

Report PA07-21783T



nps archaeology

**Archaeological Evaluation at the
Former Highways Depot, Station Road,
Hillington, Norfolk**

ENF128198



Prepared for
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Location:	Former Highways Depot, Station Road, Hillington, Norfolk
District:	Kings Lynn and West Norfolk
Grid Ref.:	TF 7210 2525
Planning Ref.:	Planning reference
HER No.:	ENF128198
OASIS Ref.:	124905
Client:	NPS Property Consultants Limited
Dates of Fieldwork:	15-23 December 2011

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was conducted for NPS Property Consultants ahead of a proposal to develop the site of the former Highways Depot, Station Road, Hillington, Norfolk for residential purposes. Six trenches, each measuring 30m x 1.80m (324m²) were excavated to provide an approximate 5% evaluation of the development site (7,000m²).

Each of the trenches contained archaeological remains - a total of fourteen ditches and gullies, seven pits, two ponds and a possible trackway/path were recorded. The ditches, gullies and trackway/path were undatable. Two of the pits were modern and the remainder were undated.

One of the ponds produced finds of late 12th- to 14th-century date, the other produced finds of Mid/Late Saxon to 18th-/20th-century date.

An undated chalk and flint built trackway/path may have traversed the site from north-east to south-west.

The finds assemblage, much of which was unstratified, was concentrated in date between Mid-Late Saxon and the 14th century. This may at least provide a general guide to the dating of the pits that are not modern and the ditches and gullies at the site.

The high level of the water table resulted in a damp if not marshy environment possibly stretching back to the Saxon period or possibly even earlier.

The general paucity of datable finds recovered during the work suggests, perhaps unsurprisingly, an absence of occupation of any intensity at the site until the present day.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A proposal to develop the site of the former Highways Depot, Station Road, Hillington (TF 7210 2525) (Fig. 1) for residential purposes was determined by Norfolk Historic Environment Service to require evaluation by trial trenching to be undertaken to assess the potential effects of the proposals on the archaeological resource in accordance with the principles set out in *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (2010) superseded by the *National Planning Policy Framework* (2012). The evaluation would utilise a combination of mechanical and manual excavation techniques to allow an informed decision to be

made regarding further mitigation that may be required once the results of the archaeological evaluation are known..

In order to comply with the Norfolk Historic Environment Service request, NPS Property Consultants Limited instructed NPS Archaeology to undertake the programme of archaeological works. The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NPS Archaeology (Ref. PA07/21783T/DW). This work was commissioned by NPS Property Consultants Ltd. and funded by Norfolk County Council.

The project consisted of the excavation of six trial trenches, each measuring 30m by 1.8m (324m) to provide an approximate 5% evaluation of the development site area (7,000m).

The proposed development is located c.150m north-west of the medieval St Mary's Church and immediately to the east of the site of a recent development for a hospice where artefacts of Roman, Saxon and early medieval date have been recovered.

Project Aims

- The Programme of Archaeological Work is required to recover, by archaeological evaluation, information relating to the extent, date, phasing, character, function, status and significance of the site. A determination of the state of preservation of any features, deposits and structures is also required.
- Period resource assessments set out in the document Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties (Glazebrook 1997; Brown and Glazebrook 2000) pose specific research questions for periods ranging from the palaeolithic to the modern period. Existing information indicates that the proposed development site may contain archaeological remains of Roman, Saxon and medieval date. The aims of the archaeological work are summarised as follows:
 - i. *To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the proposed area.*
 - ii. *To determine the extent, condition, nature, quality and date of any archaeological remains occurring within the site and the possible impacts of the proposed development on them.*
 - iii. *Ensure that any archaeological features discovered during trial trenching are identified, sampled and recorded and, where it is desirable, recommendations for their preservation in situ are made.*
 - iiiv. *To establish, as far as possible, the extent, character, stratigraphic sequence and date of archaeological features and deposits, and the nature of the activities which occurred at the site during the various periods or phases of its occupation*
 - v. *To establish the palaeoenvironmental potential of subsurface deposits by ensuring that any deposits with the potential to yield palaeoenvironmental data are sampled*

and submitted for assessment to the appropriate specialists.

- vi. To explore evidence for social, economic and industrial activity.*
- vii. To disseminate the archaeological data recovered by the evaluation in the form of a formal report which will provide the basis for decisions regarding further archaeological intervention and mitigation proposals.*

The site archive is currently held by NPS Archaeology and on completion of the project will be deposited with Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS), following the relevant policies on archiving standards.

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The underlying solid geology at the site is Mudstone of the Gault Formation laid down during the Cretaceous period. This is overlain by Lowestoft Till, a Quaternary glacial deposit which consists chiefly of sands and gravels (http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html).

The sub-soil observed at the site is chiefly mid brown/grey brown sand silt, ranging in depth from 0.18m to 0.50m.

The topsoil was a dark grey/grey brown sandy silt with an average depth of 0.19m. This essentially level site is at an elevation of 27.0m OD and is bounded by residential development to the north, east and south with open arable fields to the west. On a larger topographical scale the landscape dips away gently to the valley of the River Babingley which flows from west to east approximately 1km to the north.

Drainage at the proposed development was poor with some standing surface water. The water table was encountered in all of the trenches at a depth either coinciding with or slightly above the surface of the underlying natural geology.

The most recent use of the site was as a council highways depot which has been demolished and removed leaving patchy scrub vegetation.

The 15th-century St Mary's church is situated c.150m east of the site.



Plate 1. General site shot looking west

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Domesday entry for the village of Hillington indicates that there was a small settlement there before the Norman Conquest (1066). By 1086 the land was held by three men, one of whom, William De Warenne, is considered to have been one of the most powerful and wealthy individuals in the country. The site lies close to the probable site of the medieval centre of Hillington, some 300m to the east (NHER17441). Possible enclosures, trackways and a pond are visible on aerial photographs. Metal detecting in this area has recovered medieval buckles, medieval and post-medieval coins, a post-medieval jetton and undated weights or spindle whorls.

The 15th century church of St Marys (NHER3515) is situated 150m to the south-east of the development site.

A search of the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) was undertaken and the results are summarised below.

Previous archaeological work in the area includes an evaluation (NHER37305) conducted 100m to the east of the development site on land adjacent to the Old Rectory (Warsop 2002). A possible medieval midden deposit and a pit containing residual Romano-British and Early to Middle Saxon finds were recorded.

An archaeological watching brief was conducted in 2011 (HER ENF 127089) on land immediately to the west of the site prior to development of the area as a Hospice. Finds included metal and ceramic artefacts of Early, Mid and Late Anglo-Saxon and medieval date (Barnett 2012).

A plethora of prehistoric to post-medieval findspots are located in the vicinity and a selection of those closest to the development site is listed here.

NHER 16514 Pottery sherds of Late Saxon to medieval date were found in an area 100m to the east of the site.

NHER 39307 Metal detecting in an area adjacent to the south of the site produced part of a Bronze age chisel, Roman coins and metal finds, a 4th- or 5th-century AD strap fitting, an Early Saxon brooch and wrist clasp, a Late Saxon brooch, weight, finger ring and stirrup strap mount, a 17th-century coin weight from Amsterdam and post-medieval German jettons.

NHER 37192 Metal detecting in the field immediately to the west of the site produced a Roman brooch, a Late Saxon brooch and an undated weight.

NHER 35913 In an area close to the south of the site metal detecting produced an Early Saxon small long brooch.

NHER 35752 Close to the putative centre of medieval Hillington (NHER17441, some 300m to the east of the site) a metal detectorist unearthed a 13th- to 14th-century gold finger ring set with a polished garnet.

NHER 1398 Located approximately 600m to the west of the site is the Icknield Way, a prehistoric trackway reused as a Romano-British route and a medieval droveway.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of this evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence or absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

Six trenches, each measuring 30m x 1.80m (324m²) were excavated to provide an approximate 5% evaluation of the development site (7000m²) (Fig. 2).

Machine excavation was carried out with a hydraulic 360° excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and operated under constant archaeological supervision. Spits were removed in 100mm increments until natural ground or archaeological deposits were identified. All trenches were CAT-scanned prior to excavation and fenced using Netlon high visibility fencing and appropriate warning signage was displayed.

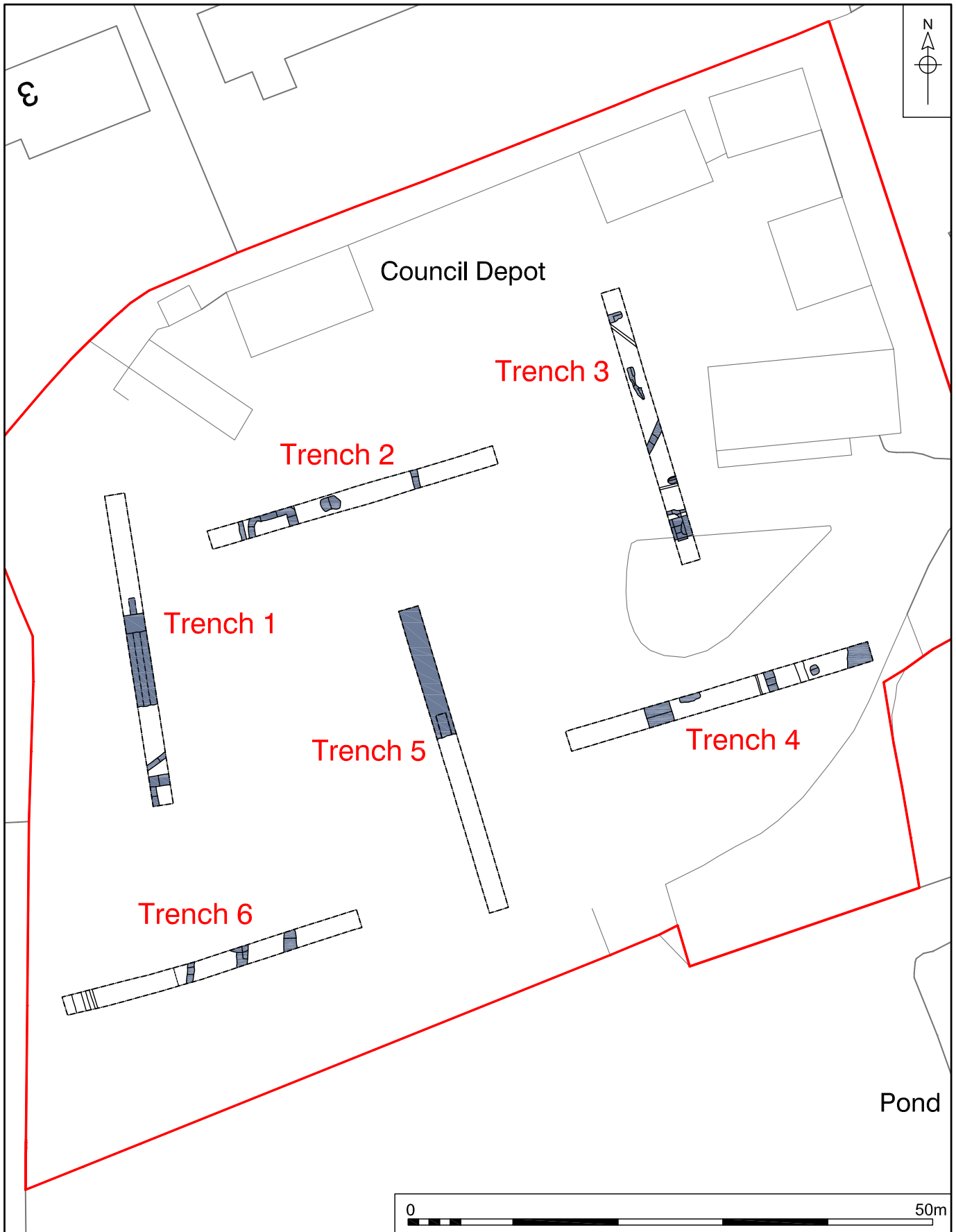
Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal-detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds other than those which were obviously modern, were retained for inspection.

