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OAKFIELDS, 126 HIGH STREET, GREAT BARFORD, BEDFORD MK44 3LF RESEARCH ARCHIVE REPORT

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NGR: TL 13275 51575	Report No: 5267
District: Bedford Borough	Site Code: AS 1845
Approved: Claire Halpin MCIfA	Project No: 6394
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Project details			
Project name		Project name	
<p><i>In November and December 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological investigation on land on land at Oakfields, 126 High Street, Great Barford, Bedford MK44 3LF (NGR 13275 51575).</i></p> <p><i>The site lies in an area of archaeological potential for remains of multi-period date. It is located to the south west of the historic core of Great Barford (recorded on the Bedford Historic Environment Record – HER17150), and the earthworks of a probable medieval moated site lie immediately adjacent to the east closer to the river (HER752).</i></p> <p><i>Extensive cropmarks are located close to the north and west of the site, and comprise multiple circular, rectilinear and curvilinear enclosures, possible pits and structures. They remain uninvestigated and undated but their form suggests a prehistoric or Romano-British origin, as they are comparable to other extensive remains which have been investigated in this part of the Ouse valley.</i></p> <p><i>A preceding archaeological evaluation revealed Late Pre Roman Iron Age Ditches Associated finds comprise animal bone, sparse iron fragments and charred plant remains. The latter suggest that the features are on the periphery of a settlement as opposed to within.</i></p> <p><i>The archaeological excavation confirmed the presence of a complex of later Iron Age ditches and a sma number of associated pits. These features have yielded an interesting artefactual and faunal assemblages, providing insights into the economy and trade links of the local Iron Age population. It appears likely that the recorded archaeology relates directly to the cropmarks identified in the adjacent field. The results of this excavation provide important information regarding the interpretation of those cropmarks. Medieval and post-medieval features were also recorded.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	November – December 2016		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	Y	Future work (Y/N/?)	N
P. number	6394	Site code	AS1845
Type of project	Archaeological Excavation		
Site status	-		
Current land use	Residential		
Planned development	Replacement residential		
Main features (+dates)	Intercutting ditches; late Iron Age		
Significant finds (+dates)	Late Iron Age pottery, fired clay, and brooch		
<i>Project location</i>			
County/ District/ Parish	Bedfordshire	Bedford	Great Barford
HER/ SMR for area	Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Record		
Post code (if known)	MK44 3LF		
Area of site	c.0.49ha.		
NGR	TL 13275 51575		
Height AOD (min/max)	c.20m AOD		
<i>Project creators</i>			
Brief issued by	Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Team		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Archaeological Solutions Ltd		
Funded by	Alliance Developments Ltd.		
Full title	Oakfields, 126 High Street, Gt Barford, Bedford MK44 3LF. Research Archive Report		
Authors	Andrew A. S. Newton. Mark Blagg-Newsome.		
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Date (of report)	June 2017		

**OAKFIELDS, 126 HIGH STREET, GREAT BARFORD,
BEDFORD MK44 3LF**

RESEARCH ARCHIVE REPORT

SUMMARY

In November and December 2016 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological investigation on land on land at Oakfields, 126 High Street, Great Barford, Bedford MK44 3LF (NGR 13275 51575). The site lies in an area of archaeological potential for remains of multi-period date. It is located to the south west of the historic core of Great Barford. Extensive cropmarks are located close to the north and west of the site, and comprise multiple circular, rectilinear and curvilinear enclosures, possible pits and structures. They remain uninvestigated and undated but their form suggests a prehistoric or Romano-British origin. Their position and orientation suggests that they may continue into the current site at Oakfields. Excavation at the current site identified two groups of intercutting ditches running in alignment with, and seemingly representing the continuation of, at least one element of the adjacent cropmark complex. Investigation of these features has indicated that they are of late Iron Age date. They contained a variety of artefactual evidence indicating that they were associated with domestic settlement somewhere close by. This suggests that the adjacent cropmark complex may also be of late Iron Age date. Artefactual and environmental evidence suggests similarities in patterns of pottery consumption but perhaps some degree of agricultural specialisation between the settlement identified here and the late Iron Age settlement activity recorded along the route of the A421 Great Barford bypass.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document comprises the Research Archive for archaeological excavations carried out by Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) on land at Oakfields, 126 High Street, Great Barford, Bedford MK44 3LF (NGR 13275 51575; Figs. 1 - 2) during November and December 2016. It is proposed to demolish the existing detached dwelling and outbuildings and erect three detached houses with garaging (BBC Planning Reference 12/01625/FUL). The excavation was carried out in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval, based on the advice of Bedfordshire Borough Council Historic Environment Team (BBC HET).

2 SITE NARRATIVE

2.1 Overview

The investigation provided for a programme of archaeological mitigation following the results of a recent trial trench evaluation (Walker 2016) which was carried out in response to a brief issued by the Bedfordshire Borough Council Historic Environment Team (BBC HET *Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Field Evaluation at Oakfield,*

126 High Street, Great Barford, Bedfordshire (dated August 2015). A written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 19th October 2016), and approved by BBC HET. The project conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Excavation* (2014).

The specific aims and objectives of the project were to identify, excavate and record any features of interest that are exposed during the strip of the proposed development site. The archaeological investigation is to determine and understand the nature, function and character of an archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

Specific attention was paid to:

- Establishing the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation on the development site;
- Establishing the relationship of any remains identified to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- Recovery of artefacts to assist in the development of a regional type series; and
- Recovery of palaeo-environmental remains in order to determine local environmental conditions

Planning policy context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2.2 Description of the site

Great Barford is located c.5.5km to the east of Bedford in the county of Bedfordshire (fig. 1). The site is located towards the southern extent of the town within Great Barford conservation area and near the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 1004505) and Grade I listed building of Barford Bridge.

The site lies set back from the south-western side of the southern end of the High Street at Great Barford, close to Barford Bridge and some 100m from the river Great Ouse to the south east (Fig. 2). It comprises an existing detached dwelling (Oakfield) and outbuildings, set in a mature garden plot. It is accessed from a long drive leading from the High Street to the north east.

2.3 Background

2.3.1 *Topography, geology and soils*

The site is located at c.20m AOD within a relatively flat agricultural landscape. The River Great Ouse runs c.140m to the south-east of the site towards its confluence with the River Ivel c.3.3km to the north-east. The site is located on its floodplain with land gently sloping upwards towards the north-west.

The underlying geology of the surrounding area is that of the Peterborough Member, a mudstone formed in the Jurassic period. The overlying soil type is a freely draining, slightly acidic loamy soil, whereas a loamy and clayey floodplain soil with naturally high groundwater lies c.100m to the south on the banks of the River Great Ouse.

2.3.2 *Archaeological and historical background*

Prehistory

Cropmarks comprising ring ditches and enclosures are located at the crossing point of the river to the east and west of the village. They are mostly thought to be Bronze Age in date, although some are titled 'prehistoric' (BHER 613, 1842 & 600). An area on the northern border of the village, between New Road and Addingtons Road, was excavated in 1998 revealing ring ditches and rectilinear enclosures with a concentration of small pits and post holes, indicative of settlement activity (BHER EBB628). One of the pits contained early Bronze Age pottery and flint artefacts of a similar date were also recorded (BHER 604); this area is c.370m to the north of the site. A similar area of enclosures, ring ditches and trackways has been identified in the fields directly to the west of the site (BHER MBB21733), these are clearly visible on aerial photographs and probably relate to other areas of cropmarks further to the west (BHER 600).

Google Maps satellite imagery shows an extensive area of cropmarks in the field to the immediate west and north-west of the current site. These are the cropmarks recorded as MBB21733. This includes a ring ditch, a large rectangular enclosure and two sets of

'ladder' enclosures arranged on different alignments but very similar in form to that recorded by AS at Dernford Farm, Sawston, Cambridgeshire (Newton 2012).

A cremation and pits with Iron Age pottery were recorded during the 1998 excavations to the north (BHER MBB21779).

Romano-British

Roman archaeology is focused along the route of the Roman road from Sandy to Sharnbrook. The road runs on a north-west to south-east alignment c.300m to the north-east of the site where it crosses the Great Ouse to the north of Barford Bridge (BHER 728). Other cropmarks and enclosures have been recorded to the south of the village and are thought to be indicative of field systems dating to this period (BHER 609).

Medieval

Saxo-Norman features c.230m to the north of the site, within the medieval village core, indicate possible seasonal occupation dependant on the flooding of the river (BHER MBB21782). The Domesday Survey lists Great Barford as an important settlement perhaps associated with the river crossing. It was during the 15th century that Barford Bridge was built, although earlier structures can be conjectured. The Bridge was widened in the 19th century and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 1004505). Medieval occupation was limited to the area north of the river crossing and concentrated around the parish church; c.190m to the north of the site (BHER 1011). Earthwork remains of a possible moated site are located directly to the north at Bridge Farmhouse, a c.1600 structure with later additions (BHER 752 & 2323).

2.3.3 Previous Archaeological work

In September 2016, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation at the current site (Walker 2016). The evaluation revealed Late Pre-Roman Iron Age Ditches in the north-western sector of the site. Their presence and alignment corresponds to the ditches recorded by aerial photography (dated 2009/10) and interpreted as possible enclosures and structures to the north of this site. Pit F1017 (Trench 3) also contained Late Pre Roman Iron Age pottery. Though Pit F1017 contained just two pottery sherds, F1005, F1014 and F1025 contained 16, 44, and 9 sherds respectively. Associated finds comprise animal bone, sparse iron fragments and charred plant remains. The latter suggest that the features are on the periphery of a settlement as opposed to within. The positions of the trial trenches in relation to the features recorded during the later excavation are shown in Fig. 3.

In summary, the evaluation report (Walker 2016) states:

Four trenches were excavated: two each of 30m x 1.6m, one of 45m x 1.6m and one of 15m x 1.6m.

The evaluation revealed Late Pre-Roman Iron Age Ditches F1005 (Trench 1) and F1014 and F1025 (Trench 3), located in the north-western sector of the site. Their presence and alignment corresponds to the ditches recorded by aerial photography (dated 2009/10) and interpreted as possible enclosures and structures to the north of this site. Pit F1017 (Trench 3) also contained Late Pre Roman Iron Age pottery. Though Pit F1017 contained just two pottery sherds, F1005, F1014 and F1025 contained 16, 44, and 9 sherds respectively. Associated finds comprise animal bone, sparse iron fragments and charred plant remains. The latter suggest that the features are on the periphery of a settlement as opposed to within.

Post-medieval and modern features were also present: Gullies F1019 (Trench 4) and F1023 (Trench 2). Post Hole F1008 (Trench 1), Pit F1021 (Trench 2) and Brick Foundation M1030 (Trench 1). Undated Post Holes F1010 and F1012 (Trench 1) contained no finds.

Research Potential

The identification of features potentially representing activity at the periphery of a late Iron Age settlement is significant; Oake et al (2007, 11) indicate that little characterisation of rural settlements of this period has been carried out and that related issues, such as settlement patterns, are important but currently poorly understood. The current site, therefore, has the potential to contribute information towards developing the available corpus of information for this subject. Medlycott (2011, 31) goes further, indicating that settlement density, zonation and dynamics require further study. In particular, the role and function of late Iron Age settlement complexes is considered to an important area of research (Medlycott 2011, 31) to which this site might contribute.

The date of the site, indicates that it has the potential to contribute to studies regarding the Iron Age/Roman period transitional phase (Medlycott 2011, 31). The preservation of faunal remains and charred plant macrofossils indicates that reconstruction of the agricultural and farming activities (Oake et al 2007, 11; Medlycott 2011, 31) undertaken within the possible settlement may be possible.

2.4 Excavation Methodology and Deposit Model

2.4.1 *Excavation Methodology*

The archaeological 'strip, map & sample' excavation was carried out across the area of the proposed new development (house plots and central yard)

The topsoil was mechanically excavated under close archaeological supervision. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by hand and examined for archaeological features. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale, and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was searched for finds and the trenches were scanned by a metal detector.

2.4.2 *Deposit Model*

Across the majority of the site, the natural substrate was a light creamy yellow to mid reddish-orange loose silty gravel (L2002). Within this, and towards the western part of the excavated area, were two notable outcroppings of natural off-white chalk (L2004). To the south and north-west of L2002, the natural geology consisted of a mid reddish-orange sand (L2003).

In the southern part of the site, L2003 was overlain by a dark greyish-brown layer of firm sandy silt colluvium (L2083), beneath which the archaeology was stratified. Elsewhere, the natural deposits were overlain by subsoil L2001, a mid reddish-grey brown firm sandy silt, with moderate small to medium sub-angular flint and occasional sandstone, which also overlay the colluvial layer L2083. Overlying subsoil L2001 was topsoil L2000, a dark red-brown firm sandy silt.

2.5 Phasing

Excavations at Oakfields in Great Barford identified an archaeological landscape comprising 35 features (Fig. 3) that appears to be on the periphery of a larger focus of occupation within the vicinity, either to the east or the north of the site. Over half of the features excavated were pits or postholes (54%, 19 features) but the bulk of the artefactual evidence came from the ditches and gullies (16 features, 46% of excavated features) that were mostly concentrated in two intercutting series in the south-west of the site.

Based on artefactual and specialist analyses, four phases of archaeological activity have been elucidated on the site, based upon the features and their deposits that have been recorded (Fig. 3). With the two ditch complexes in Phases 1 and 2, it has also been possible to identify chronological development based on the stratigraphic relationships between those features in conjunction with the artefactual evidence. The four phases of human activity are described in detail below (Table 1).

Phase	Period	Date
1	Late Pre-Roman Iron Age	1 st century BC to 1 st century AD
2	Early Romano-British	1 st century BC to early/mid 2 nd century AD
3	Medieval	11 th to 13 th century AD
4	Post-medieval	AD 1500 to AD 1750

Table 1: The phases of activity represented at the Oakfields, Great Barford site

2.6 Phase 1. Late Pre-Roman Iron Age

2.6.1 Introduction

This phase is dominated by multiple intercutting ditch features and stratigraphically or spatially associated pit features which are described below. With the two phases of ditch networks in the south-west, there is considerable overlap in dates between them. Based upon the pottery evidence, it is likely that the majority of them were in functional use in the late mid 1st century AD during the late pre-Roman Iron Age (Peachey Ch. 3.2).

2.6.2 Ditch complex

The ditches in the Phase 1 ditch complex (*Appendix 1; Table i*) were all aligned north-west to south-east, with the exception of Ditch F2061 which was orientated east-north-east to west-south-west, and were all located in the south-western portion of the site (Figs. 3 & 4, grid locations A2 to B1). The ditches varied in length with the shortest measuring 2.38m long (F2061) and the longest measuring 38.40m (F2021). There was limited variation in the composition of the fills of the ditches with the majority containing a variation of either sandy silt or silty sand fills, varying between orangey brown and greyish brown in colour. All contained flint inclusions which were either sub-angular or angular in shape, and with the exception of F2005, F2032 and F2061, all contained at least two fills. With the exception of F2061 (which was dateable due to stratigraphic relationships), all of the features contained dateable artefactual evidence. Animal bone was also fairly abundant, whilst there were isolated instances of shell (F2021B) and struck flint (F2005E).

The stratigraphically earliest ditch in the group was F2005, the middle 12m of which was truncated by the later Ditch F2021. It is probable that both ditches F2005 and F2021 were boundary ditches that also functioned as drainage channels.

The similar alignment and intercutting nature of ditches F2009, F2032 and F2037 would suggest that these were stratigraphically and chronologically consecutive features that fulfilled a similar function. The close dating evidence of these ditches might indicate that the settlement potentially had an issue with the rapidity of which the ditches silted up.

Connecting F2021 to ditch F2007 was a small drainage channel (F2061), the base of which sloped downwards from F2007 towards F2021. F2061 cut ditch F2021, but was cut by the re-cut of F2007, F2092, with the direct relationship between F2061 and the original cut F2007 obscured. The slope of the base of F2061 would suggest that water was draining from F2007 into F2021, with F2007 then re-cut by F2092 once both F2061 and F2007 had silted up. This link between the two ditches would suggest that F2007 and F2021 were in functional use simultaneously and were therefore immediately contemporary. The pottery evidence would also seem to corroborate that they were contemporaneous dating to the pre-Roman mid 1st century AD (Peachey Ch. 3.2).

