

2019/101003

**Land adjacent Main Road,
Little Fransham, Norfolk**

Informative Trial Trenching



Prepared for: Sam Daisley

OASIS Ref: norfolka1-352022

Grid Ref: TF 9001 1178

Planning Ref: 3PL/2018/0664/O

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Client: Mr Sam Daisley
Location: Land adjacent to Main Road, Little Fransham, Norfolk
District: Breckland
Planning Reference: 3PL/2018/0664/O
Grid Reference: TF 9001 1178
HER No.: ENF146108
OASIS ID: norfolka1-352022
Dates of Fieldwork: 5th-6th June 2019

Summary

In June 2019 on behalf of Sam Daisley, NPS Archaeology carried out and reported on informative trial trenching at Land Adjacent Main Road, Little Fransham, Norfolk. These archaeological works were carried out to fulfil planning conditions in advance of proposed residential development.

Three of the evaluation trenches measured 30.00m x 1.80m with one of 40.00m x 1.80m. Trench 4 targeted a ditch thought to be associated with common edge settlement. The site is currently farmland adjacent to the A47.

The earliest evidence of human activity provided by the trial trenching was a single struck flint of probable late prehistoric date, thought to be residual with a small pit. A small number of ditches probably denoting field boundaries were recorded, one containing pottery of 11th to 12th century date suggesting a medieval date.

The key feature at the site was a large ditch (3.80m wide) in the west of the site, its location corresponding to the posited line of a common edge ditch of probable medieval date. A single pottery sherd recovered from a fill of this ditch was of 12th to 13th century date. The character of the fills contained by this ditch suggested it had contained standing water.

Aside from these features, the only other indication of past activity were a small number of 19th and 20th-century land drains.

Based on these findings and extensive field walking data from the parish, the interpretation of this large ditch as defining a common edge is credible. The paucity of material culture recovered by the trial trenching and absence of structural features or other indications of occupation suggest the site has not been settled and has perhaps always been of broadly agricultural use.

INTRODUCTION

Project Background

- 1 NPS Archaeology was commissioned and funded by Mr Sam Daisley to carry out informative trial trenching at Land Adjacent the Main Road, Little Fransham, Norfolk.
- 2 The trial trenching comprised four trenches comprising 30.00m x 1.80m and one of 40.00m x 1.80m
- 3 This program of work was conducted by NPS Archaeology to comply with planning conditions set by Norfolk County Council Environment Service (NCCES) ahead of the proposed construction of four dwellings at the site. The development site covers an area of c. 0.47h.
- 4 The development site lies partly within an area subject to systematic archaeological surface collection survey (field walking) and documentary research (Rogerson 1995). This fieldwork was part of a parish-wide archaeological survey using both surface collection an extremely detailed documentary research. It is likely that a small settlement site of medieval date lay within or close to the application area.

Planning Background

- 5 The current work was undertaken to fulfil planning requirements for residential development at the site are subject to a condition (Condition 13 on 3PL/2018/0664/O) for a Programme of Archaeological Mitigatory Work in accordance with paragraphs 188 and 199 of *National Planning Policy Framework* 2019.
- 6 The NCCES brief (CNF48357) provides an outline of the full Programme of Archaeological Mitigatory Works (PoAW) to commence with trial trenching, the results of which will be used to define the scope and extent of any further archaeological mitigatory work (e.g. excavation or monitoring). Further work will be required if features of importance are found and these cannot be preserved *in situ*.
- 7 The programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the, following guidelines set out in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2019).
- 8 The recipients of this report will be the client, NCCES and the Local District Authority.

GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Geology

- 9 The underlying bedrock in this part of Norfolk is Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation, Newhaven Chalk Formation and Culver Chalk Formation (undifferentiated) - Chalk. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 72 to 94 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period and a local environment previously dominated by warm chalk seas.
- 10 The superficial deposits comprise Lowestoft Formation - Diamicton formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period with a local environment previously dominated by ice age conditions. These sedimentary deposits are glacial in origin. They can form a wide range of deposits associated with glacial and interglacial periods during the Quaternary.
- 11 Topsoil at the site was c 0.30m in depth and was a dark brown sand-silt with few inclusions. Subsoil was present in all trenches, comprising a pale brown sand-silt which varied in thickness across the site from 0.10m to 0.30m. Natural sediments at the site were quite variable, mostly fine to medium yellow-brown sands with some silt, but also with patches of gravels and occasionally some clay content.
- 12 The site has been subsoiled (*S. Daisley pers comm*) and plough scars were visible as cutting natural in all of the trial trenches.

Topography

- 13 Little Fransham is a small village in the parish of Fransham, centrally located within the county of Norfolk. The village straddles the A47, a major road of the county. The site is located at c. 75m OD on the boulder clay plateau and covers an area of c. 0.47h. The nearest modern water source is a small tributary of the River Wissey approximately 1km to the south-west.
- 14 The site is currently farmland, most recently used for livestock. Bounded to the north by the A47 forming part of a larger field, the site has a very slight incline down from south to north. A now infilled pond in the north-east of the site suggests the presence of water-retaining clay, as to do other ponds in the vicinity with the possibility some were used as clay sources for brick manufacture (see Post-medieval and Modern section in HER Data, this report).
- 15 The height of natural at the site varied from 74.73m OD at the south of Trench 4 to 73.85m at the north end of Trench 1

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Sources

- 16 The primary source for archaeological evidence in Norfolk is the Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Record (HER), which details archaeological discoveries and sites of historical interest in the county. In order to characterise the likely archaeological potential of the proposed development site, HER record data was purchased from NCCES for a radius of 1km from Grid Ref: TF 9001-1178. This exercise returned a total of 106 individual records, providing evidence of historical activity spanning the prehistoric to post-medieval periods.
- 17 A large proportion of these sites have been identified as a result of an extensive field walking and documentary survey of the parish (Rogerson 1995).
- 18 Fransham probably derives from an Old English personal name 'Fram', or from 'fraemde', meaning 'strange', and the suffix 'ham' as a place of early settlement. The main centre of settlement (NHER 20587) in the Early Saxon period was in the centre of the parish, close to the former parish boundary between Great and Little Fransham.
- 19 A reference table listing dates for historical periods described in this report is provided in Appendix 3.

HER data

Fig.1

The HER data that are most relevant to the current work are referenced and summarised below in broad chronological detail.

