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Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Excavation at Land
off Leicester Lane, Great Bowden,
Leicestershire**

NGR: SP 473640 289120

Adam Clapton



ULAS Report No 2019-030

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Adam Clapton

*With specialist contributions from Nicholas Cooper, Wayne Jarvis, Rachel Small and Adam
Santer*

For: Gladman Developments Ltd

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An Archaeological Excavation at Land off Leicester Lane, Great Bowden Leicestershire (SP 473640 289120)

Summary

An archaeological excavation was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on land off Leicester Lane, Great Bowden, Leicestershire (SP 473640 289120), for Gladman Developments Ltd. The work was in advance of a proposed new residential development of the site (16/01942/OUT). The work was carried out between June and July 2018.

The work followed a geophysical survey which highlighted the potential archaeological features and a trial trench evaluation which confirmed the presence of archaeological features within the development area.

The excavation revealed a pit alignment of probable Iron Age date, running across the stripped area from north to south. The sterile nature of the pit alignment indicates this was most probably a boundary feature originating from settlements to the south, constructed to demarcate land on high ground above the river Welland to the south and east, with Langton Brook to the north. Early Roman (mid-1st-2nd century AD) activity consisted of two boundary ditches, three livestock enclosures and associated post built structures, gullies and pit features. A driveway was also seen allowing movement of livestock between the enclosures. Evidence of crop processing was also seen in this period, highlighted through the charred plant remains, the recovery of many quern fragments and the presence of a least two four-post structures often associated with grain storage. The evidence of both crop-processing features and livestock control management systems indicates a mixed arable and pastoral farming economy. The relative absence of primary deposition in the form occupational artefacts or structural evidence suggests that associated domestic structures are situated beyond the site boundaries. The material culture recovered from excavated features does suggest that activity was largely on a local scale, with pottery and materials being locally sourced, providing a self-sufficient economy. The pottery evidence indicates at a fairly tight date for vessels and combined with a lack of stratigraphical re-working of earthfast features on site indicates the Roman activity was perhaps confined to a single generation or phase of activity. Evidence from the archaeological record suggests the site was most likely associated with comparably dated activity to the south, on a prominent ridgeway in the landscape. The absence of any dateable material beyond the 2nd century AD suggests that beyond this period the site was abandoned and activity shifted, possibly back onto higher ground.

A scatter of worked lithics also attests to some earlier activity from the Mesolithic period onwards. Ridge and furrow was also present on site most likely medieval to post medieval in date and can be attributed to the arable fields of medieval and post medieval Great Bowden to the east.

The archive for this work will be deposited with Leicestershire County Museums with accession number X.A41.2018.

Introduction

This report presents the results of an archaeological excavation, on land off Leicester Lane, Great Bowden, Leicestershire, (SP 473640 289120) (Figure 1). The archaeological work was undertaken in response to plans for a residential development by Gladman Developments Ltd (16/01942/OUT).

Initial potential for the site had been highlighted through a desk-based assessment (Pegasus Group 2016) and subsequent geophysical survey (Pre-Construct Geophysics 2017) which highlighted the potential for undisturbed archaeological deposits in the development area.

A programme of trial trenching (Clapton 2018) had confirmed the presence of 1st-2nd century Roman occupation which included boundary and possible enclosure ditches. Sample excavation of features revealed material culture in the form of pottery sherds, ceramic building material and a mill stone fragment. The Leicestershire County Council Senior Planning Archaeologist, as archaeological advisor to the planning authority, requested that an open area excavation be undertaken in order to record any archaeological remains of significance. This work was carried out by ULAS in June and July 2018.

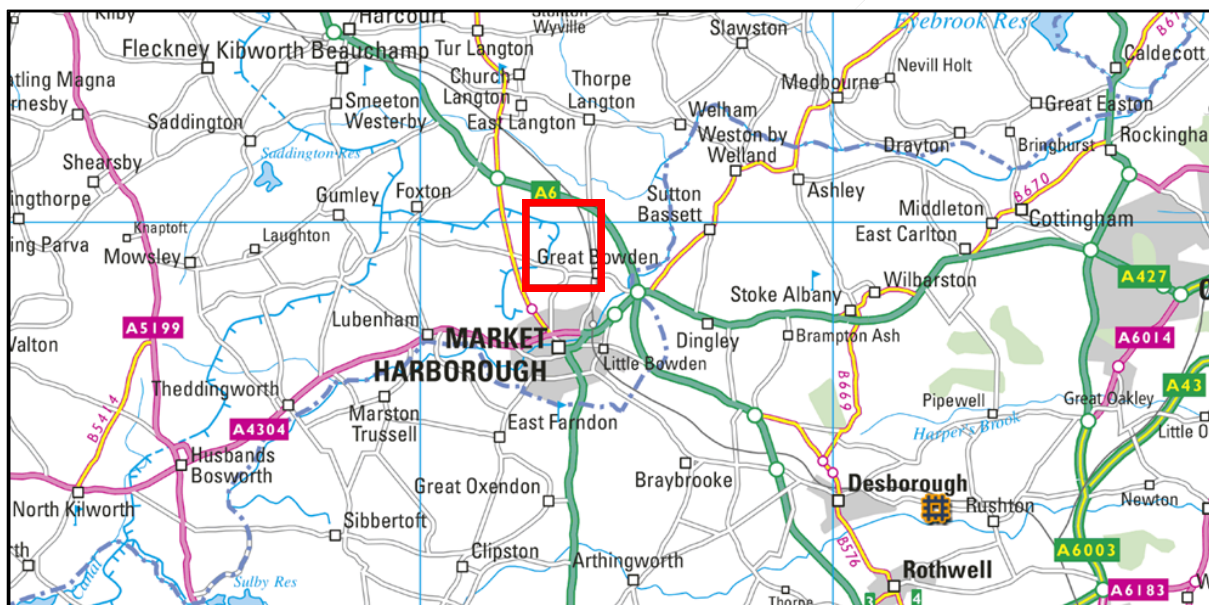


Figure 1: Site location within Leicestershire.

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Site Description, Topography and Geology

The site is located to the west of the settlement of Great Bowden (Figure 2). Public footpaths lie beyond the western and northern boundaries of the site, Leicester Lane lies immediately to the south and to the east are housing, garden allotments and a sawmill.

The site comprises one sub rectangular agricultural field and a small section of another to the north, totalling approximately 2.18ha in area (Figure 3). The sub rectangular field yielded 1st-2nd century Roman features in trial trenching. The boundaries around and within the site consist of hedgerows, except for the northern boundary which is open. The site occupies a gentle north-facing slope at a height of c.88- 99m aOD.

The bedrock geology of the site consists of Dyrham Formation (siltstone and mudstone, interbedded). This sedimentary bedrock formed in the Jurassic Period (c.183-191 million years ago) in a local environment previously dominated by shallow seas.³ No superficial deposits are recorded for this site.

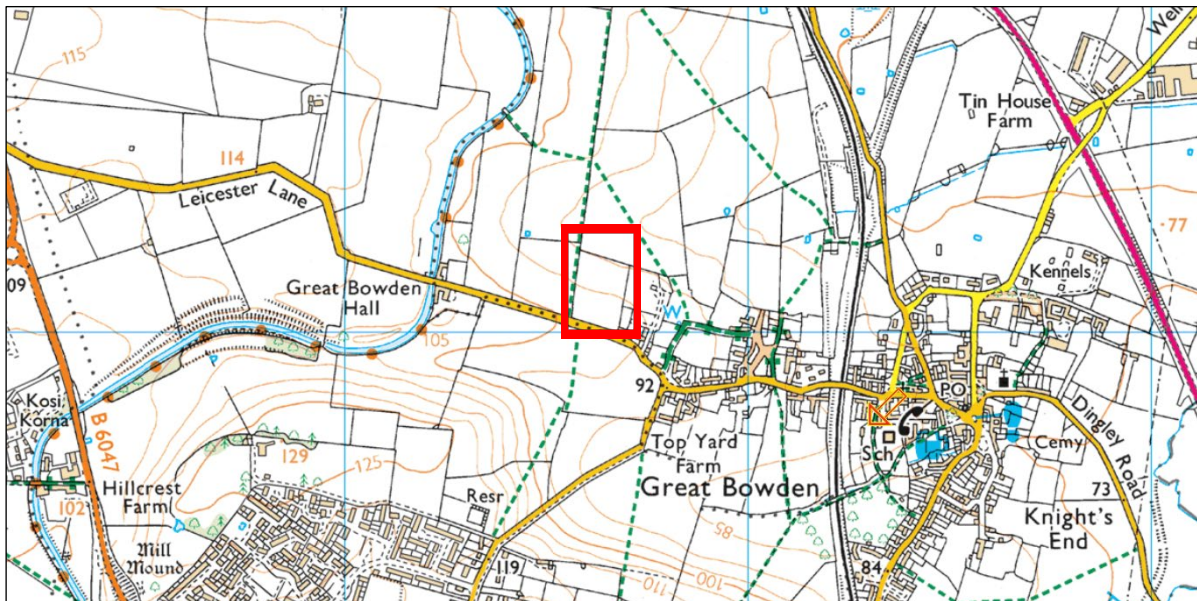


Figure 2: Site location (detail).

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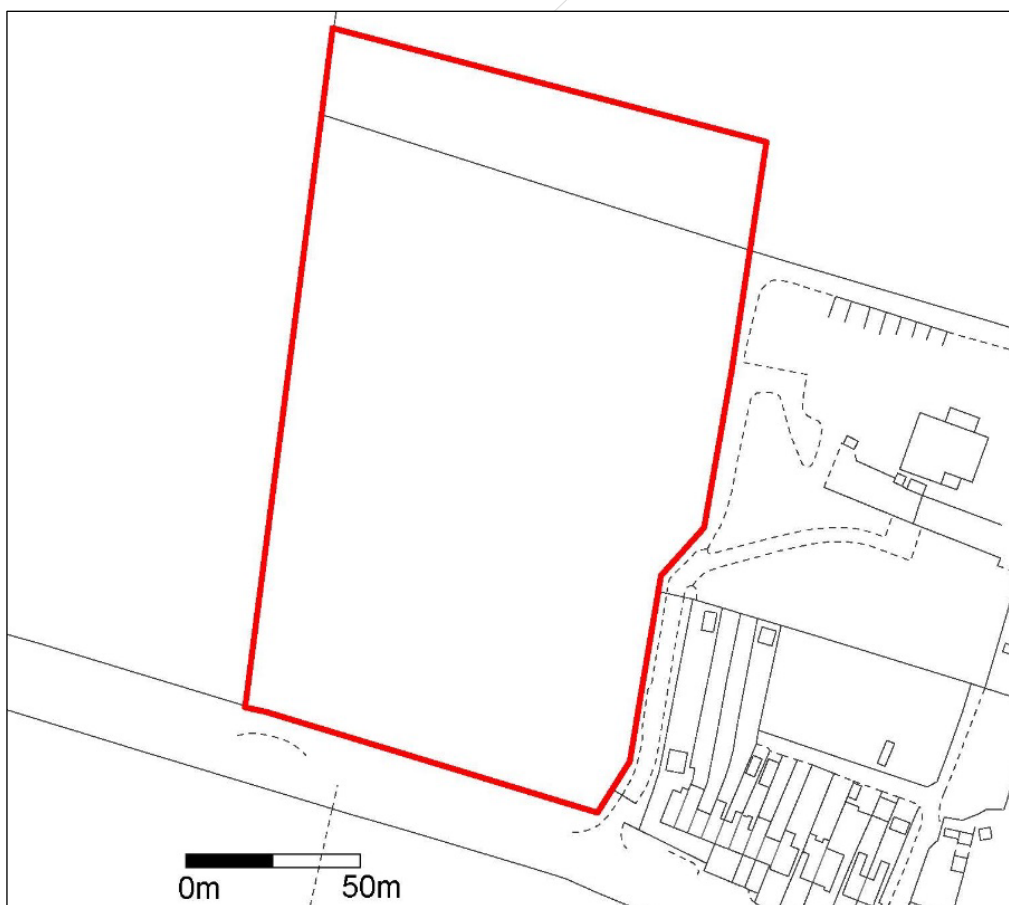


Figure 3: Area of development.

Archaeological and Historical background

Great Bowden village is situated above the Welland floodplain, a site reflected in its Old English meaning Bucga's Hill. Domesday and other evidence indicate that Great Bowden was an important estate centre in the eleventh century. The village is mentioned in Domesday and was amongst the holdings of William I subsequent to its ownership by Edward the Confessor. It consisted of nine and a half curacates of land. Robert de Bucy held land here from Countess Judith and William de Bucy also held land in Great Bowden. The ancient parish of Great Bowden was bounded to the south and west by the River Welland, which forms the boundary between Leicestershire and Northamptonshire for much of its length (although Market Harborough is now wholly within Leicestershire). The ancient parish formerly contained, besides Great Bowden, two dependent chapelries, St. Mary in Arden and Market Harborough (VCH Volume 5: Gartree Hundred.1964).

In 1086 Great Bowden was the centre of a large soke (a subordinate unit to a mother parish), which included lands in twelve other Leicestershire villages. The origin of the soke is unknown, but it seems to have existed under Edward the Confessor. Great Bowden soke is mentioned in 1173, but not subsequently. Nothing more is known of its organization although part of its territories evolved into a separate entity known as the soke of Stretton.

A Desk-Based Assessment (Pegasus Group 2016) highlighted several areas of interest close to the assessment area.

Prehistoric (to AD 43)

No prehistoric activity has been recorded within the site but finds have been recorded in an area adjacent to the north-east of the site (MLE 10148). Fieldwalking here recorded two late Iron Age pottery sherds and eight Romano-British pottery sherds (ELE 4675). Although identified as a possible site on the HER, there is no further evidence such as cropmarks to support this, and the amount of prehistoric material recorded is small and could have resulted from the manuring of fields in this area with refuse from activity elsewhere. Fieldwalking in Russell Seeds to the south of the site on three occasions (ELE 5389, ELE 5388, ELE 7783) identified over 40 pieces of worked flint including blades, flakes, cores, scrapers and some burnt flint (MLE 17041). The excavation of test pits in Great Bowden (ELE 9145) revealed a number of Neolithic to Bronze Age flint flakes to the east of the site, although no cut features were uncovered (MLE 21624, MLE 21628, MLE 21630). During an archaeological watching brief c.230m east of the site (ELE 5987), an unusual sherd of decorated Iron Age pottery was recovered (MLE 17526). Various artefacts were discovered during fieldwalking (ELE 4847) in Kendall's Field c.345 west of the site. Seven pieces of worked flint were collected as well as artefacts of various dates (MLE 16664). Prehistoric flint found through fieldwalking c.450m south-east of the site (MLE 19894, ELE 7785) included struck fragments, scrapers and blades were recovered.

Roman (AD 43 to AD 410)

No Roman activity has been recorded within the site, but again Romano-British finds were recorded adjacent to the north-eastern part of the site, during fieldwalking, comprising eight Roman pottery sherds (MLE 10148, ELE 4675). This material may represent activity in this area but could equally have resulted from the manuring of the fields with material from

elsewhere. Metal detecting and fieldwalking to the south of Leicester Lane (ELE 598, ELE 5389, ELE 5388, ELE 7783) identified greater quantities of more diverse material comprising sherds of pottery; ceramic building material including some flue tile; tesserae; three brooches; nine 4th-century coins; and a possible piece of glass (MLE 1999), indicating a possible area of settlement activity. The form, nature and extent of this activity is currently unknown. Roman pottery was also discovered c.420m south-east of the site at Lower Green's Hill (MLE 19893). Various artefacts were discovered during fieldwalking (ELE 4847) in Kendall's Field c.345 west of the site. Two pieces of Roman pottery and one piece of glass were collected (MLE 16664). During an archaeological watching brief (ELE 5987), a sherd of transitional early Roman pottery was recovered c.230m east of the site (MLE 17526). Roman pottery has also been recovered to the east of the site from The Paddock, Upper Green Farm and Old Hall (MLE 21594, MLE 21607, MLE 21612).

Early Medieval (AD 410 to AD 1066)

Great Bowden is known to have Anglo-Saxon origins. The site was historically located within the parish of Great Bowden and appears to have formed part of the agricultural hinterland to this settlement during the medieval period. No early medieval activity has been recorded within the site. One sherd of early Anglo-Saxon pottery was found during fieldwalking, 200m to the south-west of the site (MLE 17042).

Medieval (AD 1066 to AD 1539)

No medieval activity has been recorded within the site The Church of St Peter and St Paul (MLE 14936), situated c.970m east of the site in the centre of the settlement of Great

Bowden is of medieval origin, built in the 13th-century. Medieval settlement at Great Bowden appears to have been focused to the east of the site. Trial trenching and a watching brief (ELE 4848, ELE 5987) at Green Lane, c.235m east of the site, recorded gullies, pits and postholes as well as medieval pottery (MLE 16665). This site is within the medieval village core. Medieval village earthworks including a building platform and enclosure were noted c.105m east of the site on aerial photographs and during a field survey (MLE 1950). Fieldwalking c.30m south of the site (ELE 5389, ELE 5388, ELE 7783) recorded medieval material including pottery, glass and pieces of clay pipes (MLE 17040). Metal detecting (ELE 7784) found a small number of metal finds including a medieval horse shoe. This material is most likely to have resulted from the manuring of the fields with debris from the medieval settlement at the east of the site. Some medieval pottery was recovered during the excavation of test pits to the north of Great Bowden Hall c.150m west of the site (ELE 9145, MLE 21595), although the majority of the finds were post-medieval in date. Additional medieval sherds have been discovered through the excavation of test pits and fieldwalking to the west of the site (ELE 4847, MLE21590, MLE 21591, MLE 16664). Small amounts of medieval sherds were also recovered at several locations to the east and south-east of the site (MLE 6751, MLE 6753, MLE 21608, MLE 21610, MLE 19892). Ridge and furrow earthworks have not been recorded within the site, but are present to the north and the south of the village.

Post-medieval (AD 1539 to AD 1801) and Modern (AD 1801 to present)

The site itself appears to have changed little since at least the late 19th-century as seen on The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886. A large number of buildings in Great Bowden, to the east of the site, were built during the post-medieval period when the settlement expanded.

Great Bowden Hall (MLE 14956) is located *c.*310m west of the site and dates from the early 19th-century. A windmill situated *c.*370m south-west of the site, to the south of Great Bowden Hall, was noted in 1775 (MLE 1949). The road leading to the site is called Burnmill Road, which may indicate the fate of the structure. A large number of post-medieval findspots are recorded in the study area. Fieldwalking *c.*30m south of the site revealed post medieval material including pottery, glass and pieces of clay pipes (ELE 5389, ELE 5388, ELE 7783, MLE 17040). To the east P16-0195 | DS | December 2017 Leicester Lane, Great Bowden, Leicestershire 6 of the site, the excavation of test pits revealed post-medieval pottery, brick or tile, clay pipe fragments, glass, animal bone and other objects (ELE 9145, MLE 21590, MLE 21591, MLE 21593, MLE 21608, MLE 21610), and fieldwalking (ELE 7785) to the south-east revealed more similar finds. More post-medieval material was recorded to the west of the site also (MLE 10289, MLE 16664, MLE 21595). Again, this material may have resulted from the manuring of the fields with material from the settlement of Great Bowden, as no associated cut features are recorded. The Grand Union Canal, Market Harborough Arm was built in 1797 from Leicester to Debdale Wharf (MLE 16299). The canal was extended towards Market Harborough by 1809. The Conservation Area surrounding the Market Harborough Arm section of the Grand Union Canal extends to cover Great Bowden Hall and its surroundings, and is located *c.*220m west of the site. The Midland Railway, Leicester and Hitchin Extension passes through Great Bowden, *c.*500m east of the site (MLE 16083). The line opened in 1857 for transporting coal and in 1868 the line carried passenger trains to St Pancras, London.

Great Bowden separated from Market Harborough in 1995, when the former became a separate civil parish.

A geophysical survey of the site detected a limited number of potential ditches (and at least one potential pit) in the mid-southern part of the site. Elements of these potentially reflect enclosure boundaries associated with an early agricultural landscape. There are also slight geophysical suggestions of a curvilinear ditch in this locality.

A subsequent archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken in April 2018 comprising 14 30m by 1.8m trenches that were excavated across the development area. Five of the fourteen trenches contained archaeological features confirming the geophysical survey results indicating the presence of 1st-2nd century Roman activity in the development area, with some indications of more than one phase of activity also recorded (Clapton 2018). (Figure 4).

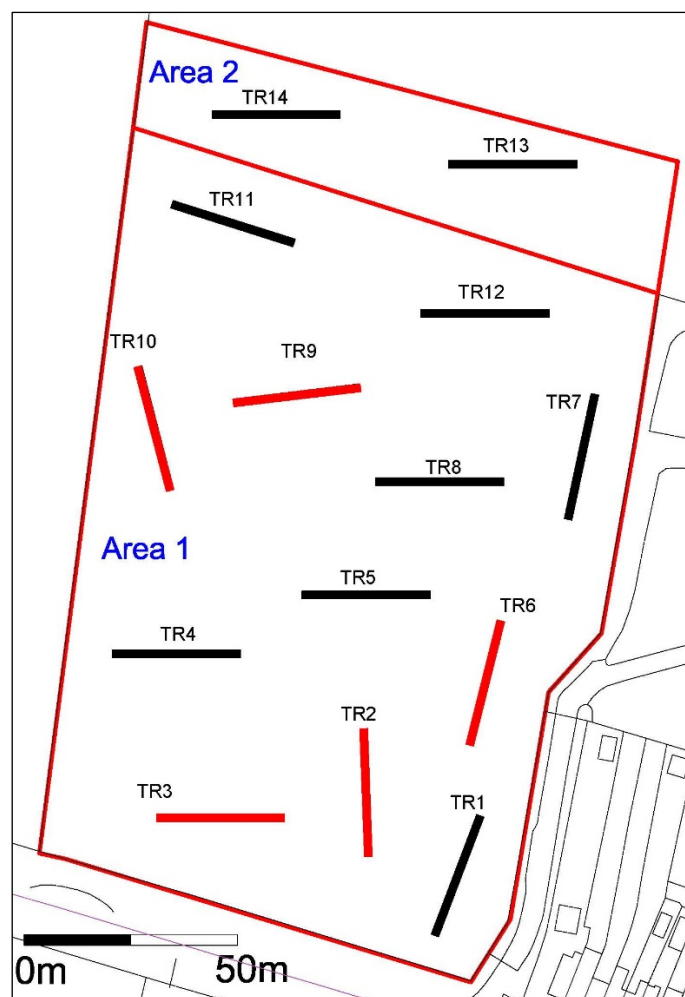


Figure 4: Negative trenches shown in black and trenches containing archaeology are shown in red.

