

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD
EVALUATION ON LAND OFF MAIN ROAD,
SEDGEBERROW, WORCESTERSHIRE**

NGR SP 02312 38336

On behalf of

Sedgeberrow (Nominees) Ltd

NOVEMBER 2012

REPORT FOR Sedgeberrow (Nominees) Ltd.
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FIELDWORK 7th-9th November 2012

REPORT ISSUED 22th November 2012

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JMHS Project No: 2718
HER Activity Number: WSM47415

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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services conducted an archaeological evaluation in advance of new planning proposals on land to the rear of Main Road, Sedgeberrow, Worcestershire (centred SP02312 38336). This report is a summary of the discovered archaeological features and considers the significance of the site.

The archaeological evaluation followed a geophysical survey (Stratascan 2012) and metal detector survey (Appendix A) of the site. Six trenches were excavated to the underlying natural geology or uppermost surface of the archaeology. The evaluation confirmed suspected archaeological anomalies in all of the targeted trenches. The earliest dating evidence recovered from the evaluation was considered to be mid to late Romano-British pottery. The latest dating evidence were post-medieval finds within the backfill of boundary ditches uncovered in Trenches 4 & 5.

A probable Romano-British building of unknown function was discovered within Trench 4. A well preserved Romano-British corn dryer, with collapsed flue roof and sides was discovered within Trench 3.

Enclosure ditches of Romano-British date were adjacent to a postulated trackway or road. A human skeleton and Roman roof tile were found within the backfill of the roadside ditch. This ditch was also traced on earlier excavations undertaken in 1999 to the immediate west of the site (Buteux et al 1999). Other ditches in Trenches 1, 2, 5 & 6 probably represent the remains of simple field boundaries associated with the Romano-British settlement. After the departure of the Romans the village of Sedgeberrow was then settled by new migrants during the Saxon period. However, no Saxon remains were apparent within the trenches.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location and Geology (Figure 1)

The site is located to the south of Main Street at SP 02312 38336. The soils of the area belong to the Lodgegrove and Evesham (411) soil series of slightly stoney calcareous clays over Lower Lias (limestone) and Jurassic/Cretaceous clay (British Geological Survey 1977; Ragg et al 1984, Beard et al 1986).

1.2 Planning Background

Planning permission is sought from Wychavon District Council for a new residential development on land to the rear of Main Street, Sedgeberrow by Sedgeberrow (Nominees) Ltd. Due to the possible presence of archaeological features, the developer was informed that further information on these historic assets will be required before the Local Planning Authority can decide whether to grant planning consent. This information should be obtained by means of an archaeological evaluation, a stage of which will include an archaeological metal detector survey. This is in line with NPPF and Local Plan policies. The Planning

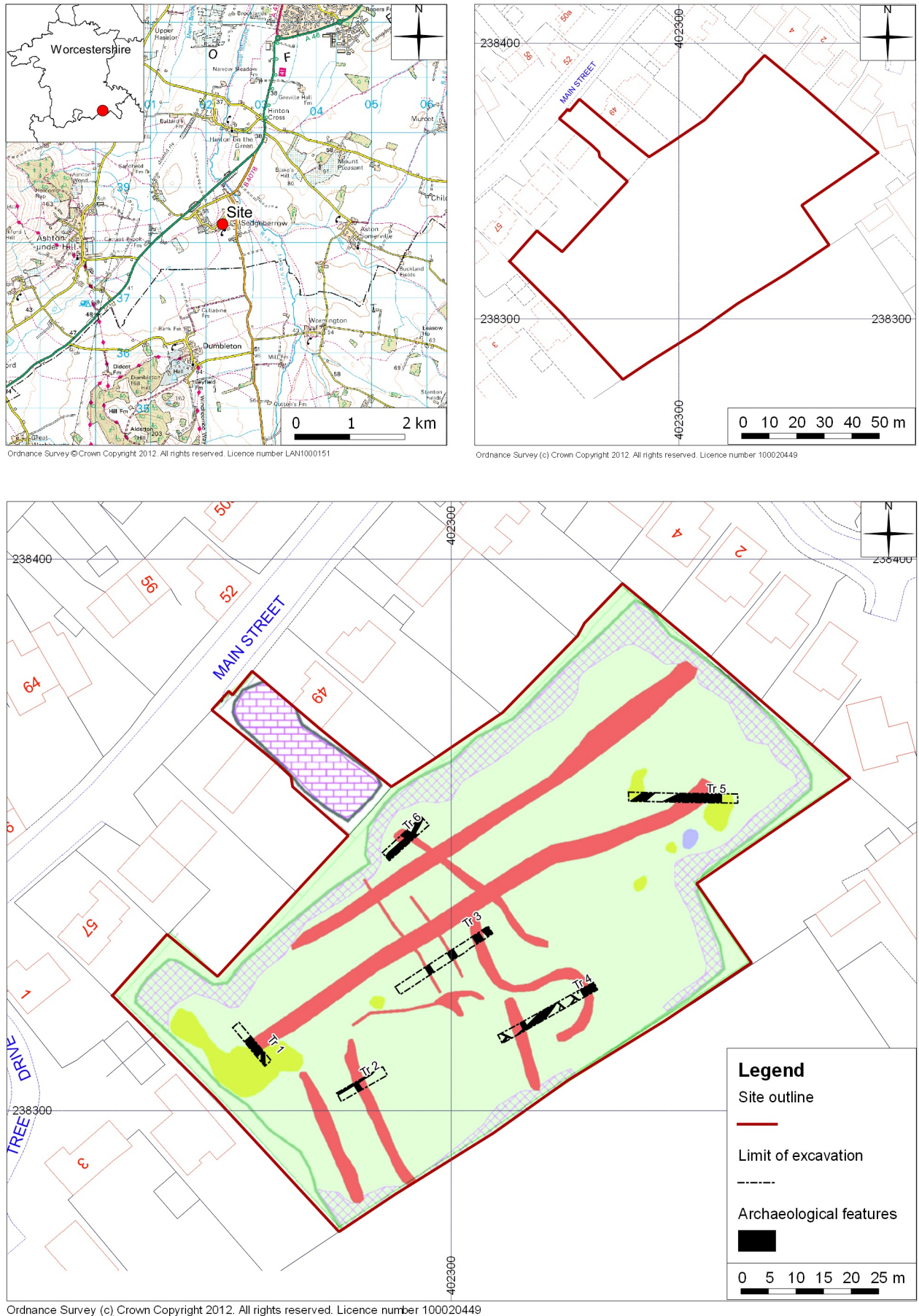


Figure 1. Site and trench locations with geophysical results

Advisory Section of the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service prepared a *Brief* (Glyde 2012) for such archaeological work.

This was followed by a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (JMHS 2012) which outlined the method by which the survey would be carried out. The archaeological trenching evaluation was carried out during 7th-9th November 2012 by Paul Riccoboni (Project Officer) on day one, replaced by Gwilym Williams (Senior Project Officer) on day two due to injury. Three site assistants helped to excavate and record the features; Gavin Davis, Sam Herbertson and Paul Wragg.

1.3 Archaeological Background (By David Gilbert)

The proposed development is located in an area of archaeological potential.

