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Archaeological Field Unit

**Early Post-Medieval Quarry Pits on land at the Rear
of 8-10 The Row, Sutton: An Archaeological
Evaluation**

Rob Atkins

April 2005

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. 793

Commissioned by *Richard Hough Building*



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Early Post-Medieval Quarry Pits on land at the Rear of 8-10 The Row, Sutton: An Archaeological Evaluation

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April 2005

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SUMMARY

During the 17th and 18th March 2005 the Archaeological Field Unit (AFU) of Cambridgeshire County Council conducted an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of 8-10 The Row, Sutton, Cambridgeshire (TL 4426 7865) in advance of construction of two houses.

Three trenches (total length 31.9m) were excavated within the proposed development area (c.0.1ha). The site was on a steep southern slope.









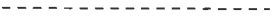

The only archaeological features on the site comprised eleven early post-medieval quarry pits (16th to 17th centuries). The sand from the quarry pits were used for new house building-possible in The Row itself. The western part of Sutton seems to have been expanded in this period as other quarry pits have been found 250m to the west behind the High Street (Hatton 2001). In contrast archaeological evaluations and excavations to the east of the site have not found post-medieval quarry pits. After being quarried the pits were backfilled, some with moderate to large amounts of domestic waste.

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Drawing Conventions

Sections

Limit of Excavation	
Cut	
Cut - Conjectured	
Soil Horizon	
Soil Horizon - Conjectured	
Intrusion/Truncation	
Top of Natural	
Top Surface	
Break in Section	
Cut Number	
Deposit Number	117
Ordnance Datum	$\frac{18.45\text{m}}{\times}$ ODN

Plans

Limit of Excavation	
Deposit - Conjectured	
Natural Features	
Intrusion/Truncation	
Sondages/Machine Strip	
Illustrated Section	
Cut Number	118

**Early Post-Medieval Quarry Pits at 8-10 The Row, Sutton,
Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation
(TL 4426 7865)**

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at rear of 8-10 The Row, Sutton, Cambridgeshire (TL 4426 7865) to fulfil the requirements of planning application E/04/00958/FUL (Fig. 1). The application was to build two houses, garages and associated services. Richard Hough Building Ltd funded the archaeological evaluation. The Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council carried out this evaluation over the 17th and 18th March 2005.

The Brief for archaeological work was dated 3rd March 2005 (Gdaniec 2005). The archaeological objectives for the evaluation were recorded in the Specification for the site dated 4th March 2005 (Macaulay 2005). These objectives were to establish the character, date, state of preservation and extent of any archaeological remains with the proposed development area.

The specification and the proposed location of the archaeological trenches were approved by Kasia Gdaniec of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice.