Aims and Objectives

The principle aims of the archaeological work (WSI, Brown 2108) were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits and provide further clarification of the nature and extent of surviving archaeological remains on the site.
- To characterise more fully the extent, date range and significance of any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To advance understanding of the heritage assets
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

The archaeological work was considered in regard to the East Midlands Research Framework (Cooper ed. 2006) and strategy (Knight et al. 2012) along with national research aims, highlighted as English Heritage's critical research priorities for the prehistoric and Roman periods (EH 2010, EH 2012). As highlighted in the WSI, the excavation results had the potential to contribute to knowledge on Iron Age to Roman and Roman to Saxon transitions in rural settlement, landscape and society. The excavation also had the potential to contribute to regional research agenda topics including rural settlement patterns and landscapes in the

Roman period, agricultural economy in the Roman period and artefact production, distribution and social identity in the Roman period.

Methodology

A 13 ton 360 mechanical excavator was used to strip the excavation area using a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and subsoil was stored separately and excavation ceased at undisturbed natural deposits. The stripping targeted features identified on the geophysical survey combined with results from the subsequent trial trenching. A rough 10m easement was stripped around enclosure and boundary ditches and where further features were seen stripping was extended. A previously unidentified pit alignment also dictated further stripping within the development area. In total an area of around 6,700 m² (0.67 hectares) was stripped for excavation (Figure 5).

Following the machine stripping the exposed area was planned using a Topcon Hiper SR Network RTK system attached to a FC 5000 controller. The data was processed using N4ce V3.2 software and the final plans completed with the aid of TurboCad v2016 professional design software.

Guidelines concerning the excavation of archaeological features on site were provided in the WSI. Linear features were excavated at potential terminals and where interactions were visible, with further sections excavated at mid-points to reach the required sample requirements. Discrete pits and postholes were generally half sectioned and sampled where rich deposits or soils were identified. A one in four sample of the pit alignment was agreed and these were half sectioned and sampled. Pits that interacted with other features were also excavated.

All excavated sections were hand planned, photographed and the sections drawn to scale (either 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate) and subsequently tied in to the ordnance survey grid system. All written records were entered onto pro-forma ULAS context record sheets and regularly updated site indices were maintained. All work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Excavation*.

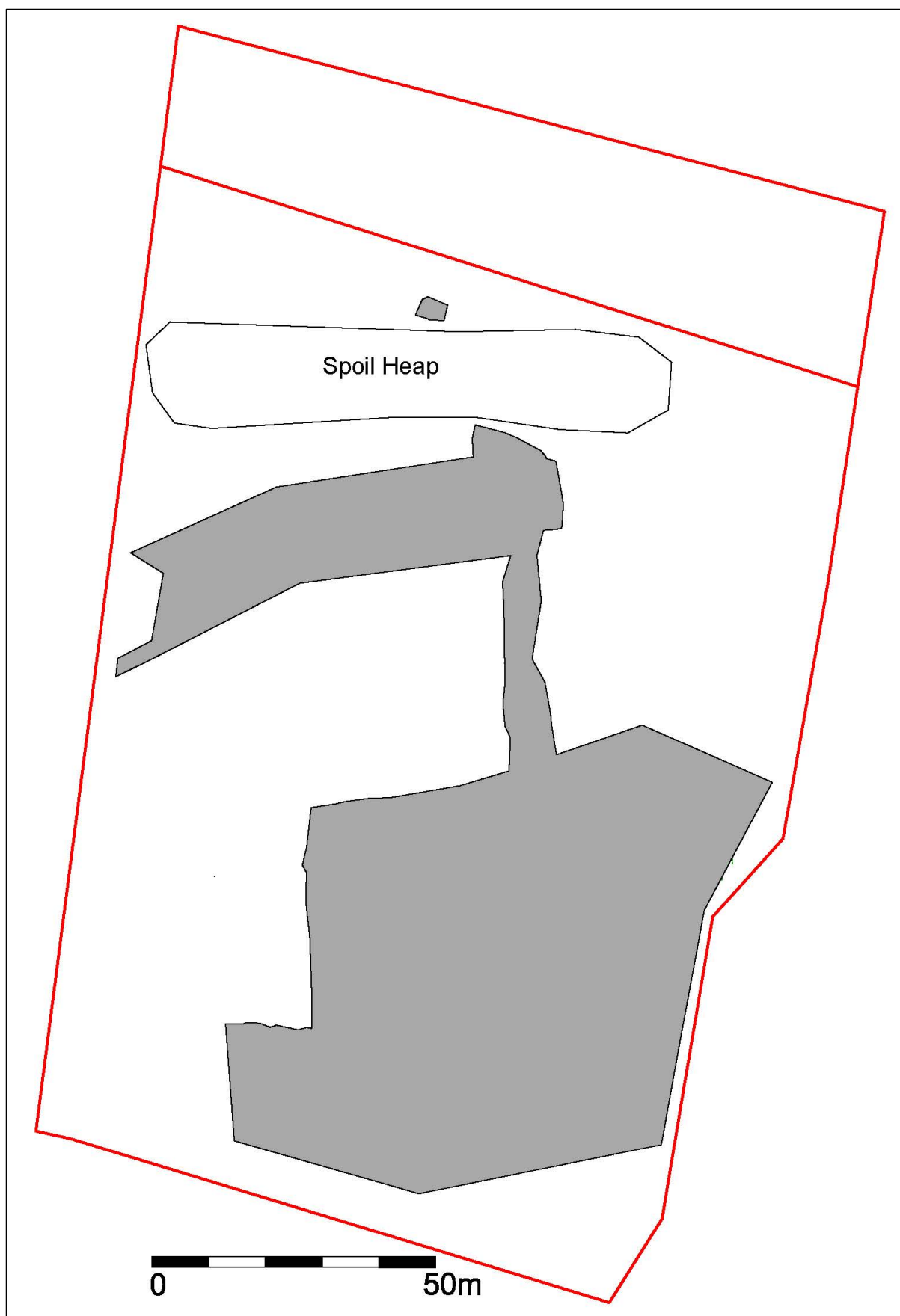


Figure 5: Final excavation area (in grey).

Excavation Results (Figure 6-7)

Stripping was carried out between the 4th June and 20th June 2018 using a 13 ton 360 mechanical excavator and ditching bucket under archaeological supervision (Figure 6). The sequence of overburden deposits mirrored that of the evaluation stage; below the topsoil was a subsoil which was removed separately by the machine and stored away from the area strip. Subsoils became greater in depth moving north and downslope across the site, with evidence of greater truncation from ploughing seen on the southern, flatter part of the site. Topsoil depths were also slightly less here than to the north. The natural substratum consisted of a yellowy brown clay interspersed with occasional pockets of ironstone with a sandy matrix.

Ridge and furrow, as seen in the evaluation ran north-south across the site at consistent intervals. Several field drains were also seen running north-south and north-east to south-west across the stripped area.

A series of linear features were exposed including two boundary ditches, a series of ditched enclosures and several short gully features. A number of other features were also identified consisting of pits and postholes some of which formed groups, alignments and evidence of structural features (Figure 7).

Little in the way of stratigraphical relationships were encountered so phasing is somewhat tentative. Relatively few finds were recovered from excavated features, however, those that were do suggest a main focus of dateable activity. Where applicable, evidence recovered from the evaluation is also cited in the report. Consequently a broad phasing can be suggested as detailed below.

The cut numbers for features are shown in square brackets e.g. [50] whereas the fills are shown in round brackets e.g. (51). All plans in the report show site north at the top of the page.



Figure 6: The excavation area from the north looking south-east.

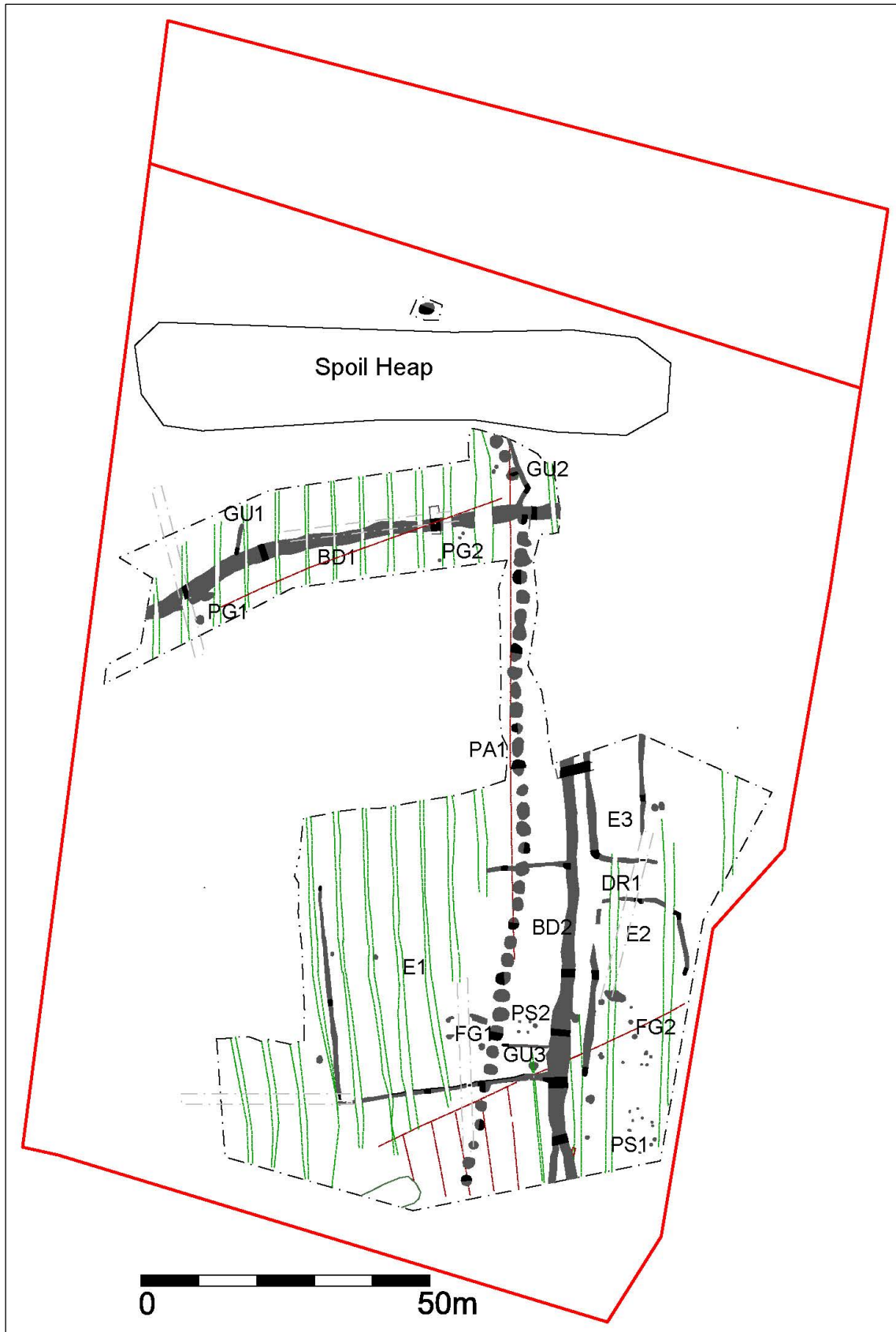


Figure 7: Overall plan of site showing features (grey), groups, excavated sections (black), furrows (green) and field drains (brown).

Prehistoric Evidence

PA1 Pit Alignment (Figures 8-11)

Cuts [101], [118], [132], [150], [175], [181], [183], [193], [195], [199], [206], [226], [247], [249]

The pit alignment could be traced across the stripped area for 133m running north-north-east to south-south-west at the south end of the stripped area then curving north to south as it headed north across site. A further small area was stripped to the north of the spoil heap which revealed a further pit, indicating the alignment continues curving heading south-east to north-west for a further 27m and continued out of the stripped area. (Figure 8). The alignment was intersected by **E1** and **BD1** as it headed across the stripped area. A total of 40 pits were seen with 11 pits half sectioned, a further 2 excavated to determine relationships and a further single pit sample excavated (Figure 9).

In plan the pits appeared sub-circular to sub rectilinear. The space between pits (from edge to edge) varied from between 0.4m-2.2m, with pits towards the southern boundary being further apart, most likely due to heavier plough truncation in this area. Pits heading down the slope heading north appeared closer together, again possibly due to less truncation from ploughing, due to greater amounts of sub and topsoil in this area. The pits averaged 2.16m in length by 1.86m in width and averaged 0.79m in depth. Broadly pits on the southern boundary appeared generally shallower than those heading north, although this is likely due to levels of truncation. The pit sides were consistently steep to vertical although slight variations were seen throughout the excavated sections. Generally pits to the north and south of the site had wider 'U' shaped concave to flat bases whilst pits more central, on the south-north sloping topography appeared to have a more general 'V' shaped bases. The majority of the pits had a substantial upper fill consisting of a mid-brownish yellow to grey silty clay with minimal small gravel inclusions and rare charcoal flecks. Eight of the excavated pits also contained a lower fill representing a primary silting phase, consisting of mainly mid greyish brown to yellow silty clay. Two excavated pits [183] and [206] showed slightly different fill patterns. Both pits showed further silting lenses above the primary silting layer, mainly consisting of variable yellowish-greys to brown silty clays. Pit [206] contained the substantial upper fill seen in the majority of other pits whilst [183] was heavily truncated by a field drain.

From 14 excavated pits only three sherds of pottery were recovered from excavated fills. These were pits [132], [150] and [196], which were all located close to the foci of the early Roman activity. All pottery was dated mid-1st-2nd century Roman, recovered from upper fills and therefore most likely residual in nature. Three flint fragments were also recovered from pit [132]. Extensive bulk sampling from fills at the base of the pits along its alignment revealed no environmental data. The extensive sterile nature of fills within the excavated pit sections suggests the pits probably silted up gradually over a long period, and the lack of material culture within the fills suggest they were away from any contemporary settlement activity. The presence of shallow features associated with the Roman activity cutting the upper fills of several pits within the alignment does appear at least to indicate the alignment pre-dates the Roman period.

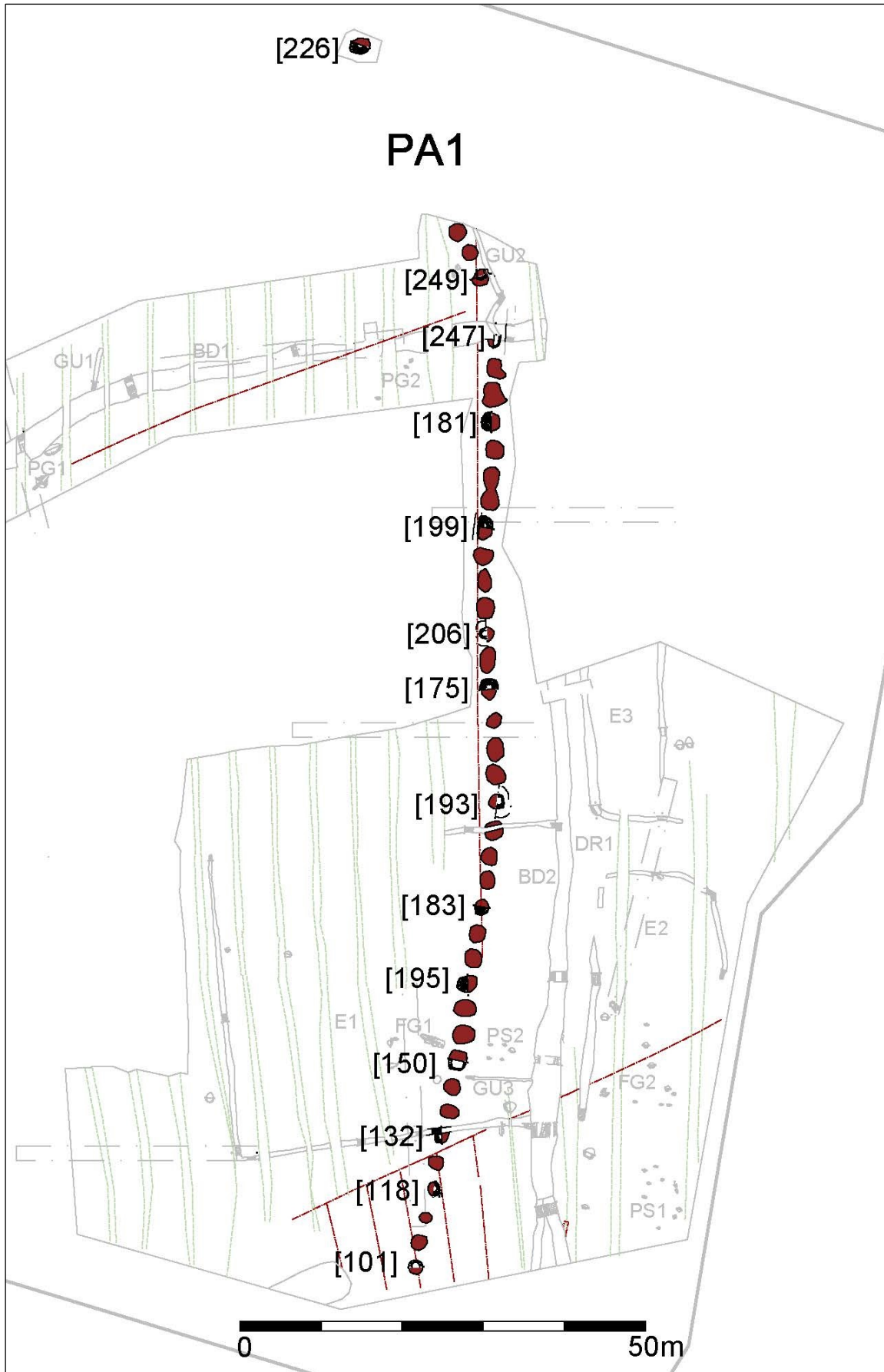


Figure 8: Pit Alignment PA1 plan.

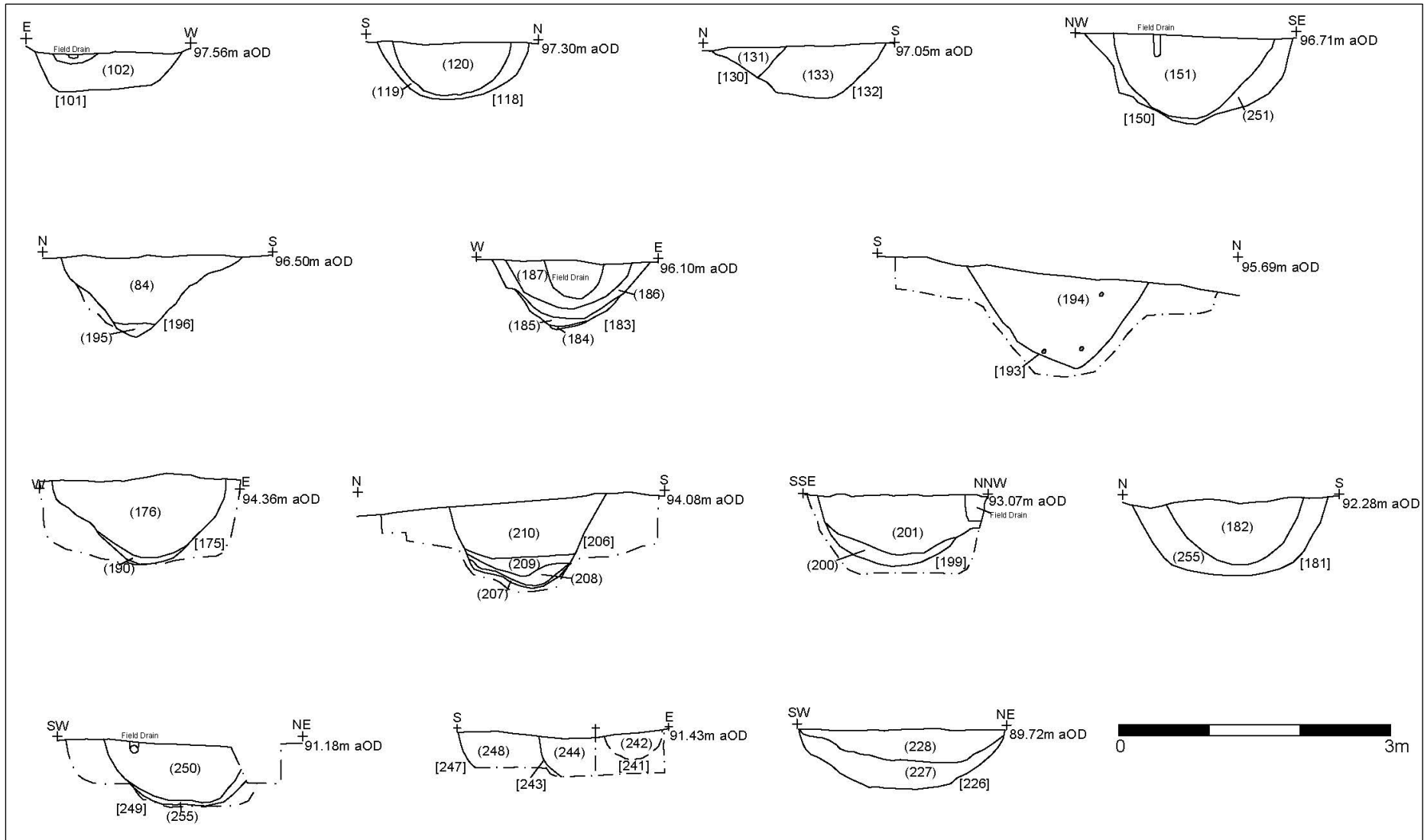


Figure 9: Pit Alignment PA1 sections.

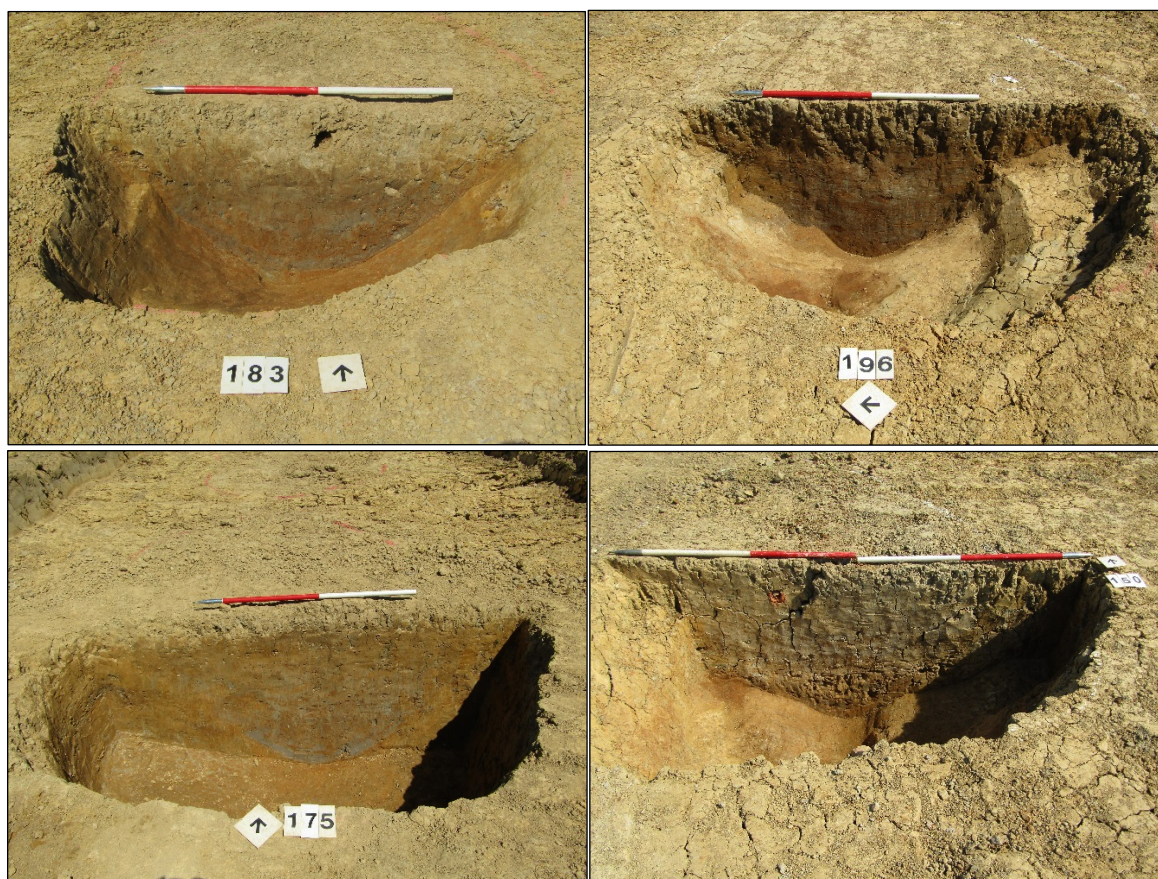


Figure 10: Pit Alignment PA1 selected sections (1m scales).