A settlement is known to have existed at Sedgeberrow from c.777 'Seggesbearuue'. Meaning: Probably 'the grove of Secg'. In Domesday: "The church itself holds Sedgeberrow. There are 4 hides paying geld. In demesne are 2 ploughs and 11 villans and 4 bordars with 7 ploughs. There is a priest having half a hide and half a plough and 4 slaves and 1 female slave and 2 mills rendering 10s and 8 acres of meadow. It was worth £3. Dodda holds it and it is for the sustenance of the monks. Archbishop Ealdred proved their right to it against Beorhtric, his son (VCH 1913).

The area to the south of Main Street includes concentrations of cropmarks (Worcestershire Historic Environment Record WSM34924) including enclosures, ring ditch, linear boundaries and possible structures, as well as a track way; small and large enclosures, and a sub-rectangular enclosure with possible rectangular building on north side (interrupted by house and barn). Aerial photographs show a further sub-rectangular enclosure 500m to the southwest (WSM05504). Antiquarian finds from the area include two bronze spearheads and fragments of Roman armour (WSM28760). A Roman road lies 400m to the southeast (WSM28761). An Anglo-Saxon roadway aligned rough east to west lies 450m to the north of the development site (WSM28762).

Salvage recording in 1998 (WSM23272) on land adjacent to the west of the development site recorded five ditches including a possible ring ditch, all probably prehistoric in date (Buteux *et.al.* 1999) and a single residual Neolithic-Bronze Age flint flake. Also recorded were a series of Iron Age and Roman ditches with associated pottery. A watching brief (WSM38563) at 82 Main Street recorded two Iron Age pits and a Roman horse burial (Mann 2008).

Earlier work was first recorded in the 1930's by G. Mackin on land directly north of the development site at the Old School. Pottery recovered dated from the Late Iron Age through the Roman period with notable concentrations of 2nd century material and possibly into the 6th century, evidenced by shell-tempered wares. A silver sceatta dated to 604-616 was also recovered from this site (WSM07517). Roman pottery has also been recorded in the field of Lower Portway Farm adjacent to the south (WSM34500). Finds of a Roman broach and coin have been found 400m further north (WSM09927).

A surface collection and an excavation were conducted on land adjacent to 50 Main Street, 50m to the north of the development area (WSM33549). Pottery recovered ranged from Roman, Saxon, medieval and post-medieval. A small quantity of struck flint was recovered. Despite the topsoil scatters the excavation revealed no features earlier than the 17th century;

these features included evidence for cider making (Williams 2004). A watching brief at the adjacent property of 52 Main Street (WSM34311) located only evidence for medieval and post-medieval agriculture (Miller & Jacobs 2005).

An evaluation (WSM30515) was conducted on land at West End Farm 350m to the southwest of the development site that located post-medieval field boundaries and a single residual sherd of Roman pottery (Miller 2001). Ridge and furrow is noted 400m to the east (WSM46562) and southeast (WSM06034) with slight indications of headland and ridge and furrow ploughed out further to south. This area could be an area of medieval home pasture before enclosure, preserving earlier features below ground.

Two 18th century coins have been recovered by metal detector survey on land 400m to the north of the site (WSM09926). Further coins dating between 12th and 17th centuries have been found 200m to the east, and it is suggested that the area may have been a market field (WSM09927).

Gravel extraction quarries (WSM40379) dating to the 19th century area noted on land directly to the west of the site (Buteux *et.al.* 1999).

A watching brief (WSM31628) conducted 100m to the west at 90 Main Street recorded significant recent disturbance although some residual sherds of medieval pottery were recovered (Vaughan & Darch 2002). A second watching brief (WSM33393), 400m to the northeast at Hall Farm on Main Street also recorded only modern features (Goad & Griffin 2003). A further watching brief (WSM36052) at 88 Main Street recorded an undated field boundary ditch and 19th century features.

An undated 110m long strip of marsh running next to Moat Lane (150m to the north of the development site; MSW32733) is marked on the 1st edition OS map and is thought to be a fish pond (WSM32732).

A geophysical survey has been conducted across the site (Stratascan 2012). This recorded the potential for archaeological features across the entire development area.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The primary aims of the archaeological evaluation were to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the site.

2.1 Project Objectives

More specific objectives were to;

- determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered;
- to assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits and;
- determine the impact of the proposed development on any remains present.

In particular to determine whether any remains of Iron Age, Roman or medieval settlement survive on the site.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the *Institute for Archaeologists* (2008) and the procedures laid down in MAP2 (English Heritage 1991).

3.2 Methodology

The investigation involved the mechanical excavation of six trial trenches (representing a 2% sample of the study area); three 20m long and three 10m long, each 1.6m wide, supplemented by hand investigation of all features as set out in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*. Locations of the trenches are shown on Figure 1.

The trenches were excavated by 8 tonne 360° type tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Each trench was placed to target potential features highlighted by the geophysical survey (Stratascan 2012).

Mechanical excavation was taken down to the uppermost archaeological horizon or geological horizon under direct archaeological supervision.

The resultant surfaces were cleaned by hand (where necessary) prior to hand excavation of the archaeological deposits and features.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and sections drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was produced using colour transparency, black and white and digital cameras. The trenches were backfilled after inspection by the Historic Environment Planning Officer (Mike Glyde) after recording.

All artefacts were retained for inclusion into the site archive. No finds will be discarded without the agreement of the receiving museum. All surfaces were planned and levelled to Ordnance Datum. The trenches were accurately surveyed to Ordnance Survey National Grid.

Surfaces were cleaned where it was considered appropriate. All surfaces and excavated spoil were scanned with a metal detector.

No samples thought necessary for scientific dating, including C14 dating were discovered.

Two palaeo-environmental samples of 20-40 litres were taken. One was taken from the Roman corn dryer flue in Trench 3, as this had the most potential for useful environmental remains.

The work was monitored by the County Historic Environment Planning Officer (archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority) Mike Glyde. Two site visits were made, the first after the trenches had been initially opened on 7th November 2012 and a second site visit was made on 9th November 2012 to ensure the requirements set out in the WSI had been fulfilled and permission to backfill was given.

4 RESULTS

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers without brackets indicate features i.e. pit cuts or walls; while numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material.

4.1 Excavation Results (Fig. 1)

The trenches were set out across the general area of the proposed new development designed to test anomalies indicated by the geophysical survey.

The lowest deposit noted within the trenches consisted of natural sands and gravels and clays, which was reached between varying heights across the proposed development site 47.13m AOD to 47.78m AOD. The natural was overlain by subsoil that varied in thickness from 0.20m to 0.30m. The topsoil was generally 0.20m to 0.30m thick.

4.1.1 Trench 1 (Fig 1; Fig. 2)

Trench 1 was excavated to a length of 10m (1.6m wide) and to heights of 47.55m AOD at the north-eastern end and 47.52m AOD at the south-western end. Machine excavation ceased at the top of archaeology or the natural.

The stratigraphy within the trench consisted of the following layers (earliest to latest). The natural brownish orange sandy silt was at the base of the trench (1/03). Overlying this was 0.30m thick light greyish brown silty clay subsoil (1/02) and *c.* 0.25m thick dark greyish brown topsoil (1/01).

Ditches; cut into natural (1/03)

Ditch 1/05 (Fig. 2; Section 1.2) was orientated on an approximate north - south east direction with a noticeable curve. It was 0.9m wide and 0.13m deep with shallow concave sides and a gently rounded base. It was filled by dark greyish brown silty clay (1/04) with one animal bone fragment and one iron nail. This ditch was sealed by subsoil (1/02).

