

SH10 (OX)
230/93
2400

SHELLINGFORD QUARRY EXTENSION ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Summary

The OAU carried out a fieldwalking survey on behalf of Multi-Agg Ltd, covering an area of approximately 25 ha. A relatively uniform distribution of modern, medieval and occasional Roman pottery was recovered. A light scatter of flints was also recorded. No significant clusters of pottery can be identified and it is most likely that the distribution results from manuring activities. In the case of the flints several low density clusters are recognisable which may reflect significant archaeological activity.

Introduction

In October and November 1991 a fieldwalking survey was undertaken, as part of a field evaluation, by the Oxford Archaeological Unit on behalf of Multi-Agg Ltd, in connection with a planning application for a proposed extension to Shellingford Quarry. The site is located approximately 700 m ENE of Shellingford church at grid reference SU 328937.

Prior to fieldwalking the collection of aerial photographs held by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments at Swindon was consulted. No cropmarks within the application area were apparent. Aerial photographs held by the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services, taken in 1975, show two areas of cropmarks to the E of Shellingford (Fig. 1). Immediately S of Field C there appears to be an elliptical enclosure with a S-facing entrance, while ESE of the application area the cropmarks are indicative of a field system, which is different from that of either modern fields or paddocks.

Assessment Strategy

The fieldwalking survey was undertaken as an initial stage of assessment, in order to identify surface artefact distributions, from which it would be possible to assess whether further archaeological work would be required.

All of the relevant surface artefacts were collected by line-walking on a 25 m x 25 m grid, which was aligned on the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The finds were washed and catalogued in order to provide basic information on their type, date and distribution.

Access and Conditions

Approximately 25 ha of the application site was available for fieldwalking. Field C (Fig. 1) was under pasture and was therefore not examined. The northern part of Field A was not walked due to topsoil spreading.

As the fieldwalking was undertaken during several days over the period of a month the

conditions were variable, but adequate for the results to be considered as reliable. When Field B was walked the light was good but the ground had only just been ploughed, which meant that the surface visibility of the finds was more limited. In Field D the light was poor but the ground had been both ploughed and harrowed, which resulted in there being very good surface visibility of finds.

Fieldwalking Results

Three sherds of Roman pottery, 101 sherds of medieval pottery and 257 sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered (Fig 2). Fifty-six pieces of struck flint and 27 pieces of burnt flint were found (Fig. 3). The flints predominantly appear to date from the later Neolithic through to the Bronze Age, however, the assemblage did include a Mesolithic two-platform core (33275/93575).

