



Northamptonshire  
County Council

# Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological trial trench evaluation of  
land at Bossington Lane/Stoke Road  
Linslade, Leighton Buzzard  
Bedfordshire

November - December 2008

Accession number: LUTMN: 2008/73



Anne Foard-Colby

January 2009

Report 09/05

## Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House  
Wootton Hall Park

Northampton NN4 8BE

t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822

e. [sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

w. [www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk)



**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY**  
**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**JANUARY 2009**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION OF LAND**  
**AT BOSSINGTON LANE/STOKE ROAD, LINSLADE**  
**LEIGHTON BUZZARD**  
**BEDFORDSHIRE**  
**NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2008**

ACCESSION NUMBER, LUTMN: 2008/73

**REPORT 09/05**

***NGR SP 9150 2600***

***STAFF***

Project Manager	Tony Walsh BA
Fieldwork supervision and text	Anne Foard-Colby Cert Ed
Fieldwork	Nathan Flavell BA PGDip Paul Kajewski BA PGDip Adrian Adams Johnathan Elston BA Lazlo Lichtenstein MA
The finds	Andy Chapman BSc MifA Tora Hylton Paul Blinkhorn BTech Pat Chapman BA CMS AifA
The environmental evidence	Karen Deighton MSc
Illustrations	Charlotte Stevens BSc AifA Amir Bassir BSc

***QUALITY CONTROL***

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	P Chapman		
Verified by	T Walsh		
Approved by	A Chapman		

**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project title	Archaeological evaluation of land at Bossington Lane/Stoke Road, Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land proposed for housing, at Bossington Lane/Stoke Road, Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire. The evaluation identified a concentration of pits, ditches and postholes occupying the western slopes of a small hill. The majority of the features are dated to Roman period, 1st – 3rd centuries AD and represent a small farmstead together with field boundaries. Finds include Roman pottery, roof and floor tile, ironwork including a Roman ‘spud’ or hoe and half a rotary quern. Two of the pits contained iron smelting debris. Evidence of early to mid Saxon occupation was also present with pottery dated to 5th - 9th centuries and a typical annular loomweight. Quarry pits had been dug, possibly for the extraction of clay.	
Project type	Trial trench evaluation	
Site status (none, NT, SAM etc)	None	
Previous work (SMR numbers etc)	DBA	
Current Land use	Pasture	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	Unknown	
Monument type/period	Roman, Saxon	
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	Roman pottery, iron objects, Roman hoe Saxon pottery and loomweight	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Bedfordshire	
Site address (including postcode)	Bossington Lane/Stoke Road, Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire	
Study area (sq.m or ha)	7.2 ha	
OS Easting & Northing (use grid sq. letter code)	SP 9150 2600	
Height OD	c 93.60m to c 102.60m aOD	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Bloor Homes	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Anne Foard-Colby	
Project Manager	Tony Walsh	
Sponsor or funding body		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	24 November 2008	
End date	11 <sup>th</sup> December 2008	
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)</b>
Physical		
Paper	LUTMN: 2008/73	
Digital		
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title	Archaeological evaluation of land at Bossington Lane/Stoke Road, Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire	
Serial title & volume	09/05	
Author(s)	Anne Foard-Colby	
Page numbers	28 plus figs and plates	
Date	January 2009	

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>EVALUATION RESULTS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>THE FINDS</b>	<b>15</b>
6.1	<b>The flint</b> by Andy Chapman	
6.2	<b>The Roman pottery</b> by Tora Hylton	
6.3	<b>The Roman finds</b> by Tora Hylton	
6.4	<b>The ceramic building material</b> by Pat Chapman	
6.5	<b>The querns</b> by Andy Chapman	
6.6	<b>Metalworking debris</b> by Andy Chapman	
6.7	<b>The Saxon pottery</b> by Paul Blinkhorn	
6.8	<b>The Saxon finds</b> by Tora Hylton	
6.9	<b>The medieval and post-medieval finds</b> by Tora Hylton and Pat Chapman	
<b>7</b>	<b>THE ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE</b>	<b>21</b>
7.1	<b>The animal bone</b> by Karen Deighton	
7.2	<b>Assessment of charcoal</b> by Karen Deighton	
<b>8</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>25</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>27</b>

### APPENDIX 1: pottery index

#### Tables

Table 1: Quantification of ceramic tile

Table 2: Saxon pottery by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type

Table 3: Taxa by context

Table 4: The availability of ageing and metrical data

## Figures

Fig 1: Site location, 1:20,000

Fig 2: Historic Environment Record (HER) information, 1:10,000

Fig 3: Trench locations, 1:2,500

Fig 4: Plan of trenches 4-11, 15-18, 21-24

Fig 5: Plan of trenches 9, 10 and 11

Fig 6: Plan of trenches 1, 13, 20, 34 and 37

Fig 7: Sections 14, 16 and 33

Fig 8: Sections 9, 10, 20, 25, 30 and 36

## Plates

Report cover: General view of the trenches, looking east

Plate 1: General view of site, ground rising to a small hill, looking east

Plate 2: Trench 9, pits [909], [911], and burnt pits [907] and [913], looking north-west

Plate 3: Trench 9, excavated burnt pit [907], looking north

Plate 4: Trench 10, possible ditch terminal [1029], looking east

Plate 5: Trench 11, pit [1109], cutting ditch [1105], looking north-east

Plate 6: Trench 16, ditch [1604], looking south-east

Plate 7: Trench 16, ditch [1606], looking south-west

Plate 8: Trench 24, ditch [2406], looking south-east

Plate 9: Trench 34, pit [3404] and gully [3407], looking north

Plate 10: Saxon loomweight from trench 37, posthole [3705]

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION OF  
LAND AT BOSSINGTON LANE/STOKE ROAD  
LINSLADE  
LEIGHTON BUZZARD, BEDFORDSHIRE**

*ABSTRACT*

*Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land proposed for housing, at Bossington Lane/Stoke Road, Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire. The evaluation identified a concentration of pits, ditches and postholes occupying the western slopes of a small hill. The majority of the features are dated to Roman period, 1st – 3rd centuries AD and represent a small farmstead together with field boundaries. Finds include Roman pottery, roof and floor tile, ironwork including a Roman ‘spud’ or hoe and half a rotary quern. Two of the pits contained iron smelting debris. Evidence of early to mid Saxon occupation was also present with pottery dated to 5th - 9th centuries and a typical annular loomweight. Quarry pits had been dug, possibly for the extraction of clay.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out archaeological evaluation comprising trial trench excavation in November 2008 on land at Bossington Lane/Stoke Road, Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire (NGR: SP 9150 2600; Fig 1).

The work was commissioned by Bloor Homes in order to inform a pre-application enquiry with regard to developing land for housing. The evaluation met the requirements of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared for the County Archaeological Officer of Bedfordshire County Council, dated 20th November 2008.

The objective of the archaeological evaluation was to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of surviving archaeological remains liable to be affected by the proposed development.

**2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY**

The proposed development site lies to the north of Linslade, and occupies an area of 7.2 ha. Linslade lies on the Bedfordshire side of the Bedfordshire-Buckinghamshire border adjacent to the town of Leighton Buzzard, with which it forms a civil parish known as Leighton-Linslade.

The site is bordered to the west by the A4146 Stoke Road and to the east by Bossington Lane. A row of 20th-century housing abuts the site to the south, while to the north the landscape is pasture, which will be retained as public parkland under plans for the current development. The River Ousel flows around the site to the east and, until the boundary change in 1965, formed the county border. The Grand Union Canal flows almost parallel to the Ousel, but just to the west of it.

The site rises from *c* 93.60m aOD at the west to *c* 102.60m in the east (Plate 1). The solid geology of the area comprises deposits of Lower Greensand overlain by superficial deposits of alluvium deposited by the River Ousel ([www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.htm](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.htm)).

### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

There are no known archaeological remains within the proposed development site. However, the area within which the development site sits is rich in prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval remains (Fig 2). Palaeolithic implements were found during gravel extraction to the east of the site. The presence of prehistoric barrows was noted in a Saxon boundary charter, these are thought to have lain to the far west of the site. To the west and north-west, a series of cropmarks and a linear earthwork have been identified. The deserted medieval settlement of Old Linslade village, currently consisting of the church, manor house and two cottages lies to the north-west of the site. The Grand Union Canal, which encircles the site to the east and north, together with the railway to the west were both built during the 19th century.

A full report of the area is to be found in the Desk-based Assessment (Walker 2008).

### **4 METHODOLOGY**

In total 37 trenches were excavated; of which 35 were 50m long (Trenches 1 – 35), Trench 36 was 20m long and Trench 37 was 30m long. They were excavated using a mechanical digger fitted with a 2m-wide toothless ditching bucket under continuous archaeological supervision (Fig 3). In all trenches mechanical excavation proceeded as far as the upper surface of the natural substrate.

Small extensions (measuring 5m by 5m each) to Trenches 34 and 37 were excavated in order to further clarify the extent and character of the archaeology. The amount of additional trenching



was discussed and agreed with the County Archaeological Officer of Bedfordshire County Council.

The trenches were related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid by GPS survey. Archaeological information was recorded on pro-forma sheets, with a unique context number being allocated to each distinct deposit and feature. A photographic record comprising both 35mm monochrome negatives, with associated prints, and colour transparencies was maintained, with additional digital photographs. All records were compiled during fieldwork into a comprehensive and fully cross-referenced site archive. The Northamptonshire Archaeology site code assigned was SRL08. The allocated museum Accession number is LUTMN:2008/75.

All works were carried out according to the IFA (new IfA) Code of Conduct (1985, revised 2006) and *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Evaluation* (IFA 1994, revised 2001), in addition, all works complied with the guidelines detailed in *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

All procedures complied with the Northamptonshire County Council Health and Safety provisions and Northamptonshire Archaeology Health and Safety at Work Guidelines.

## **5 EVALUATION RESULTS**

The natural substrate, which was encountered in all trenches, varied considerably across the site. The natural substrate in the rest of the trenches consisted of silty or sandy clay with patches of sand, gravel and/or ironstone outcrops, encountered at a depth of between 0.30m and 0.84m. Colluvium was encountered in Trenches 1, 2, 7, 13, 14, 17 and 18. This consisted of light to mid orange-brown silty clay, encountered at a depth of between 0.19m and 0.35m.

Subsoil was present in all the trenches apart from Trenches 15 and 20, and ranged in depth from 0.05m to 0.25m. All trenches were overlain by dark brown silty clay topsoil, measuring up to 0.35m thick.

There were no archaeological features present in Trenches 2, 3, 12, 14, 19, 21, 25 – 33, 35 and 36 (Fig 3).

Trenches 1, 4 - 11, 13, 15 – 18, 20, 22 – 24, 34 and 37 contained archaeological features and are described below (Figs 3, 4 and 5).

### **Trench 1**

Trench 1 was 50m long, orientated north-east to south-west (Fig 3). One posthole, undated, lay 4.00m from the north end of the trench.

Posthole [105] was 0.20m in diameter and 0.16m deep, with steep sides and curved base (Fig 6). The fill (104) consisted of dark orange brown sandy clay with patches of charcoal lumps and flecks. There were no finds present.

### **Trench 4**

Trench 4 was 50m long and orientated north-south (Fig 3). A pit and a posthole were present.

At the north end of the trench, and partially concealed by the baulk was posthole [409] (Fig 4). It measured 0.60m in diameter but was not excavated. The fill (408) consisted of light to medium orange-brown-grey mottled sandy clay with occasional gravel and charcoal inclusions. There were no finds present. It was cut by pit [407].

To the south, pit [407] continued beyond the edge of the trench (Figs 4 and 6, Section 33). It was sub-circular in shape, with gentle sloping sides at the top, a break in slope half way down and near vertical sides towards the irregular, flattish base and was 2.60m wide and 0.90m deep. The primary fill (406) dark brown-grey sandy clay with gravel inclusions, 0.20m thick, contained 16 sherds of grog-tempered, greyware and shell-gritted Roman pottery. Above this was fill (405), grey-brown sandy clay with occasional gravel and charcoal, which was 0.20m thick. Overlying this was fill (404), light grey-brown sandy clay with occasional gravel and charcoal, 0.30m thick, which contained five sherds of grog-tempered pottery dated to early to mid 1st century AD.

### **Trench 5**

Trench 5 (Fig 3) was orientated east to west and measured 50m long. At the west end of the trench was a single, shallow gully [505] (Fig 4), aligned north-west to south-east. It had a U-shaped profile, cut subsoil (502) and was 0.88m wide and 0.24m deep. The fill (504) was dark grey-brown sand clay with gravel, ironstone and charcoal inclusions and at this point was overlain by topsoil (501). A modern coin (SF 21) came from the topsoil immediately above the ditch.