Ditch 1/07 (Fig. 2; Section 1.1) was orientated on an approximate north east-south west direction and was 3.8m wide and 0.80m deep with shallow concave sides and a gently rounded base. It had seven fills with the earliest fills being side collapse (1/10) & (1/11), indicating the ditch was open for a long period of time. This was followed by a thin deposit of dark grey brown clay sand (1/13) across the base of the ditch. Overlying (1/13) was 0.30m thick moderate bright orange brown clay (1/08) with a child skeleton, a Roman roof tile (*tegula*) and occasional small gravels. Overlying this was 0.10m thick mid greyish brown clay sand with a thin layer of small stones at its base (1/09). This was followed by 0.12m thick dark greyish brown silty clay (1/06). The latest fill was 0.14m thick moderate grey brown clay

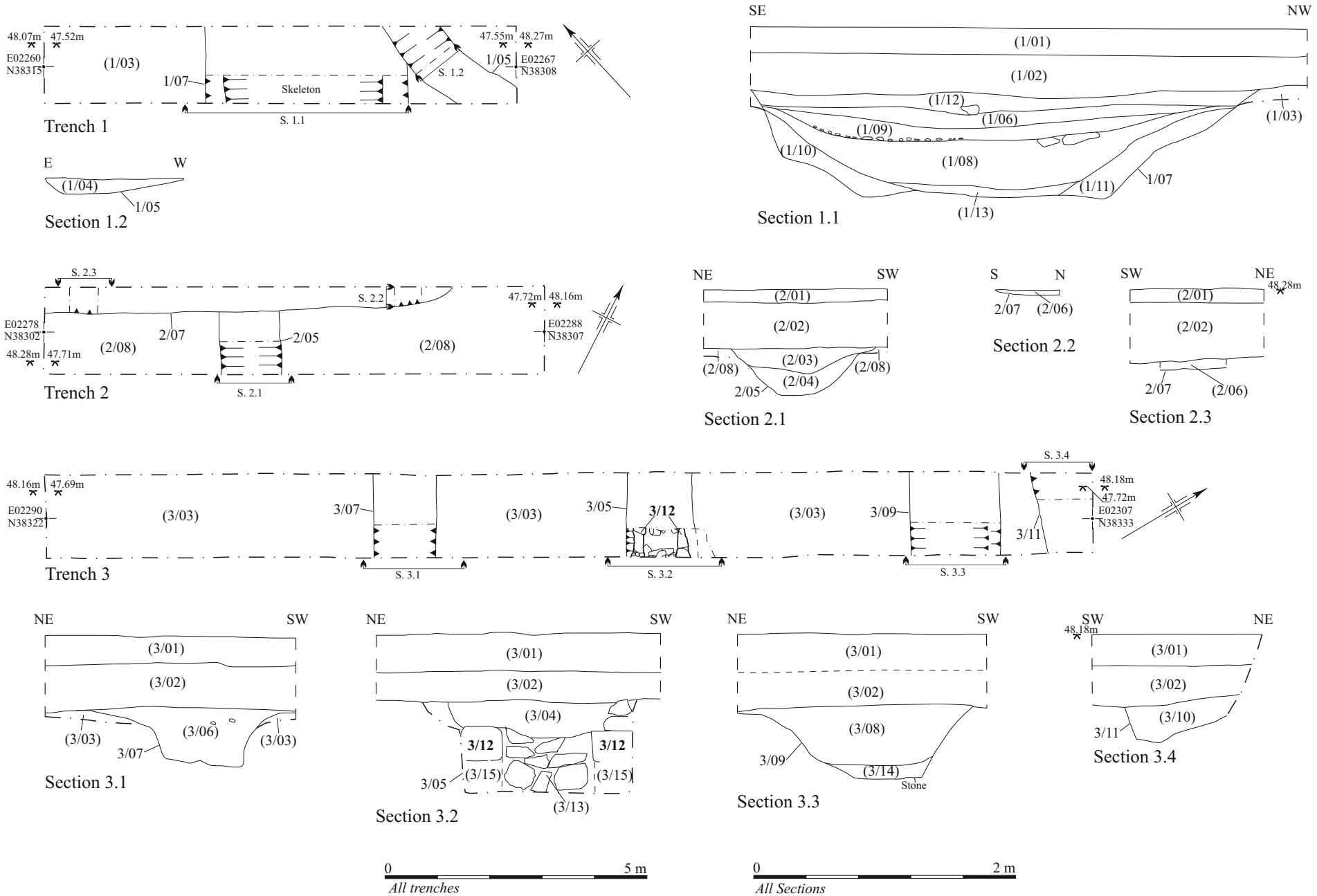


Figure 2. Plans and sections of trenches 1, 2 and 3

sand (1/12). The latest three fills were considered post-medieval. The ditch was sealed by subsoil (1/02).

4.1.2 Trench 2 (Fig 1; Fig. 2)

Trench 2 was excavated to a length of 10m (1.6m wide) and to heights of 47.72m AOD at the northern end and 47.71m AOD at the southern end. Machine excavation ceased at the top of archaeology or the natural. The stratigraphy within the trench consisted of the following layers (earliest to latest). The natural brownish orange sandy silt was at the base of the trench (2/08). Overlying this was 0.30m thick light greyish brown silty clay subsoil (2/02) followed by 0.20m thick dark greyish brown topsoil (2/01) with one sherd of Roman pottery.

Ditches; cut into natural (2/08)

The earliest ditch on the site was 2/05 (Fig. 2; Section 2.1) measuring 1.8m wide and 0.36m deep with concave sides and a gently rounded base. The ditch was orientated on a NW-SE direction and contained two distinct fills. The earliest fill 0.21m thick was light grey brown silty clay with frequent gravel inclusions (2/04). This was overlain by friable greyish black sandy loam with occasional gravel and frequent charcoal flecks (2/03). Two small abraded sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from this fill and one broken animal bone.

A later shallow ditch 2/07 (Fig. 2; Section 2.2 & 2.3) was seen cut into natural and across the uppermost fill of ditch 2/05 (fill (2/03) but was only partially revealed orientated north-east south-west along the length of the trench and was at least 0.50m in width. It had concave sides, a flat base and was filled by firm 0.04m thick light grey sandy silt (2/06) with no finds.

Both of the above features were sealed by subsoil (2/02).

4.1.3 Trench 3 (Fig. 1; Fig. 2)

Trench 3 was excavated to a length of 20m (1.6m wide) and to heights of between 47.72m AOD at the north-eastern end and 47.69m AOD at the south-western end. Machine excavation ceased at the top of archaeology or the natural.

General overburden

The earliest deposit noted within the trench was the natural clay with gravels (3/03). This was overlain by c. 0.30m thick dark greyish brown silty clay subsoil (3/02). The latest deposit was 0.20m thick topsoil (3/01).

Roman 'corn dryer'

The flue of the corn dryer 3/05 (Fig. 2; Section 3.2) was 1.4m wide x 0.50m deep with vertical stoned-lined sides (3/12). The stone was excavated to a depth of one course. It was filled by dark grey brown silty clay loam (3/15). Overlying this was dark grey black and yellow grey clay with frequent stone inclusions (<100-300mm) (3/13) with one Roman pottery sherd. The latest fill was friable dark grey brown silty clay (3/04). The drain was covered by subsoil (3/02).