Prehistoric

- 20 Evidence of prehistoric activity is widespread across the parish, including a record from the current site. Prehistoric pot boilers, and a burnt mound were found in 1947 (NHER 7288) and concentrations of prehistoric burnt flints (often colloquially referred to as pot boilers) have been found during field walking at several sites (NHER 20830, 31854) as well as on the southern part of the current site where some struck flints are also recorded (NHER 25569).
- 21 Field walking suggests site NHER 20508 was probably occupied by small settlements in both the Iron Age and Early Saxon periods. Prehistoric flint implements, including a Mesolithic flint blade and a Neolithic flint axehead have also been recovered from the same site.

Roman

- 22 The search returned sites with evidence of Roman settlement, with site NHER 23082 also continuing as NHER 23897 and NHER 24763. Here, field walking has recovered pottery of Roman date, as was also the case at NHER 25566. Site NHER 24767 also appears to be the location of Roman settlement, the settlement site continuing under NHER 24765 and NHER 24766.

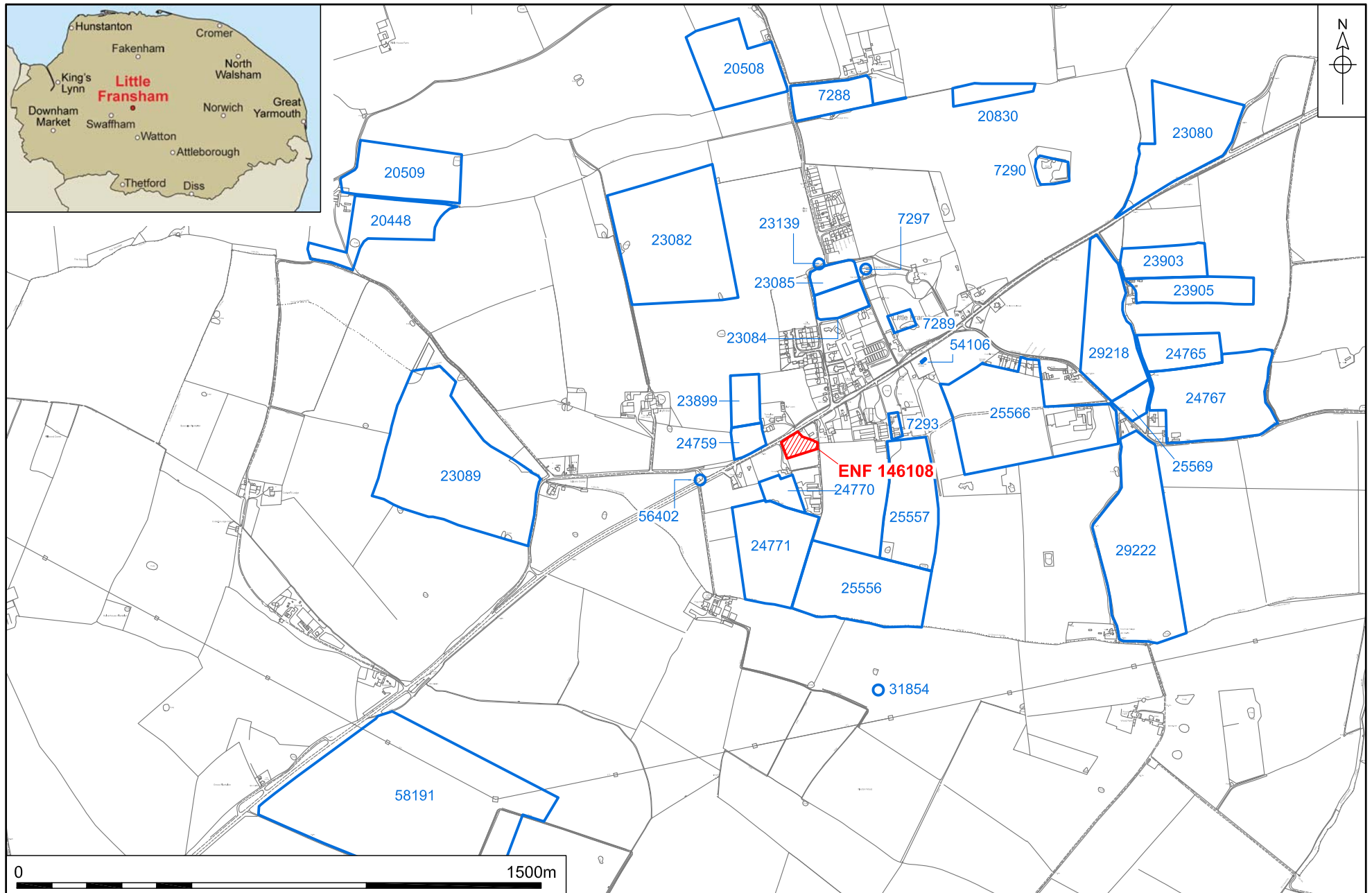


Figure 1. Site location with HER data. Scale 1:15,000

Saxon and Medieval

- 23 Due to the intensity of field walking in the parish Fransham, this period provides a large number of sites recovered by the NHER search.
- 24 Early Saxon pottery fragments recovered during field walking (NHER 20448) suggest this site is probably a small Early Saxon settlement. This was also the site of a common edge settlement during the medieval period. Field walking suggests NHER 23080 was the site of Late Saxon pottery kilns, producing Thetford ware during the late 10th and 11th centuries, and as such defines a rare occurrence of Late Saxon pottery production in a rural area. A windmill is also recorded on this site in 15th century documents.
- 25 Site NHER 24767 is Late Saxon settlement occupied in the 11th and 12th centuries before being abandoned, a medieval settlement subsequently developing on the site in the late 12th or early 13th century.
- 26 A medieval period settlement site NHER 20509 on the edge of a common here is first recorded in an early 15th century document. Iron slag of unknown date found during field walking suggests this site may have been used for iron working. A medieval quern, and medieval and post medieval pottery and building materials were also found during field walking. Other examples of medieval common edge settlement include sites at NHER 23089, NHER 24770, NHER 23903
- 27 Further sites NHER 23899 and NHER 24759 also appear to be small medieval settlements.
- 28 St Mary's Church, Little Fransham (NHER 7297) is a medieval parish church containing reused Norman masonry but dating mainly from the early 14th century. The church contains a square font dating to about 1200. Middle Saxon pottery has been found in the churchyard, as well as medieval floor tiles. Late Saxon settlement (NHER 23084 and NHER 23085) developed around the church in the 9th and 10th centuries, this settlement continuing under NHER 23085.
- 29 Manorial complexes are identified at the probable medieval manor of Wilcocks (NHER 24771) first recorded in the mid-14th century. Amongst other buildings, 15th-century accounts record the presence here of a barn and dovecote.
- 30 At NHER 7289 a moat is depicted on 19th-century maps. Documentary research indicates the moat had once enclosed a medieval rectory and still contained a building in 1804, the dwelling and associated outbuildings to the south being demolished by 1807.
- 31 The medieval moated site of Kirkham's manor house NHER 7290 was probably occupied from the 12th to the 15th centuries. The moat is now dry and a length of medieval flint and brick wall is still visible above ground.

