cambridgeshire archaeology
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CCC AFU Report Number 853

A Middle Iron Age to Early Romano-British settlement at Vicarage Farm Road, Peterborough

An Archaeological Evaluation

Rob Atkins BSocSc DipArch AIFA

January 2006

Cambridgeshire County Council
Environment & Community Services

Commissioned by Jeakins Wier Ltd

Cover Images

Machine stripping, Soham	On-site surveying
Roman corn dryer, Duxford	Guided walk along Devil's Dyke
Bronze Age shaft, Fordham Bypass	Medieval well, Soham
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A Middle Iron Age to Early Romano-British settlement at Vicarage Farm Road, Peterborough

An Archaeological Evaluation

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Summary

Between the 19th and 23rd December 2005 the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (CCC AFU) conducted an archaeological evaluation at Vicarage Farm Road, Peterborough (TL 2096 9940) in advance of the construction of an industrial unit and related car parking area. The work was commissioned by Jeakins Wier Ltd.

Five trenches (total length 133.7m) were mechanically excavated in the development area. The evaluation uncovered moderate to dense archaeological remains over the southern *c.*80% of the site with no archaeological features surviving in the northern area due to modern truncation. The remains consisted of at least four phases of settlement from around the 4th or 3rd century BC until the 2nd century AD. The remains of several structures were found, at least one of which was within a ring gully. Other postholes may have been associated with angular ditches or slots.

Other features included enclosure ditches and a parallel linear north-west to south-east ditch traced from Pryor's 1972 excavation Area I, as well as various pits. There was a moderate collection of pottery and animal bone together with secondary evidence for copper alloy working in the vicinity. Environmental remains did not survive well but a few poorly surviving charred cereal grains were recovered from Early Romano-British features.

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Ordnence Datum 18.45m ODN

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1 Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Vicarage Farm Road, Peterborough (TL 2096 9940; Fig. 1) in advance of proposed construction of a single industrial warehouse unit on the southern part of the site with associated car parking to the north. The archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a Brief issued by Peterborough City Council Archaeological Service (PCCAS) (Robinson 2004); Planning Application (05/00497/FUL), supplemented by a Specification (Roberts 2005) prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (CCC AFU).

The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *Planning and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by PCCAS, on behalf of the Peterborough Unitary Authority Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by CCC AFU and will be deposited with the Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery archaeological store in due course.

2 Geology and Topography

The natural geology consists of an area of Cornbrash, overlaid by Kellaways Clay and River Terrace deposits (British Geological Survey 1984).

There is a gentle north to south slope across the site with the northern part of the site at 5.06m OD falling away to 4.23m OD on the southern side.

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 Cropmark evidence

The subject site is within cropmark features which covered an area of at least 1500m by 1000m (Fig. 2) with a concentration of features in an area around the site measuring *c.*150m by *c.*150m (Fig. 3). The latter cropmarks show some intercutting features. There are various enclosures of different shapes although most are ovoid and sub-rectangular, indicating the possible presence of ring gullies, droveways and some large pits.

