Report 2110

nps group

nau archaeology

An Archaeological Evaluation at land off Cross Street, Hoxne, Suffolk (Amended)

HXN 044

Prepared for
Orwell Housing Association

Steve Hickling

April 2009

www.nps.co.uk

NAU ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT CHECKLIST		
Project overseen by	Nigel Page	
Draft completed	Steve Hickling	08/04/2009
Graphics completed	David Dobson	03/04/2009
Edit completed	Richard Hoggett	08/04/2009
Signed off	David Whitmore	08/04/2009
Amendments completed	Steve Hickling	16/04/2009
Amendments signed off	Richard Hoggett	28/04/2009

NAU Archaeology
Scandic House
85 Mountergate
Norwich
NR1 1PY

T 01603 756150 F 01603 756190 E jayne.bown@nps.co.uk www.nau.org.uk

Contents

Figures

Plates

Location:	Cross Street, Hoxne
District:	Mid-Suffolk
Grid Ref.:	TM 1870 7617
HER No.:	HXN 044
Client:	Orwell Housing Association
Dates of Fieldwork:	24–25 March 2009

Summary

Five evaluation trenches produced a large number of archaeological features, only a small proportion of which contained datable material. A fragment of Roman pottery suggests the presence of either Roman agriculture or a Roman site in the vicinity. All of the dated features were dated by pottery to the 11th–14th centuries and may represent late 13th-century activity, a period of high population. This can be characterised as backyard-type activity, with enclosures, quarry pits and evidence for iron smithing on plots probably fronting onto Witton's Lane to the east. Most of the ditches appear to be aligned parallel or perpendicular to Witton's Lane. Environmental samples indicate a significant amount of cereal processing, domestic burning and a small amount of smithing in this period.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The site covered the area of a proposed housing development at Cross Street, Hoxne, Suffolk (Fig. 1). Five 25m by 1.8m trenches were excavated within the development area that measured *c.*4,400m^2, giving a sample of *c.*5% of the total area.

This project was commissioned and funded by the Orwell Housing Association.

This archaeological programme was undertaken to in response to a planning requirement (Planning Application Ref: 2108/08) set by Mid-Suffolk District Council and in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref: BAU2110/DW) and a Brief issued by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team (Will Fletcher, 3 June 2008) .

The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, following the guidelines set out in *Planning and Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by NAU Archaeology and on completion of the project will be deposited with the Suffolk County Council Sites and Monuments Record, following the relevant policy on archiving standards.

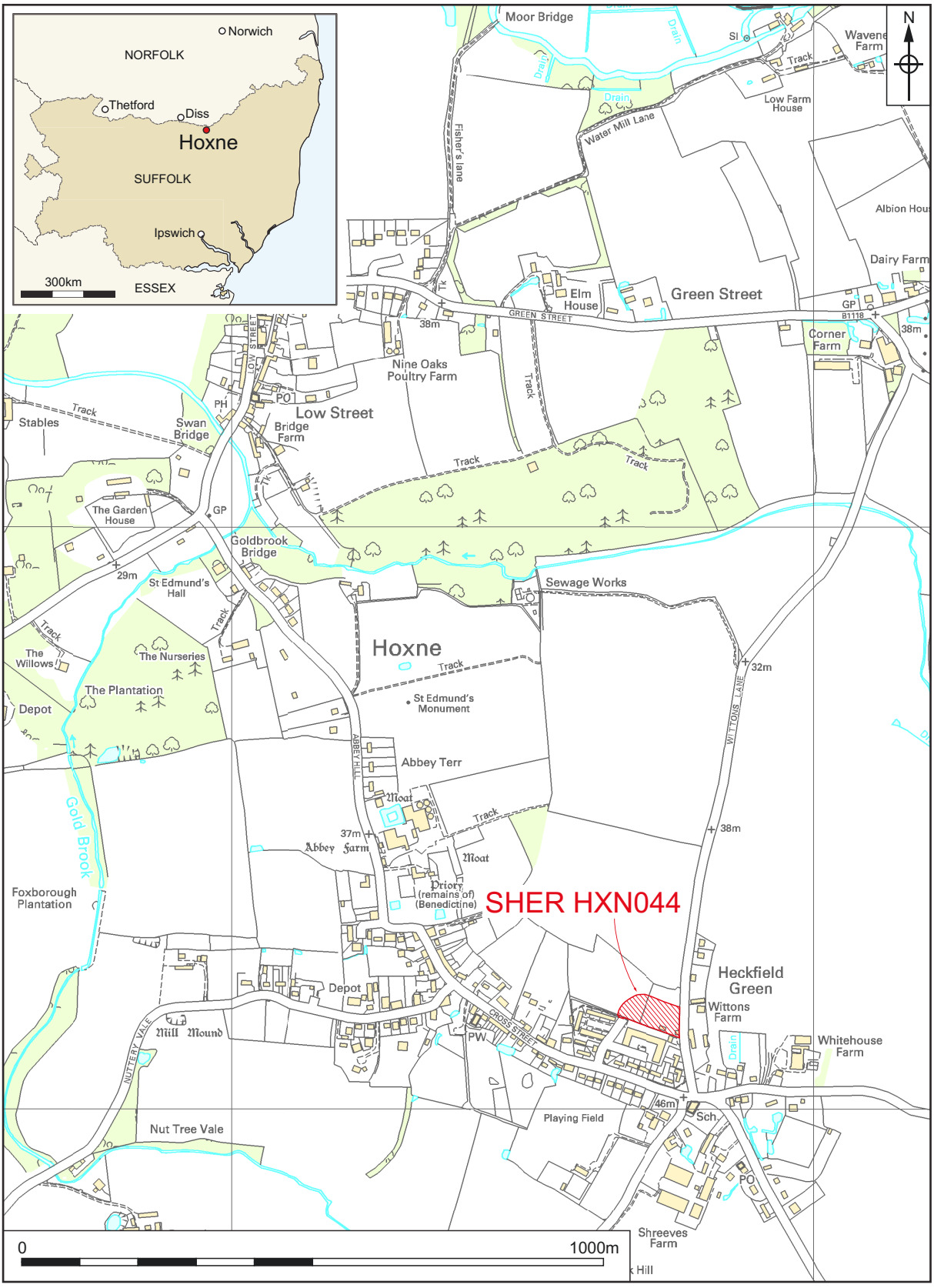

Figure 1. Site locatiion. Scale 1:10,000

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The natural subsoil on the site was a glacial till lying over Liocene and Pleistocene Crag, a marine deposit of shelly sands (Wymer 1988).

The development area is located in the hamlet of Heckfield Green, 1.5km south-east of the village of Hoxne, 5km north-east of Eye, 2km south of the River Waveney and 2km east of the River Dove (Fig. 1). It is situated at a height of 40–45m OD on a gentle north-facing slope of a hill centred just to the south.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The development site is located on the edge of the hamlet of Heckfield Green, originally a small common lined with late medieval and early post-medieval houses along its edge.

3.1 Prehistoric

Little prehistoric material has been uncovered in the immediate vicinity. A Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowhead (SHER HXN039) was found 100m north-east of the development site in 2002. Extensive areas of prehistoric field systems are still visible in much of the Waveney valley, the closest elements north of Scole, but none in the immediate vicinity of Hoxne.

3.2 Roman

The present A140 follows the line of the Roman road from the Roman town at Colchester to the Roman town at Caistor St Edmund. The Hoxne Hoard was discovered by metal-detectorist Eric Lawes in 1992. The hoard was a cache of approximately 15,000 late 4th- and early 5th-century Roman gold and silver coins and around 200 items of silver tableware and jewellery believed to have been hidden during the political turmoil of the early 5th century AD.

3.3 Saxon and Medieval

The Hamlet of Heckfield Green is rich in standing medieval buildings. Hoxne Priory (SHER HXN004) lies 400m north-west of the development site. It is a Grade II* Listed Building and a Scheduled Monument. It dated from the early 12th century and is reportedly on the site of an Anglo-Saxon chapel dedicated to St Edmund, thought to have been built on the site of St Edmund's martyrdom. Any medieval settlement in the vicinity of such a major religious site may have played a role in servicing the religious community.

