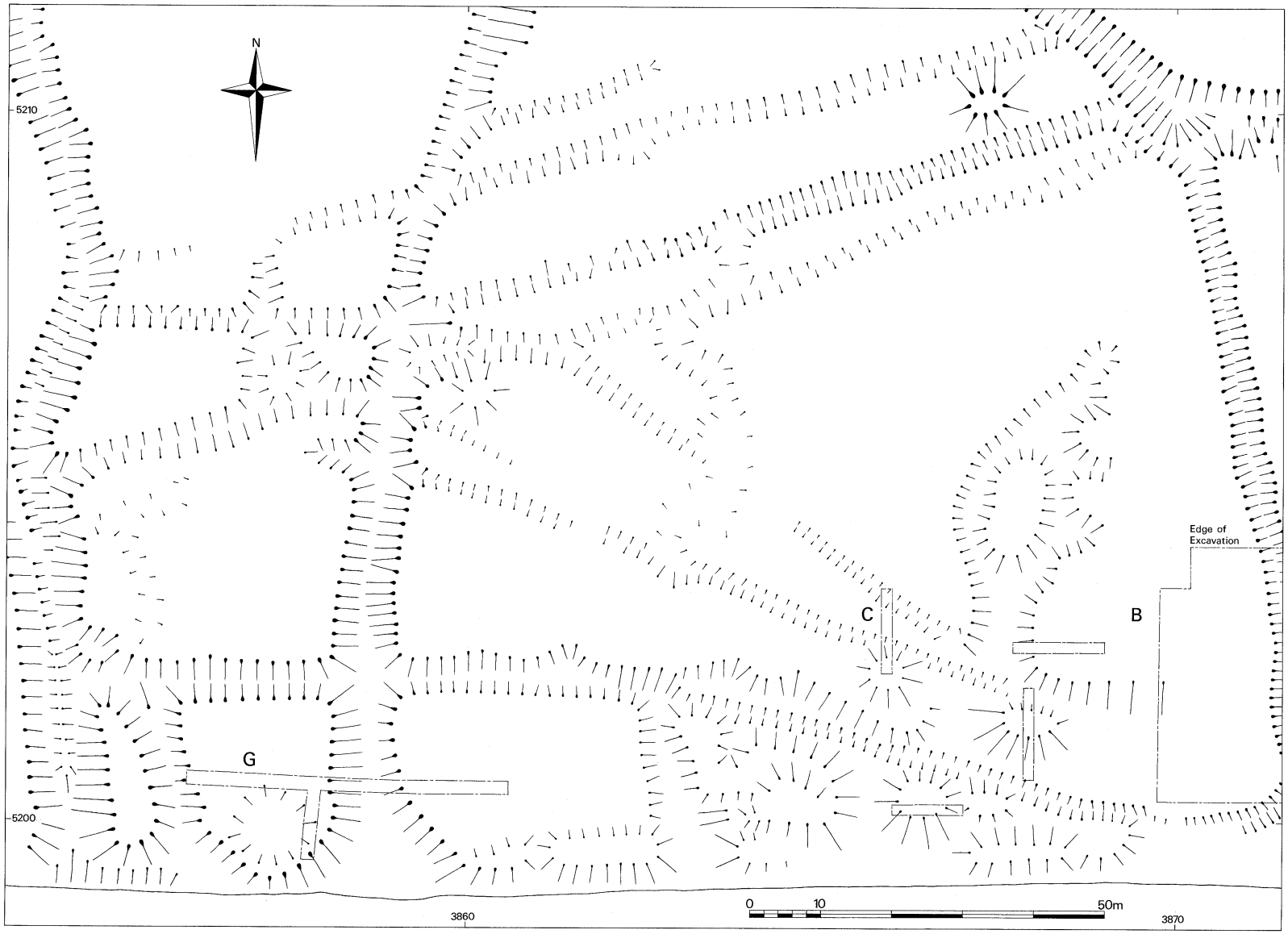

Figure 6.3.6
Earthwork Survey:
3 Western area

West of excavated tenements (Figure 6.3.6)

The area to the west of the excavated tenements contained a variety of earthworks that were difficult to interpret, but some of which seemed likely to represent settlement. To the south- east there was a shallow irregular hollow running north-south. There were also a number of low platforms which it was thought might represent buildings, although they did not seem to sit within defined properties. A series of trial trenches was excavated into these (Areas B and C). Radiating west and north-westwards from here there were three shallow gullies, of which the two northern ones were probably animal or vehicle tracks and the southern one possibly a drainage ditch.

To the west there was a group of more prominent earthwork platforms bounded by two deep north-south ditches. Against the south edge of the field there were two platforms, with one larger one to the north, the group together suggesting a farmstead. To the east there was a less well defined rectangular platform. A single trial trench (G) was placed across these.

To the north there were three shallow, parallel gullies running WSW-ENE, probably the south part of a block of late ridge and furrow; and in the north-east corner there was an oval mound, *c*10m x *c*8m, presumably caused by some post-medieval agricultural activity.

North-western part of field (Figure 6.3.1)

The north-west part of Chapel Ground also contained earthworks but these do not seem to represent the remains of settlement. Some of them were drainage features, others were vestiges of ridge and furrow ploughing.

The most prominent feature was a wide (*c*12-20m) ditch running ENE-WSW. This contained a substantial stone-lined drain along its bottom (information from Mr G Smith), and running into it there were a number of narrower ditches which seem to have been branch drains. One of these ran from the west end of the hollow way, which did not go beyond the excavated tenements, and another ran northwards from the westernmost group of enclosures. Together they do appear to form a coherent drainage system. This system cannot however be dated. While it is most likely that it was dug in the post-medieval period after the site had been turned over to pasture, and at the same time as the pond near the chapel, there is no evidence to prevent its being contemporary with the settlement. The only point where it impinges on the other earthworks is at the east end of the main drain where it cuts into the area of paddocks or crofts.

To the south of the main drainage ditch and parallel to it were a series of shallow ditches at *c*10-15m intervals. These seem to represent the north part of the block of ridge and furrow already noticed to the south. This seemed very different in character to that in the medieval open fields around the settlement and is likely to be later in date. It was also much less prominent suggesting that it derived from a fairly short period of ploughing. Finally, there were a number of animal and vehicle tracks or recent date, mostly running diagonally across the field.

Road to west of Chapel Ground

Running northwards along the west side of the western boundary of Chapel Ground, until its removal by the farmer in the late 1980s, there was a substantial rubble road. The line of the modern main road is that of the early 18th-century turnpike and it is possible that this was

the original line of the Warwick-Banbury road, although it may have been of only local significance. On the 1769 map this road is shown more prominently, with hedges on both sides, but by the time of the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1st Edition (Ordnance Survey 1886), when it had been cut by the railway to the north, it had declined to a track. Further north it appears to have followed the parish boundary between Gaydon and Burton Dassett before heading towards Kingston and Chesterton.

Dovehouse Close

The south-western field, known as Dovehouse Close, was not included on Bond's 1973 survey. This field had been ploughed in recent times; over most of it the earthworks had been considerably eroded and were much less prominent than in the other fields. However from within the field, and on the air photographs, a number of features could be made out.

Along the south side of the field there was a prominent, east-west boundary ditch marking the limit of settlement. The ridge and furrow in the fields to the south ran up to this ditch and stopped. To the east the ditch ran into a presumably post-medieval pond; towards the west a north-south ditch ran up to the road dividing off the western third of the field. This area was formerly a separate field known as Bullocks Close. A slight east-west bank possibly representing a property boundary ran across it. In the area to the east two similar banks ran back from the road delineating three large rectangular plots. In the central plot just north west of the pond there was a group of mounds and hollows that were possibly building platforms. These also showed on air photographs (eg Figures 63.2 - 6.3.3) taken when the field was under cultivation. To the north the photographs also show a line of slight mounds running east-west across the central and east plots, set back from the road, and appearing lighter than the surrounding crop. These may also represent building platforms.

Documentary evidence suggests that Dovehouse Close was unoccupied in 1567, but that Bullocks Close was the site of a shepherds' cottage. It seems that the cottage did not occupy a medieval plot but was newly built; however, it had gone by 1769.

To west of Little Dassett Home Farm (Barn Close)

Barn Close, the field to the west of Little Dassett Home Farm, contains very well preserved earthworks. Its northern half contains a dense but irregular pattern suggesting an uncertain number of irregular house plots, *c*50m deep, fronting the modern road. The field drains laid in 1986 at the west end of the field unearthed large quantities of rubble showing that here at least these plots were quite densely built up. An irregular but continuous east-west boundary ditch appears to mark the southern limit of the house plots, which thus extended back only half the distance of those in Dovehouse Close further west. To the east this ditch runs into a north-south boundary ditch running right across the field, which may mean that the plots further east, now occupied by the farm, extended the full width of the field. To the west the south part of the field is relatively flat except for the north end of ridge and furrow extending from the fields to the south.