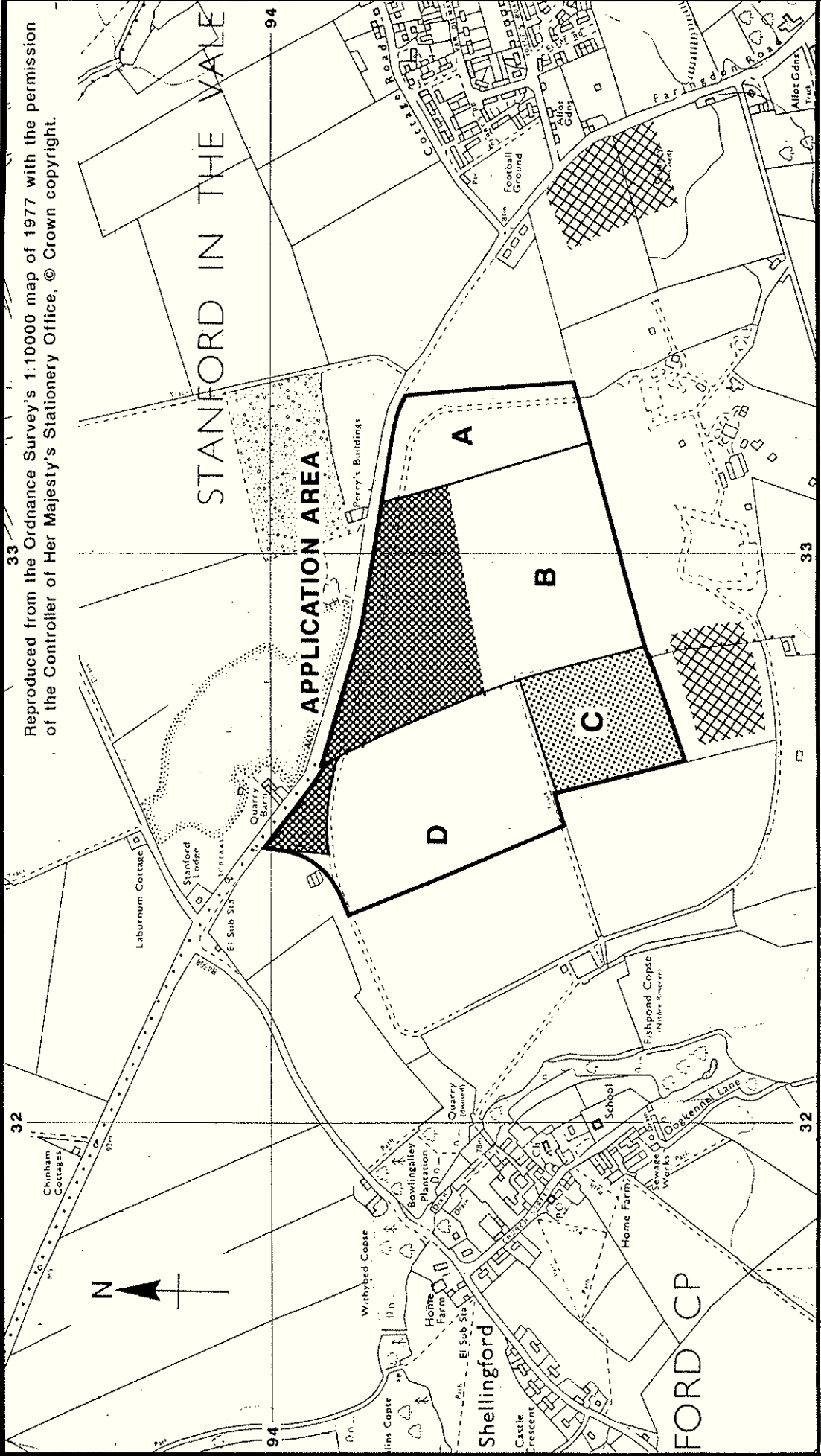
In addition 66 fragments of post-medieval brick and tile, 20 modern glass fragments, 14 clay pipe fragments, 9 bone fragments, 6 iron nails, 5 pieces of slag and two fragments of copper alloy were collected.

No significant spatial patterning can be discerned in the distribution of the pottery (Fig. 2), which appears to have a relatively uniform distribution across the areas surveyed. However, within the spatial patterning produced by the flints, several clusters can be identified (Fig. 3).

Conclusions

The relatively uniform distribution of the pottery would suggest that the observed patterning results from artefact dispersion, as a consequence of domestic refuse being included in material for manuring. In the case of the flints the low density clusters of artefacts (Fig. 3) may be archaeologically significant.

Field C which was not available for fieldwalking, will require assessment when land-use conditions are suitable. This will be done either by fieldwalking or by trial trenching with an initial 1% sample, with particular attention being paid to the southern part of Field C which is close to the potential enclosure, identified as a cropmark just outside the application area (Fig. 1). However, given the results of the evaluation to date the likelihood of their being significant archaeological remains in this area is low.



