

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**MALTHOUSE FARMHOUSE, BRIGHTHAMPTON,
STANDLAKE, OXFORDSHIRE**

SP 3833 0334

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

On behalf of

Fairview Homes

SEPTEMBER 2010

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Summary

The investigations found evidence for Romano British and medieval settlement. The former was found in the southern part of the site while the latter was in the north. The Romano British occupation was from the mid 3rd century into the 4th century while the medieval activity was during the second half of the 11th century and the 12th century. No Anglo-Saxon activity apart from residual pottery was found. It is possible that there was some limited activity in the 16th or 17th century before the land became part of Malthouse Farm in modern times.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site was located on the east side of Aston Road approximately 200m south of the junction with the A415 in Brighthampton, Standlake (NGR SP 3833 0334). The underlying geology was First Terrace Gravel and the site lay at approximately 67m OD. The site was formerly a farmhouse and garden.

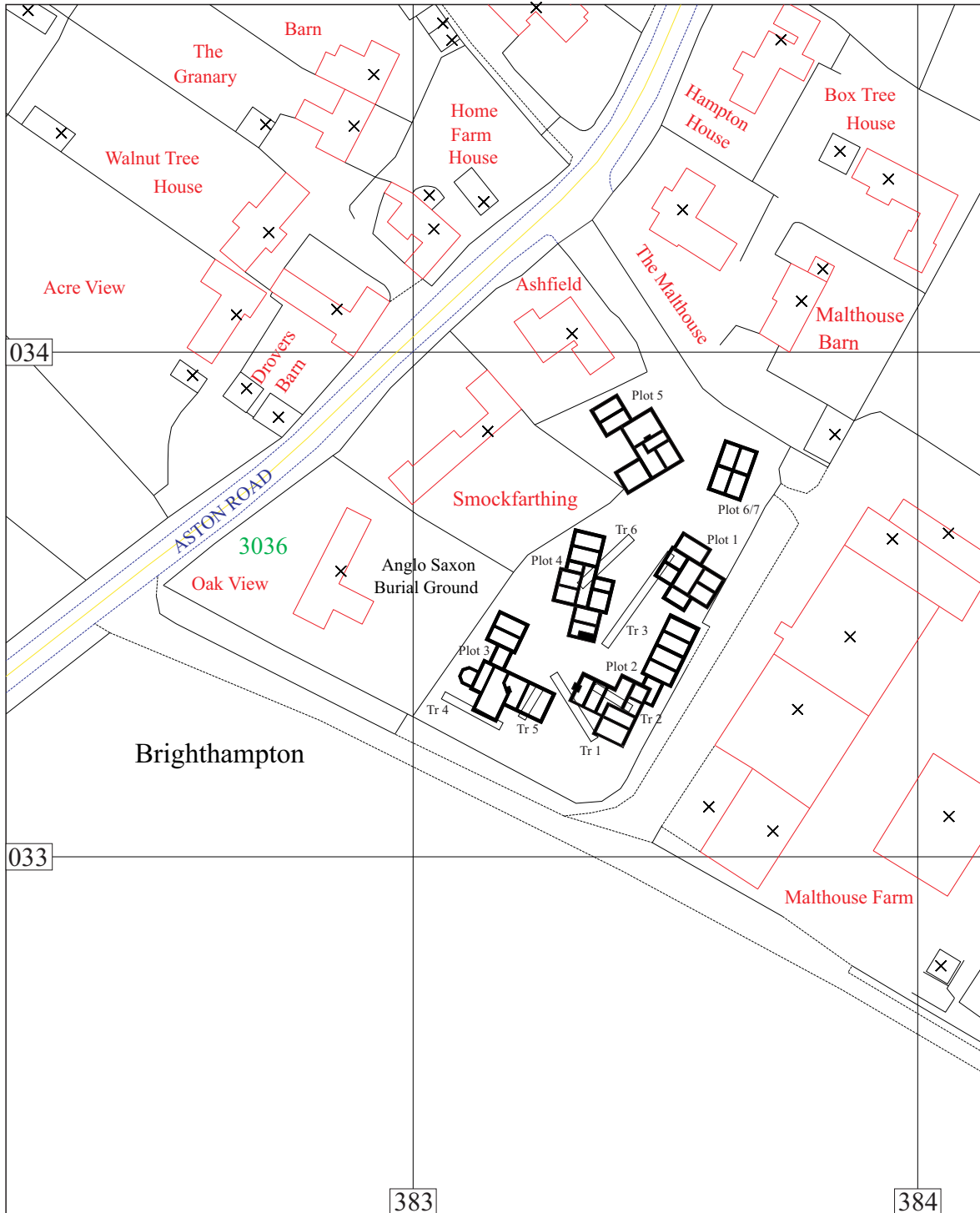
1.2 Planning Background

West Oxfordshire District Council granted planning permission to demolish the existing building at Malthouse Farm and to erect six new dwellings with associated garages and parking. An archaeological evaluation was carried out in April 2008 and found settlement remains dating to the Romano British and Saxon periods. Due to the known archaeological remains on the site a condition was attached to the planning permission requiring that a programme of archaeological work be carried out during the period of groundworks. This was in line with PPG 16 and Local Plan policies. Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS) prepared a *Brief* for a watching brief.

1.3 Archaeological Background

An Anglo-Saxon child's grave buried with a brass-bound wooden bucket, beads of amber and glass, a pair of bronze gilt brooches, a knife and fragments of bronze was found in 1857 under the floor of the 'old malthouse' (Akerman 1857). The site of it may have been the south-west end of the north range of the pre-existing building where tiles for malting have been found under the floor. Akerman reported that less than sixty graves had been found at the site (1858, 231-2), 54 detailed in the two other reports (Akerman 1857; 1860).

Subsequent investigations revealed 14 graves with one supposedly containing a double burial. From examination of the report (Akerman 1857) this is probably two intercutting burials. The graves were accompanied by a variety of grave goods. In addition two urned cremations were found. Where these graves were exactly is unknown. Further work to the south-east of the first area of graves found a further 40 graves. Eight urns were found between the graves. Investigation to the west of the first area of graves revealed an absence of graves (Akerman 1860). In addition several complete skeletons were found while digging gravel in the rickyard behind the barn (BBOAJ, IV (1898), 12). This area must be to the south of the development area.



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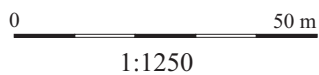


Figure 1. Site location

The area of the graves previously excavated cannot be to the south-west of the application area as a palimpsest of linear and other features show on cropmarks. It is possible that they were to the north-west of the application area or within the south-western part. It is unlikely that the garden area immediately to the south-west of the house would have been used for gravel digging.

Roman coins were also found, mainly in association with the graves. Other cropmark features are visible on aerial photographs on the other side of the Aston Road. These include rectilinear enclosures, trackways and pits. Possible grubenhäuser are also present and this area has been interpreted as an Anglo Saxon settlement.

A field evaluation undertaken in 2008 (JMHS 2008) revealed the presence of Romano British and Anglo Saxon features. Two distinct phases of Roman activity were suggested from the ceramic evidence; mid to late 3rd century and 3rd – 4th century. The site appears to be a continuation from cropmarks to the south. The features include pits, postholes and ditches. From the number of postholes it was considered that there were one or two potential buildings in the area of Trench 2. There was also evidence of a realignment of the field system during the 3rd century.

For the Anglo Saxon period the evidence was harder to assess. The absence of human bone and artefacts suggests that the site did not cover the area of the Anglo Saxon cemetery given that the previously discovered graves were reported to have been disturbed by ploughing. Human bone was reported from a pit in Trench 3 although this could have related to Roman activity. One possible grave was not investigated but the potential for further Anglo Saxon burials was considered as low. Some features, including a possible grubenhäuser were potentially Anglo Saxon based on the pottery. However the report only tentatively assigned the pottery fragments to that period and a later medieval date was considered possible.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

- To make a record of any significant remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.
- To establish further the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of those archaeological remains already encountered during the evaluation.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.
- In particular to establish whether features related to the known prehistoric settlement and agricultural use in the area extend into this development site.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS). Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate and possible.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (1994).

