



CCC AFU Report Number 868

Land off New Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation

Chris Thatcher

June 2006

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Chris Thatcher BA

Site Code: CHA NER 06
CHER Event Number: ECB 2211
Date of works: 10th – 19th April 2006
Grid Ref: TL 3944 8625

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PROJECT DETAILS				
Project name	Land off New Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire			
Short description	<p>CCC AFU were commissioned to excavate ten trenches (total area 304m²) in the development area. The evaluation revealed two concentrations of archaeological features.</p> <p>Archaeological remains were recorded in Trenches 8, 9 and 10, in the northeast part of the development area, which consisted of three grave cuts, containing what appeared to be supine burials, a series of postholes forming part of a post-built structure (dated to the Early Iron Age), a hearth and several isolated features. The inhumations were not excavated but it was clear that two of the burials were aligned east to west with the heads at the west end of the cuts.</p> <p>The second concentration of archaeological remains was recorded in Trenches 1, 2 and 3 and consisted of a series of ditches and pits whose basal fills contained ritual deposits of faunal remains, pottery and worked stone.</p> <p>The pattern of features in these southernmost trenches bore some similarity to the Early Iron Age features recorded during the High Street excavations of 2001, the majority of which were located in the northern part of that site. A greater concentration of evidence for ritual behaviour was recorded during the evaluation than was encountered during the High Street excavations. No finds dated to later than the Iron Age were recovered during the evaluation. This suggests a shift in habitation, especially during the Roman and Saxon period, towards the south where evidence for settlement has been recorded.</p>			
Project dates	Start	10-04-06	End	19-04-08
Previous work	None		Future work	yes
Associated project reference codes	CHA NER 06 ECB 2211			
Type of project	Evaluation			
Site status	None			
Current land use	Undeveloped			
Planned development	Residential			
Monument types / period				
Significant finds: Artefact type / period	Inhumation, pottery, CBM			
PROJECT LOCATION				
County	Cambridgeshire	Parish	Chatteris	
HER for region	Cambridgeshire			
Site address (including postcode)	New Road, Chatteris Cambridgeshire			
Study area (sq.m or ha)	0.4ha			
National grid reference	TL 3944 8625			
Height OD	Min OD	8.82mOD	Max OD	9.30mOD
PROJECT ORIGINATORS				
Organisation	CAM ARC			
Project brief originator	Kasia Gdaniec			
Project design originator	James Drummond Murray			
Director/supervisor	Chris Thatcher			
Project manager	James Drummond Murray			
Sponsor or funding body	Ashley King Developments			
ARCHIVES	Location and accession number	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, database, context sheets etc)		
Physical	CAM ARC	Finds, primary records, environmental samples		
Paper	CAM ARC	Site records, written and drawn, evaluation report		
Digital	CAM ARC	Project report, database, graphics, survey data		
BIBLIOGRAPHY				
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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was conducted by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (CCC AFU) between 10th and 19th April 2006 at land off New Road, Chatteris (TL 3944 8625) prior to the development of the land for residential properties. The work was commissioned by Ashley King Developments Ltd.

CCC AFU were commissioned to excavate ten trenches mechanically (total area 304m²) in the development area. The evaluation revealed two concentrations of archaeological features within the development area.

Archaeological remains were recorded in Trenches 8, 9 and 10, in the northeast part of the development area, which consisted of three grave cuts, containing what appeared to be supine burials, a series of postholes forming part of a post-built structure, a hearth and several isolated features. The inhumations were not excavated but it was clear that two of the burials were aligned east to west with the heads at the west end of the cuts. The third grave was aligned north to south.

The postholes, (which contained pot sherds dated to the Early Iron Age) and hearth recorded in Trench 10 suggest that some form of settlement was present on the site that may have been bounded by two northeast to southwest aligned ditches recorded to the south.

The second concentration of archaeological remains was recorded in Trenches 1, 2 and 3 and consisted of a series of ditches and pits whose basal fills contained ritual deposits of faunal remains, pottery and worked stone.

Two ditch terminals investigated in Trench 2 were found to contain a large faunal assemblage. The skeletal remains of at least one adult pig was recovered from each terminal and one of these was buried in conjunction with a minimum of five neo- or perinatal piglets (207). No evidence of butchery was found on these remains, which were very well preserved. This, along with their presence in the terminals, may suggest deliberate and careful deposition.

The pattern of features in these southernmost trenches bore some similarity to the Early Iron Age features recorded during the High Street excavations of 2001, the majority of which were located in the northern part of that site. A greater concentration of evidence for ritual behaviour was recorded during the evaluation than was encountered during the High Street excavations

No finds dated to later than the Iron Age were recovered during the evaluation. This suggests a shift in habitation, especially during the Roman and Saxon period, towards the south where evidence for settlement has been recorded.

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Drawing Conventions

Sections	Plans
Limit of Excavation	Limit of Excavation
Cut	Deposit - Conjectured
Cut-Conjectured	Natural Features
Soil Horizon	Intrusion/Truncation
Soil Horizon - Conjectured	Sondages/Machine Strip
Intrusion/Truncation	Illustrated Section S.14
Top of Natural	Excavated Slot
Top Surface	Archaeological Deposit
Break in Section/ Limit of Section Drawing	Cut Number 118
Cut Number	
Deposit Number 117	
Ordinance Datum 18.45m ODN	

1 Introduction

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Andrew Thomas of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA; Planning Application F/YR04/4303/O), supplemented by a Specification prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (CCC AFU).

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

The site archive is currently held by CCC AFU and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