2.6.3 Pits directly stratigraphically or spatially associated with the ditch complex

Two pits were either stratigraphically related or spatially associated with the Phase 1 ditch complex (*Appendix 1; Table ii; Figs. 3 & 4*). These were Pit F2035 and F2059. The former was sub-oval whilst the latter was circular in plan. Despite being located in close proximity to each other, the dimensions of both pits vary considerably. F2035 measured 1.5 x 0.90 x 0.30m whilst F2059 was considerably smaller, measuring 0.20 x 0.20 x 0.07m. 'Belgic' pottery was recovered in relative abundance from both these features totalling 1305g (30 sherds). The forms of the pottery would suggest that these pits contained domestic waste from a moderately affluent settlement (Peachey Ch. 3.2).

2.6.4 Phase 1 features beneath the Phase 2 Ditch complex

Two features dated to the pre-Roman Iron Age were found in the same part of the site as the Phase 2 ditch complex, ditch F2052 and pit F2055 (*Appendix 1; Table iii; Figs. 3 & 4*). The full length of Ditch F2052 is unknown, as it was not present in the excavated slot 1m to the north that contained ditch features F2023A, F2025A and F2027, and was not recorded further south. Pottery was only recovered from its upper fill L2054 which, given the prevalence of pottery from this fill and elsewhere on site from a similar period, could suggest that the lower fill L2053 may have been a natural silting deposit. This ditch was probably the precursor to the ditch complex that can be seen in Phase 2. As such, it is probable that this ditch was part of a series of boundary ditches related to a settlement that was probably situated to the east and north of the excavation area.

Pit F2055 was a modestly sized pit measuring 1.27 x 0.95+ x 0.81m that continued beyond the western limit of the excavated area. A small assemblage of animal bone (70g) and eight sherds of pottery (96g) were recovered from this feature.

2.6.5 Other Phase 1 pits

Four other pit features of late pre-Roman Iron Age date were also recorded within the excavated area but which were not directly related to the series of ditches in the south-western corner of the site (*Appendix 1; Table iv; Figs. 3 & 4*). These were F2065, F2086, F2088 and F2101, all either sub-oval or sub-circular in plan with smallest F2086 measuring 0.49 x 0.25 x 0.06m, and the largest in the north-east corner of the site F2101 measuring 1.60 x 1.20 x 0.58m. There was little variation in the fills with the majority being composed of silty sand (with the exception of F2065 which was a sandy silt), and all either being a mid orangey brown or dark greyish brown in colour. For all of these pits, the finds assemblages were small but appear to be consistent with the other pit features found associated with the ditch complex. As a result, it is possible to speculate that these pits were also used as areas of deposition for domestic waste produced by the nearby occupation.

2.7 Phase 2. Late Pre-Roman Iron Age to early Romano-British

2.7.1 Introduction

A second series of ditches located c.1.4m to the SW of the Phase 1 complex of ditches characterises this phase, with an associated pit (F2049) and occupation level (F2079) (Fig. 3, grid location A1 to B1). Directly to the north was a gully (F2073) truncated at either extremity by two post-holes (F2075, F2077). Within the two phases of ditch groups in the south-west, there is a considerable overlap in dates.

2.7.2 Phase 2 features cutting the Phase 1 ditch complex

Two features associated with Phase 2 were located in association with the Phase 1 ditch network, these were Ditch F2007 and its re-cut F2092, and Pit F2049 (*Appendix*

1: *Tables v and vi*; Figs. 3 & 5). No finds were recovered from ditch re-cut F2092 so its relationship with the surrounding features is based purely on stratigraphic Evidence.

Ditch F2007 (*Appendix 1: Table v*; Figs. 3 & 5) was probably a later re-cut of earlier ditch F2009 as it ran on the same alignment and crossed over the earlier ditch at several points. At some point later, ditch F2007 was re-cut by Ditch F2092. Pottery finds were abundant from F2007, with finds particularly prevalent in fills L2014 and L2015. The forms and soot patterns suggest that some of the pottery from F2007 was used for cooking, whilst other forms are indicative of domestic detritus probably from occupation in the immediate vicinity (Peachey Ch. 3.2). The other artefactual and ecofactual assemblage would support this assertion, with fired clay, burnt bone and other animal remains recovered from this feature.

Pit F2049 (*Appendix 1: Table vi*; Figs. 3 & 5) cut the eastern side of F2007, 0.80m south of ditch terminus F2032 (Grid Location A1). It was stratigraphically later than ditch F2007 and was relatively wide at 1.67 x 1.07m. It contained a single similar sandy silt fill to ditch F2007, with comparable inclusions. Artefactual evidence suggestive of domestic occupation was recovered from this feature alongside burnt bone and animal remains.

2.7.3 *Features forming, or associated with, the Phase 2 ditch complex*

Within the south-western part of the excavated area a second group of intercutting ditches was recorded (*Appendix 1: Table vii*). Its constituent features were all arranged running on a north-west to south-east alignment; the group was located c.1.4m south-west of the group of intercutting Phase 1 ditches (Fig. 3; Grid Locations A1 to B1). At the south-eastern end of this group, was Ditch F2103 (*Appendix 1: Table viii*), which was orientated north-north-west to south-south-east.

The ditches were variable in length with the shortest, F2103, measuring c.2.60m in length, whilst the longest, F2057, was c.13.40m in length. There was no variation in the composition of the fills as all contained sandy silt deposits, with some variation in colour, consistency and inclusions present. All of the ditches, with the exception of F2025, contained only one fill, and all fills contained a datable finds assemblage. Pottery was present throughout all of the features, with animal bone also very abundant. Occasional finds of struck flint (F2057B, F2079A), fired clay (F2057A), a whetstone (F2057A) and CBM (F2079A) were also recovered from these features.

The stratigraphically earliest ditch in this complex was F2023, with the other ditches in the group, F2025, F2027 and F2057, probably representing subsequent re-cuts of one another.

Overlying ditch F2057 in the south (Grid Location B1), was a shallow occupation layer, F2079 (*Appendix 1: Table ix*; Figs. 3 & 6), which at its deepest point measured 0.16m. A rich finds assemblage was recovered from this deposit, including pottery (24 sherds, 478g), animal bone (60), struck flint (2 frags, 5g) and CBM (14g). The pottery assemblage is suggestive of domestic waste. This corroborates with the animal bone assemblage where a preponderance of rib fragments and chopped shaft elements indicates domestic waste probably from the production of food. All of this evidence

points towards the presence of occupational activity just beyond the limits of the excavated area.

2.7.4 Gully 2073 and Postholes F2075 and F2077

Located in the north-east of the site (Grid Location A3 to B3), was a gully, F2073 (*Appendix 1: Table x; Figs. 3 & 6*), orientated north-west to south, c.8.38m in length, and cut at both ends by postholes F2075 and F2077, respectively (*Appendix 1: Table xi; Figs. 3 & 6*). All three features contained a mid greyish brown sandy silt fill, with the only variation being that the consistency of the fill of the postholes was friable as opposed to the gully's firm composition. Pottery and animal bone were recovered from each of these contexts except those pertaining to the southern posthole F2075. It is not clear either from the form of the features themselves, or from the associated finds assemblages what function these features may have had, although a structural function must be considered. It is of interest to note that the latest find of mid 3rd to 4th century AD Roman mortaria was recovered from within posthole F2077 amongst other finds of late 1st century BC to mid 1st century AD Belgic pottery types (Peachey Ch. 3.2).

2.8 Phase 3. Medieval

Ditch F2090 (*Appendix 1: Table xii*) was located in the north-eastern part of the site (Fig. 3, Grid Location B3 to C2). It ran on a north-west to south-east alignment for c.24.80m from beyond the northern limit of excavation, before being truncated by modern disturbance relating to the demolished building that previously stood on the site. Two fills were recorded from the most northerly Segment A, while only a single fill was recorded elsewhere. There was much modern disturbance in the eastern part of the site, and it is quite possible that the southern end of F2090 did once contain multiple fills which have been truncated or removed by later activity. Both recorded fills were either sandy silt or silty sand in composition with variable colours and inclusions. Finds included 11 sherds of medieval pottery in addition to what must be considered residual Belgic pottery (Thompson in Peachey Ch. 3.2). The medieval pottery forms represent 12th to 13th century AD cooking pots, which would indicate domestic occupation in the vicinity.

2.9 Phase 4. Post-medieval

Located in the central eastern part of the site was Ditch F2099 (*Appendix 1: Table xiii; Fig. 3, Grid Location B2*). It ran on a south-west to north-east alignment for c.12m before being truncated at its north-eastern end by modern disturbance relating to the demolished building that was previously present on the site. Only one sandy silt fill was recorded from this feature, greyish brown in colour and with some small flint inclusions. Around 0.40m before being truncated by the modern building, Ditch F2099 perpendicularly truncated ditch F2097. Pottery and CBM were recovered from this feature and this dates F2099 to the post-medieval period (Thompson in Peachey Ch. 3.2).

2.10 Undated features

Ten pits and postholes and one ditch feature, present across the whole of the site, were deficient in any dateable artefactual assemblage or sufficient stratigraphic or spatial relationships from which these features may have been phased (*Appendix 1: Table xiv & xv; Fig. 3*). Given the density of late pre-Roman Iron Age features on the site, and the spatial distribution of some of the features from this period, it is possible that the majority of the undated features also belong within these phases of activity (Phases 1 & 2). It is possible that some features may belong to one of the two later phases of human activity seen within this excavation.

The vast majority of the undated features were discrete pits or postholes (91%), yielding little or no information regarding their provenance or function. Three of the pits (F2016 and F2018, F2081) and one of the postholes (F2084) were intercutting pairs of features, whilst the single ditch feature F2097 was truncated by post-medieval ditch F2099. It is possible that due to similarities in profile and in their fills, that ditches F2097 and F2099 are contemporary.

Pit F2063, however, was previously recorded during the preceding evaluation of the site as Pit F1017 L1018 and this was found to contain late pre-Roman Iron Age pottery which would place pit F2063 within Phase 1.

3 SPECIALIST REPORTS

3.1 The Struck Flint *Andrew Peachey*

3.1.1 Introduction

Excavations recovered a total of four pieces (13g) of struck flint as residual material in 1st century AD features and the subsoil, with moderate levels of patination supporting the re-deposition and weathering of the flint flakes.

3.1.2 Methodology & Terminology

The flint was quantified by fragment count and weight (g), with all data entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that will be deposited as part of the archive. Flake type (see 'Dorsal cortex,' below) or implement type, patination, colour and condition were also recorded as part of this data set, along with free-text comments. Terms used to describe implement and core types follow the system adopted by Healy (1988, 48-9). The term 'cortex' refers to the natural weathered exterior surface of a piece of flint, and the term 'patination' to the colouration of a flaked surface exposed by human or natural agency. Dorsal cortex is categorised after Andrefsky (2005, 104 & 115) with 'primary flake' referring to those with cortex covering 100% of the dorsal face; 'secondary flake' with 50-99%; 'tertiary' with 1-49% and 'un-corticated' to those with no dorsal cortex.

3.1.3 Discussion

The struck flint was entirely comprised of blade-like debitage flakes, probably produced using core technology characteristic of the early Neolithic period. Tertiary flakes from Layer L2083 and Subsoil L2001 exhibit parallel dorsal scars at their butt end, indicating they were produced as part of the process of systematic blade removal and associated core maintenance. Two small un-corticated flakes contained in Ditch F2005 appear consistent with this technology, and all the flakes have very small bulbs of percussion, typical of the indirect or soft-hammer percussion typical of the period. Though limited in sample size, the flakes appear to represent varied raw material, ranging in colour from orange brown to mid and dark grey, possibly indicating the utilization of local surface gravels.

3.2 The Pottery

Andrew Peachey

Introduction

3.2.1 Excavations recovered a total of 1014 sherds (20698g) of pottery; predominantly a well-preserved assemblage recovered from early 1st century AD ditches (Table 2), focussed on the south-western side of the site. The early 1st century AD pottery was predominantly comprised of ‘Belgic’ pottery including grog-tempered bowls, jars, beakers, platters and lids, with a significant component of shell-tempered, lid-seated jars. These vessels appear to indicate moderately affluent domestic occupation in the immediate vicinity; a theory supported by the presence of rare Gallo-Belgic fine wares, imported from lowland Europe, including Terra Nigra, Terra Rubra and fine white wares, which were also imitated in local fabrics. While deposition appears to have been continual into the ditches in the south-western area of the site, there were concentrations in two ditches suggesting particular episodes of disposal.

Period	Sherd Count	Weight (g)	R.EVE
Early 1 st Century AD (Late pre-Roman Iron Age)	993	20403	5.07
Late Roman	1	37	0.10
Medieval	11	107	-
Post-Medieval	9	151	-
<i>Total</i>	<i>1014</i>	<i>20698</i>	<i>5.17</i>

Table 2. Quantification of pottery by period

3.2.2 Methodology

The pottery was quantified by sherd count and weight (g), with fabrics analysed at x20 magnification and all data entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that forms part of the site archive; in accordance with the *Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology* (Barclay *et al* 2016), which complement the guidelines of the Study Group for Roman Pottery (Darling 2004; Willis 2004) and Medieval Pottery Research Group (Slowikowski *et al* 2001). Where possible, fabric types have been cross-referenced with the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber & Dore 1998) and the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series (held by Albion Archaeology). Form types of the ‘Belgic’ grog-tempered wares are referenced to the type series developed by

Thompson (1982) with form codes italicised (i.e. *D1-1*). The pottery fabrics are described below and the late pre-Roman Iron Age fabrics quantified in Table 3, with the remainder presented under the relevant headings.