Ditches; cut into natural (3/03)

Ditch 3/07 (Fig. 2; Section 3.1) was 1.4m wide and 0.42m deep with sharp sides and irregular base orientated on a NW-SE direction. It was filled by firm grey black silty clay loam (3/06)

with three pottery sherds dated to the Roman period and animal bones. This ditch was covered by subsoil (3/02).

Ditch 3/09 (Fig. 2; Section 3.3) was 1.76m wide x 0.56m deep with sharp sides and a flat base, orientated on a NW-SE direction. It was filled primarily by 0.12m thick firm grey brown silty sand (3/14). The secondary fill was 0.44m thick firm grey black silty clay loam (3/08) with two sherds of Roman pottery and few animal bones. This ditch was covered by subsoil (3/02).

Ditch 3/11 (Fig. 2; Section 3.4) was 0.87m wide with sharp sides forming a flat base orientated on a NW-SE direction, only partially uncovered within the trench. The ditch was filled by mid brown sandy loam (3/10) with no finds. This ditch was covered by subsoil (3/02).

4.1.4 Trench 4 (Fig. 1; Fig. 3)

Trench 4 was excavated to a length of 20m (1.6m wide) and to varying heights of 47.69m AOD at the north-eastern end and 47.78m AOD at the south-western end. Machine excavation ceased at the top of archaeology or the natural.

General overburden

The earliest deposit noted within the trench was the natural dark yellow clay with occasional gravels (4/03). This was overlain by c. 0.20m thick moderate grey brown clay silt subsoil (4/02). At the north-eastern end of the trench the features were overlain by a c. 0.10m thick buried dark organic soil (4/12)/(4/17). The latest deposit was 0.20m thick topsoil (4/01). No relationships were investigated between the following features.

Ditches; cut into natural (4/03)

Ditch 4/07 (Fig. 3; Section 4.2) was 1.0m wide and 0.25m deep with sharp concave sides and a flat base. It was filled by dark brownish black clay sand (4/06) with moderate gravel inclusions.

Gully 4/09 (Fig. 3; Section 4.3) was 1.8m long x 0.50m wide and 0.10m deep orientated east-west. It was filled by soft grey sand (4/08).

Gully 4/11 was 1.0m long x 0.50m wide orientated east-west. It was filled by soft grey clay sand (4/10).

Ditch 4/05 (Fig. 3; Section 4.1) was 1.2m wide with steep concave sides, it was filled by moderate brown clay sand (4/04). This ditch was a post-medieval field boundary. The gullies and ditches were all sealed by subsoil (4/02).

Deposits

A soft very thin dark brownish black yellow gravelly mortar deposit was extending beyond the edges of the trench probably associated with the suspected building within this trench (4/12). It extended 3m in length and was overlain by (4/17) see below. An environmental sample <2> was taken from this deposit (4/12). The curving ditch of the enclosure shown on the geophysical survey may have been sealed beneath this layer.

Discrete feature

A sub circular shaped posthole 4/14 (Fig. 3; Section 4.4) with concave sides was 0.35m wide and 0.12m deep. It was filled by mid grey clay sand (4/13) with no finds.

Layers

Layer (4/17) was overlying layer (4/12). It was 0.10m thick dark grey black soft clay sand considered a possible buried topsoil or layer created from a burnt down building. This layer sealed the putative sill beams (4/16), (4/18), (4/20) & (4/22). It also sealed (4/19).

Possible Roman building (Fig. 3)

Deposit (4/16) was thought to possibly represent a beam slot which was once part of a Roman building. It was orientated on an approximate east-west direction 1.8m long x 0.50m wide of a soft black brown colour and clay sand consistency.

Deposit (4/18) was thought to possibly represent a sill-beam slot which was once part of a Roman building. It was orientated on an approximate east-west direction 1.8m long x 0.50m wide of a soft black brown colour and clay sand consistency.

Deposit (4/20) was orientated east-west, 0.50m wide x 1.8m long (min) of black brown colour and a soft clay sand consistency. It was also considered by the excavator to represent the remains of a sill beam slot which once formed part of a building.

Deposit (4/22) was soft black clay sand 0.40m wide and 1.0m long of a similar black brown colour and soft clay consistency. It was also interpreted as a decayed sill beam. All sill-beams were covered by layer (4/17).

Deposit (4/19) was thought to be a floor surface of a putative Roman building. It was moderately compact clay sand with yellow orange black mottling on the eastern side with black orange mottling orange on the western side. It was covered by layer (4/12).

4.1.5 Trench 5 (Fig. 1)

Trench 5 was excavated to a length of 20m (1.6m wide) and to heights of 47.13m AOD at the eastern end and 47.43m AOD western end. Machine excavation ceased at the top of archaeology or the natural. A sondage was put in to confirm a patch of natural at the eastern end of the trench.

General overburden

The earliest deposit noted within the trench was the natural dark yellow clay with occasional gravels (5/02). The latest deposit was 0.20m thick topsoil (5/01).

Ditches; cut into natural (5/02)

Ditch 5/04 (Fig. 3; Section 5.1) was 1.2m wide and 0.20m deep with gradual concave sides and a flattish base, orientated on a north-east south-west direction. It was filled by moderate orange brown clay sand with occasional stone (5/03) and two sherds of Roman pottery.

Ditch 5/06 (Fig. 3; Section 5.2) was 0.30m deep x 1.6m wide orientated on a north-east south-west direction. It was filled by moderate mid orange brown clay silt (5/05) with one sherd of Roman pottery. The true width of this ditch was not fully ascertained.