### **Trench 6**

Trench 6 (Fig 3) was orientated north to south and measured 50m. It contained layer (604), located halfway along the trench, but only partially exposed (Fig 4). The layer was 2m long, 2m wide and 0.11m thick and appeared to lie in a natural hollow of the sand and ironstone substrate.

The soil consisted of dark grey-brown sandy clay loam with ironstone, gravel and charcoal flecks and contained pottery dated to early to mid 1st century AD.

### **Trench 7**

Trench 7 (Figs 3 and 4) was orientated north to south and 50m long. At the southern end were three postholes, with a small pit 8.5m to the north, and a small gully in the centre. Medieval ridge and furrow was also present.

The three postholes [704], [706] and [708] were approximately 1.5m distant from each other and may be part of a four-post structure, with the fourth posthole possibly lying beyond the trench. Posthole [704] was oval in plan with a shallow profile, 0.52m wide and 0.13m deep. Fill (705) was dark brown silty loam with ironstone and occasional charcoal flecks. There was early to mid 1st century AD pottery present. Lying to the south, posthole [706] was sub-circular with a V-shaped profile and measured 0.70m by 0.66m and was 0.19m deep. Fill (707) was mid brown grey loamy clay with occasional ironstone fragments and charcoal flecks. There were no finds present. Posthole [708] further east was slightly irregular in plan with shallow edges and a break in slope leading to steep sides and a rounded base and measured 0.55m long by 0.40m wide and 0.13m deep. The fill (709) consisted of light grey silty clay with occasional small gravel; no finds were present.

Approximately 8.00m to the north was circular pit [710]. It had a U-shaped profile, measured 0.85m in diameter and was 0.12m deep. Its fill (711) was dark grey loamy clay with considerable charcoal. Two residual flints were recovered from the fill.

A further 12m to the north was gully [712], aligned east to west across the trench. It had a U-shaped profile and was 0.50m wide and 0.19m deep. The fill of the gully (713) consisted of mid grey-brown silty clay with occasional gravel. There were no finds present.

### **Trench 8**

Trench 8 (Fig 3) was 50m long and orientated east to west. Twenty-nine metres from the east end of the trench was a single ditch [805], orientated north-west to south-east, with a U-shaped profile, 1.50m wide by 0.42m deep (Fig 4). The fill of the ditch (804) consisted of dark grey-brown sandy clay with occasional ironstone fragments and gravel inclusions, and contained sherds of early to mid 1st century AD pottery.

### **Trench 9**

Trench 9 (Figs 3 and 5) was 50m long and orientated north to south. At the south end, a ditch was aligned north-east to south-west and continued beyond the limit of the trench. Towards the

north end of the trench was a shallow gully or layer of material south-east to north-west. Between the linear features lay a cluster of at least seven pits, two of which contained burnt material.

Gully [905], aligned north-west to south-east had a very shallow U-shaped profile and was 1.30m wide and 0.10m deep. The fill (904) consisted of mid grey-brown sandy clay with gravel and frequent charcoal lumps and also lumps of slag and burnt clay. The fill was similar to the natural and may have represented a 'smear' of furnace debris, as the remains of two pits located close-by contained the debris from iron smelting furnaces.

At the south end of the trench ditch [921] was at least 2m wide, the remainder lying beyond the trench; it was not excavated. The fill (920) was dark reddish-brown clayey sand with gravel and charcoal flecks, which contained a residual sherd of greyware and sherds of early to mid Saxon pottery.

Between the gully and the ditch lay pits [907], [909], [911], [913], [915], [917] and [919]. Three were intercutting, pits [909] cut by pit [911] and [913]. Pit [909] was 0.45m in diameter. Its fill (908) was mid to dark grey-brown sandy clay with gravel and charcoal flecks. Pit [913] (Plate 2) was *c* 1.30m in diameter, half of which lay beyond the bounds of the trench. The fill (912) consisted of mid red-brown silty clay with frequent lumps of fired clay; it was not excavated. Cutting their fills, pit [911] was 1.16m in diameter. Its fill (910) consisted of mid to dark grey-brown sandy clay with gravel and charcoal flecks. A modern iron fitting was recovered from the subsoil.

Pit [907] (Plates 2 and 3) was 0.30m to the east of the inter-cutting pits. It had a steep-sided U-shaped profile, 0.95m in diameter and 0.30m deep. Its fill (906) consisted of mid red-brown silty clay with frequent lumps of fired clay and fragments of slag, including a large lump (see 6.6 below) and was similar to, and probably contemporary with pit [913].

Three other pits [915], [917] and [919] respectively lay 1m to the south. Pit [915] was 3m long and 0.90m, the remainder beyond the limit of the trench. It may have been two separate pits. Its fill (914) was mid to dark grey-brown sandy clay with some gravel and charcoal. No finds were present. Pit [917] was 1.45m and pit [919] was 2.10m in diameter. Their fills (916) and (918) respectively, consisted of similar mid to dark grey-brown sandy clay with gravel and charcoal flecks.

### **Trench 10**

Trench 10 (Figs 3 and 5) was 50m long and oriented north to south. It contained three ditches,

six gullies, seven pits/postholes and two possible enclosure terminals.

The earliest features were four parallel gullies aligned east to west and posthole [1035]. Gully [1037] was recut by terminals [1039] and [1041]. Gully [1037] was 0.40m wide by 0.20m deep with a U-shaped profile. Fill (1036) was light brown silty sand with occasional gravel and a sherd of grog-tempered ware. It was cut by ditch [1033]. Gully terminal [1039] lay immediately to the north of the gully and measured 0.50m wide and 0.24m deep with a similar profile. The fill (1038) was mid brown silty sand with occasional gravel and also contained a sherd of grog-tempered ware. To its north was gully terminal [1041], 0.35m wide and not excavated, its fill (1040) was similar to that (1038) and contained a sherd of grog-tempered ware and half of a domed quern (see 6.5). Lying 2.50m to the north, gully terminal [1025] was 0.50m wide and unexcavated. Its fill (1024) was red brown silty sand with occasional gravel. The terminals to the gullies may be the opening to a small enclosure. Posthole [1035] immediately to the south of the three parallel gullies and partially beyond the trench, may be associated with the entrance. It was 0.70m in diameter and 0.20m deep with steep sides. Its fill (1034) consisted of brown silty sand with occasional gravel and five sherds of Verulamium whiteware. It was cut by ditch [1033].

Approximately 10m to the north was parallel gully [1011], 0.60m wide and unexcavated, with fill (1010) a mid brown clay sand. One metre to the south was posthole [1013], 0.50m in diameter and not excavated. The fill (1012) was similar to that of the gully. Both features were cut by a curvilinear ditch [1007], which may be the ring ditch of a roundhouse. It had a shallow U-shaped profile, 0.80m wide and 0.17m deep. The fill (1006) was brown-red sandy clay with frequent gravel and contained two sherds of pottery dated to the early to mid-1st century AD. A recut on the east side [1005] had a shallow U-shaped profile, 0.40m wide and 0.13m deep. Fill (1004) was grey-brown clay sand with frequent ironstone fragments.

Two ditches, [1033] in the centre of the trench and [1009] at the north end, were both aligned north-east to south-west, 20m apart and may form the parallel sides of an enclosure. Ditch [1033], 1.50m wide by 0.22m deep, cut gullies [1037] and [1039]. The fill (1032) consisted of dark brown sandy clay with large ironstone fragments and fourteen sherds of early to mid 1st century AD pottery, ceramic tile, and iron objects including a 'spud' or hoe for weeding (see 6.7). Ditch [1009], 1.70m wide was unexcavated. Fill (1008) was mid brown with some orange mottling, silty clay and contained seven sherds of pottery dated to the early to mid 1st century AD.

Two further ditches lay to the south of the south of the curvilinear ditch. Ditch [1043] was

aligned north-west to south-east and measured 1.20m wide. The fill (1042) was red-brown sandy clay with occasional gravel. There were no finds present. Ditch [1023] was to its south, aligned east to west, 0.70m wide. The fill (1022) was mid brown-red clay sand with occasional stone; no finds were present.

Four circular pits [1015], [1017], [1019] and [1021] lay between ditches [1043] and [1023]. Pit [1015] was 0.85m in diameter and not excavated. The fill (1014) was mid red-brown clay sand; no finds were present. Pit [1017] was 1.00m in diameter and lay partially outside the limit of the trench. Its fill (1016) consisted of mid brown clay sand, there were no finds present. Pit [1019] had a shallow U-shaped profile, was 1.70m in diameter and 0.30m deep. The fill (1018) was red-brown sandy clay with frequent ironstone fragments and contained two sherds of Roman greyware. Pit [1021] was 0.60m in diameter and not excavated. Fill (1020) was red-brown clay sand with occasional gravel; no finds were present.

A further pit or ditch terminal [1027] lay to the south of ditch [1023], aligned east to west with a shallow profile 0.80m wide and 0.18m deep. The fill (1026) was dark grey-brown sandy clay with gravel and charcoal and one sherd of grog-tempered ware.

In the south of the trench were two possible terminals of an enclosure lying largely beyond the trench. Ditch terminal [1029] had a deep U-shaped profile and measured 0.97m wide and 0.45m deep (Plate 4). Its fill (1028) consisted of dark grey-brown sandy clay with gravel, ironstone fragments, charcoal lumps and ten sherds of grog-tempered ware. Lenses of pebbles within the fill suggested a gradual silting up. Ditch terminus [1031] was 12m to the north and 0.60m wide; it was not excavated. Its fill (1030) was brown-red silty sand with occasional gravel; there were no finds present.

### **Trench 11**

Trench 11 (Figs 3 and 5) was 50m long and orientated east to west. Four gullies, two ditches, a pit, a pond, a quarry pit and two medieval furrows were present in the trench. The ditches and three of the gullies were cut by later features, suggesting at least two phases of occupation.

At the east end of the trench, gully [1113] was aligned north to south, with a shallow U-shaped profile, 0.80m wide and 0.25m deep. The fill (1112) was dark grey silty sand with occasional charcoal flecks, thirteen sherds of pottery dating to the early to mid 1st century AD and two sherds of Lower Nene Valley colour coated ware. It was cut by pond [1111] at least 4.80m wide and 0.30m deep with moderate sloping sides. The fill (1110) was brown-grey silty sand with

occasional gravel, ten sherds of early to mid 1st century AD pottery, and one sherd of Samian ware.

Further west gullies [1127] and [1125] were both aligned north to south, approximately 5m apart. To the east, gully [1127] was 0.35m wide; it was not excavated. The fill (1126), was brown-red sandy clay, no finds were present. Gully [1125] was 0.50m wide; it was not excavated. The fill (1124) was red-brown mottled sandy clay; there were no finds present. Ditch [1121] was to the west of gully [1125], aligned north north-west to south south-east. It was 2.60m wide and unexcavated. Its fill (1120) was brown-red clay sand with three sherds of grog-tempered ware. These were all cut by quarry pit [1123] with irregular edges, 6.70m wide. The fill (1122) was red-brown mottled sandy clay and contained six sherds of early to mid 1st century AD and one of Verulamium whiteware. A further small gully lay at the far west end of the trench and may be contemporary. Gully [1115] was aligned north-east to south-west and 0.30m wide. Fill (1114) was red-brown sandy clay; no finds were present.

Towards the west end of the trench, ditch [1105] was aligned north-west to south-east, with a wide U-shaped profile, 1.20m wide and 0.21m deep. Fill (1104), was mid brown with orange flecked sandy clay with ironstone fragments, gravel and charcoal flecks. This was cut on its north edge by pit [1109], with steep sides and flat base, 1.45m wide by 0.66m deep (Plate 5). The fill (1108) consisted of mid brown with orange flecked, sandy clay, ironstone fragments, gravel and charcoal flecks. It contained one sherd of grog-tempered ware.

Two parallel medieval furrows aligned north to south across the trench were recorded.

### **Trench 13**

Trench 13 (Figs 3 and 6) measured 50m long and was orientated east to west. A small pit and a stakehole were present in the trench.

Pit (1305) lay half in the trench the remainder outside. It was circular in plan, with steep sides and curved base, 0.70m in diameter and 0.20m deep. Its fill (1304) was black mixed with orange brown silty sand with frequent large burnt stone and flint. This fill may represent a dump of burnt debris from a hearth.

Immediately to the south of the pit was a stakehole [1307], 0.15m in diameter and 0.10m deep. The fill (1306) consisted of black with mid brown/orange silty clay, similar to that of the pit. There were no finds present.

### **Trench 15**

Trench 15 (Figs 3 and 4) was 50m long and orientated north to south. There was a single ditch in the centre of the trench.

Ditch [1504] (Figs 8, section 25) was aligned north-west to south-east with a V-shaped profile and measured 1.6m wide by 0.55m deep. The fill (1503) was light brown sandy loam with infrequent gravel and charcoal and contained sherds of pottery dated to the early to mid 1st century AD, together with Samian pottery.