There are the cropmark remains of a possible moat and associated enclosure (SHER HXN012) 300m west of the development site. Abbey View (400m west of the present development) is a timber-framed Grade II Listed Building dating from the late 15th century with a 17th-century rear wing. Corn House and Three Trees are two Grade II Listed Buildings, originally one house, situated 400m west of the development site. They are timber framed and date from *c.*1500. There is a 15th-century timber-framed open-hall house (Grade II Listed) 100m south-east of the development area. The Grapes public house (200m west of the present development) is a timber-framed, open-hall house dating from the 15th century.

3.4 Post-medieval

The hamlet of Heckfield Green is rich in early post-medieval buildings. Abbey Farmhouse is a Grade II* Listed Building of predominantly early 17th-century date with a cross-wing dating from *c.*1540, located 400m north-west of the present development. Cosy Cot is a 17th-century timber-framed Grade II Listed Building sited 100m south-east of the development site. Farm Cottage is a 17th-century three-celled timber-framed Grade II Listed Building 300m south-east of the development area. The Old Wheelwrights (300m west of the present development) is a Grade II Listed 17th-century house. The Red House, immediately to the east of the present development is a Grade II Listed timber-framed 16th-century farmhouse. The Retreat (100m south-east of the present development) is a 17th-century timber-framed Grade II Listed building, formerly a public house. The Three Ponds is a late 16th-century timber-framed farmhouse which is Grade II Listed and situated 200m south-east of the development site. Whitehouse Farmhouse is a Grade II Listed 16th-century timber-framed farmhouse 300m south-east of the development area.

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.

The Brief required that 5% of the area be sampled by trial trenching (amounting to 225m² of trenching) (Fig. 2).

Machine excavation was carried out with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket and operated under constant archaeological supervision.

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.

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

Samples for the evaluation of the content and preservation of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken, and five were submitted for assessment.

The temporary benchmark used during the course of this work was transferred from an Ordnance Survey spot height in the road (44.1m OD) to the east of the development site.

Site conditions were bad, with the work taking place in heavy blustery showers and boggy ground conditions.

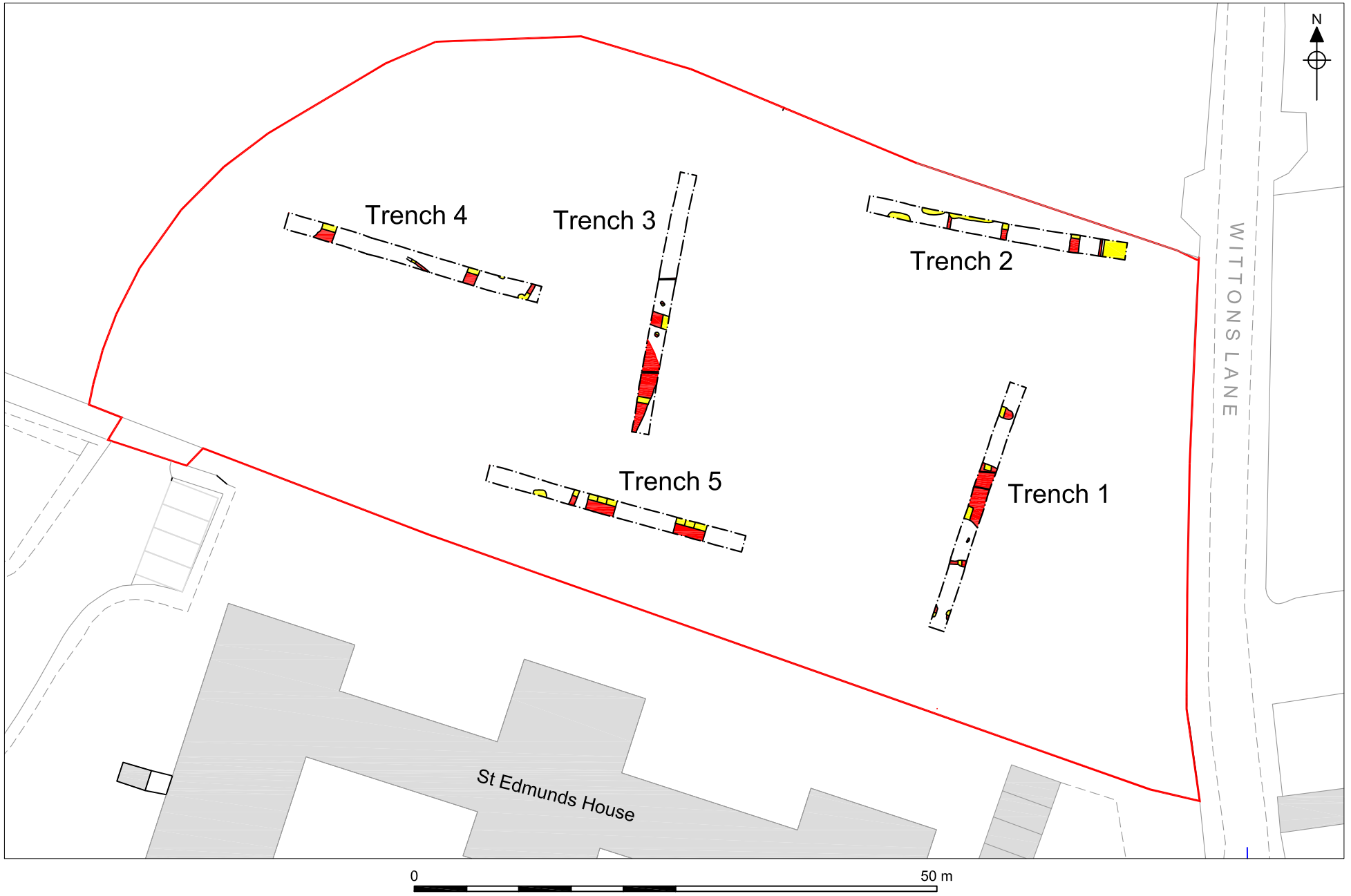

Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:500

5.0 RESULTS

Trench 1

Location	
Orientation	NE–SW
North End	618358, 276558
South End	618335, 276550
Dimensions	
Length	24.7m
Width	1.6m
Depth	0.3m
Levels	
South End Top	44.18m OD
North End Top	43.76m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
1	Topsoil	Dark brown rich, humic topsoil with occasional stones.	0.3m	0.3m
2	Upper fill of [12]	Mid–dark brown with slight reddish/orange tinge, silty clay soil.	0.28m	0.58m
4	Pit	Oval, 0.2m deep and 0.8m long with steep sides and a concave base.	0.20m	0.50m
5	Fill of [4]	Light greyish-brown sandy clay with occasional stones and rare charcoal.	0.20m	0.50m
6	Pit	Oval, 0.16m deep and 0.9m long with gently sloping sides and a concave base.	0.16m	0.46m
7	Fill of [6]	Light yellow-beige sticky heavy clay with sandy clay patches and occasional charcoal flecks.	0.16m	0.46m
8	Land drain	Linear, more than 0.33m deep and 0.35–0.55m wide with steep sides.	0.33m+	0.63m+
9	Fill of [8]	Patchy brown with orange redeposited natural clay and brown clay.	0.33m+	0.63m+
10	Post-hole	Oval, 0.14m deep, 0.15m wide and 0.44m long with vertical sides and a flat base.	0.14m	0.44m
11	Fill of [10]	Light brown sticky silty clay with occasional chalk flecks and moderate charcoal and fired clay flecks.	0.14m	0.44m
12	?Pond	Probably 5.8m wide, depth unknown, with steep, concave sides.	–	–

Trench 1				
13	Fill of [12]	Rich darkish-brown with a purplish tinge soft, humic, soil with occasional stones.	–	0.50m
14	Land drain	Ceramic field drain in a narrow trench.	–	–
15	Land drain	Ceramic field drain in a narrow trench.	–	–
16	Pit	Oval, 0.43m deep and 1.12m wide with steep sides and a flat base.	0.43m	0.73m
17	Fill of [16]	Mid-brownish-grey silty or sandy clay with occasional charcoal and chalk flecks and lenses of redeposited natural.	0.43m	0.73m
18	Pond	Same as [12].	–	–
19	Fill of [18]	Brownish-grey silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks.	–	–

Discussion

This trench contained five discrete archaeological features and three modern land drains. The two pits ([4] and [6]) at the southern end of the trench contained a significant amount of highly vitrified smithing waste. In the centre of the trench was a large feature ([12]), 5.8m wide and of unknown depth, which yielded medieval pottery (and one sherd of residual Roman pottery) as well as a fragment of medieval brick and a fragment of vitrified smithing waste with clay lining attached. This feature has been interpreted as a pond. At the northern end of the trench, pit [16] contained another fragment of medieval pottery.