This area seems to have retained one house after 1497, as the north part of the field would seem to correspond to the `messuage and orchard' occupied by Thomas Burbery in 1567, with Dovehouse Close to the west, and the `meadow to the south' covering the south part of the field. The messuage was however probably abandoned by 1658. The site of Home Farm was also occupied in 1567, by Thomas Makepeace, and in 1658.

East part of settlement

The eastern part of the settlement is covered by two modern fields. In the northern one the earthworks are somewhat eroded by recent ploughing. This makes them difficult to interpret and the tenement boundaries are unclear. However, the earthworks appear to be generally rectilinear and aligned on the road.

The earthworks in the field to the south are more prominent. On the north side there appear to be two east-west strip properties, the northern one *c*30m wide, the southern *c*25m, both *c*160m long; while to the south there are two larger subrectangular plots. The frontage of the northern strip is occupied by the existing Windmill Cottage (although its garden now includes the west end of the southern strip as well). The northern strip property is divided into two parts behind the frontage, while the southern one has a series of cross divisions, probably marking building platforms at the frontage and terracing to the east. The two subrectangular plots contain possible building platforms and other earthworks on the same alignment as the boundaries.

This part of the site also does not seem to have been completely depopulated in 1497. A house tenanted by Thomas Brooks in 1567 probably occupied the site of Windmill Cottage. A cottage recorded in 1582 may have been located to the north. By 1769 there were buildings on the sites of Windmill Cottage and Little Dassett Home Farm Cottages.

6.4 EXCAVATION METHODS

Recording system

The archaeological recording system used for the 1986-88 excavations at Burton Dassett allocated a single sequence of numbers from 1 to 2518 for both layers and features. Contexts within features were given sub-numbers, eg the fill of Pit 47 would be 47/1, any second fill would be 47/2; and the stones of Wall 15 would be 15/1. In some cases the sub-numbers designate different parts of the same context, eg to separate finds along a ditch or across an extensive layer; in other cases different numbers might be used for the same purpose. In the following description where a feature had a single fill, the fill sub-number is not specifically mentioned. The fieldwalking used the same sequence of numbers for finds collection groups (1000 to 1122 for Dovehouse Close in 1987, and 2519 to 2905 for Chapel Ground in 1991). The 2003 Chapel recording continued the context number sequence from 2910 to 2968, but for this work separate numbers were used for features and their fills.

During the excavation all finds were recorded to context. Environmental samples and significant finds such as metalwork and flint, stone and bone objects were individually located. Bulk finds, such as pottery, animal bone, tile, slate, nails and slag, were only recorded by context and these are located in the distribution plots below by the coordinates of their context. The numbers of finds from individual contexts given in the following description are taken from the main finds database. In some cases they may not tally exactly with the figures given in the specialist reports below. However, they do give an accurate indication of the relative quantities involved across the site.

Soil texture descriptions in the report follow the particle-size classes of the Soil Survey (Hodgson 1976, 22-25, fig 6b). Colour descriptions follow the Munsell notation (Munsell 1975). Levels given on plans and section drawings are above Ordnance Datum, related to the OS benchmark on the barn on the south side of the road (now destroyed). The site grid on the plans is aligned on the National Grid. Estimation of stone sizes was based on the scale: small (10-100mm), medium (100-300mm), large (300-500mm) and very large (500mm+). Unless otherwise stated the stone and rubble was the local ironstone (ferruginous limestone) from the Marlstone Rock Formation which will have come from the quarries still visible along the hills *c*1km to the east of the site. Since most layers contained a small proportion of rubble, in this description rubble is ignored unless it constituted at least 10% of the layer. Dimensions of features given are generally maximum figures.

According to the Geological Survey (1:10560 sheet SP35SE) the natural subsoil over the area of the excavation ought to have consisted of grey Charmouth Mudstone (formerly Lower Lias Clay). In practice, over most of the area, the grey clay was overlaid by localised patches and bands of material, presumably of glacial origin, which varied from olive yellow-olive- olive brown-dark greyish brown clay/clay (loam) to yellowish brown gravel. Some of this material differed very little from the fills of the archaeological features and it was often very difficult to tell them apart. This difficulty was compounded by the fact that the earliest features were mainly irregular hollows, most probably resulting from tree clearance. The presence of finds or ironstone rubble in the fill was conclusive of archaeological rather than geological origin, but many of the features lacked these.

The fills of the excavated features generally varied very little in colour and texture. The vast majority consisted of clay loam with a limited colour range from dark greyish brown-olive brown-olive-olive grey (Munsell 2.5-5Y4/2-4). This homogeneity meant that it was very difficult to recognise the relationship of intercutting features. Many of the recorded

relationships were not certain. The description presented here combines the stratigraphic evidence with that from other sources, notably the finds, and in some cases the former has been overruled by the latter.

Interpretation of building remains

Interpretation of the structure of buildings using only the evidence of foundations can be problematical. The Dassett Southend excavations produced evidence for a wide variety of construction methods, including stone walls, timber-framing on stone footings, timber-framing on post bases, timberwork supported on earth-fast posts at irregular intervals, and timberwork supported on regularly spaced posts.

Where buildings are supported on earth-fast posts set in postholes or on stone post bases lines of post settings can be recognised relatively easily, so long as there are not too many other similar features from other buildings occupying the same area. In the latter circumstance one looks to stratigraphy and similarities in dimensions, fill or packing to assign individual postholes or bases to particular buildings. In the absence of these one can look at spacing and alignment before guesswork becomes necessary.

Continuous stone foundations can support either timber-framed or stone superstructures, or cob walls although these are not a common feature of this area. Here the width of the foundations seems to offer the best guide to the character of the walls above (cf Beresford and Hurst 1971, 94). Those over 0.70m (2ft 4in) wide will support stone walls to the eaves, while those less than 0.55m (1ft 9in) are likely to support timber frames. Widths between these extremes can support stone walls. It is recorded that average wall thickness of the stone houses in the local area is 'remarkably consistent' at 2ft 6in (0.75m) or over in medieval work, but from the end of the 16th century reduced to 1ft 10in (0.56m) (Wood-Jones 1963, 240). At Southend the walls of the standing medieval Chapel are *c*0.7m wide (2ft 3½in) while those of the post- medieval Priest's House are *c*0.65m wide (2ft 1½in). The presence of buttresses on excavated foundations indicates stone walls, as does the presence of *in situ* and loose stone architectural details such as door and window surrounds. On the other hand regularly spaced pad stones along a wall foundation may indicate the location of cruck trusses. The solidity and consistency of construction of a wall foundation should also be considered, less substantial and less regular foundations being more likely to indicate timber-framing.

Using these criteria it is concluded below that on seven of the ten excavated tenements (A, D1, D2, E, I, J, K) the houses were built with stone walls to the eaves, while on two (F and H) they were timber-framed, probably with cruck structures on stone footings. The tenth (L) may have been of mixed construction. In some cases stone houses were extended with timber-framed additions, and some minor subsidiary features like porches might be supported on earth-fast posts. The outbuildings were less substantially constructed than the houses. There was a stone granary on Area K and an outbuilding on Area E probably a brewhouse was at least partly rebuilt in stone, but there were three barn/outbuildings in timber supported on earth-fast posts, one barn, with a presumably cruck frame set on post bases, and at least seven barn/outbuildings with stone footings, probably supporting timber frames.

The high proportion of stone-built houses suggested goes somewhat against the prevailing interpretation, recently restated, of medieval peasant housing in Midland England (Alcock and Miles 2013). The view held in the 1960s that, until the 'Great Rebuilding' of the 16th century, peasant houses were frail, short-lived timber structures, constantly replaced, was

revised in the 1980s, as documentary research revealed them to be substantial structures similar to surviving vernacular buildings and the archaeological evidence was reinterpreted in this light (Dyer 1986, 19-45; Field 1965, 105-45; Wrathmell 1989, 3-14). It is now accepted that the known local post-medieval vernacular building traditions were in existence probably by the late 13th century and the interpretation of excavated peasant buildings should therefore look to the vernacular tradition of the immediately surrounding area.