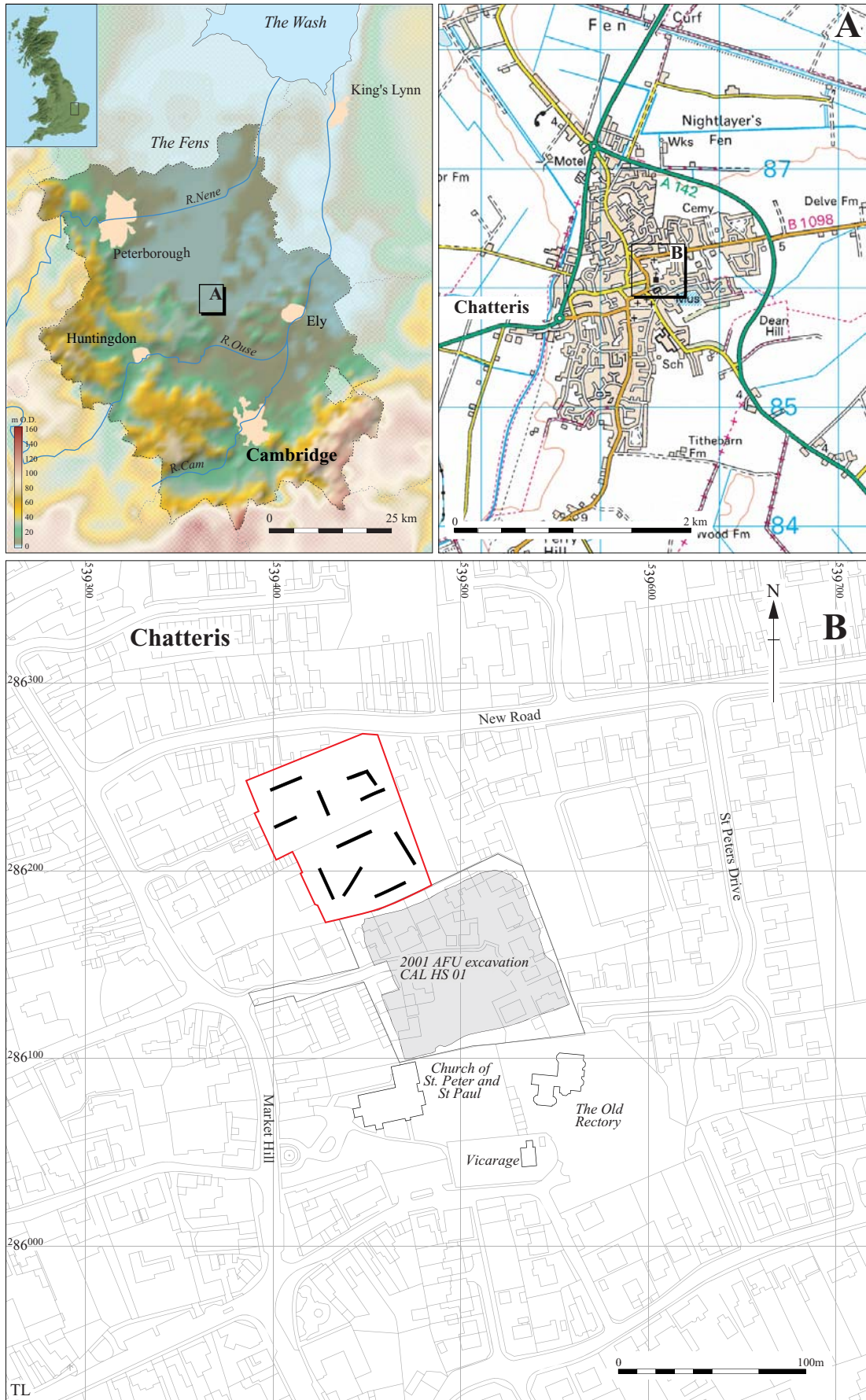
2 Geology and Topography

The site lies on an island of Ampthill clay with patches of March and terrace deposits. Surrounding the island are fen deposits, including peats sealed by marine clays laid down in the early Bronze Age (British Geological Survey 1995, sheet 172). The site lay at between 8.82mOD and 9.30mOD and was fairly level with a recorded variation in height across the site of less than 0.50m.

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

The site lies in the historic core of Chatteris and there is a large body of evidence for the occupation of the area from the prehistoric period onwards. CCC AFU conducted an archaeological excavation immediately to the south of the site in 2001, which revealed multiple phases of occupation (Cooper 2004). The results of this evaluation, which were summarized in the specification, have been incorporated into the background for this report.

No archaeological deposits were identified during evaluations conducted to the east and southeast of the development area at Nos 48-56 New Road (Taylor and Thorne 2003) and St Martins Road (Prosser and Bourne 2001), though these sites lay on more marginal land outside the core of the settlement.



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Figure 1 Location of excavated trenches (black) within the development area (red)

3.1 Prehistoric

During the Neolithic period a major river channel, with associated tributaries, ran close to the northern edge of the island. Tidal or intertidal marshes lay between the tributaries and whilst much of the island was dry land, the soils were too heavy to attract settlement (Hall 1992). The majority of the settlement and finds evidence come from the southern and eastern part of the island although a flint scatter and Neolithic axe found to the west of the modern settlement and a polished axe from Delve Terrace suggest limited occupation elsewhere.

During the Bronze Age, peat fen encroached on the area covering the marine sediments. The relative dryness of much of the land during this time appears to have led to more extensive occupation of the island, as evidenced by the considerable amount of Bronze Age metal work reported from Chatteris; possibly as a result of cemeteries being disturbed by agriculture. A dispersed barrow field occupying the eastern half of the island towards the fen edge was the chief monument from this period and comprised at least fifteen barrows (Hall 1992).

The archaeological excavation carried out immediately to the south of the development area recorded pits which contained fragments of Beaker and Collared Urn pottery as well as worked antler dated to the Bronze Age.

Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age pottery forms found in two areas suggest continued intensive occupation into the Iron Age period (Hall 1992). A number of pits and postholes dateable to the Early Iron Age were also recorded during the CCC AFU excavation in 2001, immediately to the south, and smaller settlement sites of later Iron Age date have also been identified.

3.2 Roman

Chatteris appears to have been an important area in the Roman period with evidence for settlement and a local economy based on stock rearing. A continuous sequence of occupation throughout this period was identified to the south of the development area in 2001 in the form of ditches (suggesting a field system), pits and postholes dateable to the Late Iron Age/Early Roman period and enclosure systems, structures and industrial features dateable to the 2nd to 4th century.

3.3 Saxon

No Saxon remains were identified by the Fenland Project survey around Chatteris Island, away from the town. It is possible that the present town is built over the Saxon settlement and a number of features recorded during the 2001 excavations to the south support

this theory. These consisted of pits, postholes and ditches suggestive of structural remains dateable to the Anglo-Saxon period. The main island was subjected to Midland-type strip cultivation in the medieval period.

3.4 Medieval

Two manors are known for Chatteris from the medieval period. Athelstan Mannesson gave a part of Chatteris to Ramsey Abbey; Edgar confirmed the gift in 974. Eadnoth, Abbot of Ramsey founded a small nunnery at Chatteris between 1006 and 1008 (Hall 1992).

The church of Sts Peter and Paul consists of a chancel, north and south chapels, a north vestry, clerestoried nave, aisles, two south porches and a west tower. It is built of rubble with stone dressings and the roof is part tiled and part leaded. The oldest remaining part of the structure dates from the mid-14th century and the porch is 15th century.

The archaeological evidence for this period recovered from the excavations of 2001 consisted of a number of pits.

4 Methodology

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

The Brief required that a total of c 5% of the proposed development area be investigated. In order to meet this requirement ten 1.60m wide trenches were excavated, eight of which were 20m long and two 15m long.

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

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

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using CCC AFU's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

Seven 10L environmental samples were taken from relevant features in order to provide an indication of the level of survival of charred grain and other ecofacts.

The evaluation took place under mixed weather conditions with dry sunny spells punctuated by several bouts of prolonged heavy rainfall.

5 Results

Dark black brown topsoil composed of sandy silt, with occasional grit and gravel inclusions, sealed the whole site in a layer recorded as between 0.1m & 0.25m thick.

This overlay subsoil which varied quite markedly in thickness across the development area between 0.30m & 0.62m. This was recorded as dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional small stones and gravel inclusions.

The archaeological features recorded during the evaluation were cut into a mid orange brown silt sand layer that was interpreted as an interface comprised of a mixture of natural deposits and soil matter. It was probably formed as the result of bioturbation and root action over an extended period of time. Table 1, below, provides the depths of deposits down to the top of this layer.

The natural geological deposits, observed at between 8.00mOD and 7.55m were fairly mixed and comprised mid brown orange silty sand with occasional gravel and sand outcrops.

Trench	Context No.	Topsoil	No.	Subsoil	Total depth to features
1	100	0.15m	101	0.30m	0.45m
2	200	0.22m	201	0.30m	0.52m
3	300	0.22m	301	0.55m	0.77m
4	400	0.20m	401	0.62m	0.82m
5	500	0.20m	501	0.50m	0.70m
6	600	0.20m	601	0.39m	0.59m
7	700	0.20m	703	0.42m	0.62m
8	800	0.25m	802	0.42m	0.67m
9	900	0.25m	901	0.35m	0.60m
10	1000	0.14m	1001	0.40m	0.54m

Table 1: Depth of topsoil and subsoil across the site

5.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was 18m long, aligned north to south and excavated towards the southwest boundary of the site. Several archaeological features were recorded in the southern half of the trench.