3.2.3 Fabric Descriptions

(code in brackets: *Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series*)

1st century AD continental imports and local (imitation) fine wares

GAB TN1	Gallia-Belgica (Vesle Valley) Terra Nigra 1 (Tomber & Dore 1998, 15). Black (slipped/self-slipped) surfaces over a very dark grey body. Inclusions comprise common abundant translucent and white quartz (<0.1mm) with occasional white clay pellets (<1mm). A hard fabric with a smooth feel; glossy where burnished. (R26)
UNS RE1	Fine reduced ware. Mid grey surfaces/margins with a thin dark grey core. Inclusions comprise abundant quartz (generally <0.2mm, occasionally to 0.5mm), with sparse red/black iron-rich grains (<0.1mm). Moderately hard with a smooth finish; probably slow-wheel made. Possibly a local imitation of Gallo-Belgic imports. (R06C)
GAB TR1C	Gallia-Belgica Terra Rubra 1C (Tomber & Dore 1998, 15). Only un-slipped sherds present, with smooth to slightly powdery orange-red surfaces. (R25)
UNS OX1	Fine oxidised ware. Pale orange-pink surfaces/margins over a thin mid grey core. Inclusions comprise sparse quartz, red and black iron ore/clay pellets (all <0.2mm, occasionally to 0.5mm). Wheel-made with a smooth to slightly powdery finish. Possibly a local imitation of Gallo-Belgic imports. (R05B)
NOG WH1	North Gaulish (Gallo-Belgic pipeclay) white ware 1 (Tomber & Dore 1998, 22) (R04B)

'Belgic' grog-tempered pottery (Tomber & Dore 1998, 214; Thompson 1982, 20) and related coarse wares

SOB GT1	'Belgic' grog-tempered reduced ware (Tomber & Dore 1998, 214; Rigby 1986, 260: Fabric 2), slow-wheel-made or finished on a wheel (often slightly sloppily). Orange to dark brown-grey surfaces, over a mid-dark grey core. Inclusions comprise common grog, generally grey to black, with some sparse cream or red (0.25-2mm); sparse quartz (<0.25mm), occasional flint and ironstone (<5mm). (F06b)
SOB GT2	Sand and grog-tempered ware. As SOB GT1 but with inclusions of common quartz (<0.25mm) and sparse grog (<2mm). (F09)
ROB SH	'Belgic' to early Roman shell-tempered ware; hand-made though neatly so and some vessels may have been finished on a slow-wheel. Black to dark red-brown. Inclusions of abundant shell (generally 0.1-2mm, occasionally to 5mm). Kilns producing this fabric are known at Stagsden, Clapham and Biddenham (Slowikowski 2000, 62) and it is a common coarse ware in the region (i.e. Marney 1989, 174: fabric 1a; Timby 2007, 90: SH1) (F07)

Late Roman Pottery

OXF WS (M)	Oxfordshire white-slipped ware mortaria (Tomber & Dore 1998, 177)
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Medieval Pottery

MCW1	Medieval Coarseware 1. Grey core with pale brown or grey surfaces; inclusions comprise moderate to common medium quartz and occasional flint with some coarser grains. 12 th -13 th centuries. (C4)
MCW2	Medieval Coarseware 2. Dark grey core and surfaces; inclusions comprise medium to coarse grey, clear and white quartz, and occasional burnt organics. 12 th -13 th centuries. (C1)

Fabric	Sherd Count	Weight (g)	R.EVE
<i>1st century AD continental imports and local (imitation) fine wares</i>			
GAB TN1	8	154	0.15
UNS RE1	1	3	-
GAB TR1C	5	35	0.10
UNS OX1	43	177	0.35
NOG WH1	2	10	-
<i>'Belgic' grog-tempered pottery and related coarse wares</i>			
SOB GT1	542	10109	2.40
SOB GT2	49	951	0.25
ROB SH	343	8964	1.82
<i>Total</i>	<i>993</i>	<i>20403</i>	<i>5.07</i>

Table 3. Quantification of late pre-Roman Iron Age pottery by fabric group

3.2.4 Discussion of Early to Mid 1st century AD Fabric Groups

Fine wares account for a limited component of the assemblage; 5.9% by sherd count (1.9% by weight), and are characteristic of the suite of Gallo-Belgic vessels imported in the early to mid 1st century AD (the Augustan-Tiberian periods, pre-Roman Conquest), albeit with the bulk representing local imitations of true continental fabrics. The continental fabrics (GAB TN1, GAR TR1C & NOG WH1) were manufactured in Gallia-Belgica, lowland Europe equating to Belgium, Holland and northern France, and probably arrived at the site via prosperous late Iron Age centres (*oppida*) such as Baldock, c.20km to the south, and Braughing, c. 35km to the south-east. The Terra Nigra (GAB TN1) includes a butt beaker with roulette-decorated cordons (V8; Fig. 7a) in Ditch F2007, while the Terra Rubra (GAB TR1C) includes a collared cup (V13; Fig. 7a) in Ditch F2057, both of which are paralleled in Augustan-Tiberian groups at Skeleton Green, Braughing (Rigby 1981, 172-3: types 40 & 29a/32b). Similarities with the Gallo-Belgic wares at Baldock are also apparent, but that assemblage has a slightly contrasting focus on post-Conquest forms, notably Terra Nigra platters and cups (Rigby 1986, 224), supporting a pre-c.AD43 date for the Great Barford vessels. An UNS OX1 footring base in Ditch F2007 suggests that fine ware platters were present, but the UNS OX1 appears focussed on a range of beakers, including a barrel beaker (V9; Fig. 7a) in Ditch F2025 and a butt beaker with a proto-cornice rim (V5; Fig. 7a) in Ditch F2023, with further body sherds in Ditch F2057 suggesting that these beakers may have had cordons decorated with combed vertical lines, imitating the rouletted decoration of the continental vessels. The small sherds of NOG WH1 and UNS RE1 are limited to thin-walled, plain burnished body sherds, which also appear to be derived from beakers.

The bulk of the assemblage is made up of grog-tempered 'Belgic' fabrics (SOB GT1-2) and a shell-tempered fabric (ROB SH1) (Table 3), which were all manufactured or finished on a slow-wheel, but frequently exhibit an unevenness resulting from hand-formation, before they were fired in a bonfire or clamp kiln. As a result most vessels have a mottled or patchy finish to their colouring, although the SOB GT1 girth beaker (V18; Fig. 7b) in Ditch F2090 and SOB GT2 fine jar (V10; Fig. 7a) in Ditch F2073 exhibit a consistent and relatively vivid orange finish potentially indicative of a controlled firing in a more formal kiln chamber. The bulk of grog-tempered pottery was probably made locally on a domestic scale, though mid 1st century AD chambered kilns serving extensive settlement at Milton Keynes have been recorded at Caldecotte c.26km to the south-west (Marney 1989, 98). Great Barford is located towards the

north-western periphery of the distribution zone of 'Belgic' grog tempered pottery in south-eastern England (Thompson 1982, 16: zone 8), an area noted for the presence of the aforementioned girth beaker with 'red' surfaces, and also an area where the grog-tempered vessels are commonly supplemented by local shell-tempered fabrics, notably used for lid-seated jars, as here. At East Stagsden grog- and shell-tempered Belgic fabrics form the bulk of the Phase 3 and 4 (Conquest Period) pottery, providing the closest comparison of form types to this assemblage; however, there the high proportions of shell-tempered wares, particularly lid-seated jars is skewed by the presence of kilns producing them on site between c.AD40-100 (Slowikowski 2000, 73). This pattern of grog- and shell-tempered Belgic fabrics is also closely comparable to Phase 4 (c.100BC-AD60) at Little Paxton c.11km to the north-east, where it is notable that the pottery groups from the preceding Phase 3 (c.100BC-AD43) incorporate hand-made middle to late Iron Age vessel types (Hancocks 2011, 111), which are absent here. However, the consumption or availability of Belgic pottery during this transition, approaching the early Roman period, appears to have been inconsistent, potentially based on the economy or choice of particular inhabitants. On late Iron Age sites along the Great Barford Bypass these fabrics dominated, but were accompanied by hand made sand- and shell-tempered fabrics typical of the middle Iron Age in the region, but absent here (Webley 2007a, 232); while at nearby Sandy, grog-tempered fabrics remained uncommon in favour of local shell- and sand-tempered fabrics that partly imitate Belgic forms, even as Gallo-Belgic vessels (North Gaulish white ware) were arriving at the settlement (Johnston 1974, 48).

The primary coarse ware in the assemblage is SOB GT1, which appears to have a focus on table wares, typically with burnished external surfaces, while 'cooking pots' are restricted to ROB SH1 (Table 4). The most common SOB GT1 forms are utilitarian necked bowls (*D1-1/D2-1*), which include a *D1-1* bowl in Ditch F2052 (V3; Fig. 7a), while the base of such a bowl in Ditch F2007 has a 20mm wide circular hole bored through the centre of the floor, demonstrating the durability of these bowls for multiple and secondary functions. If all of the potential rims can be attributed to a fairly homogenous vessel type, then the *D1-1/2-1* bowls occur in approximately double the quantity of each of the broad SOB GT1 categories of jars, platters, beakers and lids. Evidence for jars is fragmentary with both narrow-neck and wide-mouthed types represented by neck and plain cordon sherds, with the most notable comprising a double-cordoned jar with a near globular body (*B3-4*) in Ditch F2077 (V17; Fig. 7a), a type most common in the first half of the 1st century AD.

The platters vary in form but are consistent in that the Gallo-Belgic type platter (*G1-6*) in Ditch F2057 (V12; Fig. 7a) and 'native' straight-walled platter (*G1-11*) in Ditch F2007 (V22; Fig. 7b) typically emerge in the early 1st century AD and continue into the Roman Conquest period, while the platter with an upright bead (*G1-9*) also in Ditch F2007 (V6; Fig. 7a) tends to develop in the mid 1st century AD. The SOB GT1 beakers appear focussed on butt beakers with decorated cordons (*G5-5*), such as that in Ditch F2057 (V20; Fig. 7b), which imitate the Terra Nigra beaker recorded in the assemblage. Cross-joining basal and lower body fragments of one such beaker were distributed between Ditches F2009 and F2032. However, the most notable beaker was a large girth beaker (*G4*), typical of the early to mid 1st century AD, recorded as residual material in Ditch F2090 (V18; Fig. 7b), which was relatively thin-walled and very well-finished. Based on their size, the lids could have complemented the SOB GT1 bowls or platters if they were used in conjunction with one another, though the traces of soot

on the interior of the bell-shaped lid (L1) in Ditch F2073 (V11; Fig. 7a) suggests that they may have complemented the ROB SH1 cooking pots or non-ceramic cooking methods, as no other SOB GT1 vessel exhibits any evidence of burning. The pedestal 'knobs' on the lids, such as that in Ditch F2057 (V21; Fig. 7b) would have acted as ideal handles that minimised heat conduction if the lids were used as part of a cooking set, or independently as covers that were placed over a grill or other heat source.

Thompson (1982) type	Form	Description	SOB GT1		SOB GT2		ROB SH	
			R.EVE	MNV	R.EVE	MNV	R.EVE	MNV
A/B1-2	Jar	Tall, plain everted rim, offset neck, rounded shoulder	-	-	0.1	1	-	-
B1-4	Jar	Tall-neck, bead rim, cordon with burnished line decoration	0.05	1	-	-	-	-
B3-4	Jar	Necked, neck & shoulder cordoned round jar	0.30	1	-	-	-	-
B3-5	Jar	Tall narrow-neck jar with neck cordon	0.05	1	-	-	-	-
C5-1	Jar	Channel/lid-seated rim	-	-	-	-	1.15	7
C5-2	Jar	Channel/lid-seated, cabled rim	-	-	-	-	0.45	2
C6-1	Storage Jar	Thick everted bead rim	0.55	4	-	-	0.22	2
D1-1/2-1	Bowl	Necked, slightly everted bead rim, rounded shoulder	0.30	4	-	-	-	-
?D1-1/2-1	?Bowl	Slightly everted bead rim (miscellaneous)	0.05	3	0.15	1	-	-
G1-6	Platter	Gallo-Belgic type with off-set wall	0.05	1	-	-	-	-
G1-9	Platter	Upright bead on splayed sides	0.10	1	-	-	-	-
G1-11	Platter	'Native' platter with straight walls	0.15	1	-	-	-	-
G4	Beaker	Girth beaker, with pronounced ridges on neck	0.25	1	-	-	-	-
G5-5	Beaker	Butt beaker with decorated cordons	0.45	2	-	-	-	-
L1	Lid	Bell-shaped	0.10	2	-	-	-	-
<i>Total</i>			<i>2.40</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>0.25</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1.82</i>	<i>11</i>

Table 4. Quantification of form types in Belgic and related fabrics by Rim Estimated Vessel Equivalent (R.EVE) and Minimum Number of Vessels (MNV)

Cooking pots in ROB SH1 are as common as bowls in SOB GT1 (Table 4), and are entirely comprised of neckless jars with stubby lid-seated (or channel) rims, most commonly plain (C5-1) or occasionally with slashed cabling to the upright bead (C5-2). Ditch F2007 contained examples of both plain (V23; Fig. 7b & V1; Fig. 7a) and slashed (V2 & V7; both Fig. 7a) variants of this common 1st century AD vessel type, while further plain cooking pots were present in Ditches F2090 (V14; Fig. 7a), F2023 (V4; Fig. 7a), F2057 (V19; Fig. 7b) and Pit F2049. These vessels vary little in size, with rim diameters between 16-22cm and no evidence for further decoration or functional surface treatment, with fine rilling apparent on two examples likely to be a by-product of wheel-made manufacture. ROB SH1 sherds in the assemblage that are not thick-walled, and therefore probably derived from storage jars, appear to only represent this type of jar and have a very high incidence of soot adhering to surfaces, including many basal and body sherds not associated with diagnostic rim sherds. However, there is no consistent pattern of soot, suggesting a myriad of cooking techniques to satisfy varying cuisine. One jar in F2007 (V23; Fig. 7b) has soot only on the exterior of neck and under the rim and another in the same feature (V2; Fig. 7a) has soot on the interior of the lower body, while a jar in Ditch F2090 has a soot-stained exterior, suggesting

differing vessel placements in or over coals, the accidental burning of food or possibly even the placement of embers in vessels to charge them with heat.

The assemblage also contains a strong component of storage jars in both SOB GT1 and ROB SH1, albeit with a seeming higher degree of fragmentation than other vessels, which may partially be attributable to their voluminous bodies but may also suggest these robust vessels were deliberately broken down for disposal. The diagnostic components of the storage jars (C6-1) are typically limited to robust everted bead or thickened rims, such as the SOB GT1 vessel in Ditch F2090 (V15; Fig. 7a), though a single ROB SH1 vessel in Posthole F2077 preserves a row of slashed decoration on the shoulder (V16; Fig. 7a). Though the storage jars are all similarly sized (rim diameters 36-40cm), it is clear that the multiple fragments in Ditches F2007 and 2090 represent several different vessels, with a further storage jar in Ditches F2005 possibly associated with those in the former deposit.

A relatively minor presence in the assemblage is SOB GT2 (Table 3), which typically appears as thinner-walled and wheel-made, contrasting with SOB GT1, and possibly reflects a naturally sandy clay source towards the Greensand ridge in central Bedfordshire, though a precise provenance remains unclear. The only diagnostic vessel comprised a jar with an everted plain rim on a slightly off-set neck and shouldered body in Ditch F2073 (V10; Fig. 7a). The jar appears small and given its high standard of manufacture is more likely from a pedestal based urn (A), but could be from a more basic type of jar (B1-2), which are nonetheless absent in the assemblage, suggesting that either type may have had a degree of prestige.

3.2.5 Distribution and Conclusions on Early to Mid 1st century AD Pottery

The distribution of pottery is heavily biased towards a complex of inter-cutting and similarly aligned ditches close to the south-western edge of the site which collectively account for 80% of the assemblage by sherd count (74% by weight), with a notable concentration of pottery in Ditch F2007 (Table 5). The main ditches in the south-western area have mean sherd weights of c.13-19g and, with the exception of Ditches F2007 and F2057, contain diagnostic sherds limited to those derived from only one or two vessels. The significantly diagnostic groups in Ditches F2007 and F2057 appear to be relatively late, if not final, in the stratigraphic sequence and retain a high mean sherd weight and a common incidence of cross-joining sherds relative to the other ditches, suggesting that they contain primary deposits of artefactual material discarded from activity in the immediate vicinity, rather than re-deposited sherds accumulated from the re-cutting or scouring of previous ditches. Thus, these two groups in particular form key components in defining the chronology and function of the site:

Feature/Group	Sherd Count	Weight (g)	R.EVE	Mean sherd weight (g)
<i>Complex of ditches in south-western area of site</i>				
Ditch F2007	307	5552	1.72	18.1
Ditch F2057	85	1351	0.75	15.9
Ditch F2032	69	942	0.10	13.7
Ditch F2027	59	1087	0.05	18.4
Ditch F2025	43	547	0.10	12.7
Ditch F2005	33	1514	0.15	45.9
Ditch F2037	31	583	0	18.8
Ditch F2052	29	427	0.10	14.7
Ditch F2023	23	362	0.35	15.7
Other features in SW area (11 features)	116	2658	0.10	22.9
<i>Feature in central/northern area of site</i>	45	1730	0.65	38.4
<i>Medieval & post-medieval features</i>	139	3211	1.00	23.1
<i>Un-stratified</i>	14	439	0	31.4
Total	993	20403	5.07	20.5

Table 5. Distribution of early-middle 1st century AD pottery

Ditch F2007 contained pottery in five fills, though particularly high quantities were recovered from L2014 and L2015, with the overall group broadly reflecting the make-up of the assemblage, being dominated by SOB GT1 and ROB SH1, with limited quantities of SOB GT1, UNS OX1 and the Gallo-Belgic imports of GAB TN1 and NOG WH1. The Terra Nigra (GAB TN1) in L2048 provides an important chronological marker as it comprises a butt beaker (V8; Fig. 7a) of Augustan-Tiberian date (c.63BC-AD37) which, combined with the presence of SOB GT1 platters, (V22; Fig. 7b & V6; Fig. 7a) in L2014 and L4048 respectively, that do not develop until the 1st century AD, indicates that the group was deposited in the pre-Roman Conquest early 1st century AD. The SOB GT1 vessels in the group are dominated by utilitarian necked bowls, supplemented by single examples of a narrow-neck jar and storage jar but the group is more notable for the presence of significant portions and cross-joining fragments from several ROB SH1 jars with lid-seated channel rims, including in L2014 (V23; Fig. 7b), L2015 (V1 & V2; both Fig. 7a) and L2048 (V7; Fig. 7a). Though clearly distinct, separate vessels, these jars are similarly sized and commonly exhibit soot patterns, varying from on the exterior of the neck and under the rim to on the interior of the lower body, appearing to indicate that they were utilised as cooking pots, albeit employed for different techniques in or over coals, or in ovens heated using embers. The combinations of fine imported table wares, burnished SOB GT1 bowls, ROB SH1 cooking pots, as well as occasional storage jars strongly supports that this group represents domestic detritus resulting from occupation in the immediate vicinity, and probably represents a specific episode or short-duration phase of disposal, contrasting with perhaps the lower intensity accumulation of waste in most of the related ditches.