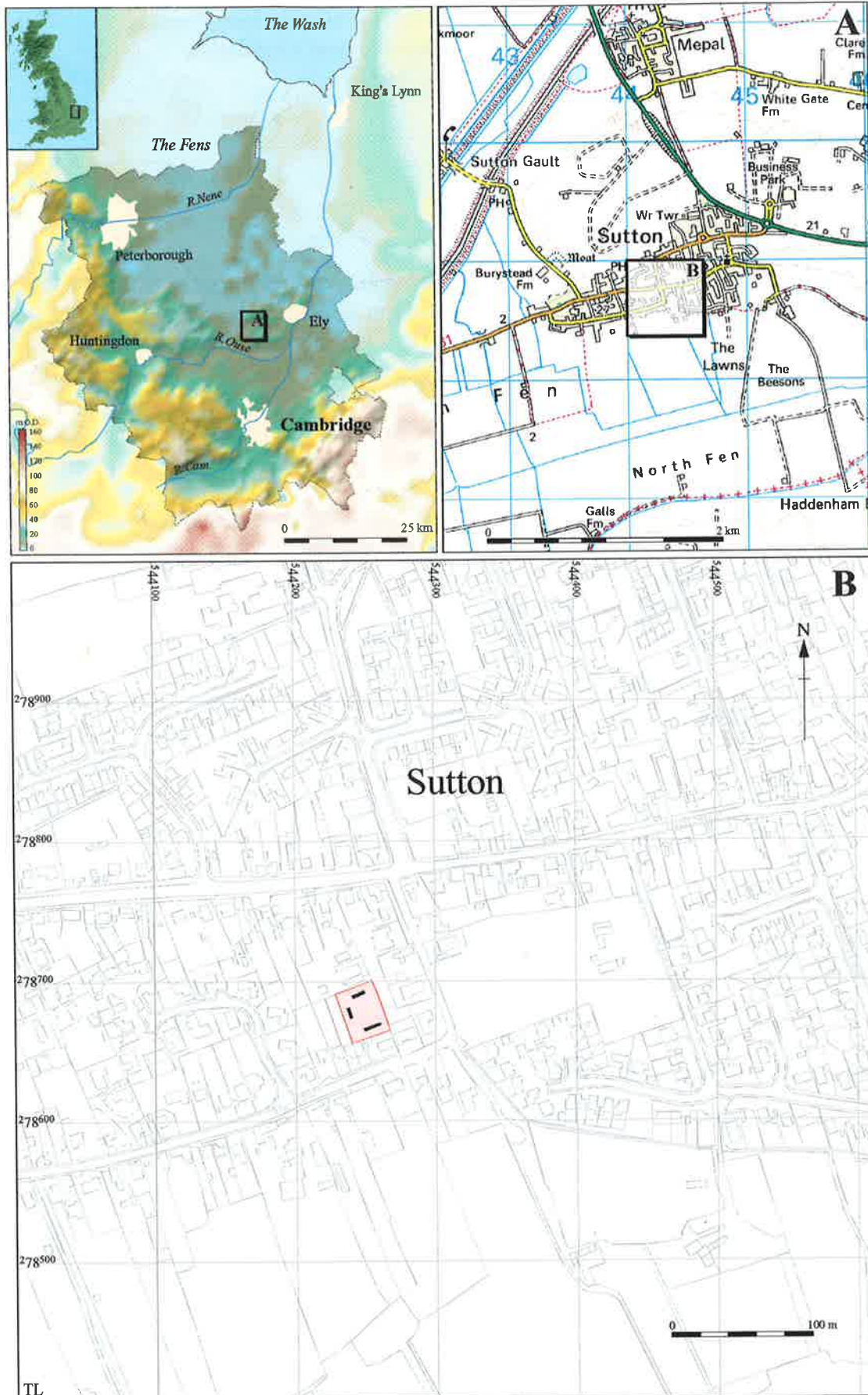
2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The geology has been mapped as Glacial Sand and Gravel (BGS 1980) with Upper Jurassic Kimmeridge Clay to the north of the site. The evaluation encountered orange silty sand with some small pieces of chalk and flint.

The site is on a steep south facing slope overlooking the fen. The ground level was at 15.5mOD at the northern part of the site falling to 11.33mOD at the southern side.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There has been several archaeological evaluations and excavations taken place in Sutton (Fig. 2) and have shown there has been activity and occupation from the prehistoric periods.



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Figure 1 Location of trenches (black) and development area (red)