Figure 11: Pit Alignment PA1 looking south.

Early Roman Evidence

BD1 Boundary Ditch (Figure 12, Figure 13)

Cuts [44] = [221] = [142]

Cuts [41] = [224]

A Boundary Ditch (**BD1**) was observed to the north of the stripped area and ran east-north-east to west-south-west across the site, extending beyond the excavation area to the east and west. The ditch ran across site for 74m and was 1.9m-3.7m wide at a depth of 0.5m-1.29m. At its western end it could be seen truncating the pit alignment (**PA1**).

The ditch profile varied slightly across its length, with a significant secondary later recut truncating a smaller primary cut. The primary cut could be seen in the excavated sections for 43m across the stripped area, from where the secondary later recut truncates the primary cut entirely heading west. The primary cut measured 1.05m in width and 0.59m in depth. Its profile consisted of 'V' shaped concave sides and a narrow concave base. Its lower fill consisted of an orangey grey silty clay with occasional ironstone fragments. The upper fill consisted of an orangey brown silty clay with rare ironstone fragments. A secondary recut could be seen across the length of the boundary ditch. It measured 1.94m-2.67m in width and 0.5m-1.3m in depth. At its eastern end its profile was much shallower, consisting of shallow concave sides and concave base. As it headed east its profile became more 'V' shaped, with steep straight sides and narrower concave base, becoming much deeper in the process. At its western end the secondary recut had completely truncated the primary cut. A single fill consisting of orangey brown silty clays was recorded in excavated sections to the east, which was also consistent as an upper fill in sections heading west. These sections also showed two-three lower fills consisting of grey-orangey brown silty clays, representing silting episodes.

Three sherds of mid-1st-2nd century Roman pottery were recovered from the uppermost fill (141) of at the eastern end of **BD1**.

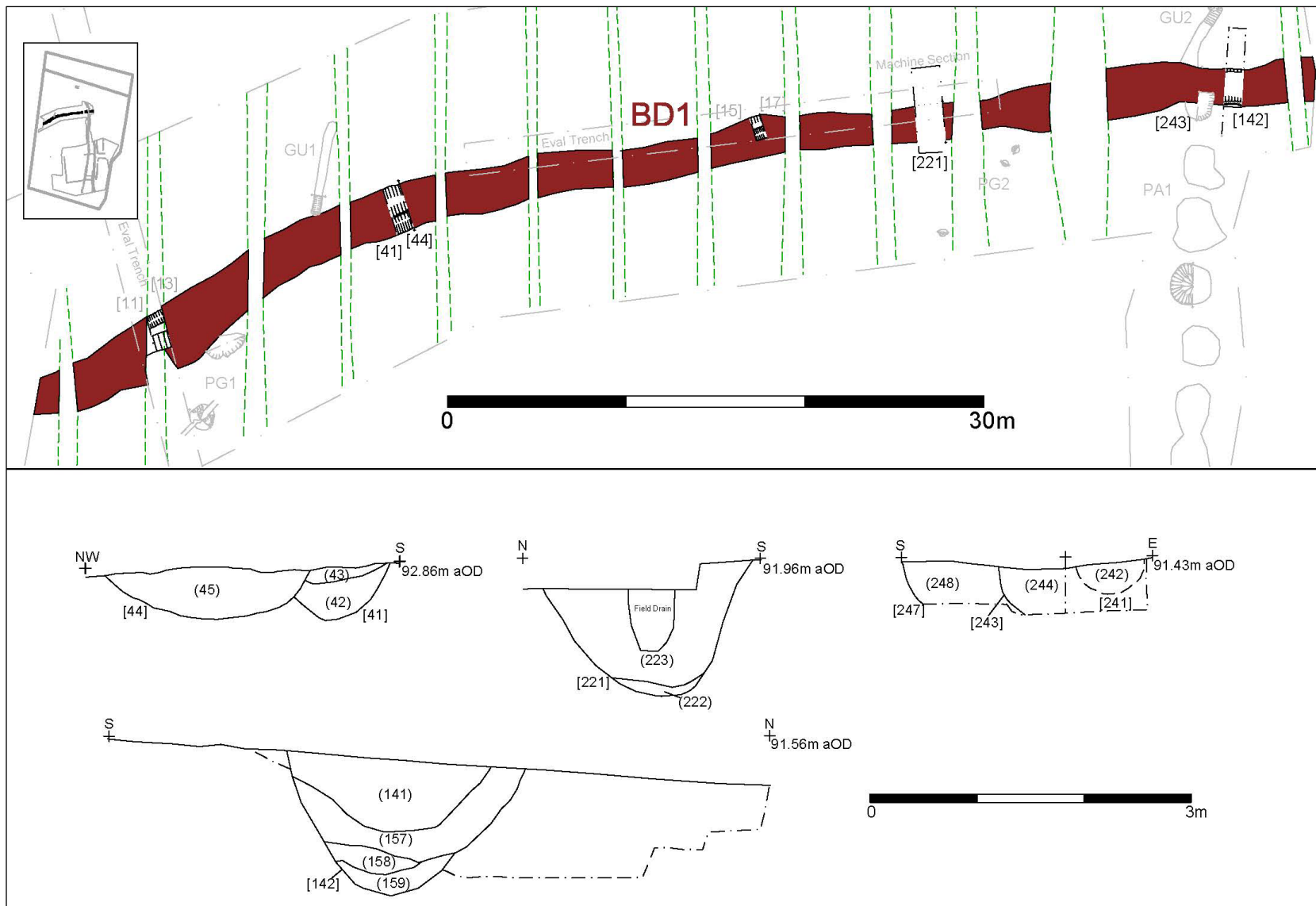


Figure 12: Boundary Ditch BD1 plan and sections.



Figure 13: Boundary Ditch BD1 looking south-west.

PG1 Pit Group (Figure 14)

Cuts [20], [35]

A pair of shallow pits were located on the west edge of the stripped area immediately to the south of **BD1**.

The southernmost pit [20] appeared sub circular in plan and measured 1.5m in length and 1.4m in width. It had shallow sloping sides breaking to a flat base and measured 0.15m in depth. It contained a single fill (21) consisting of an orangey grey silty clay with occasional small ironstone fragments. A single flint flake was recovered from the fill. The remnants of a field drain was seen truncating the centre of the pit from north-east to south-west. At 2.6m to the north-east a further shallow pit was located [35]. It appeared sub oval in plan and measured 1.2m in width, 2.3 m in length and 0.12m in depth. It had shallow sloping sides breaking to a flat base. It contained a single fill (36) consisting of a light brown silty clay with occasional ironstone fragments. A single flint flake and 2 sherds of 1st-2nd century Roman pottery were recovered from the fill. **BD1** appeared to truncate the north-western edge of pit [35].

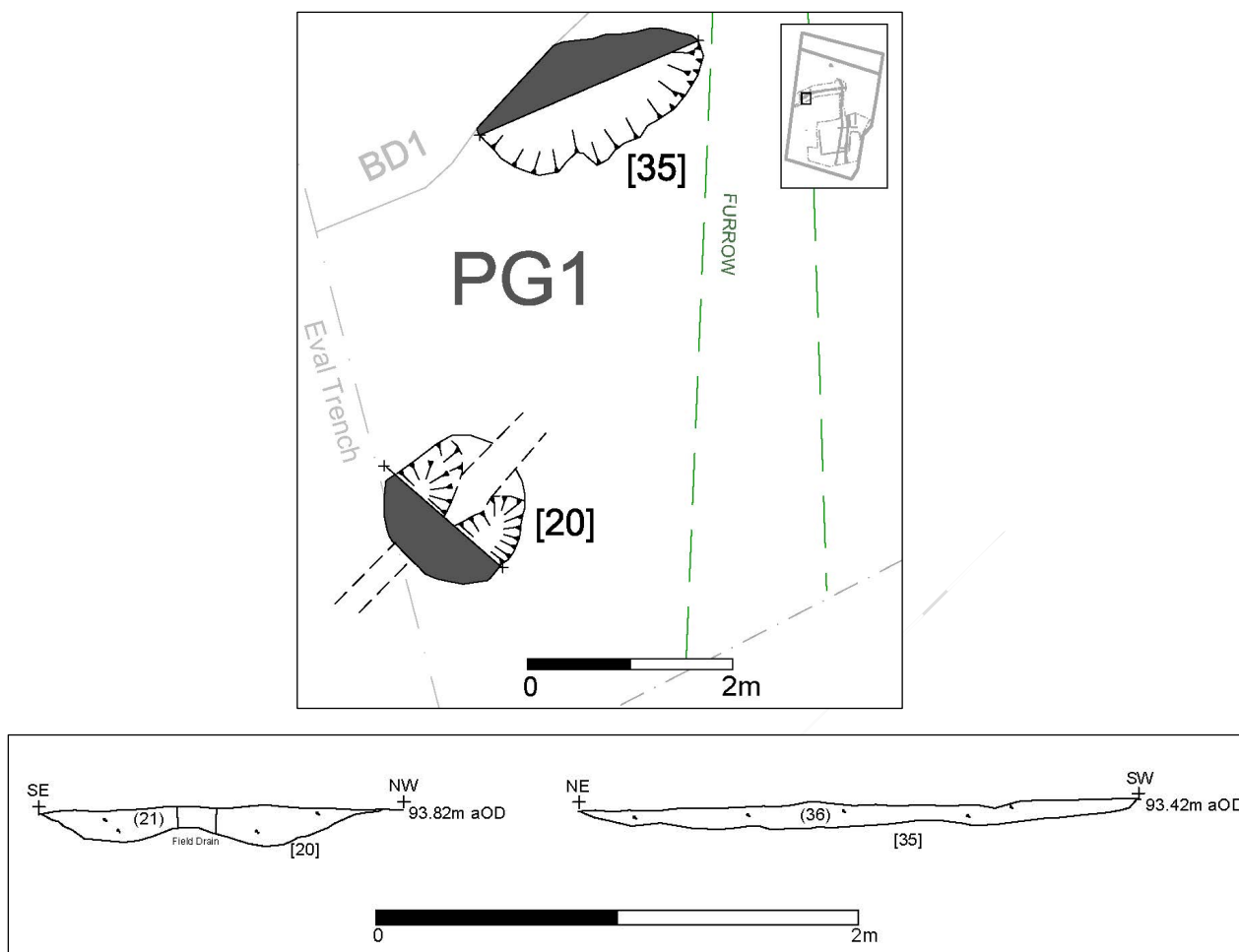


Figure 14: Pit Group PG1 plan and sections.

PG2 Pit Group (Figure 15)

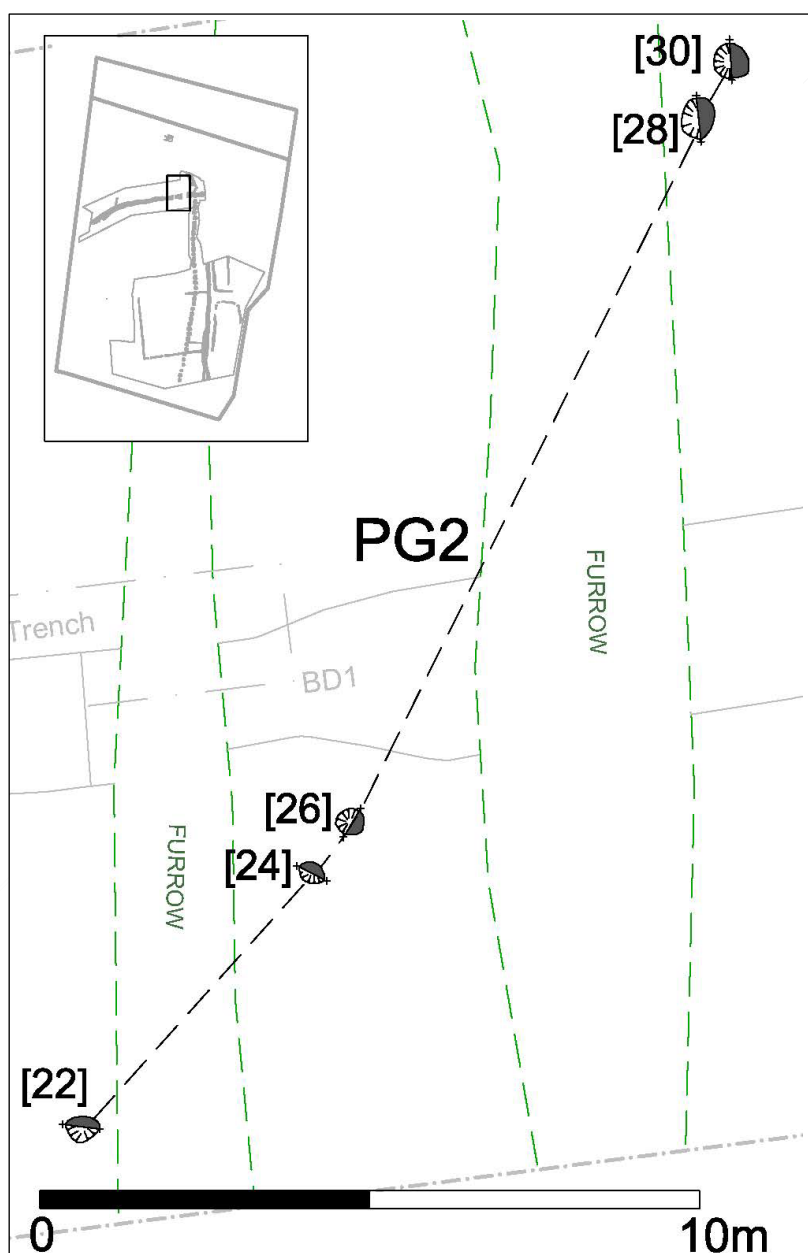
Cuts [22], [24], [26], [28], [30]

A loose group of 5 small pits could be seen forming a broad linear pattern, located in the north-east corner of the site. The group could be seen for 19.6m on a north-east to south-west alignment, to the west of PA1 and bisected by BD1.

The south-western most pit [22] appeared sub circular in plan, with shallow straight sloping sides and a narrow concave base. It measured 0.5m in diameter and 0.08m in depth. The fill (23) consisted of an orangey grey silty clay with occasional iron stone fragment inclusions. At 4.7m to the north-east a further sub circular pit was located [24]. It measured 0.4m in diameter and 0.08m in depth consisting of concave shallow sloping sides and a smooth concave base. It contained a single fill (25) consisting of a mid-grey silty clay with occasional ironstone fragments. Immediately north-east a further sub circular pit was located [26]. It measured 0.4m in diameter and 0.05m in depth consisting of shallow concave sides and a smooth concave base. It contained a single fill (27) consisting of a mid-grey silty clay with occasional ironstone fragments. A further 2 pit features were located 11m to the north east. Sub circular pit [28] measured 0.55m in diameter and 0.18m in depth a consisted of moderately sloping concave sides and a smooth concave base. It contained a single fill (29) consisting of a mid-greyish silty

clay with occasional ironstone fragments. Sub circular pit [30] measured 0.5m in diameter and 0.16m in depth, consisting of moderately sloping concave sides breaking to a smooth concave base. It contained a single fill (31) consisting of a mid-grey silty clay with occasional ironstone fragments. No finds were recovered from the pit group.

The similarity in shape, size and profile of the pits suggest they are contemporary features and therefore probably shared the same function, although the lack of dateable material means this can only be speculated. They formed a broad linear pattern running north-east to south-west and possibly would have numbered more, but consequent later truncation from furrows has removed any evidence of further pits. Dateable material from surrounding features does indicate the group was probably early Roman in date and may have functioned as a loose boundary type feature such as a fence, or maybe a result of small scale mineral extraction.



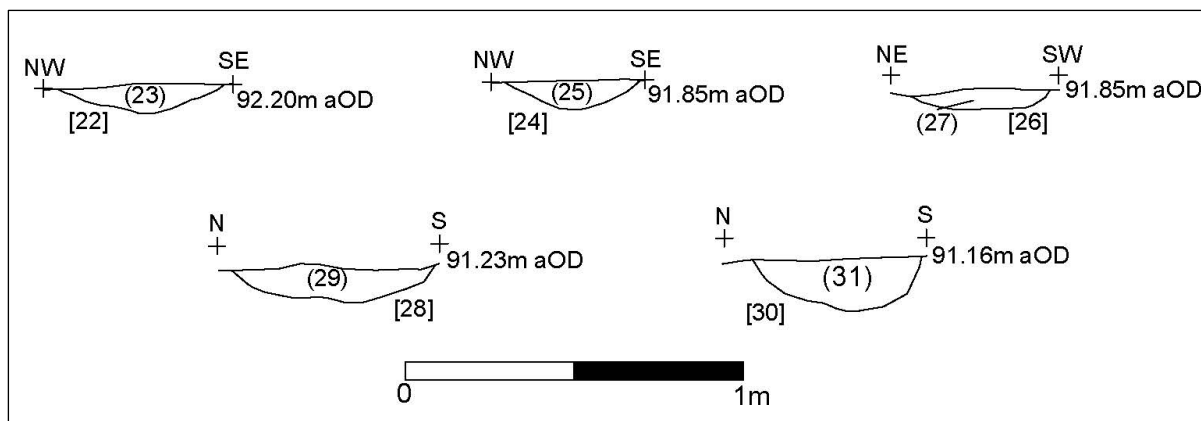


Figure 15: Pit Group PG2 plan and sections.

GU1 Short Gully (Figure 16)

Cut [32]

A short length of gully could be seen for 5.45m running north-south immediately to the north of **BD1**. Its northern end appeared truncated by a furrow and consequently its path could not be traced any further north.

A single excavated section [32] indicated a V-shaped profile for the gully, with steep sloping sides and a narrow base, measuring 0.5m in width and 0.25m in depth. The lower fill (33) consisted of a light blueish grey silty clay with occasional small ironstone fragments. The upper fill (34) consisted of a light brownish grey silty clay with occasional ironstone fragments. A single sherd of pottery was recovered from the fill indicating a mid-1st-2nd century Roman date for the infilling of the feature.

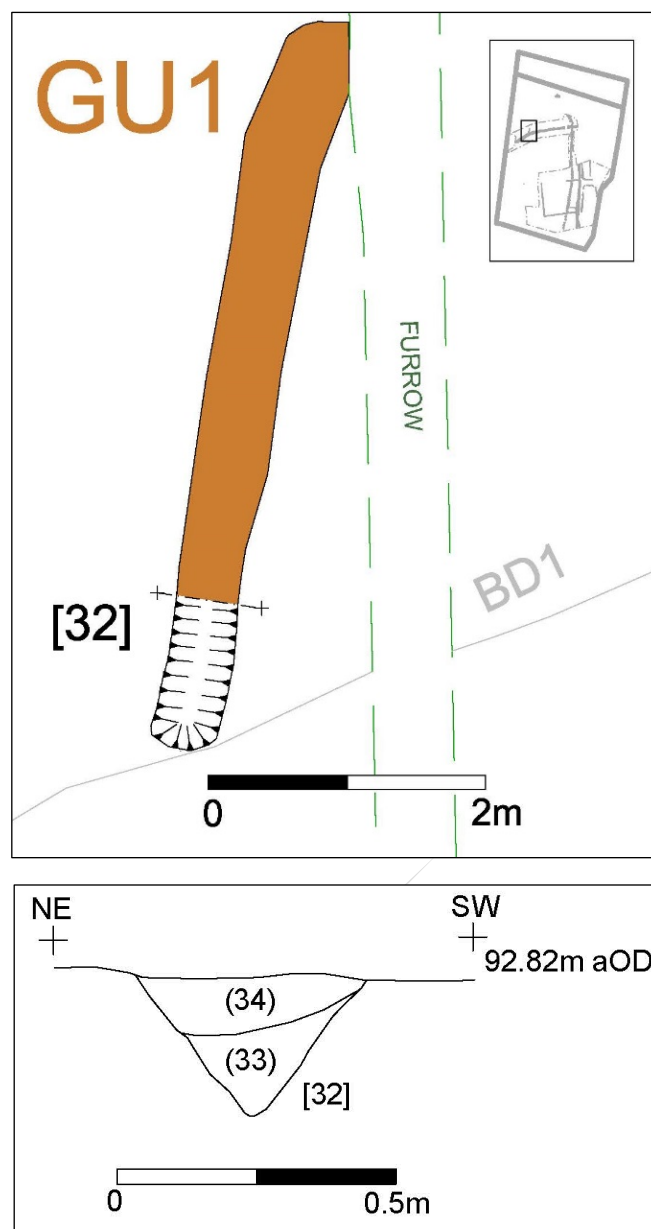


Figure 16: Gully GU1 plan and section.

GU2 Gully (Figure 17)

Cuts [148] = [241]

A gully survived for a length of 12.5m in the north-east corner of the excavation area. It appeared to originate from the north edge of **BD1** heading north-east before turning and heading out of the excavation area on a south-east to north-west alignment. **PA1** ran immediately to the west.

A section excavated where the gully turns [148] showed a V-shaped profile for the gully with steep sloping sides breaking to a narrow base, measuring 0.65m in width and 0.28m in depth. It contained a single fill (149) consisting of a blueish-orange silty clay with occasional small ironstone fragment inclusions. A section dug to the south to ascertain a relationship of **BD1**

and **PA1** also revealed a possible continuation of the gully, although this is speculative and could also represent an isolated discrete feature. The possible cut here showed more of a U-shaped profile with moderately sloping concave sides breaking to a concave base. It measured 0.6m in width and 0.4m in depth. It contained a single fill (242) consisting of a mid-orangey brown silty clay. No finds were recovered from excavated sections in **GU2**.