### **Trench 16**

Trench 16 (Figs 3 and 4) was 50m long and orientated east to west. It contained two ditches.

Ditch [1604] was aligned north-west to south-east, with a U-shaped profile, 0.60m wide and 0.25m deep (Fig 8. section 20; Plate 6). Fill (1605) was mid grey silty clay with some gravel and occasional charcoal flecks. It contained Roman ceramic tile.

Ditch [1606] was aligned north-east to south-west, with a wide U-shaped profile, 1.25m wide and 0.40m deep (Plate 7). Primary fill (1608) was 0.22m thick, light grey-brown silty clay with occasional gravel and charcoal flecks, no finds were present. Upper fill (1607) was 0.18m thick, dark grey-brown loamy clay with few stones and contained sherds of pottery dated to the early to mid 1st century AD, and Verulamium white wares.

### **Trench 17**

Trench 17 (Figs 3 and 4) was 50m long and orientated north to south. At the north end of the trench a pit, or terminal of a ditch, was overlain by a pond. At the south end of the trench was a layer of colluvium.

Pit [1705] had a wide U-shaped profile, which was 1.00m wide and 0.30m deep (Fig 7, section 14). The primary fill (1706) was mid grey-brown silty clay with occasional gravel and sherds of pottery dated to the early to mid 1st century AD. It was overlain by deposit (1704) 8.50m long, 2.00m wide and 0.40m deep which consisted of mid grey silty clay with occasional gravel, charcoal flecks and contained 31 sherds of Roman pottery, which included grog-tempered and grey wares together with mortaria and a sherd of Samian . This deposit was probably the sediment build-up of a pond.

A layer of colluvium (1707) was present at the south end of the trench overlying the natural clay; there were no finds present.



### **Trench 18**

Trench 18 (Figs 3 and 4) was 50m long and orientated east to west. A single, large quarry pit was located at the east end of the trench.

Only the east and west sides of pit [1808] were located, the rest lying beyond the trench. A box section 11.20m long and 1.25m deep was excavated across part of the pit, but it was not bottomed for safety reasons. The earliest excavated fill (1807) was grey/light brown sandy clay with occasional gravel, ironstone fragments and charcoal flecks, and was at least 0.50m thick. It contained pottery, which dated from the early to mid 1st century and included local wares and sherds of Lower Nene Valley colour coated, an animal tooth and ceramic tile. It was overlain by fill (1806), 0.16m thick, light brown with orange flecked silty clay with some gravel, which is probably a layer of redeposited natural. It was overlain by (1805) mid brown sandy clay 0.36m thick, which contained occasional gravel and charcoal flecks, and pottery which dated from the early to mid 1st century, tile and an iron nail. This was overlain by fill (1804) mottled light/mid brown sandy clay, 0.75m thick with occasional gravel and charcoal flecks and Roman tile.

### **Trench 20**

Trench 20 was 50m long and oriented north-east to south-west (Figs 3 and 6). Two gullies of similar size and fill were present in the northern half of the trench, approximately 10.4m apart; they may be two parallel sides of a small enclosure.

Gully [2004] was aligned east to west and had a shallow U-shaped profile 0.56m wide and 0.17m deep. The fill (2003) was mid orange-brown sandy clay with infrequent gravel and ironstone fragments and occasional charcoal flecks. There were no finds present.

Gully [2006] was aligned south-east to north-west with a shallow U-shaped profile and was 0.66m wide by 0.14m deep, the fill (2005) was the same as fill (2003).

### **Trench 22**

Trench 22 (Figs 3 and 4) was 50m long and orientated east to west. Two quarry pits, three gullies, two postholes and a ditch were present in the trench.

At the west end of the trench was gully [2208], aligned north-west to south-east, with a U-shaped profile 0.61m wide and 0.27m deep. The fill (2209) was dark brown silty clay with infrequent gravel and three sherds of greyware. The north part of the gully was overlain by fill (2207) of the quarry pit.

Only part of the large quarry pit [2204] at the west end of the trench was visible, the rest lying beyond the trench (Fig 7, section 16). It measured at least 3.30m wide and 1.12m deep and was not bottomed due to the depth from the trench edge. Only the eastern edge was present which was irregular in section. Lower fill (2205) was 0.38m thick grey/light brown sandy silt with ironstone fragments and larger stones at the base of the excavation and one sherd of early to mid 1st century AD pottery. Overlying this was fill (2206), 0.33m thick, mid brown sandy clay with some ironstone fragments and gravel. Fill (2207) which was 0.43m thick, was mid brown sandy clay with occasional gravel and seven sherds of local wares, which overlay the north part of gully [2208].

A second quarry pit [2211] further east was irregular in shape, 10.50m wide and was not excavated. The fill (2210) was dark red-brown silty clay. Eight iron objects including nails were recovered from the fill (see 6.7). The quarry pit cut ditch [2220].

To the east of the second quarry pit were two parallel ditches [2220] and [2215] respectively. Ditch [2220] was aligned north-east to south-west with a wide U-shaped profile, 1.40m wide by 0.30m deep. Primary fill (2219) was 0.10m thick, yellow-brown silty clay, with occasional gravel, and one sherd of shell-gritted, Roman pottery. Upper fill (2218) was grey-brown sandy clay with occasional charcoal and thirty-six sherds of local Roman pottery and Samian. Parallel ditch [2215] cut ditch [2220] at the south end. It was 0.70m wide and aligned north-east to south-west. Its fill (2214) was red-brown sandy clay with some charcoal flecking and contained sherds of Roman pottery. Close by the eastern edge of the ditch was posthole [2213], which was 0.30m in diameter and not excavated. Fill (2212) was red-brown clay sand with frequent gravel.

Cutting the western edge of ditch [2220] was posthole [2217], with a U-shaped profile, 0.65m in diameter and 0.20m deep. Fill (2216) was grey-brown silty sand with some gravel and charcoal flecks and sherds of Roman pottery. A large flat burnt stone 'post pad' had been placed in the base of the posthole.

Towards the east end of the trench, ditch [2222] was aligned north-east to south-west, 1.8m wide and unexcavated. Fill (2221) consisted of red-brown clay sand with frequent gravel. No finds were present.

### **Trench 23**

Trench 23 (Figs 3 and 4) was 50m long and oriented east to west. Two gullies and a ditch were

at the west end of the trench.

Gully [2304], aligned north-east to south-west with a U-shaped profile was 0.41m wide and 0.16m deep. The fill (2305) was red-brown sandy silt clay with occasional gravel, charcoal flecks, twenty-eight sherds of early to mid 1st century, Verulamium Whitewares and Samian pottery and two burnt stones. A recut of the gully [2306] was 0.38m wide and 0.18m deep. The fill (2307) was dark brown silty clay with black patches, which contained fragments of ironstone, frequent charcoal lumps, Roman greyware and burnt stones. Fill (2308) was also a fill of the recut but only at the south-west end of the gully. It was grey/brown clay with charcoal flecks and sherds of local ware pottery.

Terminal [2309], aligned east south-east to west north-west with a shallow U-shaped profile was 0.69m wide and 0.23m deep and cut gullies [2304] and [2306]. Primary fill (2310) was orange/mid brown silty clay with ironstone fragments, gravel and charcoal flecks. Upper fill (2311) was dark brown silty clay, which contained burnt stone, frequent charcoal and a single sherd of greyware.

To the east of, and parallel to the gullies, was ditch [2312]. It was 1.00m wide with a possible terminal on the eastern edge. Fill (2313) was mid brown silty clay with occasional gravel and charcoal flecks.

#### **Trench 24**

Trench 24 (Figs 3 and 4) was 50m long and orientated north to south. A ditch and a gully were present in the south of the trench.

Gully [2406] was aligned north-west to south-east, with a wide U-shaped profile, 0.60m wide and 0.25m deep (Plate 8). Primary fill (2405) 0.12m deep was orange-brown sandy clay with occasional gravel, and represented natural silting of the gully. Seventy-three sherds of pottery dated to the early to mid 1st century AD, including grey wares and sand-tempered wares and animal bone were present. Overlying this, fill (2404) 0.18m deep, was dark grey silty clay with occasional gravel. It contained one hundred and fifty five sherds of early to mid 1st century AD pottery and represented a deliberate backfilling of the gully.

Ditch [2408] was aligned north-east to south-west, with a wide U-shaped profile 1.30m wide and 0.35m deep. The fill (2407) was red-brown silty sand with frequent small gravel and chalk and contained seventeen sherds of early to mid 1st century pottery, Verulamium Whitewares

and Samian, together with animal bone.

### **Trench 34**

Trench 34 (Figs 3 and 6) was 50m long and orientated east to west. There were two pits and a gully; the smaller pit did not contain finds. The trench was extended to the south to locate the southern edge of pit [3404].

Pit [3404] (Fig 8, section 10) was an irregular-sided rectangle, with steep sides and a flat base, 4.00m long, 3.50m wide and 0.44m deep (Plate 9). Primary fill (3405) was mid grey-brown loamy clay with frequent charcoal, occasional gravel and sherds of early to mid Saxon pottery. Fill (3406) was a slump of material on the eastern edge of the pit. It consisted of light grey silty clay with occasional charcoal and contained sherds of early to mid Saxon pottery. On the north and west sides the pit was cut by gully [3407] which was U-shaped, 2.00m long, 0.78m wide and 0.40m deep. The fill (3408) consisted of light brown sandy clay with occasional charcoal, gravel and early to mid Saxon pottery.

Towards the east end of the trench was pit [3409] part of which lay outside the bounds of the trench. It had a wide U-shaped profile and was 1.12m wide by 0.26m deep. The fill (3410) was orange-brown mottled sandy clay with occasional charcoal and may have been the fill of a tree bole from its disturbed condition.

### **Trench 37**

Trench 37 (Fig 3) was 30m long and was orientated north-east to south-west. There was an isolated posthole in the centre of the trench, the sides of which was extended to the north and south of the posthole to investigate the possibility of further postholes but none were revealed.

Posthole [3705] (Fig 8, Section 9) was steep-sided with a flat base, 0.25m in diameter and 0.14m deep. Its fill (3704) consisted of orange-brown silty sand with the occasional flint inclusion and charcoal flecks. In the top of the fill, and lying on its side was a round, doughnut-shaped, ceramic, Saxon loomweight (Plate 10), (see 6.7).

## 6 THE FINDS

### 6.1 The flint by Andy Chapman

Seven flints were recovered. The raw material is typically grey to black vitreous flint, with a white to pale brown cortex. The group comprises five flakes, one of which has extensive edge damage, possibly from utilisation as a cutting edge. There is a long slender blade, 41mm long by 8-10mm wide, and another blade, 39mm long (broken) by 19mm wide, which has been retouched at the broader distal end to form an end scraper.

The group can be characterised as residual finds of broadly Neolithic to early Bronze Age date.

### 6.2 The Roman pottery by Tora Hylton

The evaluation produced 527 sherds of pottery (see Appendix 1) with a combined weight of 6,147g, recovered from 49 individual deposits in 17 trenches. The highest concentration of pottery (96 % by weight) was recovered from features located in the centre of the site, within an area encompassing Trenches 10, 11, 16-18, 22-24. A small number of sherds were recovered from peripheral trenches to the west (1, 4, 6-9), and Trench 34 to the east, but these amount to just 4% of the total. No pottery was recovered from Trenches 3, 5, 12-14, 19, 20, 26-33, 35-37. With the exception of a few abraded fragments representing non-local and imported wares, the assemblage appears to be of local origin, dating from the early/mid-1st century to the late 2nd/3rd centuries. Late 3rd and 4th-century material is represented, but these comprise just a few abraded sherds.

The overall condition of the pottery is good, although the grog-tempered fabrics are fragmentary, resulting in an average sherd weight of 11.6g. The analysis includes sherd count and weight by fabric type, which has been recorded on an Access database. Where relevant references have been made to Thompson's typology of 'Belgic' Late Iron Age forms (1982) and previously illustrated examples from published reports in the region.

The assemblage is dominated by locally manufactured kitchen and tablewares in coarseware and finewares fabrics, represented by Grog-tempered (16%), Shell-gritted (32%) and Greyware (28%) fabrics.

Chronologically the earliest fabric type represented is Grog-tempered ware. With the exception of one small sherd from Trench 22, Grog-tempered wares were only present in

trenches sited to the west of the site (1-17). The majority of sherds are undiagnostic, but the few datable forms represented, display features reminiscent of Late Iron Age (Belgic) type wares. These were located in fill (1008) of ditch [1009] in Trench 10, and are represented by jars ranging from large plain storage vessels to smaller forms with shoulder cordons (cf. Thompson 1982, Type B1) and plain jars with no external rim (ibid 1982, Type C3.3), which date to the early/mid-1st century.