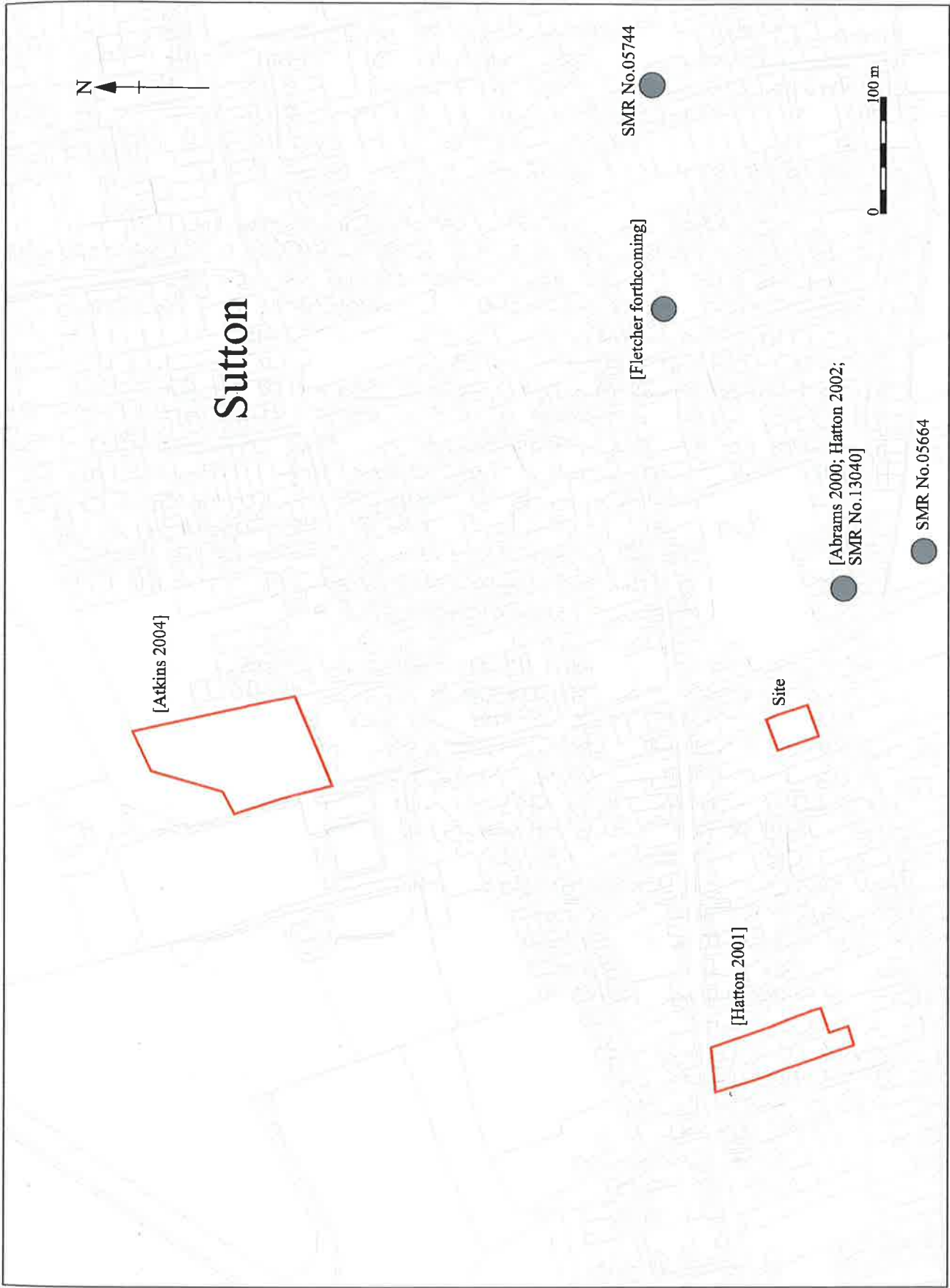


Figure 2 Site location in relation to previous archaeological work.

3.1 Prehistoric and Roman

An Iron Age and Roman settlement was found 500m to the north on land to the north of The Brook (Atkins 2004) and a Roman cremation 500m to the east at Oates Lane (SMR 05744).

3.2 Late Saxon and medieval

The name Sutton means 'South Farm' and may derive from its position in the Isle of Ely. Sutton was on the main road from Ely to St. Ives, c.10km from Ely. The Late Saxon (Domesday Book) and medieval and post-medieval records (Tax receipts) show that Sutton was a relatively large settlement. The location of Late Saxon and medieval remains (archaeological work and standing buildings) implies that the settlement was not only along the roadway and clustered around the church but also to the south of the High Street.