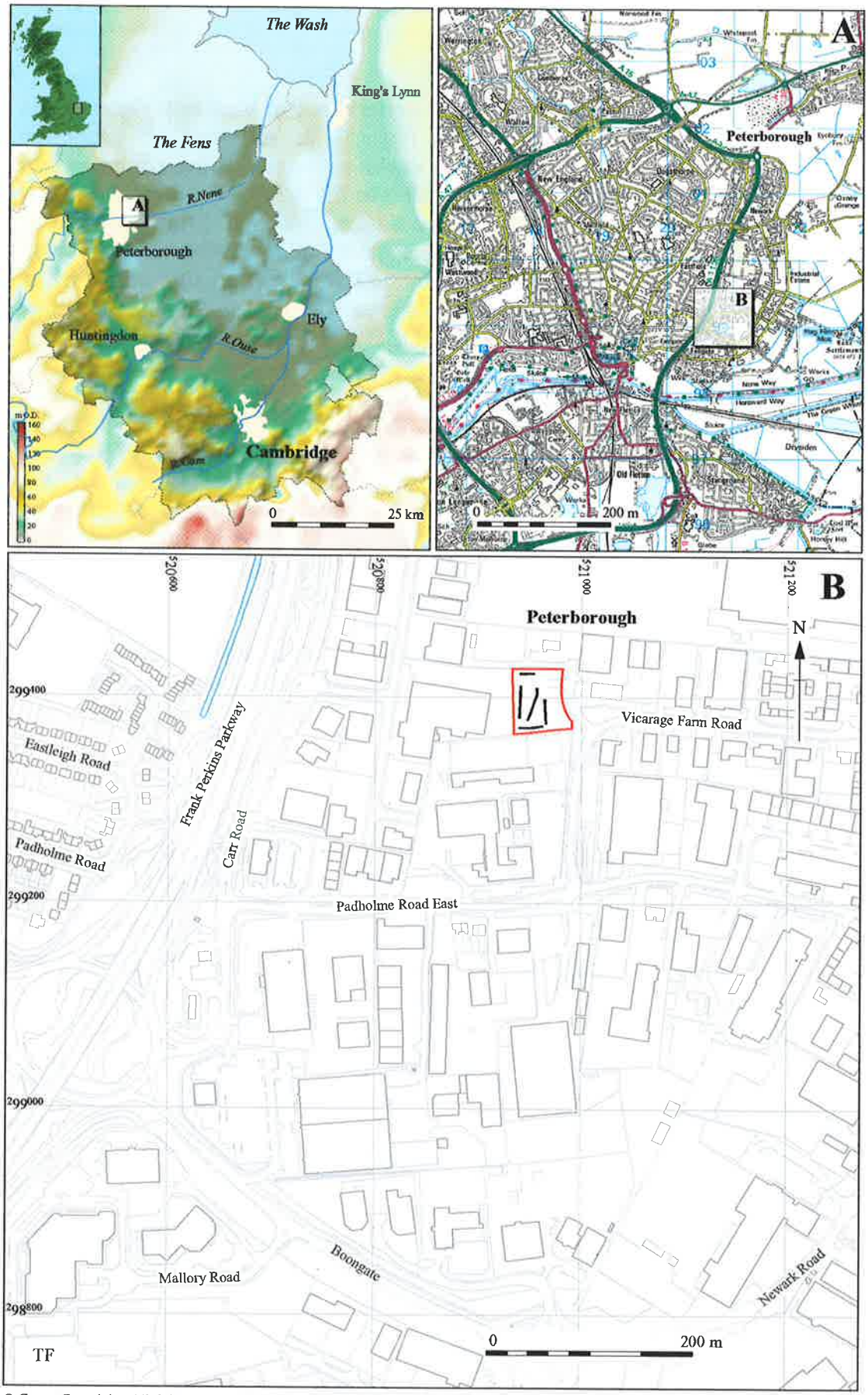

Figure 1: Site location showing position of trenches (black) and development area (red)

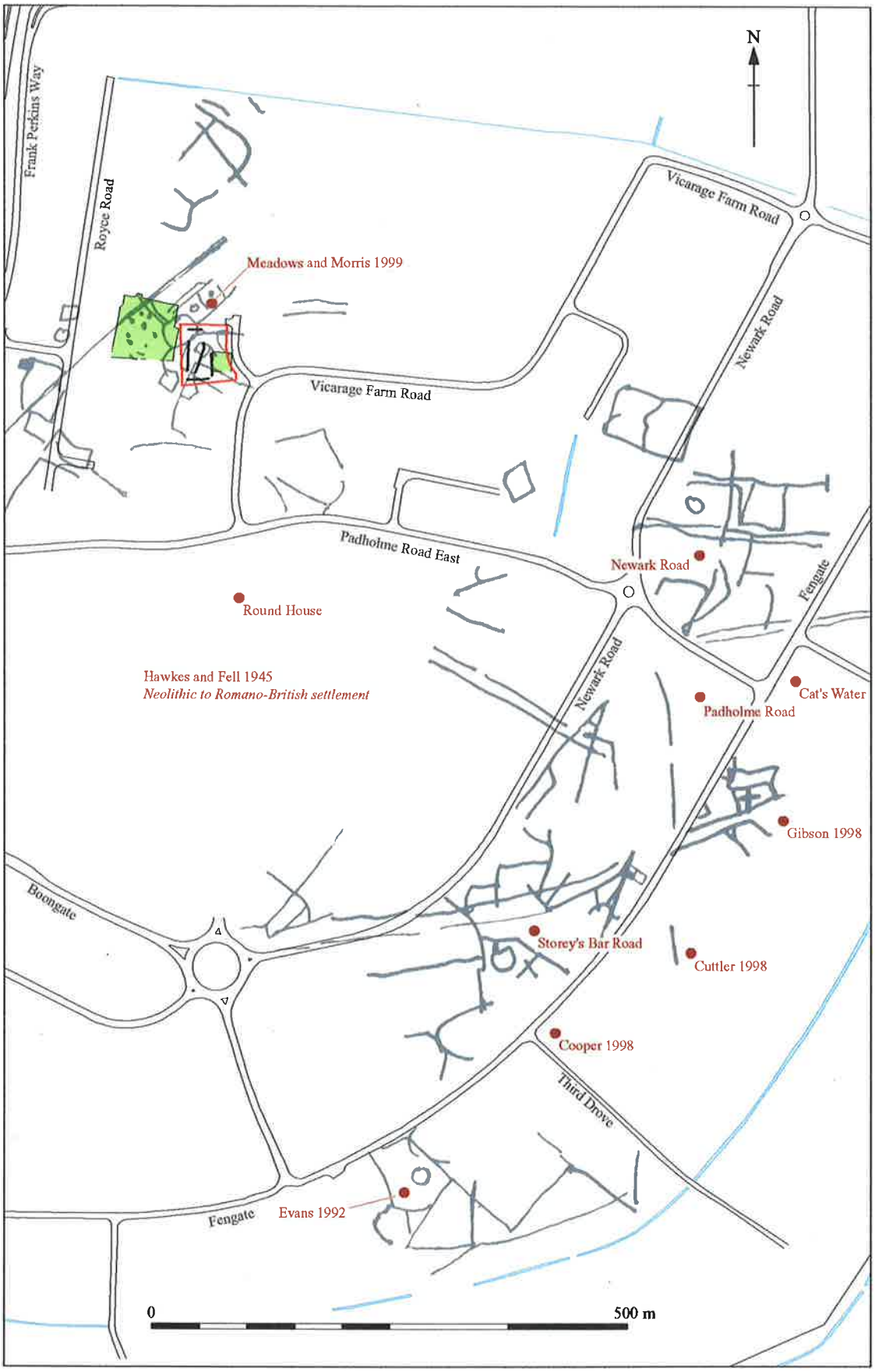

Figure 2: Site within a cropmarked landscape with Pryor's 1972 excavations (green) adjacent to the west and east and other excavations labelled