Environmental samples were taken from possible pond fill (13) and pit fill (17). The sample taken from possible pond fill (13) contained a small amount of barley and wheat grain, a moderate amount of charcoal and small amounts of bone, ferrous globule, cokey and tarry material indicating the burning of plant material at very high temperature, perhaps associated with the industrial process producing the vitrified smithing waste. Pit fill (17) was rich in wheat and legume remains, with smaller amounts of oat, barley, rye and corncockle, together with a large amount of charcoal.

This type of archaeological activity may be indicative of medieval backyards of properties fronting on to Witton's Lane to the east. The metalworking debris suggests the presence of a medieval smithy.

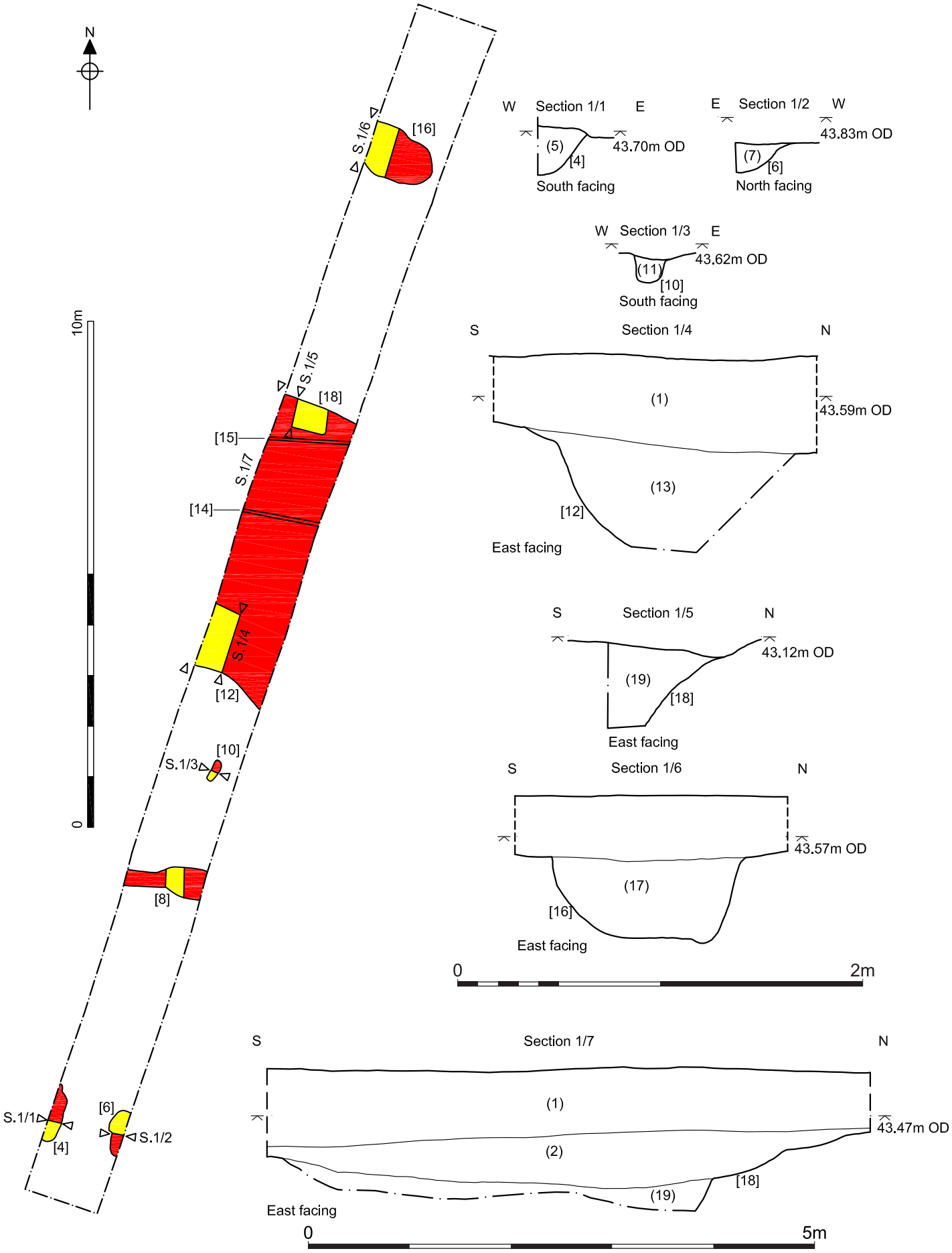

Figure 3. Trench 1 plans and sections. Scale 1:100, 1:50 and 1:25

Trench 2

Location	
Orientation	SE–NW
East End	618371 276568
West End	618376 276543
Dimensions	
Length	25.10m
Width	1.60m
Depth	0.50m
Levels	
East End Top	43.49m OD
West End Top	43.56m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
20	Topsoil	Dark brown clay with occasional small stones.	0.45m	0.45m
21	Land drain	Ceramic field drain.	–	–
22	Fill of [21]	Similar to (20).	–	–
23	Ditch	0.26m deep and 1.2m wide with moderately sloping sides and a convex base, suggesting it may be two ditches.	0.26m	0.71m
24	Fill of [23]	Pale brown clay.	0.26m	0.71m
25	Ditch	0.18m deep and 0.60m wide with a concave base.	0.18m	0.63m
26	Fill of [25]	Mid-brown clay with occasional chalk flecks.	0.18m	0.63
27	Pit	Irregular oval, 0.30m deep and 4.5m long with an uneven base.	0.30m	0.75m
28	Fill of [27]	Mid-greyish-brown silty clay with occasional stones, chalk flecks and charcoal flecks.	0.30m	0.75m
29	Pit	Oval, 0.30m deep and 1.95m long with steep sides and a concave base.	0.30m	0.75m
30	Fill of [29]	Mid-greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional stones, charcoal and chalk flecks.	0.30m	0.75m
31	Pit	Oval, 0.55m deep, 2.6m wide with steep sides and a concave base.	0.55m	1.0m
32	Fill of [31]	Pale brown sandy clay with occasional flint, chalk and charcoal flecks and clay lenses.	0.55m	1.0m
33	Ditch	0.22m deep and 0.50m wide with the eastern side steeper than the western and a concave base.	0.22m	0.67m

Trench 2				
34	Fill of [33]	Mid-greyish-brown clay with occasional charcoal and chalk flecks.	0.22m	0.67m

Discussion

This trench contained three ditches (all aligned north–south) and three pits. Ditch [25] can be securely dated to the 12th–13th centuries by six sherds of pottery. Pits [27] and [29] can be ascribed a similar date due to finds of similar pottery. Ditch [33] contained a fragment of peg tile, which could be medieval, but is more likely to be post-medieval. The trench also contained one modern land drain [21].

One environmental sample was taken from pit fill (30). This contained a moderate amount of wheat, together with some barley, grass and legume, together with some charcoal and fuel waste.