Post-medieval and Modern

- 32 Little Fransham Old Hall (NHER 7293) is a 16th century brick house, with 17th and 18th century alterations. The house has a moulded brick pediment with a panel bearing the arms of Elizabeth I, who is reputed to have stayed here.
- 33 Several in-filled ponds identified during a geophysical survey in 2012 (NHER 58191) have been interpreted as possible clay extraction pits dug to provide raw material to the post-medieval brick kiln (NHER 36525) located to the north-west of this site and

a post-medieval brick kilns has been recorded at NHER 25557, revealed during a field walking survey.

- 34 Gingerbread Cottage NHER 54106 appears externally to be a 19th century flint and brick house with modern rebuilding and an extension to the rear. However, the internal cross wall is oak timber framed on the first floor and several chamfered beams in the ceiling of the ground floor suggests it was constructed in the 17th century.
- 35 A 19th century milestone (NHER 5640) marks Swaffham 6 miles and Dereham 6 miles and site NHER 23139 identifies a World War Two pillbox, used as a Home Guard post.

METHODOLOGY

General

- 36 The methodology for the archaeological trial trenching followed the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation (White 2019), where the mitigation strategy for the works is presented in full.
- 37 Archaeological procedures conformed to the Standards For Development-Led Archaeological Projects in Norfolk (Robertson et al. 2018) and the guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA 2014a). The trial trenching was conducted within the context of the regional archaeological framework (Medlycott 2011).

Objectives

- 38 The objective of the 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.
- 39 The archaeological project aimed to provide appropriate and adequate data to permit informed decisions regarding any requirement for future archaeological mitigation work at Land Adjacent the Main Road, Little Fransham, and to make the results of the work accessible.

Methods

- 40 The Brief required that an approximate 5% of the proposed development area was to be sampled. Trenches were situated according to the agreed plan provide in the NCCES brief and located in relation to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The location of Trench 1 had to be moved c. 5m west due to the proximity of a below ground north-south aligned electrical cable.
- 41 Prior to mechanical excavation, each trench location was scanned with a CAT to check for buried services. The areas to be stripped of topsoil were examined for surface features and for archaeological artefacts prior to any excavation.
- 42 Machine excavation was carried out by a wheeled JCB-type excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. All mechanical excavation was constantly and directly monitored by a suitably experienced archaeologist. Machining was halted at the first identifiable archaeological deposits or natural geology.
- 43 All trench surfaces revealed by machine were hand-cleaned and any archaeological deposits were excavated by hand. On completion of the work all trenches were backfilled by machine.
- 44 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal-detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds, other than those that were evidently modern, were retained for examination. All retained finds were identified by context number to a specific deposit and were processed and recorded in line with relevant guidelines for archaeological finds (ClfA 2014b).
- 45 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NPS Archaeology pro forma. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales.

Site survey was carried out by NPS using a GS16 GPS. Digital photographs were taken of all relevant archaeological features and deposits where appropriate.

- 46 Site conditions were good and the work took place in fine weather.
- 47 All site work was undertaken with respect to Health and Safety provision. Hard hats, high-visibility vests and steel toe-capped boots were worn by all staff at all times.

Archive

- 48 The site archive is currently held at the offices of NPS Archaeology. Upon completion of the project, the documentary archive will be prepared and indexed following guidelines obtained from the relevant museum and national guidelines (ClfA 2014c). The archive, consisting of all paper elements created during recording of the archaeological site, including digital material, will be deposited with Norfolk Museums Service .
- 49 Subject to written consent and donation by the landowner, all archaeological finds recovered by the current work will be deposited with Norfolk Museums Service.
- 50 A summary form of the results of this project has been completed for Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations (OASIS) under the reference norfolka1-352022 (Appendix 4), and this report will be uploaded to the OASIS database.
- 51 The contents of the site archive is summarised in Table 1.

Item	No.
Contexts	37
Files/paper record sheets	37
Plan and section sheets	4
Photographs	43
Finds	Pottery sherds x4
	Struck flint x1
	Metal badge x1