Late Saxon 10th century and medieval remains have been recently excavated in the High Street 400m to the east (Fletcher forthcoming). Saxo-Norman and medieval pottery, spindle whorls and metalwork were recovered in the 1950s c.200m to the south-east of the site (SMR 05664). The village was already large by the time of the Domesday Book with 39 people recorded in the parish. As these people were only the heads of households a multiple of 4 or 5 would give the approximate population of the parish.

An excavation at Red Lion Lane 100 to 150m to the south-east of the site identified medieval and later drainage ditches, medieval rubbish pits, a kiln and a possible building platform probably associated with occupation further up slope (Abrams 2000 and Hatton 2002; SMR No. 13040). The Row may be medieval in origin and could have been a back lane from the High Street. The Victoria County History noted that one or two cottages in The Row were timber framed and plastered and may be medieval (Pugh 1967, 159).

The general importance and posterity of medieval Sutton can be seen by the fact in 1313 the Prior of Ely received the right to hold a weekly market at Sutton on Thursdays. The village was the only conventual estate outside Ely itself with such a privilege (Pugh 1967, 159). This market continued into the post-medieval period.

3.3 Post-medieval

The general high degree of posterity in Sutton is shown by the nickname 'Golden Sutton', found in the Chancery proceedings of 1599 (Pugh 1967, 160). In 1676 Sutton was recorded as having 490 inhabitants. The general expansion of Sutton in this early post-medieval period can be seen by the large amount of early quarry pits not only found in this evaluation but also 250m to the west behind the High Street (Hatton 2001).

There are at least three 17th and 18th century standing structures fronting onto both sides of The Row. The Tithe Map is the earliest surviving map of Sutton and this shows that there were many structures on both sides of The Row. The 1842 Tithe Map shows the site as part of a large plot of land running from the High Street to The Row. This plot possibly represents the amalgamation of two former burgage plots. There is nothing recorded within the area evaluated although there is a structure adjacent to the west. The 1886 1st Edition OS map (XXV. 14) and the 1927 3rd Edition OS map shows the site as only having trees within it.

4 METHODOLOGY

A mechanical excavator with 1.6m wide ditching bucket was used to excavate three trenches (total length 31.9m) under archaeological supervision giving a c. 5% sample of the site (Fig. 1). The trench locations were slightly changed to miss a small pond of breeding frogs. On advice of Kasia Gdaniec no soil samples were taken. The list of contexts is Appendix 1

5 RESULTS

5.1 Trench 1 (Figs. 1, 3 and 4)

Trench 1 was 9.8m long and ran east to west at the northern part of the site (Fig. 3). Topsoil, (1) was 0.4m thick and comprised a dark brown silty sand. There was no subsoil and the topsoil sealed both archaeological features (4 and 7) and natural sands and gravels (Fig. 4). Features 4 and 7 were seemingly linear quarry pits which ran north to south. There were no relationship between the two linear pit alignments but they seemed to respect each other running roughly parallel and the early post-medieval finds from both are roughly contemporary.

Pit 4 was 1.2m wide and 0.86m deep with vertical edges and a flat base (Fig. 4). The main fill (3) was a dark brown sandy silt with a large amount of domestic waste comprising pottery, post-medieval brick, slag, shells, metal objects and animal bone (several with butchery marks etc.). The pit was sealed by a mid to dark brown sandy silt with no finds. Pit 7 was 2.06m wide and 0.66m deep with vertical edges and a flat base. The fills (5 and 6) were similar to (2 and 3) although there were significantly fewer finds.