3.2 Methodology

The foundations were piled, with excavation of tie beams which were observed and recorded. Mostly the excavation for such went down to the level of the archaeological horizon namely the top of the natural gravel. The impact for the access road and the services was not low enough to reveal any archaeological features. One or two archaeologists were on site to record the remains exposed.

4 RESULTS Figures. 2 - 7

The results of both the watching brief are presented here with reference to the evaluation where relevant. All features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material. The evaluation contexts were numbered 1/1, 2/1 etc. with the trench number preceding the context number and the watching brief contexts 1, 2, etc.

Many of the remains were undated with few finds being visible in the surface. The features that had solely Roman pottery were confined to the south end of the site. Two medieval features were recognised here as well. The majority of the medieval features were in the northern part. Undated features are described in the Romano British or medieval sections dependant on location

4.1 Romano British

In the south-west part of the site within Plot 3 was a ditch seen over 10.5m orientated NW-SE (Fig. 3). This ditch 70 & 4/04 had a SE terminal that was rounded while the main length survived 1m wide. The top fill as seen was mid red-brown clay silt with 10% charcoal flecking and 15% small gravel (71). A single body sherd of Romano British pottery was recovered from the top. To the south west an undated ditch 84 was seen over 5.3m within the west part of Plot 3. This was 0.80m wide and filled with dark grey-brown clay silt and 20% small gravel. This was not quite parallel to ditch 70. A further ditch 62 on a ESE-WNW orientation was seen further north. This had a square ESE end that was 0.50m wide and was filled with dark grey-brown clay silt with 20-25% small gravel in the top (63). The ditch probably continued after a gap as 94 to the ESE where it 0.70m wide and filled with similar material (95). To the WNW the ditch probably continued as 72 where it was 0.95m wide and



Figure 2. Plan of features
0 10 m

filled with the same material although with noticeably less gravel content (73). From ditch fill 63 six sherds of Romano British pottery were recovered. Parallel to it in Evaluation Trench 5 was another ditch 5/12 that had a steeply angled northern side and a gently sloping southern side with a slightly concave base. The ditch was 0.60m wide, 0.18m deep and lay at a height of 66.54m OD. The fill of the ditch (5/13) was a loose mid-grey-brown sandy silt with occasional small stones. The feature produced one sherd of Oxford colour-coated ware dated to AD 240+. The western end of the ditch was obscured by root disturbance (JMHS 2008). To the east was a possible continuation that was on a more E-W orientation that would have been possible if the ditch was curving. Here the ditch 106 was 0.55m wide and filled by mid brown-grey silt clay with 60% small gravel (105).

Immediately north of ditch 5/12 was ditch (5/14) parallel to it. It had a rounded terminal to the WNW and had very shallow sides which merged imperceptibly with the slightly concave base. It was .80m wide and 0.06m deep and had a height of 66.52m OD. The fill (5/15) of the feature was loose dark grey-brown gravely sandy silt that did not produce any finds.

A further ditch 66 on a SE-NW orientation and on the south side of Plot 3 was 1.15m wide filled with dark grey-brown clay silt and 15% small gravel (67). It contained mid 3rd century + pottery and a coulter from a plough that may be intrusive. Just to the south within Evaluation Trench 4 was N-S orientated ditch 4/10 that had irregularly shaped sides and a flat base. The southern end of the ditch was truncated by pit (4/08). The ditch survived 0.95m wide and 0.44m deep and lay at a height of 66.53m OD. The fill of the ditch (4/11) was loose dark grey-brown silty sand with small stones. No finds were recovered from the feature. This ditch was dated to prior the mid 3rd century by pottery from the later pit. A gully 74 on a SE-NW orientation was seen in the west part of Plot 3. This feature was 0.20m wide filled with red-brown clay silt with 20-25% small gravel (75). It may have continued to the SE as gully 64 that was 0.35m wide and filled by dark grey-brown clay silt with 10% small gravel content (65). In the extreme NW corner of the plot was ditch 90 that was 1.20m wide and 0.30m deep. It had sides at 45⁰, a flat base and was filled by dark grey-brown clay silt (91). It was on a SSE-NNW orientation. Towards the SE part of the plot ditch 68 was orientated ENE-WSW and was only seen in one part of the trenches. This was 0.60m wide and filled by mid brown-grey clay silt with 20% small gravel (69).

On the north side of the plot was ditch 60 on a NNE-SSW orientation that was 1.10m wide and filled by dark grey-brown clay silt with 20% small gravel (61). No relationship with ditch 62 was established. 3m to the east was gully 92 that was 0.25m wide and filled with dark grey-brown silty clay with 10-15% small gravel (93) with pottery dated to the mid 3rd century onwards. Towards the SE corner of the plot was NE-SW orientated ditch 96. This was 0.60m wide and filled with dark grey-brown silty clay and 80% small gravel (97), however this was not seen in Evaluation Trench 5. On the east side of Plot 3 was the butt end of a ditch/gully 104. This was 0.25m wide and filled by mid brown-grey silt clay with 60% small gravel (103). Within Evaluation Trench 4 was the butt end of a ditch 4/14 that was orientated E-W. It was 0.75m wide, 0.20m deep with the top at 66.58m OD. The fill (4/15) was loose dark grey-brown sandy silt with small stones; no finds were recovered from the feature.

Several pits and postholes were found during the investigations. In Evaluation Trench 4 pit 4/08 truncated ditch 4/10, and extended beyond the trench to the south. The pit was circular and had concave sides, the base was not observed. The fill of the pit (4/09) was loose dark