The activity in this trench can also be characterised as medieval backyard activity, with boundary ditches and shallow pits which may be shallow clay quarries. A significant amount of the natural clay in this area is chalky till which is an ideal raw material for clay-lump construction.

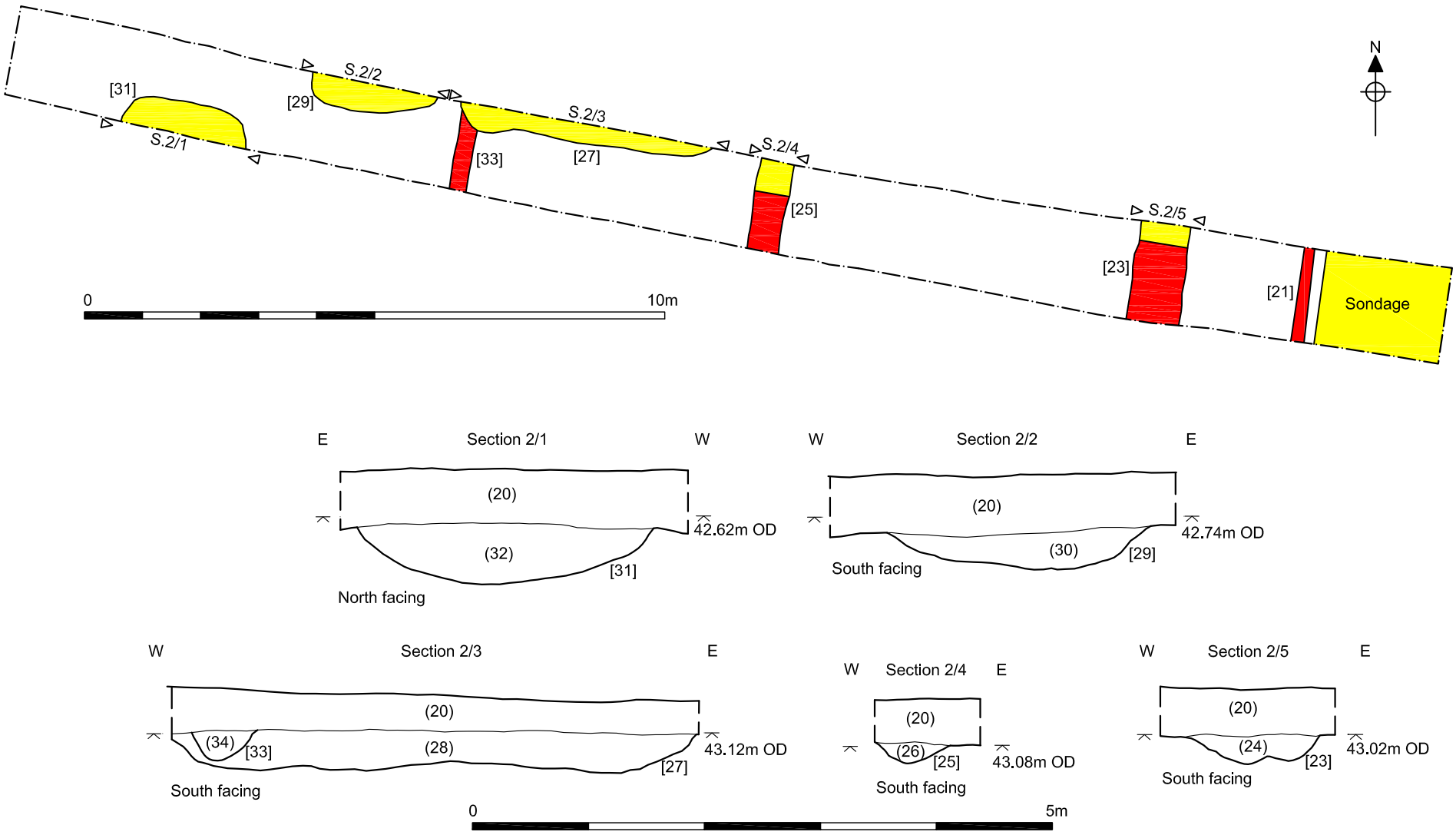

Figure 4. Trench 2, plan and sections. Scale 1:100 and 1:50

Trench 3

Location	
Orientation	NE–SW
North End	618378 276526,
South End	618354 276522
Dimensions	
Length	25.3m
Width	1.6m
Depth	0.55m
Levels	
North End Top	43.74m OD
South End Top	44.12m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
65	Topsoil	Dark brown clayey silt with occasional flint and chalk gravel.	0.39m	0.39m
66	Subsoil	Mid-brown clayey silt with occasional flint and chalk gravel.	0.16m	0.55m
67	Ditch	0.5m deep and 1.28m wide with a flat base and convex sides.	0.5m	1.05m
68	Fill of [67]	Mid-brownish-grey clayey silt with occasional charcoal, rare flint gravel and frequent mineralisation.	0.5m	1.05m
69	Post-hole	Oval, 0.17m deep, 0.45m long and 0.3m wide with steep sides and a concave base.	0.17m	0.72m
70	Fill of [69]	Mid-brownish-grey silt with rare flint gravel.	0.17m	0.72m
71	Post-hole	Circular, 0.11m deep and 0.43m in diameter with gently sloping sides and a concave base.	0.11m	0.66m
72	Fill of [71]	Mid-brownish-grey clayey silt with occasional flint gravel.	0.11m	0.66m
73	Ditch	0.48m deep and 0.95m wide with steep sides and a concave base.	0.48m	1.03m
74	Fill of [73]	Pale brown sandy clay with occasional chalk and flint gravel and charcoal flecks.	0.48m	1.03m

Trench 3
Discussion
This trench contained two ditches, two possible post-holes and two modern land drains. None of the archaeological features could be dated. Ditch [73] at the southern end of the trench appeared to be a continuation of the north–south ditch [55] / [57] in Trench 5, which appears to turn westwards in Trench 3. Ditch [67] was aligned east–west. The two post-holes ([69] and [71]) were in close proximity to ditch [67] and may be associated with that boundary. Post-hole [71] contained a highly fragmented large mammal bone which may have been used as post-packing.