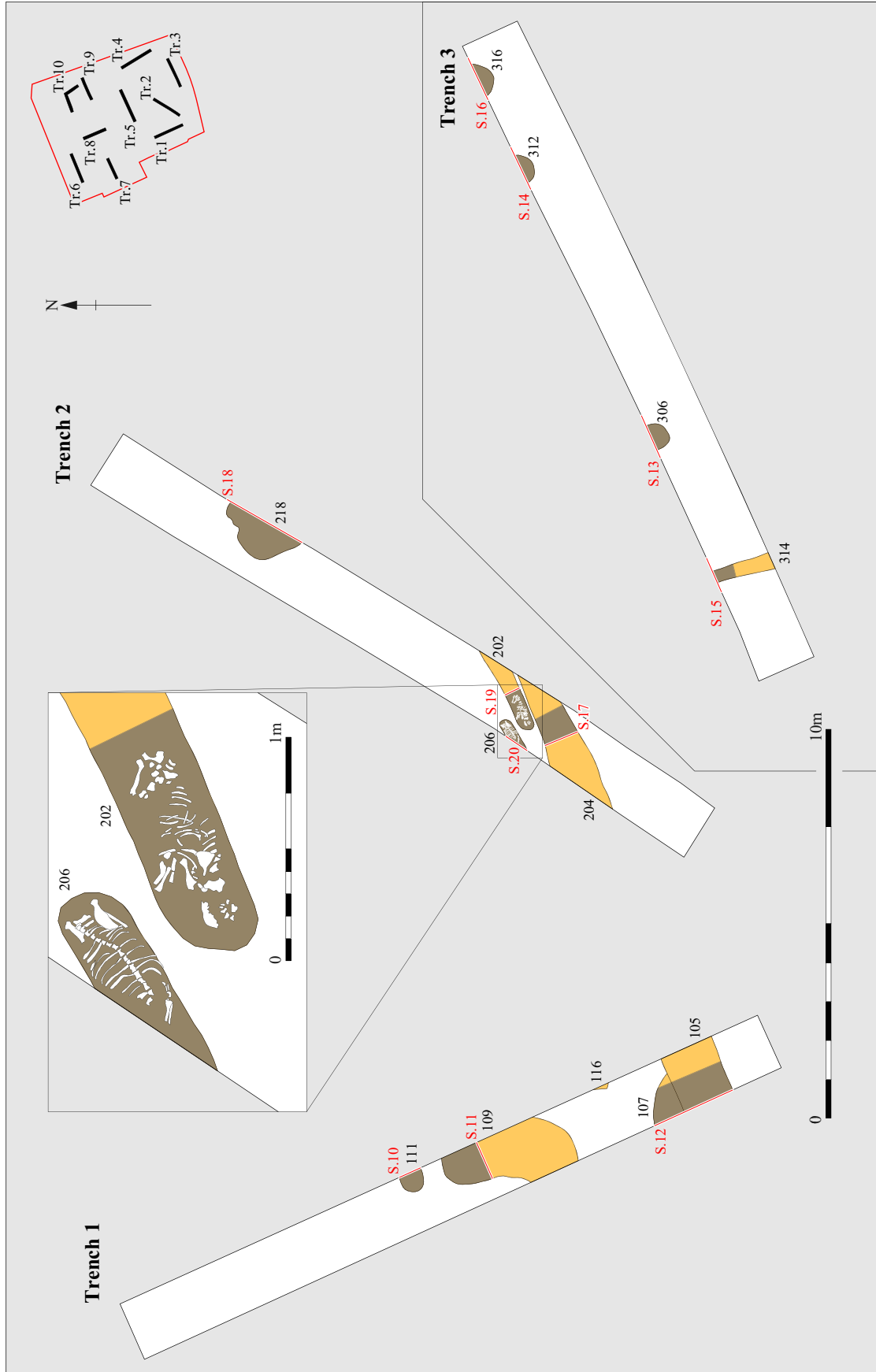


Figure 2: Detailed plan of Trenches 1, 2 and 3 showing all features

5.1.1 Ditches

A fairly extensive ditch (**105**), 1.90m in width x 1.00m in depth, was excavated that crossed the southernmost end of the trench on a northeast to southwest alignment. This feature was very steep sided with a flat base and contained a single homogeneous dark black brown fill (104) from which several fragments of animal bone were recovered. Given its size it is possible that this ditch formed part of an enclosure.

The ditch truncated a shallower feature, 0.70m deep, (**107**) lying to the north whose function was unclear due to its position at the edge of the trench. Its sides were comparatively shallow sloped with no discernable break of slope at the base. It is possible that this was a pit from an earlier phase of occupation or the terminus of a ditch following a similar alignment to **105**, which superseded it. The fill of **107** (106) was very similar in composition to the overlying layer (114). If this feature was in fact a ditch then the similarity between these two deposits may be explained by the fact that 114 represented the remnants of a bank that was used to backfill the feature once it had fallen out of use.

Sealing the sequence described above was a very shallow cut and fill (**103** & 102 respectively) 1.20m in width x 0.28m in depth. This feature may have been a shallow gully representing a third phase of occupation. It might equally have been the final infilling of a depression left by the settling of the fills of the earlier ditches, rather than a deliberate cut feature. No finds were recovered from fill 102.

Six metres from the southern boundary of the trench and entering it from the western side, another ditch (**109**) was recorded on a southwest to northeast alignment before turning onto a southeast to northwest alignment and terminating 2m beyond the return.

The excavated section of this feature was very shallow, being no more than 0.23m deep with fairly steep sides and a flat base. Several fragments of bone were recovered from the ditch's single fill (108) a dark black brown sandy silt.

5.1.2 Pits

Two further features were recorded, both of which continued beyond the limit of the trench. Feature **111** lay less than 0.50m north of the terminus of **109**. This feature was 0.60m in width x 0.30m in depth and may have been part of a pit or the terminus of a ditch. It contained a single fill (110) from which fragments of pottery were recovered.

The corner of a small pit, which lay between ditches **105** and **109**, was also recorded (**116**). This feature was not excavated but a number of animal bone fragments were recovered from its upper fill, which was

visible in the trench section where the pit had been truncated by machining.

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 18m long and aligned northeast to southwest in the southern part of the development area. A ditch on a similar alignment to **105** from Trench 1 was recorded in the southwest end of the trench. The skeletal remains of two pigs and at least five neo or perinatal pigs were also recorded in the terminals of two gullies that followed the same alignment.



*Plate 1: Pig burials **202**, **206** in ditch terminus showing alignment with ditch **204***

5.2.1 Ditch

A fairly shallow ditch (**204**) was recorded that appeared to continue the line of ditch **105** from Trench 1. This feature was similar in profile to **105** with steep sides and a flat base but was significantly smaller, being only 0.95m in width and 0.33m deep. Despite the close proximity of the excavated sections, approximately 5m from one another, their marked variation in size made it unlikely that they represented a continuation of the same ditch. However, the contiguous alignment recorded was indicative of these being either two phases of the same enclosure or the opposing sides of an enclosure, the entrance to which lay somewhere between Trenches 1 and 2.



Plate 2 Pig burials **202** and **206** in ditch terminus (**202** in foreground)

5.2.2 Gullies & Animal Burials

Following the same alignment, immediately to the north of ditch **204**, a shallow gully 0.40m in width x 0.03m in depth, was recorded whose northern terminus lay within the bounds of the trench (**202**). A pig burial, laid on its side with the head to the north, was recorded in the terminus. No other finds were recovered from the fill of the feature, which was severely truncated and comprised a dark grey brown sandy silt (**203**).

A second pig skeleton was recorded lying in what appeared to be the truncated remnants of a gully (**206**) along with the remains of at least five neo-/perinatal pigs. It was impossible to ascertain the overall outline of the feature into which the pig had been placed as a result of its proximity to the trench edge. The fill of the gully (**207**) was silt sand of a mid grey brown colouration and yellow mottling.