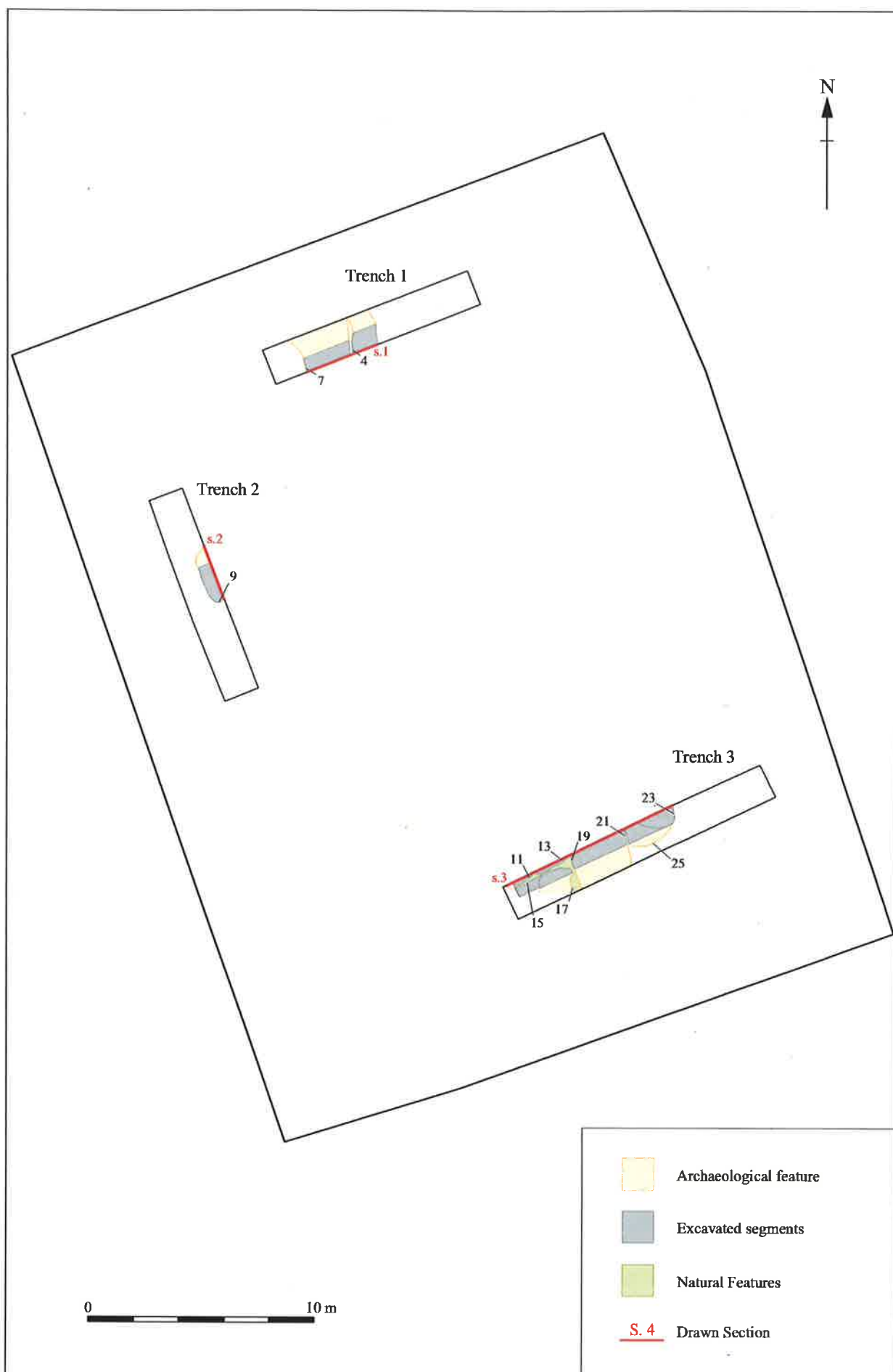


Figure 3 Trench plans.