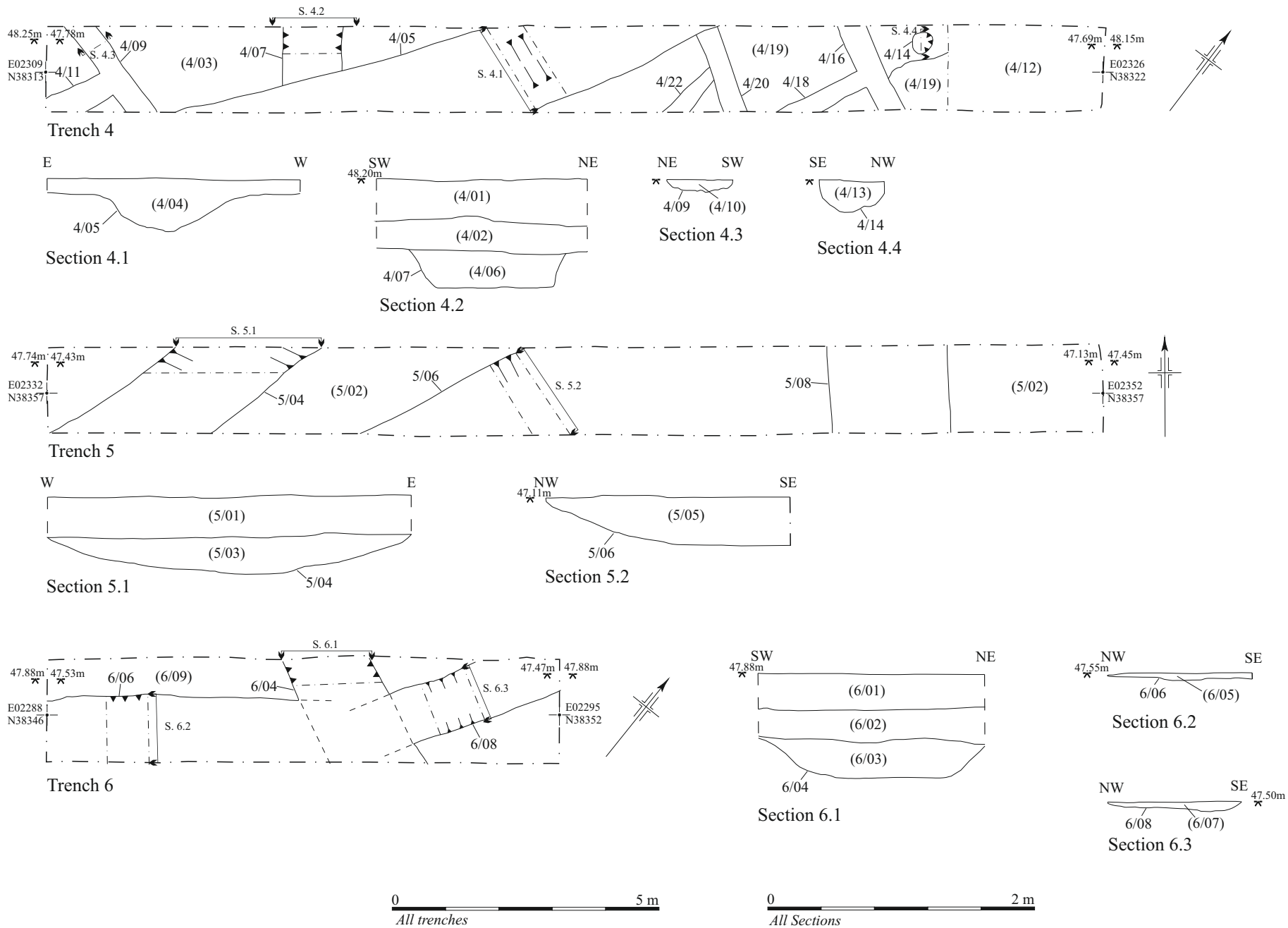


Figure 3. Plans and sections of trenches 4, 5 and 6

Ditch 5/08 was probably the same as the post-medieval ditch discovered in Trench 4 (4/04). It was a field boundary filled by pale mid brown grey sandy loam (5/07) with Roman & post-medieval finds (not retained). All ditches were sealed by topsoil (5/01). The geophysical anomaly at the eastern end of the trench was tested by machine sondage and proved natural.

4.1.6 Trench 6 (Fig. 1)

Trench 6 was excavated to a length of 10m (1.6m wide) and to varying depths of between 47.47m AOD at the north-eastern end and 47.53m AOD at the south-western end. Machine excavation ceased at the top of archaeology or the natural.

General overburden

The earliest deposit noted within the trench was the natural dark yellow clay with occasional gravels (6/09). This was overlain by *c.* 0.20m thick moderate grey brown clay silt subsoil (6/02). The latest deposit was 0.20m thick topsoil (6/01).

Ditches; cut into natural (6/09)

Ditch 6/06 (Fig. 3; Section 6.2) was 1.03m wide and 0.08m deep with gradual concave sides with a flat base orientated on an east-west direction. It was filled by light brownish orange sandy silt with frequent gravels (6/05) with no finds. A second section across this ditch 6/08 was 0.30m deep with gradual concave sides and flat base (Fig. 3; Section 6.3). It was filled by light grey brown sandy silt (6/07).

Ditch 6/04 (Fig. 3; Section 6.1) was 1.7m wide and 0.40m deep with imperceptible sides and a flat base orientated on a north-east south-west direction. The ditch was filled by friable light brown grey silty loam with animal bone inclusions. The relationship with ditch 6/06 was not investigated in section, but this ditch was probably later in plan, but also of unknown date. Both ditches were sealed by subsoil (6/02).

4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results

The excavation of the trenches took place during autumn, but in favourable weather conditions. A confidence rating is high that the best possible results were achieved.

5 THE FINDS

5.1 The Pottery by Jane Timby

5.1.1 Introduction

The archaeological work resulted in the recovery of 17 sherds pottery weighing 266.5 g dating to the Roman period and one fragment of ceramic building material.

Pottery was recovered from nine individual contexts, thus the number of sherds per context is very low. The material is moderately well preserved with an overall average sherd weight of 15 g. The surfaces have been preserved and the sherds are in fairly fresh condition.

For the purposes of the assessment the assemblage was scanned to assess the likely chronology and quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context. Known

regional or traded wares are coded using the National Roman fabric reference collection (Tomber and Dore 1998). These codes are shown in brackets after the names. The resulting data is summarised in Table 1.

5.1.2 Roman

All the pottery recovered dates to the Roman period. Most of the sherds are unfeathered bodysherds in oxidised Severn Valley ware (SVW OX). This is a long-lived industry spanning the 1st to 4th centuries. The compact nature of the fabrics, here with few visible inclusions, suggests they are more likely to date to the mid or later Roman period rather than earlier.

Only three other wares are present: a small sherd of Malvernian rock-tempered ware from 5/03; a jar rim sherd of later Roman shelly ware (ROB SH) from 3/13 and two sherds from an Oxfordshire colour-coated flanged cup (OXF RS), Young (1977) form C51 from 3/04. The shelly ware jar, probably from a source near Harrold in the Midlands, is a type current from the last quarter of the 4th century. The Oxfordshire bowl is also likely to be a 4th-century product. The only other ceramic piece is a fragment of probable Roman tile from 1/06.

5.1.3 Potential and further work

This is a very small assemblage of pottery which appears to document largely late Roman activity at the site. No further work is recommended unless additional work is undertaken at the site when the group should be taken into consideration, particularly the diagnostic later sherds.

Context	Fabric	Form	Tot No	Tot Wt	Date
1/06	CBM	fragment	1	6	Roman
1/06	SVW OX	body	2	4	C2-C4
2/03	SVWOX	body	2	0.5	C2-C4
Tr 2 u/s	SVWOX	body	1	12	C2-C4
3/04	OXF RS	body/rim Young C51	2	51	C4
3/06	SVW OX	body	3	32	C2-C4
3/08	SVW OX	body, base	2	110	C2-C4
3/13	ROB SH	rim jar	1	30	late C4
5/03	SVW OX	body	1	23	C2-C4
5/03	MALV?	body	1	1	Roman
5/05	SVW OX	body	1	1	C2-C4
5/07	SVW OX	body	1	2	C2-C4
Total			18	272.5	

Table 1; Roman pottery quantification

5.2 The Roman tile by Paul Riccoboni

One broken Roman clay *tegula* was recovered from context (1/06) weighing 257g. The tile was abraded and worn.

5.3 The Human Bones *by Paul Riccoboni*

A human skeleton approximately 10-12 years old was discovered in the backfill (1/08) of the large ditch 1/07. A total of 151 fragments of bone weighing a total 843grams were retrieved from the ditch backfill. The skeleton was *c.* 70% complete of undetermined sex.

5.4 The Animal Bone *by Paul Riccoboni*

A small assemblage of animal bone was collected from the evaluation. The most common identified bones were from sheep/goat. All bones have been retained to form part of the site archive.

Context Number	Number of fragments	Weight (g)
1/06	11	36
1/04	1	3
2/03	1	15
3/06	3	8
3/08	14	179
5/07	1	5
6/03	5	41

Table 2; Quantification of retrieved animal bone

5.5 The Environmental Remains *by John Moore*

Two palaeoenvironmental samples were taken. One sample <1> was from the backfill of the Roman corn dryer. Sample <2> was from an organic layer in trench 4 sealing a putative Roman building (4/12). The samples were processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant remains and charcoal.