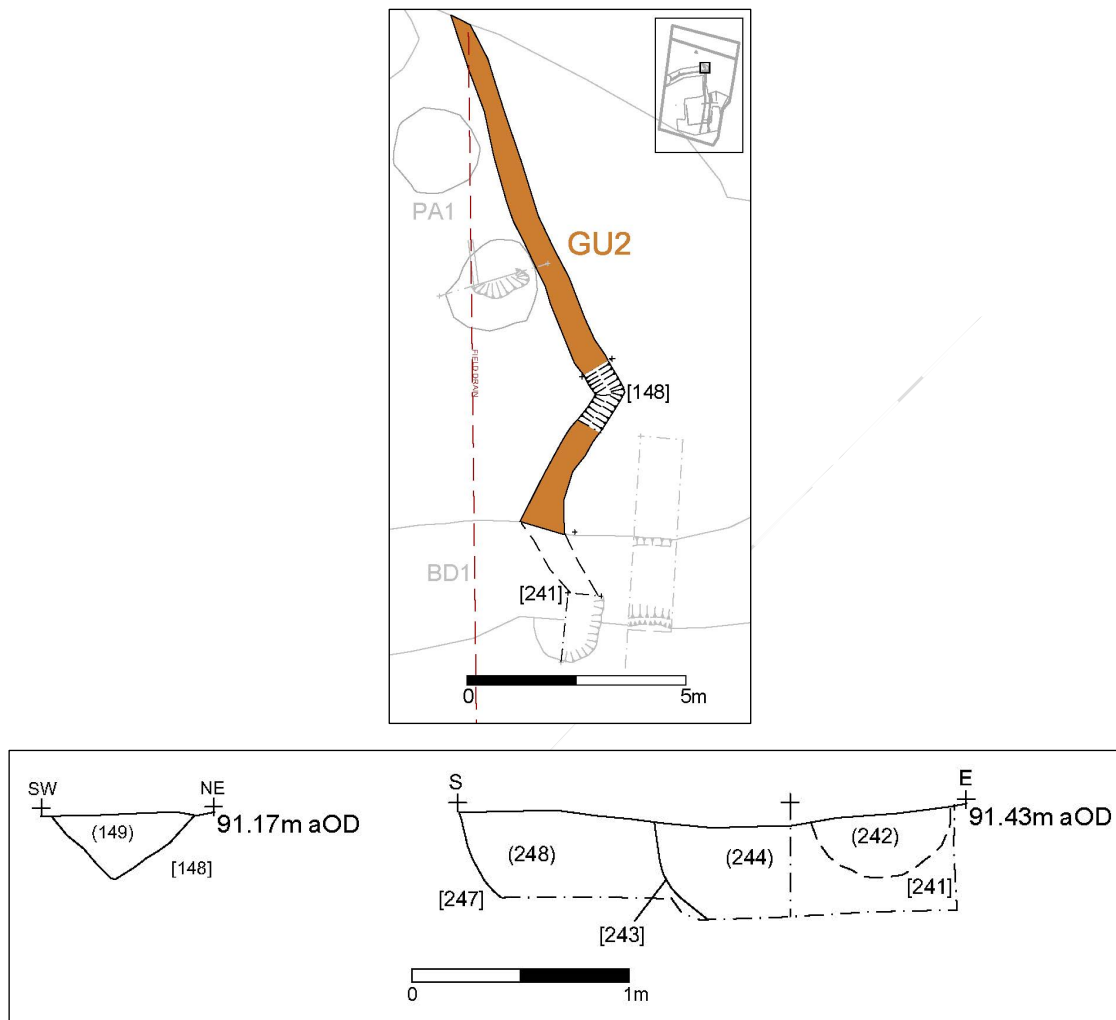


Figure 17: Gully GU2 plan and sections.

BD2 Boundary Ditch (Figures 18-20)

Cuts [89] = [152] = [237]

Cuts [91] = [103] = [134] = [204] = [218] = [239]

Boundary Ditch **BD2** was observed in the stripped area and ran north - south across the site, extending beyond the excavation area to the north and south. The boundary ditch ran across site for 75m and was 1.25m-4m wide with a depth of 0.25m-0.69m. Its profile varied slightly across its length, with a significant secondary cut [91] [103] [134] [204] [218] [239] truncating a smaller primary cut [89] [152] [237]. For 6m at its southern end the cuts appeared as two separate ditches but merged into a single ditch heading north. **E1** and **GU3** were situated to the

west and shared a relationship with **BD2**, whilst **DR1** formed a large part of its eastern boundary. **PA1** was situated 8m to the west also running north-south.

The primary cut [89] [152] [237] could be seen for around 25m by which point it is completely truncated by the secondary cut. It measured 1-4m-1.7m in width and 0.25m-0.6m in depth, becoming greater in depth heading north, probably due to heavier truncation from ploughing on the southern edge of the stripped area. The southernmost excavated section in the primary cut showed a wide U-Shaped profile for the ditch, whilst to the north the primary cut appeared more irregular in profile with moderate sloping sides and a narrow base. A single fill was recorded in all excavated sections consisting of a mid-orange-greyish brown silty clay with occasional charcoal fleck and ironstone inclusions. A single sherd of pottery was recovered from the fill of the primary cut and was mid-1st-2nd century Roman in date.

The secondary cut [91] [103] [134] [204] [218] [239] could be seen for the entire length of **BD2**. It measured 1.05m-2.08m in width and 0.56m-0.69m in depth. The ditch appeared at its widest and deepest towards the middle of the exposed length of the boundary ditch, probably more truncated at the northern and southern edges of the stripped area. Excavated sections revealed a consistent U-shaped profile for the ditch, with steep concave sides and a smooth concave base. A single fill was recorded in all excavated sections, consisting of a mid-dark greyish brown silty clay with rare charcoal flecks, ironstone fragments and occasional rounded cobble inclusions. Four sherds of mid-1st-2nd century Roman pottery were recovered from fills in the secondary cut. Five rotary quern fragments representing at least two separate querns were also recovered from excavated section [103] in the secondary cut of **BD2**.

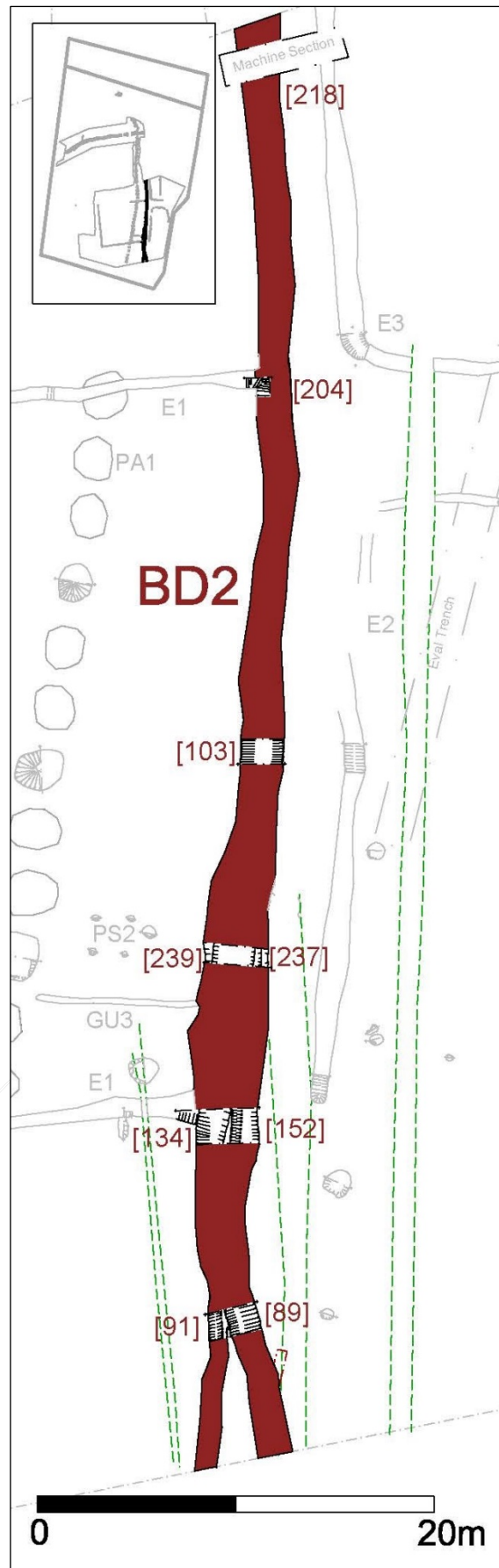


Figure 18: Boundary Ditch BD2 plan.

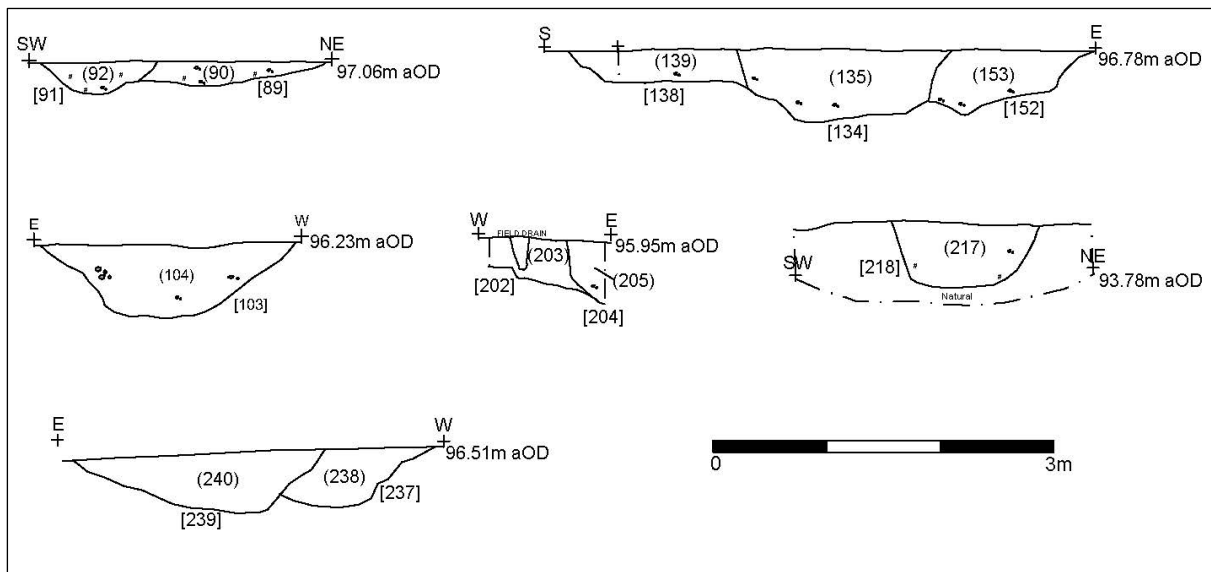


Figure 19: Boundary Ditch BD2 sections.

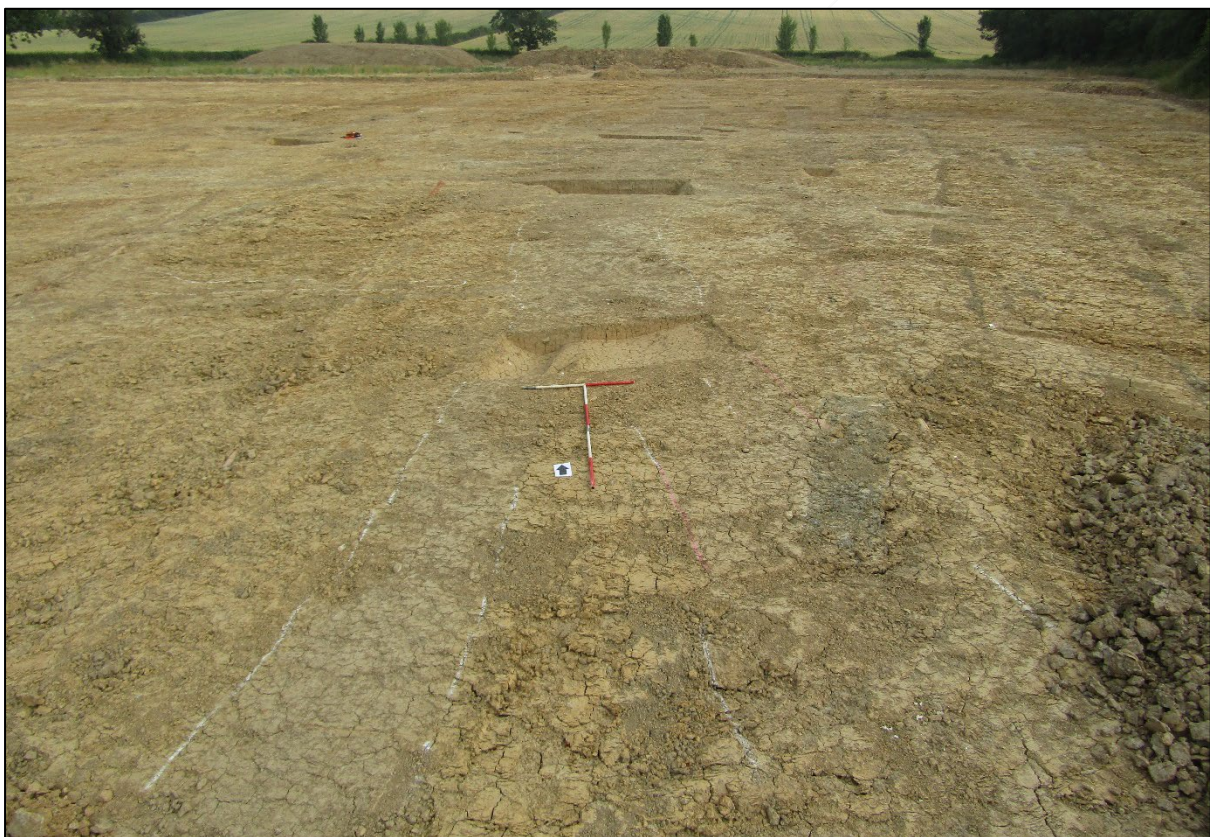


Figure 20: Boundary Ditch BD2 looking north (2m and 1m scale).

PS1 Post Structure (Figure 21, Figure 22)

Cuts [37], [39], [52], [54], [59], [61], [65], [67], [69], [71]

Cuts [75], [85]

A group of postholes/small pits was located in the south-east corner of the excavation area, 10m to the east of **BD2** and 7.5m to the south of **FG2**. The features probably formed a post built structure, incorporating a semi-circular and square pattern of postholes/small pits. A four-post arrangement formed the northern part of the group, measuring around 1.7m square, whilst a semi-circular pattern of postholes (incorporating the southernmost postholes of the square structure) formed the remainder of the structure, indicating a diameter of around 5-6m. A further 2 pits features [75] [85] were located 6m to the west of the structure and were possibly contemporary, although this is by no means a definite.

The four-post part of the structure was formed by a series of sub-circular postholes. Posthole [61] measured 0.25m in diameter and 0.14m in depth with moderately sloping concave sides and a smooth concave base. It contained a single fill (62) consisting of a mid-orangey grey silty clay with occasional charcoal fleck inclusions. A single flint chunk was recovered from the fill. Posthole [69] measured 0.32m in diameter, 0.08m in depth and had shallow sloping sides breaking to a concave base. It contained a single sterile fill (70) consisting of a greyish orange silty clay. Posthole [65] measured 0.32m in length, 0.28m in width and 0.08m in diameter with moderately sloping sides breaking to a concave base. The fill (66) appeared sterile consisting of a light brownish orange silty clay. Posthole [71] formed the north-eastern corner of the structure and measured 0.28m in diameter and 0.04m in depth. It had shallow sloping sides and a smooth concave base. The fill (72) consisted of a sterile mid greyish brown silty clay.

To the south the post structure was formed by a semi-circular pattern of postholes. The southernmost posthole [59] appeared circular in plan, measuring 0.28m in diameter and 0.12 in depth. It had moderately sloping concave sides and a smooth concave base. It contained a single fill (60) consisting of a mid-greyish orange silty clay with rare charcoal inclusions. At 2m to the north-east a further two sub circular postholes were located. Posthole [37] measured 0.4m in diameter and 0.15m in depth with moderately sloping concave sides and a concave base (Figure 21). It contained a single fill (38) consisting of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with occasional charcoal fleck and small ironstone inclusions. Two sherds of mid-1st-2nd century Roman pottery was recovered from the fill. Posthole [39] measured 0.5m in diameter, 0.4m in depth and had shallow concave sloping sides breaking to a smooth concave base. The fill (40) consisted of a mid-orangey grey silty clay with occasional charcoal fleck and ironstone inclusions. Ten sherds (28g) of mid-1st-2nd century Roman pottery was recovered from the fill. Around 2m to the north a further 2 sub circular postholes were located. Posthole [52] measured 0.3m in diameter and 0.1m in depth with concave sloping sides and a smooth concave base. It contained a single fill (53) consisting of a mid-orangey grey silty clay with rare charcoal fleck inclusions. Posthole [54] measured 0.34m in diameter and 0.05m in depth with concave shallow sloping sides breaking to a flat base. It contained a single fill (54) consisting of a mid-orangey grey silty clay with rare charcoal fleck inclusions. The north-western most posthole within the arc [67] appeared oval in plan, measuring 0.55m in length, 0.31m in width and 0.1m in depth. It had moderately sloping concave sides breaking to a flat base. It contained a single sterile fill (68) consisting of a mid-greyish brown silty clay. Postholes [61] and [69] (discussed above) also lie within the curved structure.

Some 6m to the west of the structure was pit [75]. It appeared sub circular in plan measuring 0.6m in length, 0.5m in width and 0.07m in depth with shallow sloping sides breaking to a flat base. The fill (76) consisted of a sterile light brownish grey silty clay. At 5.5m to the north was pit [85]. It was sub circular in plan measuring 1.4m in length, 1.22m in width and 0.11m in

depth. It had shallow sloping sides breaking to a flat base. The fill (86) consisted of a light brownish orange silty clay with rare charcoal inclusions.



Figure 21: Posthole [37] looking north-west (0.3m scale).

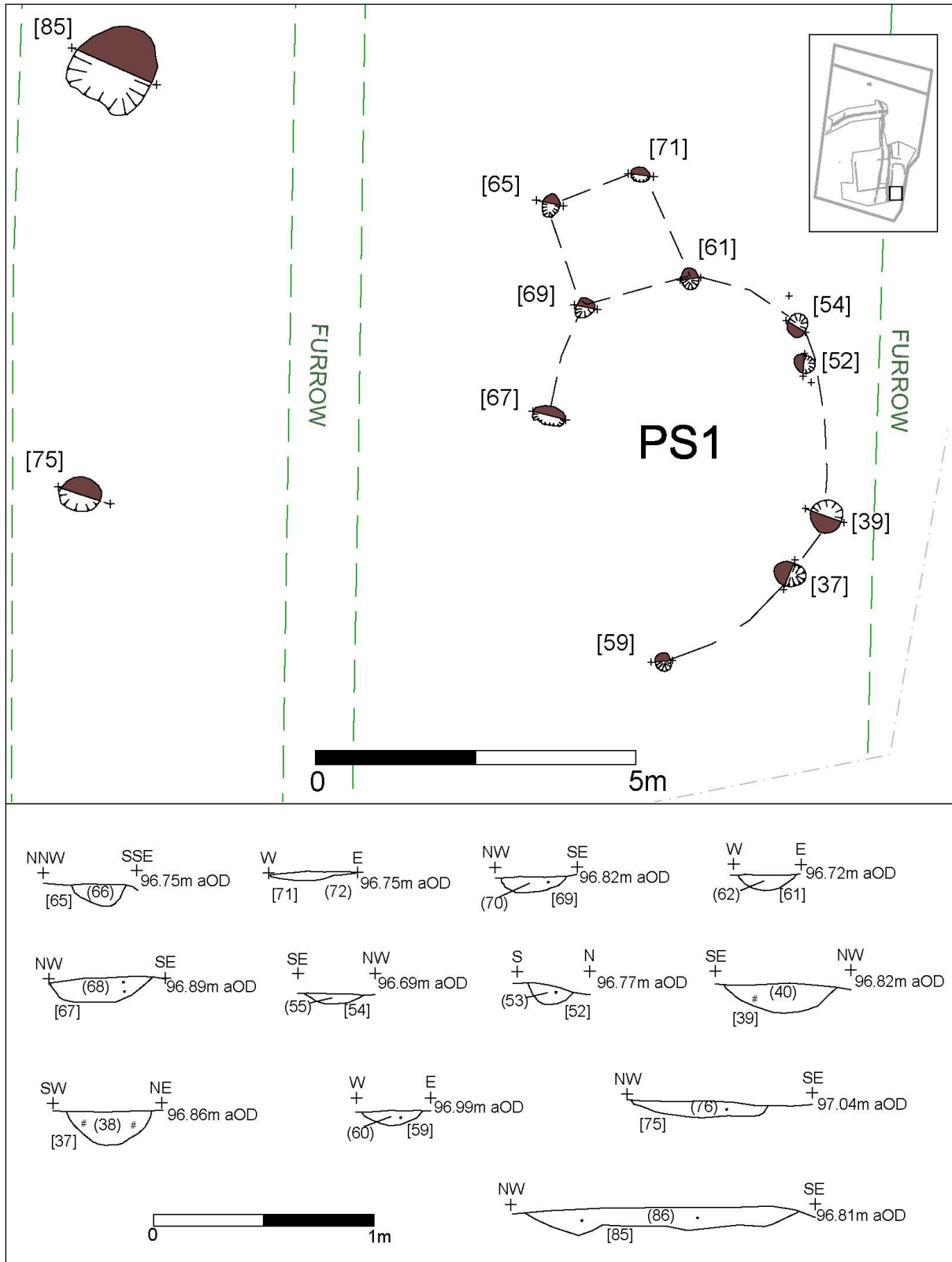


Figure 22: Post Structure PS1 plan and sections

E1 Enclosure Group (Figure 23, Figure 24)

Cuts [95] = [117] = [130] = [137] = [138] = [202] = [215] Evaluation [5] = [7]

Cuts [109], [155], [245], [252]

Enclosure **E1** was a ditched enclosure and appeared square in plan. Much of the northern part of the enclosure appeared truncated, although a small section survived in the north-east corner. The enclosure measured some 38m north-south and 37-40m east-west with an internal area of around 1520 sq. m. A butt-end at the north-west corner of the enclosure indicated the entrance was probably situated here, although truncation to the east had removed any evidence of a second terminus. The east side of the enclosure was defined by Boundary Ditch **BD2**. **PS2**, **FG1** and **GU3** were situated within the south-east corner of the enclosure and therefore were most likely contemporary features.

Five sections were excavated through the enclosure ditch [95] [117] [130] [137] [215], along with a single section to establish a relationship with **BD2** [138] and a further two sections [5] [7] were excavated during the previous evaluation phase. The ditch appeared relatively consistent throughout, measuring between 0.52m – 0.65m in width, with a depth of 0.31m – 0.37m. Its profile was consistently V-shaped, with moderately sloping sides and a narrow base. An exception was seen in the section excavated at its north-western terminus [137], where the ditch had a U-shaped profile and measured 0.3m in width and 0.06m in depth, appearing to shallow as it terminated. A single fill was recorded in the majority of excavated sections, consisting of a mid-orangey-brown to grey silty clay with rare charcoal fleck inclusions. A primary silting deposit was recorded in 2 excavated sections consisting of a light-mid orangey grey silty clay with rare charcoal inclusions.