Table 1. Site archive quantification

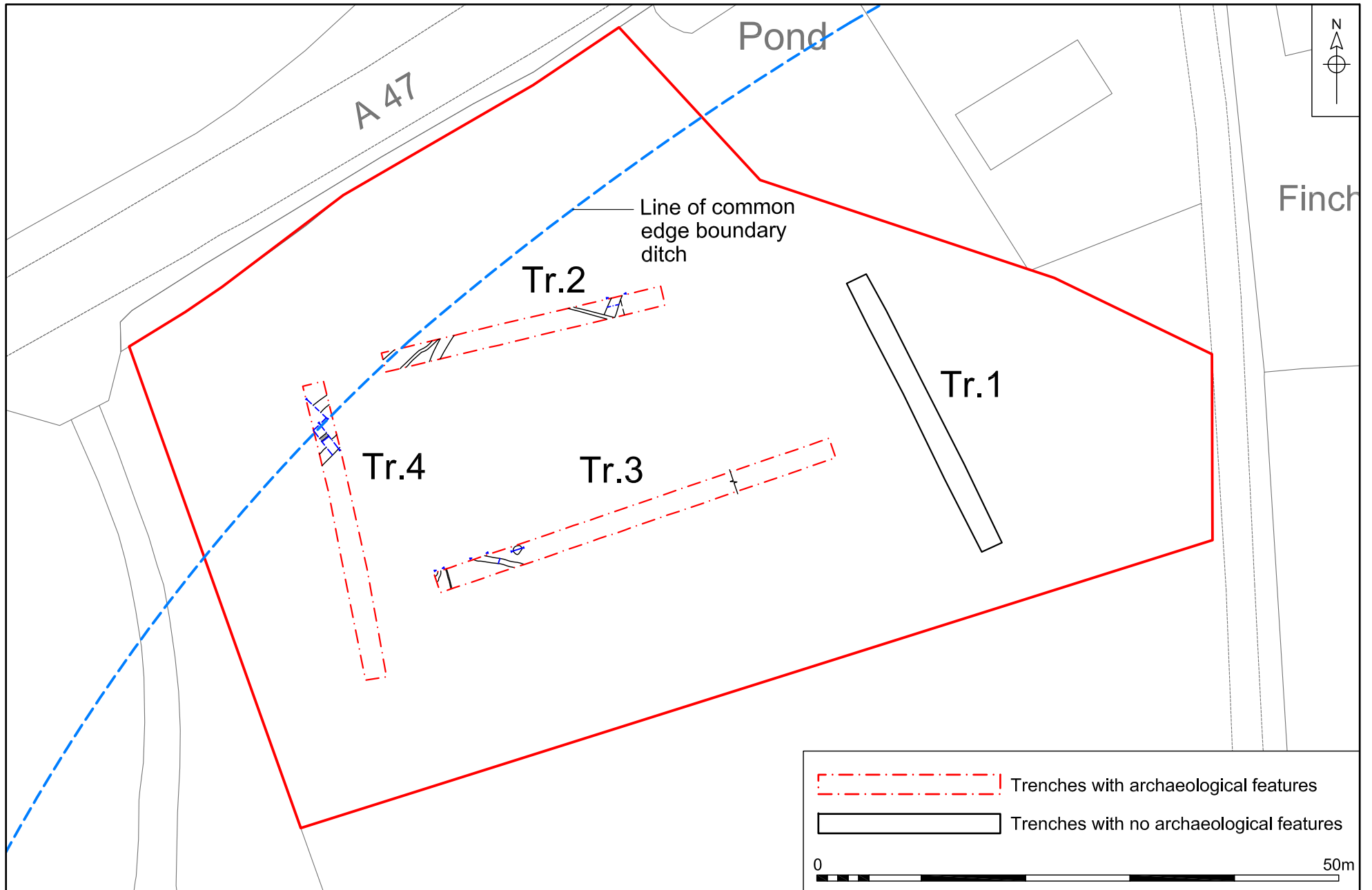




Figure 2. Location of trenches. Scale 1:500

RESULTS

Trench 1				
		Figure 2.		
		Location		
		Orientation	North-north-west to south-south-east	
		Dimensions		
		Length	30.00m	
		Width	1.80m	
		Depth	0.40m	
		Levels		
		NNW top	74.25m OD	
SSE top	74.78m OD			
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	
130	Deposit	Topsoil	0.30m	
131	Deposit	Subsoil	0.10m	
132	Deposit	Natural	n/a	
Discussion				
No archaeological features were present within this trench. Subsoil was shallow within this trench and plough scars visible in natural sediments.				

Trench 2				
		Figures 2, 3; Plate 1		
		Location		
		Orientation	North-east–south-west	
		Dimensions		
		Length	30.00m	
		Width	1.80m	
		Depth	0.65m	
		Levels		
North-east top		74.49m OD		
South-west top		74.72m OD		
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	
133	Deposit	Topsoil	0.35	
134	Deposit	Subsoil	0.30	
100	Cut	Ditch	0.30	
101	Deposit	Fill of 100	0.30m	
102	Cut	Common-edge ditch?	Not excavated	
103	Deposit	Fill of 102	Not excavated	
104	Cut	Modern Services	Not excavated	
105	Deposit	Fill of 104	Not excavated	
128	Deposit	Fill of 129	Not excavated	
129	Cut	Modern Services	Not excavated	
Discussion				
<p>At the east end of Trench 2 was a shallow, undated ditch 100 which was aligned approximately north-east to south west. This feature was 0.30m deep and 1.10m wide. Its fill of mid grey-brown silt-sand contained no dating evidence. Very sparse, small inclusions of burnt clay and occasional small stones were present. This feature appeared to coincide with an area of damper soils, and one interpretation is this ditch provided drainage northwards towards a now infilled pond.</p> <p>At the western end of the trench was a large feature 102 interpreted a possible boundary ditch defining the edge of a common. Due to its size it was not excavated at this location- instead, it was examined in Trench 4 where the same feature is recorded as 117.</p> <p>A modern service trench 129 contained a concrete pipe anecdotally set out in the 1960s (<i>pers comm</i> Daisley senior) to drain water across the site from a pond to the south-west. Its fill contained fragments of plastic and corroded iron objects of no antiquity which were not retained.</p>				