Environmental samples were taken from three deposits - a possible buried soil [79] and two deposits ([4] and [76]) from possible ponds.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NPS Archaeology pro forma. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Colour, monochrome and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits where appropriate.

The trenches were laid out using a GPS900 RTK Rover. Ordnance datum heights were provided by the GPS for either end of the trenches.

The work took place in wet weather.




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Figure 2. Location of trenches. Scale 1:500

5.0 RESULTS

Six trenches were excavated during the course of this evaluation (Fig. 2) all of which contained archaeological features. The results of the evaluation are tabulated below in numerical order by trench.

Trench 1				
		Figs 2 and 3		
		Location		
		Orientation	North-west to south-east	
		North-west end	TF72089 25278	
		South-east end	TF72094 25249	
		Dimensions		
		Length	30.0m	
		Width	1.80m	
		Depth	0.92m max, 1.08m min	
		Levels		
North-west top	27.009OD			
South-east top	27.339mOD			
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
[58]	Cut	Ditch	0.16m	0.92-1.08m
[59]	Deposit	Mid greyish brown silt sand, fill of [58]	0.16m	0.92-1.08m
[60]	Cut	Ditch	0.20m	0.94-1.14m
[61]	Deposit	Mid greyish brown sand silt, fill of [60]	0.20m	0.94-1.14m
[62]	Cut	Ditch	0.10m	0.94-1.04m
[63]	Deposit	Mid greyish brown silt sand, fill of [62]	0.10m	0.94-1.04m
[78]	Cut	Trackway	0.15m	0.95-1.10m
[75]	Cut	Pond	0.14m	0.96-1.10m
[76]	Deposit	Dark grey silt sand, fill of [75]	0.14m	0.96-1.10m
[77]	Deposit	Clunch trackway, fill of [78]	0.15m	0.95-1.10m
[79]	Deposit	Mid to dark sandy silt, chalk flecked ?buried soil	0.28m	0.80-1.08
[84]	Deposit	Dark grey sand silt topsoil	0.09m	0.25-0.34m
[85]	Deposit	Mid brown silt sand sub-soil	0.21m	0.34-0.55m
[92]	Deposit	Dark grey sand silt topsoil	0.10m	0.00-0.10m
Discussion				

Trench 1

Trench 1 contained three ditches, a pond and a ?trackway

The three ditches ([58], [60] and [62]) recorded in Trench 1 were clustered towards the south-east end. All appeared to truncate the surface of the natural geology and were sealed by sub-soil [85]. The fills of the features appeared to have accumulated naturally and were waterlogged.

The 2.0m long section of ditch [58] within the trench was 0.60m wide and was orientated north-west to south-east. This undated feature had steep slightly concave sides and a flat base. Ditch [58] was truncated by a north-west to south-east orientated ditch [60].

Ditch [60] was 1.0m in width with steep, slightly concave sides and a flat base. The ditch spanned the width of the trench and extended beyond the limits of excavation. Situated almost immediately to the north of ditch [60] was smaller ditch [62], measuring 0.45m wide with a north-east to south-west orientation.

This feature (ditch [62]) had quite gently sloping sides and a flat base and also extended beyond the limits of excavation to the north-east and south-west. Given the waterlogged nature of the site due to the high water table it would seem probable that these three ditches were dug for the purposes of drainage.

The central portion of the trench was occupied by a large feature ([75]) which measured approximately 7.50m from north-west to south-east and extended beyond the limits of excavation to the north-east and south-west. The feature was found to be relatively shallow with a gently sloping south-east edge and a reasonably level base. The fill of the suspected pond produced a small quantity of pottery, two sherds of refined white earthenware of 18th- to 20th-century date and a sherd of Thetford-type ware dating to between the 10th and 11th centuries. Two metal finds were recovered - a copper alloy hooked tag of Middle or Late Saxon date and a copper alloy brooch which dates to the 13th or 14th centuries. The environmental evidence (Sample <3>) revealed a waterlogged assemblage that was surprisingly limited in composition, being largely composed of robust pieces of waterlogged root and stem. However, it would appear that the pond had been situated within an area of damp grassland, which was possibly close/adjacent to an area of cultivated land

The remaining north-west portion of the trench (11.50m) was occupied by what appeared to be a buried soil ([79]). The deposit had an average depth of 0.28m and directly overlay the natural geology. Three pottery sherds were recovered from the deposit, one of Thetford-type ware (10th- to 11th-century), one of Early medieval ware (11th- to 12th-century) and one of Grimston ware (Late 12th- to 14th-century). Analysis of the environmental sample taken from this deposit (Sample <1>) would appear to indicate that the buried soil formed within an area of predominantly open, short-turfed grassland, which probably included a small element of wetland or marsh habitat.

The fill of feature [76] and buried soil [79] could be contemporary.

North-east to south-west aligned linear feature [77] consisting of chalk with flint gravel inclusions was recorded, perhaps significantly, on the boundary between pond [75] and buried soil [79]. Although the relationship was not absolutely clear, the feature probably truncated both deposits and may also have been broadly contemporary. This 1.75m-wide feature, tentatively interpreted as a path or narrow trackway, was possibly also seen further to the north-east in Trench 3 and could border pond [3] in Trench 5.

A 0.15m-thick layer of orange-yellow crushed stone sealed all deposits in the trench including original topsoil [84]. This material had presumably been laid down as hardstanding during the time the site was occupied by a council highways' depot. A thin topsoil ([92]) had formed above the stone.

The water table was encountered at approximately the same height as the surface of the natural geology (which consisted of a pale silvery grey sand).

Unstratified finds recovered from the spoil included three 12th-century pottery sherds, a fragment of medieval brick and a fragment of lava quern of Roman to medieval date

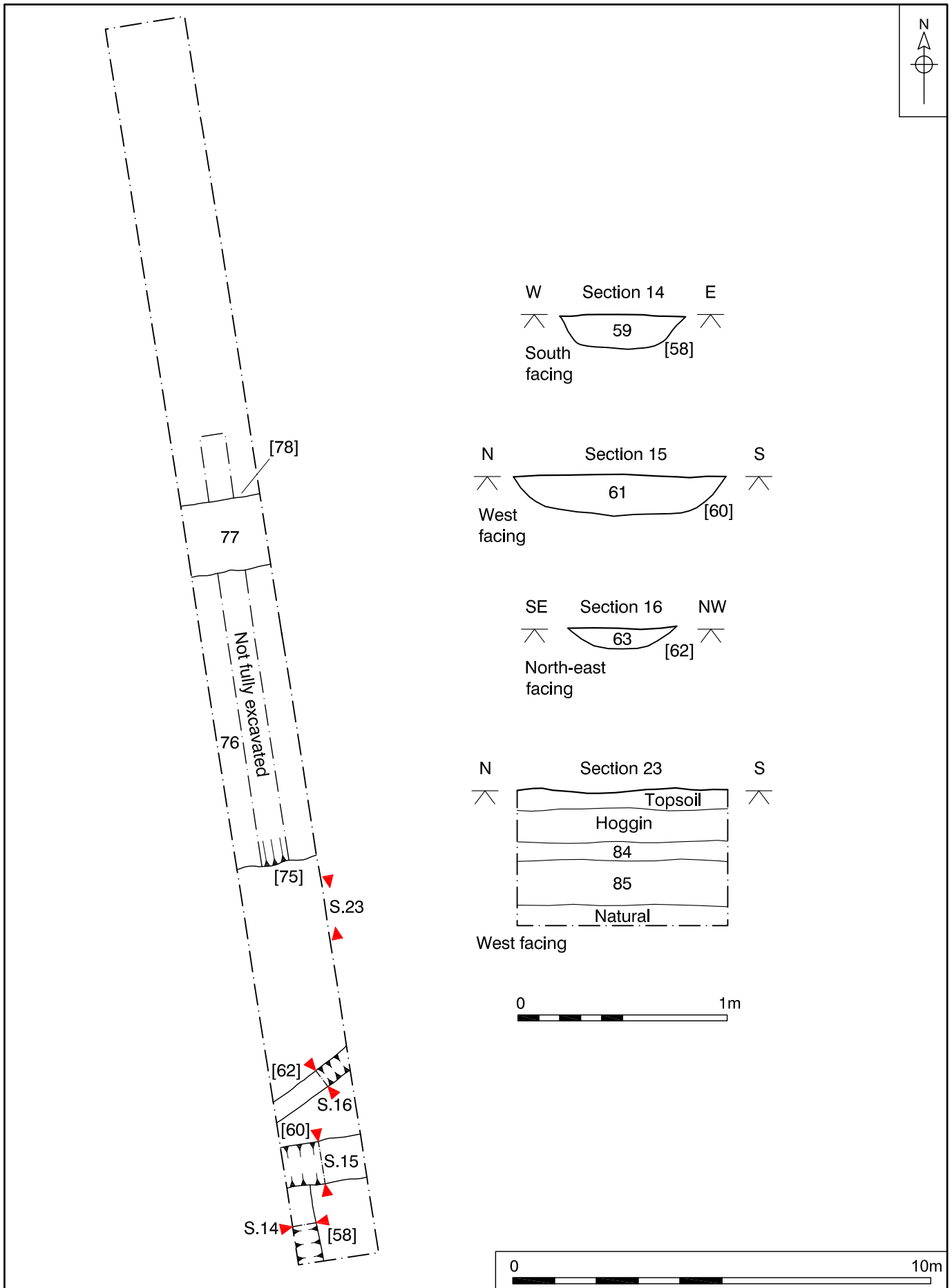



Figure 3. Trench 1, plan and sections. Scale 1:125 and 1:25

Trench 2				
	Figs 2 and 4			
	Location			
	Orientation	North-east to south-west		
	North-east end	TF72127 25283		
	South-west end	TF72098 25274		
	Dimensions			
	Length	30.0m		
	Width	1.80m		
	Depth	0.93m SW-0.76m NE		
	Levels			
North-east top	27.09m OD			
South-west top	26.96mOD			
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
[18]	Cut	Ditch	0.12m	0.81-0.93m
[19]	Deposit	Mid to dark grey brown sand silt, rare to occasional flint pebbles, wet, friable	0.12m	0.81-0.93m
[20]	Cut	Ditch	0.10m	0.86-0.96m
[21]	Deposit	Mid to dark grey brown sand silt, rare to occasional flint pebbles, wet, friable	0.10m	0.86-0.96m
[22]	Cut	Ditch	0.07m	0.93-1.0m
[23]	Deposit	Mid to dark grey brown sand silt, rare to occasional flint pebbles, wet, friable	0.07m	0.93-1.0m
[24]	Cut	Ditch	0.10m	1.00-1.10m
[25]	Deposit	Mid to dark grey brown sand silt, rare to occasional flint pebbles, wet, friable	0.10m	1.0m-1.10m
[26]	Cut	Pit	0.30m	0.78-1.08m
[27]	Deposit	Mid grey brown sand silt, rare to occasional flint pebbles, wet, friable	0.30m	0.78-1.08m
[28]	Deposit	Dark grey brown sandy silt, occasional flint pebble, friable, topsoil	0.14m	0.30-0.44m
[29]	Deposit	Mid greyish brown sand silt, rare flint pebble, wet, friable, sub-soil	0.50m	0.44-0.94m
[41]	Cut	Ditch	0.18m	0.76-0.94m

Trench 2

[42]	Deposit	Mid grey brown sand silt, rare to occasional flint pebbles, wet, friable	0.18m	0.76-0.94m
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Discussion

Four features were recorded in Trench 2; pit [26] ditches [24] and [41] and gullies ([18]/[20]/[22]).