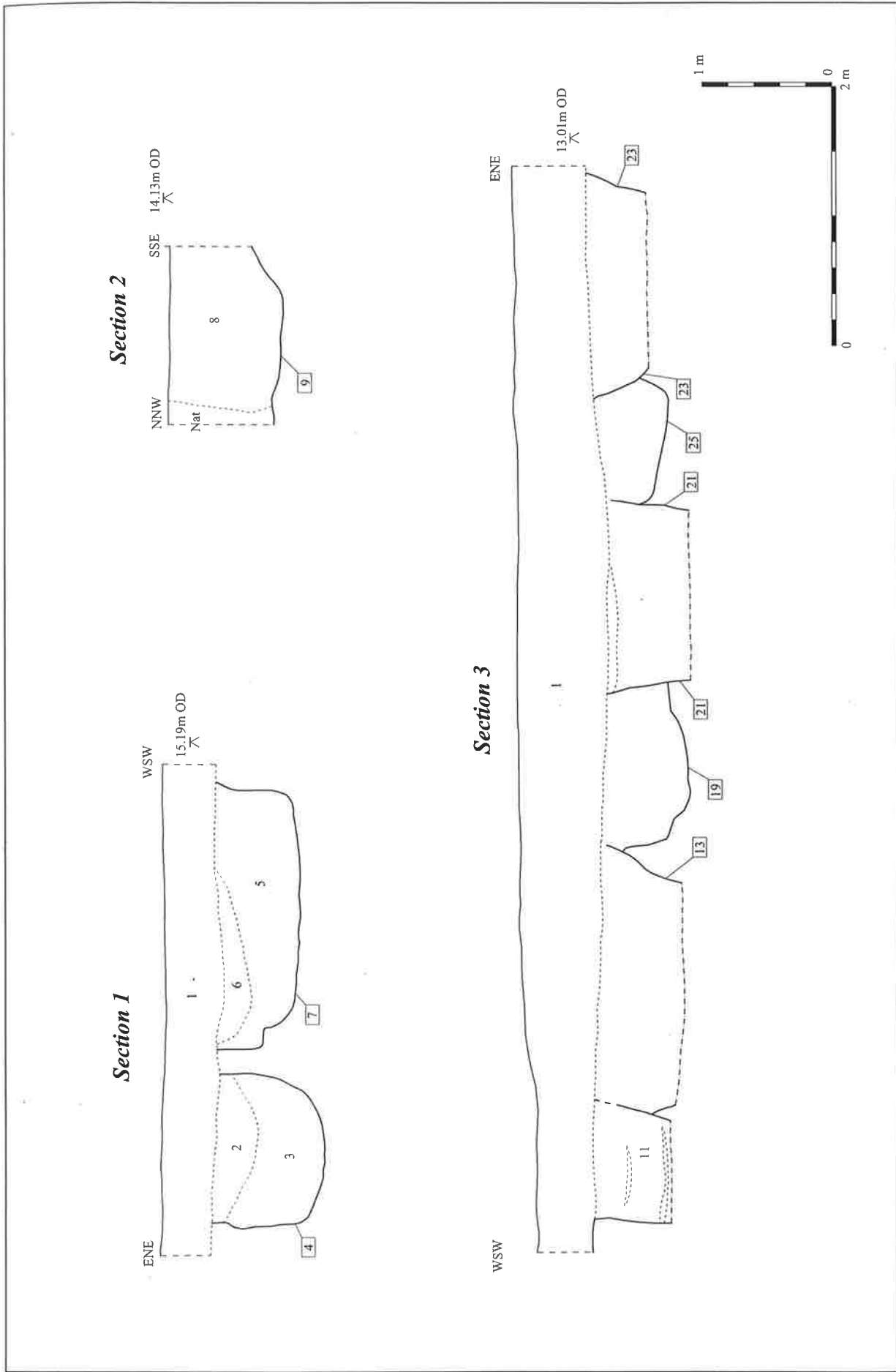


Figure 4 Section drawings

5.2 Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

Trench 2 ran east to west and was 9.5m in length (Figs. 1, 3 and 4). Below the topsoil there was a single undated quarry pit (9) partly in the eastern baulk of the trench. It was at least 2.6m in length and 0.6m+ wide and 0.48m deep. The pit had largely vertical edges although there was undercutting in places and a flat base. It was filled with a mid to dark grey brown silty sand.