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Scale 1:10000

Figure 1

- PRESENT CONSENT AREA
- PASTURE
- AREAS OF CROPMARKS

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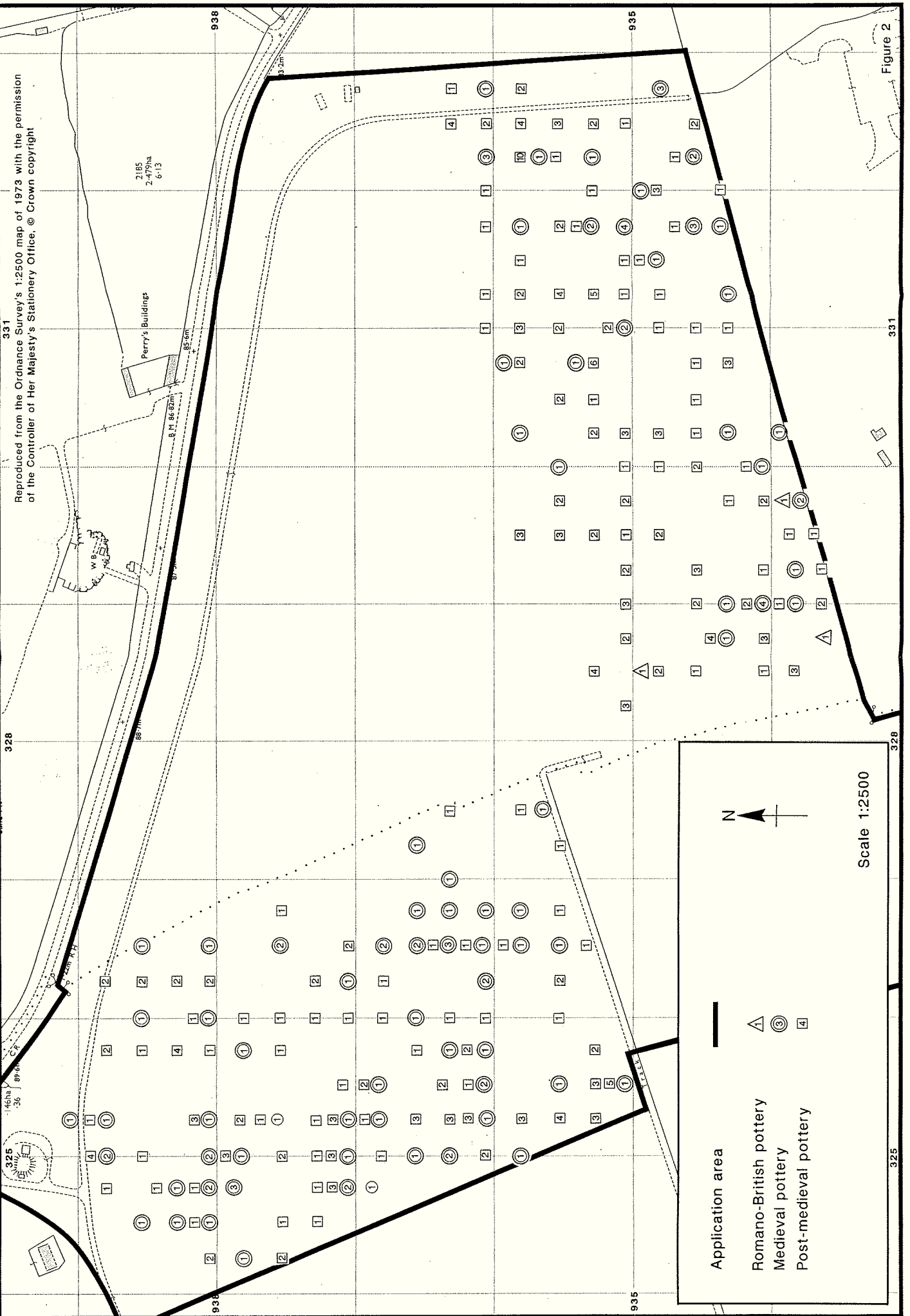