The majority of the medieval peasant buildings in the West Midlands analysed by Field (Field 1965, 109) and Dyer (1986, 22-31) were timber-framed with crucks on low stone footings and there is no doubt that this was the dominant method of vernacular construction over the wider region (Alcock and Miles 2013, fig 2.1). It is possible however that recent study of Midlands peasant houses has overemphasised cruck construction to the exclusion of other forms, assuming that the archetypal peasant house in the region was cruck-built (Alcock and Miles 2013, vii, 156). It has been asked whether this focus allows conclusions to be drawn concerning medieval houses generally, and whether it underemphasises the occurrence of other structural forms such as the box-frame (Clark 2013). It may be that it also underemphasises localised traditions of stone-built houses such as those of the limestone areas of north Oxfordshire and south Warwickshire (and Gloucestershire and Northamptonshire) where there was a relative dearth of timber, but easy availability of good building stone (Hilton 1983, 95). It is noticeable that there is a relative absence of surveyed crucks in north Oxfordshire and south Warwickshire (Alcock and Miles 2013, fig 2.1), and the nearest dated building to Burton Dassett, The Old Post Office, Oxhill, dated to 1450-6, does actually have stone walls below a raised cruck roof structure (Alcock and Miles 2013, OXH-A).

In fact the vernacular architecture of the Burton Dassett area is that described in detail by Wood-Jones, centred on Banbury and defined by the use of the Middle Lias Marlstone Rock Formation for building (Wood-Jones 1963). This regional style is typified by solid stone-built houses, generally with thatched roofs. Wood-Jones describes only a handful of medieval buildings, but writing in the 1960s he will have assumed that the peasant houses were of frail timber construction and that all examples had disappeared, and in the absence of dendrochronology very few buildings were dated to before 1500. Wood-Jones himself does not seem to have been completely happy with the idea of a break in structural technique in the 16th century as throughout his study he emphasises the conservatism and fundamentally medieval character of the later regional style (eg Wood-Jones 1963, 250). Wood-Jones identifies a few early buildings which he categorises as ‘Lesser Hall Houses’, not manorial but of some social significance as homes of men of substance (Wood-Jones 1963, 31). He also identifies a number of early buildings in which there was a localised form of roof structure in which raised crucks were used on stone walls (Wood-Jones 1963, 14-23). The excavated houses at Dassett Southend would fit well into this context and the suggestion that a majority of them were stone-built would reflect the vernacular tradition of the immediate region. With raised cruck roofs, such buildings would be described in documents in similar terms to full cruck-framed structures as only the amount of stone involved in their construction would vary.

Another area of difficulty is the identification of upper rooms in buildings. Their presence may be suggested by the presence of foundations that might support stairs. Generally they would seem to be precluded by the presence of hearths in the room below, unless these are located adjacent to walls and could be surmounted by a smoke hood, smoke bay or chimney.

Phasing and chronology

The phasing of the site is primarily based on the observed stratigraphic relationships. Over most of the excavated areas the stratigraphy in and around the buildings was relatively well-preserved, enabling the groups of contexts belonging to structures and associated activity to be identified and a sequence of structural phases to be worked out with some confidence. However between their initial laying out and final abandonment the various tenements had individual development histories which were generally not related stratigraphically. Identification of the contemporary phases on different areas has been based mainly on a comparison of the pottery assemblages and seriation of the occurrence and changing proportions of fabrics and wares. Isolated features and groups of features unrelated stratigraphically have also been assigned to particular phases on the basis of their pottery assemblages. For those areas (B, C and G) with little relevant stratigraphy and few finds the phase groups are more general.

Dating the phases and establishing the chronology of the site has drawn on a number of sources of evidence but also relies heavily on the pottery assemblages and comparison with dated material from other sites.

The historical evidence provides the relatively firm and crucial milestone date of *c*1497 for the depopulation of Southend and the end of the medieval occupation. However, apart from this it gives only a general framework for the chronology. Dated references to buildings and people in Southend are general evidence of activity at the time but cannot be related to the excavated features. The date of 1267 for the acquisition of the market charter for Southend cannot be tied directly to the excavated tenements, but it does provide a plausible context for expansion of the settlement and the laying out of new properties in the mid/later 13th century. The absence of urban-type 12d per annum rentals from the Hundred Rolls of 1280 and their prevalence thereafter is evidence of continuing development of the settlement, but again there is no direct link to the excavated areas.

[edited]: It was hoped that some objective chronology for the later period would be provided by the remanent magnetic dating of hearths in the successive Area D2 houses (Linford in Section 8.23). Date ranges initially obtained for the latest use of hearths identified as belonging to phase D24 of 1387-1418, to phase D25 of 1400-1446, and to phase D26, the final occupation, of 1480-1515 and 1482-1517, appeared to fit with other evidence, although the presence of cistercian ware pottery in contexts of phases D24 and D25 was problematic since this would have suggested that this material first arrived on site in the early/mid 15th century rather than in the later 15th century, as currently accepted (Rátkai, section 8.1). Recalibration of the archaeomagnetic data using the most up-to-date calibration curve gave dates significantly at variance with the original ranges for the samples from phases D24 and D25, with the D24 measurements giving no date post AD1000 and those from D25 a date range of 1294-1327. These dates do not match the stratigraphic sequence, and no satisfactory explanation for this anomaly can be offered beyond the difficulties of excavating and interpreting myriad interleaving and intermittent floor layers.

Apart from the pottery the finds provided little dating evidence. All the few coins and jettons were residual in demolition contexts or topsoil, except for two Roman coins that were residual in mid/late 15th-century contexts. Other individual finds were not closely datable or did not occur in sufficient quantity to be useful for dating. The distribution of the small circular iron buckles which seem to be characteristic of the mid to late 15th century provides corroboration of the dating of contexts rather than primary evidence.

Using these methods the contexts in each area have been assigned to the dated phases of

activity shown in Table 2. Table 3 shows the various phases across the site grouped together into the chronological periods which have been used for the finds analyses. Figure 3.7 is a schematic representation of the chronology and relationships between the phases across the site, with the phases including buildings shaded.

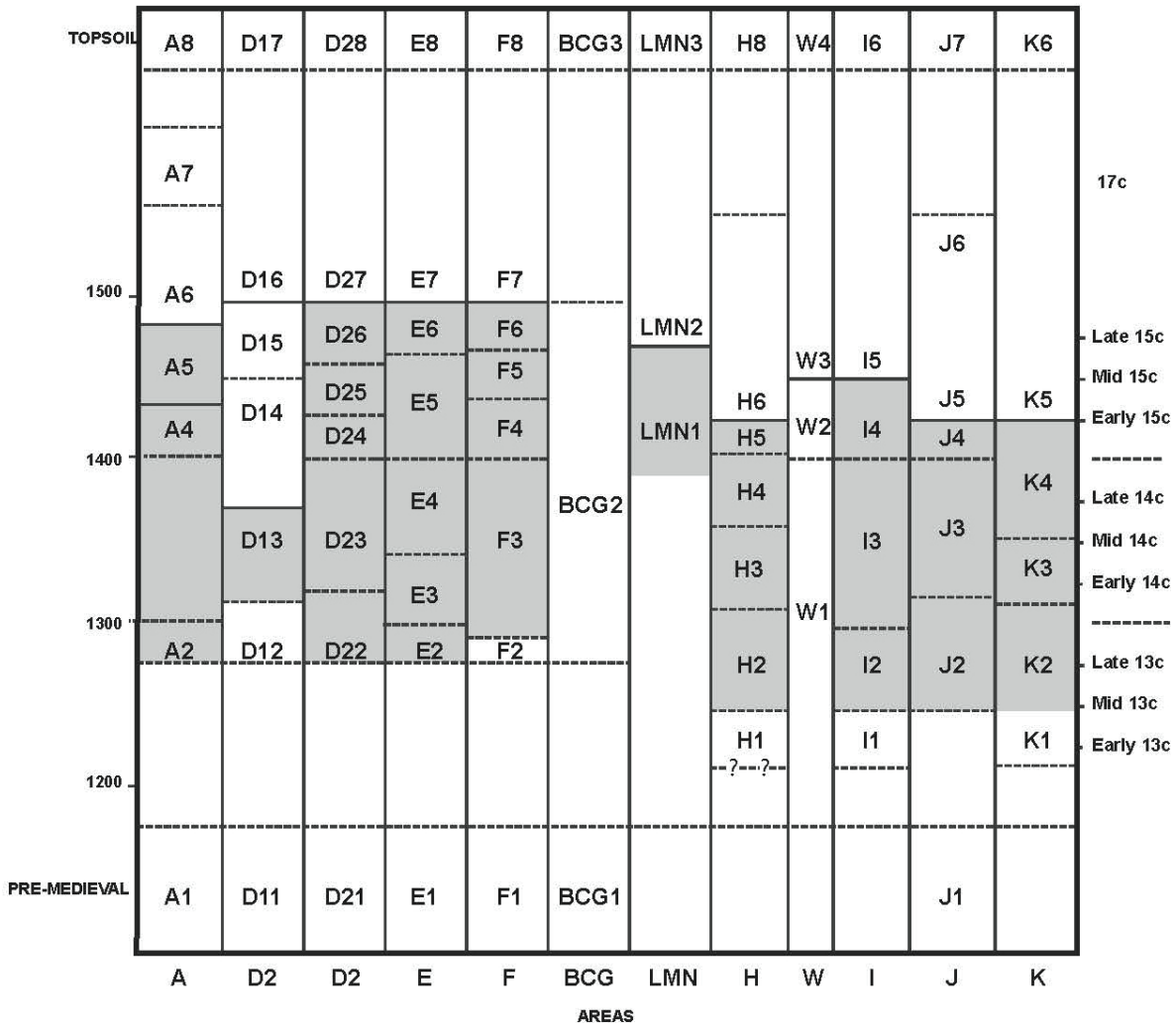

Figure 6.4.1:
Phasing and chronology

North of the road (Areas A-G)