Three sherds of mid-1st-2nd century Roman pottery were recovered from (131) in excavated section [130] at the south east corner of the enclosure ditch along with 8 fragments of loom weight also dating to the early Roman period. Three fragments of rotary quern and a fragment of millstone were also recovered from (131) and a single fragment of rotary quern was recovered from (139). A single sherd of early-mid 2nd century Roman pottery was recovered from (216) in excavated section [215] at the north east corner of **E2** and a fragment of vitrified clay hearth lining was recovered from (203) in excavated section [202].

A series of undated isolated features [155] [245] [252] were present towards the western edge of the strip, possibly loosely associated with **E1**. A shallow pit [109] was situated immediately to the south of the ditched enclosure and appeared sub oval in plan measuring 1m long, 0.41m in wide and 0.08m in depth. It contained a single fill (110) consisting of a light brownish grey silty clay. Posthole [155] was situated immediately within the western side enclosure ditch, and was sub circular in plan. It had shallow sloping sides breaking to a flat base and measured 0.54m in length, 0.41m in width and 0.08m in depth. It contained a single sterile fill (156) consisting of a mid-brownish grey silty clay. Pit [245] was located within the western side enclosure and appeared circular in plan. It measured 0.67m in diameter, 0.32m in depth and consisted of steep sloping sides breaking to a flat base. It contained a single fill (246) consisting of a mid-greyish orange silty clay with small pebble and ironstone inclusions. Pit [252] was situated immediately to the west of ditched enclosure **E1**. It was sub circular in plan, measuring 0.86m in diameter and 0.15m in depth with steep sloping sides breaking to a flat base. The fill (253) consisted of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with occasional ironstone fragments.

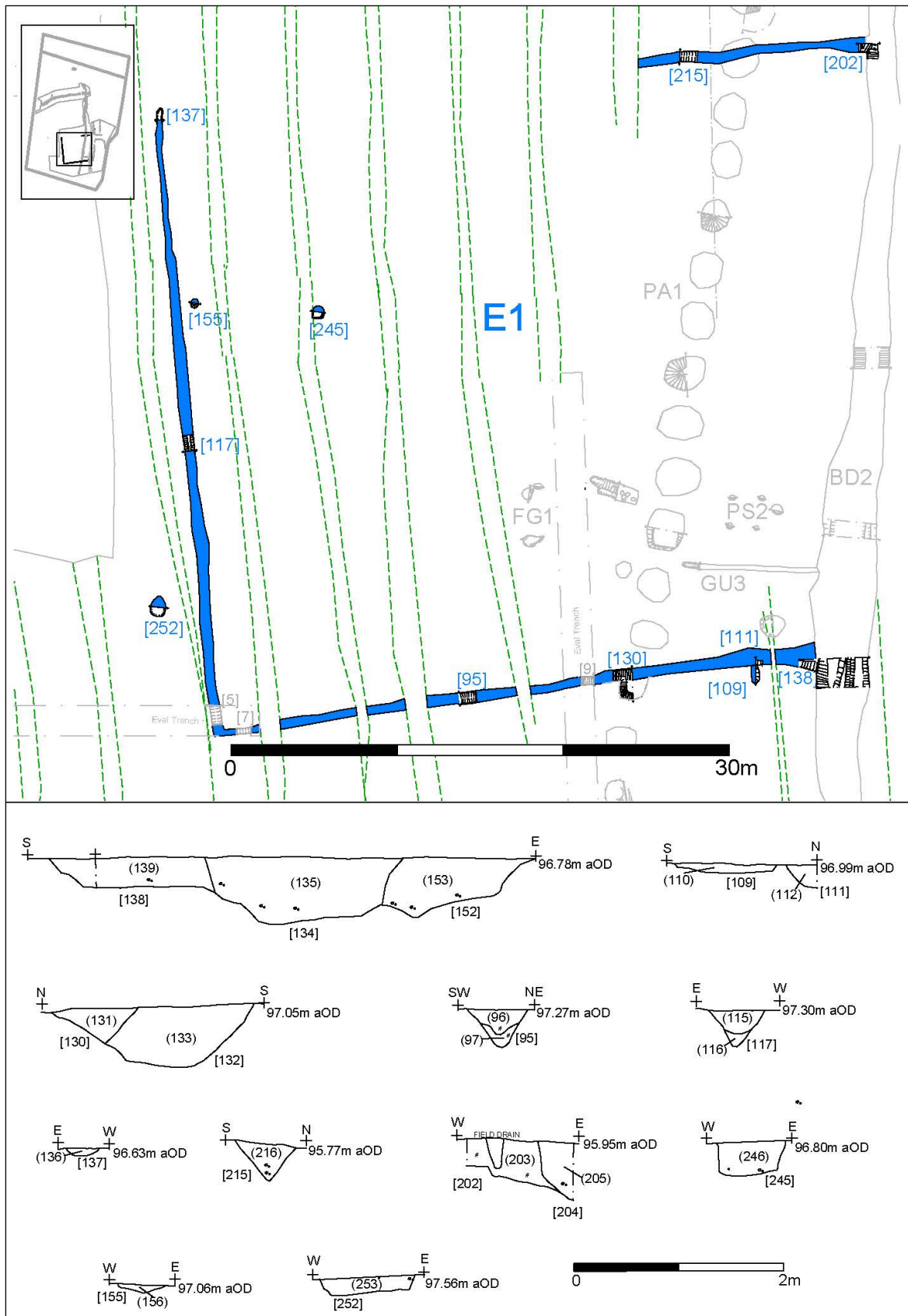


Figure 23: Enclosure Group E1 plan and sections.



Figure 24: E1 Enclosure Ditch [117] looking south (0.5m scale).

PS2 Post Structure (Figure 25, Figure 26)

Cuts [167], [169], [177], [179], [191]

A probable four-post structure and associated pit was located within the south-east corner of **E1**. Gully **GU3** was situated 2m to the south and **FG1** was cited 5.7 to the west. The structure measured 1.75m square and was formed by four shallow posthole features.

The south-western posthole [167] appeared sub-circular in plan and measured 0.35m in diameter and 0.1m in depth. It had steep sloping sides breaking to a flat base. It contained a single sterile fill (168) consisting of a mid-greyish blue silty clay with infrequent small ironstone fragments. The south-eastern posthole [169] of the structure also appeared sub-circular in plan measuring 0.2m in diameter and 0.08m in depth. It had moderately sloping straight sides breaking to a smooth concave base. The fill (170) appeared sterile consisting of a mid-greyish brown silty clay. The north-eastern corner of the structure was defined by an oval shaped posthole [177]. It appeared 0.38m in length, 0.3m in width and 0.06m in depth and consisted of moderately sloping concave sides and a smooth concave base. It contained a single sterile fill (178) consisting of a mid-greyish blue silty clay. The north-western corner of the structure was formed by a further oval posthole [191] measuring 0.4m in length, 0.3m in width and 0.06m in depth. It had steep straight sides breaking to a flat base. It contained a single fill consisting of a mid-grey silty clay with occasional small ironstone inclusions. Immediately to

the east of the structure, a sub oval shallow pit was located [179]. It measured 0.75m in length, 0.6m in width and 0.05m in depth and had shallow sloping sides breaking to a smooth concave base. It contained a single fill (180) consisting of a mid-greyish blue silty clay with occasional sub angular stone inclusions. No finds were recovered from **PS2**.

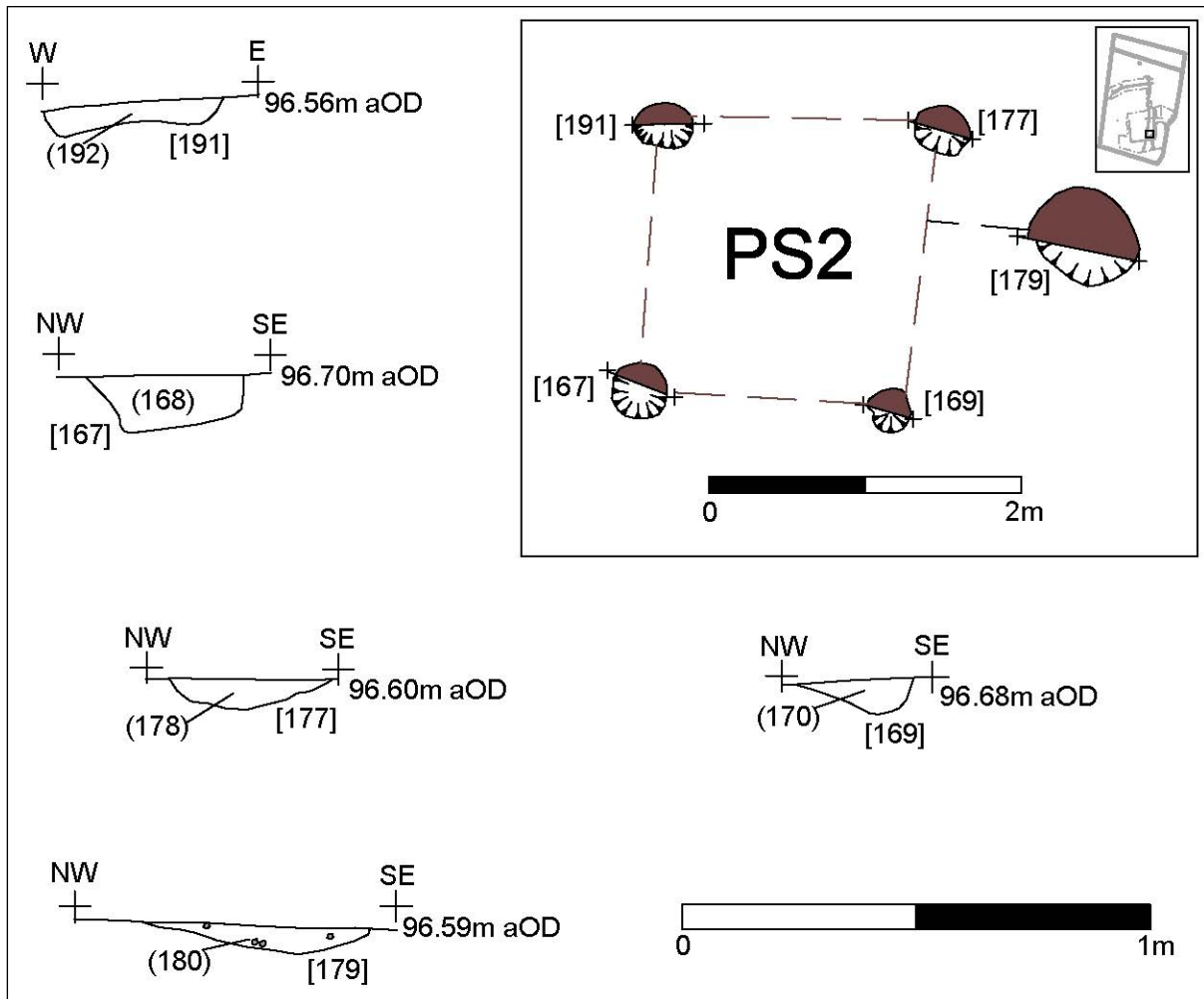


Figure 25: Post Structure PS2 plan and sections.

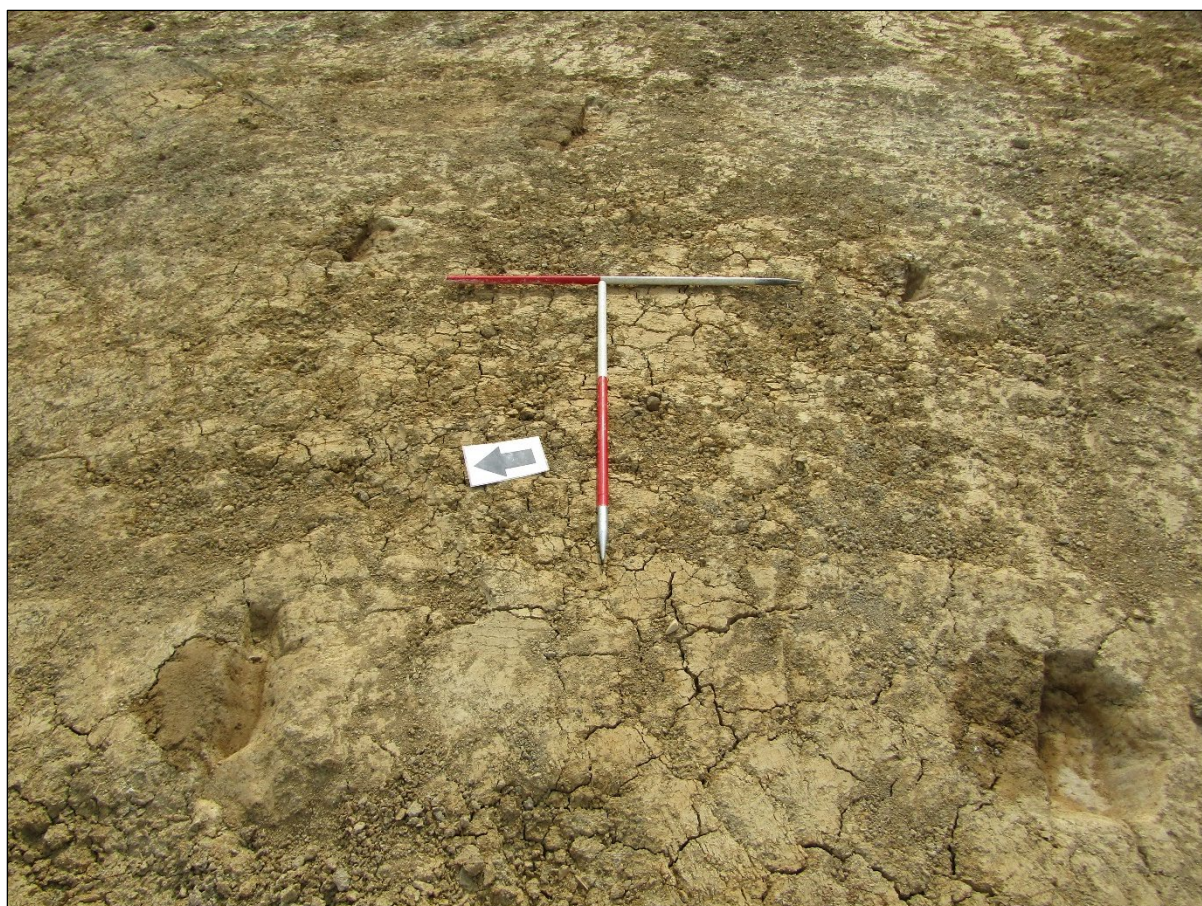


Figure 26: Post Structure PS2 looking east (2 x 1m scales).

FG1 Feature Group (Figures 27-29)

Cuts, [140], [163], [164]

Deposits (83), (166)

A group of features located in the southern half of **E1**. **PS2** and **GU3** were situated immediately to the east and were split by **PA1**. The group of features were individually irregular in plan but formed a rough rectilinear pattern as a group. All features appeared heavily truncated and disturbed by plough activity.

Feature (83) was observed as a ‘dump’ of burnt material sitting on top of the natural substratum, immediately below the subsoil. No Cut could be seen for the feature. The deposit (83) measured 0.75m in length, 0.56m in width with a depth of 0.06m and appeared irregular in plan. It consisted of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with common charcoal fragments and medium stone inclusions. Sixteen sherds (545g) of mid-1st-2nd century Roman pottery was recovered from (83) along with a single abraded fragment of tegulae. At 3.4m to the north an elongated pit [140] was located forming the north-easternmost feature of the group (Figure 28). It appeared sub rectilinear in plan, with irregular shallow-moderately sloping sides and an irregular base. It measured 2.2m in length, 1.2m in width and 0.2m in depth. The fill (121) consisted of a mid-dark greyish brown silty clay, with frequent charcoal flecking, occasional large sub rounded- sub angular stones and medium rounded pebble inclusions. Six sherds

(251g) of mid-1st-2nd century pottery was recovered from fill along with 5 sherds of abraded Roman tegulae. Two fragments of saddle quern (possibly residual) and a single fragment of rotary quern were also recovered from this fill, along with a possible pivot stone. A further irregular pit [163] formed the south-western most feature of the group. It measured 1.1m in length, 0.7m in width and 0.15m in depth. It had moderately sloping irregular sides breaking to a flat base. It contained a single fill (154) consisting of a mixture of orangey red and mid yellowish brown silty clay patches. Frequent charcoal inclusions were also recorded. Nine sherds (145g) of early-mid 2nd century Roman pottery were recovered from this fill. Environmental sampling of this fill also produced a good quantity of chaff, indicative of cereal grain processing. At 2.2 m to the north a further pit [164] was located. It appeared sub oval in plan measuring 0.6m in length, 0.55m in width and 0.12m in depth. It had irregular, moderately sloping sides breaking to a flat base. It contained a single fill (165) consisting of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with frequent charcoal flecks and occasional small sub angular ironstone fragment inclusions. A single sherd of early-mid 2nd century Roman pottery was recovered from the fill. Environmental sampling of the fill produced a good amount of chaff, again indicative of waste produced from cereal grain processing. Immediately to the east a deposit of material (166) was seen, immediately beneath the subsoil but in no visible cut. The deposit measured 0.5m in length, 0.4m in width and 0.05m in depth. It consisted of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with common charcoal inclusions.

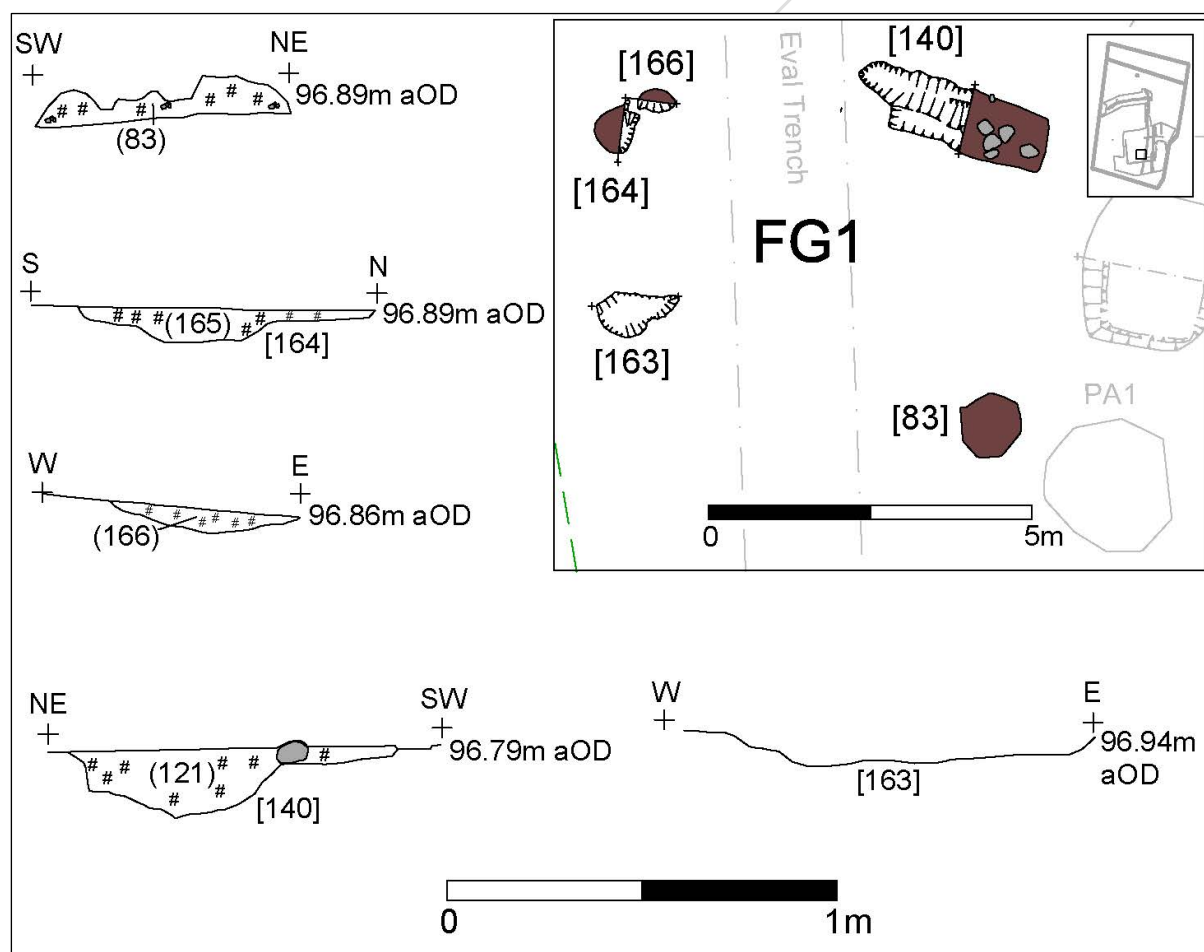


Figure 27: Feature Group FG1 plan and sections.



Figure 28: Feature [140] pre excavation (1m scale).

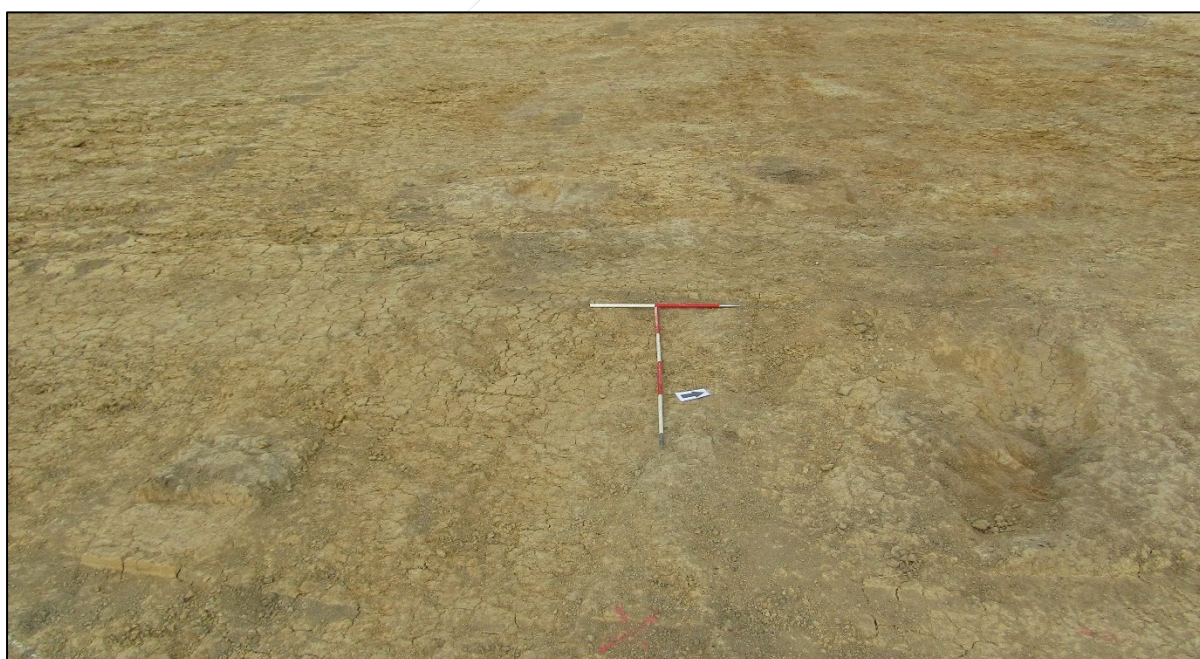


Figure 29: Feature Group FG1 looking west (2m and 1m scale).