5.2.1 Pit

Further to the north a slightly irregular shaped feature (**218**) was excavated that might have been part of a pit or conceivably the terminus of a ditch protruding into the trench. In section, **218** was observed to have almost vertical sides, with a slight overhang on the

Fig. 3: Sections Trench 1 and 2

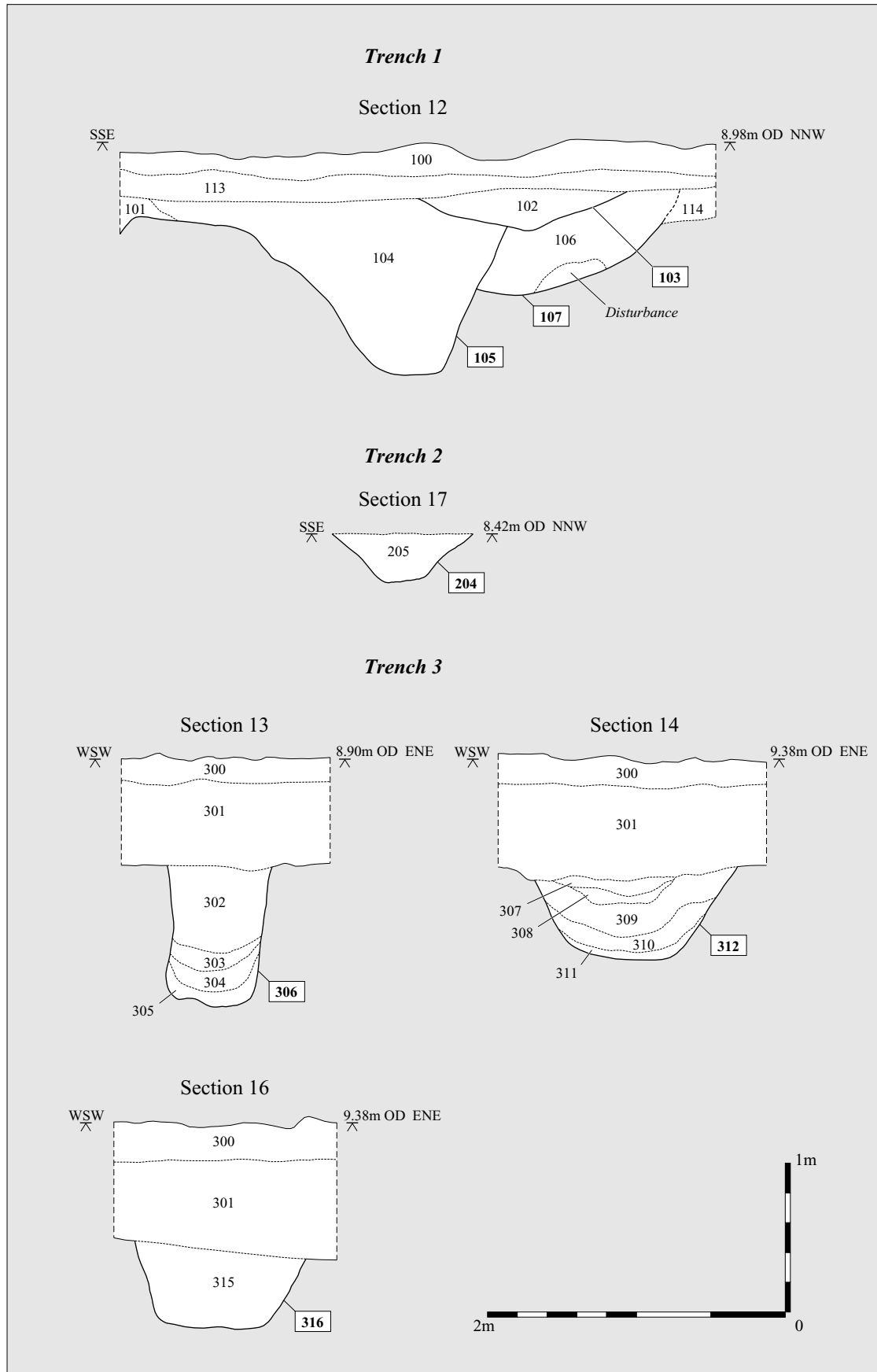


Figure 3: Sections of Trenches 1, 2 and 3

northern slope, as a result of the soft sand edges collapsing and an irregular base. A series of fills, which appeared to be the result of natural slumping or tipping in of material, were recorded in this feature. Its fill contained several sherds of animal bone. A less shallow recut of the feature was recorded on its northern side (**219**), which contained a similar sequence of slumped deposits.

The cuts for these two features were not exposed in their entirety, which made it impossible to determine their exact function.

5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was 18m long and aligned east-northeast to west-southwest parallel to the southern boundary of the development area. Three pits and a shallow ditch were recorded.

5.3.1 Ditch

A shallow ditch, 0.53m in width x 0.36m in depth, with steep sloped sides and a curved base was recorded on an alignment parallel to the trench's long axis (**314**). The fill of the ditch (**313**) comprised a mid grey brown silty sand from which no finds were recovered. This homogeneous deposit probably represented an accumulation of material as a result of natural weathering processes rather than deliberate backfill.

5.3.2 Pits

Lying to the northeast of ditch (**314**) a vertical sided pit (**306**), 0.70m in diameter x 0.94m in depth, was excavated whose primary fills contained burnt stone, two worked flints, a large sherd of Iron Age pottery and a significant volume of animal bone including butchered cattle and sheep/goat remains and mandibles from at least two young adult individuals (**304**, **305**). A total of four fills were recorded for the pit. Capping the finds rich primary deposits was a mid yellow grey clay silt (**303**), which was in turn sealed by a homogeneous mid grey brown tertiary fill (**302**).

Two further pits were recorded in the northeastern end of the trench (**312** & **316**). Pits **312** was u-shaped in profile with fairly steeply sloped sides, 1.36m in diameter x 0.68m in depth. Pit **316** was very similar in both size, being 1.14m in diameter x 0.55m in depth, and profile. The fill sequences for these two features were quite different with **312** containing five fills whose defining characteristics were mainly variations in colour and **316**, which contained a single homogeneous dark grey brown sandy silt fill. No finds were recovered from either feature and although the deposits recorded within them differed markedly, which might suggest that functionally they were unrelated, it was impossible to determine their use.

5.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 was excavated on a northwest to southeast alignment towards the eastern boundary of the site. The trench was 18.80m in length and revealed no archaeological features. A large pit containing the skeletal remains of a horse was recorded at the southern end of the trench. This feature was sealed by a layer that contained post-medieval brick.

5.5 Trench 5

Trench 5 was excavated towards the centre of the development area on an east northeast to west northwest alignment. The trench was 19.10m in length and revealed no archaeological features. The natural geological deposits revealed within the trench (502) were a mid orange sand with sporadic flint and gravel outcrops and darker silty patches.

5.6 Trench 6

Trench 6 was excavated in the northwest corner of the development area on a southwest to northeast alignment parallel with the site boundary. The trench was 18.00m in length and contained no archaeological features.

A modern, gravel filled, drain run was revealed at the western end of the trench truncating an area of modern disturbance that was found to contain modern brick and slate.

5.7 Trench 7

Trench 7 was excavated further to the south on a northwest to southeast alignment, close to the western boundary of the development area.

No archaeological features were revealed in this trench, which was found to contain the highest level of modern disturbance recorded within the development area. This truncated the natural geological deposits at the west end of the trench and was recorded in a series of layers lying immediately below the topsoil throughout the rest of its length. These included mixed re-deposited soil and modern debris overlying the natural (703), which were sealed by a levelling layer composed of modern brick, gravel and slate fragments (702) and finally, a layer of re-deposited natural gravel (701).

5.8 Trench 8

Trench 8 was 13.30m in length and located to the north of the dividing wall that partitioned the north and south sections of the site on a north northwest to south southeast alignment.