Later forms dating to the late 1st and 2nd centuries in shell-gritted and greyware fabrics are represented by jars, with channel rims (Marney 1989, fig 24, 8, 10 and fig 25, 14), everted rims, decorative cordons, rilling and horizontal grooving. A cordoned jar in greyware, displays similarities in both form and fabric to an example from Milton Keynes (ibid 1989, fig 6, 32) which dates to the late 1st and 2nd centuries. Other forms represented include shallow dishes with upright rims, flanged bowls and a bowl with an out-turned rim (ibid 1989, fig 31, 8).

Non-local wares are represented by a small number of abraded and mainly undiagnostic body sherds in Verulamium White ware (c2nd century) and colour coated wares from the Lower Nene Valley (3rd-4th centuries). In addition part of a Young Type C47 Oxford ware bowl, dating to c270-400AD (1977, fig 58) was recovered from Saxon feature in Trench 34, together with an assemblage of Saxon pottery.

The assemblage also includes ten fragments of Samian imported from the Continent. Although displaying signs of extreme wear and abrasion, the forms identified include a Dragendorff Type 33 cup with footstand (Webster 1996, fig 30), a 18/31R bowl (ibid 1996, fig 21) and two Type 38A hemispherical bowls (ibid 1996, fig 36).

### ***General Comments***

Much of the material derived from a complex of features at the centre of the site. The range of material represents domestic settlement in the area from the early/mid-1st century through to the late 2nd/3rd centuries. Only a small group of abraded and mainly undiagnostic sherds dated to the 3rd and 4th-century were recovered, suggesting that occupation may not have extended into the later Roman period. The spatial distribution of the fabric types and forms, suggests that the focus of occupation moved from the west to the east.

### 6.3 The Roman finds by Tora Hylton

Finds of Roman date were recovered from Trenches 10 and 22. The range of finds is dominated by iron nails and unidentifiable fragments, but of interest is the presence of an iron spud, found together with an annular iron ring (possibly for suspension) and a dome-headed nail (hob nail), in fill (1032) of Ditch [1033] in Trench 10. Spuds are not uncommon finds on sites of Roman date; they would have been used for the delicate task of weeding between the crops. This particular example is socketed with a triangular blade, it has straight sides and the blade edge is crescentic, a sign that it has been heavily sharpened. It displays similarities to an example from the Sibson hoard, Peterborough (cf. Rees 1979, fig 130b) which has been dated to the 4th century. The fill (2210) of quarry pit [2211] in Trench 22 produced nine individually recorded small finds; with the exception of four nails, two examples each of Mannings Type 1b with a flat sub-circular head (cf. 1985, fig 32) and Mannings Type 8 with a domed head (cf. 1985, fig 32), they comprise undiagnostic strips and rod fragments.

### 6.4 The ceramic building material by Pat Chapman

#### *Roman tile*

This small assemblage comprises 38 fragments of Roman tile, weighing 5916g (Table 2). This is almost all roof tile, as indicated by the presence of six *tegulae* recognised by their distinctive flanges, and three curved *imbrices*. One *imbrex* and three *tegulae* come from Trench 10, fill (1032) of ditch [1033], one flange has a lower cutaway, for linking one *tegula* over another, consistent with a Type C dated to c 160-260 AD (Warry 2007), another *tegula* has a paw print. Two other *tegulae* are unstratified within Trench 10. A *tegula* and *imbrex* also come from fill (1605), of ditch [1604] and a very abraded *imbrex* from fill (1110) of pond [1111]. Twenty-one of the body sherds are 15-25mm thick and most likely from roof tile. There are also three fragments of probable floor tile 35-38mm thick.

The fabric is typically silty to sandy orange with occasional small to fine calcareous or grog inclusions and fired to orange sometimes with a grey core or reddish brown.

Table 1: Quantification of ceramic tile

Context/feature	No	Weight (g)	Comment
1032 / 1033 ditch	10	2732	3 tegulae, 1 imbrex
1036 / 1037 gully	4	493	
Trench 10, u/s	3	1378	2 tegulae
1110 / 1111 pond	1	76	imbrex
1112 / 1113 ditch	1	77	
1605 / 1604 ditch	3	219	1 tegula, 1 imbrex
1704 /pond	5	197	
1805 / 1808 quarry pit	2	120	
1807 / 1808 quarry pit	1	53	
2305 / 2304 ditch	1	21	
2802 / subsoil	3	61	
2902 / subsoil	1	294	
3701 / topsoil	1	40	
3702 / subsoil	2	155	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>5916</b>	

**Fired clay**

There are seven fragments of fired clay, weighing 198g. One large fragment from fill (3406) of pit [3404], brown with a hard grey slightly vesicular flat surface, had been subject to high temperature, possibly as part of a hearth. Four other nondescript fragments come from pond fill (1704) and fill (2311) of ditch [2309].

**6.5 The querns** by Andy Chapman

From context (1040), the fill of gully [1041], there is just under half of a domed rotary quern in Hertfordshire pudding stone. The stone is 100mm thick, and the quern is *c* 270mm diameter, although the outer surface is damaged. The stone has been split vertically through the central hopper and the handle socket. The hopper is 50mm in diameter at the top and tapers steadily to 22mm diameter at the eye. The handle socket is conical, up to 40mm in diameter by 50mm deep, with a pointed base, and is situated low down on the side, only 14mm above the grinding surface. The grinding surface is slightly concave.

Domed rotary querns in Hertfordshire pudding stone are a characteristic find on Roman settlement sites.

**6.6 Metalworking debris** by Andy Chapman

A total of 10.82kg of ferrous slag was recovered from context (906), the fill of a pit [907] in Trench 9. The assemblage includes a single massive block of slag, 245mm long by 180mm wide and up to 110mm thick, weighing 5.7kg. A little fired clay, red to red-brown in colour,



from the furnace lining adheres to the underside of the block, while the absence of any clay lining around the sides indicates that the block came from the centre of the furnace. There is a further 1.9kg of small fragments, up to 130mm long by 30-45mm thick. Most of these pieces are from furnace lining, and comprise fluid slag adhering to the fired lining, which is hard and light grey in colour to a depth of 20mm and below this orange-red. From the soil sample there is a further 3.2kg of smaller fragments of mixed slag and fired, grey, furnace lining. The smaller pieces of slag are fluid and convoluted, containing small numerous vesicles, but appear to be slag that has run down within the furnace. There are no characteristic flat, lava-like plates of tap slag.

There are also numerous small lumps of reddened fired clay from the furnace lining, although these have not been included in the total weights.

The material from context (906) is the debris that has been cleaned out from the base of an iron smelting furnace, presumably so that it could be reused. There is no evidence to indicate that it was a slag-tapping furnace, and the amount of debris may support the suggestion that it was probably a simple bowl furnace, with the slag accumulating to some depth at the base.

A few small fragments of ferrous slag were also recovered from context (904) of gully [905], 521g, and in Trench 24, fill (2404) of gully [2406], 21g.

## **6.7 The Saxon pottery** by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprises 29 sherds with a total weight of 1040g. It comprises a very well-preserved group of undecorated vessels which appear entirely domestic in nature. Where appropriate, it was recorded using the codings and chronology of the Bedfordshire County Archaeology Service type-series, as follows:

A01: *Chaff-tempered*. Moderate to dense chaff voids, sparse quartz and /or calcareous material up to 1mm. 7 sherds, 496g.

A18: *Fine quartz*. Moderate to dense sub-rounded quartz up to 1mm. 21 sherds, 524g,

Fabric 3: *Granite temper*. Sparse sub-angular grano-diorite up to 2mm. 1 sherd, 20g,

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The range of fabric types is fairly typical of sites of the period in the region.

The assemblage comprises mainly large fragments of a small number of vessels, most of which are closed forms of medium to large size, although the rimsherd from a smaller open bowl was noted in context 3406 of pit [3404]. Both rim- and base-sherds from jars are present. Cross-fits between three different vessels from contexts 3405 and 3406 were noted, suggesting that the two contexts are both part of the same deposit. The group of pottery appears entirely domestic in nature, with the large mean sherd size (35.9g) and the freshness of the sherds indicating that it is a primary deposit, and that there was Anglo-Saxon activity within the immediate vicinity of these excavations.

The pottery is all undecorated, making it impossible to date the group other than to within the broad early/middle Saxon period, *ie* AD450-850. Further work at the site may enable clarification of this dating.

*Table 2: Saxon pottery by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type*

Fabric type	A18		A01		F3		Date
	No	Weight (g)	No	Weight (g)	No	Weight (g)	
920/ 921 ditch	1	4	1	31	–	–	E/MS
3405/ 3404 pit	9	365	2	297	1	20	E/MS
3406/ 3404 pit	3	60	4	168	–	–	E/MS
3408/ 3407 gully	8	95	–	–	–	–	E/MS
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>	

## 6.8 The Saxon finds by Tora Hylton

Finds from Saxon deposits include two possible nails from Trench 34, from fill (3405) of pit [3404] and a ceramic loomweight from the top of fill (3704) of posthole [3705] in Trench 37. The presence of an annular loomweight attests to the manufacture of textiles on a warp weighted loom during the early/middle Saxon period (Plate 10). The loomweight would have been used to ensure that the warp was vertically taut. This particular example is complete and has been made from a poorly-fired coarse clay fabric with an orange oxidised exterior and a black/grey barely fired core. Typologically it may be compared to Dunning's annular type with a D-shaped cross-section (1959, 23-24). The size and dimensions of the loomweight (Diameter: 120mm, Diameter of central hole: 55mm) correspond to the mean range of examples recovered from Pennylands, Milton Keynes (Williams 1993, 123), while its weight of 329g is representative of the middle range for Anglo-Saxon loomweights, suggesting that it

would have been used for the more ordinary types of fabric (Walton Rogers 1997, 1753).

## 6.9 The medieval and post-medieval finds

### *Medieval tile* by Pat Chapman

Four sherds of medieval roof tile, weighing 370g, come from trench 7, subsoil (702). One corner has a peghole with a diameter of 12mm. Another very worn sherd has part of a peghole 13mm in diameter.

### *Post-medieval finds* by Tora Hylton

Modern finds are represented by a corroded, copper alloy penny of Elizabeth II (post 1972) from Trench 5 and an iron fitting from Trench 9.

## 7 THE ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

### 7.1 The animal bone by Karen Deighton

#### *Introduction*

A total of 1.4kg (1 archive box) of animal bone was collected by hand during the course of excavation. This material was assessed to ascertain the condition of the bone, the species present and potential contribution to the understanding of the site and to inform on future collection strategies.

#### *Method*

The animal bone was scanned and identifiable elements were noted (following Halstead 1985 after Watson 1979). Preservation and modification (after Binford 1981) were also noted. Any available biometrical data (after von den Driesch 1976) was noted as was any available ageing data. Ageing data included state of fusion (after Silver 1969) and tooth eruption and wear (after Payne 1973 for *Ovicaprids* and Halstead 1985 after Payne 1973 for *Bos* and Payne and Bull for *Sus*).

#### *Results*

##### Preservation

Fragmentation and surface abrasion were high and flaking was noted in context 1028. Fresh breaks were frequent. Only three instances of Canid gnawing were noted which could suggest the presence of dogs/foxes at the site. Evidence for burning was restricted to a single

indeterminate bone fragment from context 3405, suggesting that this was not a preferred method of disposal. No evidence for butchery or bone working was observed, possibly as a result of the high frequency of surface abrasion.

### *The taxa present*

*Table 3: Taxa by context*

Cut/fill	Feature	<i>Bos</i> (cow)	<i>Ovicaprid</i> (sheep/goat)	<i>Sus</i> (pig)	Large ungulate	Small ungulate	Total
1808/1807	Quarry pit	1					1
2406/2404	Gully	1		1	1		3
2406/2405	Gully		1				1
3404/3405	Pit	9	1	2	2	2	16
3404/3406	Pit	2	2	2	2		8
<b>Total</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>29</b>

Contexts 404 (fill of pit 407) and 1028 (fill of gully terminal 1029) had indeterminate bone fragments only.

The most abundant taxon present was Cattle with smaller quantities of Sheep/Goat and Pig. No particular concentrations of bone were observed. No bone was recovered from sieved material.

### *Ageing and metrical data*

*Table 4: The availability of ageing and metrical data*

<i>Bos</i> (cow)			<i>Ovicaprid</i> (sheep/goat)		<i>Sus</i> (pig)		
fusion	toothdata	measurements	fusion	toothdata	fusion	toothdata	measurements
1	2	2	2	1	3	1	2

A single female pig canine was recorded which could be used for sexing

### *Discussion*

Little can be said of the animal economy of the site due to the paucity of material. However, the species present are typical of those seen from Roman contexts.

### *Potential*

Although preservation was poor, most of the bone (c75%) could be identified and some ageing data was available. This provides some basic information on the animal economy of the site, and adds to the corpus of existing work for Bedfordshire, for example Queensway Hall, Dunstable (Hutchins 2004).