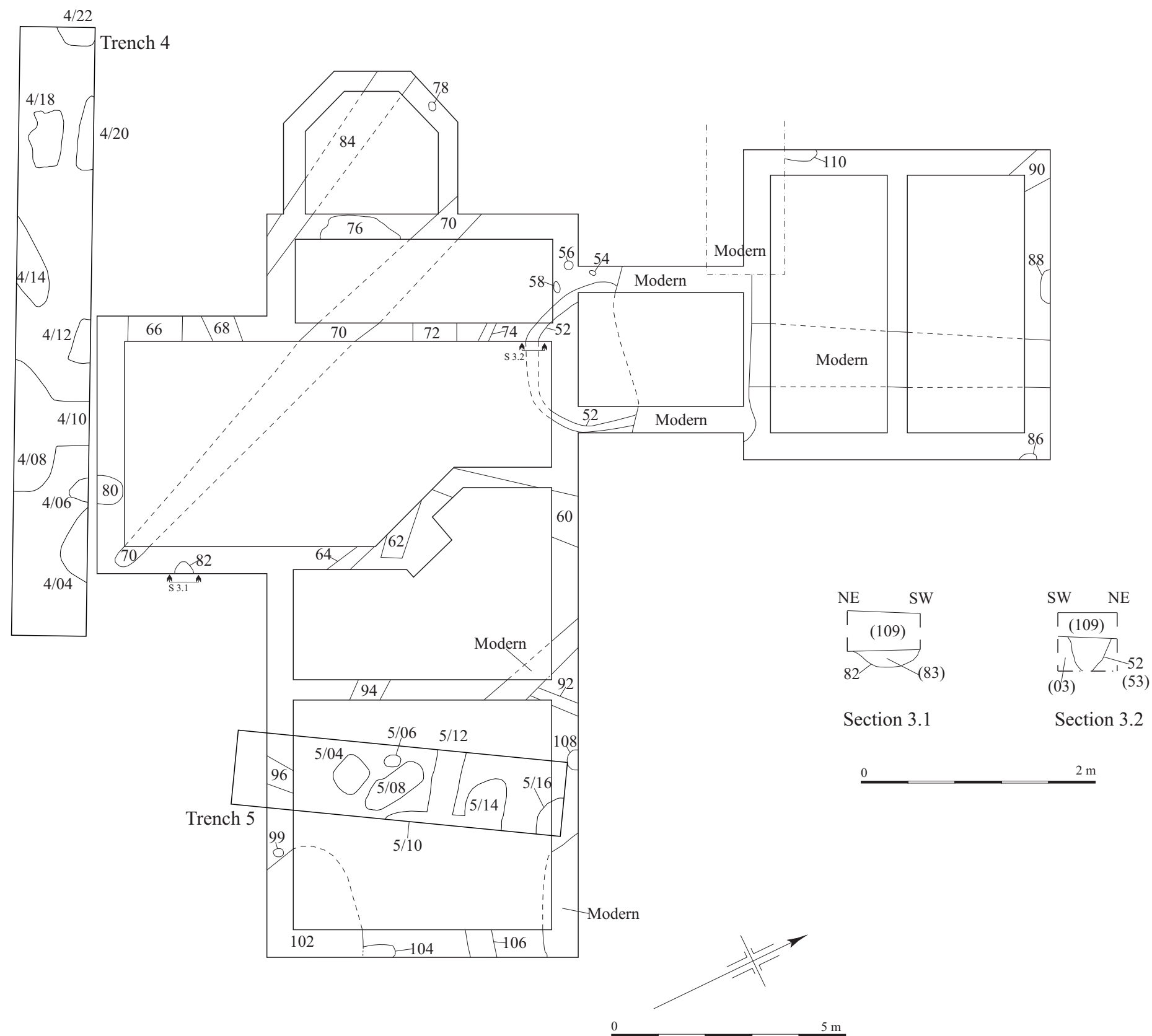


Figure 3. Plot 3 Plan and sections

grey-brown silty clay with small stones producing 19 sherds of pottery representing Oxford colour-coated ware, fine reduced coarse ware (jar/bowl), sandy reduced coarse ware, moderately sandy reduced coarse ware, fine sandy reduced "West Oxfordshire" coarse ware (lid), black Dorset burnished ware (BB1) (dish), wheel-thrown black-burnished ware imitation fabric and shell tempered coarse ware (jar). The pottery has been dated to AD 240+. Seven fragments of animal bone were also recovered from (4/09).

Pit 4/06 was located in the east of the trench and extended beyond it to the north where it was recorded as 80 in the watching brief. It was oval, *c.* 1.20m long, 0.48m wide and had a height of 66.53m OD. The fill (4/07 and 81) was loose dark grey-brown silt clay with 15-20% small gravel; the feature was not excavated and no surface finds were recovered. Pit 4/12 was located in the centre of the trench immediately to the west of ditch 4/10 and extended beyond it to the north but was not seen in the watching brief. It was sub-rectangular, 1.00m long and at least 0.50m wide and had a height of 66.58m OD. The fill (4/13) was loose dark grey-brown silt clay with small gravel. The feature was not excavated and no surface finds were recovered.

Irregular pit 4/18 was located in the west of the trench. It was 1.25m long, 0.75m wide, 0.07m deep and had a height of 66.65m OD. The fill (4/19) was loose dark grey-brown silt clay with small stones; no finds were recovered from the feature. Pit 4/20 was located in the west of the trench and extended beyond it to the north. It was sub-rectangular, 1.55m long, at least 0.30m wide and had a height of 66.65m OD. The fill (4/21) was loose dark greyish brown silt clay with small stones; the feature was not excavated and no surface finds were recovered. Pit 4/22 was located in the west of the trench and extended beyond it to the north and west. It was sub-circular and at least 0.75m long in diameter and had a height of 66.67m OD. The fill (4/23) was loose dark grey-brown silt clay with small stones.

In the NW part of the plot was posthole 78 that was 0.20m in diameter filled with dark grey-brown clay silt with 20% small gravel (79). To the west was irregular pit 76 at least 1.46 wide, filled by dark grey-brown silt clay with 10% small gravel (77). To the north three postholes were found. Feature 54 was circular, 0.10m diameter, and filled with dark grey-brown silt clay with 20% small gravel (55). Posthole 56 was the same but larger at 0.20m diameter while 58 was oval and measured 0.20 x 0.10m.

Further SE pit 82 was at least 0.40m in diameter and filled by dark grey-brown silt clay with 15-20% small gravel (83) (Fig. 3, Section 1). Within Evaluation Trench 5 were three features that may be Romano British date. Posthole 5/06 had a diameter of 0.30m and a height of 66.54m OD. The fill of the posthole was a loose light brown silt with occasional small stones; the feature was not excavated and there were no surface finds. The irregularly shaped pit 5/08 was rectangular at its northern end and sub-oval at its southern end. The feature was 2.50m long, 1.00m wide and lay at a height of 66.54m OD. The fill of the feature was a loose mid-brown silt clay with occasional small stones; the feature was not excavated and no surface finds were recovered. Pit (5/16) was located in the NE corner of the trench and ran to outside it to the north and east. The diameter is estimated to have been 1.5m and the top lay at 66.50m OD. The pit's fill was loose dark grey-brown gravelly silt clay.

In the SE corner of the plot was a large pit or several intercutting pits (100 & 102). The feature(s) was at least 2.5m across and the fill was mid brown-grey clay silt with 40% small gravel content (101). Adjacent to it was posthole 98 of 0.20m diameter. Irregular shaped pit

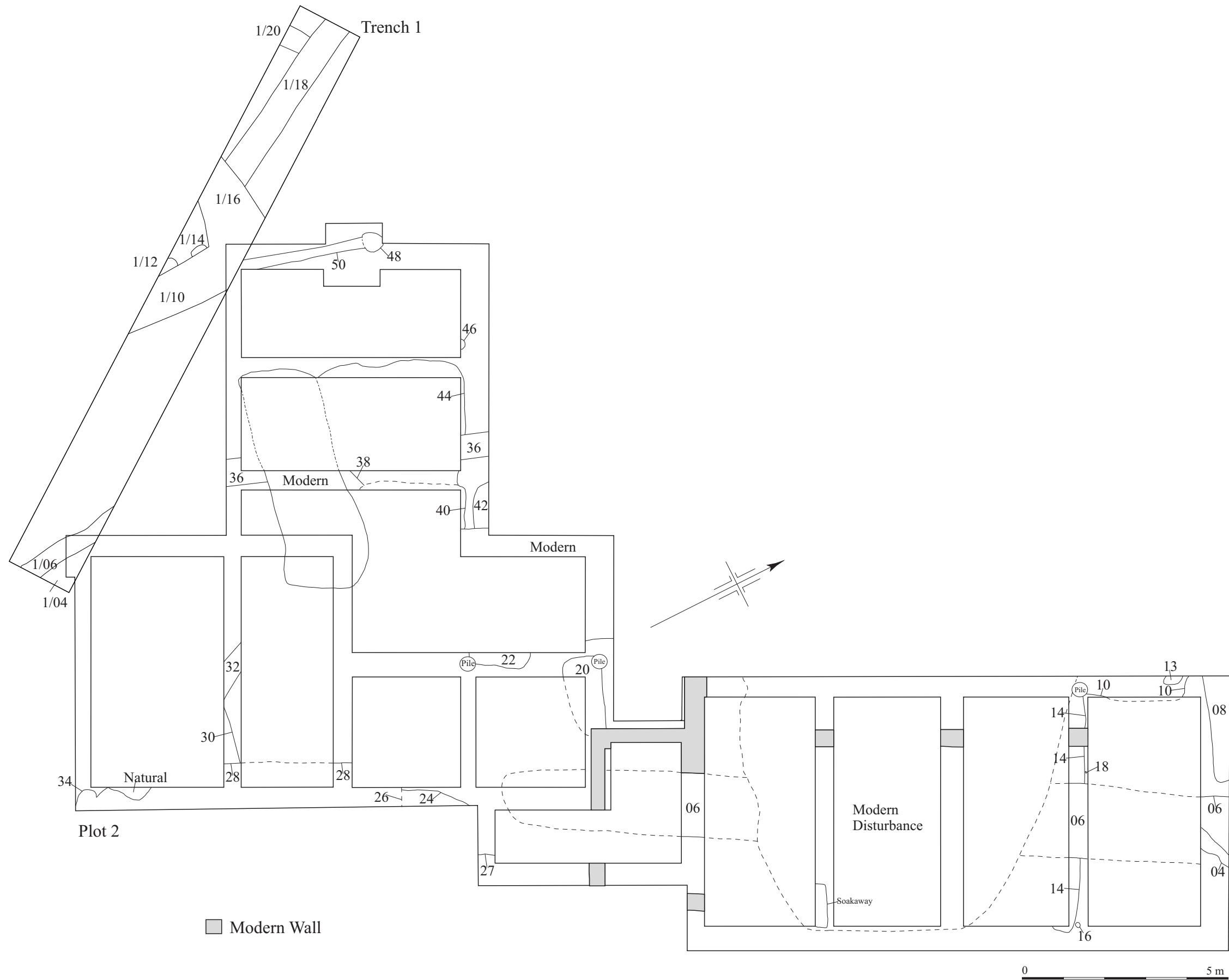


Figure 4. Plot 2

108 was to the north and was 0.40m across, filled with dark grey-brown clay silt with 10-15% small gravel (107).