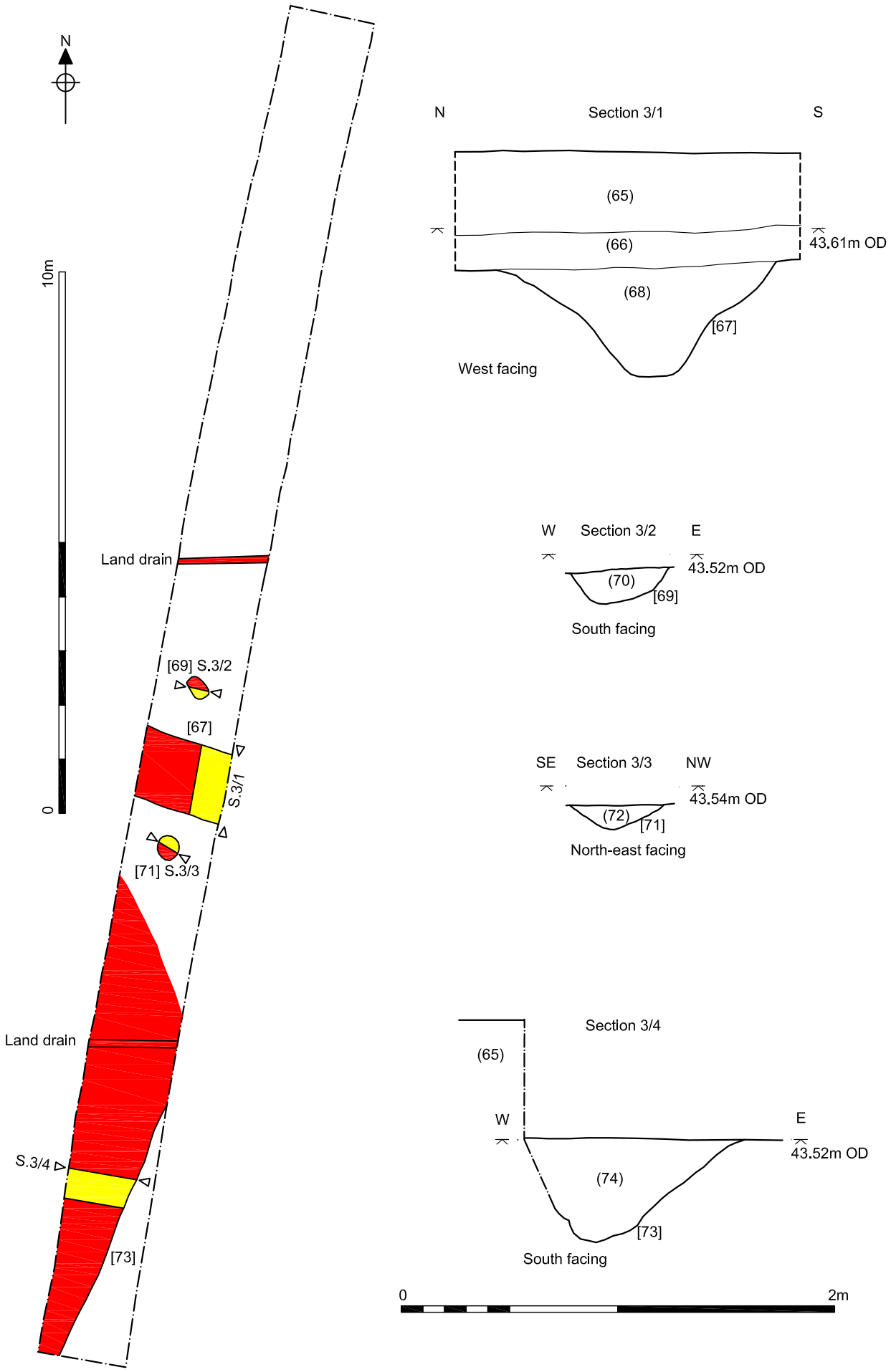

Figure 5. Trench 3, plan and sections. Scale 1:100 and 1:25

Trench 4

Location	
Orientation	SE–NW
East End	618367 276512
West End	618374 276488
Dimensions	
Length	25.15m
Width	1.6m
Depth	0.5m
Levels	
West End Top	43.82m OD
East End Top	43.88m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
35	Fill of [75]	Mid-greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional chalk and flint gravel and rare charcoal.	0.48m	0.99m
36	Primary fill of [75]	Mid-greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional chalk and flint gravel and rare charcoal and frequent lumps of redeposited natural clay.	0.14m	1.12m
37	Ditch	0.30m deep and 0.34m wide with steep sides and a concave base.	0.30m	0.81m
38	Fill of [37]	Pale grey silty clay with occasional charcoal and flint gravel.	0.30m	0.81m
39	Ditch	0.28m deep and 0.55m wide with vertical sides and a flat base.	0.28m	0.79m
40	Fill of [39]	Mid-brown clayey silt with occasional flint gravel and rare charcoal.	0.28m	0.79m
41	Ditch	0.13m deep and 0.38m wide with concave side and base.	0.13m	0.64m
42	Fill of [41]	Dark greyish-brown clayey silt with moderate charcoal and flint gravel.	0.13m	0.64m
43	Pit	Unknown shape, 0.15m deep and 1.1m long. The western side was gently sloping, while the eastern side was much steeper.	0.15m	0.51m
44	Fill of [43]	Dark brown clayey silt with frequent charcoal and occasional flint gravel	0.15m	0.51m

Trench 4				
45	Ditch	0.21m deep and 0.5m wide with steep sides and a flat base.	0.21m	0.72m
46	Fill of [46]	Mid-grey clayey silt with moderate charcoal and rare flint gravel.	0.21m	0.72m
47	Pit	Unknown shape, 0.24m deep and 0.94m wide with gently sloping sides and a concave base	0.24m	0.60m
48	Fill of [47]	Mid-brownish-grey clayey silt with moderate charcoal and occasional flint gravel.	0.24m	0.60m
49	Subsoil	Mid-brown silty clay with occasional flint and chalk gravel and moderate mineralisation	0.15m	0.51m
50	Topsoil	Dark brown silty clay with occasional flint and chalk gravel	0.36m	0.36m
75	Ditch	0.61m deep and 1.38m wide with vertical sides and a flat base	0.61m	1.12m

Discussion

Trench 4 contained four ditches and two pits, none of which could be dated. A shallow layer of subsoil was present throughout the trench, which may be the result of medieval open-field-type arable agriculture. This layer sealed most features. Pits [43] and [47] were both cut through the subsoil, which suggests a post-medieval date. Ditch [75] had vertical sides and a flat base suggesting that its sides suffered very little erosion before it fell out of use.