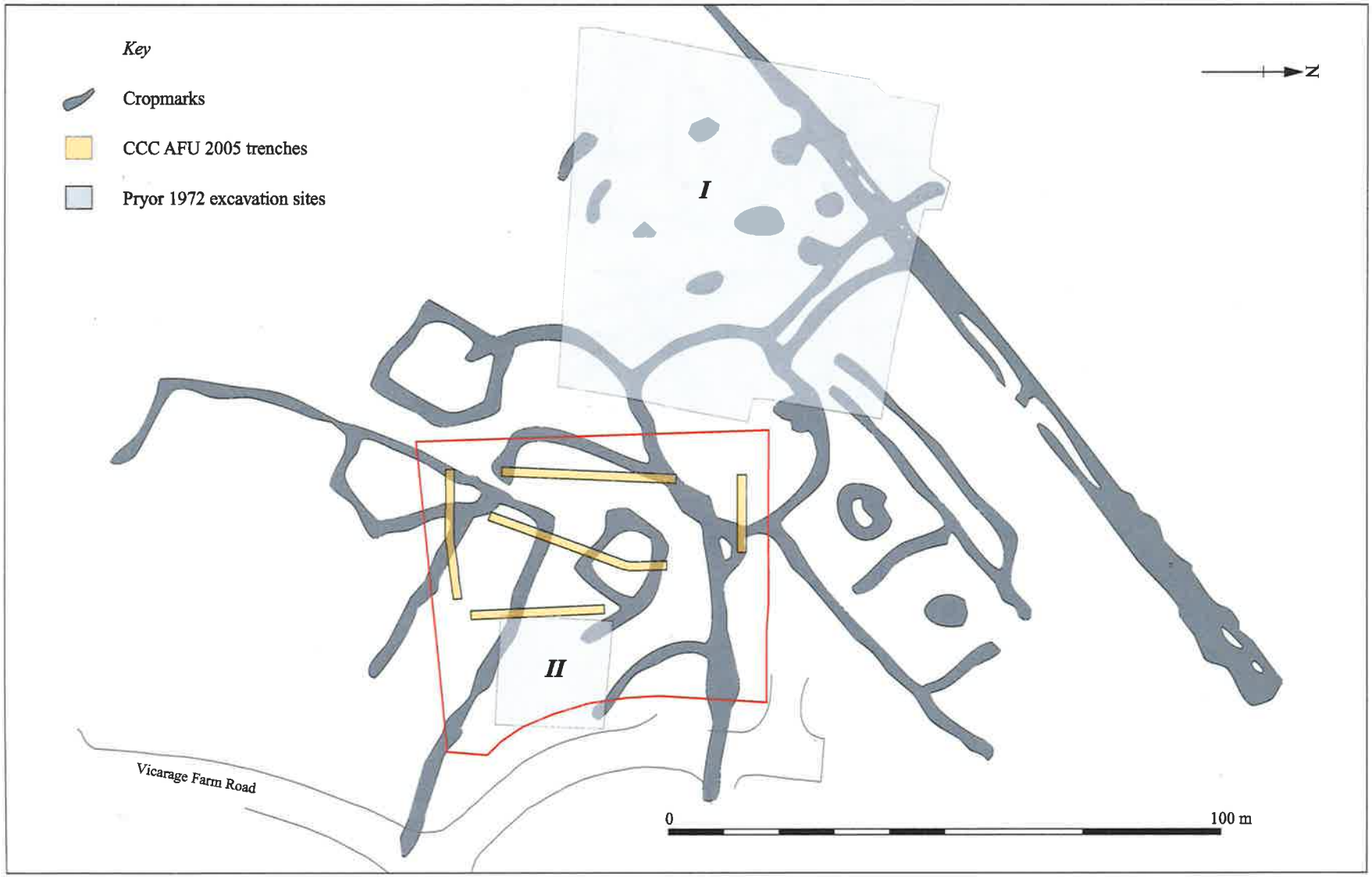

Figure 3: Close up of site, cropmarks and Prior's Area I to the west and Area II to the east

Excavations of Areas I and II in 1972 by Francis Pryor at Vicarage Farm Road (Figs. 3 and 4) indicated a number of discrepancies between cropmark interpretation and the site plan after excavation. The plan of Area I, for example, showed large differences especially where linear features and ditches met in the north-eastern side of the site. This demonstrates that the interpretation of the cropmarks needs to be treated with some caution.

The present evaluation found only a few of the cropmarks could be related to features uncovered in the evaluation (see Section 5 below). Overall, the evaluation found a great many more features than the cropmarks implied; with some ditches as well as smaller features such as pits and postholes not seen in the cropmark survey.

The cropmark landscape around the Vicarage Farm Road site included areas where there were no cropmarks recorded (Fig. 2). This circumstance has to be taken with caution since within some of these blank areas several excavations have found archaeological features, sometimes in dense concentrations (e.g. Cooper 1999; Cat's Water; Gibson 1998; Padholme Road; Cutler 1998 etc.). No cropmarks have been recorded directly to the south of Padholme Road East due to excavations in the 1940s (Hawkes and Fell 1945) and quarrying having removed archaeological features before the area could be photographed from the air (Fig. 2).

Overall the cropmarks give a broad, although very understated, view of an extensive archaeological landscape from the Neolithic to the Roman periods over a c.1km²+ area. All this activity (see below) denotes intensive occupation on ground adjacent to the Fen edge.

3.2 *Pryor's 1972 excavation of an Iron Age/Early Romano-British settlement at Vicarage Farm Road*

There were two excavations at Vicarage Farm in 1972, adjacent to the west and to the east of the present evaluation (Fig. 3, Areas I and II; Fig. 4). These excavations found part of part of an Early Iron Age settlement, probably starting in about the 5th century BC and continuing into the Early Romano-British period - probably no later than the second half of the 1st century AD (Pryor 1984, 177). The settlement may have been larger than a simple family unit (Pryor 1980, 185), and may have been a farmstead or small hamlet (Pryor 2005, 166). The 1972 excavations found few stratigraphic relationships and features in Areas I and II were relatively sparsely laid out.

There was little evidence of pre-1st millennium BC activity (only a few fragments of Beaker ware and part of a Langdale axe). Early Iron Age features consisted of largely pits in the northern and north-western parts of the site. Other features included two long linear