Methodology

The samples were processed by Gavin Davis, using standard methodology. Samples were processed outside using a ‘Siraf’ style flotation tank, with meshes of 0.5mm aperture for both retention of the flot and the residue. The residue was additionally bucket floated to obtain maximum possible retrieval of environmental evidence. Following air drying the residue was sorted, weighed and discarded, though it was not fractionated prior to sorting. Little environmental evidence was present in the residue, though finds from these samples – rodent bones were. The flot was sorted and assessed by eye without the aid of a microscope; it was not fractionated prior to assessment.

Charcoal

There is a moderate amount of small fragments of charcoal present within the samples. It is unlikely that this could be identified to species as the fragments were so small.

Seeds

There is a moderate to abundant amount of cereal seeds in the fill of the Roman corn dryer and a moderate amount of seeds from the layer above the putative building.

Phase	Excavation Area						Comments
	No. of samples	Context and Sample no.	Sample Vol (litres)	Flot Vol (litres)	Residue weight (g)	Residue discard weight (g)	
Late Roman	1	<1> (3/13)	40	40	4940	4940	Moderate to abundant cereal seeds and very small charcoal fragments. 1 small rodent bone
Late Roman	1	<2> (4/12)	20	20	3220	3220	Moderate number of seeds and small charcoal fragments. Small amount of rodent bones
Totals	2	-	60	60	8160	8160	-

Table 3: Sample Information

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological evaluation was successful in determining the archaeological potential of the site and the character of any below ground features and deposits. The excavations enabled an assessment of the depth, quality and nature of the features encountered.

In all of the trenches the linear and curvilinear anomalies shown on the geophysical survey were proven archaeological. The large linear feature orientated across the centre of the site was the most substantial feature at *c.* 0.80m deep and 3.5m wide. The lower fills of the ditch would appear to be Roman as they contained Roman roof tile and pottery sherds. A child skeleton was also recovered from the ditch backfill, perhaps a Roman roadside burial. This ditch was on a similar alignment to another large ditch seen to the north on the geophysical survey, but was not investigated during these excavations.

The presence of Roman tile within the ditch would indicate the existence of a Roman building with a tiled roof in the vicinity. Roman roof tile was also discovered on the adjacent site (Buteux 1999). This is interesting as there is a lack of tile, particularly roof tile in the county (Lockett 2003). The latest series of thin fills may have accumulated during the post-medieval period. Perhaps the line of the original Roman ditch left a depression in the ground and was then re-cut as a field boundary during the post-medieval period. It is unknown at this stage whether these two ditches are contemporary or one is a replacement of the other. If they are contemporary they may be the roadside ditches of an Iron Age/Romano-British droveway or trackway. Ditch 39 recorded on the adjacent site during a watching brief (Buteux 1999) was probably a continuation of this droveway or trackway.

A Roman corn dryer was discovered in Trench 3, which had a collapsed flue roof, evidenced by the high frequency of stone within its backfill. Corn dryers were either used as malting ovens or for parching grains prior to threshing. The high number of cereal seeds from the environmental sample would suggest the function as the latter. A larger area would need to be opened around Trenches 3 & 4 to help ascertain the shape of this corn dryer and whether it was connected to a Romano-British building and its relationship to the droveway ditch.

At right angles to the possible droveway ditches were Romano-British enclosure ditches. The Roman building was enclosed within a defined space (c. 12m x 9m) with a curved ditch on its eastern side. The general lay out of the enclosure directly adjacent with the trackway would seem to fit in well with what would be expected from permanent occupation to the side of a road. The length of life of the settlement and its permanency are uncertain, but with pottery dates spanning the later Roman period (2nd-4th Century AD), it is likely to have been occupied for a century or more. Given the curving shape of one enclosure ditch and the proximity of the discovered burial (albeit within a ditch backfill), it is possible that this curved ditch formed a funerary enclosure (*pers. comm.* Dr Steven Yeates). Funerary enclosures are commonly set at right angles or parallel to Roman Roads (Wilson *et al* 2005) and the mausoleums often had tiled roofs (*pers. comm.* Dr. Martin Henig). However the finds and the presence of a corn dryer indicate a more domestic use of the area. Another Roman building was postulated within a small rectangular enclosure to the north-east of the adjacent site (Buteux 1999), but this could not be fully investigated.

It would seem that the only surviving evidence of the Romano-British building were the sill-beams discovered in Trench 4. Sill-beam construction techniques usually involved continuous or interrupted slots into which horizontal beams were placed. On or in these sill-beams are erected the walls themselves (of variable materials). In some cases it has been demonstrated that the posts were morticed into the sill-beams giving them extra stability which would not be achieved using simple postholes (Wilson 1976).

Other ditches within Trenches 2, 3, 5 & 6 were just about deep enough to enclose grazing livestock. The ditches would have likely had a bank on one side, perhaps with a hedgerow or fence line on the top of the bank to further enclose the cattle and keep them safe. There was no evidence for banks adjacent to the ditches at the site, presumably as they have been ploughed away.

The ditches did not generally display any evidence of being re-cut, but often two ditches were found close together within a trench. On permanently occupied prehistoric and Romano-British sites one would expect to see re-cut ditches, but perhaps if the ditches were cleaned out regularly and carefully, such activity would leave little archaeological trace. The multiple ditches would indicate that the boundaries may have been re-established on at least one occasion, perhaps suggesting that the site was long lived enough to be re-designed perhaps during a change in site function or a landowner change.

Most of the archaeological features did contain some Roman dating evidence, but finds were not abundant. The fills of the ditches were dark and consisted of organic rich silty clays indicating they may have been used to contain perishable materials, perhaps from the corn dryer, which decayed leaving an organic soil. The scarcity of datable finds on Romano-British sites of this type is common and may simply reflect a small community with few possessions and effective rubbish removal during the sites occupation.

Significance and Conclusions

The results of the archaeological evaluation on land off Main Rd, Sedgeberrow, Worcestershire has identified an important Roman farmstead of high local or even regional significance. If used in conjunction with the results of the adjacent archaeological work (Buteux 1999), geophysical survey, crop mark plots and metal detector survey, it is apparent the site was occupied during the mid-late Romano-British period. A building and corn dryer

set within an enclosure with additional field boundaries and driveway are evident. It has been previously suggested that the recovered finds and known prehistoric archaeological sites in Sedgeberrow indicate the area had special ritual significance. While there can be little doubt that some of the ditches found in the locality are simple field boundaries, especially those farther from the road, it is possible that others were originally intended to delineate burial plots.

The Romanised inhabitants of Sedgeberrow used new building techniques, such as sill-beam construction methods and tiled roofs. No evidence of a Saxon settlement was established at the site, but further archaeological work may reveal the existence of these rather elusive buildings. The presence of a high number of ditches, some of them intercutting, indicates the area was intensively occupied during the Romano-British period, perhaps with less occupation during the Saxon and medieval periods and again more intensively used during the post-medieval period.

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Plate 1; Ditch 1/07 (1m scales) looking S



Plate 2; Corn dryer flue (1m scale) looking SE



Plate 3; Trench 4 containing building looking NE



Plate 4; Curvilinear ditch 1/05 (1m scale)



APPENDIX A – Metal Detector Survey (By David Gilbert)

Introduction

A metal detector survey was conducted as part of a programme of archaeological evaluation (see section 1 of the main report).