Within the west part of Plot 2 ditch 50 was recorded as being only 0.22m wide (Fig. 4). This must have been at the level the ground was machined to as within Evaluation Trench 1 it was 0.80m wide. Here 1/10 was sectioned and found to be 0.19m deep with concave sides and a flat base. The top lay at 66.73m OD. The fill (1/11) was loose dark grey-brown silty clay with moderate small stones and occasional charcoal flecking. The fill contained two sherds of moderately sandy reduced coarse ware dated to the 3rd/4th century. The NW side of the ditch had an unclear relationship with ditch (1/16), it may be that they are contemporary and part of the same rectilinear enclosure system. Ditch 1/16 had concave sides and a flat base; the ditch was 1.30m wide and 0.30m deep and had a height of 66.68m OD. The fill (1/17) of the ditch was a loose dark grey-brown clay silt with moderate gravel which produced 13 sherds of pottery comprised of Oxford colour coated ware, black-surfaced reduced coarse ware (lid), Dorset black-burnished ware (BB1) (bowl) and Shell-tempered coarse ware (jar). The fill also produced seven fragments of animal bone. The pottery has been dated to the 4th century.

This ditch cut an earlier ditch 1/18 which had concave sides and a flat base, was 1.20m wide and 0.25m deep and had a height of 66.68m OD. The fill from the ditch was a (1/19) a loose dark grey-brown silty clay with moderate small stones. The fill produced one sherd of Oxford parchment ware and one sherd of a fine reduced coarse ware both dated to AD 240+. This ditch must belong to the second half of the third century. This ditch cut earlier ditch 1/20 that lay in the north of the trench aligned NE-SW and was 0.60m wide and lay at a height of 66.62m OD. The fill from the ditch (1/21) was a dark grey-brown silt clay.

Ditch 36 was 0.70m wide and filled with dark grey-brown clay silt with 20-30% small gravel (37). This ditch may have been the same as the feature 1/04 seen in the east corner of Evaluation Trench 1. While neither side were seen here the base was flat and the ditch fill (1/05) contained two sherds of Oxford colour-coated ware dated to AD 240+.

In the SE part of Plot 2 were two ditches that were probably the same with a curve or right angle joining them. Ditch 32 was 0.60m wide while ditch 30 was 0.48m wide. The fills were the same, mid orange-brown silty clay (33 & 31).

Two postholes were cut into the west side of ditch 1/10. Posthole (1/12) had a diameter of 0.30m and a depth of 0.08m with concave sides and base and a height of 66.73m OD. The fill (1/13) was loose dark grey-brown silty clay with moderate small stones. Posthole (1/14) may have been a small pit; it had a diameter of 0.68m and a depth of 0.20m with concave sides and a flat base and a height of 66.73m OD. The fill (1/15) was loose dark grey-brown silty clay with moderate gravel. Seen cut into the north end of ditch 50 on the west end of the plot was posthole 48. This was sub-circular 0.40-0.45m in diameter filled with dark grey-brown silt clay with 20% small gravel (49). Further NE posthole 46 had a diameter of 0.25m as seen and was filled by mid grey-brown silty clay with 50% small gravel (47).

Towards the SW end of Evaluation Trench 3 pit 3/10 was sub-oval, had concave sides and a concave base. It was 0.70m wide and extended outside the limits of the trench (Fig. 6). It was at least 1.2m long, the depth was 0.26m and it had a height of 66.17m OD. The fill of the pit was loose dark brown silt with frequent small stones (3/11). This feature may be later being Anglo Saxon or medieval in date.

4.2 Anglo Saxon

Two possible features of this period were found. However the pottery may have been residual and the features may be medieval. In Evaluation Trench 5 in the area of Plot 3, pit 5/04 was sub-rectangular with rounded corners that was 0.70m long, 0.60m wide, 0.25m deep and lay at a height of 66.58m OD (Fig. 3). The pit had steeply angled sides and a flat base. The fill of the pit (5/05) was loose mid green-brown sandy silt with occasional small stones. The fill produced one sherd of an Anglo-Saxon coarse tempered ware. Pit 6/07 contained three sherds (non-joining) were assigned on fabric to the Anglo-Saxon period although a later (medieval) date was considered possible. Given the amount of medieval remains this is likely.

4.3 Medieval

The southernmost feature of this period was within Plot 3. A trench 52 surviving 0.40m wide and 0.32m deep, possibly circular or in angled sections, was 3.20m in diameter externally (Fig. 3, Section 2)). The sides were at 75-80° and the base was rounded. The trench was filled by dark orange-brown silty clay with 40% small gravel (53). A sherd of mid 11th to 12th century pottery was recovered.

In the west part of Plot 2 a large irregularly shaped feature may be one of several. Feature 44 (Fig. 4) was at least 3m E-W by at least 3.5m N-S and probably continued eastwards as 40. The fill, dark grey-brown clay silt with occasional to moderate amounts of gravel (39/45 & 41) was fractionally different between the two parts of the feature. The size of the feature suggests gravel digging. Pit 42 may have continued as pit 22 and had a similar function as they had the same fill (23 & 43) as each other and the same as pit 44. A sherd of mid 11th – 12th century pottery from fill 45 may date the presumed gravel digging to the medieval period or else the sherd is residual. A sherd of Oxford region black sandy ware was recovered from pit fill 23 and may be residual. Pit 20 with a similar fill (21) may have also been gravel extraction. Pit 44 was truncated on the south side by a modern pit as had pit 42 on the east side.

The long undated ditch 06 (Fig. 4) was 1.8m wide and filled by black-brown silty clay with moderate amounts of large gravel (07). It had a rounded terminal at the SW end. The line of it probably continued as ditch 28. Ditch 28 was filled with mid grey brown silt clay and small gravel (29). The plan of the south end of the feature suggested pit digging i.e. 34. These pits could have been Romano British. Pit 34 was filled with dark orange-brown sandy silt (35). Edge 26 may have been the north terminal of ditch 28 cutting earlier pit 24. This pit was at least 1.20m long and was filled by mid red-brown silt clay (25).

Ditch 06 that cut ditch 14 was a least 0.60m wide with a rounded terminal to the east. It was filled with mid grey-brown slightly sandy clay silt (15). The relationship with feature 10 was not established. It was filled with grey-brown clay silt and 2-5% gravel and charcoal flecking (11). Sherds of mid 11th -12th century pottery were recovered. Cut into the fill was oval posthole 12 0.25m x 0.50m containing charcoal rich black-brown clay silt and occasional burnt gravel (13). To the north was a ditch or pit 08 that was at least 2.50m long filled by mid grey-brown silty clay with frequent charcoal flecking and some animal bone (09). A sherd of 11th century pottery was in the top of the fill.