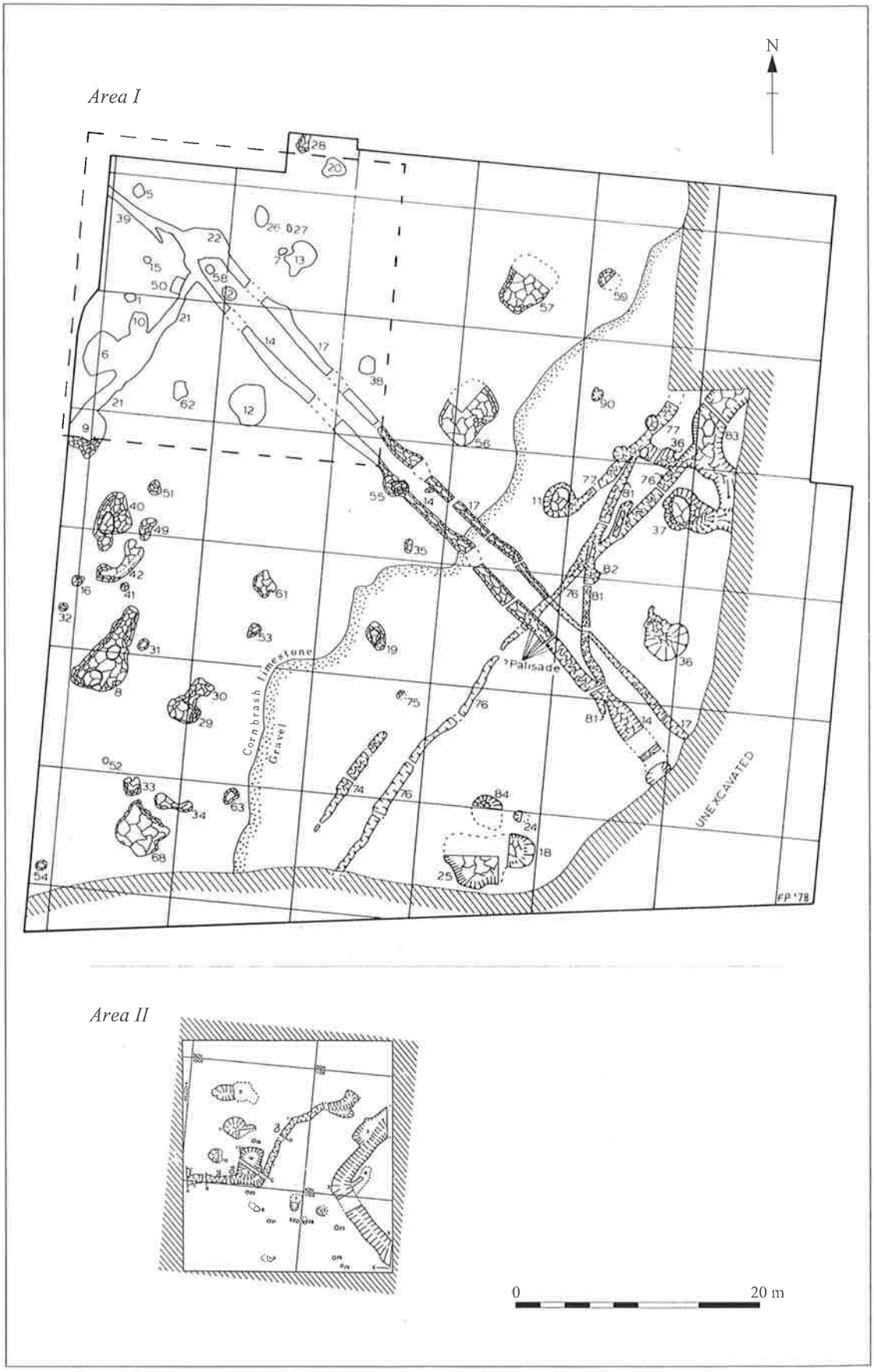

Figure 4: Pryor's excavation Areas I and II: reprinted with permission [Pryor 1984, fig. 5 and microfiche]

parallel north-west to south-east ditches (parts of one palisaded) and two north-east to south-west ditches as well as a few pits and postholes. The long parallel ditches were dated as probably Iron Age although a Neolithic date was not ruled out (Pryor 1984, 7). These ditches were seen continuing into the evaluation (Trenches 1 and 4 below). All the other features were dated as either Iron Age or Early Romano-British. The later Iron Age and Early Romano-British features were found towards the south and east of Area I suggesting, a degree of 'settlement drift' (Pryor 1984, 7). The enclosure in the extreme north-eastern part of the site may equate with the enclosure ditch found in the northern part of Trench 4 (Fig. 5).

In Area II all features were probably Late Iron Age in date (Pryor 1984, 10 and microfiche). These comprised two angled ditches and numerous small pits and postholes. The latter were clustered around the two ditches implying that they were probably connected functionally and chronologically (Pryor 1984, microfiche p13).

3.3 Other excavations and recent development work in the vicinity

The Vicarage Farm Road Iron Age to Roman-British settlement was one of four settlements in this period within the immediate area (Fig. 2; Pryor 1980, 185). A second settlement at Cat's Water 500m to the east (which was of substantial size) was inhabited intermittently before being abandoned at the end of the 2nd century AD probably due to flooding and ploughing (Pryor 1984, 200-230). The two other settlements were of uncertain size. At Padholme Road/Newark Road 300m to the east Iron Age houses and other features were found (Pryor 1980, 50-63). A site directly to the south of Padholme Road little more than 300m away was excavated in the early 1940s (Hawkes and Fell 1945). The excavations found Iron Age houses and Romano-British remains.

In reality, it is possible that there were less than four settlements and that for example, the Vicarage Farm Road settlement continued to join the settlement directly to the south of Padholme Road. It is clear that the landscape was intensely used and farmed in the Iron Age and Romano-British periods with many other nearby settlements including another over 1km to the north-east (Wotherspoon 2003).

Earlier pre-Iron Age archaeological sites in the area consisted of an intense Neolithic and Bronze Age landscape with ritual and domestic occupation recorded on most sites. The ritual monuments lay at least 600m to the east (Fig. 2) at *c.*2m OD close to the fen edge. Domestic/farming features to the east and south lay on slightly higher ground nearer the subject site and further to the west of the fen edge (Cooper 1999; Cuttler 1998; Evans 1992; Storey's Bar Road, Newark Road, and in the area 300-500m to the south. Among domestic and farming features was a series of ditched enclosures and droves laid

out along, and at right-angles to, the Fen edge in the 2nd millennium BC (Pryor 1980). Settlement structures included Neolithic houses and associated pits (Pryor 1974, 6-13), and a pre-Beaker enclosure (Mahany 1969).