Trench 2



Trench 2, ditch 100, looking north-east 1m scale

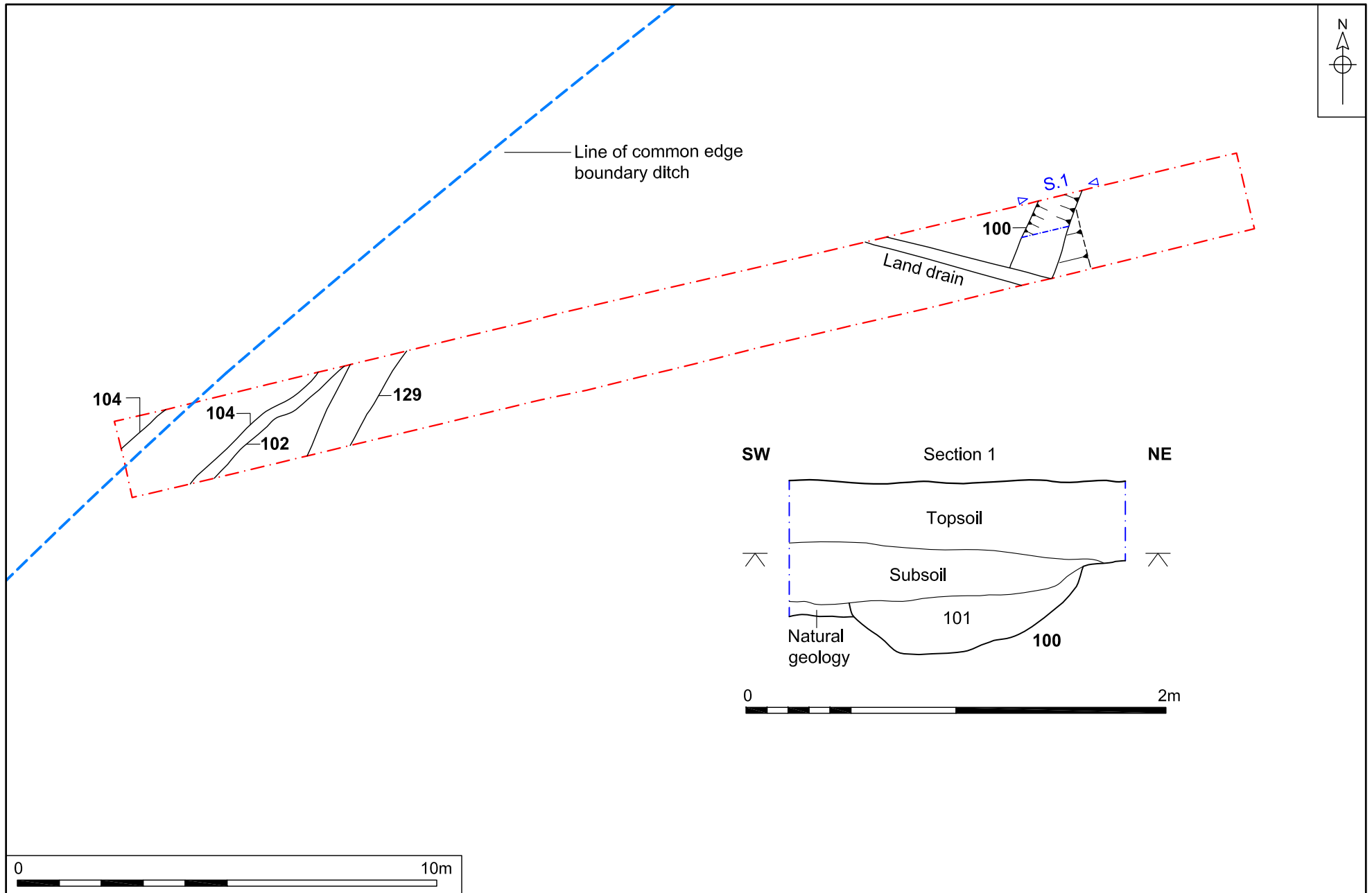



Figure 3. Trench 2, plan and section. Scale 1:125 and 1:25

Trench 3				
		Figures 2, 4; Plates 2, 3		
		Location		
		Orientation	North-east–south-west	
		Dimensions		
		Length	40.00m	
		Width	1.80m	
		Depth	0.60m	
		Levels		
		North-east top	74.59m OD	
South-west top	74.92m OD			
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	
106	Deposit	Topsoil	0.30m	
107	Deposit	Subsoil	0.20m	
108	Deposit	Natural	n/a	
109	Deposit	Fill of 110	0.20m	
110	Cut	Gully aligned approximately north-east to south-west	0.20m	
111	Deposit	Fill of 112	0.24m	
112	Cut	Ditch aligned approximately north-west to north-east	0.24m	
113	Deposit	Fill of 114	0.18	
114	Cut	Pit	0.18	
115	Deposit	Fill of 116	Not excavated	
116	Cut	Land drain aligned approximately north-south	Not excavated	
Discussion				
<p>The small number of archaeological features in Trench 3 were all present at its western end.</p> <p>A small length of a gully? 110 was exposed at the very west of the trench. This had a ‘U’ shaped profile and was 0.54m wide and 0.20m deep. Its fill of mid grey-brown silt-sand contained no finds, with inclusions of occasional small stones and charcoal flecks. This feature possibly cut the subsoil 107.</p> <p>Ditch 112 had a concave base and gradual sides with a width of 0.50m and was 0.24m deep. Its fill 111 of mid-grey brown silt-sand contained occasional small stones and charcoal flecks. A small quantity of pottery (three sherds) of medieval date was recovered from this feature, which appeared to be sealed by subsoil 107.</p> <p>To then east of this ditch was a small circular-to-oval pit 114 which was 0.86m long and 0.18m deep. Its fill 113 was of dark grey silt-sand contained occasional flecks and small lumps of charcoal. A single struck flint of probable late prehistoric date was recovered from this fill.</p> <p>A land drain 115 constructed from interlocking clay pipes aligned broadly north - south is considered to be of 19th-20th century date</p>				

Trench 3

An area of damper, perhaps waterlogged natural was present approximately halfway along the evaluation trench. This might be similar to an area of damper sediments observed at the eastern end of Trench 2