Figure 2

Application area

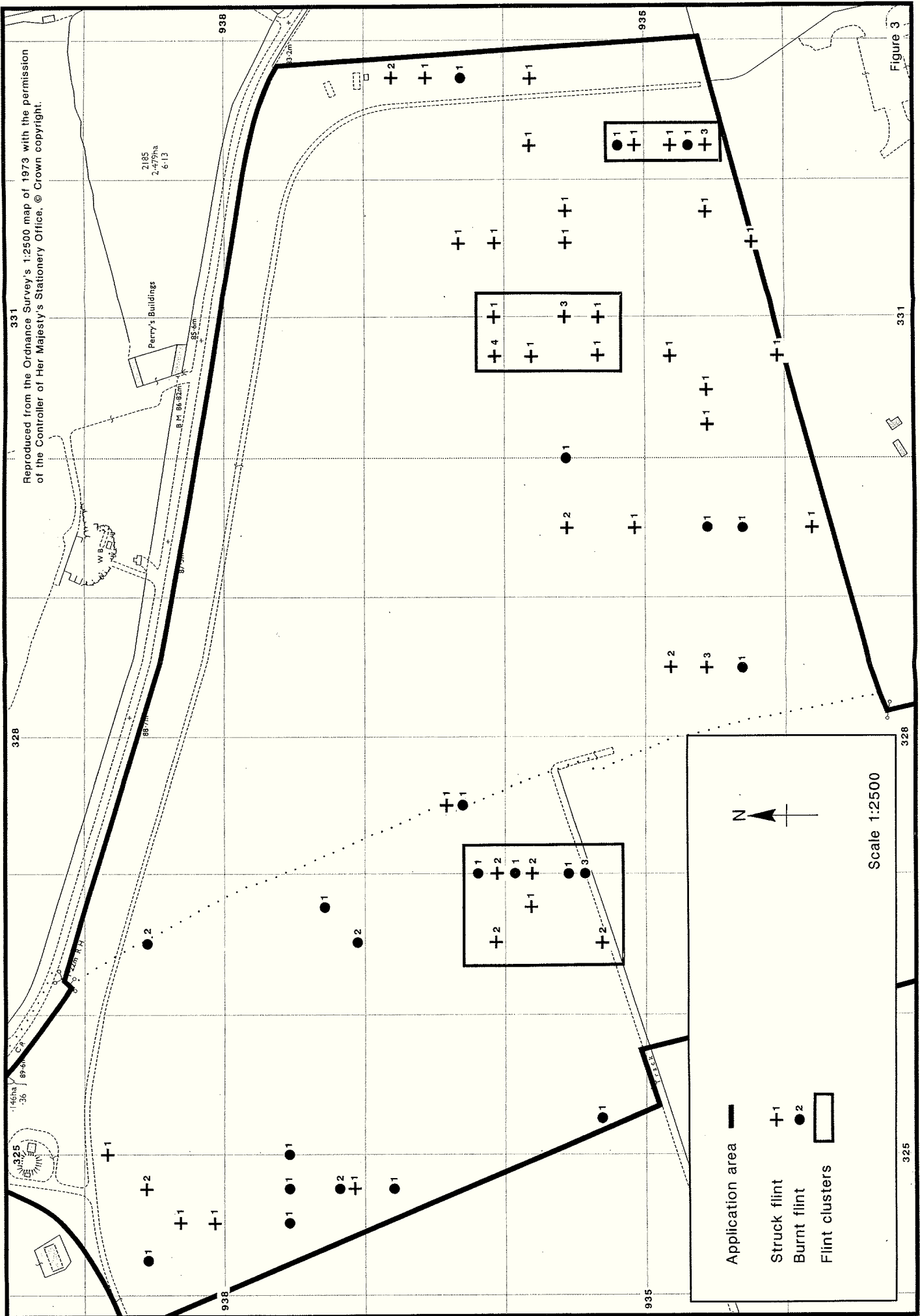
Romano-British pottery

Medieval pottery

Post-medieval pottery

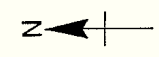
Scale 1:2500





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Figure 3



Scale 1:2500

- Application area —
- Struck flint +
- Burnt flint ●
- Flint clusters □

2185
2,479ha
6-13

Perry's Buildings

W.B. HOUSE

938

935

328

328

331

331

935

938

325

325