In the last 30 years most of the settlement area depicted in Fig. 2 has been developed as part of the Eastern Industry area of Peterborough. This has left the site as virtually the only relatively undisturbed plot. On the north-eastern part of the site, an access road was built leading into it. It was probably when this road was built that the northern part of the site suffered truncation. There has been one other archaeological evaluation since the implementation of Planning Guidance 16 (PPG 16) in 1991, this evaluation, 20m to the north-west of the subject site, found that site had been truncated in modern times and no archaeological features were noted (Meadows and Jones 1999).

4 Methodology

The objective of the evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

The Brief stipulated that specific research issues to be considered during the evaluation included the presence of pre-Bronze Age activity; the presence and orientation of the 2nd millennium BC enclosure system; the identification of prehistoric settlement and funerary remains, and their relationship to the fen edge enclosure system (Robinson 2004).

Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a 1.60m wide toothless ditching bucket. The extreme eastern part of the site was covered with shrubs and very young trees and was cordoned off with heras fencing which meant that this area was not evaluated. Recent dumping on the site meant that the trenches were slightly altered to avoid obstacles. A total of five trenches were excavated (133.7m in total) comprising nearly 5% of the total development area (Figs. 1-4).

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using CCC AFU's *pro-forma* sheets. A context summary appears as Appendix 1. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

Four 10L environmental samples were taken from relevant features to provide an indication of the survival of charred grain and other ecofacts (Appendix 6). The evaluation took place in ideal conditions with the weather remaining mostly dry and overcast.

5 Results

There was a modern layer (1) across the whole site sealing a subsoil layer (10) which may represent a possible medieval and/or post-medieval cultivation layer (Table 1). This subsoil layer sealed all archaeological features on the site.

Trench	Topsoil (1)	Subsoil (10)	Total depth to features
Trench 1	East side 0.25m West side 0.20m	East side 0.20m West side 0.20m	East side 0.45m West side 0.40m
Trench 2	South side 0.25m North side 0.24m	South side 0.20m North side 0.21m	South side 0.45m North side 0.45m
Trench 3	South side 0.20m North side 0.20m	South side 0.30m North side 0.15m	South side 0.50m North side 0.35m
Trench 4	South side 0.20m North side 0.24m	South side 0.25m North side 0.28m	South side 0.45m North side 0.52m
Trench 5	East side 0.71m West side 0.69m	- -	- -

Table 1: Depth of topsoil and subsoil across the site

The topsoil layer (1) contained modern artefacts including 20th-century brick. This layer was generally around 0.20m thick across the site except in Trench 5, within which deposits consisted entirely of modern build-up material. The subsoil layer was between 0.20m and 0.30m thick except in the extreme northern part of the site where it had been removed by modern activity (see 3.3 above).

There was some stratification of features across the site and features have been roughly phased. Where appropriate, features have been linked together where they may have formed part of the same structure or enclosure (see below and Appendix 1). At least four phases of activity were recorded:

Phase 1 *c.*Middle Iron Age
Phase 2 *c.*Middle/Late Iron Age
Phase 3 Late Iron Age/Transitional
Phase 4 Early Roman