The group of vessels contained in Ditch F2057 was recovered from a single fill and, while composed of a similar range of fabrics, exhibits a more diverse range of form types within a limited sample. The presence of a Terra Rubra (GAB TR1C) cup (V13; Fig. 7a) associated with a SOB GT1 platter (V12; Fig. 7a) in L2058 Seg.B appears to confirm an early 1st century AD date for the group, contemporary with that in Ditch F2007. Present elsewhere in L2058 were butt beakers in UNS OX1 and SOB GT1 (V20; Fig. 7b), a pedestal 'knob' from a SOB GT1 lid (V21; Fig. 7b), as well as a ROB SH1 lid-seated cooking pot (V19; Fig. 7b) consistent with the types common in Ditch

F2007. The limited diagnostic sherds in the remaining ditches close to the south-western edge of the site are broadly consistent with the range of types recorded in Ditches F2007 and F2057, with UNS OX1 beakers in Ditches F2023 and F2025 particularly indicative of a comparable pre-Roman Conquest date. It is notable that Ditch F2007 cuts Ditch F2009, its probable precursor, and that this in turn cuts Ditch F2032 with both of these earlier ditches containing relatively low quantities of contemporary pottery, including cross-joining sherds from a single SOB GT1 butt beaker. Similarly Ditch F2057 truncates parts of Ditches F2023 and F2025, which contain relatively low quantities of comparable pottery (Table 5), supporting the theory that the rate of deposition of pottery, probably through rubbish disposal, was not consistent but was characterised by the clearing of low quantities of material, possibly from working or occupation areas into adjacent areas, followed by a specific episode of dumping into two open ditches, potentially resulting from the abandonment or redevelopment of the site but with occupation spanning a short duration in the early 1st century AD.

Thus, even for a short duration the occupants of this site appear to have consumed modest quantities of pottery with a focus on shell-tempered, lid-seated cooking pots, a diverse range of 'Belgic' grog-tempered utilitarian wares encompassing bowls, jars, beakers, platters and lids and had sufficient resources to access Gallo-Belgic fine wares imported from lowland Europe. This pattern of consumption appears broadly consistent with that from the late Iron Age groups recorded on the Great Barford Bypass (Webley 2007a, 234) and the 1st century AD phase of occupation at the settlement at Sandy c.5km to the south-east (Johnston 1974, 48-50), albeit in comparison to both that this assemblage may demonstrate a greater demand or dependency on Belgic pottery as opposed to local hand-made wares, while also contrasting by not continuing into the Roman period. The suite of Belgic vessels, in particular the shell-tempered, lid seated cooking pots, is even more closely mirrored in Phases 3-4 (Conquest Period, c.AD40-100) at East Stagsden c.14km to the west (Slowikowski 2000, 71-3), in Period II ('Belgic' Iron Age/early Roman) at Haynes Park, c.10km to the south (Wells 2004, 84-5), and in Phase 4 (c.100BC-AD60) at Little Paxton, c.11km to the north-east (Hancocks 2011, 111), where all assemblages are complemented by successive phases that demonstrate the longevity of Belgic pottery into the early 2nd century alongside Romanised form and fabric types, absent in this assemblage, supporting a pre-Conquest chronology in the early 1st century AD. The Belgic pottery, supplemented by Gallo-Belgic fine wares is also closely comparable to the group from Phase 1 at Newnham c.7km to the west (Ingham *et al* 2016, 16), where occupation is established by the early 1st century AD. At Newnham, the pre-Conquest pottery cannot be reliably distinguished from that which continues into the early 2nd century AD, but collectively these sites demonstrate that there was a significant market for grog-tempered Belgic pottery at the north-western extent of its distribution in south-east England, and that occupation at Great Barford, however short-lived in the early 1st century AD, was supported by a flourishing pre-Roman economy, that was probably supported by the relative proximity and transport connections to centres such as Baldock and Milton Keynes.

3.2.6 *Late Roman Pottery*

The pottery in Posthole F2077, in the north-western area of the site, included a single sherd (37g) of late Roman mortaria, produced by the major industry at Oxford (OXF WS (M)). The mortar has a tall upright bead above a slightly drooping flange (Young 2000: type WC5.1), but the fragment is of insufficient depth to preserve any trituration grits or evidence of wear. This type of mortar was a commonly-traded specialist product throughout the region in the mid 3rd to 4th centuries AD, although it remains unclear if its presence in association with Belgic pottery is intrusive.

3.2.7 *The Medieval Pottery*

Peter Thompson

Ditch F2090 contained 11 sherds (105g) of medieval pottery, distributed in three contexts in association with more common early 1st C AD sherds. The medieval sherds comprised locally produced, un-glazed coarse wares, including two sherds (12g) of MCW2 in L2091, with 9 sherds (93g) of MCW1 in L2091, L2091 Seg.B and L2096. The MCW1 in L2091 included the simple out-turned rim of a jar, while the MCW1 in L2096 included the flat base from a similar vessel. These fabric and form types, probably representing cooking pots, indicate a date in the 12th-13th centuries.

Low quantities of abraded post-medieval glazed red earthen wares (Table 2) were also recovered from Ditch F2099, in the eastern area of the site.

3.3 **The Fired Clay objects**

Andrew Peachey

Excavations recovered a total of 20 fragments (740g) from fired clay objects, entirely derived from mid 1st century AD fire bars, used as supports in ovens or kilns. These objects occurred in a pale orange fabric that had been baked or fired at a low temperature. The fabric was manufactured from relatively crudely processed clay, with inclusions of common quartz (<0.5mm), red iron rich grains and chalk (generally <2mm, occasionally larger).

Sixteen cross-joining fragments (501g) from a single fire bar were contained in Ditch F2057 (L2058), while single fragments preserving parts of surfaces/edges were recovered from Ditches F2007, F2090 and F2099. The fire bar from Ditch F2057 was cigar-shaped with a roughly square section, c.70mm thick at the centre, tapering to c.55mm at the ends, though the complete length could not be re-constructed. The bar appears to have been knife-trimmed with roughly smoothed faces and slightly rounded edges. Fire Bars such as this were a common component of 1st century AD and Roman ovens and hearths in the region, including at the kilns at Stagsden (Gentil with Slowikowski 2000, 87-88) and settlement at Newnham (Slowikowski 2016, 4).

3.4 The Ceramic Building Materials

Andrew Peachey

Excavations recovered a total of 15 fragments (2920g) of late post-medieval and early modern CBM, largely as un-stratified material from the topsoil, but including isolated fragments of peg tile contained in a pit and gully (Table 6).

CBM type	Frequency	Weight (g)
Peg tile (late post-medieval+)	2	161
Red brick (19-20 th C)	8	1798
Sewer pipe (19-20 th C)	5	961
Total	15	2920

Table 6. Quantification of CBM

The fragments of peg tile, contained in Pit F1008 and Gully F1023, were manufactured in a highly fired red fabric with inclusions of common-abundant quartz (<0.25mm), sparse red iron-rich grains and flint (0.5-8mm). The fabric was fired at such a high temperature it as nearly fused and vitrified. The small fragments of peg tile were 12-14mm thick with a sanded base, but were of insufficient size to preserve any other diagnostic dimensions or technological traits.

Topsoil L1000 contained several abraded fragments of soft red brick and salt-glazed white earthen ware pipe; the former sand-tempered with a thickness of 68-70mm, and the latter comprising sewer pipe, with both comprising common components of construction from the 19th century to the Victorian period onwards.

3.5 Small Finds

Rebecca Sillwood

A penannular brooch (SF1) was recovered from ditch F2009, fill L2031. The piece weighs 2g, and is slightly oval, rather than perfectly circular, measuring between 25-27mm in diameter. The pin is missing. The piece is circular sectioned and ends in coiled terminals.

This type of penannular brooch can be placed into Booth's type C (2014, 116) which is said to be a type confined to the south-west and east of England, with few outliers. The C-type brooch tends to be found in Roman towns with military origins, but very few from exclusively military sites, and on more rural settlements in lesser numbers. The single coil undecorated examples are the most numerous recorded, and the Great Barford example falls into this category. Booth suggests that this type of brooch spanned the 1st and early 2nd century AD, with Late Iron Age origins.

3.6 The Animal Bone

Julie Curl

3.6.1 Methodology

The analysis was carried out following a modified version of guidelines by English Heritage (Davis 1992). All of the bone was examined to determine range of species

and elements present. A record was also made of butchering and any indications of skinning, hornworking and other modifications. When possible ages were estimated along with any other relevant information, such as pathologies. Measurements were taken where appropriate following Von Den Driesch, 1976. Counts and weights were noted for each context and counts made for each species. Where bone could not be identified to species, they were grouped as, for example, 'large mammal', 'bird' or 'small mammal'. The results were input into an Excel database for quantification and analysis. A summary catalogue and a table of measurements is included with this report and a full catalogue (with additional counts) of the faunal remains is available in the digital archive.

3.6.2 *The bone assemblage*

Quantification, provenance and preservation

A total of 4,757g of animal bone, consisting of 369 elements, was recovered from this site. The bone was recovered from twenty-eight fills in twenty-five features. Most of the bone-producing fills are from ditches, with some from pit fills, lesser amounts were seen in a posthole, topsoil, subsoil and an occupational level. Most remains were recovered with artefacts of a late Iron Age to Roman date range, with a small quantity from a medieval ditch deposit. Quantification of the assemblage by period, feature type and weight is in Table 7 and by element count in Table 8.

Feature Type	Period and weight in grams				Feature Total
	LIA/EROM	Medieval	Roman	Undated	
Ditch	3606	124	241	19	3990
Ditch Terminus			1		1
Occupational level	60				60
Pit	176		7		183
Posthole			8		8
Subsoil			391		391
Topsoil	124				124
Total by Period	3966	124	648	19	4757

Table 7. Quantification of the faunal assemblage by period, feature type and weight in grams

The assemblage is generally in good condition, although a lot of fragmentation has occurred from butchering.

Fourteen deposits contained a small amount of burnt bone. Nine pieces of black to grey colour cattle and sheep/goat bone was seen in the medieval ditch F1090, fill L2096. Three pieces of blackened pig/boar and sheep/goat bone were found in the LIA/EROM pit F2049, fill L2050. The LIA/EROM ditch F2032, fill L2033 produced two pieces of charred sheep/goat.

Feature Type	Period and count of elements				Feature Total
	LIA/EROM	Medieval	Roman	Undated	
Ditch	239	19	38	1	297
Ditch Terminus			1		1
Occupational level	13				13
Pit	19		1		20
Posthole			1		1
Subsoil			25		25
Topsoil	12				12
Total by period	283	19	66	1	369

Table 8. Quantification of the faunal assemblage by period, feature type and count

Canid gnawing was seen on cattle and sheep/goat remains in the LIA/EROM ditch 2121C, fill 2044B. These remains are possibly scavenger activity around dumped meat waste or remains of meat bones given to a domestic or working dog.

Butchering and modified bone

Cut marks were noted on a mandible and on lower leg and foot bones from the skinning process. Heavy chops were seen on many main meat-bearing bones from dismemberment and division of the carcass into joints of meat. Fine knife cuts and scrapes were seen meat bones from removal of the flesh.

Knife cuts were seen on the proximal half of a large pony tibia from ditch fill 2042, which suggest skinning and possible meat use. Similar knife cuts were seen on a pony tibia from the Aylsham Roman Project (Curl 2017), where there were cuts on the lower tibia from skinning.

Bird bone in this assemblage showed no butchering. However, birds are often cooked whole and once cooked, meat comes away from the bone easily with minimal butchering, often leaving no marks.

Species range and modifications and other observations

Seven species were identified in this assemblage, with quantification by feature type, species and NISP in Table 9.

The assemblage is dominated by the main food mammals: cattle, sheep/goat and pig/boar. There are smaller amounts of equid, dog/wolf, one domestic bird and one wild species of bird.

Just over 68% of the assemblage was too fragmented and lacking in diagnostic zones to allow identification to species level and this is recorded under 'mammal'.

Feature Type	Species and NISP								Feature Totals
	Bird - ?Egret	Bird - Fowl	Cattle	Dog/wolf	Equid	Mammal	Pig/boar	Sheep/goat	
Ditch		1	26	3	1	201	8	57	297
Ditch Terminus						1			1
Occupational level			5			8			13
Pit						17	1	2	20
Posthole						1			1
Subsoil			6			18		1	25
Topsoil	1		1		1	6	1	2	12
Species Totals	1	1	38	3	2	252	10	62	369

Table 9. Quantification of the faunal assemblage by feature type, species and NISP

Twenty deposits yielded the remains of sheep/goat. Of these most are from sheep, although one goat metacarpal was recorded from the subsoil L2001. The ovicaprid remains produced just over half from adults and just under half from juveniles, suggesting breeding and culling young for milking the mothers and for meat. There was a greater proportion of primary waste from this group, although several main meat-bearing bones were recorded. Metapodials were seen, from both adults and juveniles, sheep and goat, which show small knife cuts from skinning. One pathology was seen, with a sheep mandible from ditch F2005, fill L2006D, which has a missing premolar 4 and molar 1, infection and healing over the lost teeth.

Cattle were recovered from fourteen deposits and, in terms of NISP, was the second most frequent species. The medieval ditch F2090, fill F2098, produced a burnt cuboid from an adult cow. The remaining cattle bone was found in LIA/Roman deposits. Most of the elements of cattle recovered were from adults, with a few juvenile bones present. A range of elements were recorded, including meat waste bones, with a higher number of primary waste remains. Butchering was seen on many of the cattle remains, including cuts on the rear of one mandible from skinning.

Pig/boar remains were recorded from seven deposits, all of a LIA/Roman date range. The bulk of the porcine bones were from juveniles, with just three adult bones from the ditch F2005, fill L2006D. Most of the pig/boar remains are probably from meat waste, with just a jaw fragment and tooth in the ditch F2090, fill L2091, although the head can provide some meat. One pig/boar phalange from the pit F2049, fill L2050, had been charred black, which may have occurred if the animal was cooked whole and the extremities may have suffered more burning.

The equid bone was found in two fills. A lower molar was recovered from the topsoil L2000. A complete equid tibia was seen in the ditch F2005C, fill L2042. The metrical data from the equid tibia indicates a pony of approximately 13.5 hands high. The rear of the pony tibia showed extensive muscle attachments, suggesting a working horse used for riding or traction. Knife cuts were seen on the proximal half of the pony tibia from the ditch fill L2042, which suggest skinning and possible meat use (Plates 1 & 2). Butchering of equid remains has been seen at many other Roman sites, including at

Mildenhall (Curl 2013) and Lakenheath (Curl 2014). Similar knife cuts were seen on a similar sized pony tibia from the Aylsham Roman Project (Curl 2017), where there were cuts on the lower tibia from skinning, the Aylsham pony also showed extensive muscle attachments, perhaps suggesting that old working animals might be used for skins and perhaps meat once past their use for working.