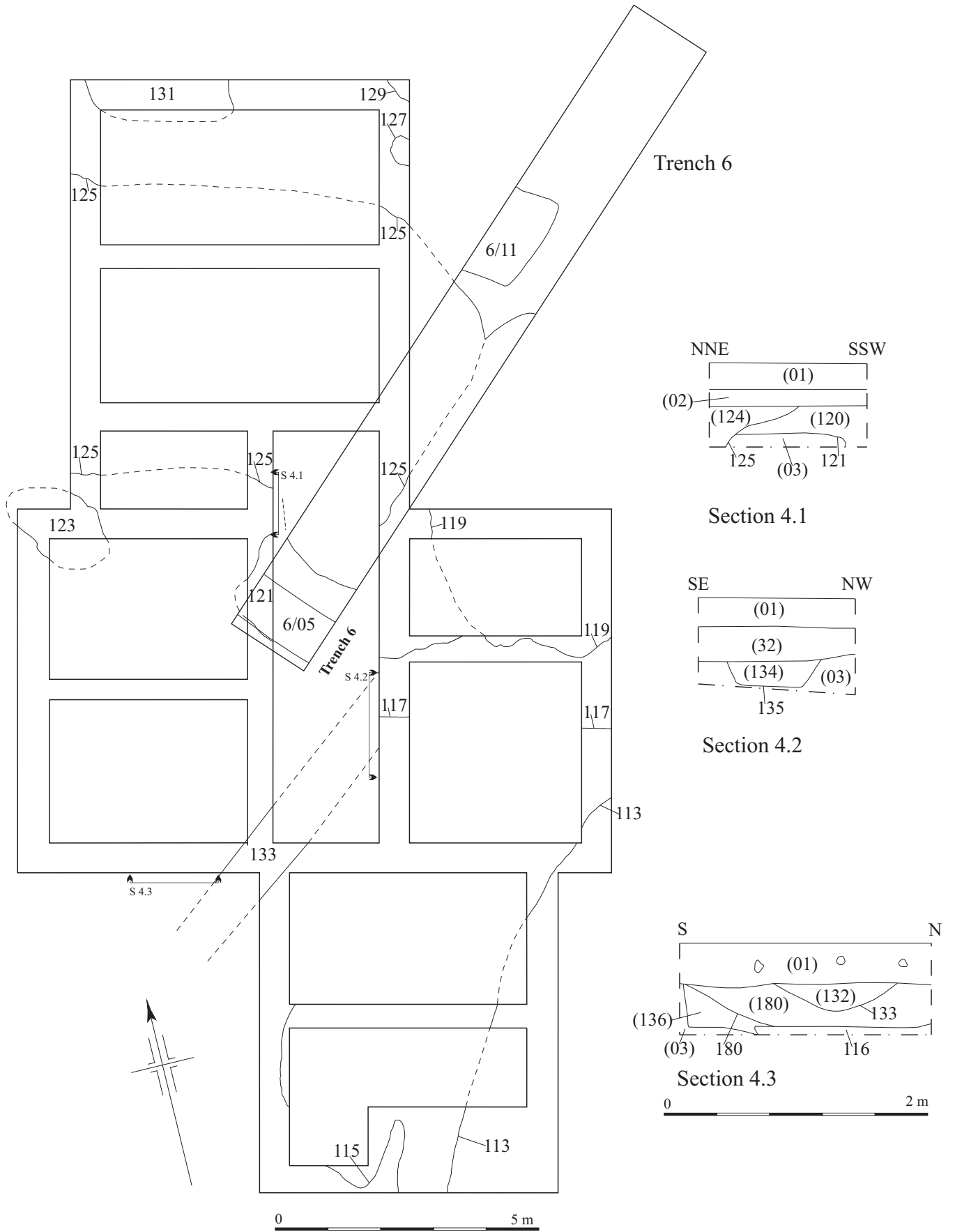


Figure 5. Plot 4 Plan and sections

On the north side of ditch 14 were two postholes. Posthole 16 was circular with a diameter of 0.10m filled by light orange-brown sandy clay (17) while posthole 18 was the same size and had the same fill (19). At the north end of Plot 2 an irregular possible ditch 04 of 0.50m width was filled with mid red-brown silty clay (05).

Feature 27 was an edge that was seen in an otherwise dirty area within Plot 2, east of the terminal of long ditch 06.

At the north end of Plot 4 was a feature different from the slurry pits in the area and therefore may be of medieval date. Pit 131 was at least 3m in diameter and was filled by mid brown clay silt with 10% gravel (130). Towards the south end of this plot a pit 135 was seen in section (Fig. 5, Section 4.2). This was 0.71m wide and 0.21m deep and filled with mid yellow-brown silty clay (134).

Within Plot 1 ditch 140 was 0.90m wide and at least 0.36m deep with vertical sides. It was filled by dark brown-grey silt clay with 20% gravel (139) and was cut by pit 143 (Fig. 6, Section 1.2). It contained a sherd of North-East Wiltshire Ware dating from the mid 11th to 12th century. The ditch did not appear to the NW and was obscured by pit 138 to the SE. Three other features produced solely medieval pottery in this area. Feature 146 could either have been part of a pit or part of a ditch terminal. It was filled by dark brown-green silt clay (145) that contained a sherd of the same material as ditch 141. Pit 166 was 3m NE-SW by *c.* 2m. It was filled with dark brown clay silt with 10% gravel and had a 20% content by charcoal fragments (165). The pottery dated it to the late 11th – 12th century. Feature 150 again could possibly been a pit or a ditch filled by mid brown-green silt clay with 10% gravel and pottery dating from the mid 11th – 12th century (149).

Several undated pits were found in this area (Fig. 6). Pit 162 was at least 4.5m long and 3.5m wide filled by mid brown silt clay with 10% gravel (161). The pit was at least 0.90m deep and had undercut sides (Fig. 6, Section 1.1). Pit 156 was at least 3m long and filled by mid brown-green silt clay with 30% gravel content (155). Both these pits were cut by modern pit 164. Pit 162 cut large pit 158. This appeared irregular in plan, at least 5.5m across and was filled by mid brown silt clay with 30% gravel (157).

Smaller pits were found on the NE side of the plot. Pit 152 was *c.* 1.9m across filled by mid brown silt clay (151). Pit 154 was at least 1.8m in diameter filled by mid brown-green silt clay with 30% gravel (153).

Large irregular pit 138 was at least 4.5m long and at least 0.67m deep (Fig. 6, Section 1.3). It was filled with dark brown-grey silt clay with 20% gravel and 5% charcoal content (137). Pit 144 was irregular in plan, 3m wide, at least 0.34m deep and filled with mid brown silt clay (143).

Within Evaluation Trench 3 ditch 3/08 was aligned ESE-WNW (Fig. 6, Section 1.4), had irregularly shaped sides and a concave base. The ditch was 1.20m wide and 0.30m deep. The pit's fill was loose dark grey-brown sandy silt with frequent small stones (3/09); no finds were recovered from the feature. Adjacent to it was pit 3/06 that was sub-oval, had vertical sides and a flat base. The pit was at least 1.70m long, and was 1.80m wide and 0.20m deep. The top survived at 66.10m OD. The fill (3/07) was loose dark grey-brown sandy silt with frequent small stones; no finds were recovered from the feature. Pit 3/04 was square with