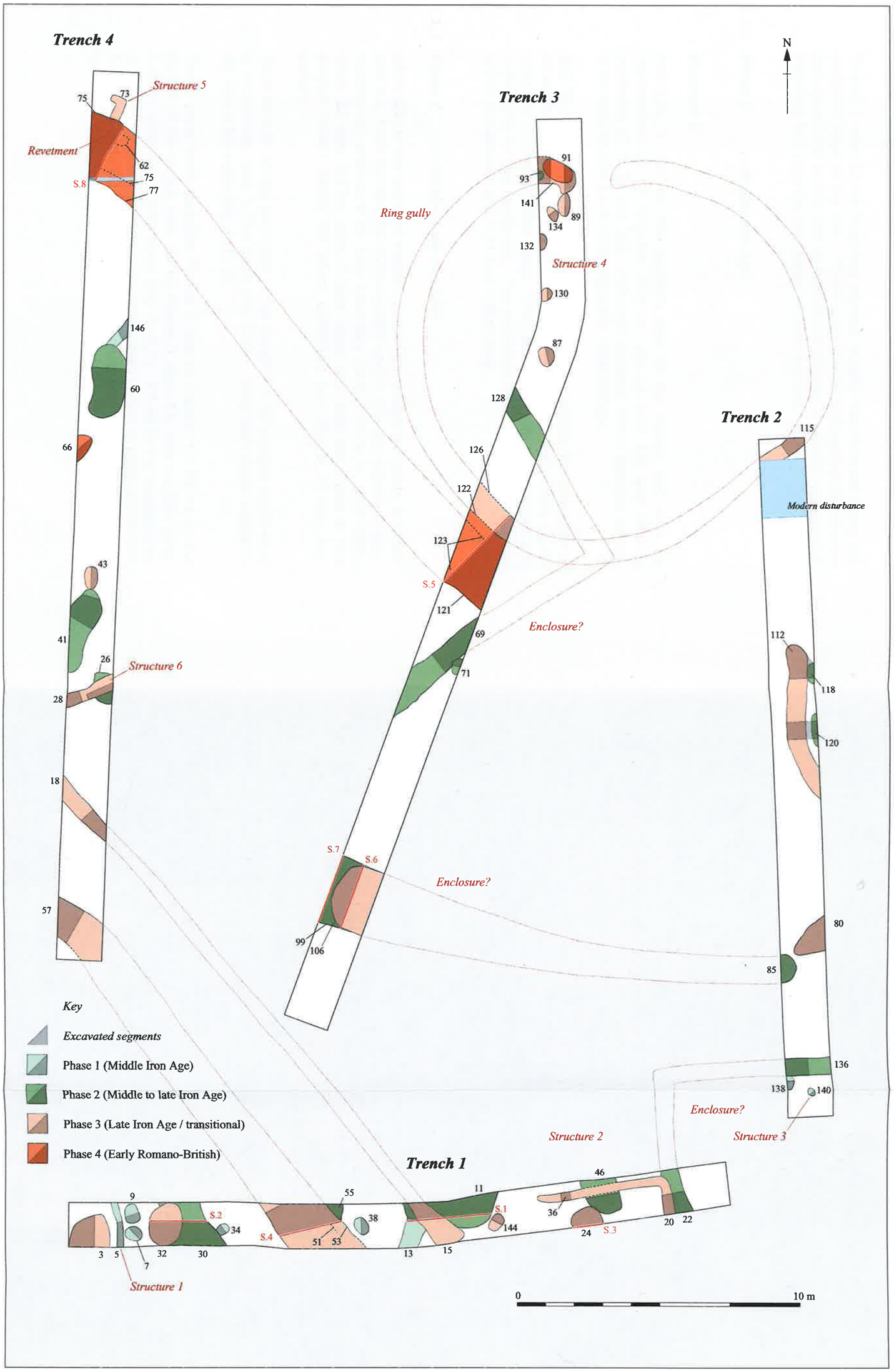

Figure 5: Plan of Trenches 1 to 4

5.1 Trench 1 (Fig. 5)

Trench 1 was 23.1m long and aligned roughly east-to-west along the southern edge of the site. There were dense archaeological remains throughout the trench with at least three phases of activity represented including two possible structures, ditches and pits.

5.1.1 Phase 1 (c.Middle Iron Age)

Structure 1

Structure 1 was on the western side of the trench and may be represented by an angular ditch or slot (**5** and **13)** and internal postholes (**7**, **9**, **34** and **38)**. Although undated, these features appear to be early on the basis of stratigraphic relationships.

Slot **13** butt-ended within the trench and may indicate the presence of an entrance-way. Slots **5** and **13** were respectively 0.42m and *c.*0.60 wide and 0.30 and 0.20m deep. They were filled with a mid-brown and a dark grey-brown sandy silt. The postholes were between 0.36m and 0.51m in diameter and 0.14 and 0.25m deep.

5.1.2 Phase 2 (c.Middle/Late Iron Age)

Ditch (**22**) in the extreme eastern part of the trench ran north to south and may have formed the north-western corner of a sub-square or sub-rectangular enclosure or field boundary (with Trench 2, ditch **136**). Ditch **22** was 0.77m wide, 0.38m deep and was filled with a mid greyish brown sandy silt which contained two sherds of Iron Age pottery.

Ditch **30** was on the west side of the trench. it ran roughly north-west to south-east, was 1.79m wide and 0.42m deep with steep edges c. 80° and a flat base (Fig. 6, S. 2).

There were three possible Phase 2 pits in Trench 1. Pit **11** in the middle of the trench was cut by Phase 3 ditch **15,** was *c.*2.50m long, 1.40m+ wide and 0.23m deep (Fig. 6, S.1). Pit **46** in the eastern part of the trench was 1.27m wide and more than 0.70m in width and 0.34m deep. An undated pit **55** (0.62m in diameter and 0.23m deep) was cut by Phase 3 ditch **53**.