Plate 2. Trench 3, ditch 112 looking north-west 1m scale

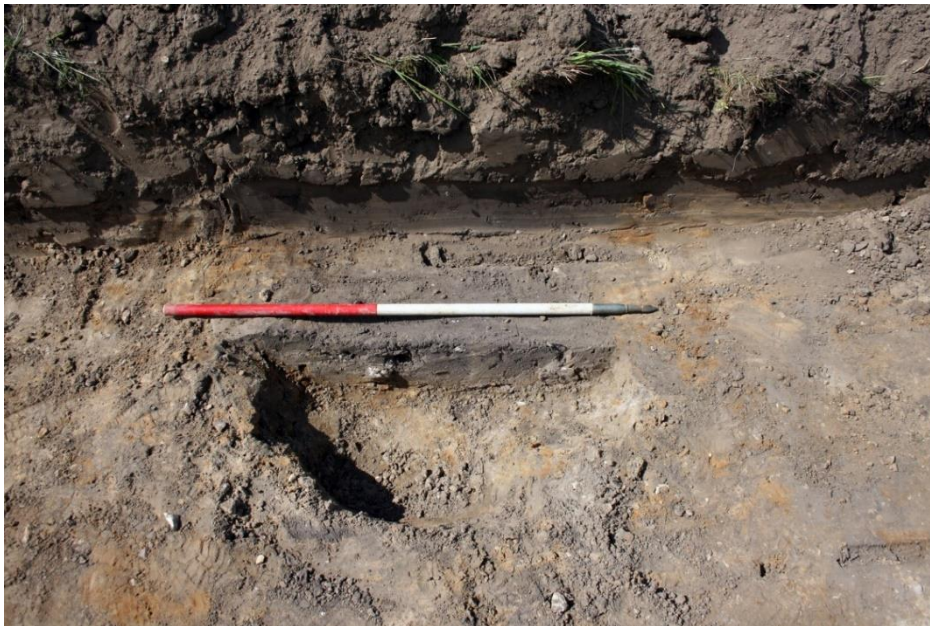


Plate 3. Trench 3, pit 114 looking north-west 1m scale

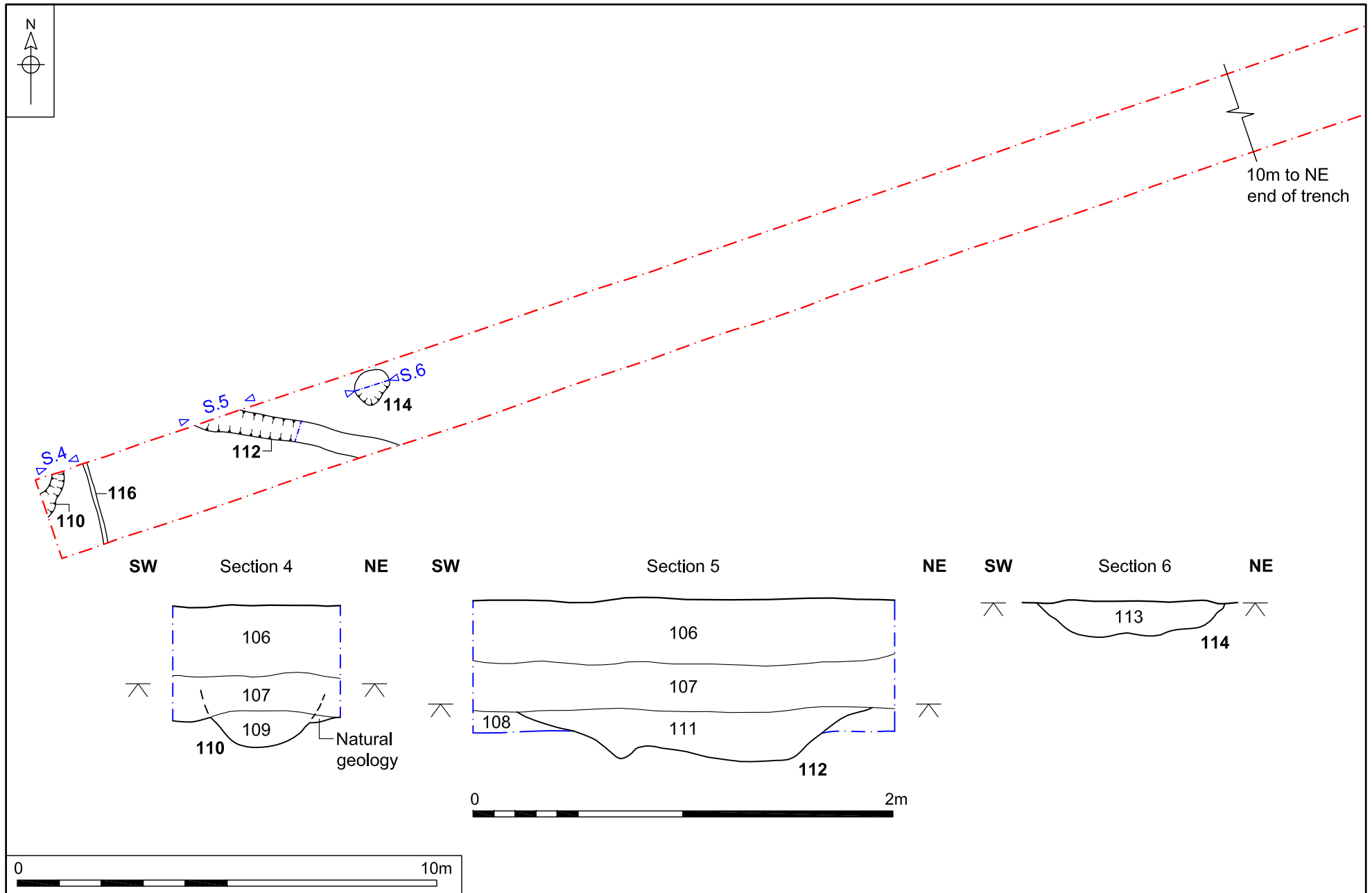



Figure 4. Trench 3, plan and sections. Scale 1:125 and 1:25

Trench 4				
		Figures 2, 5; Plate 4		
		Location		
		Orientation	North-west–south-east	
		Dimensions		
		Length	30.00m	
		Width	1.80m	
		Depth	0.50m-0.80m	
		Levels		
North-west top		74.94m OD		
South-east top		75.23m OD		
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	
117	Cut	Common-edge ditch?	1.10m	
118	Cut	Modern services	0.50m	
119	Deposit	Fill of 118	0.50m	
120	Deposit	Fill of 117	0.40m	
121	Deposit	Fill of 117	0.25m	
122	Deposit	Fill of 117	0.60m	
123	Deposit	Primary fill of 117	0.20m	
124	Cut	Pit?	0.48m	
125	Deposit	Fill of 124	0.48m	
126	Cut	Pit- probably modern	0.30m	
127	Deposit	Fill of 126	0.30m	
135	Deposit	Topsoil	0.35m	
136	Deposit	Subsoil	0.45m	
Discussion				
<p>The only archaeological feature of interest in this trench was a large ditch 117 at its north end which may identify a medieval common edge in Little Fransham.</p> <p>The scale and position of this feature meant it was excavated in two separate interventions to record its profile, which was steeper along its southern edge. The base was a shallow concave. The ditch was 1.10m deep and c. 3.80m wide, with the base of the ditch present below groundwater level.</p> <p>The primary fill 123 was pale brown gravelly sand with occasional lenses of dark grey silt. This was overlain by a 0.60m thick deposit 122 of pale grey, leached, slightly silty sand with rare gravel and no cultural material.</p> <p>Fill 122 was then overlain by a mottled silt-sand 121 which contained flecks of probable iron mineralisation and rare gravel.</p>				

Trench 4

The upper fill **120** of the ditch consisted of a dark brown, soft deposit up to 0.40m deep, interpreted as an organic mud infilling the ditch and perhaps comparable to the anaerobic deposits familiar from ponds or static watercourses. The single artefact recovered from this feature came from this deposit- a sherd of Grimston-type coarseware of 12th to 13th-century date.

Cutting this deposit was a large ceramic pipe of probable 20th century date which seemed to use the line of the ditch as a conduit. The construction cut **118** for this pipe was 1.55m wide and 0.50m deep, and had been backfilled with a firm yellow brown clay. The same situation was seen in Trench 3 where ditch **117** is recorded as **102**.

A pair of modern clay-filled pits **124** (cut by **118**) and **126** cutting the north edge of the ditch were very similar in form and might be associated with the pipe trench.