5.3 Trench 3 (Figs. 1, 3 and 4)

Trench 3 ran east to west and was 12.7m long. Archaeological features were only in the western part of the trenches (Fig.3). These consisted of eight intercutting quarry pits (11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27; Table 1). The pits varied in size (probably sub-rectangular to sub-circular in shape) and all the pits were filled with a single silty sand fill. Finds recovered from the pits (section 6.2 below) show that the pits were roughly contemporary in date and most had a little to moderate amounts of domestic waste in their fills.

Cont (cut)	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Edge	Base	Fill/Relationships
11	0.85m+	0.34m+	0.60m+	$\underline{c.80^\circ}$?	Dark grey brown. Lenses of redeposited natural. Cuts pits 13 and 17
13	2.10m	0.50m+	0.90m+	$\underline{c.70^\circ}$?	Very dark brown. Cuts pits 13 and 19
15	1.80m	1.30m+	0.80m+	$\underline{c.80^\circ}$?	Mid orange brown. Cuts pit 17
17	1.20m+	1.0m+?	0.65m	-	Flat	Mid Orange brown
19	1.60m+	1.50m	0.90m	85°+	Concave	Dark orange brown
21	1.6m+	1.5m	0.9m+	$\underline{c.80^\circ}$?	Mid brown. Cuts pits 19 and 25
23	2.5m+	1.1m	0.8m+	$\underline{c.70^\circ}$?	Mid grey brown. Cuts pit 25
25	1.8m	0.7m+	0.6m	$\underline{c.70^\circ}$	Slightly concave	Orange grey brown

Table 1: Quarry pits in Trench 3

6 FINDS

6.1 Iron objects and slag

by Dennis Payne

There were three Iron objects and a little iron slag recovered from two quarry pits. From context 3 there was a tool with an iron handle, an iron nail and two slag pieces (153g). A late medieval horseshoe was recovered from context 22.

6.2 Pottery

by Carole Fletcher

There were 56 sherds weighing 829g recovered from nine separate quarry pits. Apart from a single residual Roman Grey Ware sherd, the pottery comprised medieval and early post-medieval pottery from c.1100 to c.1700AD. The majority of pottery was late medieval and early post-medieval in date c.1450-1700AD. The pottery consisted of domestic wares with drinking, serving and cooking vessels (see Table 2). There was a range of fabrics represented with pottery from Cambridgeshire, Essex, Lincolnshire and Norfolk.

Cont	No. Sherds	Weight (g)	Comments
3	13	208	One Essex micaceous grey ware, three Cistercian type wares (c.1500-1600) Post-Medieval Red Wares; Late Medieval Reduced ware and Late Medieval Ely ware. A range of drinking (cups), serving (bowls and jugs) and cooking vessels.
5	4	308	Essex transitional medieval to post-medieval (15th/16th), a bung hole cistern (1400+) and two Post-Medieval Red Wares (1500-1600).
10	5	29	Medieval and Late Medieval Ely wares and a sherd of an early post-medieval sherd. Both cooking (one with sooting residue) and serving vessels.
12	20	171	Late Medieval Ely ware (1350+), local medieval unglazed, Bourn D ware (1450-1600) and one Roman Grey ware. Mostly jars and a couple of cooking pots.
14	1	15	Late medieval to early post-medieval bowl
18	6	60	Two Medieval Ely ware (1200-1500), one med?, one later medieval, one Post-Medieval Red ware and one Norfolk bi chrome (16th/17th)
20	3	15	Early Medieval Essex Micaceous Sandy (1100-1200), local medieval unglazed and late medieval to early post-medieval transitional sherd
22	2	7	Medieval Ely ware and early post-medieval bi-chrome (16th/17th)
24	2	16	A medieval or late medieval Essex micaceous and a sherd of late medieval/transitional sherd (c.1450-1600)
Total	56	829	

Table 2: Pottery

6.3 Animal Bone

By Stephen Macaulay

There were 52 animal bone fragments weighing 893g (Table 3). The large majority of bone came from one quarry pit fill (3). The animal bone represents a domestic assemblage with some evidence for butchery and burning. Sheep/Goat and ungulate (all cow?) were seemingly the only species present.