**1.1 Assessment of charcoal** by Karen Deighton***Introduction***

A soil sample (Sample 1) was collected from context (906), the fill of pit [907] in Trench 9. This material was analysed to establish the presence, preservation and nature of ecofacts along with obtaining further information on the function of the feature and the economy associated with it.

***Method***

The sample was processed using a siraf tank fitted with a 500micron mesh and 250 micron flot sieve. The resulting flots were dried and examined under a microscope (10x magnification). Seeds were identified with the aid of the author's reference collection and Schoch *et al* (1988).

***Results***

Preservation was entirely by charring. Seeds were well preserved, with no fragmentation and a low frequency of surface abrasion. Charcoal was fairly heavily abraded, however some fragments would still be large enough for further identification.

***Taxa present***

Along with a significant amount of slag, which is dealt with elsewhere, 22g of wood charcoal were recovered. A single fat hen (*Chenopodium album*) seed and one dock (*Rumex* sp) nutlet were also observed.

***Discussion***

The presence of the common ruderal weeds fat hen and dock suggest the use of dried plant material possibly collected from around the site. This material could have been utilised in starting a furnace. Unfortunately, without further analysis (e.g. identification to taxa) little can be said of the charcoal present.

***Potential***

Although it is difficult to predict the ecofactual potential of an entire site from a single sample, the charcoal from the sample has the potential to at least elucidate the fuel exploitation and economy associated with a furnace.

***Conclusion***

A small amount of ecofacts, which have some potential contribution to a further understanding of the economy associated with a furnace located close by.

## 8 DISCUSSION

The Desk-based Assessment (Walker 2008) found that there were no known archaeological sites within the area of the development and that no previous archaeological survey had been undertaken. The Country Archaeological Officer for Bedfordshire therefore requested that a trial trench evaluation, this report, was carried out to investigate the site.

The earliest evidence recovered were seven flint artefacts that were residual in later contexts. These consisted of abraded flakes and blades, broadly dated to the Neolithic and early Bronze Age.

The evaluation produced evidence of settlement from the late Iron Age through to the Middle Saxon period (early 1st century AD to mid-9th century).

The concentration of Iron Age and Roman features was to the southern part of the site. These probably represent a farmstead, standing within its fields and trackways. At least one building was found, surviving as a roundhouse ring ditch. The nearby penannular gully with terminals may indicate the position of a second building, or small paddock. The presence of other postholes and gullies may indicate associated structures and possible fencelines. Numerous small intercutting pits were present for the disposal of domestic waste, primarily pottery, and small amount of animal waste (from cow, sheep/ goat, and pig). There was evidence of small scale iron production. At least two pits contained the remains of a cleaning episode from a bowl furnace, indicating that iron production was occurring nearby. At the east there was evidence of clay extraction and it is possible the clay was being used for making daub for buildings.

The dating of the pottery suggests the main period of activity was from the early 1st century to the early 3rd century AD, with the fewer abraded sherds present indicating a lower level of activity into the 4th century. The distribution of the pottery suggests earlier features were located in the western part with occupation shifting eastwards over time.

On the south-east part of the site, two trenches yielded evidence of early/middle Saxon occupation (AD 450-850). No buildings were found, however, finds of this date included domestic refuse in the form of iron nails, pottery and animal bone. Textile production was suggested by the find of a single annular loomweight in an isolated posthole. On the south-western part of the site a ditch contained Saxon pottery. Although, this may have been a long-

lived earlier feature, as it also contained earlier Roman pottery.

The presence of ridge and furrow in many of the trenches indicates that the site was under cultivation during the medieval period. The small amount of medieval roof tile recovered from the subsoil is consistent with material derived from manuring.

The trial trench evaluation at Linslade has demonstrated good survival of archaeological features of Roman and Saxon date. The features were well defined and at a relatively shallow depth, usually below the current subsoil. In the area of greatest density of features, it was possible to elucidate stratigraphic relationships and suggest general phasing. The range of finds recovered was good, indicative of domestic settlement. There was also evidence of small-scale iron production. The environmental survival was relatively poor (ie ecofacts, charred plant and animal bone). This is probably due to the porous and acid nature of the sands and gravels.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Binford, L, 1981 *Bones: ancient myths and modern man*
- Brothwell, D, and Higgs, E, (eds) *Science in Archaeology*, London: Thames and Hudson
- Dunning, G C, Hurst, J G, Myres, J N L, and Tischler, F, 1959 Anglo-Saxon Pottery: a symposium, *Medieval Archaeol*, **3**, 1-78
- Gurney, D, 2002 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeol, Occasional Paper, **14**
- Halstead, P L, 1985 A study of mandibular teeth from Romano-British contexts at Maxey East, in F Pryor and C French 1985, 219-24
- Howe, M D, Perrin, J R, and Mackreth, D F, (1980) *Roman Pottery from the Nene Valley: A guide*, Occasional Paper **2**, Peterborough City Museum and Art Gallery
- Hutchins, E, 2004 The animal bone, in A Mudd 2004, 153-154
- IFA 1994 revised 2001 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*, Institute of Field Archaeologists
- IFA 1995 revised 2006 *Code of Conduct*, Institute of Field Archaeologists
- Marney, P T, 1989 *Roman & Belgic Pottery from excavations in Milton Keynes 1972-82*, Buckinghamshire Archaeol Soc, Monog, **2**
- Mudd, A, 2004 *Early Roman occupation on the site of the former Queensway Hall, Dunstable*, Bedfordshire Archaeol, **25**, 141-58
- NA 2008 *Written scheme of investigation for archaeological evaluation of land at Stoke Road, Linslade*, Northamptonshire Archaeology
- NCCNH 2003 *Health and Safety provisions and Northamptonshire Archaeology Health and Safety at Work Guidelines*, Northamptonshire County Council, Northamptonshire Heritage
- Payne, S, 1973 Kill-off patterns in Sheep and goats: the mandibles from Asvan Kale, *Anatolian Studies*, **23**, 281-303
- Pryor, F, and French, C, 1985 *The Fenland Project No 1. Archaeology and environment in the Lower Welland Valley*, East Anglian Archaeol, **27 (i-ii)**
- Rees, S E, 1979 *Agricultural Implements in prehistoric and Roman Britain, Part i*, British Archaeological Reports, **69(i)**
- Schoch, W H, Pawlik, B, and Schweingruber, W H, 1988 *Botanical macro-remains*, Berne: Paul Haupt
- Silver, I, 1969 The ageing of domestic mammals, in D Brothwell and E Higgs (eds) 1969, 283-302
- Thompson, I, 1982 *Grog-tempered 'Belgic' pottery of South-Eastern England*, British Archaeological Reports, **108**, Oxford

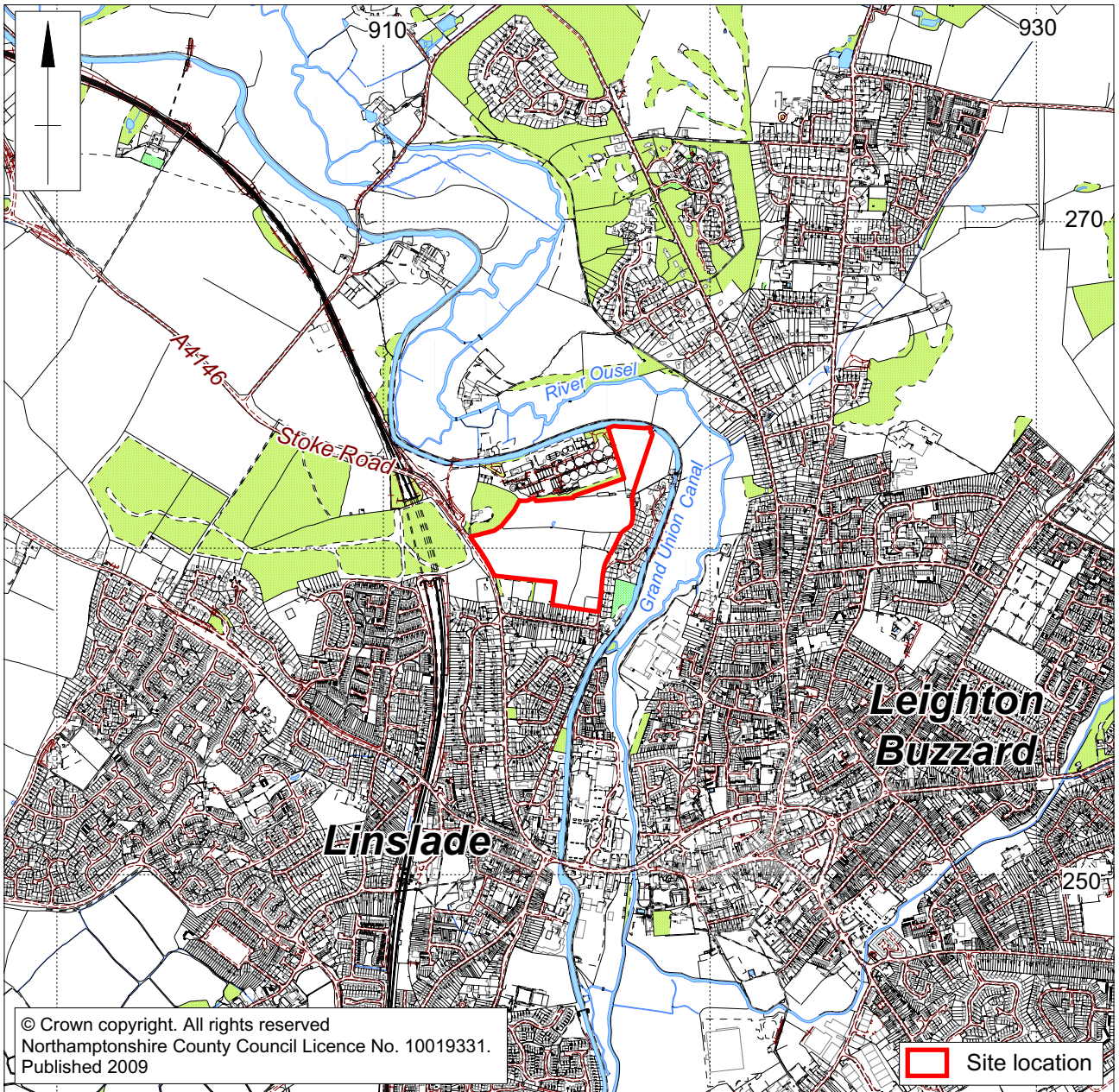
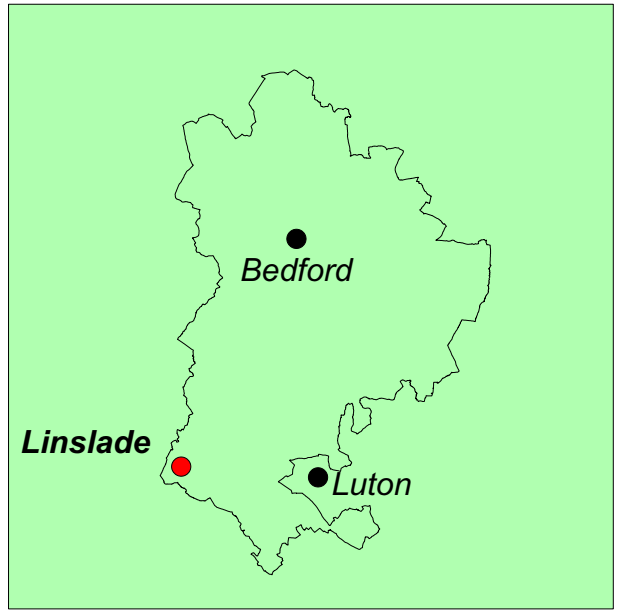
- Von den Driesch, A, 1976 *Guide to the measurement of Animal bones from Archaeological sites*, Harvard: University Press
- Walker, C, 2008 *An archaeological desk-based assessment of land at Bossington Lane/Stoke Road, Linslade, Bedfordshire*, Northamptonshire Archaeology, report **08/194**
- Walton Rogers, P, 1997 *Textile production at 16-22 Coppergate, Vol 17: The Small Finds*, York Archaeological Trust
- Warry, P, 2007 Roman Tile, hard-core or hard data? *Current Archaeology*, **209**, 27-30
- Watson, J P N, 1979 *The estimation of the relative frequencies of mammalian species: Khirokitia*, Journal of Archaeol Science
- Webster, P, 1996 *Roman Samian Pottery in Britain*, Council for British Archaeology, **19**
- Williams, R J, 1993 *Pennyland & Hartigans: Two Iron Age and Saxon sites in Milton Keynes*, Buckinghamshire Archaeol Soc, Monog, **4**
- Young, C, 1977 *The Roman Pottery Industry of the Oxford Region*, British Archaeological Reports, **43**