A1	Pre-medieval
A2	Late 13c
A3	14c
A4	Early 15c
A5	Mid-late 15c
A6	Late 15c demolition
A7	*c*17c
A8	Post-medieval/Topsoil

D11	Pre-medieval D12
D12	Late 13c
D13	Early to mid 14c
D14	Early to mid 15c
D15	Mid-late 15c
D16	Late 15c demolition – *c*1497
D17	Post-medieval/Topsoil

D21	Pre-medieval
D22	Late 13c
D23	14c
D24	Early-mid 15c
D25	Mid-late 15c
D26	Late 15c
D27	Late 15c demolition – *c*1497
D28	Post-medieval/Topsoil

E1	Pre-medieval
E2	Late 13c
E3	Early 14c
E4	Mid 14c
E5	Early-mid/late 15c
E6	Late 15c
E7	Late 15c demolition – *c*1497
E8	Post-medieval/Topsoil

F1	Pre-medieval
F2	Late 13c
F3	Early 14c
F4	Early-mid 15c
F5	Mid-late 15c
F6	Late 15c
F7	Late 15c demolition – *c*1497
F8	Post-medieval/Topsoil

B1 C1 G1	Pre-medieval
B2 C2 G2	Medieval
B3 C3 G3	Post-medieval/Topsoil

South of the road (Areas H-N and W)

H1	12c-early 13c
H2	Early/mid-late 13c
H3	Early 14c
H4	Mid-late 14c
H5	Early 15c
H6	Early 15c demolition
H7	Early post-medieval (16c?)
H8	Post-medieval/Topsoil

I1	12c-early 13c
I2	Early/mid-late 13c
I3	14c
I4	Early-mid 15c
I5	Mid 15c demolition
I6	Post-medieval/Topsoil

W1	Early 14c
W2	Early-mid 15c
W3	Mid 15c demolition
W4	Post-medieval/Topsoil

J1	Pre-medieval
J2	Early/mid-late 13c
J3	Early-late 14c
J4	Early 15c
J5	Early 15c demolition
J6	Early post-medieval (16c?)
J7	Post-medieval/Topsoil

K1	12c-early 13c
K2	Early/mid-late 13c
K3	Early 14c
K4	Mid-late 14c (-early 15c)
K5	Early 15c demolition
K6	Post-medieval/Topsoil

L1 M1 N1	(14c)-15c (Medieval)
L2 M2	?later 15c demolition
L3 M3 N3	Post-medieval/Topsoil

Figure 6.4.2:
Excavation phases and dating by area

A1, D11, D21, E1, F1, B1, C1, G1, J1	Pre-medieval	
H1, I1, K1	12c to early 13c]	13c
H2, I2, K2, J2; A2, D12, D22, E2, F2	Later 13 c	
E3, F3, H3, W1, K3; D13	Early 14c	14c
A3, D23, I3, J3	14c	
E4; H4, K4	Later 14c	
A4, H5, H6, J4, J5, K5; D14, D24, F4, I4, W2; E5	Early 15c	15c
I5, W3; A5, D15, D25, F5; L2, M2; A6, D26, E6, F6;	Later 15c	
D16, D27, E7, F7	Late 15c demolition (*c* 1497)	
L1, M1, N1; B2, C2, G2	Medieval (undifferentiated)	
H7, J6; A7	Post-medieval	
A8, D17, D28, E8, F8, B3, C3, G3, H8, I6, W4, J7, K6, L3, M3, N3	Topsoil	

Figure 6.4.3:
Excavation phases and dating by general period

6.5 FIELDWALKING *by Nicholas Palmer*

DOVEHOUSE CLOSE FIELDWALKING 1987

Although the earthworks in Dovehouse Close had been eroded by modern ploughing, in 1986 the field had not been ploughed for some years. However in that year a series of field drains were laid down across Dovehouse Close and part of the field to the east (Barn Close), and in 1987 Dovehouse Close was ploughed again, along with part of the field to the south. Both the laying of the drains and the ploughing turned up large amounts of building rubble and it was decided to walk the field systematically and record the surface material.

Methods

The field was divided into 110 20m x 20m squares and part-squares (numbered 1000-1109). A second area of 12 squares and part squares (1110-1121) was laid out in the field to the south- east around the remains of a building in its north-east corner. Each square was walked for 15 minutes by three people and the artefactual material on the surface was collected. The material was cleaned and sorted and obviously modern brick, tile and field drain fragments were discarded. Generally all material was collected but in some squares very large quantities of tile and slate were involved. In these the fragments were counted and their volume was estimated but only a representative selection of tile fabrics and forms was kept together with those tile and slate fragments with measureable dimensions (other than thickness). In addition the distribution of rubble in each square was sketch plotted (Figure 6.5.1).

Results (Figures 6.5.1 – 6.5.3)

The area walked can be divided into six zones (Z1-Z6), corresponding to the divisions already identified in the earthworks. Areas Z1-Z3 covered the original Dovehouse Close; to the west Z4 and Z5 covered the north and south parts of the former Bullocks Close; and to the south-east Z6 covered the north-east corner of the field to the south. The most significant evidence for the extent of medieval settlement came from the distributions of rubble, tile and slate (Figures 6.5.1 and 6.5.3) and to a lesser extent those of pottery and animal bone (Figure 6.5.2). Dating evidence came from the pottery. The spreads of coal, metalwork and window glass (Figure 6.5.3) seemed to relate more to post-medieval cultivation.

Area Z1

At the east end of Dovehouse Close Area Z1 covered a block of 24 squares, bounded to the west by a slight earthwork/rubble bank. This area lay on the motorway route and contained most of the areas subsequently excavated (Areas H, I, J, K, L, N and W).

The fieldwalking revealed two main concentrations of rubble within the area: one in the north-west corner close to the road and a second *c*40m back towards the west side. A line of rubble ran northwards from the second scatter and there were further patches to its east and south. There was also a diffuse spread of rubble to the north-east around the standing hovel.