Sub-oval pit [26] was located in the central portion of the trench. The feature measured 1.90m from south-west to north-east and 1.11m from north-west to south-east. Steep sided with a concave base, the pit was a maximum of 0.30m deep. No finds were recovered from the feature and a function could not be ascribed to it.

Ditch [41] was 0.66m wide with a bowl-shaped profile was recorded some 8.0m from the north-east end of the trench. North-west to south-east aligned, the ditch was undated and again appeared to have silted up naturally.

Two features were recorded in close proximity towards the south-west end of the trench. The south-westernmost was an undated, 0.10m deep ditch [24] on a similar alignment and with a broadly similar width to that of ditch [41].

Adjacent to and north-east of ditch [24] were three gullies ([18], [20] and [22]) arranged to form three sides of a sub-rectangular feature. The gullies, apparently contemporary, were an average of 0.10m deep and ranged in width from 0.50m to 0.85m. No dating evidence was collected from the feature which may have formed the north-west end of a small enclosure.

All the features in this trench were apparently sealed by sub-soil [29] with an average depth of 0.50m, which in turn was sealed by topsoil [28] with an average depth of 0.14m.

As was the case in Trench 1 a layer of orange-yellow crushed stone sealed all deposits in the trench including original topsoil [28]. A thin turf had formed over the deposit.

The water table approximately coincided with the surface of the natural geology which consisted of a pale orange silt sand.

A single sherd of pottery of 10th- to 11th-century date and a prehistoric struck flint were recovered from the spoil ([89]) from the trench.

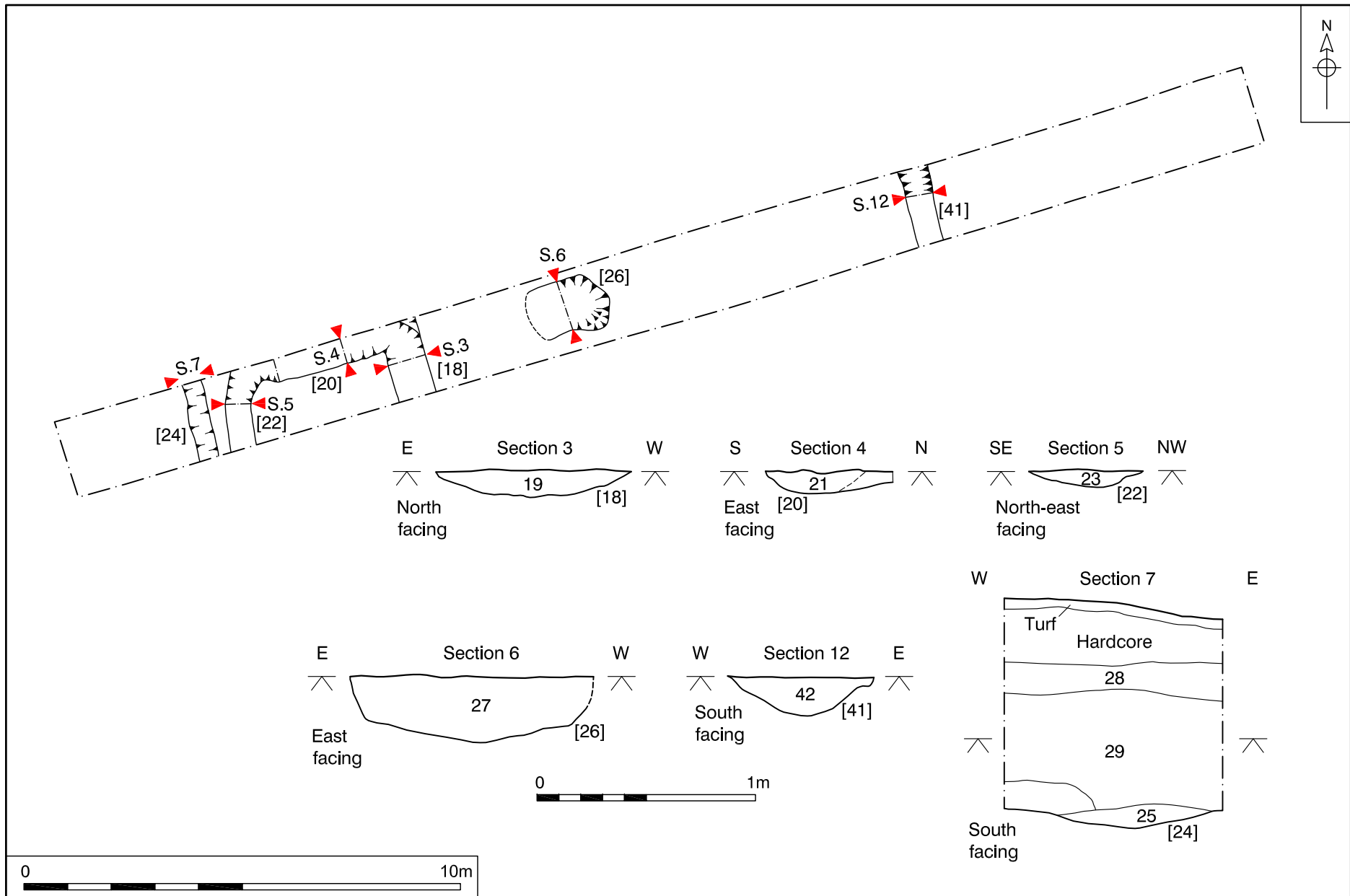


Figure 4. Trench 2, plan and sections. Scale 1:125 and 1:25

Trench 3



Figs 2 and 5

Location

Orientation North-west - to south-east

North-west end TF72135 25301

South-west end TF72144 25272

Dimensions

Length 30.0m

Width 1.80m

Depth NW-1.07m, SE- 0.92m

Levels

North-west top 27.31m OD

South-east top 27.18mOD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
[05]	Cut	Gully	0.09m	0.88m-0.97m
[06]	Deposit	Mid grey brown sand silt with sparse flints. Fill of [05]	0.09m	0.88m-0.97m
[07]	Cut	Ditch	0.28m	0.88m-1.16m
[08]	Deposit	Mid grey brown sand silt with tips of common flints. Fill of [05]	0.28m	0.88m-1.16m
[09]	Cut	Modern pit ?	0.09m	0.92m-1.01m
[10]	Deposit	Pale grey sand silt with frequent flint gravel. Fill of [09]	0.09m	0.92m-1.01m
[11]	Cut	Track/path ?	0.21m	0.92m-1.13m
[12]	Deposit	Pale grey sand silt with common chalk and flint gravel. Fill of [11]	0.21m	0.92m-1.13m
[13]	Cut	Pit	0.54m	0.92m-1.46m
[14]	Deposit	Dark grey sand silt with sparse gravel. Fill of [13]	0.41m	1.06m-1.46m
[15]	Deposit	Cream brown gravel dump. Fill of [13]	0.14m	1.24m-1.38m
[16]	Deposit	Mid grey brown sand silt with common flints. Fill of [13]	0.42m	0.92m-1.34m
[17]	Deposit	Layer	0.002m	0.88m-0.90m
[43]	Cut	Pit	0.27m	0.88m-1.15m
[44]	Deposit	Mid-dark grey brown sand silt, sparse flint pebbles. Fill of [43]	0.27m	0.88m-1.15m
[45]	Cut	Beam slot ?	0.13m	0.96-1.09m

Trench 3				
[46]	Deposit	Mid grey brown sand silt with sparse flints. Fill of [45]	0.13m	0.96-1.09m
[47]	Cut	Beam slot ?	0.11m	0.96m-1.07m
[48]	Deposit	Mid grey brown sand silt with sparse flints. Fill of [47]	0.11m	0.96m-1.07m
[49]	Cut	Beam slot ?	0.16m	0.96m-1.12m
[50]	Deposit	Mid grey brown sand silt with sparse flints. Fill of [49]	0.16m	0.96m-1.12m
[51]	Cut	Ditch terminus	0.29m	1.07m-1.34m
[52]	Deposit	Mid grey brown sand silt with sparse flints. Fill of [51]	0.29m	1.07m-1.34m
[54]	Deposit	Mid grey brown sand silt, sub-soil	0.35m	0.45m-0.80m
[55]	Deposit	Dark grey brown sandy silt, topsoil	0.15m	0.30m-0.45m
[56]	Deposit	Pale orange brown sandy silt, make-up layer	0.07m	0.23m-0.30m
[57]	Deposit	Dark grey brown sandy silt, topsoil/make/up layer	0.23m	0.0m-0.23m

Discussion

Eight features of archaeological interest were recorded in Trench 3 comprising three pits ([09], [13], [43]), four linear features ([05], [07], [11] and [51]) and a possible construction trench or beam slot ([45]/[47]/[49]).

The terminus of a north-east to south-west aligned ditch [51] was recorded 2.50m from the north-west end of the trench. A 1.30m length of the ditch was available for inspection within the trench. The ditch was 0.80m wide, narrowing near to the terminus to 0.60m. The nature of the fill suggested the feature had silted up naturally. No finds were recovered from the feature.

Roughly 5.0m further to the south-east from the ditch terminus a short, slightly amorphously-shaped, linear feature [45]/[47]/[49] was recorded (Plates 3, 4 and 5). Approximately north-west to south-east aligned, the feature measured 3.30m in length and was a maximum of 0.60m wide narrowing to 0.25m centrally. The sides of the feature, although variable, were generally quite steep. The base was largely uneven and undulating with depressions adjacent to the ends of the feature which were possibly post settings. The fill of the feature yielded a single sherd of the locally-produced Grimston version of Thetford-type ware (dating to between the 10th and 11th centuries) along with a quantity of butchered animal bone from several different domestic species and over 0.5kg of oyster shell. This assemblage of refuse indicates the presence of domestic habitation in the vicinity - possibly in the Late Saxon period if the pottery sherd is not redeposited from another context.

Approximately 8.0m from the south-east end of the trench sub-oval pit [43] was located. Bowl-shaped in profile, the feature extended into the north-eastern section of the trench but had a long axis measurement of approximately 1.10m. The fill of the pit ([44]) produced no finds and its composition and the morphology of the pit were not indicative of a specific purpose; the function of the pit is therefore elusive.

A cluster of five features were found to be present towards the south-east end of the trench (Plate 2). The north-westernmost of the features was a north-west to south-east aligned gully [05] that was 0.35m wide. This undated gully with a bowl-shaped profile appeared to have silted up naturally.

Trench 3

Only 0.30m to the south-east of the gully was another linear feature on a similar alignment. This 0.97m wide, undated ditch ([07]) had 45° sloping sides and a flat base and again the nature of the fill [08] suggested natural silting.

Running roughly parallel to and adjacent with the ditch was another linear feature, but of a different nature. Filled with compacted chalk and flint gravel, feature [11] was 0.75m wide with a gently sloping north-western side and a steeper south-western side. No dating evidence was recovered from the feature which closely resembled the possible trackway/path recorded in Trench 1.

Both the ditch [07] and the possible track [11] truncated an earlier steep sided, flat bottomed pit [13] which was located between the two. The undated sub-oval pit, which had a maximum recorded width of 0.93m from north-west to south-east, had been episodically backfilled with a possible mixture of domestic refuse and gravel dumps.

The upper 0.10m of possible track [11] was truncated to the south-east by large modern feature [09] which extended beyond the south-east end of the trench making the feature at least 2.50m wide from north-west to south-east. It was noted that the feature, probably a large pit, contained modern brick and other building materials. The feature may well be a waste disposal pit associated with the demolition of a former council highways' depot.

Three modern land drains were present within the trench.

As far as could be established all features (apart from modern pit [09] and the modern land drains) were sealed by sub-soil [54] which was in turn sealed by topsoil [55].