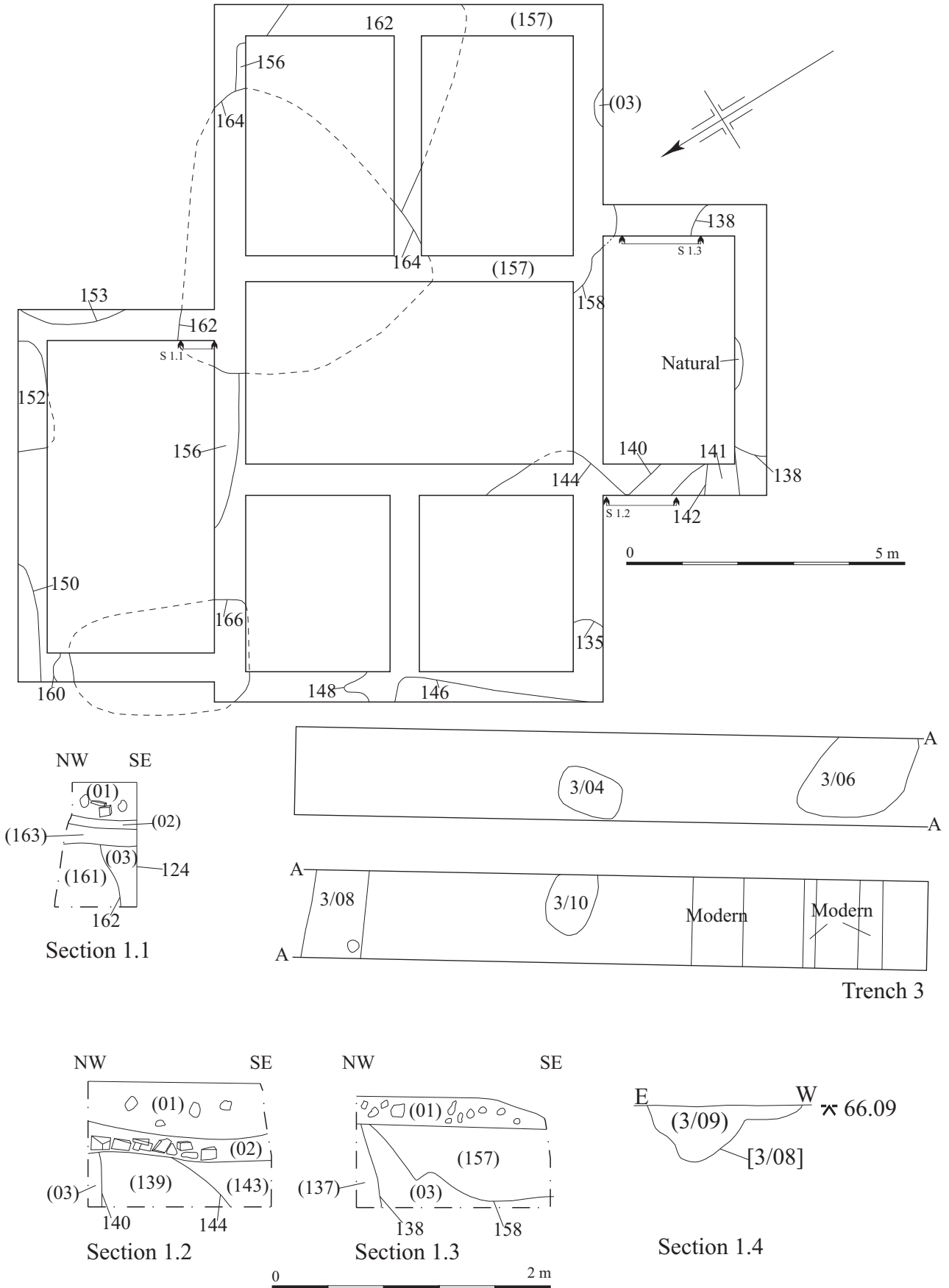


Figure 6. Plot 1 Plan and sections

rounded corners, had slightly irregular stepped sides and a flat base. The pit was at least 1.10m long, 0.80m wide, 0.14m deep and had a height of 66.78m OD. The fill (3/05) was loose grey-brown sandy silt; no finds were recovered from the feature.

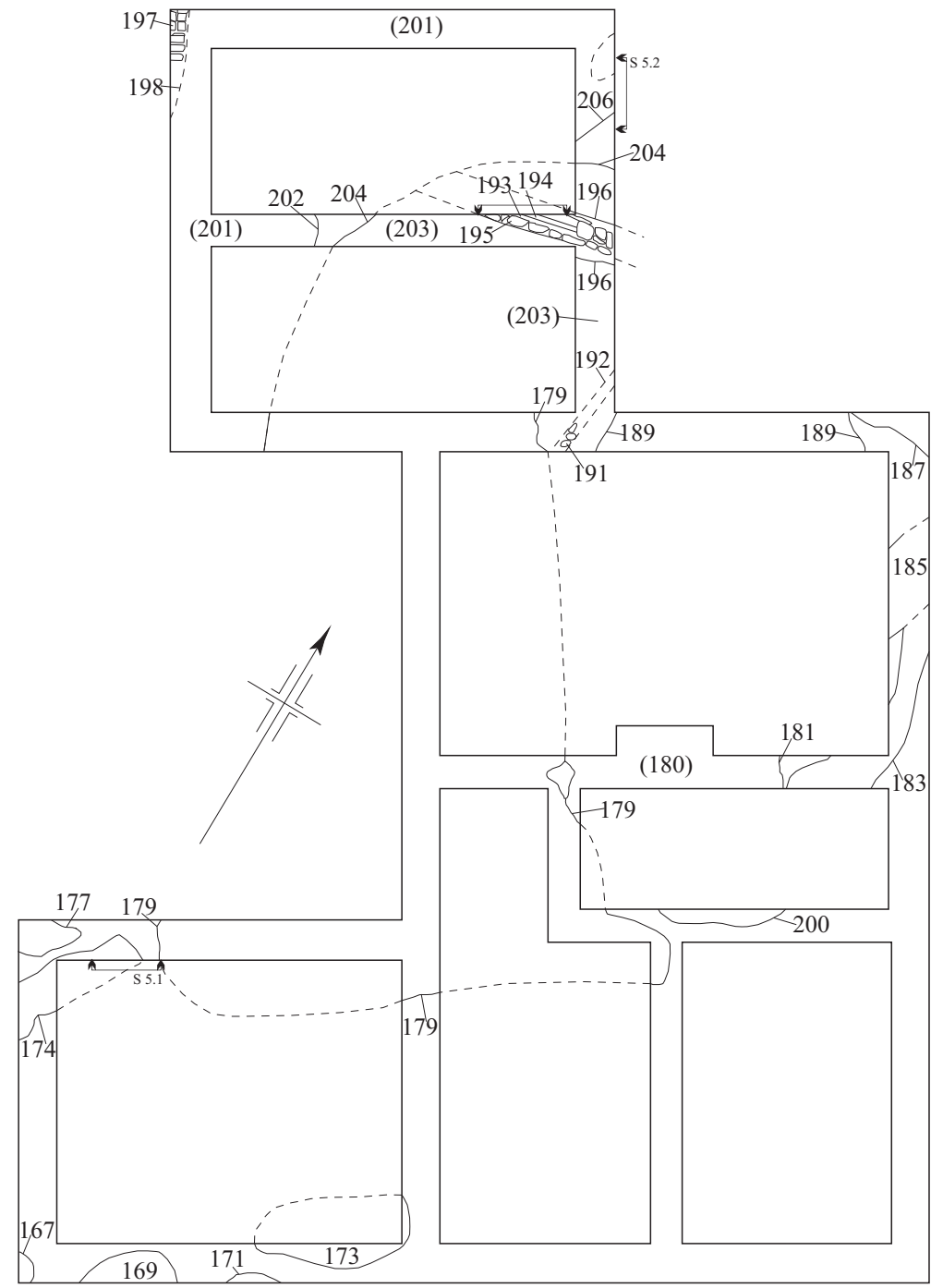
In Plots 6 & 7 two features contained medieval pottery. Pit 216 was 2.40m long and at least 0.30m deep, containing dark grey-brown silt clay with 5% gravel (215). Large pit that was at least 4.5m wide contained two sherds of medieval pottery. It was at least 0.30m wide with concave sides and was filled with dark black-grey silt clay with 15-20% gravel at the top (211). Large pit 220 was cut by modern pit 222. 220 was at least 2.65m across and at least 0.40m deep with a concave side as seen (Fig. 7, Section 6/7.2). It was filled by dark grey-black silty clay with 5% gravel. A sherd of medieval pottery was recovered (219).

Several other features were present in the foundation trenches for Plot 6/7 and have been assigned to this period due to their locations and fills. A small pit 208 at least 0.70m in diameter and at least 0.28m deep was filled with mid brown-grey silty clay with 20-25% gravel (207). Adjacent to it was posthole 210 that was 0.30m in diameter and filled with light brown-grey silty clay with 70% small gravel content (209). Two small pits were present in the SE foundation trench. Pit 214 was at least 0.78m in diameter and over 0.16m deep, filled with mid brown-grey silty clay with 20% gravel (213). Next to it was pit 236 that was at least 0.50m in diameter and 0.40m deep filled with mid red-brown silt clay with 40% gravel (235). Posthole 230 was 0.40m in diameter and 0.15m deep with sides tapering to point (Fig.7, Section 6/7.3) and filled mid brown-red silty clay and 30% gravel (229). Pit 232 was at least 1.1m in width and 0.48m deep (Fig.7, Section 6/7.1). It was filled by mid red-brown silty clay with 10% gravel (231).