Plate 4. Trench 4, ditch 117 and associated features looking north 1m and 2m scales

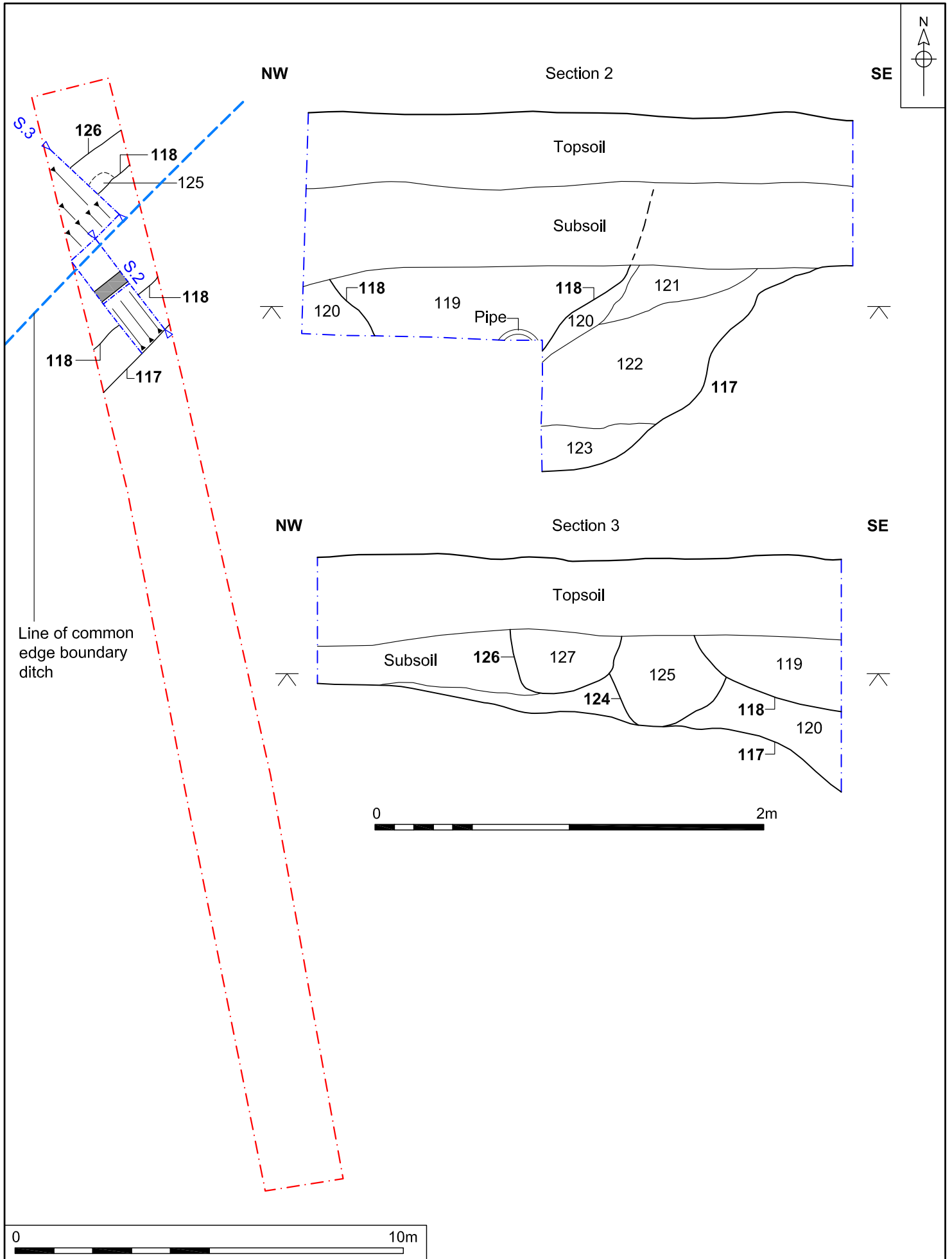


Figure 5. Trench 4, plan and sections. Scale 1:125 and 1:25

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

Pottery

By Sue Anderson

- 52 Four sherds (70g) of medieval pottery were recovered from two contexts during the evaluation. From context **111** there were two sherds of early medieval ware and a fragment of a Grimston Thetford/Unglazed ware vessel with external sooting, suggesting an 11th/12th-century date. A single sherd of Grimston-type coarseware was recovered from context **120**, suggesting a 12th/13th-century date. These fabrics are typical of north-west Norfolk but it is possible that they were made closer to the site than Grimston, as putative evidence for pottery manufacture has been found in Fransham parish (A. Rogerson, pers comm).

Struck Flint

By David Adams

- 53 A single piece of struck flint (5g) was recovered from context **113**, the fill of pit **114**.
- 54 This piece was in the form of a broadly parallel-sided, blade-like cortical waste flake 56mm x 16mm. The cortex is a smooth chalky off-white and the flint of good quality and dark grey-brown colouration.
- 55 In fresh condition, the ventral surface is a single detachment, the dorsal face having narrow flaking scars, some stuck from an opposing platform. Whether this suggests the working of a small dual-platform core or as retouch is unclear.
- 56 This piece is interpreted as blade-like debitage, possibly from a small bi-platform core. While chronologically indeterminate, parallels might be drawn typologically with material of Neolithic and Bronze Age date.

Metal Finds

By David Adams

- 57 A single metal find was recovered from the spoil generated in Trench 3. This unstratified find consisted of a small triangular pin badge 20mm along its axis with the enamelled motif of a football player. The dress style of the player suggests perhaps an early 20th century date for manufacture.