Aims of the Investigation

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To undertaking a metal detector survey, locate and recover any metal artefacts from across the area to be disturbed by the proposed development.
- In particular to record any artefacts relating to Iron Age or Roman activity

Research Design

In accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* designed by JMHS and agreed with Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Site procedures for the investigation and recording were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*. All work conformed to the standards of Worcestershire County Council (WCC 2010).

Methodology

The areas to be disturbed by the proposed development were surveyed along transects 3m apart. The locations of all finds were recorded. Each transect was walked covering a wide sweep, an area of at least 1-1.5m on either side, to ensure maximum coverage along each transect.

Ridge and furrow is known in the area; ideally to enable recovery patterns to be matched against the profile of the agricultural landform transects would run parallel to the ridge and furrow which would previously have been across this site. Unfortunately this cannot be seen on historic aerial photographs dating from 1945 onwards.

The survey was conducted using a Minelab X-Terra 30, Minelab X-Terra 305 and a Minelab Explorer SE detectors. These detectors are accurate and reliable and have the precision of Full Band Spectrum (FBS) multi-frequency technology. The detectors discriminated to non-ferrous artefacts as large quantities of modern iron objects would skew the sample.

All signals were investigated. Each signal was flagged before it was excavated. Only when each transect was finished did the surveyor go back and recover the signals, recording the location with a GPS.

The recovery of archaeological objects located by metal-detector during the field survey was restricted to the ploughsoil.

Field Results

The detectors were set to discriminate against iron objects, however the settings on the Minelab Explorer SE allowed an assessment of iron objects in the topsoil to be made, this was considered to be high.

Only seventeen “non-ferrous” signals were recorded. Therefore all were investigated.

1.	SP 02301 38367	18 th -19 th century copper alloy barrel tap
2.	SP 02308 38370	Modern copper perforated strip with screw holes
3.	SP 02315 38369	Coin – one penny 1936
4.	SP 02326 38391	Modern aluminium bottle top
5.	SP 02332 38355	Lead sheet with nail holes – modern?
6.	SP 02340 38395	Modern brass fitting for drain rod
7.	SP 02337 38378	Modern tractor ignition block “Ford”
8.	SP 02346 38372	Thin copper sheet – modern?
9.	SP 02347 38373	Modern aluminium foil food tray
10.	SP 02354 38366	Modern lid of oil can
11.	SP 02313 38342	Lead fixing for iron fitting into stone
12.	SP 02301 38355	Modern bolt from farm machinery
13.	SP 02352 38384	Modern iron plate
14.	SP 02281 38315	Modern aluminium foil food tray
15.	SP 02280 38297	Modern aluminium dish
16.	SP 02285 38295	Coin – half penny 1906
17.	SP 02288 38357	Coin – half penny very worn c. 19 th -20 th century

Reliability of Techniques and Results

The reliability of results is considered to be fair to good. The archaeological survey took place during good weather conditions. However the area surveyed was rough pasture with long grass and tussocks in places, which may have resulted in the depth of signal penetration being reduced.

Discussion

Object 1 was a copper alloy barrel tap and is likely to date from the 18th – 19th century, although it could be slightly earlier.

Object 11 was a lead fixing for an iron fitting such as a iron fence or railing that would have been secured to stone “footing”. These lead fixing would have been poured while molten around the iron upright and allow to harden to secure it in place. While such fixings are known from the Roman period the condition of the lead is considered to indicate a more recent date, perhaps Georgian or Victorian.

The majority of the finds (1-4, 6-9, 12-13 and 17) would appear to be material associated with the field boundaries, either discarded there or later thrown there. Objects 5, 10 and 11 may be associated with the east-west ditch noted on the geophysical survey (Stratascan 2012), while objects 14-16 could be associated with the two parallel features aligned northwest to southeast seen on the geophysical survey (ibid.) and one of which was sampled in Trench 2.