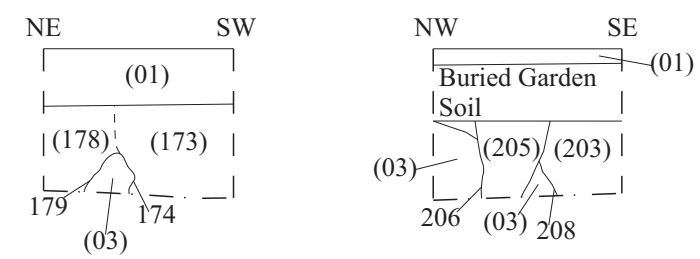
Pit 218 was 0.80m deep at least 0.50m deep with concave sides and filled by mid red-brown silt clay with 20% gravel (217). Small pit 234 was at least 0.55m in diameter and 0.27m deep with sides at 45° and a rounded base. It was filled by mid brown-grey, mottled orange-brown silty clay with 30% small gravel (233). Pit 228 in the NE corner of Plot 6/7 was 2.70m long and at least 0.52m deep with fairly steeply sloping sides. It was filled by mid brown-grey silty clay with 40% gravel content (227). It was cut by pit or ditch 226 filled with mid grey silty clay with 30% gravel (225). Pit 224 was oval 1.30m long, at least 0.40m wide and 0.30m deep. It was filled with dark grey-black silt clay with *c.* 30% charcoal content (223).

More features produced medieval pottery during the excavation for the foundations of Plot 5. Small pit 171 on the SE side was at least 0.70m wide and filled by mid brown-yellow silty clay (170) and produced three sherds of Cotswold-type ware. Oval or sub-rounded pit 173 was 2.20m across with dark brown-grey clay silt and 5% gravel (172). A sherd of North-East Wiltshire Ware was retrieved from it. Pit 200 was at least 1.7m across and filled with dark brown-grey silt clay with 30% gravel content (199) and produced a sherd of Cotswold-type ware from the top. A ditch 185 on a NE-SW orientation was 1m wide and filled by mid brown-grey silty clay (184). It produced a sherd of Cotswold-type ware from the top. Its relationship with feature 183 was not established.

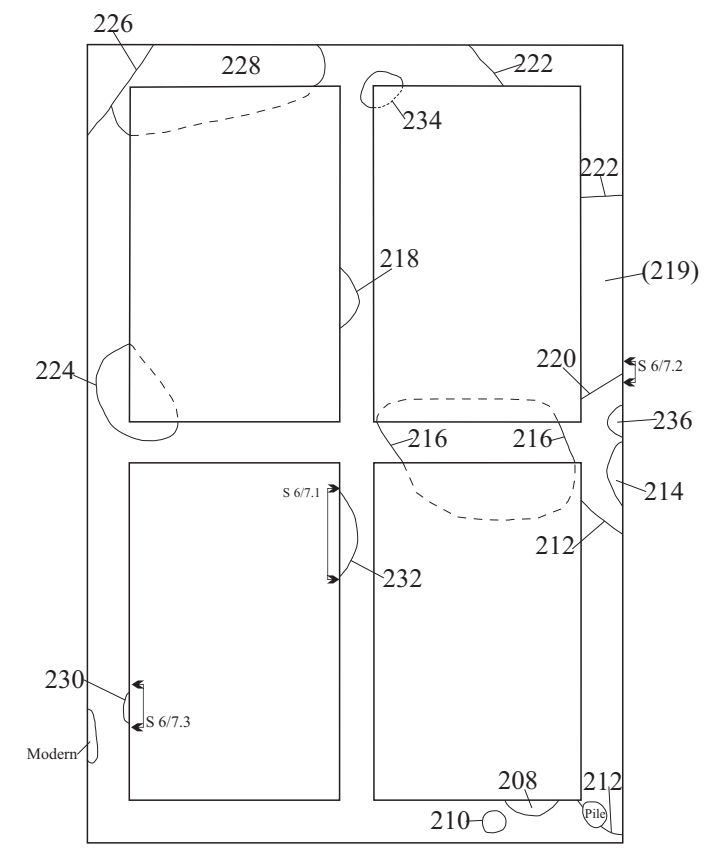
Undated features have been assigned to this period due to their location in Plot 5. Pit 167 was at least 0.40m and filled with mid brown-green silty clay and 30% gravel content (166b). pit 169 was 1.4m wide and filled with dark brown-grey silty clay with 60% gravel content (168). Feature 175 was irregular in a linear fashion, at least 2.2m long and 0.80m wide. It was filled with mid brown-green clay silt with 5% gravel (174). A further irregular feature



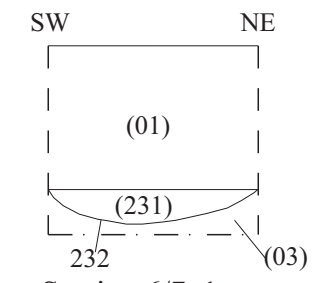
Plot 5



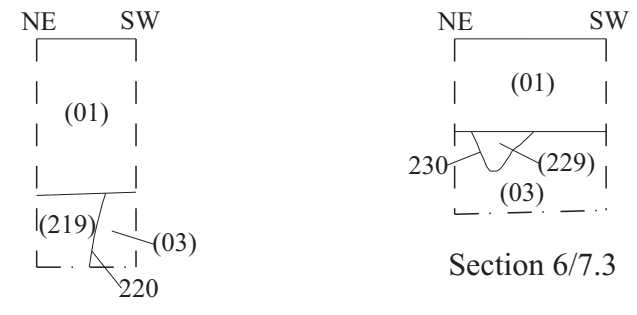
Section 5.1 Section 5.2



Plot 6 & 7



Section 6/7. 1



Section 6/7. 2

Section 6/7.3



Figure 7. Plots 5 & 6/7

was adjacent where 177 was at least 0.80m long and filled with the same material but containing only 2% gravel content (176). Pit 181 was east of large pit 179 and cut by it. It was at least 3m across and contained fill dark brown-green silt clay with 30% gravel (180). Feature 183 was irregular, at least 3.5m long and 0.80m wide, containing dark grey-brown clay silt with 2% gravel content (182). It may be part of a tree throw hole.

In the NE corner of Plot 5 pit 187 was at least 1.2m across and filled by mid brown-green clay silt with 70% gravel (186). Adjacent to it was pit 189 that was 3.6m across with fill 188 of similar material. Pit 202 was at least 6.5m across with fill dark grey-brown clay silt with 20% gravel (201) and was presumed to have been cut by large pit 204. Small pit 206 was 0.80m across and filled by dark brown-grey silty clay with 30% gravel content (205).

4.4 Post-medieval

A very large pit, gravel quarry, or series of intercutting pits 179 that was at least 8.5m long NW-SE and 7m wide was irregular with vertical sides, where seen. It was filled with dark brown-grey silty clay with 20% gravel (178) and contained a mid 16th to 17th century sherd of pottery. It is possible that it is more modern, similar to, or part of feature 204.

4.5 Modern

Ditch 133 in Plot 4 (Fig. 5) was 0.98m wide and 0.23m deep and had a rounded base and sides of 45°. It was filled by dark grey-brown silty clay (132). The ditch cut across a mortar deposit that is thought to be associated with several slurry pits. Ditch 6/05 in Evaluation Trench 6 was a right angle to ditch 133 and of a similar profile and dimensions. The mortar deposit 116 was interpreted as a mortar foundation base set in cut 117. This was 1.10m wide and the overlying stone had been and the rejected mortar 136 put to one side robbed (Fig. 5, Section 4.3). A further length of mortar foundation (142) was present in the SW corner of Plot 1. This was 0.60m wide.

Cut into mortar deposit 116 was one of the modern slurry pits associated with the pig farming. These mostly were large and contained dark grey-brown, with a greenish hue, silty clay although some were very small. These pits were 115, 119, 121, 123, 125, 127, and 129. Large pit 113 was filled with modern building rubble and hardcore (112).

Pit (6/11) contained fill (6/10) that was a loose medium greyish brown sandy silt with infrequent charcoal inclusions and a moderate quantity of 20th century bottle glass, plastic and pottery.