As was the case in all trenches a layer of orange brown crushed stone ([56]) had been laid down over the trench as hardstanding during the time the site was occupied by the council highways' depot. In Trench 3 the crushed stone was sealed by additional make-up layer [57].

The water table approximately coincided with the surface of the natural geology which consisted of orange brown sand silt.



Plate 2. Trench 3; gully [05], ditch [07], pit [13], track/path [11] and pit [09], looking north-east

Trench 3



Plate 3. Trench 3; south-east end of feature [45] looking west



Plate 4. Trench 3; central portion of feature [47] looking east

Trench 3



Plate 5. Trench 3; north-west end of feature [49] looking west

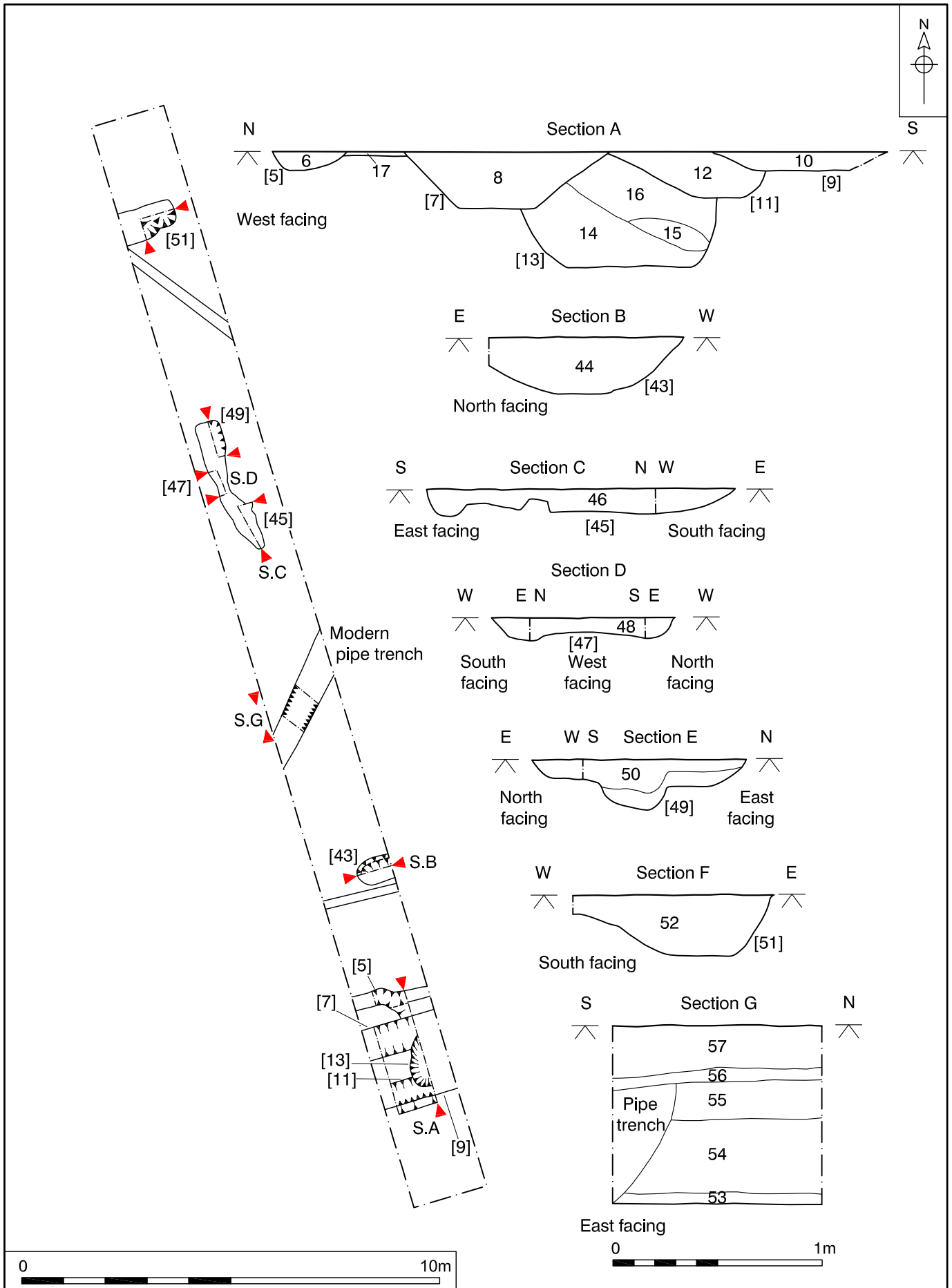


Figure 5. Trench 3, plan and sections. Scale 1:125 and 1:25

Trench 4



Figs 2 and 6

Location

Orientation North- east to south-west

North-east end TF 72161 25264

South-west end TF 72132 25255

Dimensions

Length 30.0m

Width 1.80m

Depth 0.98m NE, 0.74m SW

Levels

North-east top 27.22m OD

South-west top 27.37mOD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
[30]	Cut	Ditch	0.90m	0.25-1.15m
[31]	Deposit	Dark grey organic silt, upper fill of [30]	0.47m	0.25-0.72m
[32]	Deposit	Pale grey silt sand, primary fill of [30]	0.43m	0.72-1.15m
[33]	Cut	Pit	0.20m	0.67-0.87m
[34]	Deposit	Pale brown clay silt, fill of [33]	0.20m	0.67-0.87m
[35]	Deposit	Slightly peaty dark brown silt topsoil	0.25m	0.10-0.35m
[36]	Deposit	Mid brown sandy silt sub-soil	0.35m	0.35-0.70m
[37]	Cut	Ditch	0.27m	0.87-1.14m
[38]	Deposit	Pale grey sand with lenses of dark grey organic silt, fill of [37]	0.27m	0.87-1.14m
[39]	Cut	Pit	0.26m	0.89-1.15m
[40]	Deposit	Pale grey silt sand with rare flint pebbles, fill of [40]	0.26m	0.89-1.15m
[73]	Cut	Pit	≥0.88m	0.10-≥0.98m
[74]	Deposit	Dark grey sand silt, fill of [73]	≥0.88m	0.10m-≥0.98m

Discussion

Five features of archaeological interest were present in Trench 4 comprising three pits ([33], [39], [73]) and two ditches ([30], [37]).

Large 20th-century refuse pit [73] was found to be present at the north-eastern extremity of the trench. The feature was seen to have been cut from immediately below the topsoil and extended beyond the limits of excavation in all directions excepting south-west. The feature was not fully excavated due to the high water table and because sufficient dating material had already been recovered from the feature to enable its characterisation.

Trench 4

Approximately 3.0m to the south-west a much smaller pit ([39]) was recorded. Sub-circular in plan with an essentially bowl-shaped profile the pit measured 0.79m in diameter. The fill of the feature yielded no dating evidence and a function could not be assigned.

Located 10.0m from the north-east end of the trench was ditch [37]. It was north-west to south-east aligned, 0.78m-wide with uneven sides and a concave base. The feature was undated but appeared to be sealed by sub-soil [36].

Situated some 11.0m from the south-west end of Trench 4 a third pit ([33]) was recorded. This feature measured 1.90m from north-east to south-west and extended beyond the limit of excavation to the north-west, a 0.60m wide portion of the pit being available for inspection within the trench. Again no finds were recovered from the feature, which was sealed by subsoil [36], and no function could be confidently assigned to it.

The south-westernmost feature in the trench was a relatively large, north-west to south-east aligned ditch [30] which was steep sided with a slightly concave base. Measuring a maximum of 2.67m in width this undated ditch was observed to have been cut from high up in the sequence, possibly only sealed by the layer of crushed stone laid down during the recent use of the site as a council highways' depot. The organic nature of upper fill [31] of the ditch suggests it may derive from the decomposition of vegetation growing within the feature and may indicate an original drainage function.

The water table was at least 0.20m above the surface of the natural geology which mainly consisted of a orange sand interspersed with large patches of a greyish green sand.