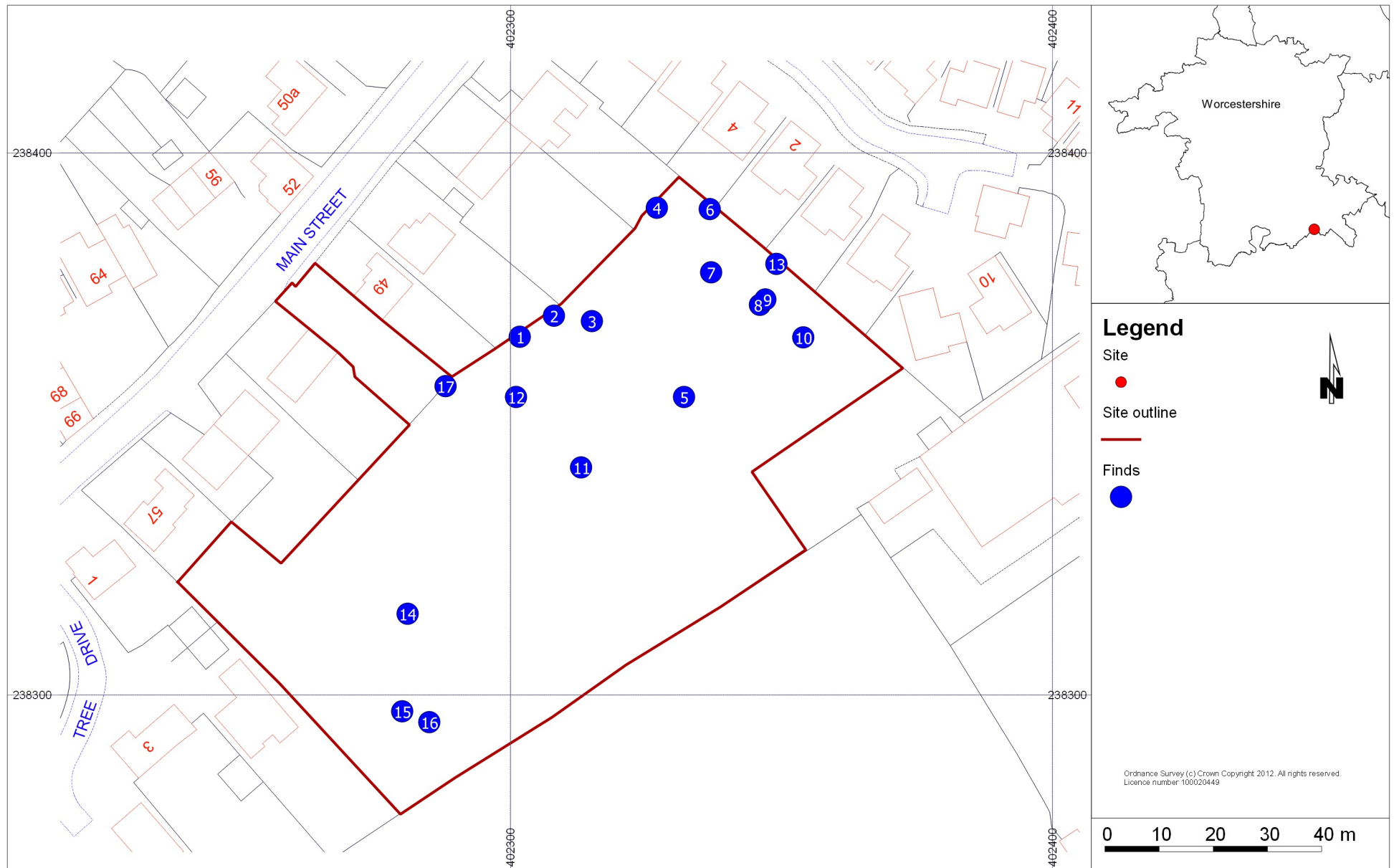


Figure 4. Results of metal detector survey

APPENDIX B; Trench content summaries

Trench	Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
1	1/01	Deposit	Dark grey brown silty clay topsoil	0.20	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
1	1/02	Deposit	Light grey brown silty clay subsoil	0.25	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
1	1/03	Deposit	Mid orange brown silty sand	n/a	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
1	1/04	Deposit	Dark grey brown sandy silt	0.13	0.80	2.2 (min)	None	/
1	1/05	Cut	Ditch orientated NE-SW	0.13	0.80	2.2 (min)	/	/
1	1/06	Deposit	Mid grey brown silty clay	0.10			Pot & animal bone	Roman
1	1/07	Cut	Large Ditch	0.80	3.8	Tr.	/	/
1	1/08	Deposit	Moderate bright orange brown clay sand	0.30	3.5	/	Human skeleton & Tegula	Roman
1	1/09	Deposit	Mid grey brown clay sand	0.10	3.1	/	/	/
1	1/10	Deposit	Mid grey yellow sandy clay	0.10	/	/	/	/
1	1/11	Deposit	Loose yellow sandy stone	0.10	/	/	/	/
1	1/12	Deposit	Moderate grey brown clay sand	0.10	/	/	/	/
1	1/13	Deposit	Dark grey brown yellow clay sand	0.10	1.4	/	/	/
2	2/01	Deposit	Dark greyish brown sandy silt topsoil	0.20	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
2	2/02	Deposit	Mid grey brown silty clay	0.30	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
2	2/03	Deposit	Mid grey black sandy loam	0.15	1.0	Tr.	Pot &	Roman

Trench	Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
							Animal bone	
2	2/04	Deposit	Light grey brown silty clay	0.21	1.0	Tr.	None	/
2	2/05	Cut	Ditch	0.36	1.0	Tr.	/	/
2	2/06	Deposit	Friable light grey brown sandy silt	0.04	0.50 (min)	c.7m	None	/
2	2/07	Deposit	Ditch SW-NE orientation	0.04	0.50	c. 7m	/	/
3	2/08	Deposit	Firm orange brown gravel with fine sand inclusions	n/a	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
3	3/01	Deposit	Dark grey brown sandy silty loam topsoil	0.26	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
3	3/02	Deposit	Friable mid grey brown silty clay	0.34	Tr.	Tr.	None	/
3	3/03	Deposit	Orange yellow clay silt natural	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
3	3/04	Deposit	Dark grey brown silty loam upper fill of Roman corn dryer	Unknown	1.4	Tr.	Pot	Roman
3	3/05	cut	Linear cut for stone corn dryer flue	Unknown	1.4	Tr.	/	/
3	3/06	Deposit	Grey black silty clay loam	0.42	0.19	Tr.	Pot	Roman
3	3/07	Deposit	Linear ditch NW-SE	0.42	0.19	Tr.	/	/
3	3/08	Deposit	Firm grey black silty clay loam	0.46	1.8	Tr.	tile and animal bones	Roman
3	3/09	cut	Linear ditch	0.56	1.8	Tr.	/	/
3	3/10	deposit	Mid grey brown sandy loam	0.30	0.87	Tr.	None	/
3	3/11	cut	Linear ditch	0.30	0.87	Tr.	/	/
3	3/12	Deposit	Stone of corn dryer 3/05	0.20	0.20	Tr.	/	/
3	3/13	Deposit	Friable dark grey black with yellow mottling	unknown	1.4	Tr.	Pot	Roman
3	3/14	deposit	Firm grey brown silty sand	0.12	0.68	Tr.	/	/
3	3/15	Deposit	Friable orange yellow coarse sand with grey patches	Unknown	0.20	unknown	/	/

Trench	Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
4	4/01	Deposit	Dark brown clay loam topsoil	0.30	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
4	4/02	Deposit	Moderate grey brown clay sand subsoil	0.20	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
4	4/03	Deposit	Yellow orange clay sand natural	/	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
4	4/04	Deposit	Mid brown clay sand	unknown	1.4	Tr.	pot	Post-medieval
4	4/05	cut	Linear ditch	unknown	1.4	Tr.	/	/
4	4/06	deposit	Soft dark black clay sand	0.25	1.0	Tr.		
4	4/07	cut	Enclosure ditch	0.25	1.0	Tr.	/	/
4	4/08	deposit	Soft grey clay sand	0.10	0.50	Tr.		
4	4/09	cut	Shallow gully	0.10	0.50	Tr.	/	/
4	4/10	Deposit	Soft grey clay sand	unknown	0.50	1.0		
4	4/11	cut	Gully	unknown	0.50	1.0	/	/
4	4/12	Deposit	Soft dark brown to black with yellow mottling	0.02	Tr.	3.0	/	/
4	4/13	Deposit	Mid grey clay sand	0.12	0.35	0.35	/	/
4	4/14	cut	posthole	0.12	0.35	0.35	/	/
4	4/16	deposit	Burnt sill beam	unknown	0.50	Tr.	/	/
4	4/17	Deposit	Soft dark grey brown clay sand	0.10	Tr.	4.0	/	/
4	4/18	deposit	Burnt sill beam	unknown	0.50	1.5	/	/
4	4/19	Deposit	Possible floor layer within building	unknown	Tr.	2.5	/	/
4	4/20	Deposit	Burnt sill beam	unknown	0.50	1.8	/	/
4	4/22	Deposit	Burnt sill beam	unknown	0.40	1.0	/	/
5	5/01	Deposit	Mid grey brown loam topsoil	0.20	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
5	5/02	Deposit	light brown clay sand natural	0.20	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
5	5/03	Deposit	Mid orange brown clay sand	0.20	1.2	Tr.	Pot	Roman
5	5/04	Cut	Ditch NE-SW	0.20	1.2	Tr.	/	/
5	5/05	Deposit	Moderate mid orange brown clay silt	0.30	unknown	Tr.	Pot & Nails	Roman
5	5/06	Cut	Ditch	0.30	unknown	Tr.	/	/
5	5/07	Deposit	Mid brown clay sand	unknown	2.2	Tr.	Pot	Roman

Trench	Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
5	5/08	cut	Ditch	unknown	2.2	Tr.	/	/
6	6/01	Deposit	Firm grey brown sandy loamy topsoil	0.20	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
6	6/02	Deposit	Firm light brown grey subsoil	0.15	Tr.	Tr.	/	/
6	6/03	Deposit	Light brown grey silty loam	0.40	1.7	Tr.	/	/
6	6/04	cut	Ditch NE-SW	0.40	1.7	Tr.	/	/
6	6/05	deposit	Light brown orange sandy silt	0.08	1.03	Tr.	/	/
6	6/06	cut	Ditch N-S	0.08	1.03	Tr.	/	/
6	6/07	deposit	Light grey brown sandy silt	0.30	1.08	Tr.	/	/
6	6/08	cut	Ditch NE-SW	0.30	1.08	Tr.	/	/