Dog/wolf was represented by two pieces of a left mandible and an isolated molar. This canid mandible is robust. The P2 is broken and missing and there is some infection below this tooth. The M2 and M3 have been lost and their sockets have healed over. The remaining teeth are present and in reasonable condition, suggesting that the animal was not that aged, despite missing teeth. Missing mandible teeth were noted on two dog mandibles from a similarly young Roman dog from Aylsham (Curl 2017), where premolars were lost on both the left and right sides and the bone had healed over. Similar tooth loss was seen on the largest (a probable Mastiff) of the fighting dogs from St Mary's Hospital Roman site in Colchester (Curl 2008). Tooth loss can occur when teeth are broken from a rough diet of bones and coarse food and they become infected, however, this is not the case with the great Barford Roman canid or Aylsham Roman dog as there is relatively little wear on the remaining teeth. Modern terrier breeds are known to fight and 'lock jaws', which might result in damage to teeth, which might suggest that the Great Barford canid, if not kept for fighting, might have occasionally got into fights with other animals.

Bird remains were seen in two deposits. A fowl (Chicken/pheasant) ulna was found in the Roman ditch F2027, fill L2028. The topsoil L2000 produced a femur of a probable Egret; the bone compares well with that of Little Egret, but another small heron species remains a possibility.

3.6.3 *Conclusions*

The bulk of the assemblage from this site consists of primary and secondary butchering and food waste. Both the cattle and sheep/goat had more primary butchering waste present, suggesting skinning and initial processing waste dumped at this site. Several main meat-bearing bones are present from both cattle and sheep/goat, as well as from pig/boar, indicating that the dumping areas were filled from different sources, with a slightly greater number of primary waste bones.

The majority of the assemblage is derived from the main meat species, with the fowl probably supplying eggs as well. The only wild species is Egret and there is no butchering present, although it may have been used for food. The Egret is largely a species of southern Europe that has been an occasional visitor, in warmer phases, it breeds in Britain. The Egret usually resides on marshland and larger bodies of water where it seeks out small fish and herpetofauna. The Egret in this assemblage may be from the natural death of a visiting bird or possibly used for meat.

Plates



Plate 1. Equid tibia from the ditch 2005C, fill 2042 with knife cuts arrowed.



Plate 2. Detail of equid tibia from the ditch 2005C, fill 2042 with knife cuts arrowed.

Catalogue of the animal bone recovered from AS1845. 126, High Street, Great Barford, Bedfordshire.

Listed in context order.

A full catalogue (with additional counts) is available as an Excel file .

Key:

NISP = Number of Individual Species elements Present

Ad = Adult

Juv = Juvenile

Meas = Measurable bone following Von Den Driesch, 1976

Count = Countable following Davis, 1992

Ch = chopped

C = cut

Ctxt	Seg	FNo	Ctxt Qty	Wt (g)	Species	NISP	Ad	Juv	Neo	Element range	Meas	Count	Ch	C	Comments
2000		2000	1	12	Cattle					talus					small talus
2000		2000			Equid					tooth					lower molar
2000		2000			Sheep/goat					MT, ulna					slight canid/mustelid gnawing at distal end of MT
2000		2000			Pig/boar					pel					
2000		2000			Bird - ?Egret					femur					femur, crane characteristics but smaller, ?Little Egret/Cattle Egret - needs ID check
2000		2000			Mammal										
2001		2001	2	39	Cattle					mandibles, teeth					1 with Dp4 in full wear and M2 nfe, 1 with M3 in full wear
2001		2001			Sheep/goat					metacarpal					robust metacarpal, cut at proximal end - GOAT
2001		2001			Mammal	1									
2006	D	2005	5	59	Cattle	1	1			mand frags, 6 t					5 mandible frags, chopped and heavy cut on condyle, isolated lower molars and premolars, young adult
2006	D	2005			Sheep/goat	1	1			2 mt, hu, scap, 2 t, mand, ul					small slender breed, skinned, mandible infection/healing over lost teeth
2006	D	2005			Pig/boar					scap, ulna, pel					
2006	D	2005			Dog/wolf					mandible (2 pieces), tooth					large robust mandible, P2 broken and infection below,

2006	D	2005																					M2 and M3 lost and jaw healed over
2008		2007	2	29	Mammal						2												fragments of med-large mammal
2008		2007			Cattle																		tibia shaft, upper molar
2008		2007			Sheep/goat																		mandible with M£ in low wear, 2 pelvic fragments
2008		2007			Mammal						1												slender small breed, P4 in low wear, sub-adult
2014		2007B	2	19	Sheep/goat																		
2014		2007B			Pig/boar																		
2014		2007B			Mammal						1												
2015		2007B	1	12	Cattle																		carpal
2015		2007B			Sheep/goat																		delicate tibia, small mandible
2015		2007B			Pig/boar																		distal tibia, tobust, flv, some wear of edges
2015		2007B			Mammal						1												
2024		2023			Sheep/goat																		
2024		2023			Mammal																		
2024		2023			Sheep/goat																		tibia
2024		2023			Mammal																		
2024	B	2023			Mammal																		
2028		2027			Cattle																		incomplete articular end
2028		2027			Sheep/goat																		distal humerus
2028		2027			Bird - Fowl																		distal una
2028		2027			Mammal																		
2029		2025			Cattle																		thoracic vert
2029	B	2025			Sheep/goat																		
2029	B	2025			Mammal																		
2033		2032			Cattle																		unfused proximal end of humerus
2033		2032			Sheep/goat																		proximal metacarpal
2033		2032			Mammal																		
2033		2032			Sheep/goat																		proximal phalanage, sheep
2033		2032			Mammal																		
2033		2032	1		Cattle																		distal radius
2033		2032			Sheep/goat																		slender tibia, small humerus, Dp4 at TWS:L,

Context	Species	Element	Fusion	GI	Bd	Dd	BT	HTC	BatF	Bfd	A	B	SD	Bp	BWmin	Bwmax	Acet	Art. end	Comments
2080				Mammal															frags of large mammal, probably cattle
2089				Sheep/goat					t										upper molar
2091			1	3 Sheep/goat					t, mt										
2091				Mammal		1													
2091	B		15	Cattle					tibia										distal radius
2091	B			Pig/boar					t/jaw frag with tooth										upper molars, one with small amount of jaw remaining
2091	B			Mammal															
2096				Cattle					cuboid										cuboid in three burnt pieces
2096			1	11 Sheep/goat					mand, mt, vert, t										M3 in low wear, thoracic vertebrae
2096				Mammal		1													
2098	A		1	Cattle					t										lower molar
2102			1	Mammal															
2104				Mammal															

Table 10. Catalogue of the animal bone recovered from AS1845. 126, High Street, Great Barford, Bedfordshire.

Context	Species	Element	Fusion	GI	Bd	Dd	BT	HTC	BatF	Bfd	A	B	SD	Bp	BWmin	Bwmax	Acet	Art. end	Comments
2000	Bird-Egret	Fe	f	90.4	18.3	15.6							8.1	19.1					fe head diam=7.93
2001	Goat	MC	f										16.	25.					
2033	Cattle	Rad	f		62.														
2033	Sheep/goat	Tib	f		21.8	17.2							12.4						
2006D	Dog/wolf	Mand		13															ht of mandible behind M1=23mm
2006D	Pig/boar	Pel	f													26.			
2042C	Equid	Tib	f	31	62.8	37.5							35.0	73.0					
2047C	Sheep/goat	HC	n/a	5											16.0	28.6			est.length
2091B	Cattle	Tib	f		58.8	43.4													

Table 11. Measurements following Von Den Driesch (1976)

Ctxt	Taxa	Tooth No	Eruption	TWS	Comments
200	Bos	Dp4	e	k-l	left
200	Bos	M1	e	h	left
200	Bos	M2	nfe	d	left
200	Bos	M1	e	j-k	right
200	Bos	M2	e	j	right
200	Bos	M3	e	g	right
200	s/g	P4	e	h	left
200	s/g	M1	e	f-g	left
200	s/g	M2	e	f-g	left
200	s/g	M3	e	c-d	left
209	s/g	P4	e	k	left
209	s/g	M1	e	j	left
209	s/g	M2	e	g	left
209	s/g	M3	e	e-f	left

Table 12. Tooth record following Hillson (1992)

3.7 The Environmental Samples

Dr John Summers

3.7.1 Introduction

During excavations at Great Barford, Bedfordshire, thirteen bulk soil samples for environmental archaeological analysis were taken and processed. The sampled features largely dated to the late Iron Age. This report presents the results from the analysis of carbonised plant macrofossils from the bulk sample light fractions, including any insights that can be gained into the economy of the site.

3.7.2 Methods

Samples were processed at the Archaeological Solutions Ltd facilities in Bury St. Edmunds using standard flotation methods. The light fractions were washed onto a mesh of 500µm (microns), while the heavy fractions were sieved to 1mm. The dried light fractions were sorted under a low power stereomicroscope (x10-x30 magnification). Botanical and molluscan remains were identified and recorded using reference literature (Cappers *et al.* 2006; Jacomet 2006; Kerney and Cameron 1979; Kerney 1999) and a reference collection of modern seeds. Potential contaminants, such as modern roots, seeds and invertebrate fauna were also recorded in order to gain an insight into possible disturbance of the deposits.

3.7.3 Results

The data from the bulk sample light fractions are presented in Table 13. Carbonised plant macrofossils were rather sparse in the sampled deposits, being represented by a handful of largely unidentifiable cereal grains. Wheat grains (*Triticum* sp.) were identified in late Iron Age occupation layer L2080 and late Iron Age ditch fill L2091 (F2090). Both barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and wheat were identified in undated pit fill L2076 (F2075). Other remains included charcoal and shells of terrestrial molluscs but these were present in very low concentrations; too low to merit further investigation or comment.

3.7.4 Conclusions

The low concentration of carbonised plant material from sampled features at Great Barford suggests that there was little activity involving the use and processing of cereals in the vicinity of the excavated features and that hearth ash was not being regularly deposited. There is good evidence of domestic activity at the site based on the evidence of pottery deposition (Peachey, 11.2) but the evidence from the bulk samples is only for scattered carbonised debris rather than discrete deposits. Excavations to the north of the present site also produced few carbonised plant macrofossils (Albion Archaeology 2005, 31).

Although an absence of evidence is not a reliable way to determine a site's economic basis, this pattern is of interest. Although the site is located on free-draining soils, the surrounding area is dominated by loamy and clay-rich soils with impeded drainage (Soilscapes 2017). This would have been poorly suited to Iron Age cultivation methods and it is possible that this area was dominated by a more pastoral economy. An economic interpretation of the Roman occupation at Newnham, which occupied a similar location, considered the site to have had a greater emphasis on animal husbandry than arable cultivation (Ingham *et al.* 2016, 63). The balance of pastoral and arable production in this area and between different parts of the region is something which would benefit from further detailed research.

AS1845	11	2096	2090	2096	2090	2096	2090	2096	2090	2096	2090	2096	2090	2096	2090	2096	2090	2096	2090
	AS1845	12	2102	2101	2102	2101	2102	2101	2102	2101	2102	2101	2102	2101	2102	2101	2102	2101	2102
	AS1845	13	2076	2075	2076	2075	2076	2075	2076	2075	2076	2075	2076	2075	2076	2075	2076	2075	2076

Table 13. Results from the bulk sample light fractions from Great Barford. Abbreviations: Hord = barley (Hordeum sp.); Trit = wheat (Triticum sp.); NFI = not formally identified (indeterminate cereal grain).

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Dating and Phasing of the late Iron Age activity

The pottery report presented above (Peachey Ch. 3.2) discusses the major part of the assemblage as representing the early to mid 1st century AD. For the most part, this assemblage can be described as dating to prior to the Roman conquest of AD 43. Examination of the finds concordance for the project (Appendix 2) shows that spot dates assigned to individual contexts during Peachey's (Ch. 3.2) analysis of the pottery includes some dates that extend beyond the mid 1st century AD. In some cases, notably F2023 and F2007, these dates are assigned to stratigraphically significant features suggesting the possibility that the activity represented at the site extends beyond the Roman Conquest period.

Peachey (Ch. 3.2) notes that F2007 is relatively late in the stratigraphic sequence. This is of note as its fill was assigned a late spot date (Appendix 2); this would appear to be consistent with its late stratigraphic position. Equally though, F2023, which is stratigraphically earlier than several other ditches, was assigned a similarly late spot date, indicating that features that cut it were later than the early to mid 1st century AD spot dates that were assigned to them. It is on this basis that a distinction has been made between Phases 1 and 2. In reality, this distinction represents nothing more than the potential introduction of later forms of pottery into the types available to the population occupying the site; occupation and activity is likely to have continued largely unchanged but this horizon may represent gradual change in material culture in this period. As has been noted with regard to late Iron Age sites recorded along the length of the A421 Great Barford bypass, with which the current site and its ceramic assemblage are directly comparable, the late Iron Age phase should be regarded as potentially continuing for several years or even a few decades beyond the Roman conquest, due to the patchy uptake of 'Romanising' ceramics during the mid 1st century AD in this region (Webley 2007b, 54).

4.2 The intercutting ditch groups

The majority of archaeology recorded during the excavation at Oakfields was recorded towards the south-western edge of the excavated area. This consisted of two separate groups of intercutting linear features. Some slight differences in the pottery recovered from these two groups (see Appendix 2) might indicate that the more south-westerly group was slightly later in date.

It has previously been suggested that, as the alignment of the ditches in these groups followed the natural slope of the land in the direction of the river Great Ouse, that these ditches had a drainage function which would have led to them silting up and thus necessitating their regular recutting (Blagg-Newsome and Newton 2017). While this cannot be entirely ruled out, a more logical way of managing drainage ditches would be to remove silty deposits at regular intervals rather waiting until a ditch had become completely clogged with silt

and compacted, thus rendering it ineffective, and then cutting a new ditch adjacent to or partially cutting the earlier one. Furthermore, there appears to be little logic in the way that these recuts occurred; in several instances, particularly within the more south-westerly group, the later features do not recut the full length of the earlier ditches, suggesting that they would have been ineffective in draining water away from further upslope. Crucially, however, it should be noted that the site is located on free draining soils, suggesting that drainage is unlikely to have been a problem.

A number of boundaries and enclosures at the Iron Age and Romano-British site at Fordham Road, Soham, Cambridgeshire were marked by ditches that had been recut several times. These boundaries ran on several different alignments irrespective of the local topography, suggesting that drainage was not their primary function and that the deposition of silt within them as a result of such a function was not what necessitated their recutting (Newton and Quinn 2015). At least two of the earliest enclosures at middle Iron Age to Roman site at Dernford Farm, Sawston, Cambridgeshire were demarcated by repeatedly recut boundary ditches (Newton 2012). It is possible that this is the result of the continuing development of the site during the middle to late Iron Age phase of activity in which they were first established. At the early to middle Iron Age site at Topler's Hill, Bedfordshire, a major boundary ditch forming part of a field system was recut on at least three occasions with the latest two recuts seemingly representing adaptation to a double-ditched boundary (Luke 2004, 36-37).

In all of the cases cited above, the repeated recutting of boundary ditches appears to be associated with wider development or adaptation within the site. As the ditches represented in this part of the site appear to relate to the cropmark complex to the west and north-west of the site, it appears possible that the repeated recutting of these ditches is consistent with change and development within the wider settlement as was identified at Dernford Farm, Sawston, Cambridgeshire (Newton 2012). In some cases, redevelopment, and therefore, recutting of boundary ditches at these sites may have been carried out because they had become infilled and indistinct. If this is the case, however, the boundaries which they denoted must have been augmented with a hedgerow, fenceline or bank made from the upcast of the original ditch, and for which no evidence was recorded at the current site, otherwise they would have ceased to function effectively long before recutting was carried out.

The intercutting nature of the ditches and the small window onto the overall layout of the site that the excavated area affords make it difficult to determine exactly what form the boundary took and whether or not the fact that Ditches F2021 and F2005 did not extend further to the north-west indicates that there was at some point a gap or entrance in the boundary. It is possible that those ditches considered to be of slightly later date might represent a double-ditched boundary, potentially suggesting that the boundary was being deliberately emphasised and made bolder. Hingley (1990, 96) asserts that boundaries constructed on Iron Age sites may have been associated with social status and Collis (1996, 90) states that boundaries can represent a display of status to outsiders; it is possible that this was the motivating factor behind the

creation of a possible double-ditch boundary and, indeed, possibly goes some way to explaining the apparent repeated reworking of this boundary.