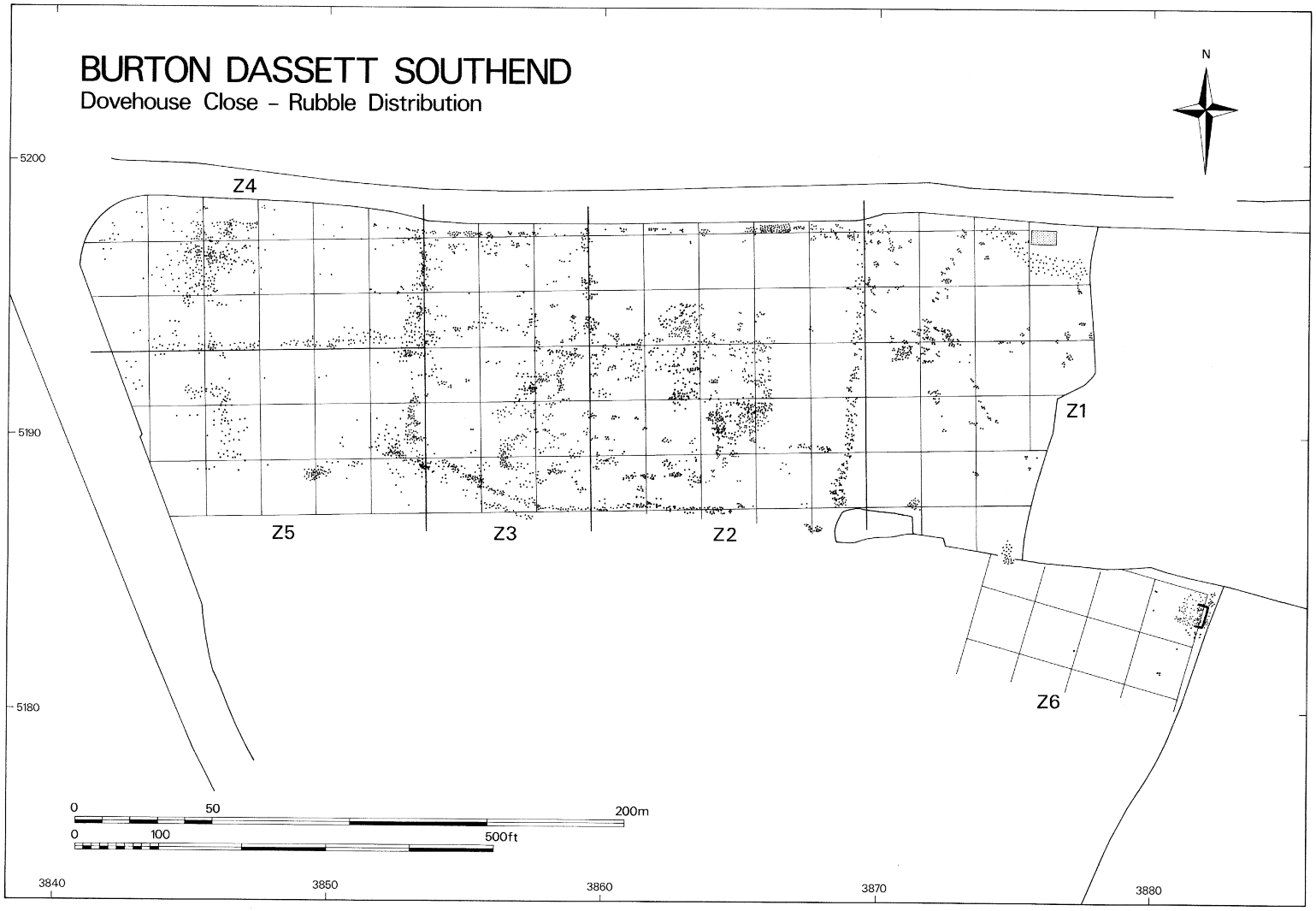

Figure 6.5.1 Dovehouse Close: Rubble Distributions

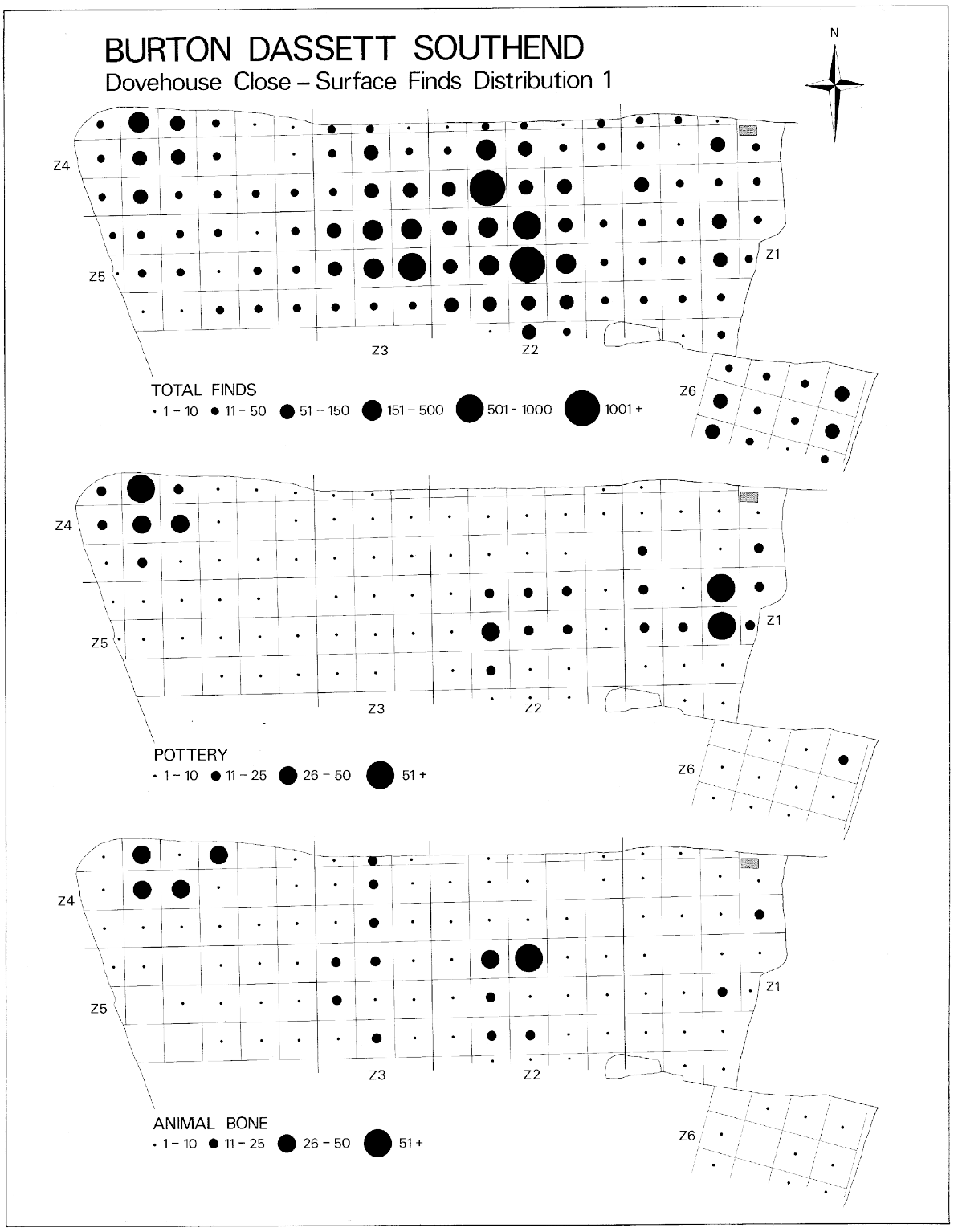

Figure 6.5.2
Dovehouse Close: Finds Distribution 1

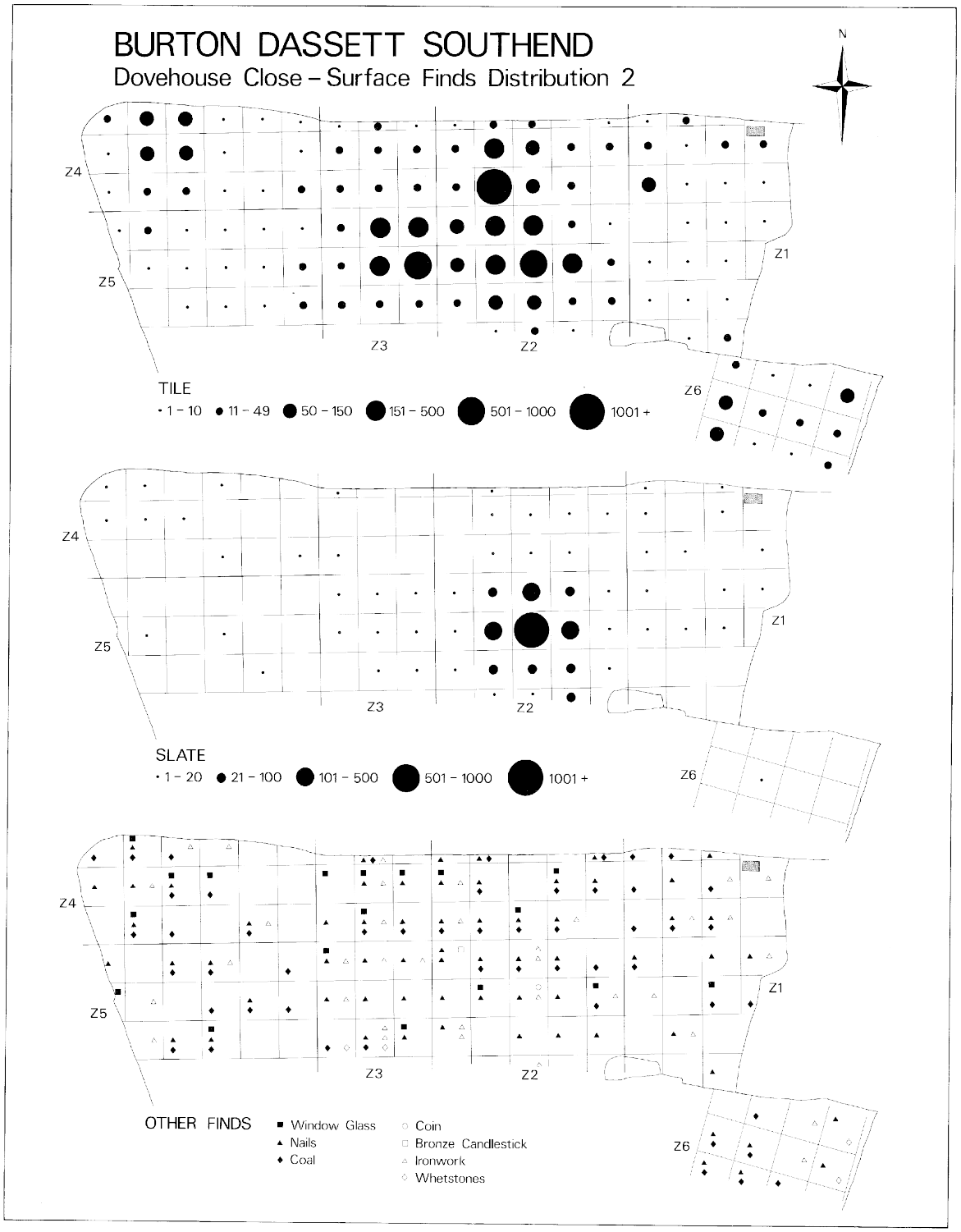

Figure 6.5.3
Dovehouse Close: Finds Distributions 2

There was a scatter of pottery over the whole area dating from the 13th century to the 15th century, with a particular concentration *c*65m back from the road on the eastern side which presumably represented a midden/rubbish disposal area. A slight concentration of animal bone was also evident here. Other finds from the area included an iron staple (no 131), four horseshoes (nos 486, 488, 490, 492), and a socketed stone (no 37).