Two intercutting features were recorded protruding into the centre of the trench from its eastern boundary.

5.8.1 Pits

A section was dug across two sub-circular features (**806 & 808**), which revealed them to be u-shaped in profile with steeply sloped, straight sides and slightly convex bases.

Cut **808** was 0.46m in depth and 0.55m in width at its base. It contained a single fill (807) whose composition was sandy silt with a dark grey brown colouration, from which no finds were recovered. This pit was truncated by **806** which contained three fills (803, 804 & 805) and was 1.34m in diameter x 0.46m deep.

The primary fill (803) contained a high frequency of gravel inclusions and as such was probably derived from the natural inwashing of natural and soil as a result of weathering processes during the early life of the feature. The secondary fill, a fairly thin band of dark black brown sandy silt, contained a high frequency of burnt material which was sampled in an attempt to determine the survival of any charred plant remains. This was sealed by a homogeneous tertiary deposit, brown grey in colour and very similar to 807, the sole fill of **808**.

No finds were recovered from **808**, which made it impossible to determine the function of either this feature or **806**. Their exact form was also difficult to identify since neither was exposed in its entirety. Whilst it is possible that they were two intercutting pits it is also plausible that these represented the terminals of two ditches that continued eastwards beyond the limit of the trench.

5.9 Trench 9

Trench 9 was 13.00m long and was excavated on the east side of the development area north of the dividing wall. It was aligned southwest to northeast. Three grave cuts were identified and recorded at the eastern end of the trench.

5.9.1 Grave cuts

Two grave cuts were recorded on an east to west alignment. The skull of the northernmost inhumation was exposed during the excavation of the trench and was observed to be lying at the west end of the cut. The proximal part of a femur was also noted along with a number of

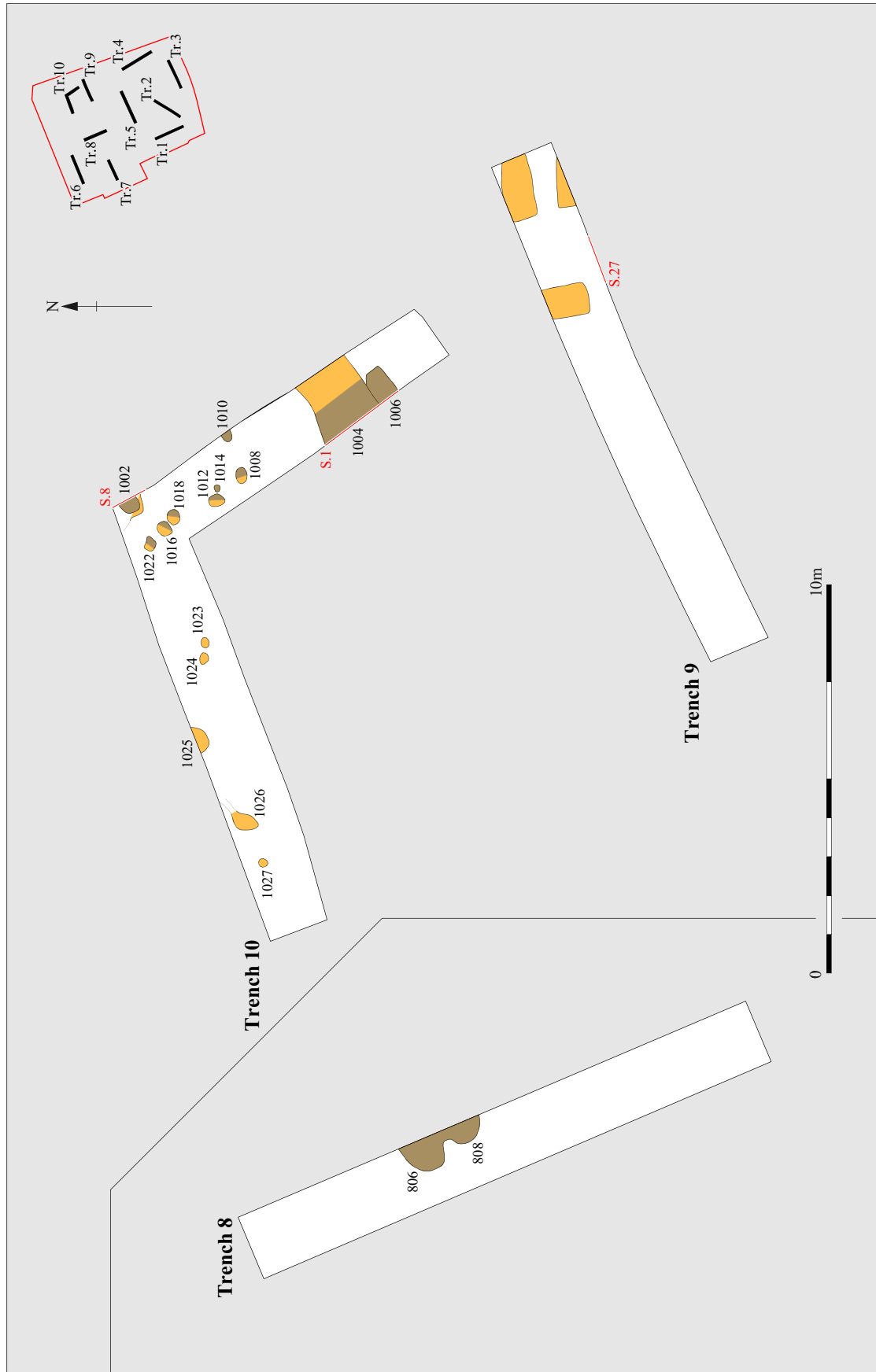


Figure 4: Detailed plan of Trenches 8, 9 and 10 showing all features

ribs and the general arrangement of the skeletal remains was suggestive of it being in a supine position.

Immediately to the south of this lay a second grave cut, very similar in size and on the same alignment. The proximal end of a femur was observed in a position which again would suggest that the body was laid out in a supine pose.

A third grave cut, aligned north to south, was observed 1.50m to the west. Approximately 1.00m of the cut was exposed with the remainder still buried under the baulk. No human remains were exposed within this cut but its size, shape and close proximity to the other graves would suggest that it was in fact an inhumation.



Plate 3: Grave cuts in Trench 9

5.10 Trench 10

Trench 10 was excavated immediately to the north of Trench 9 in an attempt to define the limit of the burial area. For this reason it was excavated on a southeast to northwest alignment for 10.00m and then east to west for a further 10.00m.

No inhumations were observed within the trench, however a fairly high density of features, including postholes, ditches, a hearth and a pit were recorded.

5.10.1 Ditches

Two very shallow ditches were recorded that ran through the southern section of the trench on a northeast to southwest alignment. The earlier feature (**1006**) was 0.90m in width x 0.20m deep with a single mid to light grey fill (1005) that contained no finds. This appeared to terminate within the confines of the trench; its continuation was beyond the western edge of the trench. Truncating this ditch on its northern edge was a wider ditch (**1004**), 1.80m in width x 0.22m in depth, that had a much darker fill more akin to the subsoil recorded within the development area. The marked difference in fill colouration would suggest that **1006** predated **1004** by quite some time. It is possible that the ditches formed a northern boundary to the cemetery area.

5.10.2 Postholes

Ten postholes were recorded within Trench 10. Seven of them were concentrated in the northeast corner of the trench and their arrangement was suggestive of the southwest corner of a post built structure which continued beyond the limit of the trench.

Postholes **1008** and **1018** were very similar in size and profile, approximately 0.25m in diameter x 0.25m in depth. Their fills, 1007 and 1017 respectively, contained numerous sherds of pot dated to the Early Iron Age. The remaining postholes (**1010**, **1012**, **1014**, **1016** and **1022**), whilst on an alignment which suggested a possible rectilinear structure, were far shallower and it is possible that they represented a different phase of the same construction.