Rees (2008), in his study of later Iron Age sites in Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire suggests that the reason enclosure ditches were allowed to silt up (or, indeed were backfilled) and then required recutting was because of the dual symbolic and functional significance of the boundary (Hill 1996, 102); the boundary may disappear from view but its position was known and respected by the inhabitants of the settlement.

Enclosures can be created for a variety of purposes; to contain animals, to keep animals out, to keep people out, to denote ownership, to denote status, to indicate areas in which different behavioural norms should be observed, to denote areas of particular symbolic importance, to indicate clear differences between the interior and exterior, and even for protection. In many cases enclosures may have fulfilled more than one of these functions. The function of an enclosure might be indicated by the features recorded within it or by the finds recovered from features associated with it. Associated features are limited, so interpretation regarding the nature of the enclosure that these ditches represent rests mainly on artefactual assemblages present within it. The animal bone assemblage consists mainly of primary and secondary butchering and food waste (Curl Ch. 3.7) while the deposition of pottery mostly appears to represent low intensity accumulation of waste and refuse while deposition into the stratigraphically late Ditches F2007 and F2057 represents a specific episode or short-duration phase of disposal, perhaps indicating final infilling and closure of the boundary (Peachey Ch. 3.2). The character of these assemblages, and particularly the low intensity accumulation of refuse material, is suggestive of domestic habitation nearby.

4.3 The late Iron Age archaeology recorded at 126 High Street, Great Barford in the context of the known archaeology of the surrounding area.

At College Farm, 350-400m to the north in Great Barford, a pit alignment, running for approximately 125m before extending beyond the limits of the excavated area in either direction, and five ditches which ran parallel to it, was recorded. Together, the pit alignment and ditches formed a major land boundary with a character typical of the Iron Age. These features were dated on the basis of the distinctive morphology of monuments from this period and by the presence of a small amount of dateable artefactual material. The boundary ran on a north-west to south-east alignment leading towards the existing Great Barford Bridge over the river Great Ouse (Albion Archaeology 2005).

During archaeological excavation carried out ahead of the construction of the A421 Great Barford bypass, to the north of the village, some trace of late Iron Age occupation was recorded at six of the excavated sites with fairly substantial settlement evidence recorded at four of them (Webley 2007b). This evidence consisted of roundhouses and associated settlement enclosures, artefactual evidence of domestic occupation and evidence for

agricultural activity. A programme of archaeological trial trenching which preceded excavation along the line of the A421 Great Barford bypass recorded an inhumation of possible late Iron Age date (Carlyle 2004, 7).

Excavation to the north-west of Brewers Hall Farm in Great Barford recorded middle Iron Age activity that mainly consisted of pits and ditches, thought to be associated with a settlement, possibly located to the south (Bedfordshire HER 18224). Within a later phase, a roundhouse and associated pits were present. Eventually the site appears to have reverted back to agricultural use and an enclosure was constructed. During the late Iron Age the enclosure continued in use but internal activity was limited to a single pit.

Trial trench evaluation (Bedfordshire HER 15492) of a series of cropmarks to the south of Brewers Hall Farm recorded evidence for Iron Age pits, ditches, postholes, a water hole, and a metallated surface. The features were dated by the finds evidence of which a large portion was ceramic. A square enclosure, another metallated surface, linear features, pits and postholes were all ascribed a late Iron Age to Roman date. Also present was evidence of medieval activity.

Possible Iron Age settlement was recorded to the north of Cuckoo Bridge in the mid to late 1970s during archaeological work in advance of the Southern Feeder gas pipeline. A number of ditches and pits, heavily disturbed by land drains were recorded at this site which hampered recording of the features. All of the recorded features contained clay and gravel fills along with large quantities of charcoal and shell-tempered Iron Age pottery (Catherall *et al* (eds.) 1984, 18-19).

In addition to this, ditches containing Iron Age pottery, albeit quite abraded, were recorded during archaeological trial trenching to the north of Great Barford, associated with the Great Barford flood attenuation scheme (Meckseper 2006, 13), a gully dated as Iron Age has been recorded at Barford Road in neighbouring Blunham (HER 7749), and unstratified finds of Iron Age date including pottery (CHER 14962) and a late Iron Age coin (CHER MBB19900) have been recovered in the surrounding area. Several complexes of cropmarks have also been recorded which may represent Iron Age settlement (Bedfordshire HER 609, 613, 615, 985, 1842, 9790, 9937, 13972, 13973, 15421, 15494, 16750, 16770).

Iron Age settlement is, therefore, well represented in the area surrounding Great Barford. The archaeology recorded at the current site forms part of a wider Iron Age landscape which, given the differences in date between some of these sites, may represent the growth, spread, and relocation of settlement over time. No direct links can be drawn between this site and the broadly contemporary activity in the surrounding area, at least in part because of the small scale of the archaeology recorded here, but it is possible that the current site had direct links with the major boundary recorded at College Farm (Albion Archaeology 2005) and possibly communicated with the settlements to the north and west. Certainly there are societal similarities between this site and those recorded on the Great Barford Bypass insomuch as the pattern of pottery consumption appears broadly consistent between these sites (Peachey Ch. 3.2;

Webley 2007a, 234). Due to their contemporaneity, it appears likely that there must have been some kind of interaction between the settlement represented at the current site and the late Iron Age settlements recorded along the line of the bypass.

4.4 The current site and cropmark evidence to the north and west

Cropmarks showing ring ditches and enclosures have been identified in the fields directly to the north and west of the site (BHER MBB21733, 600); these are clearly visible on aerial photographs and google satellite imagery. A linear component of the cropmark complex slightly to the west of the 'ladder' system within this group runs on the same alignment as ditches recorded during the excavation at the current site (Fig. 8). This suggests that this cropmark may represent the north-westerly continuation of the boundary that these ditches represent and indicates that this area may be the focus of the settlement activity of which the excavated features are considered to represent one small part.

The form of the cropmarks, especially those at the eastern extent of the complex, is very similar to the 'ladder' form of the contemporary settlements (Fig. 9) at sites such as Dernford Farm, Sawston, Cambridgeshire (Newton 2012), site 2 at the A421 Great Barford Bypass (Webley 2007c, fig. 2.1), and at the Leighton Buzzard Flood Alleviation Scheme (Phillips 2006).

It is not possible to be entirely certain that all of the cropmarks represented here are directly contemporary with one another and what in fact may be represented is a palimpsest of activity representing occupation of this area over a prolonged period. However, the similarities displayed by at least part of this set of cropmarks to the known late Iron Age settlements at Dernford Farm (Newton 2012), the A421 Great Barford Bypass (Webley 2007c, fig. 2.1), and the Leighton Buzzard Flood Alleviation Scheme (Phillips 2006) suggests that at least part of it may be of this date.

4.5 The late Iron Age economy

Elements of the pottery assemblage indicate links to other contemporary sites in the surrounding area in terms of the patterns of pottery consumption and supply. Imported pottery types are present at these sites and this indicates a flourishing pre-Roman economy that was probably supported by the relative proximity and transport connections to important 'central places' at locations such as Baldock and Milton Keynes (Peachey Ch. 3.2). These connections, and the distribution of pottery, may have taken the form of commercial trade but could also have been part of a system of exchange designed to create and mediate relationships (Moore 2007, 92).

Both at the current site and at College Farm to the north (Albion Archaeology 2005, 31) limited evidence of crop processing was identified, suggesting that the basis of the agricultural economies at these site was pastoral. Summers (Ch. 3.7) suggests that this is because the loamy and clay-rich soils of the

surrounding area would have been poorly suited to Iron Age cultivation methods. However, abundant cereal grain, chaff, and seeds from weeds associated with arable land were recorded at sites investigated along the line of the A421 Great Barford Bypass (Druce 2007, 366-367). As Summers (Ch. 3.7) notes, the lack of evidence for crop processing at the current site does not necessarily indicate that the settlement that it represents was not engaged in arable agriculture; however, the lack of evidence for such activity at this site and at the nearby College Farm site (Albion Archaeology 2005, 31) and the presence of it at sites on the A421 Great Barford Bypass (Druce 2007, 366-367) potentially suggests settlement specialisation, perhaps with the settlements to the north supplying, either through commercial trade or a system of exchange or tribute, the sites closer to the river with ready-processed cereal and perhaps with other commodities flowing in the opposite direction.

The basis of the pastoral economy upon which the agricultural practices undertaken by the inhabitants of this site was focussed appears to have been the raising of sheep and/or goats (see Curl Ch. 3.6). Sheep/goat was the most well-represented species in the animal bone assemblage, this was followed by cattle. This appears to have been supplemented by pig/boar and possibly occasional other species. It is more than likely that the majority of these food animals were bred, raised and slaughtered at the current site, although it is reasonable to suggest that some trade or exchange of animals was carried out in order to keep bloodlines refreshed and to avoid in-breeding. As the majority of the assemblage appears to consist of butchery and food waste, there is limited scope to evaluate breeding practices and the extent to which animals were utilised for other products such as milk and wool.

One particularly interesting element of the faunal assemblage is the equid tibia found in Ditch F2005C which bore knife cuts which suggest skinning and possible meat use. Meens (2002, 6) suggest that horseflesh formed an important part of people's diets in Iron Age Britain, comparing it to 1st century BC Gaul where horse makes up between 1 and 10 percent of the animal remains that can be linked to human consumption. However, Jay and Richards (2007, 184) state that the smaller presence of butchered horse bones in the archaeological record suggests that such consumption was limited and not a staple element of the diet. The absence of younger horses in these assemblages and the fact that horse bones are much less frequently cut or fragmented than cattle bones, suggest that horses were not kept primarily for meat (Maltby 1996, 23). Maltby (1985) and Coy (1987) have demonstrated, however, that there are some sites, notably in the Hampshire area, where there is evidence to show that horse carcasses were treated in the same way as cattle in this respect. At Outgang Road, Market Deeping, in Lincolnshire where horse was the third most numerous species (in terms of skeletal elements present) it has been demonstrated that horse carcasses were disposed of in a similar way to those of the main meat animals, suggesting that it is probable that horse meat was eaten although it is considered that horse were mainly bred for riding and transportation (Albarella 1997). This suggests that the knife cuts on the pony bone from F2005C could represent the consumption of horse meat although it could equally represent something else such as the use of the animal, perhaps after it died of natural causes for secondary purposes, which

could include the production of glues, grease and other products, although evidence of bone smashing, which might be consistent with this, is lacking.

The presence of disarticulated dog bone is also of note. The Ancient Greek god of medicine, Asklepios, was frequently depicted with a dog as his animal companion (Hill 2014) and dogs were also attributed to a variety of other deities in the ancient world and Gaul and it is notable that dogs were often common components in special or 'ritual' deposits (Grimm 2007; Snyder and Moore 2006; Chilardi 2006). It is possible that there was some symbolic significance in the deposition of the dog bone recovered from the recovered from the current site but, as it came from a context which also contained bone from cattle, sheep/goats, big/boar, and an unspecified medium to large mammal displaying evidence for butchery (Curl Ch. 3.6 and Table 10), it is perhaps more likely that it simply represents the disposal of remaining elements of a long-dead animal that had perhaps been allowed to decay elsewhere prior to deposition as the back fill of Ditch F2005. However, as Brück (1995, 255) notes many societies view rubbish as being a source of symbolic fertility and regeneration, at least in part due to its potential for use as manure; this means that even deposits which appear to represent refuse material were not necessarily discarded and forgotten about in the way that analogous material is treated in modern western society.

4.6 Possible late Roman activity

Directly to the north of the intercutting Iron Age ditch groups, at a distance of c.32m, was a gully (F2073) truncated at either extremity by a posthole (F2075, F2077). The arrangement of Gully F2073 and Postholes F2075 and F2077 is suggestive of a structural configuration. It may represent a similar construction method to that observed in the much larger late Iron Age Building 5 at Gorhambury in Hertfordshire (Neal *et al* 1990, 25, fig. 31). The ground plan of this structure consisted of two parallel trenches with postholes cut into the bases to support upright timbers. In this case it is uncertain why trenches were required but it is speculated that it may have allowed for more flexibility to make adjustments to the positioning of the posts during construction (*ibid.*). However, the proportions of F2073, F2075, and F2077 indicate that this must have been a much smaller example than the Gorhambury building and, as no corresponding gully was identified, it cannot be categorically stated that this represented an entire building. It could, however, have represented some kind of small-scale simple structure, such as a two-post drying rack (after Cunliffe 1986; Megaw and Simpson 1981, 382).

The majority of dateable artefactual material from this group of features has been dated to the late 1st century BC to mid 1st century AD. However, a sherd of mid 3rd to 4th century AD Roman mortaria was recovered from posthole F2077. This material may be intrusive and not reflective of an accurate date for the feature or the group of which it forms part. Although this constitutes only minimal evidence for later Romano-British activity, its presence suggests that occupation of this date may have occurred in the vicinity. Although the evidence clearly indicates that the majority of features recorded within the current site

represent very late Iron Age activity, this single piece of mortaria raises the possibility that at least part of the complex of cropmarks to which this site appears to be related may, in fact, be of later date.

4.7 Later activity

Earthworks relating to a medieval moated site have been recorded at Bridge Farm (BHER 752), just to the north of the current site. Current understanding of the layout medieval Great Barford suggests that the focus of settlement was slightly further to the north; a trial trench evaluation conducted at College Farm identified areas of medieval settlement activity (BHER 17150) in the southern part of the area investigated. The proximity of the parish church of All Saints, the earliest known fabric of which is 15th century in date although the presence of a 13th century font (Page 1912) might indicate earlier origins, suggests that this area, close to the river, may have been a focus of medieval settlement.

The proximity of the Oakfields site to the moated site at Bridge Farm suggests that the minimal medieval evidence that was recorded, in the form of Ditch F2090 and the 11 sherds (105g) of medieval pottery that it contained, is likely to be related to occupation here. It is interesting to note that Ditch F2090 ran on a similar alignment to (and broadly parallel with) the late Iron Age ditches to the south-west but this is not necessarily unusual as, due to natural or human geography and topography and other factors, the orientation or alignment of boundaries and other man-made elements of the landscape can adhere to similar alignments over very prolonged periods; one such example is the village of Bottisham in Cambridgeshire where the modern layout of the settlement follows similar alignments to Roman boundaries identified during excavation in the north of the village (Newton 2016, 41). The identification of Ditch F2090 as a medieval feature does little to alter the understanding of the layout of medieval Great Barford, although it indicates the possible presence of a boundary at this location.

Gully F2099 has been dated as post-medieval although, like F2090, it contained residual late Iron Age finds. Its relationship with Gully F2097, which it cut and which it lay at a right angle to, might indicate a shared function. The location of the site might suggest that the function of this feature might be an ancillary one, perhaps representing back yard or minor agricultural activity associated with properties closer to the road.