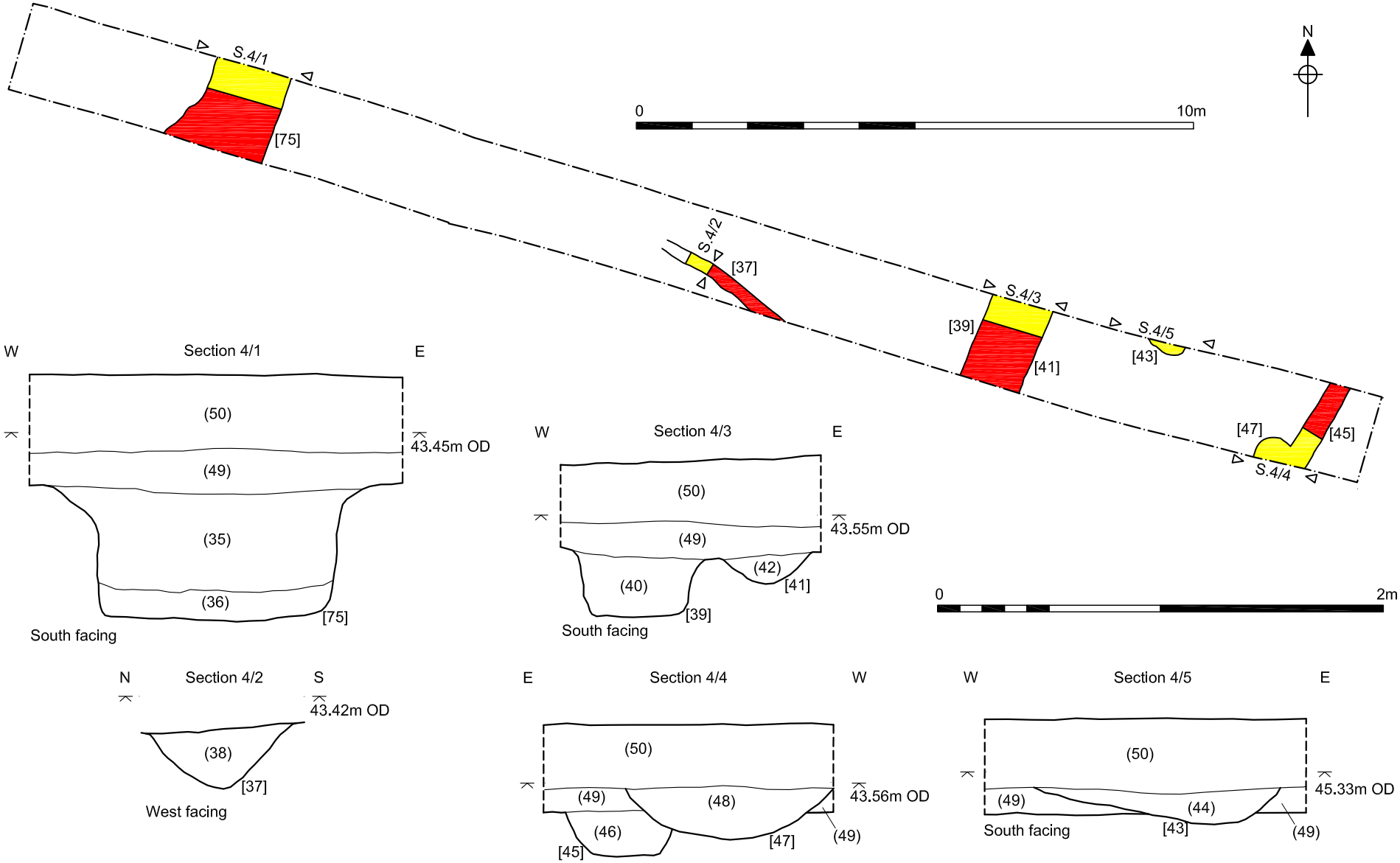

Figure 6. Trench 4, plan and sections. Scale 1:100 and 1:25

Trench 5

Location	
Orientation	NW–SE
West End	618350 276507
East End	618343 276531
Dimensions	
Length	25.4m
Width	1.6m
Depth	0.44m
Levels	
West End Top	43.98m OD
East End Top	44.15m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
51	Pit	Oval, 0.18m deep and 1.2m long with irregular sides and base.	0.18m	0.63m
52	Fill of [51]	Mid-grey clayey silt with moderate charcoal, occasional burnt clay and occasional flint and chalk gravel.	0.18m	0.63m
53	Ditch	0.38m deep and 1.6m wide with convex sides and a flat base. Possibly incorporates a wide, shallow recut.	0.38m	0.83m
54	Fill of [53]	Pale reddish-cream clayey silt with rare flint gravel.	0.38m	0.83m
55	Ditch	0.28m deep, 1.8m wide with shallow sides and a concave base.	0.28m	0.73m
56	Fill of [55]	Pale brown clayey silt with rare charcoal and rare flint gravel.	0.28m	0.73m
57	Ditch	0.43m deep and 0.86m wide with steep sides and a flat base.	0.43m	0.95m
58	Fill of [57]	Pale greyish-brown clayey silt with rare charcoal and flint gravel.	0.43m	0.95m
59	Ditch	0.36m deep and 2.84m wide with gently sloping sides and a concave base.	0.36m	0.81m
60	Fill of [59]	Mid-reddish-brown clayey silt with rare flint gravel and frequent mineralisation.	0.36m	0.81m

Trench 5				
61	Ditch	Not fully excavated due to flooding. 0.93m wide with steep sides.	?	?
62	Fill of [61]	Mid-greyish-brown silty clay with rare charcoal, flint and chalk gravel.	?	?
63	Subsoil	Mid-brown silty clay with occasional flint and chalk gravel.	0.15m	0.45m
64	Topsoil	Dark brown silty clay with occasional flint and chalk gravel.	0.30m	0.30m

Discussion

This trench contained five ditches and one pit, all undated. Like Trenches 3 and 4, a shallow layer of subsoil was present, suggesting the presence of medieval open-field-type arable agriculture. Ditches [55] and [59] had wide, shallow profiles, suggestive of medieval furrows. These ditches appeared to be recuts of ditches [57] and [61] respectively. Pit [51], although undated, contained a high proportion of charcoal and fired clay, suggestive of semi-industrial activity in the proximity.

Environmental samples were taken from pit-fill (52) and ditch-fill (58). Pit-fill (52) produced a small amount of oat, barley, rye and wheat and a large amount of charcoal. Ditch-fill (58) produced a small amount of wheat and a moderate amount of charcoal.

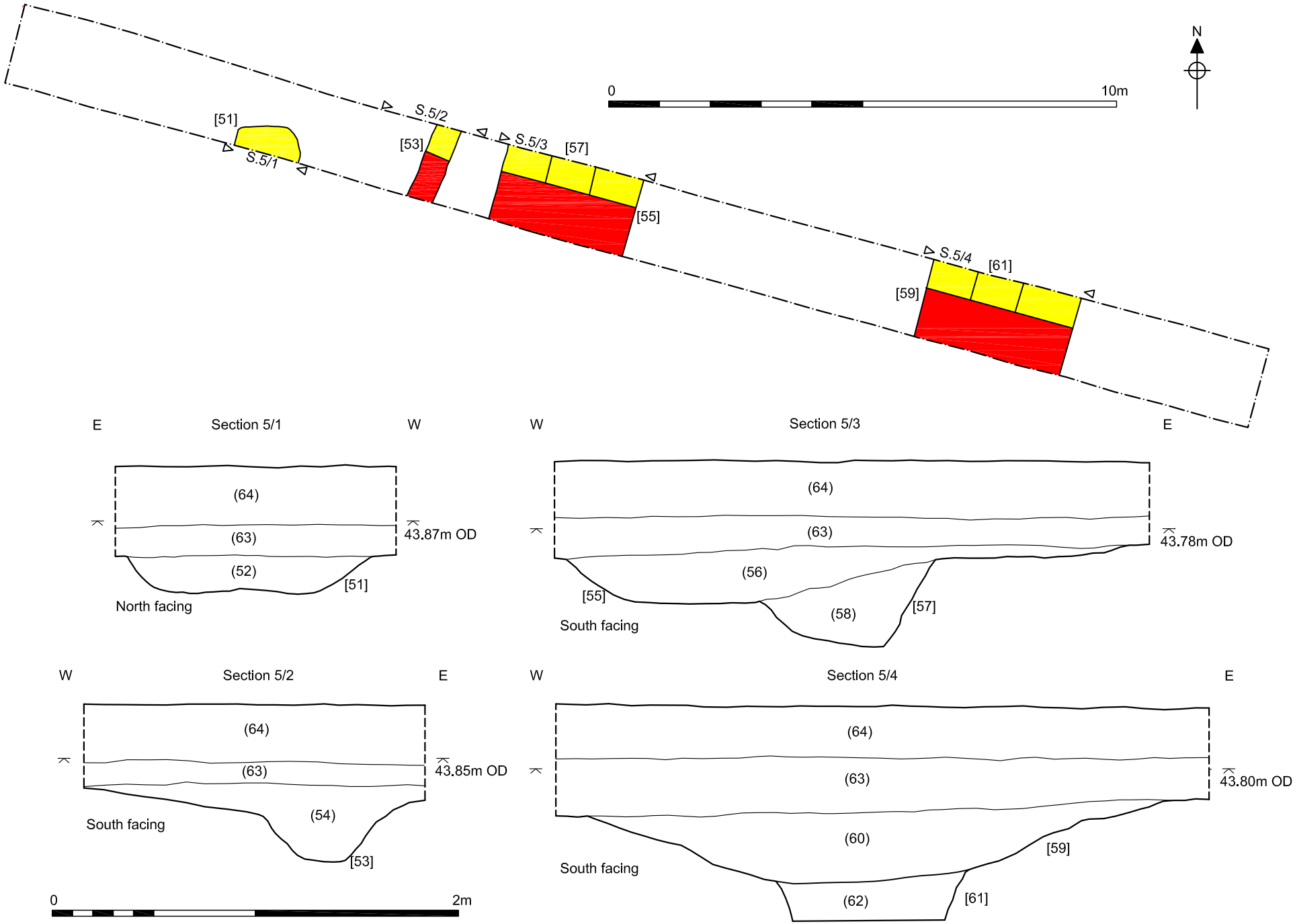

Figure 7. Trench 5, plan and section. Scale 1:100 and 1:25

6.0 THE FINDS

6.1 Pottery

By Sarah Percival

Fifteen sherds of pottery were recovered from five features (Appendix 3). A single sherd of unsourced sandy grey ware was found in pond [12]. The sherd is Roman, but is otherwise not closely datable. The remaining fourteen sherds, all undecorated body sherds, are medieval, including two sherds of Melton Shelley Ware of 12th–13th-century date (Anderson 1999, 149) and a single sherd of Bury Coarse Sandy Ware dating from the late 12th–14th centuries. The remainder of the assemblage comprises unsourced medieval coarsewares. One coarse shell-tempered sherd from pit [29] is not closely datable

Feature	Cut	Quantity	Weight (g)	Date
Ditch	25	5	19	C.12th–C.13th
		1	16	C.12th–C.13th
Pit	16	1	6	C.12th–C.14th
	27	1	16	C.11th–C.14th
	29	2	14	C.12th–C.13th
		1	29	C.12th–C.14th
		1	6	Not closely datable
Pond	12	2	3	C.12th–C.14th
		1	10	C.2nd–C.4th
Total		**15**	**119**	

Table 1. Quantity and weight of pottery by feature.