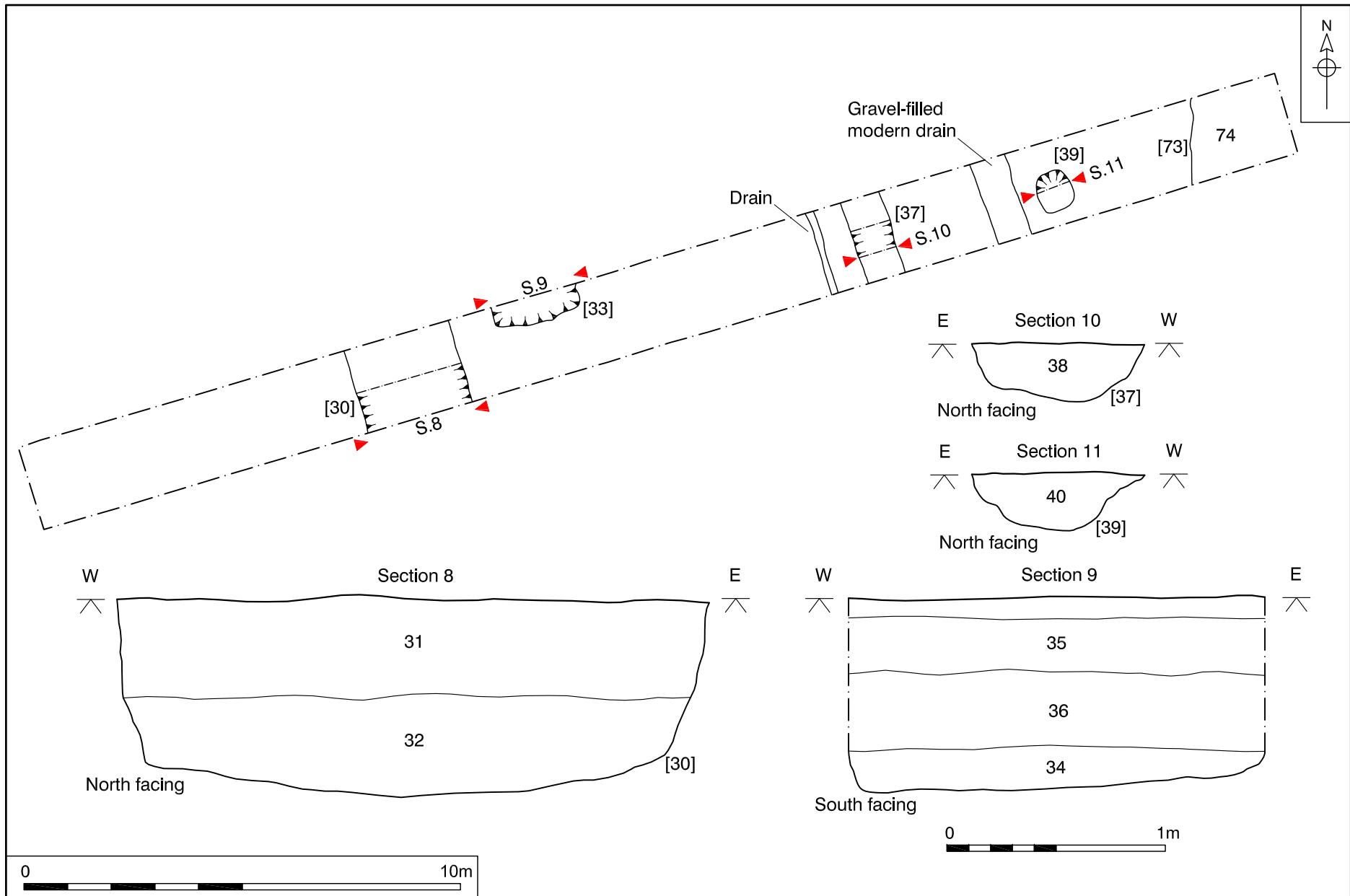



Figure 6. Trench 4, plan and sections. Scale 1:125 and 1:25

Trench 5				
		Figs 2 and 7		
		Location		
		Orientation	North-west - to south-east	
		North-west end	TF 72117 25268	
		South-east end	TF 72126 25239	
		Dimensions		
		Length	30.0m	
		Width	1.80m	
		Depth	0.84m SE, 0.46m NW	
		Levels		
North-west top	26.91m OD			
South-east top	27.73mOD			
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
[03]	Cut	Pond	0.40m	0.72-1.12m
[04]	Deposit	Mid grey silt sand with frequent lenses of dark grey organic silt in upper portion. Occasional flint pebble.	0.40m	0.72-1.12m
[86]	Deposit	Mid-dark grey sand silt topsoil	0.06m	0.20-0.26m
[87]	Deposit	Mid-dark brown silt sand sub-soil	0.34m	0.26-0.59m
[93]	Deposit	Dark grey sand silt topsoil	0.10m	0.00-0.10m
Discussion				
<p>Trench 5 contained single feature [03] which occupied the whole of the trench for a distance of 12.75m from the north-west end and extended beyond the limits of excavation to the north-west, north-east and south-west.</p> <p>Only part of the south-eastern edge of feature [03] was available for inspection. A sondage excavated from this edge into the feature revealed a steep side to a depth of approximately 0.20m which gave way to a more gently sloping transition to a fairly flat base at a depth of 0.40m. Two sherds of pottery were recovered from the fill of the feature ([04]) giving a suggested spot date of late 12th- to 14th-century. The deposit also produced an undated iron nail, a fragment of animal bone from an unspecified mammal and a fragment of lava quern (which could have been in use for grinding flour at any time between the Roman and medieval periods.</p> <p>Environmental analysis of deposits taken from the fill of the pond (Sample <2>) suggests that dumping of midden waste into the feature had occurred.</p> <p>The feature was sealed by a sub-soil [87] which was overlain by topsoil [86]. A 0.10m-thick layer of crushed orange-yellow stone had been laid down over the area of the trench upon which a thin topsoil [93] had become established.</p> <p>The water table approximately coincided with the surface of the natural geology which consisted of an orange sand with pale grey lenses of sand and a small quantity of flint pebbles.</p> <p>A prehistoric struck flint, two nails, an undated strip of iron and a modern aluminium object were recovered from the spoil from the trench.</p>				

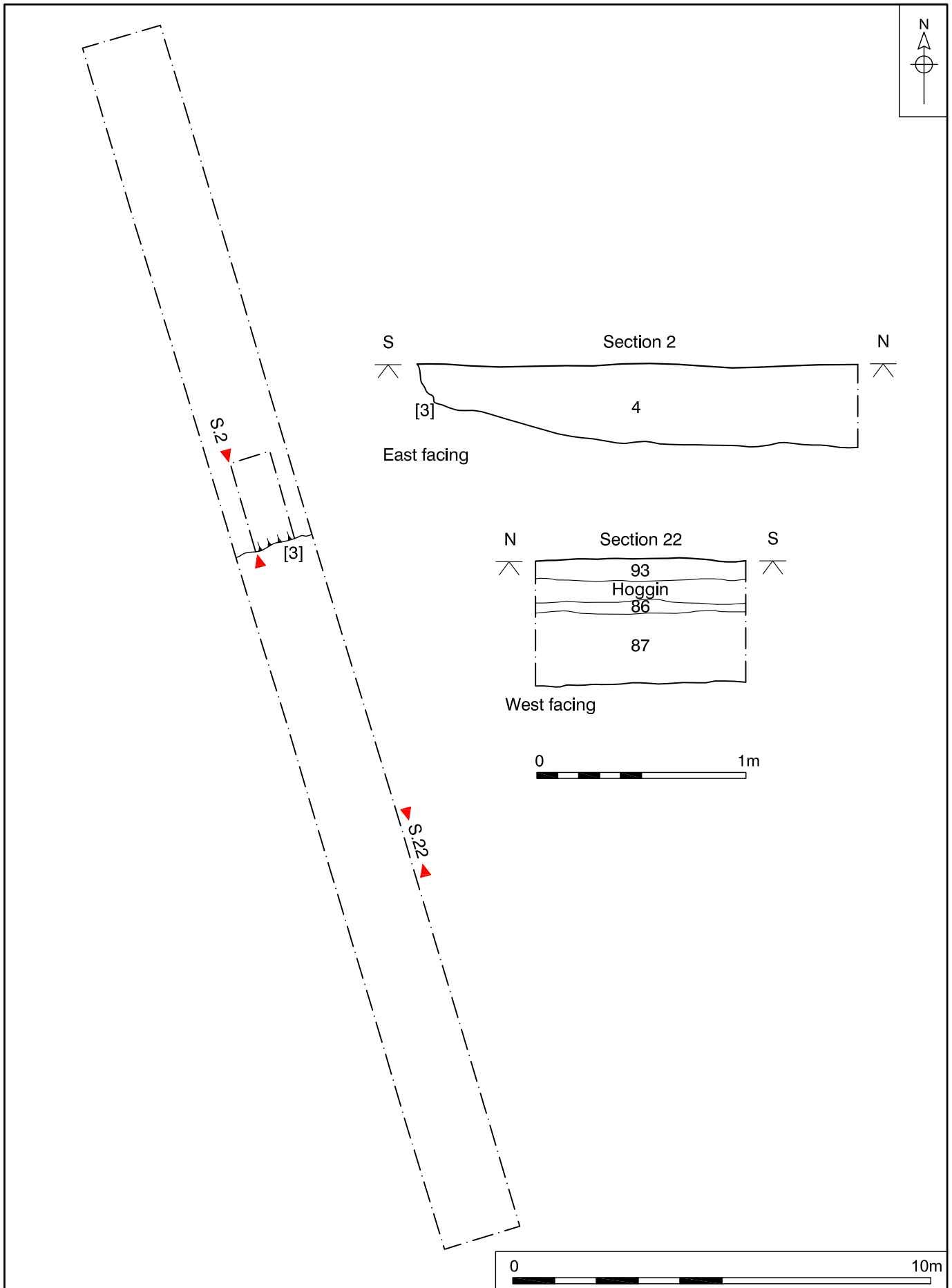



Figure 7. Trench 5, plan and sections. Scale 1:125 and 1:25

Trench 6				
	Figs 2 and 8			
	Location			
	Orientation	North-east - to south-west		
	North-east end	TF 72113 25239		
	South-west end	TF 72084 25230		
	Dimensions			
	Length	30.0m		
	Width	1.80m		
	Depth	1.05m SW, 0.61m NE		
	Levels			
North-east top	27.70m OD			
South-west top	27.45mOD			
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
[64]	Cut	Ditch	0.15m	0.88-1.03m
[65]	Deposit	Mid grey slightly yellow brown sand silt, friable, rare flint stones. Fill of [64]	0.15m	0.88-1.03m
[66]	Cut	Ditch	0.32m	0.80-1.12m
[67]	Deposit	Dark greyish brown sand silt, friable, rare flint stones. Fill of [66]	0.32m	0.80-1.12m
[68]	Cut	Pit	0.21m	0.80-1.01m
[69]	Deposit	Yellowish grey, mid brown sand silt, friable. Fill of [68]	0.21m	0.80-1.01m
[70]	Cut	Ditch	0.23m	0.68-0.91m
[71]	Deposit	Dark grey brown sand silt, frequent oyster shell, occasional flint pebble, friable. Secondary fill of [70]	0.23m	0.68-0.91m
[72]	Deposit	Pale yellowish grey brown silt sand, friable. Primary fill of [70]	0.17m-	0.68-0.85m
[82]	Deposit	Mid-dark grey brown sand silt, topsoil	0.47m	0.25-0.72m
[83]	Deposit	Yellowish grey brown sandy silt, sub-soil	0.18m	0.72-0.91m
Discussion				

Trench 6

Trench 6 contained four features of archaeological interest comprising three ditches ([64], [66], [70]) and pit [68].

The three ditches were all similarly aligned on a north to south orientation.

Ditch [70] was located some 12.50m from the north-east end of the trench. The feature measured 1.20m in width and had very gently sloping sides and a concave base. The primary fill ([72]) was the product of natural silting. In contrast, secondary fill [71] was a midden deposit containing many oyster shells along with butchered animal bone from pig/boar and unspecified mammal.

The second of the three ditches in the trench (ditch [66]) was situated 11.0m from the north-east end of the trench. This steep sided, concave based feature measured 1.05 m across and also contained some domestic refuse in the form of a small quantity of butchered animal bone.

Ditch [66] had been truncated by sub-circular pit [68] which was only partially available for inspection as it extended into the north-western baulk section. The undated pit was steep sided and flat bottomed and measured 1.80m from north-east to south-west. It may have been a rubbish pit.

The third ditch ([64]) was situated some 12.0m from the south-west end. 0.65m wide, the feature recorded in Trench 6 displayed an uneven bowl shaped profile. No finds were collected from the feature which appeared to have silted up naturally.

As far as could be established all the features in this trench were sealed by sub-soil [83] and truncated the natural geological deposits which here consisted of pale silvery orange sand.

The trench was sealed by a 0.20m-thick layer of orange yellow crushed stone, material laid down as hardstanding during the recent use of the site as a council transport depot.

Two large modern drains encased in concrete were noted to be present at the south-western end of the trench. The drains were north-west to south-east aligned and appeared to be on a trajectory parallel to the south-western boundary of the site.

Again the water table hovered just above the surface of the natural geology.

A single sherd of pottery dating between the 10th and 11th centuries was recovered from the spoil from this trench.