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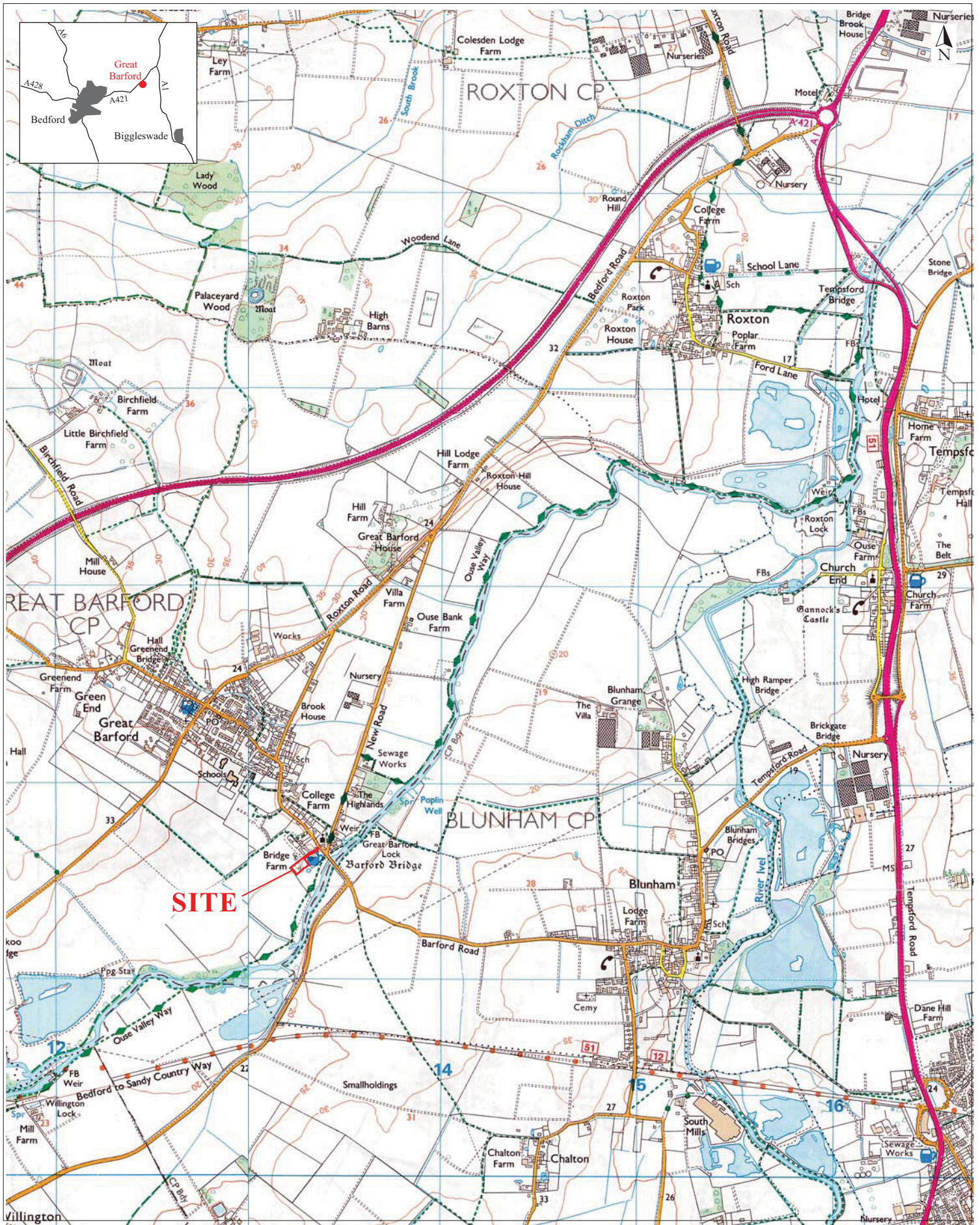
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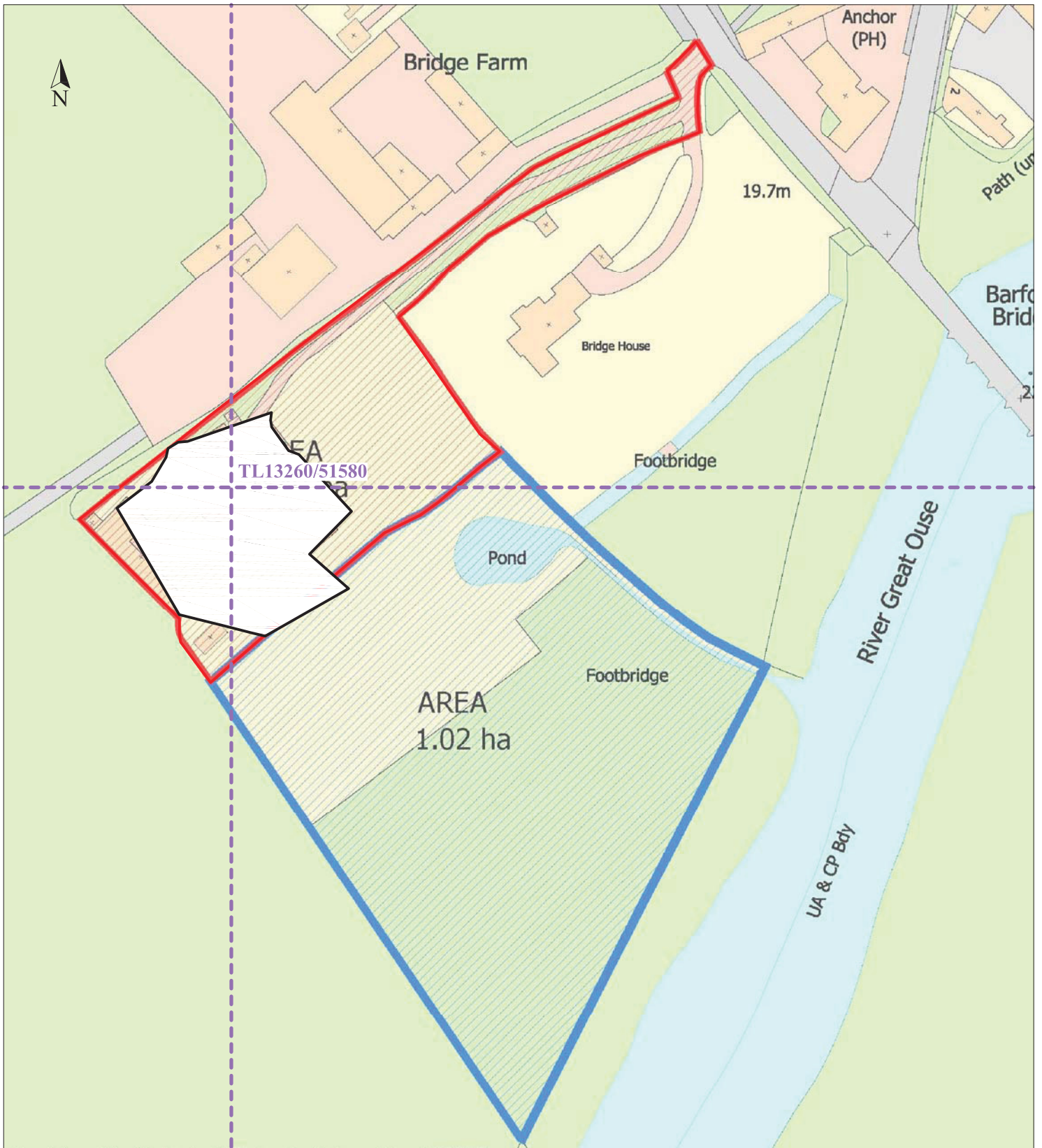
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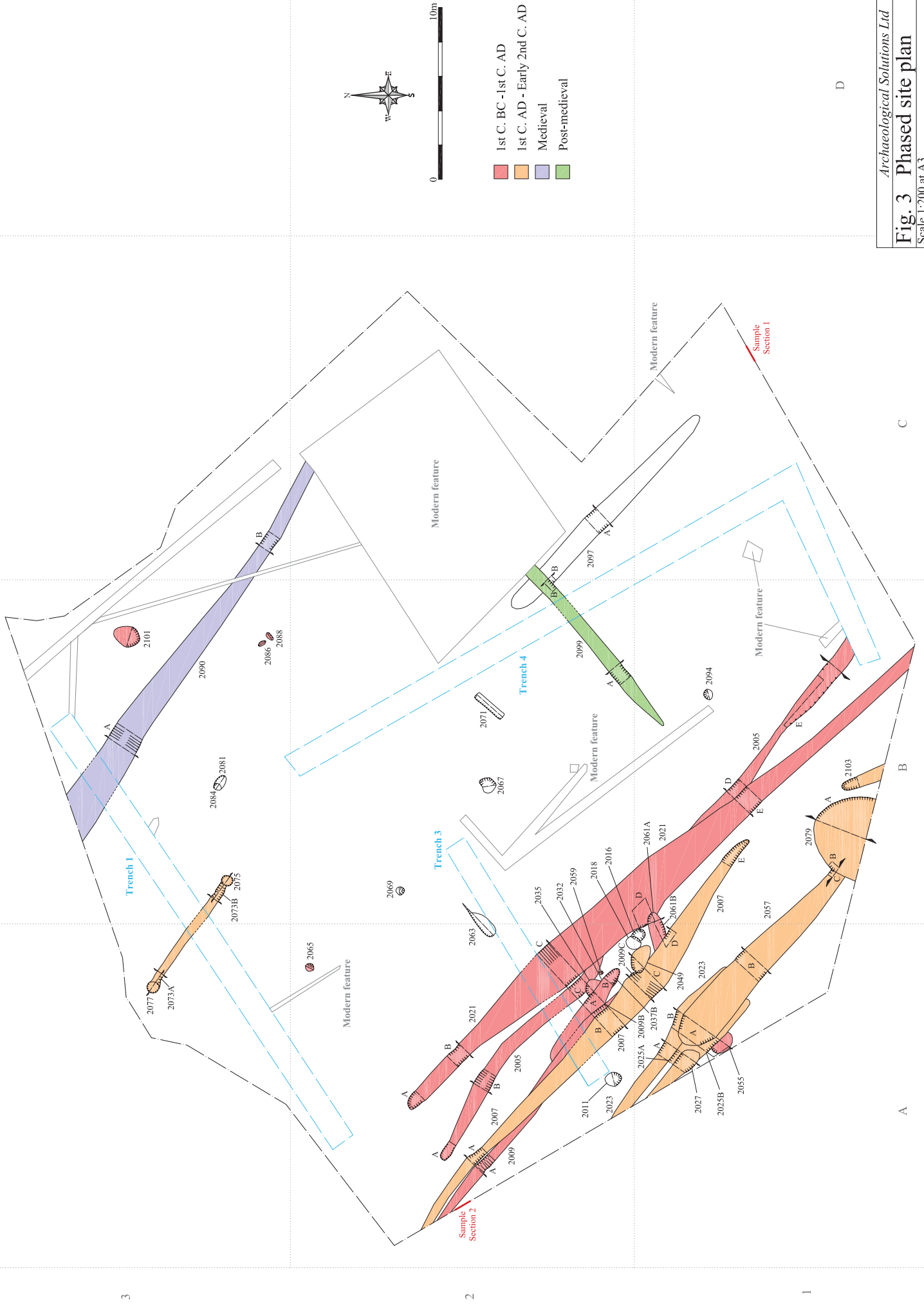
Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 Great Barford, Bedfordshire (P6394)



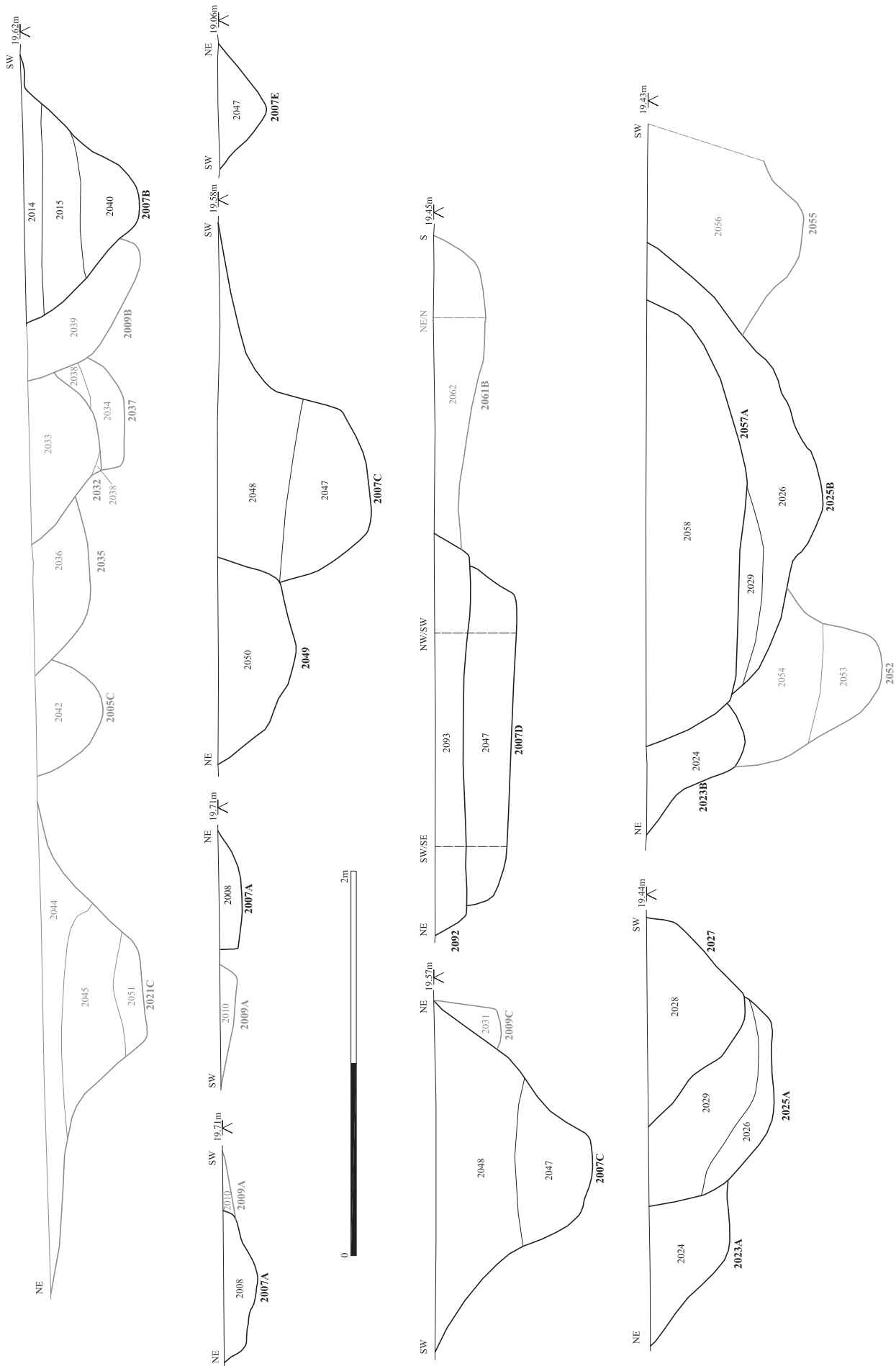
□ Area of excavation

0 75m

<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:1250 at A4
Oakfields, Great Barford, Bedfordshire (P6394)

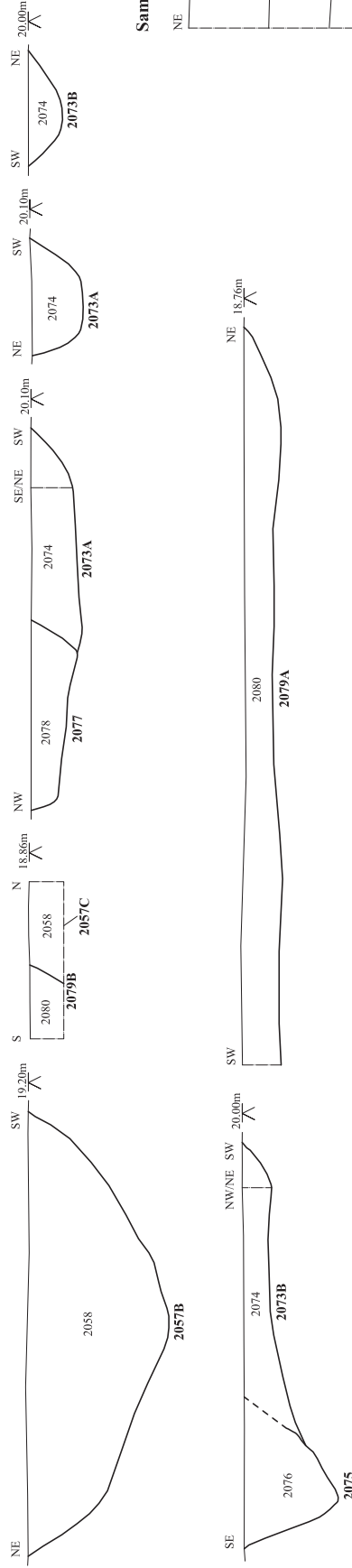


Phase 2 features

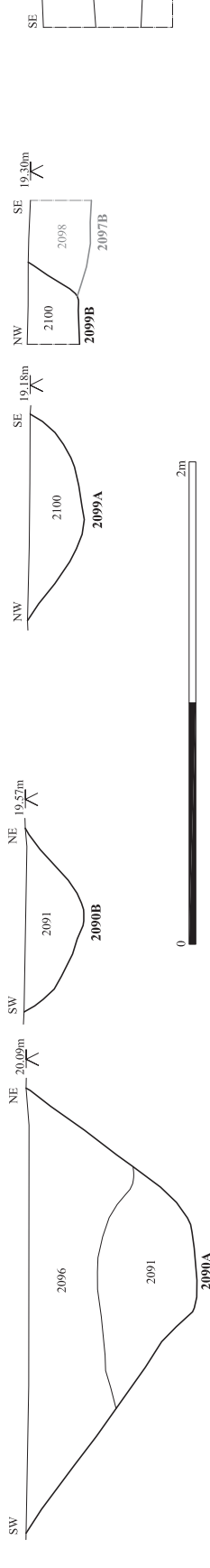


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Fig. 5 Sections
Scale 1:20 at A3
Oakfields, Great Barford, Bedfordshire (P6394)