Context	No. Fragments	Weight (g)	Comments
3	37	496	Sheep/goat and ungulate represented. Some evidence of butchery on young and adult. Three bones show burning (1 totally cremated). Large number of ribs (17). 1 sheep jaw
5	2	48	?
12	1	3	?
18	2	21	Sheep jaw and a rib
20	5	135	Ungulate/sheep
22	1	67	Large ungulate
24	4	123	1 sheep jaw, ungulate?
Total	52	893	

Table 3: Animal bone

6.4 Flint

by Richard Mortimer

A single flint flake with re-working along one side was recovered from context 12. Probably Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age

6.5 Shells

by Rob Atkins

There was 34 mussel shells recovered from context 3

6.6 Brick

by Rob Atkins

There were 8 fragments of brick (808g) from two quarry pit fills (3 and 12). The bricks were c.early 17th century in date. The brick were all poorly made puddled yellow/red clay with a width of just 2"(50mm).

7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The site is on a steep south facing slope within the former medieval settlement of Sutton. There were no pre-16th century features within the excavation area implying the site was used probably for cultivation only in the medieval period. Residual pottery in the post-medieval quarry pits included a single Roman sherd and a small amount of medieval pottery from the 12th century.

The evaluation has found evidence for early post-medieval quarry pits (16th to 17th centuries). Quarry pits were within all the three trenches but were most dense in trench 3 nearest The Row. The sand from the pits were presumably being used for new house building possible in The Row itself. There are presently several standing 17th and 18th century buildings fronting on both sides of The Row.

It is probable that the western part of Sutton expanded in this period as other quarry pits have been found 250m to the west of the site behind the High Street (Hatton 2001). In contrast archaeological evaluations and excavations to the east of the site have not found any post-medieval quarry pits.

After being quarried the pits were backfilled, some with domestic waste. This was presumably to return the site back to cultivation as there were no post 17th century features or artefacts within the site. 19th and 20th century maps of the area show that the site was not built on and was part of a large plot which ran from the High Street to The Row.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Richard Hough who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by Stephen Macaulay and the fieldwork was carried out by Rob Atkins and Steve Hickling. The illustrations were drawn by Carlos Silva and the finds were reported on by Carole Fletcher, Stephen Macaulay, Richard Mortimer, and Dennis Payne.

The brief for archaeological works was written by Kasia Gdaniec, Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice, who visited the site and monitored the evaluation.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT LIST

Context	Trench No.	Category	Type
1	All	Layer	Topsoil
2	1	Fill of 4	Quarry Pit
3	1	Fill of 4	Quarry Pit
4	1	Cut	Quarry Pit
5	1	Fill of 7	Quarry Pit
6	1	Fill of 7	Quarry Pit
7	1	Cut	Quarry Pit
8	2	Fill of 9	Quarry Pit
9	2	Cut	Quarry Pit
10	3	Fill of 11	Quarry Pit
11	3	Cut	Quarry Pit
12	3	Fill of 13	Quarry Pit
13	3	Cut	Quarry Pit
14	3	Fill of 15	Quarry Pit
15	3	Cut	Quarry Pit
16	3	Fill of 17	Quarry Pit
17	3	Cut	Quarry Pit
18	3	Fill of 19	Quarry Pit
19	3	Cut	Quarry Pit
20	3	Fill of 21	Quarry Pit
21	3	Cut	Quarry Pit
22	3	Fill of 23	Quarry Pit
23	3	Cut	Quarry Pit
24	3	Fill of 25	Quarry Pit
25	3	Cut	Quarry Pit



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