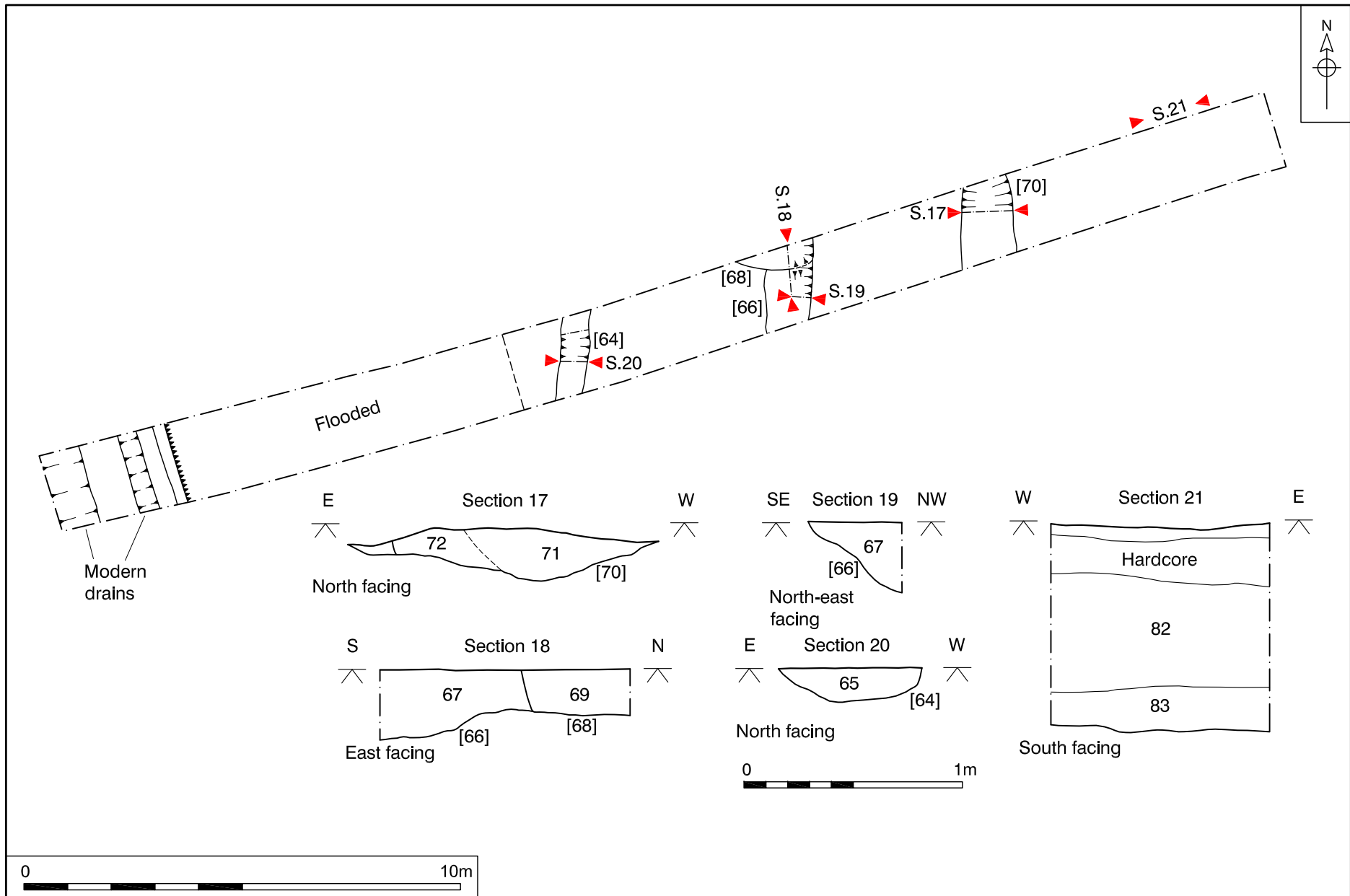


Figure 8. Trench 6, plan and sections. Scale 1:125 and 1:25

6.0 FINDS

All finds were processed and recorded by count and weight, and an Excel spreadsheet was produced outlining broad dating. Each material type has been considered separately and is included below organised by material and chronologically within each material type where relevant. A list of finds ordered by context can be found in Appendix 2a.

6.1 Pottery

by Sue Anderson

6.1.1 Introduction

Twenty-six sherds of pottery weighing 387g were collected from nine contexts. Table 1 shows the quantification by fabric; a summary catalogue by context is included as Appendix 3.

Description	Fabric	Code	No	Wt(g)	Eve	MNV
Thetford-type ware	THET	2.50	3	74	0.45	3
Thetford Ware (Grimston)	THET G	2.57	7	113	0.25	7
Early medieval ware	EMW	3.10	1	12		1
Grimston coarseware	GRCW	3.22	1	15		1
Grimston-type ware	GRIM	4.10	8	43		4
Refined white earthenwares	REFW	8.03	6	130	0.22	5
Total			26	387	0.92	21

Table 1. Pottery quantification by fabric.

6.1.2 Methodology

Quantification was carried out using sherd count, weight and estimated vessel equivalent (eve). A full quantification by fabric, context and feature is available in the archive. All fabric codes were assigned from the author's post-Roman fabric series, which includes East Anglian and Midlands fabrics, as well as imported wares. Early Saxon fabric groups have been characterised by major inclusions. Grimston Thetford-type ware fabrics were identified based on samples from the kiln site, and forms follow Anderson (2004) and Dallas (1984). Form terminology for medieval and later pottery follows MPRG (1998). Recording uses a system of letters for fabric codes together with number codes for ease of sorting in database format. The results were input directly onto an MS Access database.

6.1.3 Pottery by period

6.1.3.1 Late Saxon

Ten sherds were of Late Saxon date, all of which was Thetford-type ware, dominated by the locally-produced Grimston-type version. Three vessels could be identified to form based on their rims or other distinguishing features. There was one THETG jar (medium 'AB') with a type 6 rim, one THETG large jar with applied strips, and one THET costrel. The latter is an unusual form.

6.1.3.2 Medieval

Two sherds of medieval coarseware were identified, of which one is a handmade type classified as EMW (although some of these were made well into the 13th century) and the other is Grimston coarseware. Both are undecorated body fragments.

Eight sherds of medieval glazed ware from four vessels were recovered. By MNV, this represents 66.7% of the medieval group, which is a very high proportion for a rural group. However, the proximity of the production centre at Grimston appears to have raised the proportion of glazed wares at sites in and around King's Lynn. Whilst it is likely that most of these sherds were from jugs, no rims or handles are present and all fragments were body sherds with the exception of a piece of thumb base.

6.1.3.3 Modern

Five sherds of refined whiteware vessels were present in two contexts, pond fill [76] and pit fill [74]. The latter contained a fragment of a large oval plate with blue floral transfer-printed decoration, an undecorated body sherd, a base fragment from a small vessel with 'MADE IN ENGLAND' printed on the base centre, and a fragment of a large cup with a green transfer-printed geometric design. Two base sherds, possibly from a small bowl, were found in [76].

6.1.4 Pottery by context

Table 2 lists the pottery types by context and feature with suggested spotdates.

Feature	Context	Identifier	Fabric	Spotdate
-	54	subsoil	THETG, GRIM	L.12th-14th c.
-	79	buried soil	THETG, EMW, GRIM	13th c.?
-	88	U/S Finds	THET, GRCW	U/S (12th c.)
-	89	U/S Finds	THETG	U/S (10th-11th c.)
-	91	U/S Finds	THETG	U/S (10th-11th c.)
3	4	pond	THETG, GRIM	L.12th-14th c.
49	50	beam slot?	THETG	10th-11th c.
73	74	pit	REFW	L.19th/E.20th c.
75	76	pond ?	THET, REFW	19th-20th c.

Table 2. Pottery by feature and context.

The majority of the assemblage was recovered from the upper layers of the site or was unstratified. One sherd of THETG came from a possible beam slot and may indicate a Late Saxon date for the feature, whilst the pond fills both produced Thetford-type ware in association with later pottery.

6.1.5 Discussion

This small assemblage contains a high proportion of Late Saxon and medieval wares, although much of the material appears to be redeposited. Nevertheless, it does suggest activity of these periods on the site. Most of the vessels of these periods can be ascribed to the nearby production site at Grimston, although some

of the Thetford-type ware may be from Thetford itself. Small quantities of modern pottery were also found, largely from a single pit fill.

6.2 Ceramic building material

by Lucy Talbot

A single fragment of medieval brick, weighing 11g, was recovered from unstratified deposit (88) in Trench 1. Of medium to fine estuarine silty fabric and pinkish purple in colour, the fragment has coarse inclusions of grog and ferrous pellets and voids from burnt out vegetable matter.

6.3 Lava

by Lucy Talbot

The site produced three pieces of grey, vesicular lava quern, weighing 39g, from two contexts, pond deposit [04] and unstratified layer [88] in Trench 1. Querns for grinding, grain for flour were used throughout the Roman and medieval periods. Lava does not occur naturally within the region, usually being imported from the continent, typically from the Rhineland.

6.4 The Metal Finds

by Rebecca Sillwood

A total of seven metal finds were recovered from this site at Hillington. One object is of Middle or Late Saxon date, one is from the medieval period and the remaining five remain undated.

6.4.1 Middle/Late Saxon

The earliest find is a small and delicate sheet copper alloy hooked tag of Middle or Late Saxon date (Plate 6), which came from [76], the fill of possible pond [75]. The piece has a sub-triangular head with two circular attachment holes within it. There is an angular collar before the hook, which is complete. The piece measures 17mm in length with a width at the head of 11mm. There is no decoration visible on the plate.

The hooked tag is a common form of dress fastening, which continued in use throughout the medieval and post-medieval period, albeit in slightly different forms. This piece fits into Read's (2008) typology as an early medieval Class B, Type 1, which has a broad date of c.8th century through to c.12th century. The Hillington example is very similar to one found in Read (2008, p.21, no.97). Thomas (in Evans and Loveluck, 2009, p.17) states that the sub-triangular form is the earliest introduced, in the late 7th to 8th centuries, and continues throughout the period, although in the 10th and 11th centuries instances of the sub-circular form increased.



Plate 6. Middle or Late Saxon hooked tag

6.4.2 *Medieval*

A single find was dated to this period - a complete copper alloy brooch, in fairly good condition (Plate 7). The brooch comes from the same context as the above-mentioned hooked tag, the fill of possible pond [76]. The piece is annular and is set with six symmetrically placed projections which would have contained gems or glass settings, which are now missing. The brooch is in the style of a coronet and measures 28mm in diameter. The frame is recessed for the pointed flat sectioned pin, which grabs the frame in a clamp like grip.



Plate 7. Medieval brooch

The piece has a much smaller, but otherwise almost identical, parallel from Alms Lane in Norwich (Margeson 1993, p. 14, fig. 7, no. 58) which dates from the late 13th to 14th century. Other similar examples appear to be of a similar period and support a 13th- or 14th-century date for this piece.

6.4.3 Undated

Five of the seven objects recovered are of iron, and none of them can be dated accurately.

Four of the objects are nails, which have a wide date range, and can be modern – therefore they have not been assigned a period. These nails come from two contexts, the fill of a pond [04] and unstratified deposits in Trench 5 ([90]). The nails from [04] were associated with medieval pottery, which may indicate their date, although can be misleading.

A fragment of iron was found amongst the unstratified finds in Trench 5 ([90]), and is a strip-like piece, which cannot be assigned a function or date.

6.5 Flint

by Lucy Talbot

The site produced two prehistoric flint flakes, weighing 16g, recovered from ([89]) in Trench 2 and [90] in Trench 5 - both unstratified contexts.

The flints are identified as uncorticated flakes, both greyish brown in colour and both with parallel dorsal flake scars; although the one from [90] shows possible evidence of retouch along one or more edges.

6.6 Faunal Remains

by Julie Curl

6.6.1 Methodology

The analysis was carried out following a modified version of guidelines by English Heritage (Davis 1992). All of the bone was examined to determine range of species and elements present. A record was also made of butchering and any indications of skinning, working and other modifications. When possible a record was made of ages and any other relevant information, such as pathologies. Counts and weights were noted for each context with additional counts for each species (NISP – Number of Individual Species pieces Present) identified. No measurements were taken due to the lack of suitable elements. Information was input directly into an Excel database, a table giving a summary of the recording is provided with this report and the full catalogue, with additional counts, is available in the digital archive.

6.6.2 The assemblage – provenance and preservation

A total of 200g of faunal remains, consisting of seventeen pieces, was recovered from excavations at this site (Appendix 4). Bone produced from six contexts, with much of the material found without any datable artefacts, some faunal material was found with medieval ceramics. The features yielding bone were beam slots, ditch fills and one pond. Quantification by feature type, context and weight is presented in Table 3.

Context	Feature Type			Total
	Beam slot	Ditch	Pond	
4			4g	4g
46	14g			14g
48	20g			20g
50	20g			20g
67		54g		54g
71		88g		88g
Feature Total	54g	142g	4g	200g

Table 3. Quantification of the faunal remains by context, feature type and weight

The bone is in good, sound condition, although fragmented from butchering and wear. None of the remains showed any burning. Bone was examined for any signs of gnawing by canids or rodents and none was seen, which would suggest scavenger activity was low or non-existent.

6.6.3 Species, observations and modifications

Three species were identified in this assemblage. Pig/boar remains were found in two beam slot fills ([48] and [50]) and in ditch [70], fill [71]. Single bones of sheep were seen in two beam slot fills ([50] and [46]) and a single cattle mandible was recovered from ditch [66], fill [67]. In addition, fragments of bone, with no diagnostic zones that could provide species identification and only recordable as 'mammal', were seen in beam slot, ditch and pond fills. Quantification of the faunal assemblage by species, NISP and feature type can be seen in Table 4.