It was concluded that the two main rubble concentrations represented the only building complexes in the vicinity and excavation started on that basis. In fact when the topsoil was removed the density of building remains proved to be much greater than expected. In addition to the buildings identified (Areas K and L) there were others on three more properties (Areas H, I and J). This meant that the excavation strategy had to be adapted accordingly. A second shortcoming of the survey was its failure to predict the presence of a smithy in Area J at the north end of Z1. This was a matter of ill luck. The smithy lay under the modern entrance to the field. Quantities of slag were found concentrated in this area but it was assumed that they represented modern material dumped around the gateway. In other respects, however, the fieldwalking results were more accurate: the date range of occupation did prove to be from the 13th to 15th century, and the identification of the midden area behind the Area I house was also probably correct.

Area Z2

To the west there was an area (Z2) of 33 squares covering *c*100m x *c*110m, bounded by slight earthwork/rubble banks on both sides. Only a small part of the north-eastern corner of this area was subsequently excavated (Area M).

This area contained a number of dense rectangular rubble spreads over its central and western parts which clearly represented a number of stone buildings. The number of buildings and properties involved however is uncertain. In the centre the rubble distribution appeared to indicate buildings around a courtyard, but too much reliance should not be placed on this. There were also large quantities of roof tile with a marked concentration over the northernmost rubble spread and high densities to the south of this. To the south there was also a massive concentration of roof slate. Both the tile and slate must represent material from roofs that had decayed in situ. The latest buildings here were clearly substantial, high quality structures.

The pottery from Z2 ranged from the 13th century to the late 15th/early 16th century with some Cistercian ware which was virtually absent from Z1 to the east. There was also a scatter of post-medieval pottery, but it seems most likely that this area was abandoned in the late 15th/early 16th century, slightly later than Z1, and perhaps as part of the 1497 depopulation. There was also a concentration of animal bone in the vicinity of the buildings. Other finds included a threepence of Elizabeth I (coin no 8), a copper alloy candlestick (no 95), an iron hinge (no 214), a key (no 284), a binding strip (no 303), a chain link (no 316), two horseshoes (nos 491, 493) and an oxshoe (no 517).

There was a dense linear spread of rubble along the north edge of the field. To the north-east this was revealed by excavation to be from a substantial boundary wall rather than buildings. Another spread along the east side of the area was also shown by excavation to derive from a wall. Similar spreads along the east side of the area and the north side of the southern boundary ditch suggests that the whole block was surrounded by boundary walls.

Area Z3

Area Z3 consisted of 18 squares measuring *c*60m x *c*105m. It was edged on all sides by lines of rubble suggesting further boundary walls and to the south and west by a ditch as well. There was a concentration of rubble on the east side again *c*40m back from the road and presumably deriving from a number of buildings. The quantities of tile from the rubble spreads were sufficient to suggest that some tiled roofs had decayed in situ. Again it is not possible to say how many buildings there were nor how many properties they covered. There was also little pottery from the area and the date range of settlement cannot be gauged. Other, mainly medieval, finds included an iron staple (no 132), a hinge (no 219), a chain link (no 317), a horseshoe (no 489), an oxshoe (no 516), a spur buckle (no 529) and two hones (nos 78-9). The west edge of Z3 was the original boundary to Dovehouse Close and seems also to have been the edge of the medieval settlement.

Area Z4

Area Z4 corresponded to the north part of Bullocks Close; it contained 18 squares and measured *c*115m x *c*45m. This area contained one spread of rubble on the north side. This can be identified with the cottage recorded in 1567 as occupied by the shepherds of the tenants of Travers Field which lay to the south-west. This spread produced a concentration of pottery and some clay pipe suggesting an occupation beginning in the 16th century and lasting until the 18th century. Other finds included an iron hook (no 333), a buckle (no 403), an oxshoe (no 518) and a 17th-century glass bottle stamp (no 39).

The cottage is not shown on the 1769 map and had presumably been demolished by then. A smaller concentration of tile could suggest that the cottage had a tile roof but that most of it had been salvaged when the building was demolished. The very small quantity of medieval pottery from here suggests that this area lay outside the medieval settlement. It is likely that the linear rubble spread along the south edge marked another boundary wall, but presumably of post-medieval date.

Area Z5

Area Z5, the southern part of Bullocks Close, measuring *c*102m x *c*60m, consisted of 17 squares. It contained no significant concentrations of finds or rubble, although it did produce a horseshoe (no 487) and an oxshoe (no 519).

Area Z6

The final area (Z6) of 12 squares, measuring *c*20m x *c*80m, lay around a demolished building in the north-eastern corner of the field to the south-east. The building was covered by a spread of demolition rubble but its foundations could be discerned. It was probably three- sided, *c*9m x *c*4.5m, open to the west, with walls *c*0.6m wide. It was almost certainly a late 18th- or 19th-century hovel similar to the one standing in the north-east corner of Dovehouse Close - neither of these figure on the 1769 map. There was some medieval pottery from this area but this will have derived from manuring rather than settlement. Other finds included two hones (nos 73-4) and an iron oxshoe (no 520).

The fieldwalking in Dovehouse Close thus produced results in which the rubble and finds distributions combined to give an apparently convincing and coherent picture. However the subsequent excavation of parts of Area Z1 showed that this picture was not necessarily complete, and, in particular, the suggested density of buildings and building plots was very much an underestimate. This makes it more difficult to assess the conclusions to be drawn for Areas Z2-Z5, but any assessment of the density of settlement is again likely to err on the side of understatement.

Nonetheless it does seem possible to conclude that the medieval settlement in Dovehouse Close began in the 13th century at the east end of the field in Areas Z1 and Z2. It then spread westwards but did not extend beyond the ditch marking the western boundary of Area Z3. There were a number of substantial stone buildings in Z2 and Z3 with tile and slate roofs divided between an unknown number of properties. Some of the buildings were on a rough line set *c*40m back from the road. The occupation lasted into the 15th century in Area Z1 and slightly later, perhaps to the late 15th/early 16th century, in Area Z2. The rubble spread in Area Z4 can be identified with the shepherd′s cottage recorded in 1576 in Bullocks Close.
This was built in the 16th century on a previously unsettled site and occupied until the early 18th century.

CHAPEL GROUND FIELDWALKING 1991

Introduction

In December 1990/January 1991 most of Chapel Ground to the east of the motorway covering the north-western part of the Southend settlement, was ploughed for the first time in very many years. In March 1991 the field was surveyed to make a record of the surface material disturbed by the ploughing and to give an indication of the extent, density and date range of the occupation over this part of the settlement. Effort was concentrated on those parts of the earthworks to the south and east interpreted as representing medieval settlement, as opposed to those to the north and west interpreted as post-medieval drainage and cultivation features.

Methods

Ninety-eight 20m squares and part squares were laid out in the south and east parts of the field and each was walked by three people for 10 minutes. The distribution of rubble in each square was also plotted (Figure 6.5.4). All material was collected except for modern glass and coal. The area contained three scatters of obviously modern material within which no attempt was made to collect brick and tile, and a concentration of slag forming part of one of these was only sampled.

The rest of the field to the west was walked in strips at 10m intervals with material collected in 20m lengths. The aim of this was to locate any further concentrations of material. Along the north edge of the field two scatters of slag and a spread of rubble were identified. A further five 20m squares were then laid out for intensive walking over these areas.

The collected material was cleaned and sorted and obviously modern pottery, ironwork, glass, tile, brick and field drain was discarded. The retained material consists of: medieval and post-medieval pottery (419 sherds); animal bone (602 fragments); tile and brick (420 fragments); slag (1702 fragments); clay tobacco pipe (26 fragments); ironwork (7); flint fragments (2); glass bead (1); copper alloy sheet fragment (1); and a bone knife handle (1); a total of 3182 objects. Only two or three fragments of roof slate were noted, a much lower level of occurrence than in Dovehouse Close or in the excavation.