GU3 Short Gully (Figure 30)

Cut [197]

Cut [105]

A narrow gully could be seen running east to west for 8.1m. It was within **E1**, and had a relationship with **BD2**. **PA1** ran to the west and **PS2** was situated to the north.

A section excavated at its terminus [197] revealed a V-shaped profile with moderately sloping sides breaking to a narrow base, measuring 0.3m in width and 0.15m in depth. It contained a single fill (198) consisting of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with rare small-large stone inclusions. Its location suggested it perhaps formed an annex in the south-east corner of **E2**, possibly for livestock management although its proximity to **FG1** and **PS2** could indicate it also served a function in the processing of crop.

An undated sub circular pit [105] was located 2.5m to the south of **GU3**, and could be contemporary with it. It measured 1.5m long, 1.32m wide and 0.09m deep with shallow sloping sides breaking to a concave base. It contained a sterile fill consisting of a mid-greyish brown silty clay. No finds were recovered from **GU3**.

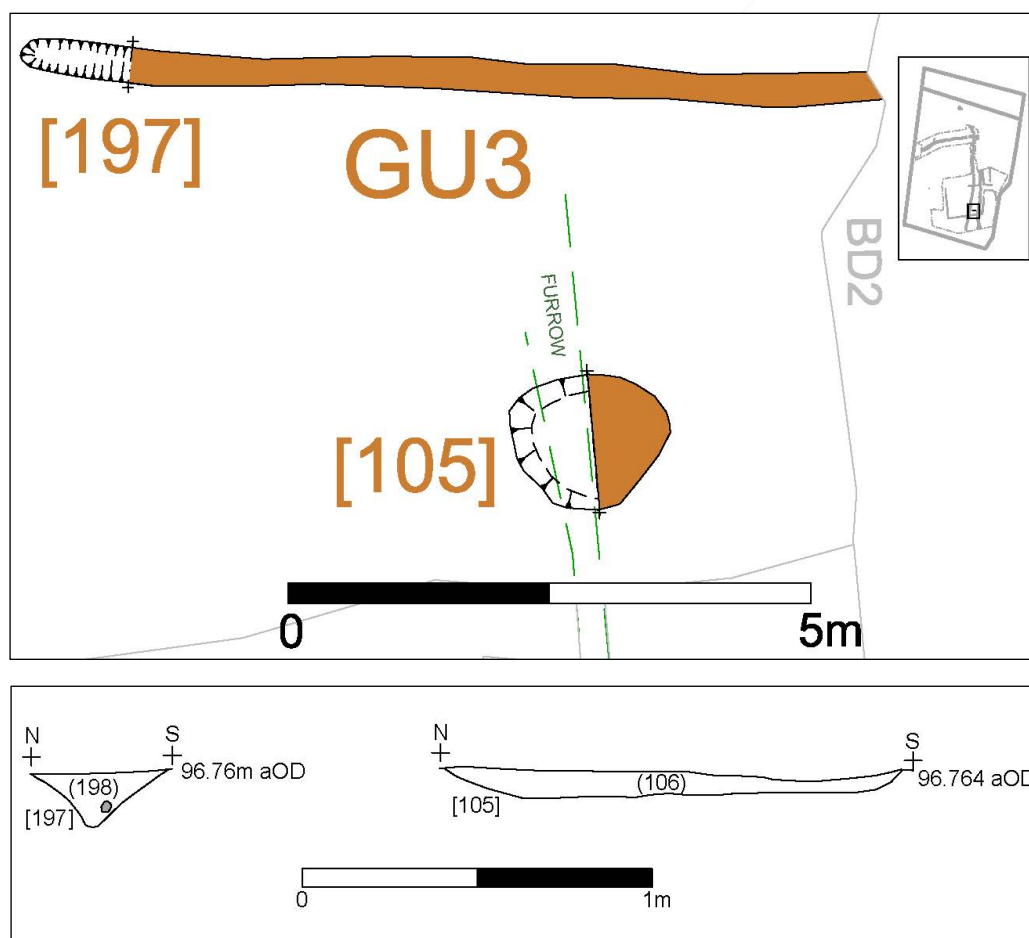


Figure 30: Gully GU3 plan and sections.

E2 Enclosure Group (Figure 31, Figure 32)

Cuts [46] = [49] = [56] = [62] = [236]

Cut [234]

Enclosure **E2** was a ditched enclosure and appeared broadly C-shaped in plan, situated within the east of the stripped area. The eastern part of the enclosure represented the longest side, appearing mostly straight on a north-south orientation, measuring 30m in length. The northern side of the enclosure curved east-west and measured 14m in length. The eastern side of the enclosure curved north to south for a length of 14m. The enclosure had a large entrance way at its southern and south-eastern side with a gap of 23m between its terminals. The north-west corner of the enclosure was incomplete and had been truncated by ploughing, which was also evident throughout the surviving enclosure ditch. **FG2** was situated within the southern part of the enclosure, **PS1** was 7m to the south and **DR1** bounded the east and north of the enclosure ditch.

Five sections were excavated through the enclosure ditch and showed the profile varied along its length. Sections excavated on its eastern side had a wide U-shaped profile with concave sides and a concave base, measuring 0.78m-1m in width and 0.25m-0.28m in depth. Sections excavated on its north side had a V-shaped profile, measuring 0.36m-0.5m wide and 0.23m-0.26m deep. A section excavated at its eastern terminus had a V-shaped profile with steep sloping sides and a narrow base, measuring 0.55m in width and 0.45m in depth. Two fills were recorded in the excavated sections. The lower fill generally consisted of an orangey brown silty clay with occasional charcoal inclusions. The upper fill generally consisted of a mid-dark brownish grey silty clay with occasional charcoal fleck and small ironstone inclusions. Two sherds of mid-1st-2nd century pottery were recovered from the terminus [46] of the enclosure ditch. Bulk samples recovered from the terminus also contained cereal grains and a broad range of wild seeds, indicative of species found in cultivated fields. Seven fragments of fired clay were also recovered from excavated sections.

A sub circular pit [234] could be seen truncating the ditch of **E2** at its northern end. It measured 0.74m in length, 0.55m in width and 0.19m in depth. It contained a single fill consisting of a greyish brown silty clay with rare charcoal fleck inclusions. The fill (233) contained no dating evidence and the feature probably a result of modern truncation.



Figure 31: E2 Enclosure Ditch [62] looking north (1m scale).

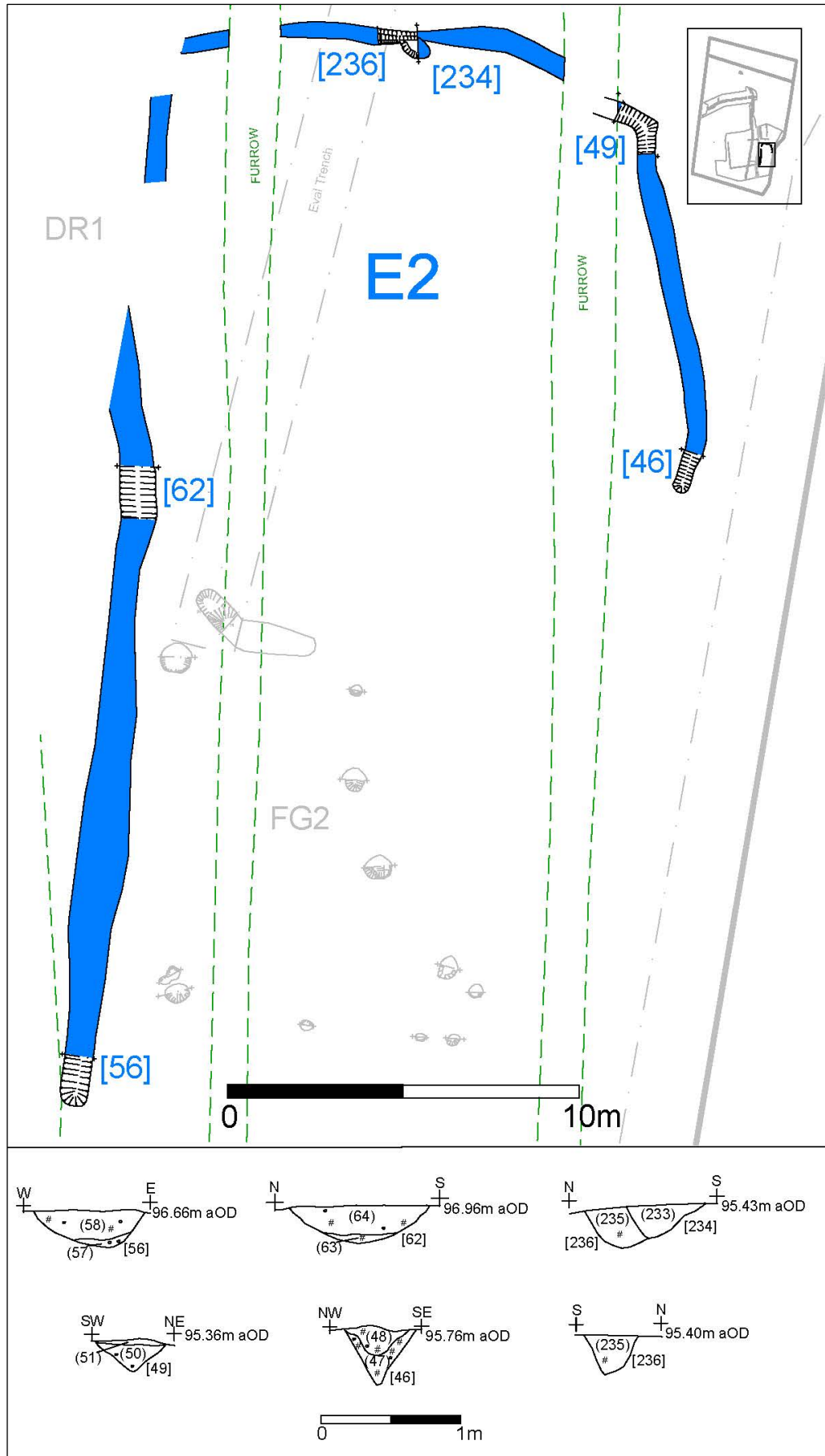


Figure 32: Enclosure Group E2 plan and sections.

FG2 Feature Group (Figure 33, Figure 34)

Cuts [73], [77], [79], [81], [87], [93], [98], [107], [113], [122], [124], [126] Evaluation [3]

A loose group of postholes and pits towards the south eastern edge of the excavation area, located in the south half of E2 and were probably contemporary with it. PS1 was located 7.2m to the south. The group formed no obvious pattern or structure but were probably related to the function of E2.

To the south of the group sat posthole [73]. It appeared sub circular in plan, measuring 0.27m in diameter and 0.06m in depth with steep straight sides breaking to a flat base. It contained a single fill (74) consisting of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with rare small pebble inclusions. To the east a further sub circular posthole was located [77]. It measured 0.22m in diameter and 0.05m in depth with shallow sloping sides breaking to a flat base. The fill (78) consisted of a sterile mid greyish brown silty clay. Immediately to the west was sub circular posthole [81], measuring 0.3m in diameter and 0.08m in depth. It had moderately sloping sides and a flat base. The fill (82) consisted of a sterile mid greyish brown silty clay. To the north was posthole [87]. It was circular in plan, measuring 0.35m in diameter and 0.08m in depth with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. The fill (88) consisted of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with rare ironstone inclusions. Immediately to the north-west was sub oval posthole [79]. It had shallow sloping sides with a flat base and measured 0.7m in length, 0.6m in width and 0.08m in depth. The fill (80) consisted of a sterile light brownish orange silty clay. At 2.8m to the north-west pit [93] was located. It was oval in plan measuring 0.8m in length, 0.7m in width and 0.2m in depth. It had irregular moderately sloping sides breaking to a flat base. The fill (94) consisted of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and small ironstone inclusions. Four small fragments of calcined animal bone, cereal grain and wild plant seeds were recovered from environmental sampling. To the north pit [113] appeared sub circular in plan, measuring 0.5m in diameter and 0.12m in depth. It had moderately sloping straight sides breaking to a wide concave base. The fill (114) consisted of a sterile mid greyish brown silty clay and contained a single fragment of calcined animal bone. The north-eastern most feature of the group was formed by a circular posthole [107]. It measured 0.3m in diameter with a depth of 0.08m and had moderately sloping sides breaking to a flat base. The fill (108) consisted of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with occasional small ironstone inclusions. The north-western most feature of the group was formed by pit [98] (Figure 34). It was circular in plan and measured 0.85m in diameter and 0.34m in depth. It had steep straight sloping sides breaking to a flat base. The lower fill (100) consisted of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with common angular-rounded stone inclusions. A single sherd of mid-1st-2nd century pottery was recovered from this fill. The upper fill (99) consisted of a greyish orange silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and ironstone inclusions. 24 sherds (23g) of mid-1st-2nd century Roman pottery was recovered from this fill. Three postholes formed the south-western most features within the group. Posthole [122] was sub circular in plan, measuring 0.35m in diameter and 0.06m in depth, with moderately sloping concave sides braking to a flat base. The fill (123) consisted of a light-mid greyish brown silty clay with small ironstone inclusions. Posthole [126] was sub circular in plan with shallow sloping sides breaking to a concave base. It measured 0.14m in diameter and 0.05m in depth. The fill (127) was sterile and consisted of a mid-greyish brown silty clay. It was cut by posthole [124] on its eastern edge. Posthole [124] was sub circular in plan, measuring 0.32m in diameter and 0.17m in depth with steep straight

sides breaking to a flat base. It contained a single fill (125) consisting of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with occasional ironstone inclusions.

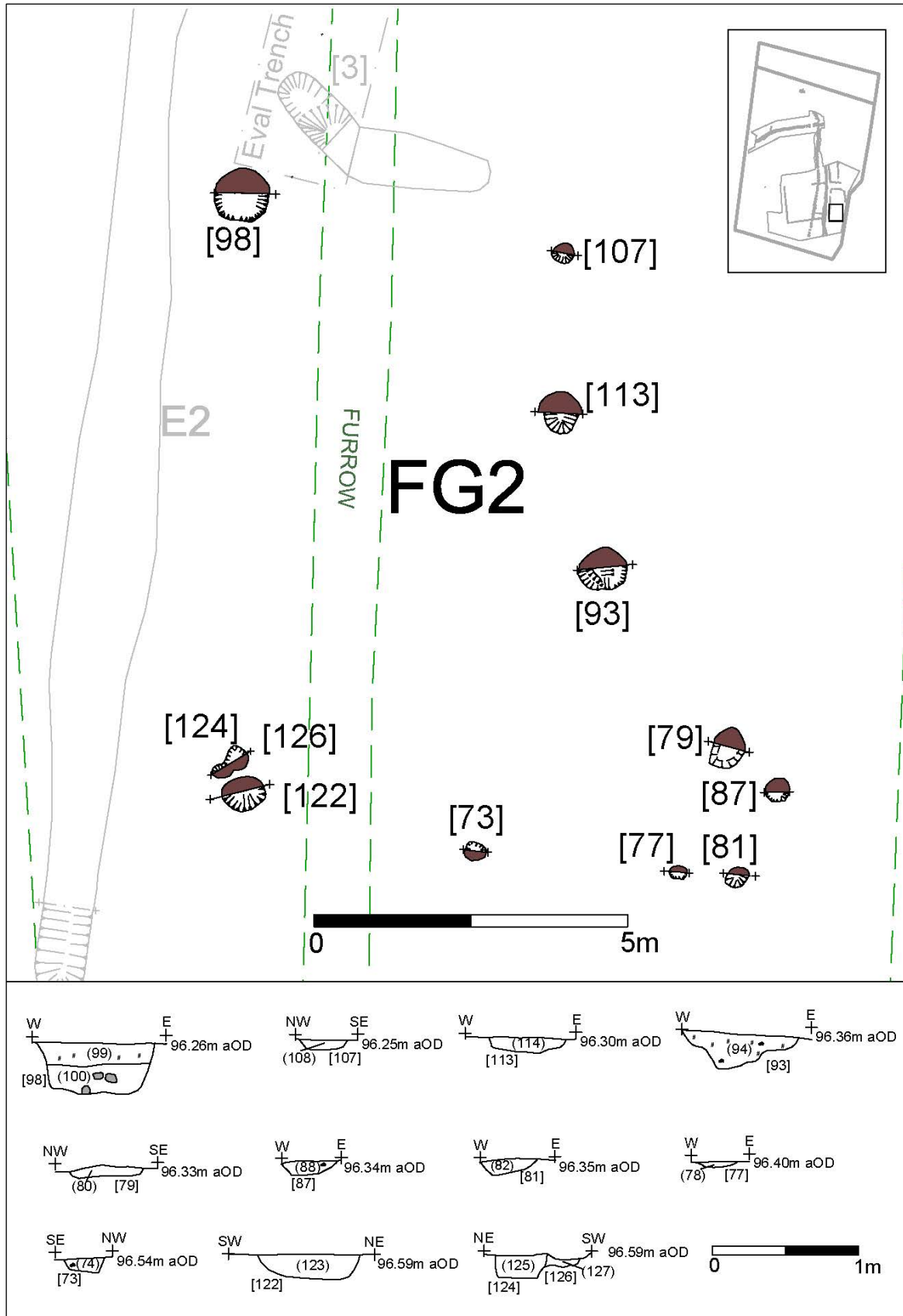


Figure 33: Feature Group FG2 plan and sections.



Figure 34: Pit [98] looking north-east (1m and 0.3m scale).

E3 Enclosure Group (Figure 35)

Cuts [211] = [213] = [219] Evaluation [1]

Cuts [229], [231]

Enclosure **E3** was a ditched enclosure and was probably rectilinear in plan. Only the southern part of the enclosure was observed in the stripped area, the enclosure continuing beyond the excavation area to the north. The exposed part of the enclosure measured 22m north-south and 11m east-west with an internal area of 242 sq. m. A butt-end at the south-east corner of the enclosure indicated the entrance was probably situated here, although truncation to the north has removed any evidence of a second terminus. **DR1** formed the southern and eastern boundaries of the enclosure, with **E2** situated further to the south.

Three sections were excavated through the enclosure ditch [211] [213] [219] along with a further section [1] excavated during the previous evaluation phase. The ditch measured 0.47m-1.1m in width and 0.18m-0.5m in depth. Sections excavated to the north appeared shallower, probably due to truncation whilst a section excavated in its south-eastern corner showed the ditch was widest and deepest here. The enclosure ditch appeared consistently U-shaped in profile throughout the excavated sections and consisted of steep concave sides breaking to a wide concave base. A single homogenous fill was recorded in all excavated sections consisting of a greyish brown silty clay with rare charcoal fleck inclusions. No finds were recovered from

excavated sections although pottery recovered from the enclosure during the evaluation phase was dated to the early Roman period.

A pair of small oval pits were located immediately to the east of ditched enclosure E3. Pit [229] measured 0.57m wide, 0.5m wide and 0.16m deep with moderately sloping concave sides and a concave base. It contained a single sterile fill (230) consisting of a greyish orange silty clay. Pit [231] measured 0.6m long, 0.43m wide and 0.17m deep with steep sides breaking to a flat base. It contained a single fill consisting of a greyish orange silty clay with rare charcoal fleck inclusions. Both pits were undated and isolated.

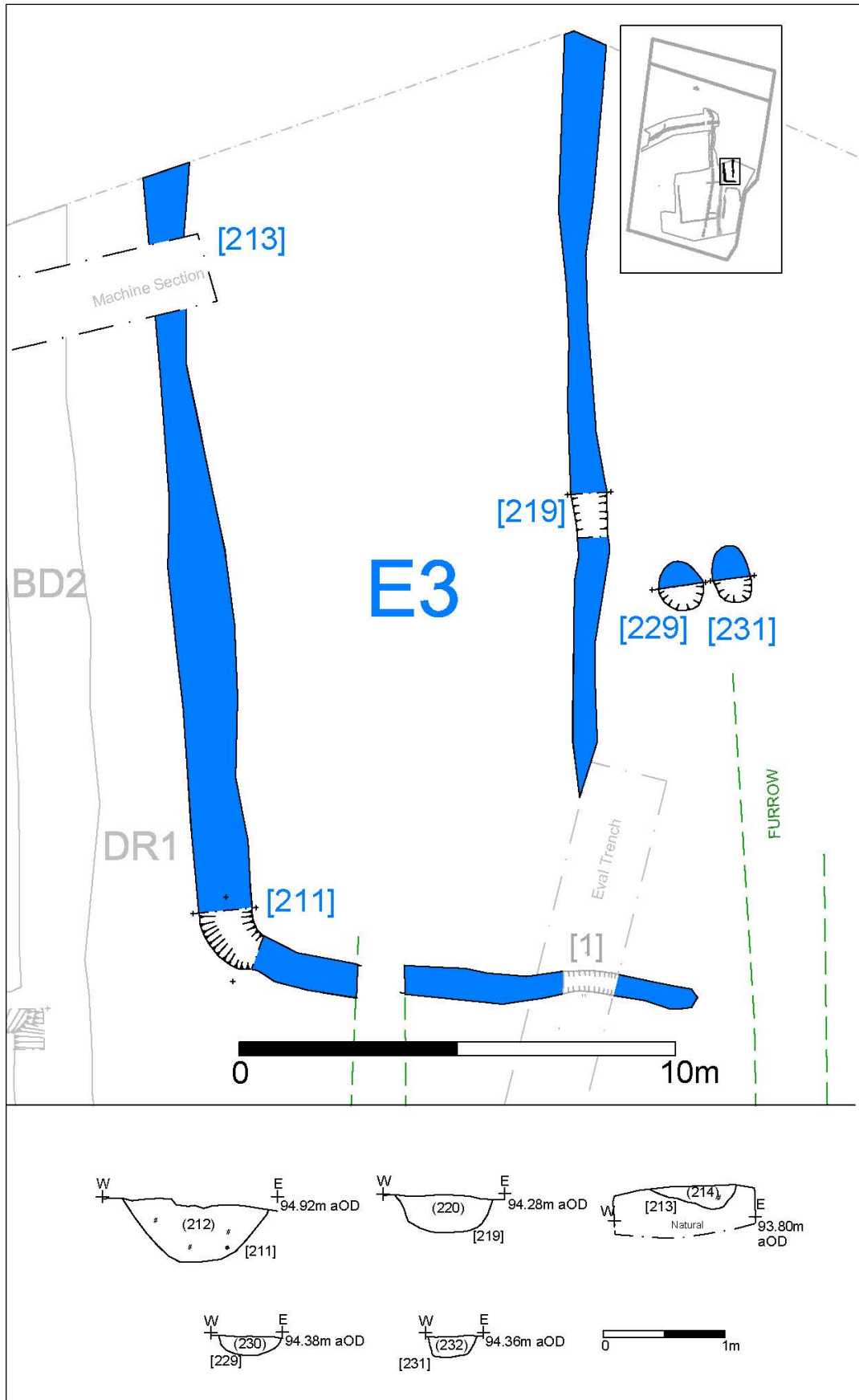


Figure 35: Enclosure E3 plan and sections.