DISCUSSION

- 58 The evaluation carried out by NPS Archaeology at Land Adjacent the Main Road, Little Fransham, recorded a small number of archaeological features of which the most significant was a large ditch (**102=117**) at the north-west of the site.
- 59 Natural at the site comprised mostly sands and gravels with patches of more silty or clay-rich material. This meant that while the site appeared to be mostly free draining, ponds in the vicinity perhaps highlighting areas of higher clay content. In both trenches 2 and 3, areas of damper sediments were present at their western ends, and while not of archaeological interest, indicates a range of soil conditions are present at the site.
- 60 The archaeological features identified by the trial trenching were present in the north and north-west of the development plot. The shallowness of the ditches and a single pit suggest some degree of truncation, as did the presence of plough scars visible in natural sediments. The thickness of subsoil, particularly to the east of the site in Trench 1 was not great- sometimes as little as 0.10m, which also suggests past truncation, presumed to be from agricultural activity.
- 61 The earliest artefact from the site, a single struck flint waste flake, though not closely datable, on a typological basis is broadly attributable to the later prehistoric period. While its presence does not securely date the feature it was recovered from- a small oval pit, it does indicate a background level of prehistoric activity in the sites environs. This corresponds to the field walking data (NHER 25569) which recorded struck flint in the southern part of the field containing the development plot, with the density of these artefacts declining to the north.
- 62 Medieval activity was more definitive with at least one ditch, **112**, based on sooted pottery recovered from its fill datable to perhaps the 11th to 12th centuries. This assemblage is however extremely small, comprising three small sherds. Other undated ditches or gullies might date to a similar period and perhaps served dual purposes as both field boundaries and drainage. While it is not possible to extrapolate the arrangement of these ditches with certainty, they perhaps follow north-east to south-west and north-west to south-east axes.
- 63 A large ditch in the north-west of the site was recorded in Trench 2 as **102** and as **117** in Trench 4. The alignment of this feature appeared to follow a shallow arc on a north-east to south-west alignment. Based on the field walking and documentary evidence (fig 6) this feature seems to correspond to what has been previously posited as a common edge boundary (Rogerson 1995).
- 64 With groundwater present in its base and a thick deposit of what is interpreted as an organic mud infilling its upper levels, it would appear this ditch had held water during its use. Other deposits within this feature indicated its fills were perhaps gleyed as a result of waterlogging, with mineralisation of some deposits causing a mottled appearance.
- 65 While there was no obvious indication of a bank associated with this ditch, the profile did present a much steeper slope along the southern edge compared to the north which may hint at any bank being present along the north side of the ditch.
- 66 What can be concluded is that the trial trenching provided little indication of activity of any period at the site. A key aim of the project was to test the potential for common edge settlement, and while the large ditch would seem likely to define a common

edge, the paucity of material culture combined with the absence of structural features such as postholes would suggest no settlement was present here.

- 67 The ditch itself is an intriguing landscape feature- a significant boundary which survives in good condition and presumably represents manorial control over the planning and development of medieval Fransham.
- 68 Recommendations for further archaeological mitigation work (if required, based on the evidence presented in this report) will be made by Norfolk County Council Environment Service.

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Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Cut Type	Fill Of	Description	Period	Trench
100	Cut	Ditch		North-east to south-west ditch	Undated	02
101	Deposit		100	Fill of ditch 100	Undated	02
102	Cut	Ditch		Common-edge ditch?	Medieval	02
103	Deposit		102	Fill of ditch 102	Medieval	02
104	Cut	Services		Modern services trench	Modern	02
105	Deposit		104	Fill of 104	Modern	02
106	Deposit			Topsoil	-	03
107	Deposit			Subsoil	-	03
108	Deposit			Natural	-	03
109	Deposit		110	Fill of 109	Undated	03
110	Cut	Gully		Short length of gully	Undated	03
111	Deposit		112	Fill of 112	Medieval	03
112	Cut	Ditch		Small ditch	Medieval	03
113	Deposit		114	Fill of 114	Prehistoric	03
114	Cut	Pit		Small pit	Prehistoric	03
115	Deposit		116	Fill of 116	Modern	03
116	Cut	Land Drain		Clay pipe land drain	Modern	03
117	Cut	Ditch		Common-edge ditch?	Medieval	04
118	Cut	Services		Modern services	Modern	04
119	Deposit		118	Clay fill of 118	Modern	04
120	Deposit		117	Fill of 117	Medieval	04
121	Deposit		117	Fill of 117	Medieval	04
122	Deposit		117	Fill of 117	Medieval	04
123	Deposit		117	Primary fill of 117	Medieval	04
124	Cut	Pit		Clay filled pit	Modern	04
125	Deposit		124	Clay fill of 124	Modern	04
126	Cut	Pit		Modern pit?	Modern	04
127	Deposit		127	Fill of 126	Modern	04
128	Deposit		129	Fill of 129	Modern	02
129	Cut	Services		Modern service trench	Modern	02
130	Deposit			Topsoil	-	01
131	Deposit			Subsoil	-	01
132	Deposit			Natural	-	01
133	Deposit			Topsoil	-	02
134	Deposit			Subsoil	-	02
135	Deposit			Topsoil	-	04
136	Deposit			Subsoil	-	04

Appendix 1b: Feature Summary

Period	Category	Total
Prehistoric	Pit	1
Medieval	Ditch	2
Undated	Ditch	2
Modern	Pit	2

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Qty	Wt	Period	Notes
111	Pottery	3		Medieval	
120	Pottery	1		Medieval	
113	Struck flint	1		Prehistoric	
107	Metal badge	1		Modern	

Appendix 2b: Finds Summary

Period	Material	Total
Prehistoric	Struck flint	1
Medieval	Pottery	4
Modern	Metal	1

Appendix 3: Historical Periods

Period	Date From	Date To
Prehistoric	-500,000	42
Early Prehistoric	-500,000	-4,001
Palaeolithic	-500,000	-10,001
Lower Palaeolithic	-500,000	-150,001
Middle Palaeolithic	-150,001	-40,001
Upper Palaeolithic	-40,000	-10,001
Mesolithic	-10,000	-4,001
Early Mesolithic	-10,000	-7,001
Late Mesolithic	-7,000	-4,001
Late Prehistoric	-4,000	42
Neolithic	-4,000	-2,351
Early Neolithic	-4,000	-3,001
Middle Neolithic	-3,500	-2,701
Late Neolithic	-3,000	-2,351
Bronze Age	-2,350	-701
Early Bronze Age	-2,350	-1,501
Beaker	-2,300	-1,700
Middle Bronze Age	-1,600	-1,001
Late Bronze Age	-1,000	-701
Iron Age	-800	42
Early Iron Age	-800	-401
Middle Iron Age	-400	-101
Late Iron Age	-100	42
Roman	42	409
Post Roman	410	1900
Saxon	410	1065
Early Saxon	410	650
Middle Saxon	651	850
Late Saxon	851	1065
Medieval	1066	1539
Post-medieval	1540	1900
Modern	1900	2050
World War One	1914	1918
World War Two	1939	1945
Cold War	1945	1992
Unknown	--	--

after English Heritage Periods List, recommended by Forum on Information Standards in Heritage available at: <http://www.fish-forum.info/inscript.htm>