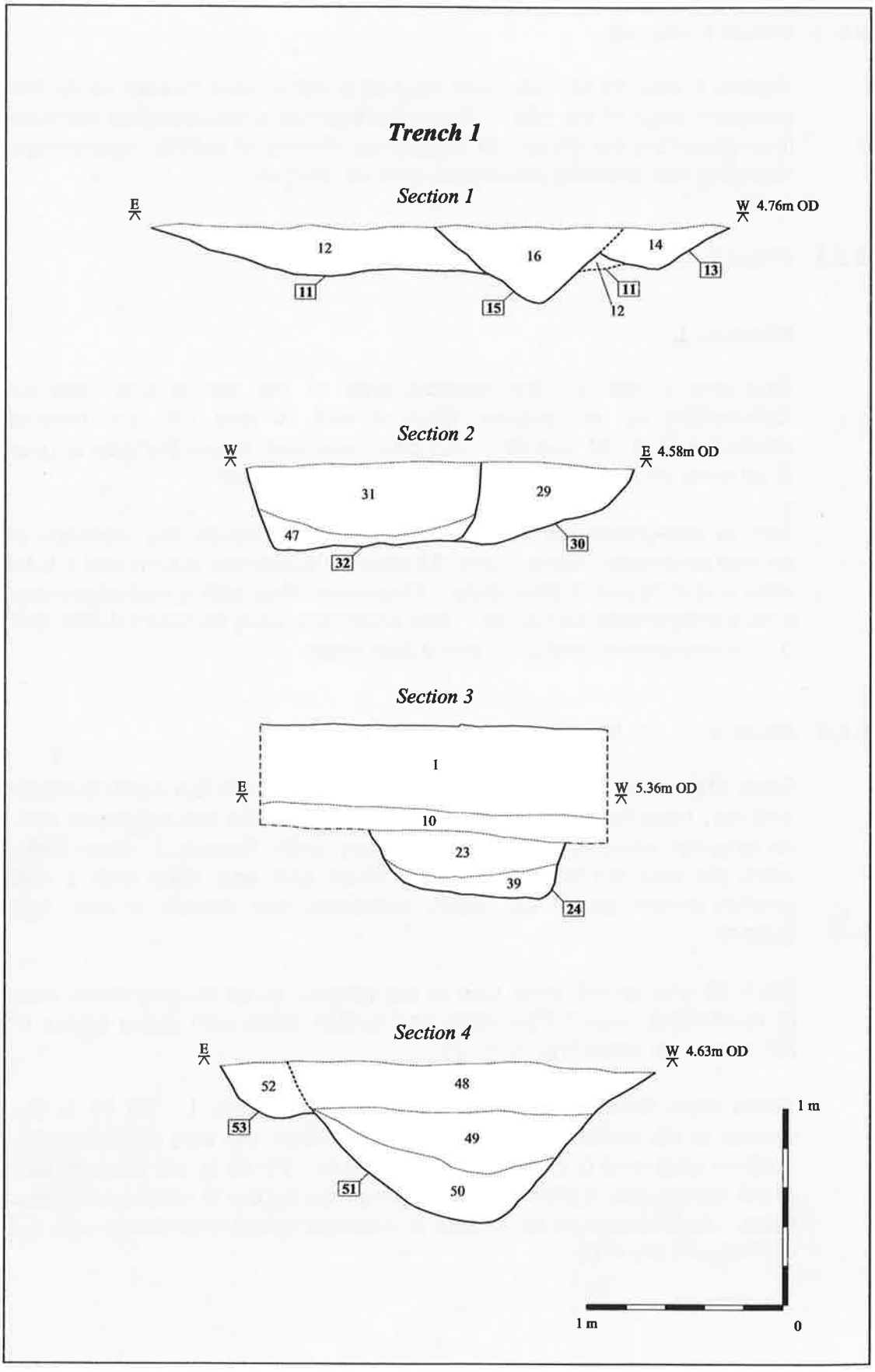

Figure 6: Sections from Trench 1

5.1.3 *Phase 3* (Late Iron Age/Transitional)

Structure 2

In the far eastern part of the trench was another possible structure (Structure 2) which consisted of a slot or angular ditch (**20** and **36**) and postholes (**24** and **144)**. The slot or ditch was 'L' shaped within the trench running north-south out of the southern baulk then turning right angles and running east-west for 4.60m before butt ending. It was 0.30m wide and 0.08m deep with steep edges and a flat base. Less than 2m to the west was posthole **144,** ovoid in shape 0.60m by 0.44m and 0.30m deep with very steep sides. Posthole **24** had a postpad within it. The posthole was partly within the southern baulk, and was 0.99m long and more than 0.55m wide and 0.31m deep with steep sides and a fairly flat base. The lower layer comprised a mid grey silty clay to give the postpad a solid base (Fig. 6, S.3). This postpad consisted of six stones placed at the same height level including a large flat boulder (Plate 1). The upper fill was a middle to dark brown sand from which two undiagnostic Iron Age pottery sherds were recovered.

Parallel linear ditches

In the middle of the trench were two parallel ditches (**15** and **51/53)**. These ditches were a continuation of the ditches uncovered in Trench 5 (**18** and **57**) and were uncovered in Pryor's excavation in Area I (see above). The original parallel ditches seem to have been fairly small (**51** and **15**) and were between 2m and 2.2m apart. Ditch **51** was recut on its western side by a large ditch (**53**) (Fig. 6, S4).

The western ditch (**51)** was more than 0.45m wide and 0.28m wide. It was much smaller with a 'V' shaped profile in Trench 1 but was more 'U'-shaped in Trench 5, where it was between 0.45m and 0.60m wide and 0.20m to 0.30m deep (Fig. 6, S.1). Ditch **15** butt-ended to the south and this may represent an entrance way. Ditch **53** was a large, slack sided ditch, 1.90m wide, 0.83m deep, with a slightly rounded base and filled with three deposits (Fig. 6, S.4). There was a little dating evidence from both large ditch sections with a total of six undiagnostic Iron Age pottery sherds recovered as well as a eight recognised animal bone fragments including very young juvenile or neonatal sheep.

Pits

Two ovoid pits lay in the extreme western part of the trench (**3** and **32**). They were 1.1m+ and 1.58m long, 0.75m and 1.16m wide and 0.43m and 0.42m deep respectively. Pit **32** contained five sherds of hand-

made pottery including an ovoid vessel with large deeply incised linear slashes (scored ware) as well as four cattle skull and vertebra fragments.

*Plate 1: Posthole **24** with postpad exposed in southern baulk, pit **24** and slot **46** in foreground*

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 24.3m long and aligned north to south along the eastern part of the site. A moderate amount of archaeological remains survived within the trench with at least three phases of activity represented including two possible structures (posthole structure and ring gully), ditches and pits.

5.2.1 *Phase 1* (*c.*Middle Iron Age)

Structure 3

Structure 3 in the extreme south side of the trench comprised two postholes (**138** and **140**) 0.58m and 0.23m in diameter and, surviving to a depth of 0.37m and 0.10m respectively.

5.2.2 *Phase 2* (*c.*Middle/ Late Iron Age)

Enclosure Ditch

Enclosure ditch **136** may have been linked to ditch **22** (Trench 1) possibly forming part of the north-western corner of a sub-rectangular enclosure (see above). Ditch **85** may represent the butt-end of an enclosure ditch found in Trench 3 (**99**). It corresponds with a large ?sub-rectangular cropmark (Fig. 3). This butt-end therefore represented an entrance way, more than 1m wide, into the enclosure. The ditch was 0.93m wide and 0.95m deep and was filled with five deposits (as was ditch **99** in Trench 3) ranging in colour from a light orange grey-brown to a very dark grey-brown sandy silt with a little clay.

Pits

There were two probable pits in the centre of the trench (**118** and **120**). Both pits were more than 0.57m wide and were 0.39m and 0.44m deep. There was part of a buried soil layer (108) in the northern part of the trench (not located in plan) which may represent a hillwash layer since it was seen in certain parts of the lower northern area (e.g. layer 116 in Trench 2; not located in plan).

5.2.3 *Phase 3* (Late Iron Age/Transitional)

Structure 4

Part of a ring gully (*c.*12m in diameter) was found in the extreme northern part of the trench (ditch **115**; Structure 4). The structure had been recorded in aerial photographs as a cropmark feature (Fig. 3). It had been truncated by an area of modern disturbance and survived to 0.80m wide and 0.49m deep.

Ditches

To the south, there was an angled ditch (**112**). This ditch had been located in Pryor's excavation where it was described as angled ditch F1, dating to the Late Iron Age period (Figs. 3 and 4; Pryor 1984 microfiche). It ran for 6m within the trench before running into the eastern baulk and was 0.83m wide and 0.60m deep. A single sherd of Belgic pottery was recovered from its fill. Five metres to the south of ditch **112,** was an undated pit or ditch (**80**) more than 0.84m wide and 0.26m deep.