The tile and animal bone assemblages were small and fairly unremarkable. Although their general distribution (Figures 6.5.5-6.5.6) contributes to understanding the extent of the settlement, no further analysis of them has been carried out. The ironwork, which included a small pistol and some horseshoes, the copper alloy and the few flints have also not been studied.

Results (Figures 6.5.4 – 6.5.6)

The quantities of rubble and material found were generally very much less than those turned up by the ploughing of Dovehouse Close. Given the other evidence of settlement in this area, this suggests that there was a greater depth of topsoil here and that the plough did not penetrate as deeply into medieval layers.

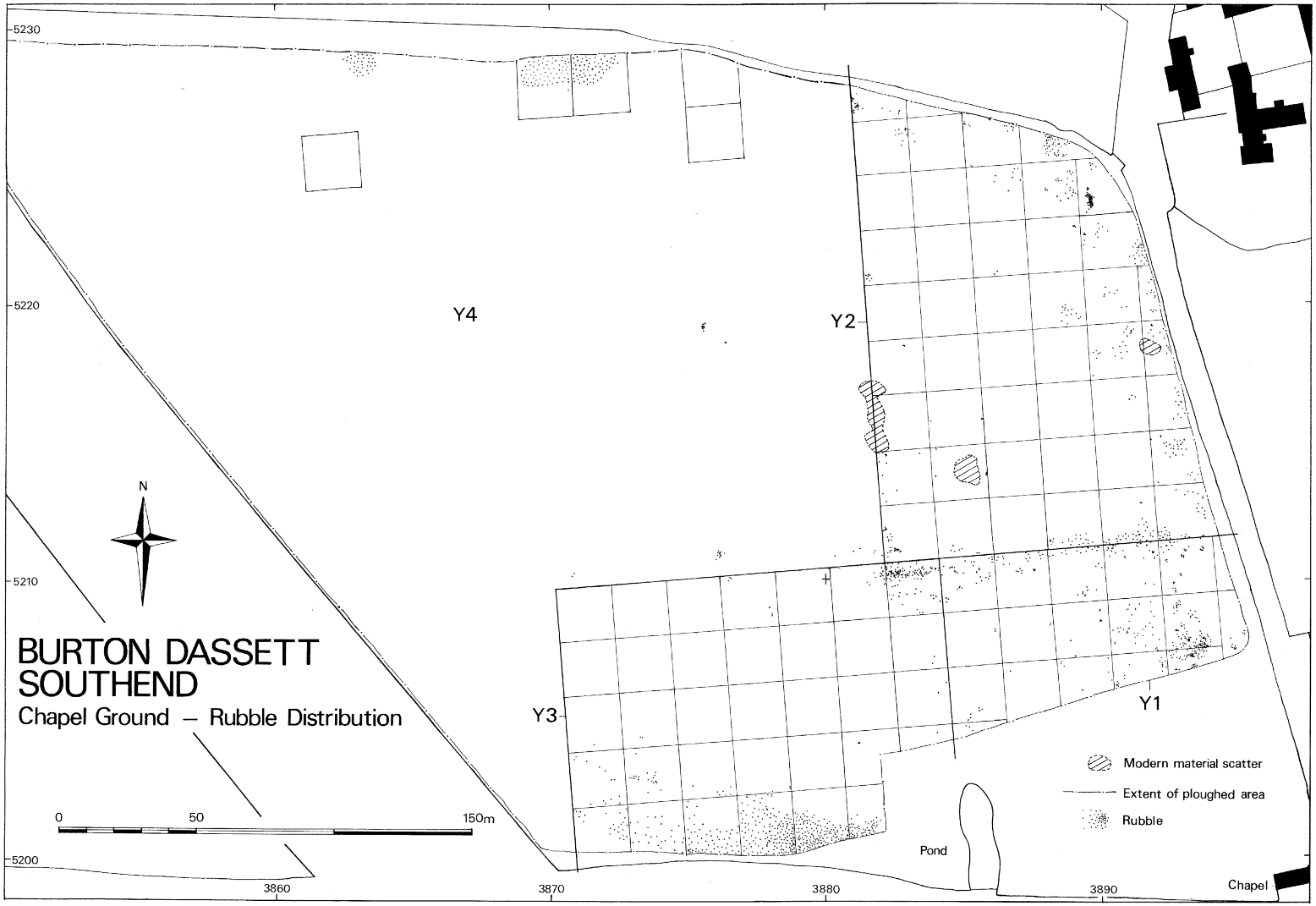

Figure 6.5.4 Chapel Ground 1991 - Rubble Distributions

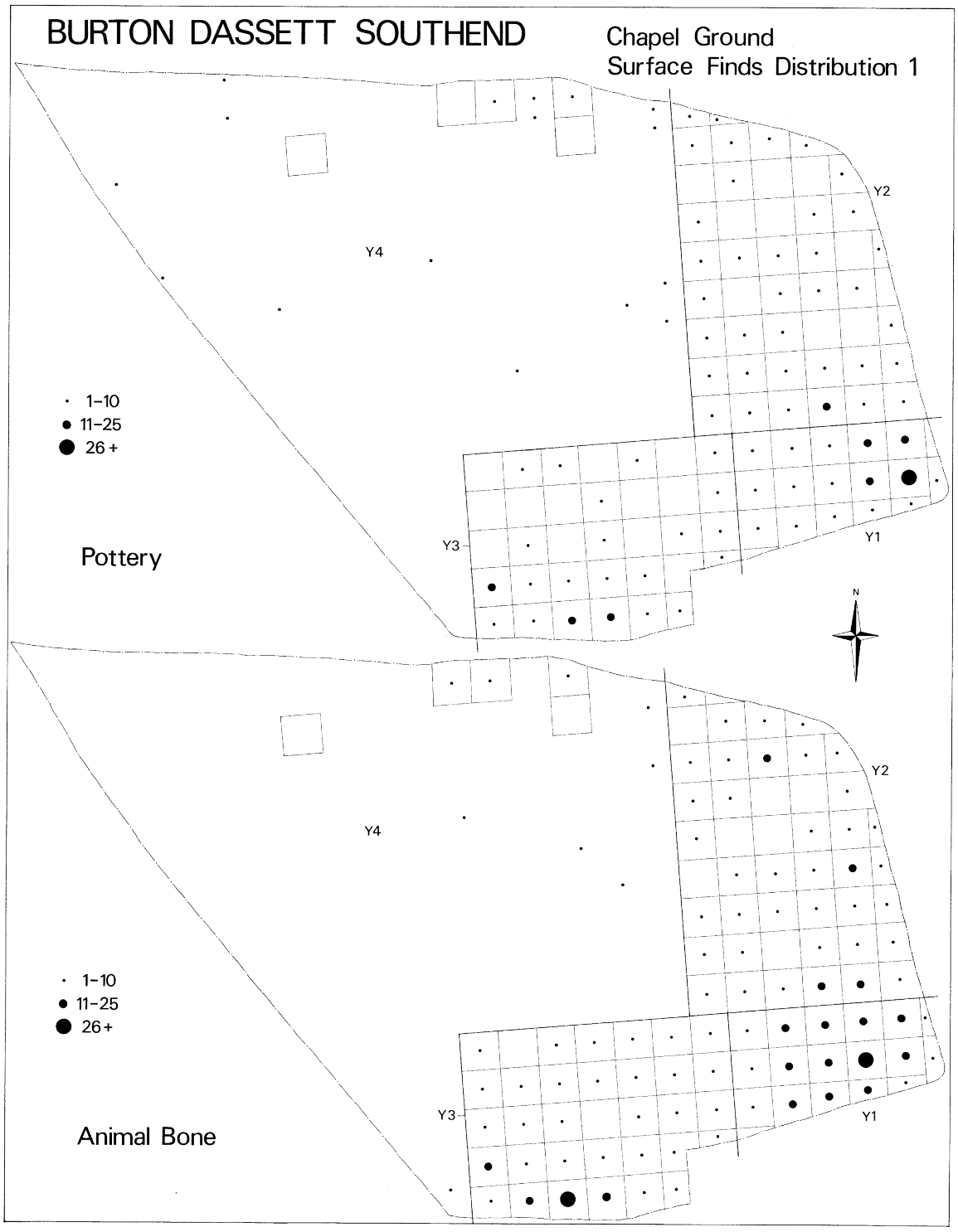

Figure 6.5.5
Chapel Ground 1991 - Finds Distributions 1

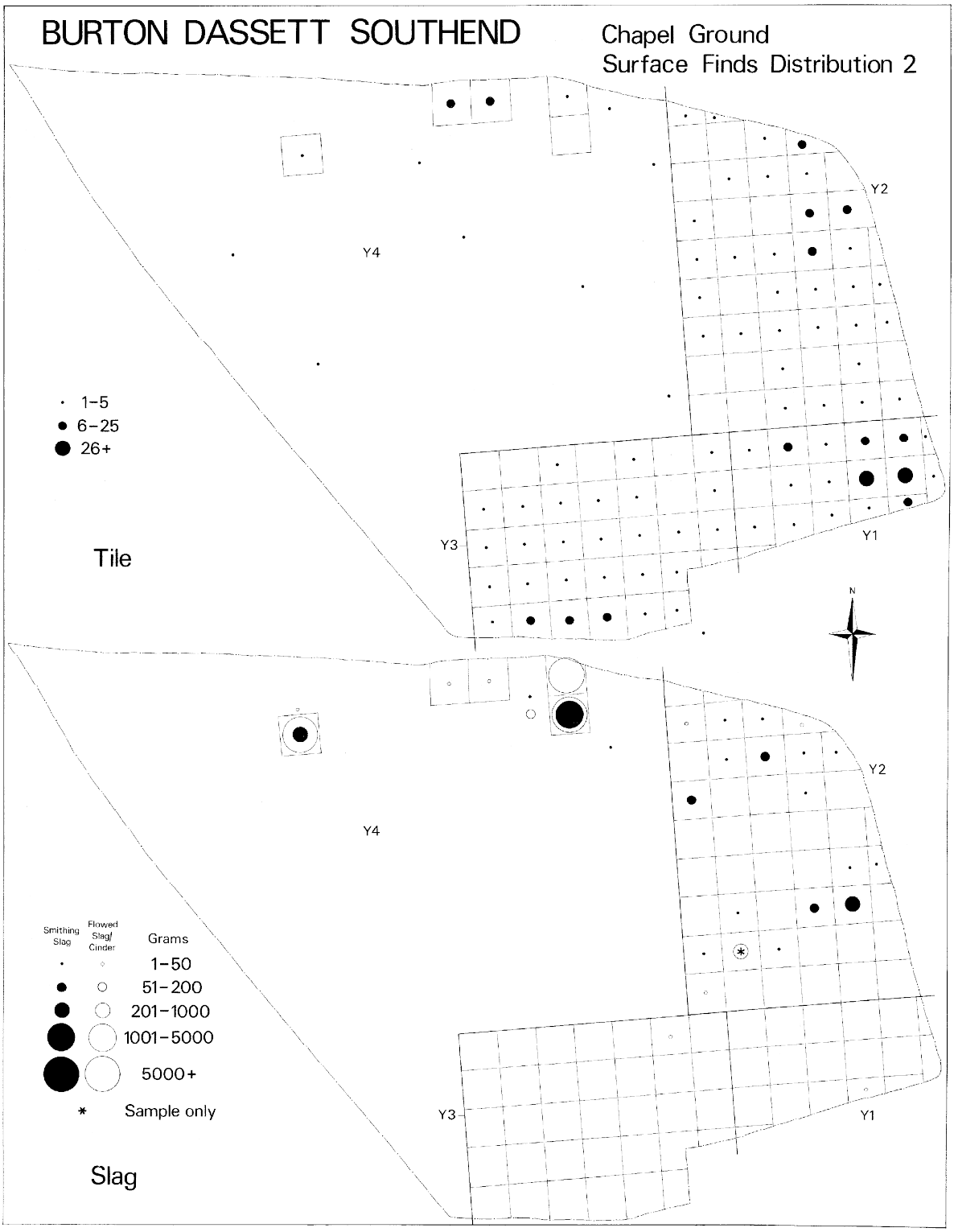

Figure 6.5.6
Chapel Ground 1991- Finds Distributions 2

The medieval pottery was generally of a similar date range to that found in the excavations (late 13th- to late 15th-century).

The area surveyed can be divided into four zones, corresponding to divisions in the earthworks: one area (Y1) to the north-west of the chapel and south of the hollow way; a second, larger area (Y2) covering the tenements to the north of the hollow way; the block including the excavated tenements (Y3); and the rest of the field to the north and west (Y4).

Area Y1

Area Y1 lay on the south side of the hollow way; it covered 18 squares and part squares and measured *c*102m long x *c*55m back from the hollow way. The greatest concentrations of rubble and material were found in this area suggesting that it was densely settled. The main rubble concentrations were on the east side presumably from the buildings fronting the north-south road. There was also a spread of rubble along the hollow way deriving from the road metalling. Smaller quantities of rubble, just south of the hollow way, were not enough to prove the existence of buildings on this frontage, because the rubble could have derived from boundary walls, but sufficient to keep the possibility open. There was also a concentration of tile to the east in the same area as the main rubble spreads and a more extensive concentration of animal bone over the eastern half of the block. This area also produced a hone (no 80) and a post-medieval bone knife handle (no 8).

As well as a scatter of 13th- to 15th-century pottery over the whole area there was also a concentration of post-medieval material to the east in the same vicinity as the spreads of building rubble. This raises the possibility of a post-medieval building or buildings in Chapel Ground. The pottery seems to be 17th/18th-century rather than 16th-century, and is unlikely to represent continuity of occupation with the medieval settlement. There is a reference from 1582 to a cottage bounded by Town Field to the west, north and south, but this has previously been tentatively placed east of the road (Figure 1.9 in printed volume). The 1769 map shows no building here. Another possibility is that the material was rubbish dumped from the known building on the site of Windmill Cottage on the east side of the road.

Area Y2

Area Y2 covered an area of 46 squares, measuring *c*105m x *c*150m, to the north of the hollow way. It contained lesser amounts of rubble, but again the concentrations were to the east and will mainly have come from buildings fronting the road. Some of the rubble was east of the probable buildings and may derive from paved forecourts similar to those on the excavated tenements.