Plate 4: Postholes and hearth in Trench 10

In the far northeastern corner of the trench part of a possible hearth was uncovered (**1002**). This feature was not fully excavated due to time constraints but a lining was evident, that was composed of a chalky clay. At its northern edge an area of fired earth was recorded that may have marked the position of a flue.

6 Discussion

The evaluation revealed two concentrations of archaeological features within the development area. In the northeast part of the site three grave cuts, containing what appeared to be supine burials, a series of postholes forming part of a post-built structure, a hearth and several isolated features were recorded. The second concentration of archaeological remains, a series of ditches and pits, was recorded in the southern part of the site.

6.1 Inhumations

The inhumations were not dated and when scanned with a metal detector gave no indication of any metallic grave goods. At least two of the burials were aligned east to west with the heads at the west end of the cut, which may suggest Christian burials; the third grave however, was aligned north to south. With this in mind it is possible that the east to west orientations of two of the visible graves were not representative any particular burial practise, or that the burial site evident within the development area was multi-phased and incorporated Christian and pre-Christian inhumations.

During the excavations undertaken immediately to the south in 2001 three crouched burials, with no associated grave goods, were excavated in the southern part of the site that may have been Bronze Age in date (Cooper 2004). Their crouched style and location, at some distance from the inhumations found at New Road, indicate that human burial was not exclusively being practised within the vicinity by a single culture or during only one period of time.

6.2 Settlement evidence

The postholes and hearth recorded in Trench 10 suggest that some form of settlement was present on the site, this may have been bounded by the ditches recorded in Trench 10 (**1004** and **1006**). The finds recovered from posthole fills 1007 and 1017 were dated to the Early Iron Age.

The evidence gathered from Trenches 1, 2 and 3 bore some similarity to the Early Iron Age features recorded during the High Street excavations, the majority of which were located in the northern part of that site. These included a north to south aligned ditch and a number of isolated pits and postholes.

No evidence was found for Bronze Age and Early Iron Age settlement at the High Street excavations but it was suggested that the finds recovered from the site were indicative of a settlement nearby; given the nature of the archaeological remains recorded in Trench 10 it is possible that such a settlement was present in the north of the development area.

6.3 Ritual deposition

Pit **306** was found to contain two worked flints, a large sherd of Iron Age Pottery and a significant volume of animal bone, including butchered cattle and sheep/goat remains, within its primary fills. The bone collected from this feature was heavily stained which might suggest that it was buried within an organic deposit or possibly burnt. This was similar to one of the pits excavated in the northern part of the High Street site, which contained a well preserved assemblage of several semi-complete vessels and a large quantity of animal bone (Cooper 2004).

The presence of struck flints, nominally dated to the Neolithic period, along with Iron Age pottery in the basal fills of pit **306** is suggestive of ritual deposition, which was also recorded during excavations at Langwood farm, to the south east of the development area, from which disarticulated cattle bone, including three skulls, a goat horn core, pig bone and a human tibia, all backfilled with hearth material were recovered (Evans 2003).

This was not the only example of possible ritual behaviour recorded during the evaluation. The ditch terminals investigated in Trench 2 were of particular interest as their fills (203 and 207) contained a very high concentration of faunal remains. Specifically, context 203 contained the remains of at least one adult pig whilst a second adult pig was buried in conjunction with a minimum of five neo or perinatal piglets in 207. The adult individuals were around two years old and no evidence of butchery was found on these remains despite their excellent state of preservation. This, along with their presence in the terminals, may suggest deliberate and careful deposition.

Ritual deposition of animal remains in ditches during the Iron Age has been recorded at Limes Farm, Landbeach where an articulated juvenile pig burial was recorded in a ditch close to a group of four small horned cattle skulls, lying upside down and facing in alternate directions, with a group of jumbled semi-articulating vertebrae, long bones and shoulder blades placed between them. This feature was



Figure 5: Plan of features within excavated trenches, in relationship with features from CHAHS01

stratigraphically earlier than an occupation phase dating to the Middle Iron Age (Connor and Sealey 2003).

The condition of the bone recorded during the evaluation may also be significant and an indicator of some form of ritual placement. The faunal assemblage differed in its state of preservation across the site. The pig remains recovered were very well preserved, whilst the sheep/goat mandibles from recovered from fill 304 displayed evidence of possible burning. Furthermore cattle bone recovered from the surface of an unexcavated pit in Trench 1 (**116**) was heavily mineralised. Given the close proximity of these features and the fact that stratigraphically they all seemed to be of similar provenance, it seems unlikely that such differential preservation would occur naturally and it is posited that perhaps animal bone was deposited in this part of the site either in varying conditions as a result of some form of processing or perhaps because they had been 'collected'. This has a parallel at Limes Farm, Landbeach where the afore-mentioned cattle skulls displayed varying states of preservation despite being derived from the same context (Connor and Sealey 2003).

6.4 Evidence from later periods

The excavations immediately to the south of the site revealed features from the Roman through to post-medieval period. Despite this, no finds dated to later than the Iron Age were recovered during the evaluation. The ditch recorded in Trench 1 (**105**) was considerably larger than its contiguously aligned counterpart in Trench 2 (**204**), which may be explained by the fact that they represented two sides of the entrance to an enclosure or that they were different phases of the same feature. However, their alignment parallel to the terminus from which the pig burials were derived suggests that some form of spatial relationship was evident.

7 Conclusions

Two areas of archaeological activity were identified by the evaluation. A number of inhumations and part of a possible settlement were recorded to the north of the development area whilst to the south a series of ditches and pits which contained evidence for ritual deposition of faunal remains were recorded.

The archaeological remains in the southern part of the development area appeared to be a continuation of the pattern of features recorded during the excavations on the High Street in 2001 (Cooper 2004). However, they differed in character from that site in that a greater concentration of evidence for ritual behaviour, in the form of the pig burials in ditch terminus and the deposition of lithics, pot and animal bone in the base of pits, was recorded during the evaluation than

during the High Street excavations, where only one feature displayed possible ritual deposition of material.

The fact that no evidence was recovered for features later in date than the Iron Age is also potentially significant as it suggests a shift in habitation, especially during the Roman and Saxon period, towards the south. The fact that a mortuary enclosure and possible Iron Age settlement was recorded in the northern part of the development area is also significant as no evidence for settlement during this time was recorded further south.

Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.

Acknowledgements

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The brief for archaeological works was written by Andrew Thomas, who visited the site and monitored the evaluation

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Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Trench number	Type	Function
100	1	Topsoil	Natural Geological deposit
101	1	Subsoil	Natural Geological deposit
102	1	Fill of gully (103)	Indeterminate
103	1	Cut of Gully	Indeterminate
104	1	Ditch fill (105)	Enclosure ditch
105	1	Ditch Cut	Enclosure ditch
106	1	Fill (107)	Possible ditch
107	1	Cut	Possible ditch
108	1	Ditch fill (109)	Ditch terminal fill
109	1	Ditch Cut	Ditch terminal cut
110	1	Pit fill (111)	Indeterminate
111	1	Pit cut	Indeterminate
112	1	Modern disturbance	Concrete layer
113	1	Layer	Redeposited soil
114	1	Layer	Possible bank
115	1	Pit fill (116)	Indeterminate (unexcavated)
116	1	Pit cut	Indeterminate (unexcavated)
200	2	Topsoil	Natural Geological deposit
201	2	Subsoil	Natural Geological deposit
202	2	Ditch Cut	Enclosure ditch
203	2	Ditch fill (202)	Enclosure ditch
204	2	Ditch Cut	Enclosure ditch
205	2	Ditch fill (204)	Enclosure ditch
206	2	Ditch Cut	Enclosure ditch
207	2	Ditch fill (206)	Enclosure ditch
208	2	Pit fill (219)	Indeterminate
209	2	Pit fill (219)	Indeterminate
210	2	Pit fill (219)	Indeterminate
211	2	Pit fill (219)	Secondary fill
212	2	Pit fill (219)	Primary fill
213	2	Pit fill (218)	Indeterminate
214	2	Pit fill (218)	Indeterminate
215	2	Pit fill (218)	Indeterminate
216	2	Pit fill (218)	Secondary fill
217	2	Pit fill (218)	Primary fill
218	2	Pit cut	Indeterminate
219	2	Pit re-cut	Indeterminate
300	3	Topsoil	Natural Geological deposit
301	3	Subsoil	Natural Geological deposit
302	3	Pit fill (306)	Disuse
303	3	Pit fill (306)	Disuse
304	3	Pit fill (306)	Secondary fill
305	3	Pit fill (306)	Primary fill
306	3	Pit cut	Indeterminate
307	3	Pit fill (312)	Indeterminate
308	3	Pit fill (312)	Indeterminate
309	3	Pit fill (312)	Indeterminate
310	3	Pit fill (312)	Secondary fill
311	3	Pit fill (312)	Primary fill
312	3	Pit cut	Indeterminate