**APPENDIX 1: Pottery Index**

FABRIC TYPE	TRENCH/CONTEXT NUMBER																																
	102		202		404		406		604		702		705		804		904		920		1006		1008		1018		1027		1028		1032		
	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)		
<b>LIA/Roman Pottery</b>																																	
<b>Local Wares</b>																																	
Grog-tempered wares	2	4			5	35	7	75	1	11			1	6	2	18					1	2	3	54			1	4	7	157	1	151	
Greyware							1	4									3	12	1	38	1	6	4	66	2	14					6	110	
Shell-gritted wares							8	58			1	5																			3	83	
Soft-Pink-Grog	1	17																													1	60	
Sand Tempered Wares																																	
Oxidised Sandy Wares																															3	30	
<b>Regional wares</b>																																	
Oxford Ware																																	
Lower Nene Valley CC																																	
Verulamium Whiteware																																	
<b>Imported Wares</b>																																	
Samian																																	
<b>Medieval Pottery</b>			1	2							1	3																					
<b>Post-Medieval</b>											1	6																					
<b>Total</b>	3	21	1	2	5	35	16	137	1	11	3	14	1	6	2	18	3	12	1	38	2	8	7	120	2	14	1	4	7	157	14	434	

FABRIC TYPE	TRENCH/CONTEXT NUMBER																															
	1034		1036		1038		1040		1108		1110		1112		1120		1123		1503		1602		1607		1704		1706		1805		1807	
	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)		
<b>Roman Pottery</b>																																
<b>Local Wares</b>																																
Grog-tempered wares			1	60	1	5	1	24	1	6	1	18	3	21	3	11	6	44	5	45			1	39	2	34	2	44				
Greyware											4	38	3	27					1	3	5	122	1	12	8	224	3	18	1	5	3	29
Shell-gritted wares											2	12	4	32											7	63	1	9	3	7	2	9
Soft-Pink-Grog											1	4	3	23																	4	55
Sand Tempered Wares																											1	14			5	16
Oxidised Sandy Wares																			1	28					2	34			1	1		
<b>Regional wares</b>																																
Oxford Ware																																
Lower Nene Valley CC													2	2																		
Verulamium Whiteware	5	28																					1	18	1	18						
Mortaria																									10	218						
<b>Imported Wares</b>																																
Samian											1	47							2	50					1	1						
<b>Medieval Pottery</b>																																
<b>Total</b>	5	28	1	60	1	5	1	24	1	6	9	119	15	105	3	11	7	48	9	126	5	122	3	69	31	592	7	85	9	68	14	67

FABRIC TYPE	TRENCH/CONTEXT NUMBER																																	
	2205		2207		2209		2210		2214		2216		2218		2219		2305		2307		2308		2311		2404		2405		2407		3402		3405	
	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)	No/Wg (g)			
<b>Roman Pottery</b>																																		
<b>Local Wares</b>																																		
Grog-tempered wares			1	3																														
Greyware			4	42	3	63			3	45	1	1	3	23			14	132	4	27	1	7	1	15	35	358	27	292	3	20				
Shell-gritted wares	1	7							1	14			32	360	1	2	5	59							103	1261	1	4	9	97				
Soft-Pink-Grog																																		
Sand Tempered Wares																	3	10							17	150	45	424						
Oxidised Sandy Wares			1	1			2	16									3	12			1	6												
<b>Regional wares</b>																																		
Oxford Ware																															1	29		
Lower Nene Valley CC																																		
Verulamium Whiteware																	1	44											4	19				
<b>Imported Wares</b>																																		
Samian			1	2									1	7			2	17											1	8	1	4		
<b>Medieval Pottery</b>																																		
<b>Total</b>	1	7	7	48	3	63	2	16	4	59	1	1	36	390	1	2	28	274	4	27	2	13	1	15	155	1769	73	720	17	144	1	4	1	29