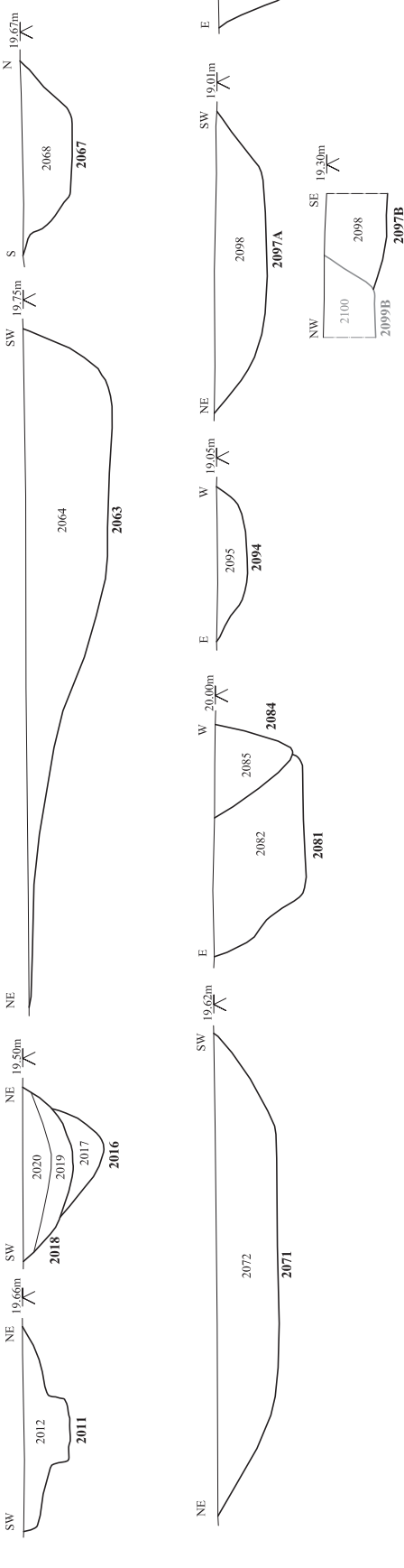
Phase 2 features



Phase 3 features



Undated



Sample sections

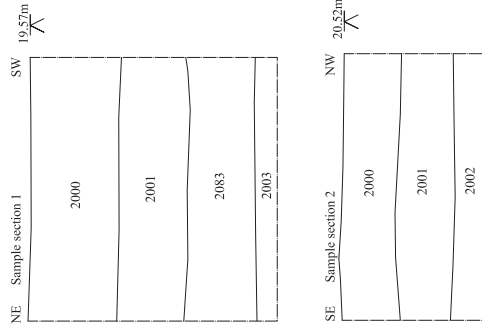
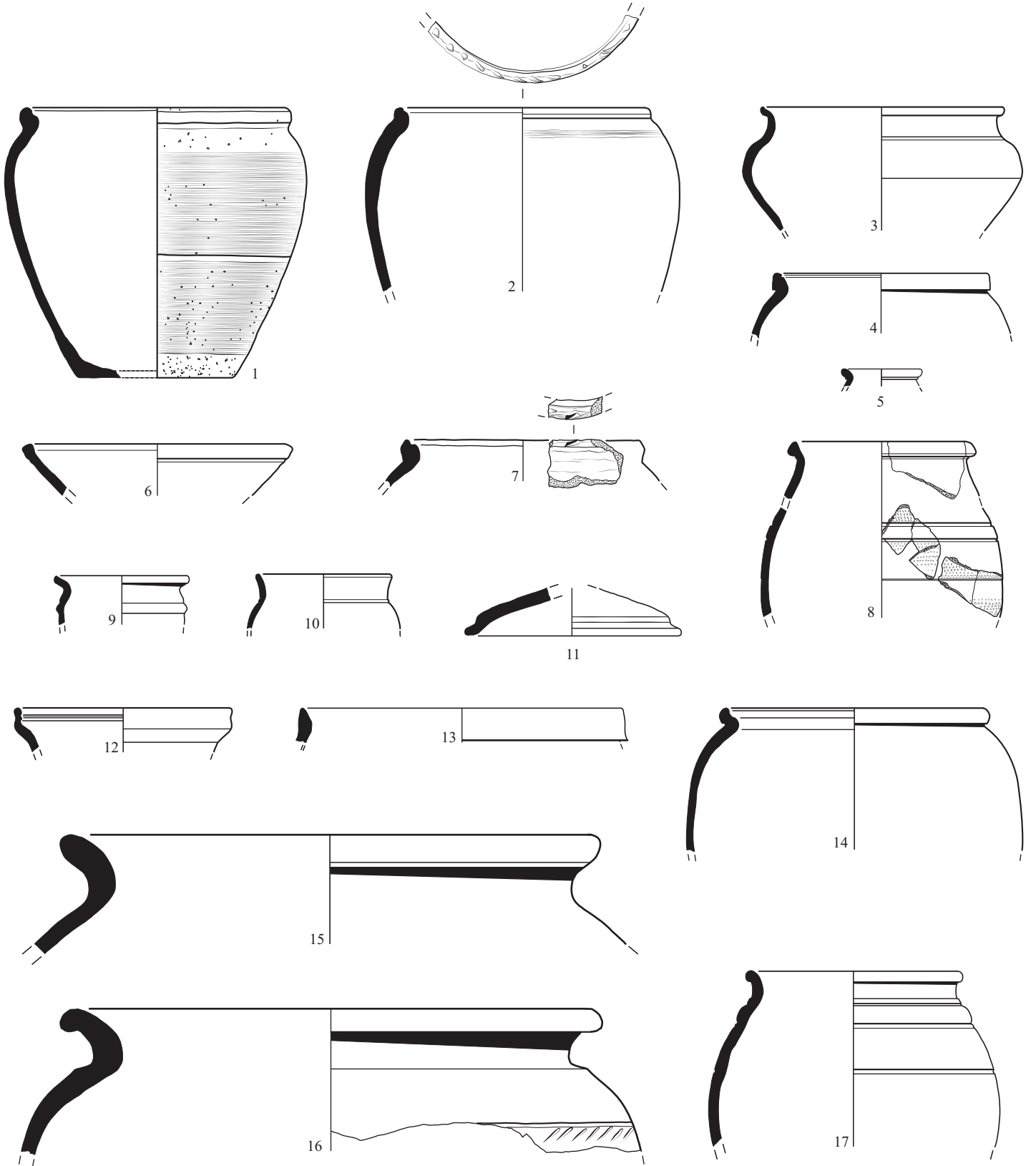
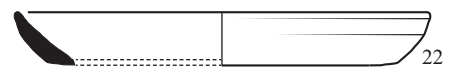
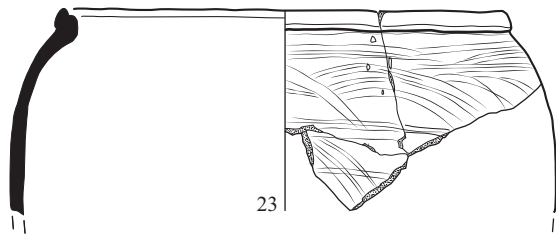
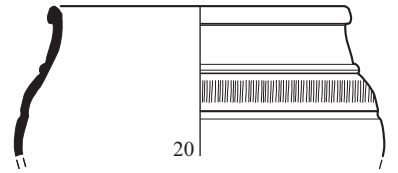
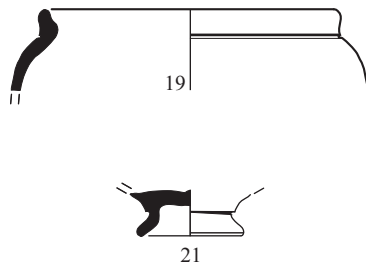
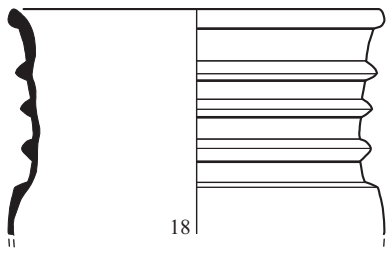


Fig. 6 Sections
Scale 1:20 at A3
Oakfields, Great Barford, Bedfordshire (P6394)

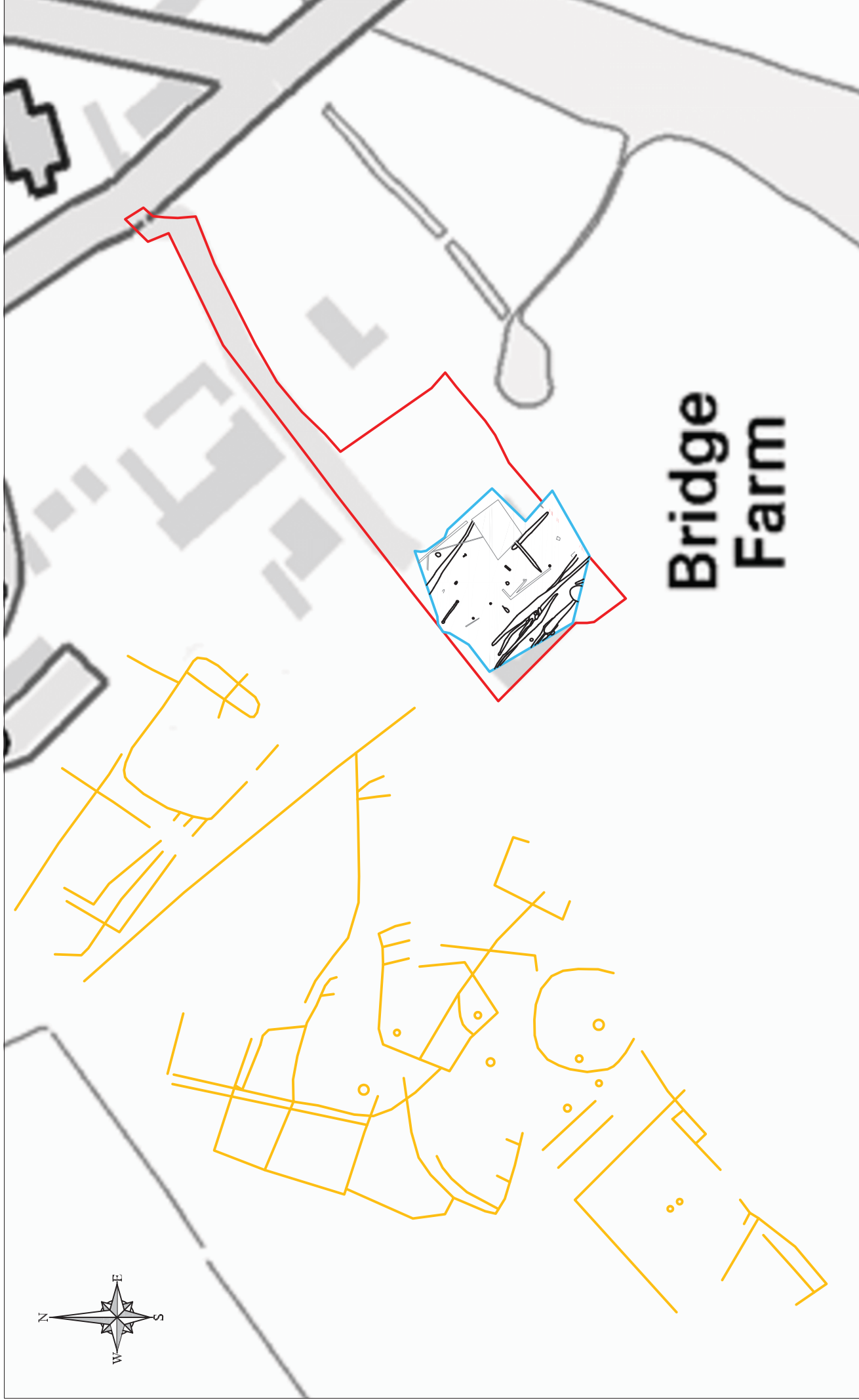


0 15cm

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Fig. 7a Pottery illustrations
Scale 1:4 at A4
Great Barford (P6394)



<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
Fig. 7b Pottery illustrations
Scale 1:4 at A4
Great Barford (P6394)



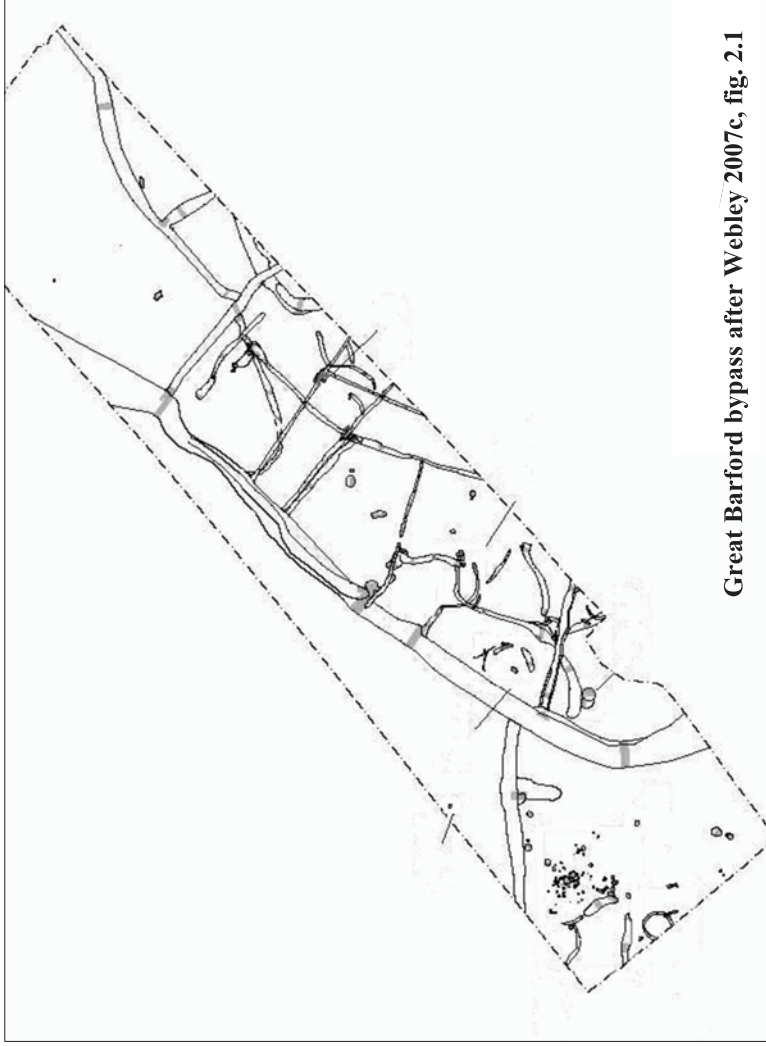
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Fig. 8 Comparison of cropmarks with excavated features

Scale 1:1500 at A4

Oakfields, Great Barford, Bedfordshire (P6394)





Great Barford bypass after Webley 2007c, fig. 2.1



Oakfields, Great Barford



Dernford Farm after Newton 2012

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Fig. 9 Comparison of cropmarks with contemporary sites

Not to scale

Oakfields, Great Barford, Bedfordshire (P6394)