313	3	Ditch fill (313)	Enclosure ditch
314	3	Ditch Cut	Enclosure ditch
315	3	Pit fill (316)	Indeterminate
316	3	Pit cut	Indeterminate
400	4	Topsoil	Natural Geological deposit
401	4	Subsoil	Natural Geological deposit
402	4	Modern Disturbance	Backfill
403	4	Modern Disturbance	Backfill
404	4	Modern Disturbance	Backfill
405	4	Modern Disturbance	Backfill
406	4	Pit cut	Horse pit cut
407	4	Natural	Natural Geological deposit
500	5	Topsoil	Natural Geological deposit
501	5	Subsoil	Natural Geological deposit
502	5	Natural	Natural Geological deposit
600	6	Topsoil	Natural Geological deposit
601	6	Subsoil	Natural Geological deposit
602	6	Natural	Natural Geological deposit
700	7	Topsoil	Natural Geological deposit
701	7	Modern Disturbance	Redeposited natural
702	7	Modern Disturbance	Modern Dump deposit
703	7	Modern Disturbance	Modern Dump deposit
704	7	Natural	Natural Geological deposit
800	8	Topsoil	Natural Geological deposit
801	8	Modern Disturbance	Redeposited natural
802	8	Subsoil	Natural Geological deposit
803	8	Pit fill (806)	Tertiary fill
804	8	Pit fill (806)	Secondary fill
805	8	Pit fill (806)	Primary fill
806	8	Pit cut	Indeterminate
807	8	Pit fill (808)	Indeterminate
808	8	Pit cut	Indeterminate
809	8	Natural	Natural Geological deposit
900	9	Topsoil	Natural Geological deposit
901	9	Subsoil	Natural Geological deposit
902	9	Natural	Natural Geological deposit
1000	10	Topsoil	Natural Geological deposit
1001	10	Subsoil	Natural Geological deposit
1002	10	Cut of Hearth	Hearth/oven
1003	10	Ditch fill (1004)	Enclosure ditch
1004	10	Ditch cut	Enclosure ditch
1005	10	Ditch fill (1006)	Enclosure ditch
1006	10	Ditch cut	Enclosure ditch
1007	10	Posthole fill (1008)	Disuse fill
1008	10	Posthole cut	Posthole
1009	10	Posthole fill (1010)	Disuse fill
1010	10	Posthole cut	Posthole
1011	10	Posthole fill (1012)	Disuse fill
1012	10	Posthole cut	Posthole
1013	10	Posthole fill (1014)	Disuse fill
1014	10	Posthole cut	Posthole
1015	10	Posthole fill (1016)	Disuse fill
1016	10	Posthole cut	Posthole
1017	10	Posthole fill (1018)	Disuse fill
1018	10	Posthole cut	Posthole
1019	10	Fill of Hearth	Hearth
1020	10	Fill of Hearth	Hearth (unexcavated)

1021	10	Posthole fill (1022)	Disuse fill
1022	10	Posthole cut	Posthole
1023	10	Posthole cut	Posthole (unexcavated)
1024	10	Posthole cut	Posthole (unexcavated)
1025	10	Pit cut	Indeterminate (unexcavated)
1026	10	Pit cut	Indeterminate (unexcavated)
1027	10	Posthole cut	Posthole (unexcavated)

Appendix 2: The Faunal Remains

By Chris Faine

1 Introduction

The assemblage in question was obtained from an evaluation at New Road, Chatteris. The contexts in question consist of ditches and pits provisionally dated to the Iron Age. A total of 190 “countable” bones (see below) were recovered.

2 Methods

All bones from this evaluation were collected by hand; hence a bias towards smaller fragments is to be expected. The bones were recorded on a MS Access database. All elements identifiable to species and over 50% complete were included in the database. However, teeth and rib shafts (where no proximal epiphyses are present) were not entered but are included in the overall fragment count. Those not identifiable to species were classed as being from large/medium mammals but were not included in any quantification.

Initially all elements were assessed in terms of species, siding (where appropriate), completeness, tooth wear (again where appropriate) and epiphysyeal fusion. In addition, any taphonomy i.e. burning, gnawing etc was recorded where necessary. Any butchery or evidence of pathology was also recorded using separate tables from the main database. Completeness was assessed by percentage and anatomical zones present (after Dobney & Reilly, 1988). Tooth wear was assessed using Grant (1982). Metrical analysis for horse remains was carried out using Von den Driesch & Boessneck (1974).

3 The Assemblage

A total of 190 fragments were recovered, with 157 identifiable to species (82.6% of the total sample). Preservation is extremely good, albeit fragmented in come cases due to butchery. Table 1 shows the broad species distribution for the assemblage. Pig remains dominate (partially for reasons outlined below), with other domestic mammals such as sheep/goat, cattle and horse making up far a lesser proportion.

The two largest contexts in terms of faunal remains are the fills of two adjacent ditch terminals (203/207), provisionally dated to the Iron Age. Context 203 contained the remains of at least one adult pig. No evidence of butchery was found on the remains, despite them being very well preserved. Context 207 contained at least one adult pig along with at least five neo- or perinatal piglets, along with a small number of sheep and rabbit bones (likely to be intrusive). All adult

individuals were around two years old given the levels of epiphysyeal fusion. Like 203, no evidence of butchery was found on these remains. Table 2 shows the wide variety of elements found in these contexts. This, along with their presence in the terminals, may suggest deliberate and careful deposition. The presence of complete or near complete skeletons in an assemblage often has the affect of artificially driving up the fragment count (NISP), so in cases such as this the minimum number of individuals (MNI) is a more accurate depiction of the species present in this assemblage.

Apart from these features the largest amount of animal bone came from a number of pits in the area. Context 304 (a fill of pit 306) contained Iron Age pottery and amounts of butchered cattle and sheep/goat remains, including mandibles from at least two young adult individuals. Pit fill 215 contained large amounts of heavily butchered bone of indeterminate species, along with an adult horse metacarpal (metrical analysis indicates an individual around 1.3m/13 hands tall).

Context 106 (thought to be backfill of a ditch truncated by a later feature 105) contained amounts of heavily butchered cattle scapulae, possibly the removal of shoulder joints for meat.

4 Conclusions

Unfortunately any comparisons with other sites in terms of species distribution are difficult to make given the presence of the pig burials. However, high ratios of pig are characteristic of Iron Age sites in the east of England (Hambelton 1999, 45). While the reasons for their deposition remains unclear, it is likely given the lack of butchery some degree of care had to be have taken in their placement. Other deposits are far less problematic, with heavily butchered adult sheep/goat and cattle remains indicating the processing of animals for meat as opposed to other purposes.