DR1 Droveaway (Figure 36, Figure 37)

A droveaway was visible running north - south and branching east - west across the stripped area, extending beyond the excavation area to the north. Although not defined by a surviving surface or any visible cut, it could be seen formed by the layouts **BD2**, **E2** and **E3** which in plan appear to form a route way between boundaries and enclosures. It could be seen running for 58m north - south, measuring 2m-3.5m in width, and for 13m east - west at 5.9m-6.3m wide.

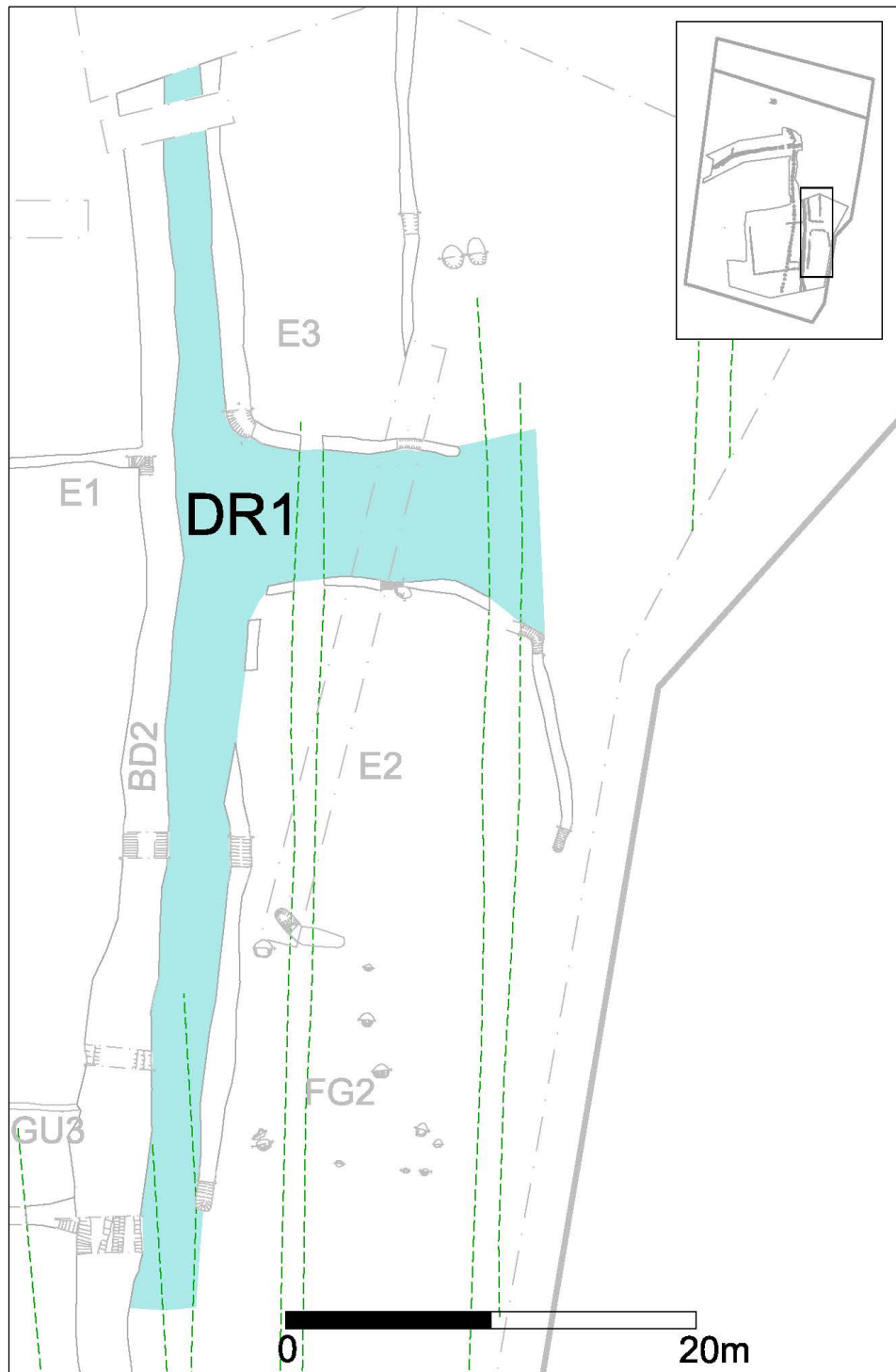


Figure 36: Droveaway DR1 plan.



Figure 37: Droeway DR1 looking north, with BD2 to the west and E2 to the east (2m and 1m scale).

The Early Roman Pottery and Roof Tile

Nicholas J. Cooper

A total of 96 sherds (1300g) of early Roman pottery were recovered from 19 contexts including 10 sherds unstratified but of intrinsic value. The pottery has been analysed by form and fabric using the Leicestershire County Museums Roman pottery fabric series (Pollard 1994, 111-114), and in accordance with *The Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology* (Barclay *et al.* 2016), and quantified by sherd count and weight. The assemblage is generally abraded and fragmentary and the overall average sherd weight of 13g is misleading because it includes the partial remains of a large storage jar. When these are excluded the average sherd weight falls to just 6g, which indicates secondary deposition of material perhaps following exposure on the ground surface or in middens perhaps, concentrating in the south east corner of the enclosure. The full quantified record is presented below (Table 1). All the pottery has been retained in the archive.

Table 1: The Roman Pottery

Roman Pottery

Context	Fabric	Form	Sherds	Weight	Date
33	GT1	storage jar	1	51	M1st-2nd
36	GT1	misc	2	2	M1st-2nd
38	CG1A	misc	2	3	M1st-2nd
40	CG1A	misc	10	28	M1st-2nd
48	CG1A	jar	2	25	M-L1st
83	GT1	storage jar	16	545	M1st-2nd
84	CG1A	misc	1	10	M1st-2nd
89	GT1	jar	1	4	M1st-2nd
99	CG1A	misc	22	13	M1st-2nd
99	GW4	misc	2	10	L1st-2nd
100	CG1A	misc	1	5	M1st-2nd
104	CG1A	misc	1	5	M1st-2nd
121	GT1	storage jar	3	240	M1st-2nd
121	CG1A	misc	3	11	M1st-2nd
131	GT1	storage jar	1	15	M1st-2nd
131	CG1A	misc	2	4	M1st-2nd
133	GT1	storage jar	1	5	M1st-2nd
141	CG1A	jar	3	6	M1st-2nd
151	CG1A	misc	1	4	M1st-2nd
154	GW4	jar	9	145	E-M2nd cent
165	GW4	misc	1	10	E-M2nd cent
216	GW3	jar	1	11	E-M2nd cent
US	GW5	flanged bowl	7	110	E-M2nd cent
US	CG1A	misc	3	38	M1st-2nd
Total			96	1300	ASW 13g

Though fragmentary, the assemblage comprises a fairly tightly-dated group of vessels, dating from the mid-1st to 2nd centuries AD, manufactured in local grog-tempered (Fabric GT1), shell-tempered (CG1A) and grey ware (GW3-5) fabrics. Grog-tempered vessels include the

remains of a single storage jar with combed decoration, a neck cordon and a rim diameter of 400mm, which was found across contexts (33), (83), (121), (131) and (133). Shell-tempered vessels include smaller jars, and one in a finer fabric from (48) probably in a 'Belgic'-style and therefore dating to the middle decades of the 1st century AD. The grey wares include jars that are manufactured in the Nene Valley (Fabric GW4) from (154) and (165), dating to the early or middle 2nd century, whilst a flanged bowl, in a sandy fabric (GW5), but also typical of that period was found unstratified (Howe *et al.* 1980, nos.17-18). Overall, it is likely that the activity represented fits within the period *c.*AD50-150, with possible extension into the decades either side. Notably, there is nothing of Iron Age date and nothing to date the pit alignment, other than early Roman material from the very upper fills (84) and (133).

Roman roof tile

Six abraded fragments of Roman *tegulae* (373g) in a sandy orange fabric were recovered from two contexts. They would indicate the existence of stone-founded buildings in the vicinity. A sample with a partial dog paw print has been retained in the archive.

Table 2 Quantified record of Roman roof tile

Roman Tile				
Context	Type	Frag	Weight	Comment
83	tegula	1	33	abraded not retained
121	tegula	5	340	sample retained
Total		6	373	

The Lithics

Wayne Jarvis

Some ten lithics were recovered from the excavation. Of the material, only one was a tool, the rest of the pieces were debitage. Some of the latter show edge wear which could be down to impromptu use or later damage as the assessment indicates that the material may be residual in later deposits.

Table 3: Breakdown of the lithic assemblage

Class	
DEBITAGE	
Core	1
Chunk	1
2ry flake	3
3ry Flake fragment	1

Bladelet	2
Bladelet fragment	1
Total	9
TOOLS	
Thumbnail/end scraper	1
Total	1
Combined total	10

The raw material was generally local till-derived flint. There is perhaps a slight Mesolithic signature in a few pieces including those that display blade and bladelet technology, and the core. A thumbnail/end scraper probably indicates Bronze Age activity at the site. Much of the flake debitage is likely to be Bronze Age in date. The knapping included hard and soft stone percussion.

Context	Type	Comment
U/S	Core	Rolled, patinated. Mesolithic?
U/S	Scraper	End scraper
21	2ry flake	Edge wear/damage
36	2ry flake	
62	Chunk	Grey flint. Edge/use wear
131	2ry flake	
133	1ry bladelet	broken
133	2ry bladelet	
133	3ry flake	Broken & burnt
251	3ry bladelet	

The Animal Bone

Rachel Small

Six specimens of animal bone were hand recovered from three early Roman contexts (94), (114) and (246) (see table). This included calcined fragments of large mammal bone and a cattle molar that had fragmented into lots of pieces. The low number of remains and survival of only calcined bone and tooth fragments is due to acidic soil conditions at the site.

Table 4: Catalogue of hand collected animal bone

Context	Notes
94	4 x indeterminate large mammal bone fragments – calcined
114	1 x indeterminate mammal bone fragment – calcined
246	1 x cattle molar (fragmented into <i>circa</i> 30 pieces)

Fired Clay and Loom Weight Remains

Nicholas J. Cooper

Eleven amorphous fragments of fired clay (70g) were recovered from five contexts (Table 3). No wattle impressions survived but presumably the fragment represent debris from burnt wattle and daub structures in the vicinity. Significantly, the partial remains of a triangular loom weight (sf8) from a warp weighted loom was recovered from (131). This is an Iron Age type but which clearly continued in use in rural areas during the early Roman period as also seen at Empingham in Rutland (Fraser 2000, 115, fig.55). The assemblage also includes a single small fragment of highly vitrified hearth lining from (203), related to some form of high temperature activity but not demonstrably related to metal working. The loom weight and hearth lining fragment have been retained in the archive.

Table 5: Quantified record of fired clay

Fired Clay			
Context	Frag	Weight	Description
48	1	10	amorphous not retained
58	2	2	amorphous not retained
64	4	4	amorphous not retained
91	1	4	amorphous not retained
99	3	50	amorphous not retained
131	8	215	Sf8 Triangular loom weight
203	1	5	Vitrified clay hearth lining
Total	20	290	

Querns

Nicholas J. Cooper

Two prehistoric saddle querns (Table 4) weighing over 10kg each were recovered from (121) [140], alongside one natural boulder and another with a central rounded depression, which had probably been used as a door pivot stone. Both saddle querns employed locally available dark

red sandstone boulders with one surface flattened smoothed through wear to give a slightly concave profile. Saddle quern Sf10 appears to be almost complete with damage to one end, whilst Sf13 has been broken transversely, losing about 20% of its original length. Both were found in an early Roman context but whether they were still in use as querns at that time is debatable.

Eleven fragments of rotary hand quern weighing over 6kg were recovered from (104), (121), (131) and (139), together with a single fragment of millstone (4.6kg) from (131), as detailed in Table 4. All the fragments come from querns manufactured from gritstone, possibly the Derbyshire Millstone Grit. One upper stone (Sf14) with a diameter of 210mm and part of central hole preserved, came from (121) [140]. Judging by the concavity of the grinding surface it is likely that two fragments from (104) are also upper stones from different querns and that from (139) is a lower stone. The millstone fragment is over 100mm in thickness and part of the outer edge is preserved, indicating a diameter of over 500mm. Three samples of rotary hand querns, the millstone and the saddle querns have currently been retained in the archive. The saddle querns should be photographed for archive, if they are subsequently disposed of.

Table 6: quantified record of the quern stone fragments.

Roman Quern Stones					
Context	SF no	Frag	Weight	Description (size in mm)	Retention
104	3	1	320	Gritstone upper stone. T:38	discarded
104	4	1	495	Gritstone upper stone. T: 55	retained
104	5	1	315	Gritstone frag	discarded
104	6	3	815	Gritstone frags. T:65	discarded
131	7	1	4551	Gritstone millstone T:105, Diam c.500	retained
131	7	3	1722	Gritstone frags	discarded
139		1	990	Gritstone lower stone. Th:62	retained
121 [140]	10	1	c.10000	Ironstone saddle quern L:300, W:180, T:110	retained
121 [140]	13	1	c.10000	Ironstone saddle quern L:220, W:180, T:80	retained
121 [140]	14	1	1470	Gritstone upper stone frag. T:50, Diam: 210	retained
Total		7	30678		

The Charred Plant Remains

Adam Santer and Rachel Small

During an archaeological excavation at Great Bowden, Leicestershire seven bulk soil samples were taken for the analysis of charred plant remains. The samples (numbered 4-12) came from the pit alignment, one 1st-2nd Century Roman gully terminus [46] and the remainder came from 1st to 2nd Century Roman pits.

The analysis of the charred plant remains (CPR hereafter) are presented here, together with a discussion of what potential evidence can be obtained regarding past diet, crop husbandry strategies and environment at the site.

Methodology

The samples consisted mostly of a yellowish/grey clay and were processed in a York tank using a 0.5mm mesh with flotation into a 0.3mm sieve. The flotation fractions (flots) were sorted for plant remains and other artefacts under an x10-40 stereo microscope. The heavy residues were also sorted to ensure full recovery of plant remains. Specimens were identified by comparison to modern reference material available at ULAS and their names follow Stace (1991). Plant remains were quantified as follows: each whole grain or those representing over 60% of the specimen were counted as one; for chaff, each glume base was counted as one; and, for seeds each fragment was counted as one.

Results

Only four of the seven samples contained CPR (57.1%). The remains were of good to poor preservation and were found in moderate densities (*circa* 10 to 30 items per litre), except for sample 5 which contained under 1 item per litre. Specific identifications are listed in table 7, however, a characterisation of each sample is given in detail below.

Sample 7 which was from the the fill (154) of a second century Roman pit [163] contained the highest density of CPR, totalling 33.40 items per litre. Glume bases were abundant in the sample, a total of 789 specimens were found. It was possible to identify 81 (10.3%) as spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta* L.). A small number of cereal grains were also present and wild seeds including goosefoots (*Chenopodium* spp.), grasses (Poaceae), redshank/pale persicaria (*Polygonum persicaria/ laphifolium*), buttercup (*Ranunculus* spp.) and docks (*Rumex* spp.). Two possible bean/pea/vetchling (*Pisum/Vicia/Lathyrus*) fragments were also found but the specimens were too poorly preserved to be identified to genus or species.

Glume bases were also most commonly found in sample 8, which was taken from the fill (165) of a second century Roman pit [164], however, the density of remains was less than sample 7 at 11.83 items per litre. In total 57 glume bases were identified and it was possible to identify 16 (28.1%) as spelt wheat. A small number of indeterminate cereal grains were also found and a low quantity of wild seeds; including large grass, knotweed (*Polygonum* spp.), dock, common chickweed (*Stellaria media* (L.) Villars), scentless mayweed (*Tripleurospermum inodorum* (L.) Villars), and a possible bean/pea/vetch.

Sample 4 which was taken from the fill (48) of mid-1st-2nd century Roman gully terminus [46] also contained a moderate density of CPR, totalling 24.14 items per litre. The sample was grain dominant containing a total of 264 specimens, it was possible to identify 77

as wheat and 11 as barley grains. Also present in the sample was five wheat glume bases and a small number of wild seeds including stinking chamomile (*Athemis cotula* L.), sedges (*Carex* spp.), common knapweed (*Centurea nigra* L.), goosefoots, wild carrot (*Daucus carota* L.), cleavers (*Galium aparine* L.), poppy (*Papava* sp.), grasses, buttercup, docks, and bean/pea/vetchling.

Sample 5 which was taken from the fill (94) of a mid-1st-2nd century Roman pit [93] contained a low density of CPR, totalling 0.44 items per litre. The sample contained an equal proportion of grain and wild seeds. It was possible to identify wheat grains, stinking chamomile, grasses and buttercup.

Table 7: the charred plant remains found in samples 4, 5, 7 and 8 (includes material recovered from the flot and heavy residue).

Sample	4	5	7	8	
Context	48	94	154	165	
Cut	46	93	153	164	
Feature type	Gully terminus	Pit	Pit	Pit	
Date	1st C. Roman	1st C. Roman	2nd C. Roman	2nd C. Roman	
Grain					
Cf. <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L.	11				Cf. Barley
<i>Triticum spelta</i> L.			2		Spelt wheat
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (glume wheat)	77	3			Glume wheat
Detached embryo		1			Detached embryo
Indeterminate cereal	176	4	21	8	Indeterminate cereal
Chaff					
<i>Triticum spelta</i> L. glume base			81	16	Spelt wheat glume base
<i>Triticum</i> sp. glume base	5		708	41	Wheat glume base
Wild seeds					
<i>Anthemis cotula</i> L.	9	5			Stinking chamomile
<i>Carex</i> sp.	3				Sedge
<i>Centurea nigra</i> L.	2				Common knapweed
<i>Chenopodium</i> sp.	1		2		Goosefoots
<i>Daucus carota</i> L.	1				Wild carrot
<i>Galium aparine</i> L.	1				Cleavers
<i>Papava</i> sp.	1				Poppy
Poaceae (large)	29	1	2	1	Large grass
Poaceae (small)	2	1	9		Small grass
<i>Polygonum persicaria/lapthifolium</i>			1		Redshank/Pale persicaria
<i>Polygonum</i> sp.				1	Knotweed
<i>Ranunculus</i> sp.	1	1	1		Buttercup
<i>Rumex</i> sp.	8		5	1	Docks
<i>Stellaria media</i> (L.) Villars				1	Common chickweed
<i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i> (L.) Villars				1	Scentless mayweed
Pisum/Vicia/Lathyrus	9		2	1	Pea/bean/vetchling
Indeterminate seed	2		1		Indeterminate seed
Total	338	16	835	71	
Soil volume (L)	14	36	25	6	
% Analysed	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Items per litre	24.14	0.44	33.40	11.83	

Discussion

Sample 7 and 8, which were both taken from the fills of second century Roman pits, were abundant in glume bases of which it was possible to identify a proportion as spelt wheat. These deposits likely represent fine sieving residue, a later stage in processing the grain for consumption. The moderate densities of remains could indicate industrial scale processing, for example using a corn drier (however, no such feature was identified on site), rather than day-to-day processing which is generally thought to produce low density scatters.

Sample 4 which was taken from the fill of a first century Roman gully terminus was abundant in cereal grains. This could represent an accident during processing the crop for consumption, for example parching of the processed grain prior to bulk storage or milling.

It is worth noting that the four samples which yielded charred plant remains came from the southern area of the excavation where quern stone fragments were concentrated (see figure 38). Therefore, it seems entirely plausible that this area was associated with the latter stages of cereal grain processing (de-husking, fine sieving and grinding to produce flour for bread making).

It is unclear as to whether the earlier cereal processing stages were carried out at the site and if the grain was grown locally or further afield. The wild seeds present are typically considered agricultural weeds and of note is the presence of sedges which are generally found in wet soils and could indicate poorly drained fields. Also, stinking chamomile, a species which thrives in harder clayey soils which would require improved ploughing equipment.

Conclusion

Charred plant remains were recovered in moderate densities from the site. The remains are indicative of the waste from the later stages of processing cereals for consumption and it has been suggested that the southern area of the site was designated for this. The low numbers of sample taken did not allow for changes over the Roman period at the site to be considered in depth. The report adds to the limited data set regarding charred plant remains at rural Roman settlements in the east midlands.

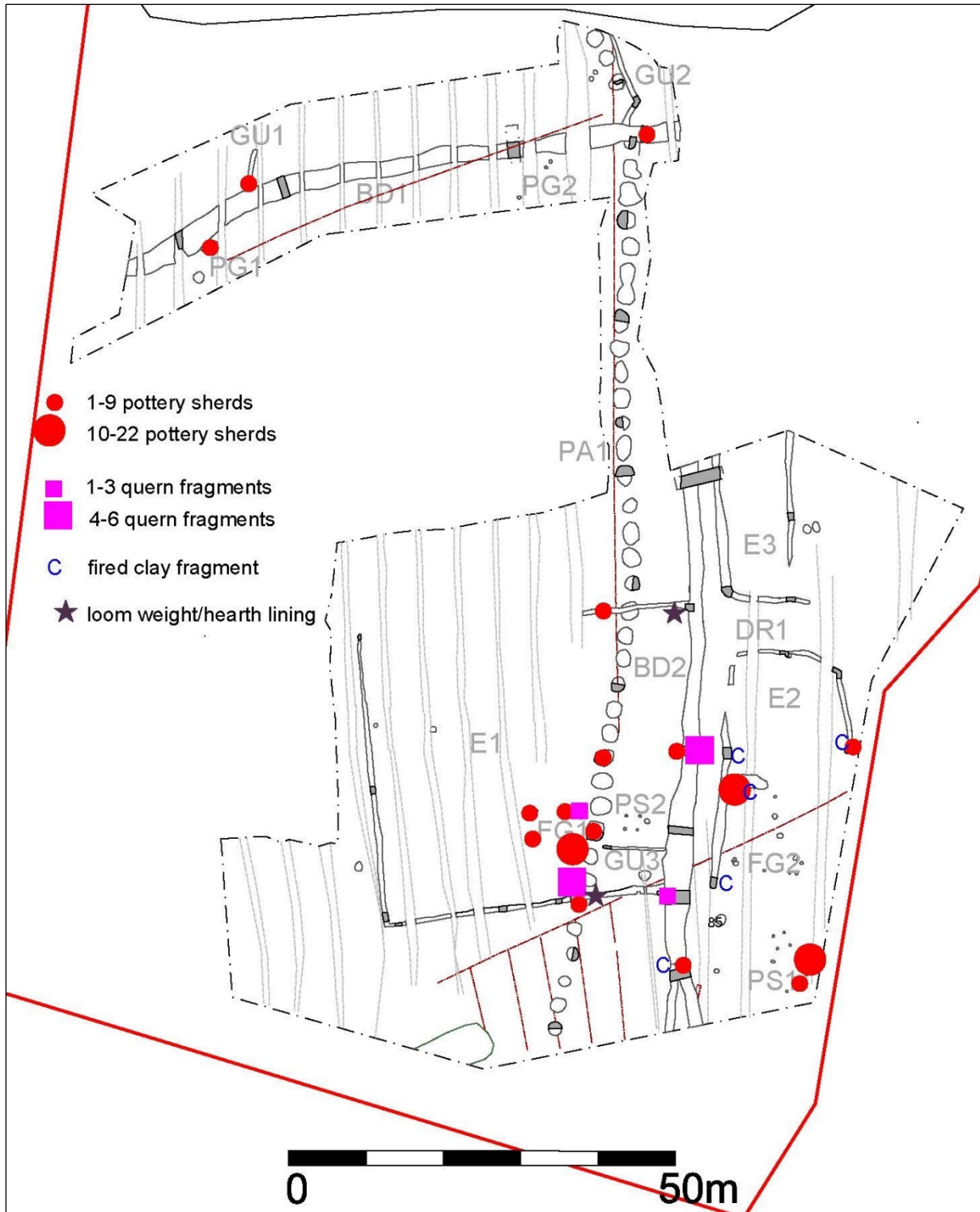


Figure 38: Distribution and density of pottery sherds, quern fragments, fired clay and loom weight/hearth lining fragments from excavated sections (see key).