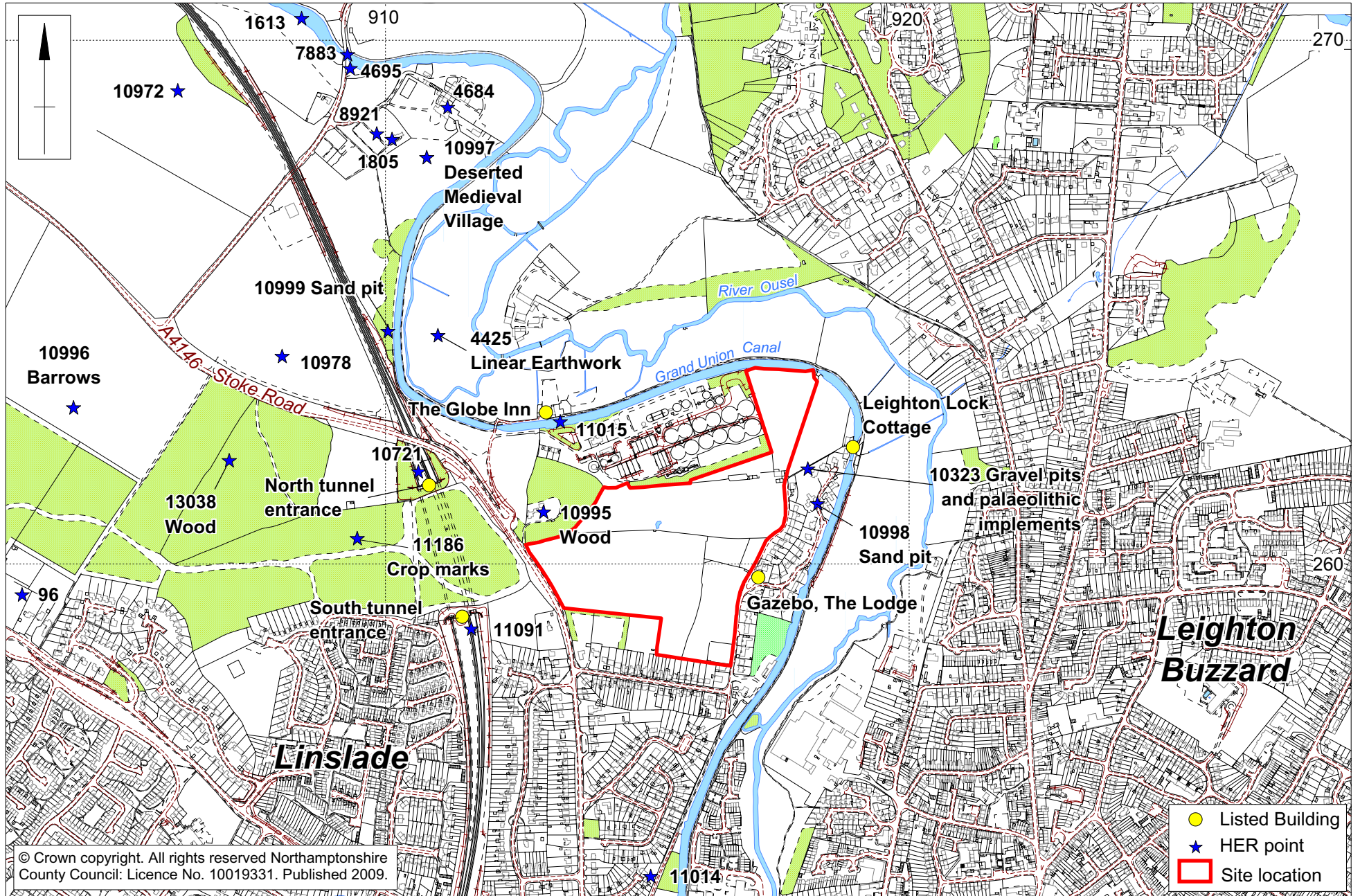


Scale 1:20,000

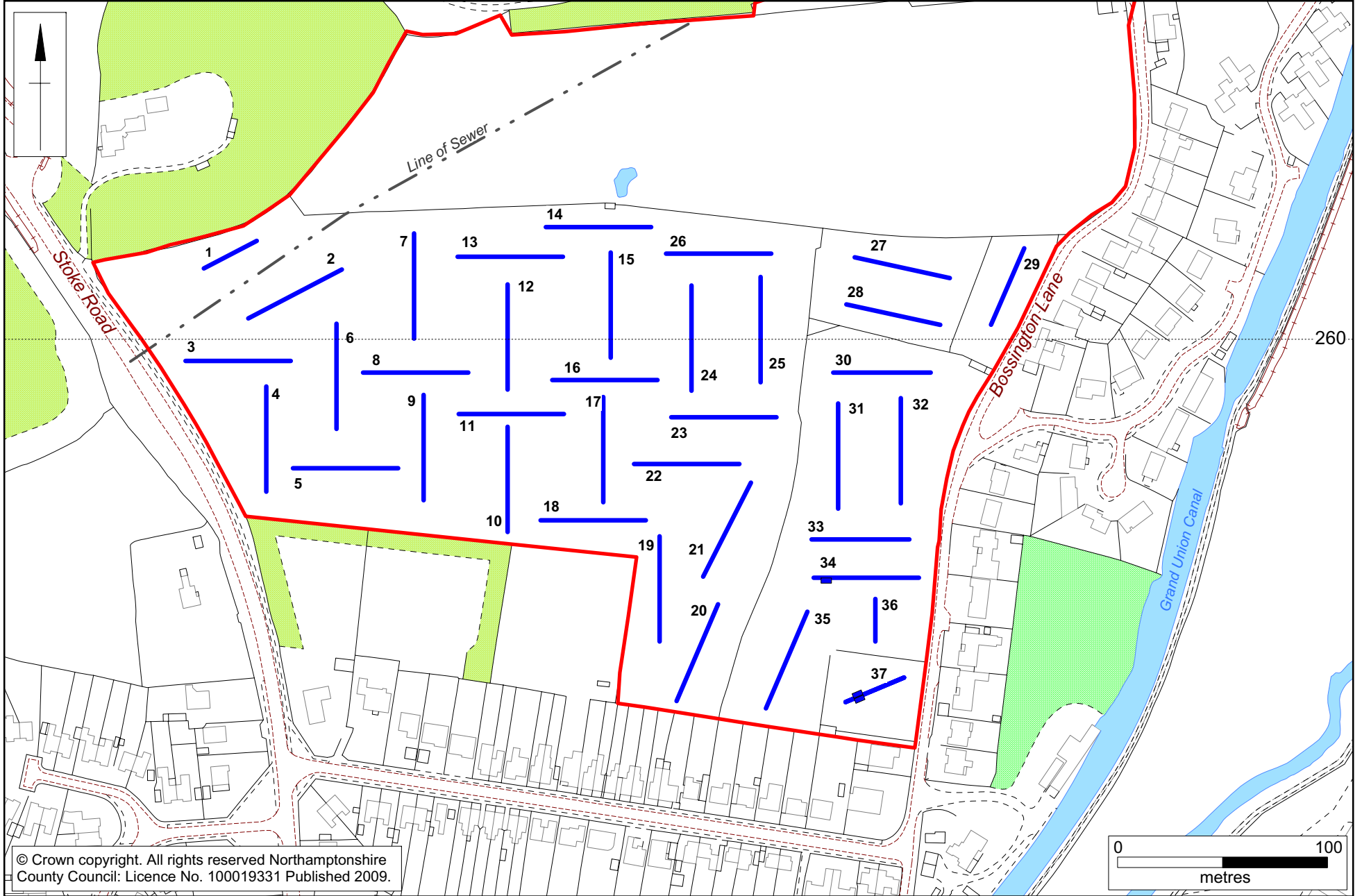
Site location Fig 1

Scale 1:10,000

Historic Environment Record (HER) information Fig 2

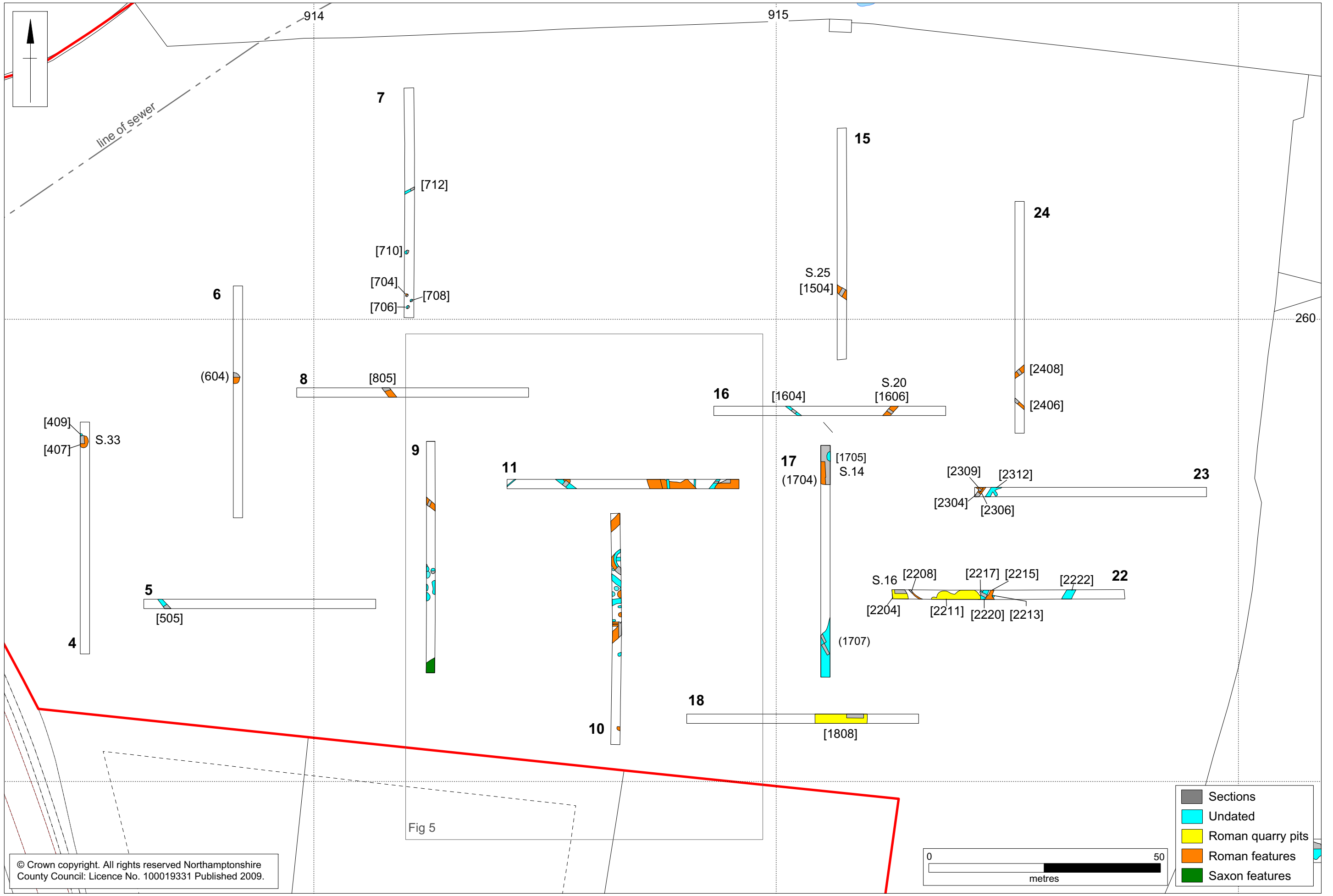


1:2,500



Linslade Stoke Rd Trench Locations Fig 3

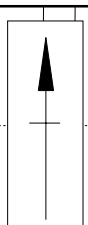
© Crown copyright. All rights reserved Northamptonshire County Council: Licence No. 100019331 Published 2009.



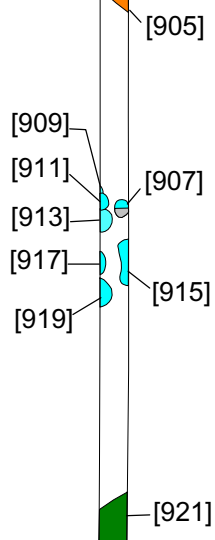
© Crown copyright. All rights reserved Northamptonshire County Council: Licence No. 100019331 Published 2009.

Scale 1:750

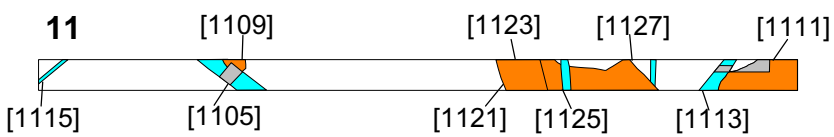
Plan of trenches 4-11, 15-18, 21-24 Fig 4



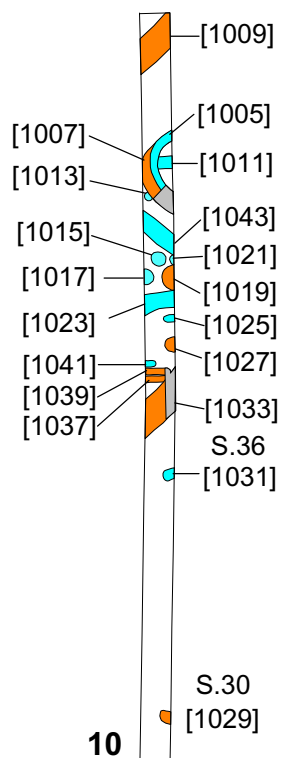
9



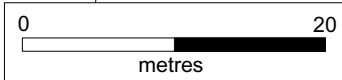
11



10



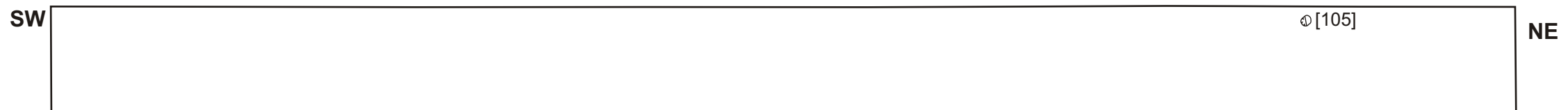
© Crown copyright. All rights reserved Northamptonshire County Council: Licence No. 100019331 Published 2009.