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Species	NISP	NISP%	MNI	MNI%
Pig (<i>Sus scrofa</i>)	132	84%	8	57.1%
Sheep/Goat (<i>Ovis/Capra</i>)	12	7.6%	2	14.2%
Cattle (<i>Bos</i>)	7	4.4%	2	14.2%
Horse (<i>Equus</i>)	5	3.3%	1	7.1%
Rabbit (<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>)	1	0.6%	1	7.1%
Total	157	100%	14	100%

Table 2: Species distribution for entire assemblage

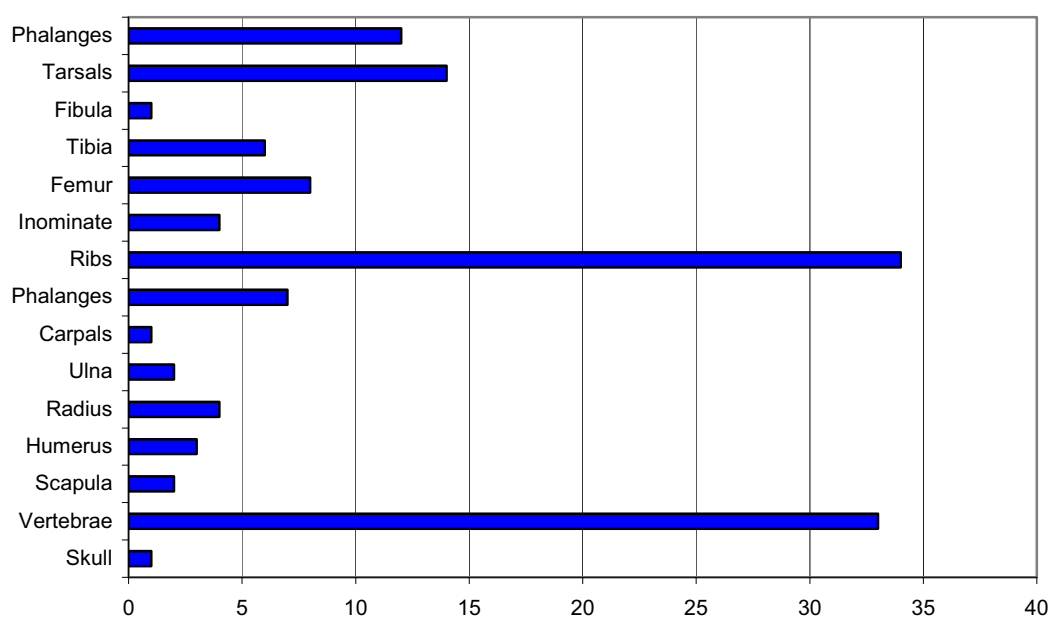


Table 3: Body part distribution (Pig)

Appendix 3: Environmental Remains

by Rachel Fosberry

1 Introduction and Methods

Seven bulk samples were taken from features within the evaluated areas of the site in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations.

Ten litres of each sample were processed by bucket flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flot was collected in a 0.5mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through a 1mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residue was passed through 5mm and 2mm sieves and a magnet was dragged through each resulting fraction prior to sorting for artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification and the presence of any plant remains or other artefacts is noted in Table 4.

2 Results

Sample No	Context No	Cut No	Context type	Charred cereal grains	Charred seeds	Charcoal	Fish scale	Bone	Pot
1	1007	1008	Post Hole	+	-	+	-	-	++
2	1015	1016	Post Hole	+	-	++	-	+	-
3	1017	1018	Post Hole	-	-	+	-	+	+
4	1019	1002	Hearth	+	+	++	+	+	-
5	1021	1022	Post Hole	-	-	+	-	+	-
6	1003	1004	Ditch	+	+	+	-	-	-
7	804	806	Pit	++	++	+++	-	-	+

Table 4: Environmental samples from CHA NER 06

2.1 Plant macrofossils

Preservation is by charring and charcoal fragments are present in all of the samples in varying quantities. Charred seeds are present in Samples 4 and 7 and include *Rumex* sp (dock), *Lolium* sp (ryegrass) and a few seeds that remain unidentified. Modern contaminants in the form of rootlets are present in all of the samples.

2.2 Cereals

Cereal grains are present in small quantities in many of the samples and are predominantly wheat. Sample 7 contains a substantial number of grains along with chaff in the form of culm nodes and rachis fragments.

2.3 Other Finds

Small fragments of both animal bone and pottery were recovered from several of the samples. The only significant bone item is a lower mandible of what has been tentatively identified as a cat (C.Faine).

3 Conclusions and Recommendations

The samples examined from this evaluation produced a low abundance of charred material in the form of charcoal fragments with some cereal grains and a few weed seeds. This suggests that most of the samples represent general scatters of burnt debris rather than discrete purposeful deposits.

The presence of grains, chaff and a few weeds (possibly associated with the cereal crops) is an important indication that some crop processing took place on site. The other remains of fragments of animal bone and fish scale along with the charred grain are probably derived from the deposition of small quantities of burnt domestic refuse.

The majority of the samples show only a low abundance of charred material that is not considered worthy of further analysis. The flots from Sample 7 merits further investigation due to the relative quantity of cereal remains and the presence of unusual weed seeds. A full assessment of this sample is recommended.

Key to Tables

- + = 1 – 10 specimens
- ++ = 10 – 100 specimens
- +++ = 100+ specimens

Appendix 4: The Pottery

By Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 25 sherds with a total weight of 540g. It was all prehistoric in date.

F1: Medium Flint. Moderate to dense angular white flint up to 3mm, rare rounded red iron ore up to 2mm, rare to sparse ferruginous quartz up to 1mm. 11 sherds, 464g.

F2: Sparse Quartz. Rare to sparse sub-angular clear quartz and calcite-cemented sandstone up to 1mm, rare shell up to 2mm, rare rounded iron ore up to 4mm. Early - Middle Iron Age? 2 sherds, 40g.

F3: Quartz and Shell. Sparse to moderate sub-angular clear quartz up to 1mm, sparse flint up to 2mm, moderate shell up to 3mm, rare rounded iron ore up to 2mm. The shell has mostly leached out. Early - Middle Iron Age? 12 sherds, 36g.

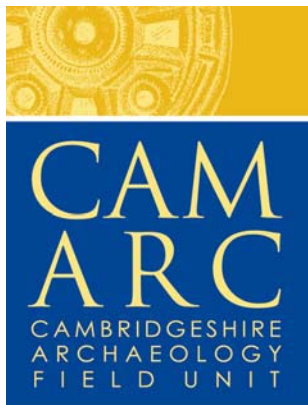
The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds by fabric type per context is shown in the table below. Two sherds of daub (10g) were present in context 108, but are impossible to date.

The range of fabric types suggest activity at the site in the Early Iron Age, although it is conceivable that the flint tempered sherds could date to the Early Bronze Age, and the shell and sand-tempered vessels could be as late as the Middle Iron Age. Flint-tempered fabrics are typical of the Late Bronze Age pottery of the region, with the majority of sites showing that flint was replaced by sand or shell as the main tempering ingredient in the Iron Age. Further work will hopefully resolve this.

All the vessels were hand-built, with no evidence of wheel-throwing. The only rimsherd was from a small bowl or cup in fabric F2. A large sherd from the flat base of a large jar occurred in context 304. None of the vessels from this site exhibited any form of decoration.

Prehistoric Pottery Occurrence by Number and Weight of Sherds per Fabric type per context

Context	F1		F2		F3		Date
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
304	1	430					LBA/EIA
1007	10	34	2	40	9	17	E/MIA
1017					3	19	E/MIA
Total	11	464	2	40	12	36	



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