6.2 Ceramic Building Material

By Sarah Percival

6.2.1 Brick

A small piece of medieval brick weighing 5g was recovered from the fill of pond [12] (Appendix 4). A roof tile fragment weighing 57g was found in ditch [33].

6.2.2 Fired Clay

By Sarah Percival

A single undiagnostic fragment of fired clay weighing 2g was found in the fill of pit [51] (Appendix 4).

6.3 Metalworking Debris

By Sarah Percival

Metalworking debris indicative of iron smithing was found in the fills of pits [04] and [06] and from possible pond [12]. The assemblage includes eleven pieces of highly vitrified smithing waste weighing 562g. One piece, from pond like feature [12], has clay lining adhering. The assemblage is not closely datable.

Vitrified smithing waste is large pieces of slag formed in the high temperatures of a smithing hearth by the combination of iron compounds, silica and fluxes (in the form of ash) (Mortimer 2005).

6.4 Lithics

6.4.1 Flint

By Lucy Talbot

A single piece of burnt flint was recovered, from context (32) (Appendix 5). This piece is undiagnostic, and whilst it could be prehistoric, it could equally be later.

6.4.2 Lava

By Sarah Percival

Eleven small abraded pieces of lava weighing 112g were found in the fill of ditch [57] (Appendix 5). The scraps in grey vesicular lava have no surviving surfaces and are not closely datable, though a Roman date for the assemblage is possible.

6.5 Faunal Remains

By Julie Curl

A total of 45kg of bone, consisting of 115 fragments, was recovered from two fills during the evaluation (Appendix 6). The remains included a heavily butchered pig/boar element and bone that may have been used for post-packing.

All of the bone was examined primarily to determine range of species, elements present and modifications. The assessment was carried out following a modified version of guidelines by English Heritage (Davis 1992). A note was also made of butchering and any indications of skinning, hornworking 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 examined. A table giving a summary of the information is included with this report.

Bone was recovered from two contexts. Context (36), the fill of ditch [75] in Trench 4 produced a heavily butchered shaft of a pig/boar humerus, with numerous knife cuts along the shaft where meat was removed.

Context (72), the fill of ?post-hole [71] in Trench 3 yielded 115 fragments of large mammal bone. Most of the fragments were <10mm long, with some fragments up to a maximum of 60mm. No diagnostic pieces were present to allow full identification; a cut-mark was noted on one shaft fragments, indicating food use. It is possible that the bone waste was used as post-packing.

The remains are in a sound condition, although fragmented from butchering and, no erosion, gnawing or invertebrate damage was evident. The remains appear to be derived from butchering and food waste and with the probability of the highly fragmented material in (72) being used as packing material.

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

by Val Fryer

Samples for the evaluation of the content and preservation of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken, and five were submitted for assessment. The samples were processed by manual water flotation/washover and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Appendix 7. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (1997). All plant remains were charred. Modern contaminants including fibrous roots and seeds were present throughout.

Oat (*Avena* sp.), barley (*Hordeum* sp.), rye (*Secale cereale*) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains were present at a low to moderate density in all five assemblages along with rare chaff elements and seeds of common segetal weeds. Preservation was generally quite poor, with a large proportion of the grains being severely puffed and distorted, probably as a result of combustion at very high temperatures. Accurate identification of the macrofossils was further hampered by a heavy coating of silt particles, which covered most of the material within the assemblages.

Charcoal/charred wood fragments, some of which were quite large, were present throughout along with pieces of charred root/stem and indeterminate culm nodes. Other remains were scarce, but did include fragments of black porous and tarry material, both of which were probable residues of the combustion of organic remains (including cereal grains) at very high temperatures. A large ferrous globule and vitreous concretions were recorded within the assemblage from sample 1 (from possible pond [12]). The ferrous globule may well be spheroidal hammer scale, although it is larger than the usual globules.

In summary, all five assemblages appear to be derived from scattered hearth waste. Cereals are present throughout, although it is unclear whether they represent spilled foodstuffs, or whether they formed part of the fuel used within the hearths. The poor condition of the macrofossils and the presence of a ferrous globule and vitreous concretions may indicate that some small-scale industrial or craft activity involving high temperature combustion was occurring in the near vicinity.

Although the current assemblages are all small, they clearly illustrate that plant remains are preserved within the archaeological horizon at Heckfield Green. Therefore, if further interventions are planned, it is strongly recommended that additional plant macrofossil samples of approximately 20 – 30 litres in volume are taken from all well sealed and dated contexts recorded during excavation.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

This evaluation produced a large number of archaeological features, only a small proportion of which contained datable material. The one fragment of residual Roman pottery (found in pond [12]) suggests the presence of either Roman agriculture or a close-by Roman site. All of the datable features were dated by pottery to the 12th–14th centuries and may represent medieval activity of the late 13th century, a period of high population. This can be characterised as backyard-type activity, with enclosures, quarry pits and evidence of iron smithing, on plots probably fronting on to Witton's Lane to the east. Most of the ditches appear to be aligned parallel or perpendicular to Witton's Lane. The environmental samples taken indicate a significant amount of cereal (oat, barley, rye and wheat) processing during this period, domestic burning (possibly hearth waste) and a small amount of smithing in this period. It is not possible at present to be sure what effect the proximity of Hoxne Priory may have had on this medieval occupation.

There is very little activity after this date, which may be due to two factors: a major land reorganisation and imposition of a form of open-field-type arable agriculture to feed the unprecedented level of population in the late 13th century; or the famine and plague of the 14th century causing a drop in population and consequent desertion of the site. A very irregular version of open-field agriculture was practised in south Norfolk and north Suffolk. The modern pattern of field boundaries is very suggestive of the piecemeal enclosure of open-field strips and furlongs.

The late medieval and post-medieval recolonisation of this area, reflected in the large number of listed buildings in Heckfield Green, did not extend as far along Witton's Lane as the present development area.

The areas of heaviest activity were at the eastern end of the development area. The archaeological remains were found to be at a depth of 0.3–0.55m below present ground level.

The environmental soil samples taken during this exercise illustrate that plant remains are preserved within the archaeological horizon at Heckfield Green. If further archaeological interventions take place here, additional plant macrofossil samples should be taken from well sealed and dated contexts.

Recommendations for future work based upon this report will be made by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank David Adams and Suzie Westall for assisting with the fieldwork, Lucy Talbot and Sarah Percival for processing and reporting on the finds, David Dobson for the illustrations and Richard Hoggett for editing this report.

The trenches were stripped and backfilled by PJ Groundworks Ltd. The site was monitored by William Fletcher of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team. The project was commissioned and funded by the Orwell Housing Association.

Bibliography

Anderson, S. 1999 'An Early Medieval Pottery Production Site at Bury Hill, Melton, Suffolk', *Medieval Ceramics* 22–23, 148–152.

Davis, S. 1992 *A rapid method for recording information about mammal bones from archaeological sites*. English Heritage AML report 71/92.

Department of the Environment 1990 *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning*. London: HMSO.

Mortimer, C. 2005 *Craft and Industries: Ferrous Metalworking* in Spall, C.A. and Toop, N.J. (eds), 2005, 'Blue Bridge Lane and Fishergate House, York. Report on excavations: July 2000 to July 2002' http://www.archaeologicalplanningconsultancy.co.uk/mono/001/rep_f_metwrk.html

Stace, C. 1997 *New Flora of the British Isles*. Second edition. Cambridge University Press.