	Sections
	Undated
	Roman features
	Saxon features



**Trench 1**



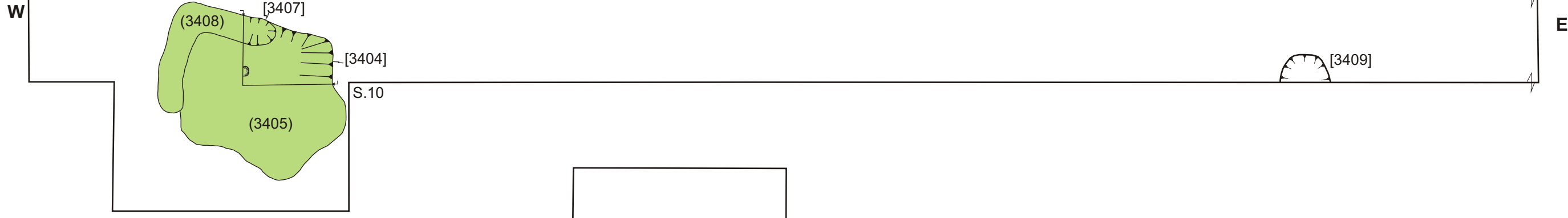
**Trench 13**



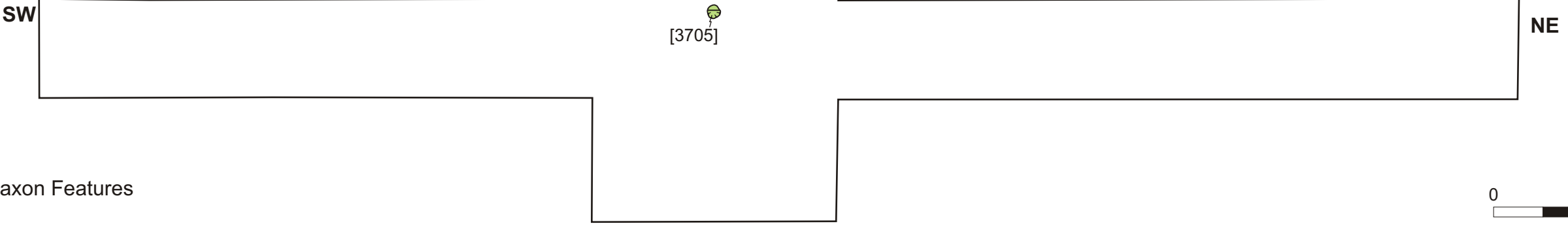
**Trench 20**



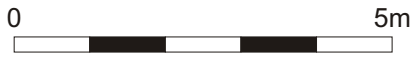
**Trench 34**



**Trench 37**

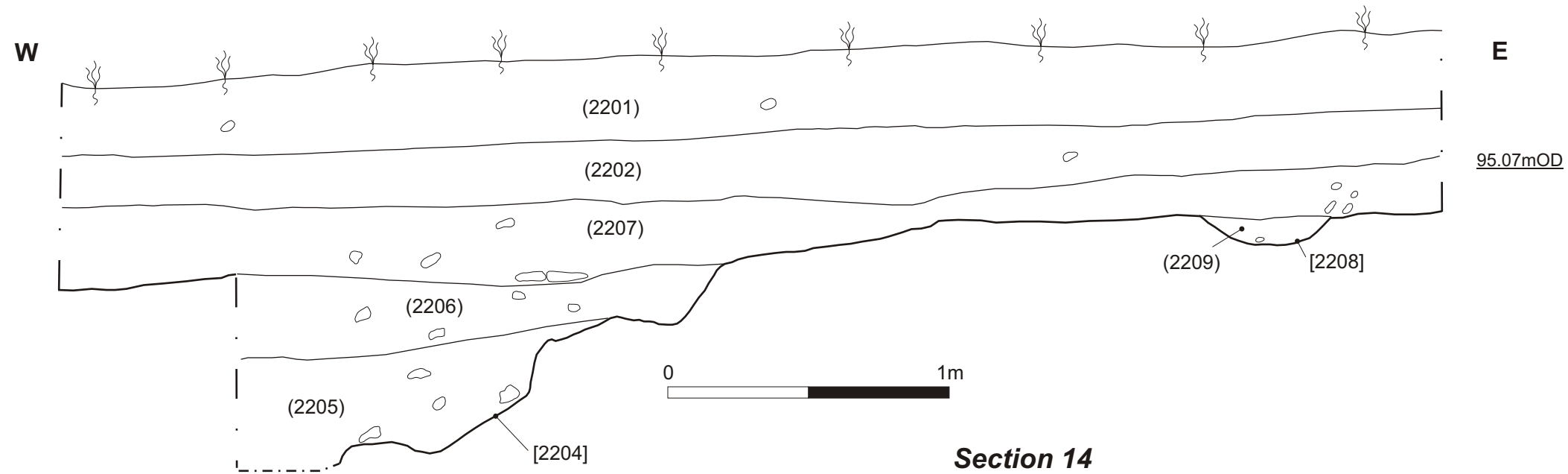


 Saxon Features

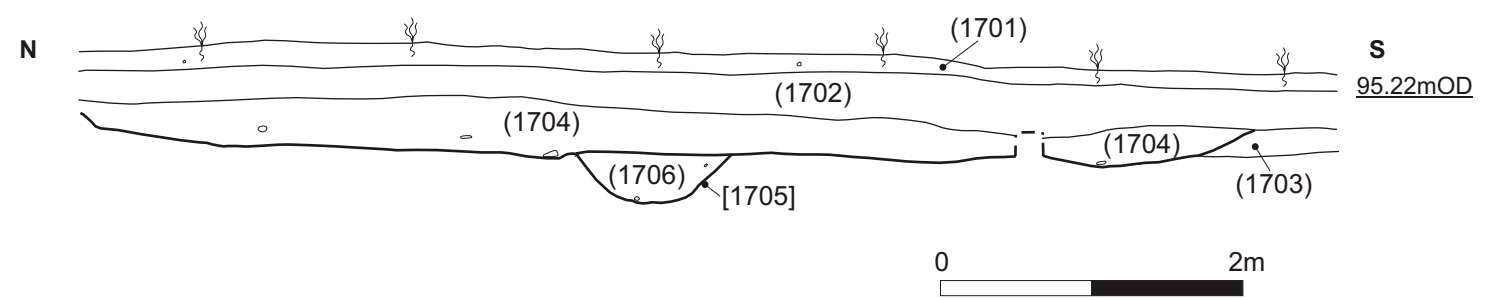


Trench plans 1,13,20,34 and 37 Fig 6

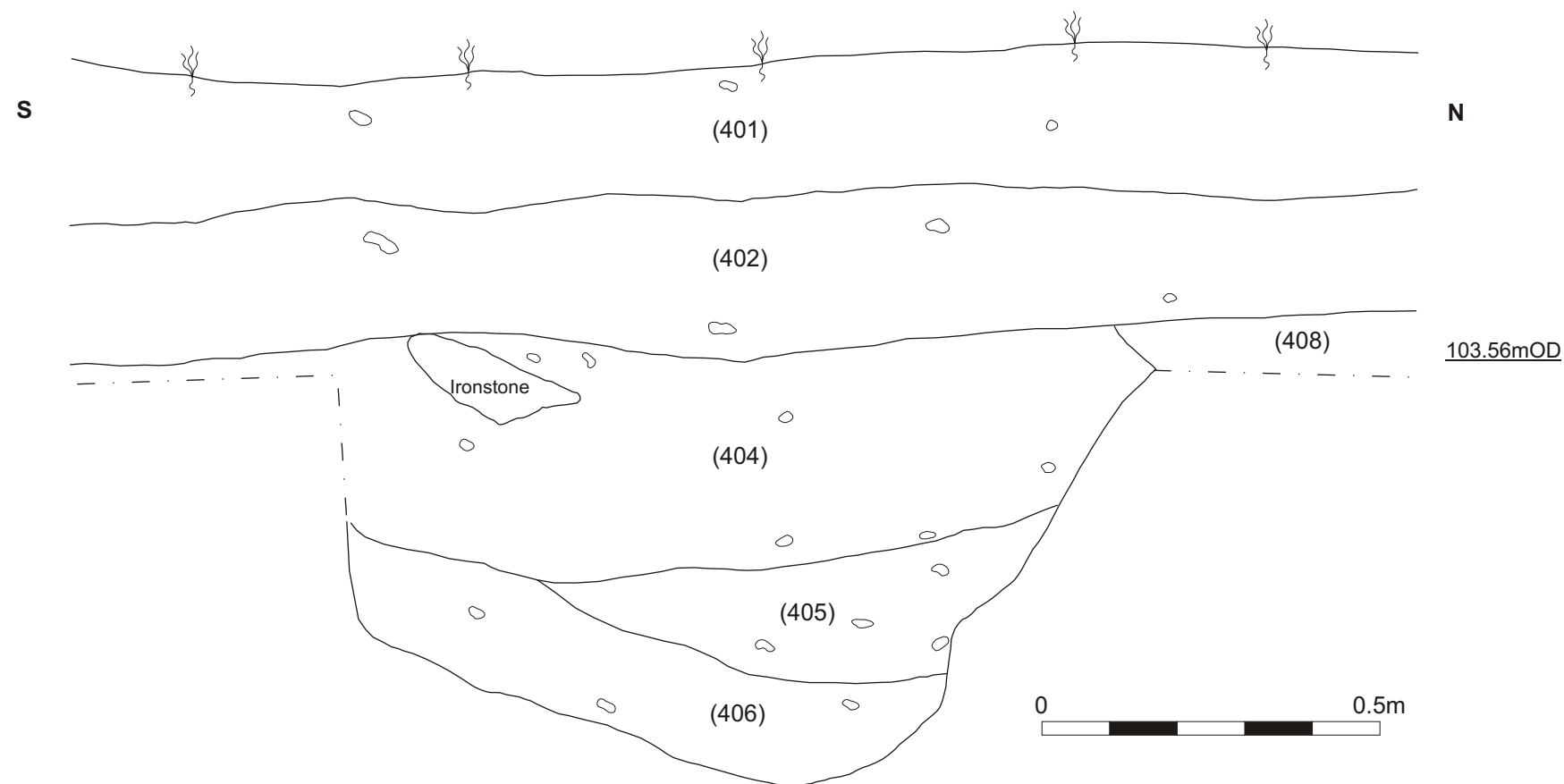
**Section 16**



**Section 14**

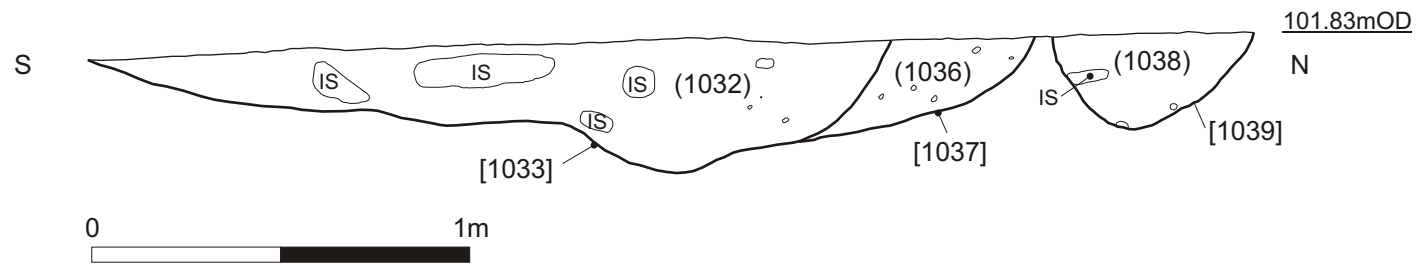


**Section 33**

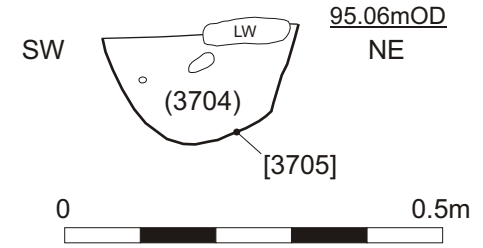


Sections 14, 16 and 33 Fig 7

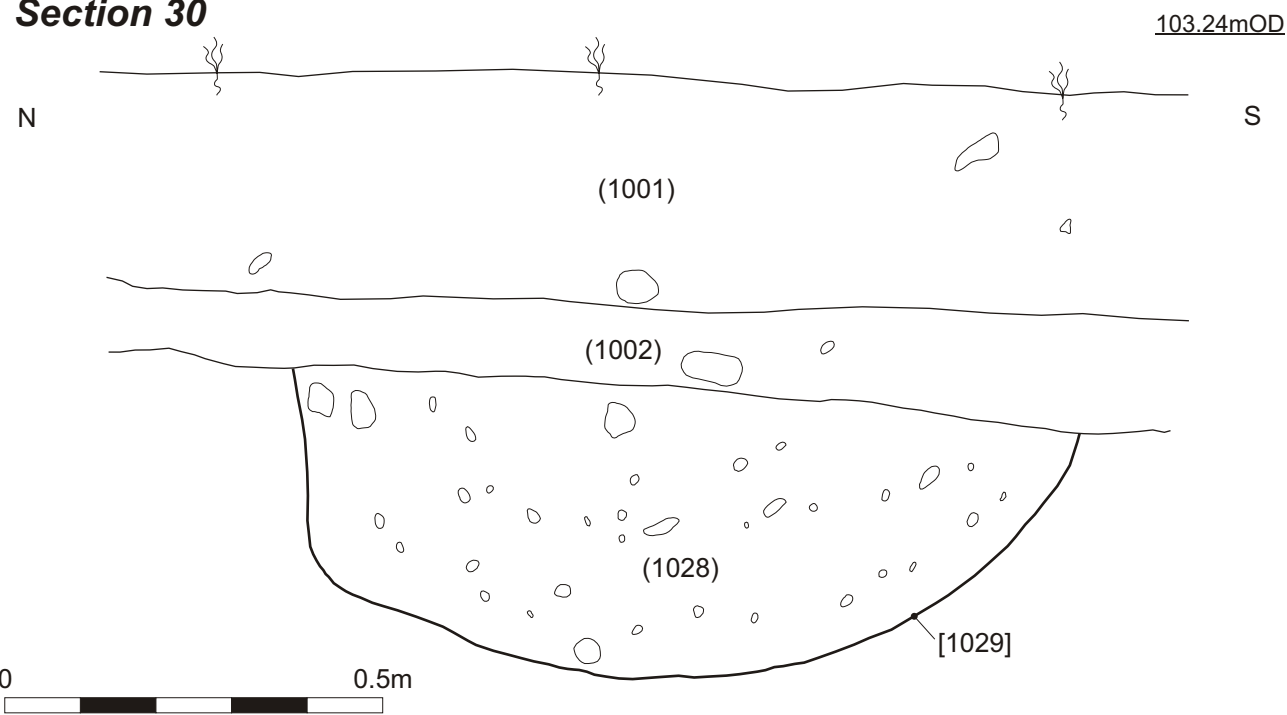
**Section 36**



**Section 9**



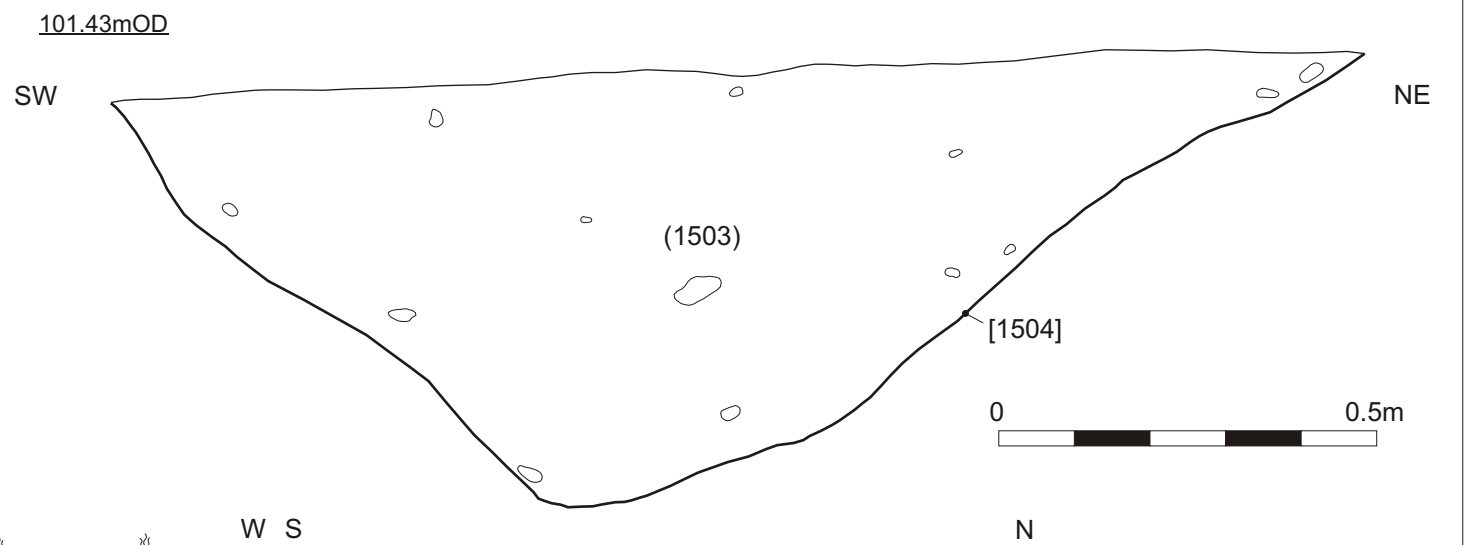
**Section 30**



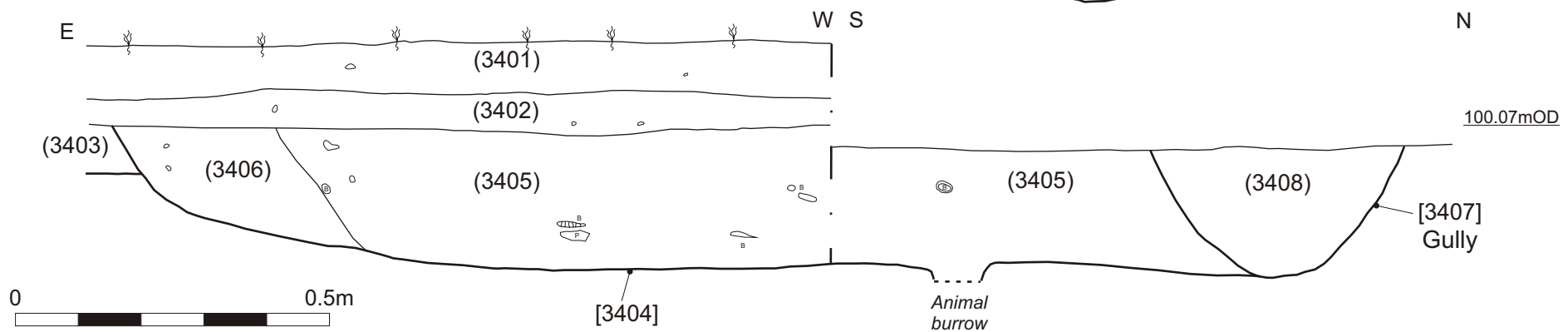
**Section 20**



**Section 25**



**Section 10**



IS Ironstone  
 B Bone  
 P Pottery  
 LW Loom Weight

Sections 9, 10, 20, 25, 30, 36 Fig 8



Plate 1: General view of site, looking east



Plate 2: Trench 9, pits [909], [911] and burnt pits [907] and [913], looking north-west



Plate 3: Trench 9, excavated burnt pit [907], looking north



Plate 4: Trench 10, possible ditch terminal [1029], looking east



Plate 5: Trench 11, pit [1109], cutting ditch [1105], looking north-east



Plate 6: Trench 16, ditch [1604], looking south-east



Plate 7: Trench 16, ditch [1606], looking south-west



Plate 8: Trench 24, ditch [2406], looking south-east



Plate 9: Trench 34, pit [3404] and gully [3407], looking north



Plate 10: Saxon loomweight from trench 37, posthole [3705]