Discussion

The earliest activity identified on site is attested from the presence of Mesolithic worked flint. The small number of pieces, probably represent chance losses or truncated material. This also appears to be the case for the later Bronze Age lithic material which included evidence of tools with some debitage from flint working which probably represent a residual background scatter.

The main focus of activity recorded on site can be split into two periods, prehistoric evidence and early Roman activity.

The Pit Alignment

The prehistoric activity was formed by the pit alignment. Unfortunately the pit alignment produced no dating evidence or environmental activity, which is not uncommon in this type of feature (Finn 1997, 104-105) with the only dating coming from the very upper fills and residually early Roman in date. Despite this its date could be speculated to some confidence by stratigraphical evidence and comparable features in the archaeological record. Features dating to the mid -1st-2nd century, some particularly shallow in nature, could be seen truncating the backfill of pits within the alignment suggesting the pits had long been out of use and almost entirely backfilled by the point early Roman activity on site was established. Despite this, some form of earthwork marking the pit alignment appeared to survive into the Roman period (perhaps as small lumps and depressions) as features dating to this period appeared to follow and respect the orientation of the pit alignment, especially its orientation from north-south. This is a pattern also seen at Manor Farm, Market Harborough (Luke, Barker, and Carroll 2018), 2km south-west of Great Bowden. Here evidence of later Iron Age and early Roman activity was also seen in conjunction with early Iron Age pit alignments. At Warren Farm Quarry, Lockington excavations also revealed an Iron Age dated pit alignment subsequently truncated by early Romano-British enclosure systems (Thomas 2011). The lack of dateable material and other evidence of settlement activity recovered from the pit alignment appears to follow the suggested theory that alignments of this nature were constructed to demarcate the landscape as boundary features (Finn 1997, 105) and were often away from areas of settlement where more material culture evidence may have been deposited within the pit features. Despite this it has been suggested that dating of pit alignments can be attested by their shape in plan (Hingley 1989) with alignments composed of rectangular pits dating from the Late Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age with oval pits having a much broader date range, from the Neolithic to Roman period. Comparable pit alignments consisting of large sub rectilinear-oval pits at Upton, Northamptonshire (Carlyle 2008), Eye Kettleby, Leicestershire (Finn 1997), Earl Shilton, Leicestershire (Jarvis 2007) and yielded material of Late Bronze Age- Middle Iron Age in date.

Although the complete length and path of the pit alignment is not known, placing its position and visual orientation in the wider landscape can be speculated from the archaeological record. No evidence for the continuation of the pit alignment was seen 40m to the south, during evaluation trenches for a new Anglian Water Pipeline (Mason and Lord 2018) although its path could easily have avoided these trenches. Despite this, some evidence of late Iron Age activity was seen in a trench 100m to the south-west, hinting at possible comparable prehistoric activity. Extensive Iron Age activity was located c500m to the south-west at Burnmill Road (Brown 2018), late Bronze Age and Iron Age activity c.650m south at Waterfield Place (Browning

2015) , with further Iron Age-Roman activity c.1.5-2km south-west at Manor Farm, Market Harborough (Luke, Barker, and Carroll 2018) and Airfield Farm, Market Harborough (Clarke and Chapman 2009, Clarke 2010). These sites appear to command a prominent ridge of high ground, with the River Wellend valley running east-west 1km to the south, then sweeping north-south 1km to the east. Langton Brook runs east-west around 2km to the north of the ridge. Based on the north-south orientation of the pit alignment, it is possible that the alignment may have originated from this Bronze Age and Iron Age activity on high ground to the south, heading north towards Langton Brook, possibly dividing the landscape in a prominent position. From wider studies of pit alignments it is clear that their positioning in relation to geological or topographical changes in the landscape was important and their association with natural features such as rivers, streams and associated boggy areas is common (Rylatt and Bevan 2007, Thomas 2008). The Leicester Lane, Great Bowden pit alignment appears to conform at least to a certain degree, to this suggested pattern.

The Roman Activity

The main activity recorded on site was of an early Roman date and consisted of a series of boundary ditches, ditched enclosures, gullies, post structures and associated pits and postholes. All pottery recovered from excavated features on site comprises a fairly tightly-dated group of vessels, dating from the mid-1st to 2nd centuries AD. The pottery assemblage therefore indicates activity did not take place over a long period of time and was confined to perhaps only a single generation, with all features forming a single phase of activity. The only earthfast features showing evidence of recutting were three discrete features and the two boundary ditches, and this is perhaps a result of later activity situated beyond the excavated area, with boundary ditches extending over greater distances needing to be maintained over longer periods of time.

The northern half of the site was defined by a boundary ditch running east-west beyond the excavated area, and was downslope from activity towards the southern end of the site. A series of small gullies and pits were also recorded in this area, possibly additional boundary features such as fences, or pits representative of small scale mineral extraction. The relatively low proportion of pottery and other finds from this area suggests these features were largely away from any settlement or domestic activity and are probably representative of landscape demarcation for field systems and a secondary function for water management.

To the south, a north-south orientated boundary ditch split the site, heading beyond the excavation area to the south and north. As well as providing the basis for the layout of the site it also acted to funnel water through the area downslope to the north. To the east two animal stock enclosures were located, combining with the boundary ditch to form a droveway, presumably for moving livestock between enclosures and around the immediate landscape. A series of pit and posthole features were located within the southern half of **Enclosure 2** and are most likely also associated with mixed pastoral and arable farming activities. The south-east corner of the area was formed by a probable four-post structure and associated curving post built structure, although it is conceivable that these may have in fact been a series of two-post structures. These type of structures are often associated with crop processing and/or storage, which can be attested to site from the presence of a quern fragments and the charred plant remains. It has been suggested in the archaeological record that four-post structures are

generally regarded as raised granaries or fodder stands (Thomas 2011, 19-20), either of which could be applicable here, especially with their locality immediately east of crop processing evidence.

To the west of the boundary ditch the activity was formed by a large sub rectilinear ditched enclosure, perhaps for enclosing livestock (which incorporates the boundary ditch as its eastern side), with a foci of activity situated in its south-east corner. Here a group of several irregular, heavily truncated features have revealed evidence for crop processing, highlighted through the evidence of charred plant remains, and the deposition of a large amount of quern fragments in the features and in excavated sections immediately surrounding the group. Evidence of an associated four-post structure was also seen, and as discussed was most likely used for storing grain during or after the crop processing phase. An associated gully also appeared to create an annex for livestock management, feeding water into the boundary ditch.

The presence of crop processing material (CPR, quern fragments and four-post structures), predominantly confined to the south-east corner of the site (Figure 38) appears to suggest small scale local consumption, although further evidence of this beyond the excavation area is possible, and therefore larger scale processing perhaps for trade, cannot be entirely ruled out. Despite the lack of animal bone survival due to acidic soil conditions, the layout of the site with clear droveways and animal stock enclosures indicates that the landscape was a mixed pastoral and arable farming economy.

The lack of any dating material beyond the 2nd century AD suggests that following this period activity shifted, perhaps contracting further south onto higher ground, where excavations at Burnmill Road and fieldwalking south of Leicester Lane has produced evidence of Roman activity into the 3rd and 4th centuries AD. No Saxon activity was recorded on site and is probably confined to the village core of Great Bowden to the east, although sporadic Saxon activity was recorded at Waterfield Place to the south.

The Post-Roman Activity

Post-Roman activity is also attested with ridge and furrow ploughing which was aligned broadly north-south on site. This is most likely medieval to post medieval in date and can be attributed to the arable fields of medieval and post medieval Great Bowden to the east.

The Wider Setting (Figure 39, Figure 40)

Archaeological investigation over recent years has much improved our knowledge of both Prehistoric and Roman archaeology in the landscape surrounding Great Bowden. A prominent ridgeway is situated in the landscape to the south of Leicester Lane and commands views of the surrounding area at 129-114m aOD. A number of excavations along the ridgeway to the south-west including Airfield Farm, Manor Farm, Burnmill Road and Waterfield Place have identified evidence of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman activity, indicating this was a key part of landscape and therefore occupied over a great period of time (Figure 39). Excavations on the Anglian Water Pipeline immediately to the south of Leicester Lane, on the upper slopes of the ridgeway also revealed some evidence of late Iron Age and early Roman activity. Previous fieldwalking also immediately south of Leicester Lane, on these north facing slopes of the

ridgeway have also identified larger quantities of Roman material, including pottery, CBM, tesserae, brooches, coins and glass which further suggests activity is perhaps focused around the prominent ridgeway. Test pitting in Great Bowden has also identified prehistoric and Roman artefacts, suggesting further settlement areas are located to the east. The landscape further afield, surrounding Market Harborough, is also rich in both Iron Age and Roman sites and artefacts. An open air shrine with votive depositions of coin hoards and evidence for feasting activity is known from Hallaton, around 9km to the north-east of Leicester Lane (Score 2011) and further Iron Age activity and a Roman marching camp were also identified at Weston by Welland, around 5km north-east of the site (Browning 2012 and Harvey 2011).

Leicester Lane is situated some 40m north of the Anglian Water Pipeline excavations, 500-650m north of sites at Burnmill Road and Waterfield Place, and 1.5-2km north-east of sites at Airfield Farm and Manor Farm, which all show comparably dated prehistoric and Roman activity (Figure 39 and 40). Leicester Lane lies slightly downslope of these at around 100-88m aOD, on the north-east facing slope of the ridgeway and is perhaps evidence of a wider farming landscape associated with this more dense occupational activity to the south on the top of the ridgeway. Trenches associated with the Anglian Water pipeline, 40m to the south-west and 80m to the south east although showing no direct continuation of features, do show evidence of comparable early Roman activity including enclosure ditches and pits, and may represent the same agricultural landscape to that seen at Leicester Lane. Ditches to the south-west produced relatively large amounts of early Roman pottery in comparison to excavated features at Leicester Lane and may indicate the foci of the activity is in this direction. A lack of any occupational activity at Leicester Lane in the form of domestic structures or primary deposition of artefacts, does suggest the foci of the associated occupation lies elsewhere, most likely to the south, south-east and south-west on higher ground.

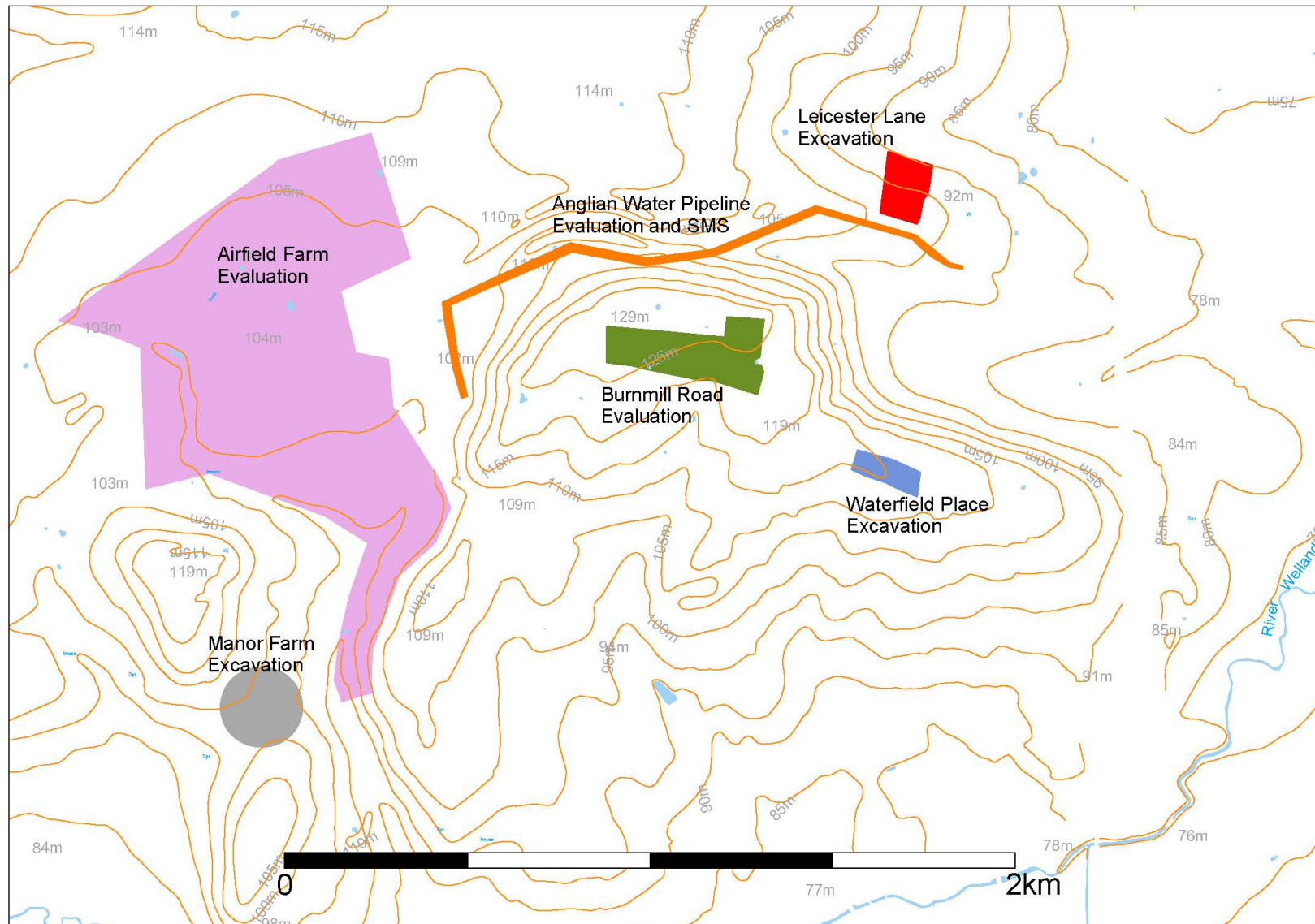


Figure 39: Distribution of nearby sites with topographical contours and heights.

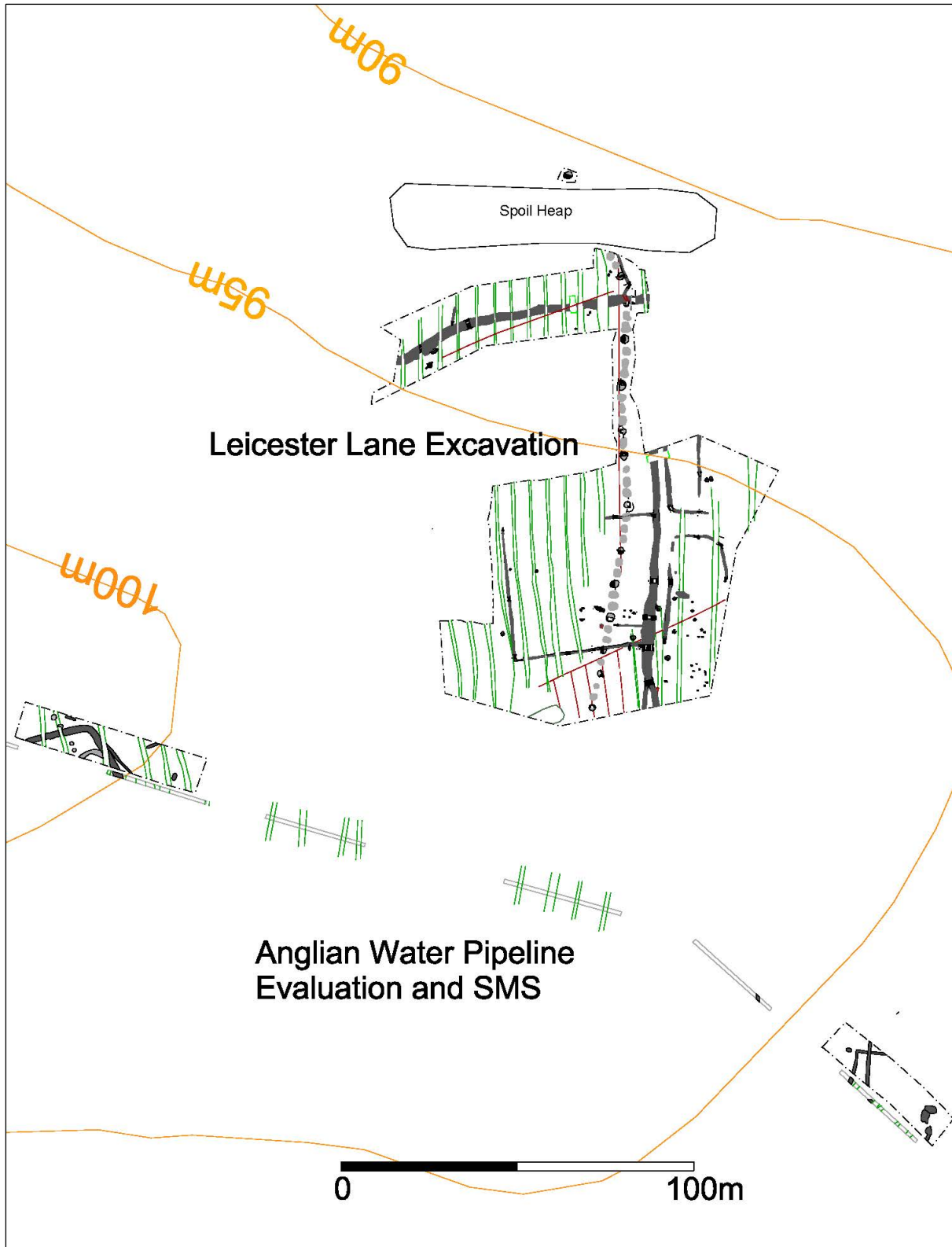


Figure 40: Leicester Lane excavation with comparably dated archaeology at the Anglian Water Pipeline evaluation and SMS to the south.

Conclusion

The archaeological work at land off Leicester Lane, Great Bowden has confirmed the presence of archaeological features identified previously on the geophysical survey and during a trial trench evaluation. The excavation has revealed the features consisted of a probable Iron Age pit alignment along with early Roman (mid-1st-2nd century AD) ditches, pits and associated features. A residual background scatter of flint has hinted of possible pre-Iron Age activity on site and ploughing of medieval and post-medieval origin is also attested on site.

The sterile nature of the pit alignment indicates this was most probably a boundary feature originating from settlements to the south, constructed to demarcate land on high ground above the river Welland to the south and east, with Langton Brook to the north.

During the early Roman period when it appears the pit alignment had been largely backfilled, a series of Roman boundary ditches and livestock enclosures were constructed with associated post built structures and evidence of crop-processing activities taking place. The evidence of both crop-processing features and livestock control management systems indicates a mixed arable and pastoral farming economy with the relative absence of primary deposition of occupational artefacts suggesting associated settlements were focussed beyond the site boundaries. The material culture that was recovered during the excavation does suggest that activity was largely on a local scale, with pottery being locally sourced, providing a self-sufficient economy. Pottery evidence indicates at a fairly tight date for vessels and combined with a lack of stratigraphical re-working of earthfast features on site indicates the Roman activity was perhaps confined to a single generation or phase of activity.

The excavation at Leicester Lane has also added to our knowledge of Iron Age and Roman activity in the surrounding landscapes of Great Bowden and Market Harborough. Leicester Lane is situated on the north facing slope of a prominent ridgeway to the south, with several archaeological excavations on the ridgeway showing this was the focus of much activity from the Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and medieval periods. The activity at Leicester Lane appears associated with this settlement on higher ground and most probably represented farming activities on lower ground to the north of the ridgeway. The absence of any dating material beyond the 2nd century AD at Leicester Lane appears to indicate that activities beyond this period shifted, perhaps contracting back to the south on higher ground.

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Publications

Since 2004 ULAS has reported the results of all archaeological work through the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York.

A summary of the work will also be submitted for publication in a suitable regional archaeological journal in due course.

Oasis data

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1 - 345461
	Project Name	An Archaeological Excavation at Land off Leicester Lane, Great Bowden
	Start/end dates of field work	04-06-18 – 9-07-18
	Previous/Future Work	Evaluation
	Project Type	Excavation
	Site Status	None
	Current Land Use	Arable
	Monument Type/Period	Prehistoric, Roman
	Significant Finds/Period	Roman
	Development Type	Residential

	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Outline		
	Planning Ref.	16/01942/OUT		
PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	Leicester Lane, Great Bowden, Leicestershire		
	Study Area	0.67 ha		
	Site Coordinates	SP 473640 289120		
	Height OD	88aOD-99aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Originator Brief	Local Planning Authority (CDC)		
	Project Originator Design	ULAS		
	Project Manager	John Thomas		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Adam Clapton		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Developer – Gladman Developments Ltd		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	Leics MusService	Leics MusService	Leics MusService
	ID (Acc. No.)	X.A41.2018	X.A41.2018	X.A41.2018
	Contents	Pottery, Bone, Flint, Querns, Fired Clay	Photos	photo records, site indices, context sheets
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	Title	An Archaeological Excavation at Land off Leicester Lane, Great Bowden		
	Author	Clapton, A		
	Other bibliographic details	ULAS Report No 2019-030		
	Date	2019		
	Publisher/Place	University of Leicester Archaeological Services / University of Leicester		

Archive

The archive for this project will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums Service, under accession no. X.A41.2018.

The archive combines the evaluation phase and consists of the following:

14 Trench recording sheets

Other site indices (7 context index sheets, 227 context sheets, 6 drawing index sheets, 2 sample index sheets, 2 small find index sheets, , 17 permatrace drawing sheets)

1 Unbound copy of this report and evaluation report

Photographic record sheets

Contact sheets of digital photographs

1 CD of digital photographs

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