Wymer, J.J. 1988 'Solid Geology' and 'Surface Geology' in Dymond, D. and Martin, E. (eds) *An Historical Atlas of Suffolk.* pp.16–19.

Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Trench	Category	Description	Period
1	1	Deposit	Topsoil	
2	1	Deposit	Subsoil	
3	All	Natural		
4	1	Cut	Pit	
5	1	Deposit	Fill of [4]	
6	1	Cut	Pit	
7	1	Deposit	Fill of [6]	
8	1	Cut	Ditch	
9	1	Deposit	Fill of [8]	
10	1	Cut	Pit	
11	1	Deposit	Fill of [10]	
12	1	Cut	Possible pond	12th–14th *c.*
13	1	Deposit	Fill of [12]	
14	1	Cut	Land drain	
15	1	Cut	Land drain	
16	1	Cut	Pit	12th–14th *c.*
17	1	Deposit	Fill of [16]	
18	1	Cut	Possible pond (same as [12])	
19	1	Deposit	Fill of [18]	
20	2	Deposit	Topsoil	
21	2	Cut	Land drain	
22	2	Deposit	Fill of [21]	
23	2	Cut	Ditch	
24	2	Deposit	Fill of [23]	
25	2	Cut	Ditch	12th–13th *c.*
26	2	Deposit	Fill of [25]	
27	2	Cut	Pit	11th–14th *c.*
28	2	Deposit	Fill of [27]	
29	2	Cut	Pit	12th–13th *c.*
30	2	Deposit	Fill of [29]	
31	2	Cut	Pit	
32	2	Deposit	Fill of [31]	
33	2	Cut	Ditch	
34	2	Deposit	Fill of [33]	
35	4	Deposit	Fill of [75]	
36	4	Deposit	Fill of [75]	
37	4	Cut	Ditch	
38	4	Deposit	Fill of [37]	
39	4	Cut	Ditch	
40	4	Deposit	Fill of [39]	
41	4	Cut	Ditch	
42	4	Deposit	Fill of [41]	
43	4	Cut	Pit	
44	4	Deposit	Fill of [43]	

Context	Trench	Category	Description	Period
45	4	Cut	Ditch	
46	4	Deposit	Fill of [45]	
47	4	Cut	Pit	
48	4	Deposit	Fill of [47]	
49	4	Deposit	Subsoil	
50	4	Deposit	Topsoil	
51	5	Cut	Pit	
52	5	Deposit	Fill of [51]	
53	5	Cut	Ditch	
54	5	Deposit	Fill of [53]	
55	5	Cut	Ditch	
56	5	Deposit	Fill of [55]	
57	5	Cut	Ditch	
58	5	Deposit	Fill of [57]	
59	5	Cut	Ditch	
60	5	Deposit	Fill of [59]	
61	5	Cut	Ditch	
62	5	Deposit	Fill of [61]	
63	5	Deposit	Subsoil	
64	5	Deposit	Topsoil	
65	3	Deposit	Topsoil	
66	3	Deposit	Subsoil	
67	3	Cut	Ditch	
68	3	Deposit	Fill of [67]	
69	3	Cut	Post-hole?	
70	3	Deposit	Fill of [69]	
71	3	Cut	Post-hole?	
72	3	Deposit	Fill of [71]	
73	3	Cut	Ditch	
74	3	Deposit	Fill of [73]	
75	4	Cut	Ditch	

Appendix 1b: OASIS feature summary table

Period	Feature type	Quantity
Unknown	Pit	7
	Ditch	15
	Post-hole	2
Medieval (1066 to 1539AD)	Pit	3
	Ditch	1
	Pond	1

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Quantity	Weight (g)	Period
5	Metalworking debris	4	104	Undiagnostic
7	Metalworking debris	4	436	Undiagnostic
13	Pottery	1	11	Roman
13	Pottery	2	4	Medieval
13	Metalworking debris	3	22	Undiagnostic
17	Pottery	1	6	Roman
19	Ceramic Building Material	1	5	Medieval
26	Pottery	5	28	Medieval
28	Pottery	2	24	Medieval
30	Pottery	3	20	Medieval
32	Pottery	2	41	Medieval
32	Flint - burnt	1	5	Prehistoric
34	Ceramic Building Material	1	57	?Roman
36	Animal Bone	-	15	Undiagnostic
52	Fired Clay	1	2	Undiagnostic
58	Lava	11	112	Undiagnostic
72	Animal Bone	-	30	Undiagnostic

Appendix 2b: NHER Finds Summary Table

Period	Material	Quantity
Unknown	Lava	11
	Flint	1
	Animal bone	116
	Fired clay	1
	Roof tile	1
Roman (42 to 409AD)	Pottery	1
Medieval (1066 to 1539AD)	Pottery	14

Appendix 3: Pottery

Ctxt	Total context sherd count	Total context sherd weight (kg)	Fabric	Form	Quantity	Wt (kg)	Date
13	3	0.013	MSGW	U	1	0.010	C.2nd–C.4th
13			MCW	U	2	0.003	C.12th–C.14th
17	1	0.006	MCW	U	1	0.006	C.12th–C.14th
26	6	0.035	MTN1	U	5	0.019	C.12th–C.13th
26			MCW	U	1	0.016	C.12th–C.13th
28	1	0.016	BCSW	U	1	0.016	C.11th–C.14th
30	4	0.049	MTN1	U	1	0.004	C.12th–C.13th
30			STW	U	1	0.006	Not closely datable
30			MCW UNGL	U	1	0.029	C.12th–C.14th
30			MTN1	U	1	0.010	C.12th–C.13th

MSGW Micaceous sandy greyware; MCW medieval coarseware, UNGL unglazed; MTN1 Melton Shelly Ware; BCSW Bury Coarse Sandy Ware; STW shell-tempered ware

Appendix 4: Ceramic Building Material

Context	Form	Quantity	Weight (g)	Period
12	Brick	1	2	Medieval
33	Roof tile	1	57	
51	Fired clay	1	2	

Appendix 5: Lithics

Context	Type	Quantity
57	Lava	11
32	Burnt flint	1

Appendix 6: Faunal Remains

Context	Total context weight (kg)	Total context quantity	Species	Comments
36	0.015	1	Pig/boar	Humerus shaft fragment, Several knife cuts on shaft
72	0.030	115	Large mammal	Highly fragmented large mammal fragments, 70% of fragments are less than 100mm

Appendix 7: Environmental Evidence

Sample No.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Context No.	**13**	**17**	**30**	**52**	**58**
Feature No.	**12**	**16**	**29**	**51**	**57**
Feature type	**?Pond**	**Pit**	**Pit**	**Pit**	**Ditch**
Cereals					
Avena sp. (grains)		x		x	
Hordeum sp. (grains)	xcf	xcf	x	xcf	
Secale cereale L. (grains)		xcf		x	
Triticum sp. (grains)	xcf	xx	xx	x	x
T. aestivum/compactum type (rachis nodes)		x			
Cereal indet. (grains)	x	xx	xx	xx	x
Herbs					
Agrostemma githago L.		x			
Bromus sp.			x		
Small Fabaceae indet.		xx	x		
Tree/shrub macrofossils					
Corylus avellana L.		x			
Other plant macrofossils					
Charcoal <2mm	xx	xxx	xx	xxx	xx
Charcoal >2mm	xx	xx	x	xxx	xx
Charcoal >5mm		x		x	
Charred root/stem		x			
Indet.culm nodes		x			
Other remains					
Black porous 'cokey' material	x	xx	x	xx	x
Black tarry material	x				
Bone	x	x			
Ferrous globule	x				
Small coal frags.	x	x	x		x
Vitreous material	x				
Sample volume (litres)	**8**	**8**	**8**	**8**	**8**
Volume of flot (litres)	**<0.1**	**<0.1**	**<0.1**	**<0.1**	**<0.1**
% flot sorted	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

x = 1–10 specimens; xx = 11–50 specimens; xxx = 51–100 specimens; cf. = compare