In Plot 1 pit 164 was 5m wide by *c.* 4m and cut two earlier pits (Fig. 6). At the SW end of Evaluation Trench 3 were three modern walls.

In Plot 6/7 modern pit 222 was present in the NE corner. Drain 191 was in Plot 5. This represented by a base of flat laid limestone slabs 191 that were approximately 120x80mm in size. This 0.20m wide feature was overlaid by light brown-grey silt clay with 80% gravel (190) and laid in cut 192. A terracotta drain 194 was also present in Plot 5. This was formed of ceramic horseshoe shaped tiles set on a limestone slab with limestone 195 on either side holding the two vertical limestone slabs set on the base slab in place. The top was capped by a slab 193. The whole was contained in cut 196 and both the drains were later than pit 204.

Pit 204 was at least 6m across with vertical sides, as seen, and was filled with mid brown-green silt clay with 75% gravel (203). This may have been part of pit 179. A small part of a brick wall 197 was present in the NW corner of Plot 5 set in cut 198. A modern drain 1/06 was seen in Evaluation Trench 1 (Fig. 4).

Remains of modern walls were seen in Plot 2 (Fig. 4). These overlay a large modern disturbance.

5 FINDS

5.1 Roman Pottery by Andrew Peachey

The watching brief recovered a total of 18 fragments (245g) of Roman pottery in a slightly abraded condition from Plots 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the area of investigation. The Roman pottery was entirely produced in the Oxford region and despite only including a low degree of diagnostic sherds, probably originates in the late Roman period (mid 3rd to 4th centuries AD)

Methodology

The pottery was quantified by sherd count, weight and R.EVE. Fabrics were examined at x20 magnification, assigned an alpha-numeric code and cross-referenced where possible to the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber & Dore 1998). All data was entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that will be deposited as part of the archive.

Fabric Codes and Descriptions

| | |
|--------|---|
| OXF RS | Oxfordshire red-slipped ware, including mortaria (Young 2000, 123; Tomber and Dore 1998, 176) |
| GRS | Sandy grey ware, produced locally in the Oxford region (Young 2000, 202: group 3) |
| BSW | Black sandy ware, produced locally in the Oxford region (Young 2000, 202: group 5) |

Commentary

The bulk of the assemblage: 14 fragments (170g) were recovered from features within Plot 3. Ditch 67 contained a small fragment of the rim of a tall, near-vertical necked beaker in OXF RS (Young 2000, 152-3: types C22-25), alongside sparse sherds of GRS and BSW. The OXF RS beaker was the standard late Roman type produced by the Oxfordshire pottery industry and dates from the mid 3rd to 4th centuries AD. Similarly a GRS dish with a plain rim and straight sides (Young 2000, 222-3L type R53.1) contained in Ditch 93 also dates to this period of late Roman production. Further sparse body sherds of GRS and BSW were contained in Ditches 53, 63, 71 and Pit 77, with the GRS body sherds in Ditch 53 decorated with burnished horizontal bands.

In Plot 5, Pit 178 contained a single fragment of OXF RS that formed part of a flat base of an unidentifiable vessel, probably a dish. The Roman pottery in Plots 2 and 4 was limited to very sparse non-diagnostic sherds of GRS in Pits 23 and 114 respectively.

5.2 Medieval and Post-medieval pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The watching brief pottery assemblage comprised 38 sherds with a total weight of 430g. It was recorded utilizing the coding system and chronology of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor 1984; 1994), as follows:

| | |
|-------|--|
| OXAC: | Cotswold-type ware, AD975-1350. 23 sherds, 342g. |
| OXBF: | North-East Wiltshire Ware, AD1050 – 1400. 9 sherds, 53g. |
| OXY: | Medieval Oxford ware, AD1075 – 1350. 4 sherds, 36g. |
| OXFH: | Border wares, 1550 - 1700. 1 sherd, 8g. |

The following, not included in the Oxfordshire type-series, was also noted:

Early/middle Saxon hand-built ware, c AD450 – 850. Sparse to moderate sub-rounded quartz up to 2mm, sparse to moderate chaff voids, occasional sub-rounded quartz gravel up to 10mm. 1 sherd, 17g.

In addition, a single residual sherd (4g) of Romano-British pottery was also noted. 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 bulk of the assemblage was of early medieval date, and indicates that the site was occupied from around the time of the Norman Conquest until the 12th century, at which point the site appears to have been abandoned. Certainly, Brill/Boarstall ware (Oxford fabric OXAM), which is very common in medieval features of 13th century and later date in the region, is entirely absent.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

| Cut | Cntxt | RB | | E/MS | | OXAC | | OXBF | | OXY | | OXFH | | Date |
|-----|-------|----|----|------|----|------|-----|------|----|-----|----|------|----|--------|
| | | No | Wt | No | Wt | No | Wt | No | Wt | No | Wt | No | Wt | |
| 8 | 9 | | | | | 1 | 5 | | | | | | | 11thC |
| 10 | 11 | | | | | 3 | 25 | 2 | 8 | | | | | M11thC |
| 44 | 45 | | | | | | | 1 | 10 | | | | | M11thC |
| 52 | 53 | | | | | 1 | 2 | | | | | | | 11thC |
| 88 | 89 | | | | | 1 | 5 | | | | | | | 11thC |
| 119 | 118 | | | 1 | 17 | | | | | 1 | 12 | | | L11thC |
| 140 | 139 | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | | | | | M11thC |
| 146 | 145 | | | | | | | 1 | 5 | | | | | M11thC |
| 150 | 149 | | | | | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | | | | | M11thC |
| 166 | 165 | 1 | 4 | | | 4 | 96 | | | 2 | 20 | | | L11thC |
| 171 | 170 | | | | | 3 | 22 | | | | | | | 11thC |
| 173 | 172 | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | | | | | M11thC |
| 179 | 178 | | | | | 1 | 8 | 1 | 9 | | | 1 | 8 | M16thC |
| 183 | 182 | | | | | 1 | 30 | | | | | | | 11thC |
| 185 | 184 | | | | | 1 | 14 | | | | | | | 11thC |
| 200 | 199 | | | | | 1 | 20 | | | | | | | 11thC |
| 212 | 211 | | | | | 2 | 26 | 1 | 15 | | | | | M11thC |
| 216 | 215 | | | | | 2 | 25 | | | | | | | 11thC |
| 220 | 219 | | | | | 1 | 59 | | | 1 | 4 | | | L11thC |
| | Total | 1 | 4 | 1 | 17 | 23 | 342 | 9 | 53 | 4 | 36 | 1 | 8 | |

5.3 Animal bone

Due to the small amounts seen no animal bone was retained.

5.4 Environmental Remains

No environmental samples were taken.

6 DISCUSSION

Evidence of Romano British settlement was found in the south part of the site where it must continue into the field to the south. Ditches on several alignments indicate more than one phase. Pottery recovered from the evaluation and watching gives a date of mid 3rd to 4th centuries to the occupation. The number of pits and postholes suggests that this part of the site was settlement with the ditches defining enclosures and plots within which various activities were undertaken. The associated fields would have been elsewhere. No buildings were found although it is possible that postholes found in Evaluation Trench 2 belonged to such a structure. No roof tile was found so the buildings were thatched and the pottery does not indicate any high degree of wealth.

The scarcity of Anglo-Saxon pottery suggests that activity of this period did not extend onto this site, or would have been on the periphery. The burial found under the floor of the old malthouse may have been an isolated burial in this area. The other burials found in the area may have been further north towards Aston Road.

Evidence of medieval settlement in Brighthampton was found towards the north of the site. Here again ditches were found and they were on several different alignments. Some pits were found, some of which are considered to be the result of gravel extraction. The function of other pits is unknown. The circular or angled foundation in Plot 3 may well be the remains of a small dovecote of 3.2m diameter. This was set some distance from the other settlement. The pottery indicates that this part of the village was occupied in the mid 11th to 12th centuries.

A sherd of pottery indicates activity in the 16th or 17th century. Whether this includes the digging of the large pit from where it came is unknown. Several large slurry pits, walls and drains were found that relate to the modern use of the farm.

The watching brief has not helped establish the character of the Roman and medieval settlements as the remains were too fragmentary for a layout to be established in these periods.

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