Species	Type			Species Total
	Beam slot	Ditch	Pond	
Cattle		1		1
Mammal	2	6	1	9
Pig/boar	2	3		5
Sheep	2			2
Feature Total	6	10	1	17

Table 4. Quantification of the faunal assemblage by species, NISP and feature type

Butchering was noted on the majority of the remains, with chops from dismemberment of the carcasses to finer knife cuts from the removal of meat. The elements present suggest a variety of cuts of meat, but an absence of the primary butchering waste.

6.6.4 Discussion and conclusions

The assemblage from this site is dominated by the meat waste from the main food mammals. The lack of primary butchering waste might suggest that the animals were initially prepared elsewhere and that this assemblage represents food consumption. Full interpretation and comparison with other assemblages is difficult as most of the remains are undated.

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

by Val Fryer

7.1 Plant Macrofossils, Mollusc Shells and Other Remains

7.1.1 Introduction and method statement

Samples for the evaluation of the content and preservation of the plant macrofossil assemblages from evaluation excavations at Hillington were taken from a buried soil horizon (Sample <1>, context [79]) and from fills within two possible ponds (features [3] (Sample <2>) and [75] (Sample <3>)) and were submitted for assessment.

Samples <1> and <2> were processed by manual water flotation/washover and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. A sub-sample of the waterlogged material from deposit [76] (from sample <3>) was similarly processed, but the flot was collected in a 250 micron mesh sieve and stored in water prior to sorting. Both the dried flots and the wet retent were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x16 and the plant macrofossils, mollusc shells and other remains noted are listed in Appendix 5. Nomenclature within the appendix follows Stace (1997) for the plant macrofossils and Kerney and Cameron (1979) and Macan (1977) for the mollusc shells. Both charred and waterlogged/de-watered plant remains were recorded, with the latter being de-noted in the table by a lower case 'w' suffix.

The non-floating residues were collected in a 1mm mesh sieve and sorted when dry. Pottery and other artefacts were recovered and retained for further specialist analysis.

7.1.2 Results

Charred grains of barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) were noted within the assemblage from Sample <2> (pond [4]) along with a possibly fragmentary grain of rye (*Secale cereale*) and a probable rounded pea (*Pisum sativum*) seed, although the latter did not retain a testa or intact hilum. Preservation of these charred remains was generally quite poor, with most being puffed and distorted, probably as a result of high temperatures of combustion. Charred/de-watered seeds of common segetal and ruderal weeds were present at a low density within all three assemblages. Taxa noted included orache (*Atriplex* sp.), thistle (*Cirsium* sp.), black bindweed (*Fallopia convolvulus*), grasses (Poaceae), dock (*Rumex* sp.), campion (*Silene* sp.), black nightshade (*Solanum nigrum*) and chickweed (*Stellaria media*). An individual sedge (*Carex* sp.) nutlet and a rush (*Juncus* sp.) fruit were recorded within the assemblage from Sample <3>, and Sample <1> (buried soil [79]) included a de-watered elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*) seed.

Charcoal/charred wood fragments and pieces of waterlogged root/stem were also recorded along with moss fronds and a single charred bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) pinnule fragment. Other remains included pieces of black porous and tarry material (all of which were probable residues of the combustion of organic materials at very high temperatures), possible dietary refuse in the form of pieces of animal bone, eggshell, fish bone and marine mollusc shell, and fragments of coal. It is currently unknown whether the latter were contemporary with the contexts from which the samples were taken, or later contaminants.

Although specific sieving for mollusc remains was not undertaken, Sample <1> contained a high density of shells of both terrestrial and freshwater obligate molluscs. All four of Evans (1972) ecological groups of land molluscs were represented, with open grassland and marsh species being especially common.

7.1.3 Conclusions

In summary, the assemblage from Sample 1 has a very limited range of plant remains, although mollusc shells are abundant. The latter would appear to indicate that the buried soil formed within an area of predominantly open, short-turfed grassland, which probably included a small element of wetland or marsh habitat. It would appear most likely that the assemblage from Sample <2> is derived from a small deposit of domestic midden or hearth waste, which was deliberately deposited within the fill of pond [4]. The waterlogged assemblage from pond [76] is surprisingly limited in composition, being largely composed of robust pieces of waterlogged root and stem. However, it would appear that the pond was situated within an area of damp grassland, which was possibly close or adjacent to an area of cultivated land. Sample <3> appears to have been taken from a deposit, which represents a period when the feature was little used and was largely choked with thick, impenetrable vegetation.

Although the current assemblages are somewhat limited, they do illustrate that plant macrofossils and mollusc shells, both of which have the potential to provide valuable data about the site and its environment, are present within the archaeological horizon at Hillington. Therefore, if further interventions are planned, it is suggested that additional plant macrofossil samples are taken from all well-sealed and dated features/deposits which are recorded during excavation.

8.0 DISCUSSION

A total of seven pits, fourteen ditches/gullies, two ponds, one track and one beam slot were recorded. Each type of feature is separately discussed below.

The pits

A total of seven pits, with a seemingly random distribution, were recorded during the evaluation. Only one (pit [73]) produced dating material; this was the large early 20th-century rubbish pit in Trench 4. Another pit ([09] in Trench 3) was obviously modern.

Although a function could not be confidently ascribed to the majority of the pits it is likely that the five undated pits were most likely small waste disposal pits of unknown date.

The ditches and gullies

A total of fourteen ditches and gullies were recorded within the six trenches. None of the features produced any dating evidence. Although none of the ditch segments in separate trenches could be definitely 'matched' there did appear to be some similarities of alignment.

The two ditches in Trench 4 ([30] and [37]) and the three in Trench 2 ([18], [22] and [41]) were all approximately north-west to south-east aligned as was ditch [58] in Trench 1. The three ditch segments recorded in Trench 3 ([05], [07] and [51]) and one ([60]) in Trench 1 displayed a north-east to south-west alignment. Taken

together this arrangement raises the possibility of the presence of rectangular enclosures, possibly being reinstated over a period of time. In view of the waterlogged nature of the site these features probably also served as drainage ditches.

In contrast to the ditches discussed above the three ditches recorded in Trench 6 ([64], [66] and [70]) were aligned approximately north to south with no parallels elsewhere on the site. It may be significant that the northern trajectory of these three features was towards the area of the two ponds and they could well have been drainage ditches emptying into the ponds. Small ditch [62] recorded in Trench 1 may have had a similar function.

Short linear feature ([45]/[47]/[49]) recorded in Trench 3 could not be confidently interpreted. The possibility of the feature being a structural element, such as a beam slot, was considered but given the amorphous shape of the feature it would seem more likely that it was of natural origin, perhaps arboreal, and simply provided a convenient place to dispose of domestic midden material. The only datable artefact, a single sherd of Thetford type ware indicates a 10th- to 11th-century date.

The probable ponds

The finds recovered from the two probable ponds ([03] and [75]) recorded in Trenches 1 and 5 range in date from the Saxon period to the 18th to 20th century. Pond [03] (Trench 5) produced finds of late 12th- to 14th-century date only whereas pond [75] (Trench 1) produced finds of Mid-Late Saxon to 18th- to 20th-century date. It may be the case that the latter feature was open for the duration of this time. Alternatively, and perhaps more likely, if the two sherds of 18th- to 20th-century refined white earthenware were intrusive the feature may have a Late Saxon to 14th-century date.

The 1905 Ordnance Survey map shows what appear to be three ponds on the site. However the positions of these three ponds do not coincide with those of the two recorded during the evaluation but perhaps serve to illustrate a continuation of the presence of water-filled surface features on the site, possibly dating back to the Anglo-Saxon period.

The environmental evidence gathered from the medieval (?13th-century) buried soil [79] recorded in Trench 1 (adjacent to pond [75]) also indicates the presence of marsh or wetland in the vicinity at that time.

The high water table encountered in all of the trenches, especially given the absence of a nearby watercourse, may indicate the presence of a 'perched' water table at the location.

Possible track/pathway

The two chalk and gravel-filled features ([78] and [11]) recorded in Trenches 1 and 3 respectively were very similar in alignment and composition and may well be two parts of a single feature. Although undated the segment of the feature recorded in Trench 1 either truncated or was contemporary with pond [75] and buried soil [79]. The possible track/pathway was immediately adjacent to the north-western edge of pond [75] and was probably constructed to facilitate the crossing of what has probably been a marshy area for a considerable period of time.

9.0 CONCLUSIONS

Probably the most striking aspect of the evaluation of the site was the relatively high level of the water table which has resulted in a damp if not marshy environment that has perhaps been prevalent for hundreds of years, possibly stretching back to the Anglo-Saxon period and maybe earlier. These localised ground conditions have undoubtedly influenced the type of activities that have taken place at the location.

The general paucity of datable finds recovered during the work suggests, perhaps unsurprisingly, an absence of occupation of any intensity at the site at any time until the present day.

The relatively large number of ditches recorded during the work probably represents several phases of attempts to drain the site. The dearth of stratified finds from the features however precludes being able to say when this may have occurred.

It should however be noted that (obviously modern material aside) the finds assemblage is focused between the Middle to Late Saxon period and the 14th century. This may at least provide a general guide to the dating of those pits, ditches and gullies at the site that were not obviously modern.

Given the proximity of the site to the Late Saxon and medieval centre of the village of Hillington, a suggested past use may have been one of seasonal grazing of domesticated animals.

Recommendations for further mitigation work (if required based on the evidence presented in this report) will be made by Norfolk Historic Environment Service.

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The finds were washed and recorded by Lucy Talbot. The post-Roman pottery was analysed by Sue Anderson. The environmental evidence was reported on by Val Fryer. The ceramic building material, lava and flint were discussed by Lucy Talbot. Rebecca Sillwood reported on the metal finds and Julie Curl analysed the faunal remains.

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Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Cut Type	Fill Of	Description	Period	Trench
1						Void
2						Void
3	Cut	pond			Late 12 th to 14 th century	5
4	Deposit		3	grey silt sand	Late 12 th to 14 th century	5
5	Cut	gully			Undated	3
6	Deposit		5	brown sand silt	Undated	3
7	Cut	ditch			Undated	3
8	Deposit		7	grey brown sand silt	Undated	3
9	Cut	modern feature			Modern	3
10	Deposit		9	pale grey sand silt	Modern	3
11	Cut	?trackway?			Undated	3
12	Deposit		11	pale grey sand silt	Undated	3
13	Cut	pit			Undated	3
14	Deposit		13	dark grey sand silt	Undated	3
15	Deposit		13	gravel	Undated	3
16	Deposit		13	grey brown sand silt	Undated	3
17	Deposit			grey brown sand silt layer	Undated	3
18	Cut	ditch			Undated	2
19	Deposit		18	grey brown sand silt	Undated	2
20	Cut	ditch			Undated	2
21	Deposit		20	grey brown sand silt	Undated	2
22	Cut	ditch			Undated	2
23	Deposit		22	grey brown sand silt	Undated	2
24	Cut	gully			Undated	2
25	Deposit		24	grey brown sand silt	Undated	2
26	Cut	pit			Undated	2
27	Deposit		26	grey brown sand silt	Undated	2
28	Deposit			grey brown sand silt old topsoil	Undated	2
29	Deposit			sub-soil	Undated	2
30	Cut	ditch			Undated	4
31	Deposit		30	dark grey organic silt	Undated	4
32	Deposit		30	pale grey sand silt	Undated	4
33	Cut	pit			Undated	4
34	Deposit		33	pale brown clay silt	Undated	4
35	Deposit			brown silty topsoil	Undated	4
36	Deposit			sub-soil	Undated	4
37	Cut	n-s ditch			Undated	4