Densities of pottery, animal bone and tile were also less in this area. Of the three areas within the settlement Area Y2 did contain most of the smithing slag collected, with slight concentrations to the north and south of the area (Figure 6.5.6). However the amounts found were small and probably do not represent more than a background level. The pottery evidence suggests occupation dating mainly from the 13th to the 15th centuries. The only other notable find was a glass bead (no 35).

This area also contained the three scatters of modern material. The two western ones probably related to the recent use of the field as a cricket pitch, deriving from the remains of the pavilion (visible on the 1969 air photograph, above, Figure 6.3.3).

Area Y3

Area Y3, 140m x *c*95m, covered 34 squares corresponding roughly to the excavated tenements. It had a fairly marked spread of rubble over its south edge from the buildings fronting the east-west street. To the west this spread was rather diffuse, presumably because it derived largely from the excavation backfill and spoil heaps. There were also concentrations of pottery and animal bone, and, to a lesser extent, tile, in the same vicinity. As one would expect the date range of the pottery was similar to that from the excavation with some 13th-century material but most being of 14th- to 15th-century date.

The northern parts of the tenements were devoid of rubble suggesting that buildings, or stone buildings at any rate, were confined to the south ends of the tenements (and within the excavated area). There was also a noticeable lack of rubble from the hollow way north of the tenements suggesting that the metalled street to the east degenerated here to an unpaved back lane, although it could be that the topsoil here was deeper.

Area Y4

The rest of the field to the north and west fell into Area Y4. Allowing for the less intensive collection methods used over this area the densities here of pottery, animal bone and tile did seem to be less, which supports the previous suggestion that this area was outside the settlement. One significant rubble spread was identified on the north edge of the field (Figure 6.5.4). This coincided with a slight earthwork mound which was itself immediately south of a small enclosure, perhaps a sheepfold, shown on the 1886 1:2500 OS map. The rubble was probably demolition material from this or a yard associated with it and not connected with the medieval settlement.

The other noteworthy features in this area were two large concentrations of slag (Figure 6.5.6). It was originally thought that these might represent medieval ironworking outside the settlement, but the main slag component in the concentrations proved to be a distinctive flowed slag/cinder that may have derived from a boiler or steam engine firebox. The material thus seems to be post-medieval; it might have derived from a steam engine used in the field or was perhaps imported from the railway as metalling to provide a hard standing for some other activity.

Conclusion

Although the small quantities of material recovered mean that the conclusions drawn need to be regarded as tentative, the 1991 fieldwalking produced much useful information. It tended to confirm the extent of settlement and buildings suggested by the earthwork and air photograph evidence, and the pottery gave some idea of their date range. It also added a number of useful details to our knowledge of the settlement: the existence of post-medieval activity in Area Y1, the confirmation that there were no major building complexes over the north part of the excavated tenements, and the evidence for the metalling of the hollow way to the east and its probable degeneration into a unsurfaced track to the north of the excavated tenements.