Context	Category	Cut Type	Fill Of	Description	Period	Trench
38	Deposit		37	pale grey sand	Undated	4
39	Cut	pit			Undated	4
40	Deposit		39	grey silt sand	Undated	4
41	Cut	ditch			Undated	2
42	Deposit		41	grey brown sand silt	Undated	2
43	Cut	pit			Undated	3
44	Deposit		43	grey brown sand silt	Undated	3
45	Cut	beam slot?			Late Anglo-Saxon ?	3
46	Deposit		45	grey brown sand silt	Late Anglo-Saxon ?	3
47	Cut	beam slot?			Late Anglo-Saxon ?	3
48	Deposit		47	grey brown sand silt	Late Anglo-Saxon ?	3
49	Cut	beam slot?			Late Anglo-Saxon ?	3
50	Deposit		49	grey brown sand silt	Late Anglo-Saxon ?	3
51	Cut	pit			Undated	3
52	Deposit		51	grey brown sand silt	Undated	3
53	Deposit			natural		3
54	Deposit			grey brown sand silt made ground/sub-soil	Undated	3
55	Deposit			grey brown sand silt topsoil	Undated	3
56	Deposit			grey brown sand silt made ground	Modern	3
57	Deposit			grey brown sand silt topsoil	Modern	3
58	Cut	n-s ditch			Undated	1
59	Deposit		58	grey brown sand silt sand	Undated	1
60	Cut	e-w ditch			Undated	1
61	Deposit		60	grey brown sand silt	Undated	1
62	Cut	ne-sw ditch			Undated	1
63	Deposit		62	grey brown silt sand	Undated	1
64	Cut	ditch			Undated	6
65	Deposit		64	grey brown sand silt	Undated	6
66	Cut	ditch			Undated	6
67	Deposit		66	grey brown sand silt	Undated	6
68	Cut	pit			Undated	6
69	Deposit		68	grey brown sand silt	Undated	6
70	Cut	ditch			Undated	6
71	Deposit		70	dark grey brown sand silt	Undated	6
72	Deposit		70	yellow grey brown sand silt	Undated	6
73	Cut	pit			Early 20 th century	4

Context	Category	Cut Type	Fill Of	Description	Period	Trench
74	Deposit		73	dark grey sand silt	Early 20 th century	4
75	Cut	pond?			Late Anglo-Saxon to 14 th century?	1
76	Deposit		75	dark grey silt sand	Late Anglo-Saxon to 14 th century?	1
77	Deposit		78	trackway ?	Undated	1
78	Cut	trackway?			Undated	1
79	Deposit			buried soil grey sand silt	13 th century ?	1
80	Cut	ditch		void		1
81	Deposit		80	void		1
82	Deposit			grey brown sand silt topsoil	Undated	6
83	Deposit			grey brown sand silt sub-soil	Undated	6
84	Deposit			dark grey humic silt topsoil	Undated	1
85	Deposit			mid brown silt sand sub-soil	Undated	1
86	Deposit			grey silty buried topsoil	Undated	5
87	Deposit			brown sandy sub-soil	Undated	5
88	U/S Finds			u/s finds trench 1	12 th century	1
89	U/S Finds			trench 2	10 th to 11 th century	2
90	U/S Finds			trench 5	Undated	5
91	U/S Finds			trench 6	10 th to 11 th century	6
92	Deposit			Topsoil trench 1	Undated	1
93	Deposit			Topsoil trench 5	Undated	5

Appendix 1b: OASIS Feature Summary

Period	Category	Total
?Late Saxon	Pit	1
	?Pond	1
	?Beam slot	3
Medieval	Pond	1
Modern	Pit	1
	Feature	1
Undated	Pit	7
	?Trackway	2
	Gully	2
	Ditch	13

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Qty	Wt	Period	Notes
4	Pottery	2	28g	Medieval	
4	Iron	2	7g	Unknown	Nails
4	Lava	2	36g	Unknown	Quern frags
4	Animal Bone	1	4g	Unknown	
4	Shell	3	146g	Unknown	Oyster, Cockle; Discarded
46	Animal Bone	1	14g	Unknown	
46	Shell	3	105g	Unknown	Oyster; Discarded
48	Animal Bone	3	20g	Unknown	
48	Shell	2	43g	Unknown	Oyster; Discarded
50	Pottery	1	5g	Medieval	
50	Animal Bone	2	20g	Unknown	
50	Shell	5	409g	Unknown	Oyster; Discarded
54	Pottery	8	77g	Medieval	
67	Animal Bone	5	54g	Unknown	
71	Animal Bone	5	88g	Unknown	
74	Pottery	4	119g	Modern	
74	Glass	4	814g	m	Bottles
76	Pottery	1	46g	Medieval	
76	Pottery	2	11g	Modern	
76	Copper-Alloy	1	1g	Middle/Late Saxon	Hooked tag; L17 W11
76	Copper-Alloy	1	7g	Medieval	Brooch; D28; 13th- 14th century
79	Pottery	3	36g	Medieval	
88	Pottery	3	43g	Medieval	
88	Ceramic Building Material	1	11g	Medieval	Brick
88	Lava	1	3g	Unknown	Quern frag
89	Pottery	1	5g	Medieval	
89	Flint – Struck	1	12g	Prehistoric	
90	Flint – Struck	1	4g	Prehistoric	
90	Iron	1	5g	Unknown	Strip frag
90	Iron	2	6g	Unknown	Nails
90	Aluminium	1	7g	Modern	Pharmaceutical tube, ICI HIBITANE 'Antiseptic Lozenges'; (discarded)
91	Pottery	1	17g	Medieval	

Appendix 2b: Oasis Finds Summary

Period	Material	Total
Prehistoric	Flint – Struck	2
Middle/Late Saxon	Copper-Alloy	1
Medieval	Ceramic Building Material	1
	Copper-Alloy	1
	Pottery	20
Modern	Aluminium	1
	Pottery	6
Undated	Animal Bone	17
	Iron	5
	Lava	3
	Shell	13
	Glass	4

Appendix 3: Pottery catalogue

Context	Fabric	Form	Rim	No	Wt(g)	Fabric date range
4	GRIM			1	6	L.12th-14th c.
4	THETG			1	22	10th-11th c.
50	THETG			1	5	10th-11th c.
54	THETG	medium AB jar	6	1	51	10th-11th c.
54	THETG			1	4	10th-11th c.
54	GRIM			5	16	L.12th-14th c.
54	GRIM			1	6	L.12th-14th c.
74	REFW	plate	EV	1	99	L.18th-20th c.
74	REFW			1	2	L.18th-20th c.
74	REFW			1	7	L.18th-20th c.
74	REFW	cup	UPL	1	11	E.20th c.?
76	THET	costrel	UPTH	1	46	10th-11th c.
76	REFW	bowl?		2	11	L.18th-20th c.
79	THETG			1	9	10th-11th c.
79	EMW			1	12	11th-12th c.
79	GRIM			1	15	L.12th-14th c.
88	THET			2	28	10th-11th c.
88	GRCW			1	15	11th-M.13th c.
89	THETG			1	5	10th-11th c.
91	THETG			1	17	10th-11th c.

Key:

Rim: UP=upright; PL=plain; TH=thickened; EV=everted; 1–7=Thetford ware types (Anderson 2004)

Appendix 4: Faunal Remains

Context	Condition	Ctxt Qty	Wt (g)	Species	NISP	Adult	Juv	Element range	Butchering	Comments
4	dark stained	1	4	Mammal	1			shaft	ch	
46	iron/sand encrusted	1	14	Sheep	1	1		ll	ch, c	Metatarsal, oblique chop into proximal end, chopped at distal shaft
48	iron/sand encrusted	3	20	Pig/boar	1		1	pel	ch	
48	iron/sand encrusted			Mammal	2			fragments		
50		2	20	Pig/boar	1		1	pel	ch	
50				Sheep	1	1		ll	ch	Metatarsal shaft only
67		5	54	Cattle	1			mand	ch	
67				Mammal	4			fragments	c, ch	
71		5	88	Pig/boar	3	3		ul	c, ch	Ulna, femur shaft and fragment

Key:

NISP = Number of Individual Species elements Present.

Juv = juvenile remains

Element range = LL=lower limb, UL = upper limb, Pel = pelvis, Mand = mandible

Butchering = c = cut, ch = chopped

Appendix 5: Plant Macrofossils, Mollusc Shells and Other Remains

Sample No.	1	2	3
Context No.	79	4	76
Feature type	Buried soil	Pond	Pond
Cereals and other food plants			
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (grains)		x	
<i>Secale cereale</i> L. (grain)		xcffg	
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (grains)		x	
Cereal indet. (grains)		xx	
<i>Pisum sativum</i> L.		xcf	
Large Fabaceae indet.		xcotyfg	
Herbs			
Apiaceae indet.			xw
<i>Atriplex</i> sp.			xw
<i>Cirsium</i> sp.		xw	
Chenopodiaceae indet.		x	
<i>Fallopia convolvulus</i> (L.)A.Love		xw	
Small Poaceae indet.			xxw
Large Poaceae indet.		x	
<i>Rumex</i> sp.	xw		
<i>Silene</i> sp.		xw	xw
<i>Solanum nigrum</i> L.			xw
<i>Stellaria media</i> (L.)Vill			xw
Wetland plants			
<i>Carex</i> sp.			xcfw
<i>Juncus</i> sp.			xw
Tree/shrub macrofossils			
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> L.	xw		
Other plant macrofossils			
Charcoal <2mm	xx	xxxx	
Charcoal >2mm	x	xx	
Charcoal >5mm		x	
Charred root/stem		xx	
Waterlogged root/stem	x		xxxx
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> (L.)Pohl (pinnule frag.)		x	
Indet.inflorescence frag.		x	
Indet.moss		xw	xw
Indet.seeds		x	xw
Other remains			
Black porous and tarry material	x	xxxx	
Bone	x	xx	
Burnt/fired clay		x	
Eggshell	x	x xb	
Fish bones		x xb	
Marine mollusc shell frags.	x	xb	
Mineralised soil concretions	xxx		
Small coal frags.	x	xxx	
Small mammal/amphibian bones	xx	x	
Waterlogged arthropod remains	x		
Vivianite concretions		xxx	

Sample No.	1	2	3
Mollusc shells			
Woodland/shade loving species			
<i>Aegopinella</i> sp.	xxx		
<i>Clausilia</i> sp.	x		
<i>Ena</i> sp.	x		
<i>Oxychilus</i> sp.	x		
<i>Punctum pygmaeum</i>	x		
<i>Vitrea</i> sp.	x		
Zonitidae indet.	x		
Open Country species			
Helicidae indet.	x		
<i>Pupilla muscorum</i>	x		
<i>Vallonia</i> sp.	xxx	x	
<i>V. costata</i>	xx		
<i>V. excentrica</i>	xcf		
<i>Vertigo pygmaea</i>	x		
Catholic species			
<i>Cepaea</i> sp.	x		
<i>Cochlicopa</i> sp.	xxx		
<i>Trichia hispida</i> group	xxxx	x	
Marsh/freshwater slum species			
<i>Carychium</i> sp.	xxxx		
<i>Lymnaea</i> sp.	xx		
<i>L. truncatula</i>	x		
<i>Succinea</i> sp.	xx		
<i>Vertigo</i> sp.	x		
Freshwater obligate species			
<i>Anisus leucostoma</i>	xx		
<i>Aplexa hypnorum</i>	xcf		
<i>Bithynia</i> sp. (operculum)		x	
<i>Lymnaea glabra</i>	xcf		
<i>Pisidium</i> sp.	x		
Other			
Limacid plates	x	x	
Sample volume (litres)	42	42	0.5
Volume of flot (litres)	<0.1	<0.1	0.2
% flot sorted	100%	100%	50%

Key:

x = 1–10 specimens xx = 11–50 specimens xxx = 51–100 specimens xxxx = 100+ specimens
 cf = compare fg = fragment coty = cotyledon w = waterlogged/de-watered b = burnt