5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was 36.5m long and was aligned roughly north-east to south-west down the central part of the site. A moderate amount of archaeological remains was recorded throughout the trench with at least three phases of activity represented including Structure 4 within a ring gully (see above), enclosure ditches and a large pit.

5.3.1 *Phase 2* (*c.*Middle/Late Iron Age)

Enclosure Ditches

An enclosure ditch (99) at the southern end of Trench 3 continued from Trench 2 (ditch **85**) and corresponds with a large ?sub-rectangular cropmark (Fig. 3). The ditch was 2.47m wide and 0.90m deep, had slack 'V' shape upper sides with a 'U' shaped concave base (Fig. 7, S. 6 and 7). It had been backfilled with five deposits of varying greys and grey brown sandy silts.

Two ditches (**69** and **128**) in the middle of the trench may represent part of a sub-rectangular enclosure. Both ditches were of a similar size 0.72-0.82m wide and 0.22m and 0.24m deep. A single small undiagnostic Iron Age sherd was recovered from ditch **69**.

Possible Postholes

Two possible postholes (**71** and **93**) may date to this phase. The former was in the middle of the trench and the latter in the northern part.

5.3.2 *Phase 3* (Late Iron Age/Transitional)

Structure 4

In the northern part of the trench was Structure 4 comprising five postholes (**87**, **89**, **130**, **132** and **134**), all within a *c.*12m diameter ring gully. The latter presumably represented part of a Late Iron Age roundhouse with external drainage gully. The postholes were between 0.40m and 0.70m in diameter and 0.08m and 0.18m deep. The ring gully (**141** and **126**) was between 0.65m and 0.87m wide and 0.25m and 0.39m deep with moderate edges and a slightly concave base (Fig. 7, S. 5). The ring gully butt ended on its northern side indicating the presence of an entrance way.

Pit

A probable storage pit (**106)** cut into Phase 2 ditch **99** (above). It was circular with a 1.5m diameter and 0.73m deep. It had near vertical edges and a flat base (Fig. 7, S. 6). The lower part of the pit was backfilled with seven thin deposits tipped in seemingly as a single event, probably from a nearby industrial feature. The layers were lenses of dark grey sandy silt, burnt red layers and black silt and charcoal. After the possible industrial waste deposits the majority of the pit was later backfilled with a related layer comprising a dark grey to black sandy silt with charcoal. A single Belgic sherd was recovered from the upper fill of the pit. It is possible the pit was backfilled at a slightly later date (Early Roman) from the same industrial feature as

Phase 4 ditch (**121**), less than 10m to the north (backfilled with some copper slag deposits).

5.3.3 *Phase 4* (Early Roman)

Enclosure Ditches

In the middle of the trench was a north-west to south-east ditch (**121**) which was recut twice (**122** and **123**), forming a continuation of ditch **75** in Trench 4. Ditch **121** was more than 1.4m wide and 0.75m deep and the south-western side had a slack V shape (Fig. 7, S5). Its fill was a mid greyish brown clay silt and contained a moderate amount of animal bone.

The first recut (**122**) was more than 1.45m wide and 0.74m deep, had a similar fill to ditch **121** but contained no artefacts. The latest recut (**123**) was 1.79m wide and 0.39m deep and was filled with a dark brownish grey clay silt with frequent charcoal flecks (78). A large assemblage of artefacts were recovered consisting of a mixed group of Iron Age to Early Roman pottery (11 sherds); (much of which was unabraded), as well as a significant amount of animal bones (28 cattle and sheep/goat bones), a copper alloy object and some copper-alloy slag.

Pit

There was one further Phase 4 feature in the northern part of the trench, consisting of a slightly ephemeral pit (**91**) which cut ring gully **141** and survived to a depth of 0.27m.

5.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 was 35.5m long and was aligned north to south along the western edge of the site. A moderate number of archaeological remains were found throughout the trench with at least four phases of activity represented including parts of two possible slot structures (5 and 6), an enclosure, linear feature and pits.

5.4.1 *Phase 1* (*c.*Middle Iron Age)

Stratigraphically one feature, ditch **146**, in the middle of the trench has been assigned a Phase 1 date since it was cut by a pit (**60**) attributable to Phase 2. Ditch **146** ran roughly north-east to south-west, was 0.41m wide and 0.13m deep.

5.4.2 *Phase 2* (c.Middle/Late Iron Age)

Pits

Pit **60** was oval in shape, *c.*2.50m by 1.17m wide and 0.31m deep with a slightly irregular base. More than half of the pit was excavated and produced four unabraded finds including Middle Iron Age sherds and two animal bone fragments.

Undated pit **41** was similar shape and orientation to pit **60** and has therefore been tentatively assigned to Phase 2. It was sub-rectangular in shape, 2.90m by 1m and 0.21m deep.

Undated pit **26** has also been tentatively dated to this phase as it was cut by probable Phase 3 slot **28**. Pit **26** was possibly sub-rounded, 1.10m long and 0.23m deep.

5.4.3 *Phase 3* (Late Iron Age/Transitional)

Structures 5 and 6

There were two possible Phase 3 structures, partly within the trench, one at the far northern side (Structure 5) and one in the southern area (Structure 6). Both identifications were very tentative.

Structure 5 was a possible slot (**73**) or angular ditch which was cut by Phase 4 ditch revetment **62** (Fig. 7, S.8). It was a curious 'L' shaped feature, which butt-ended in the middle of the trench. It was 0.42m wide and 0.23m deep with a slightly concave shape.

Possible Structure 6 was in the southern part of the trench, the only recorded element consisting of a slot (**28**). It ran roughly north-east to south-west at roughly right angles to two parallel linear ditches (see below) and is therefore tentatively dated to Phase 3 due to its alignment and due to cutting possible Phase 2 pit **26**. It was just 0.25m wide and 0.15m deep. A possible posthole (**43**), 5m to the north may have formed part of Structure 6. It was 0.60m by 0.42m in size and 0.08m deep.

Linear ditches

Linear ditches **18** and **57** in the southern end of the trench were also seen in Trench 1 (ditches **51**/**53** and **15**) where they were described in detail (see 5.1.3 above).

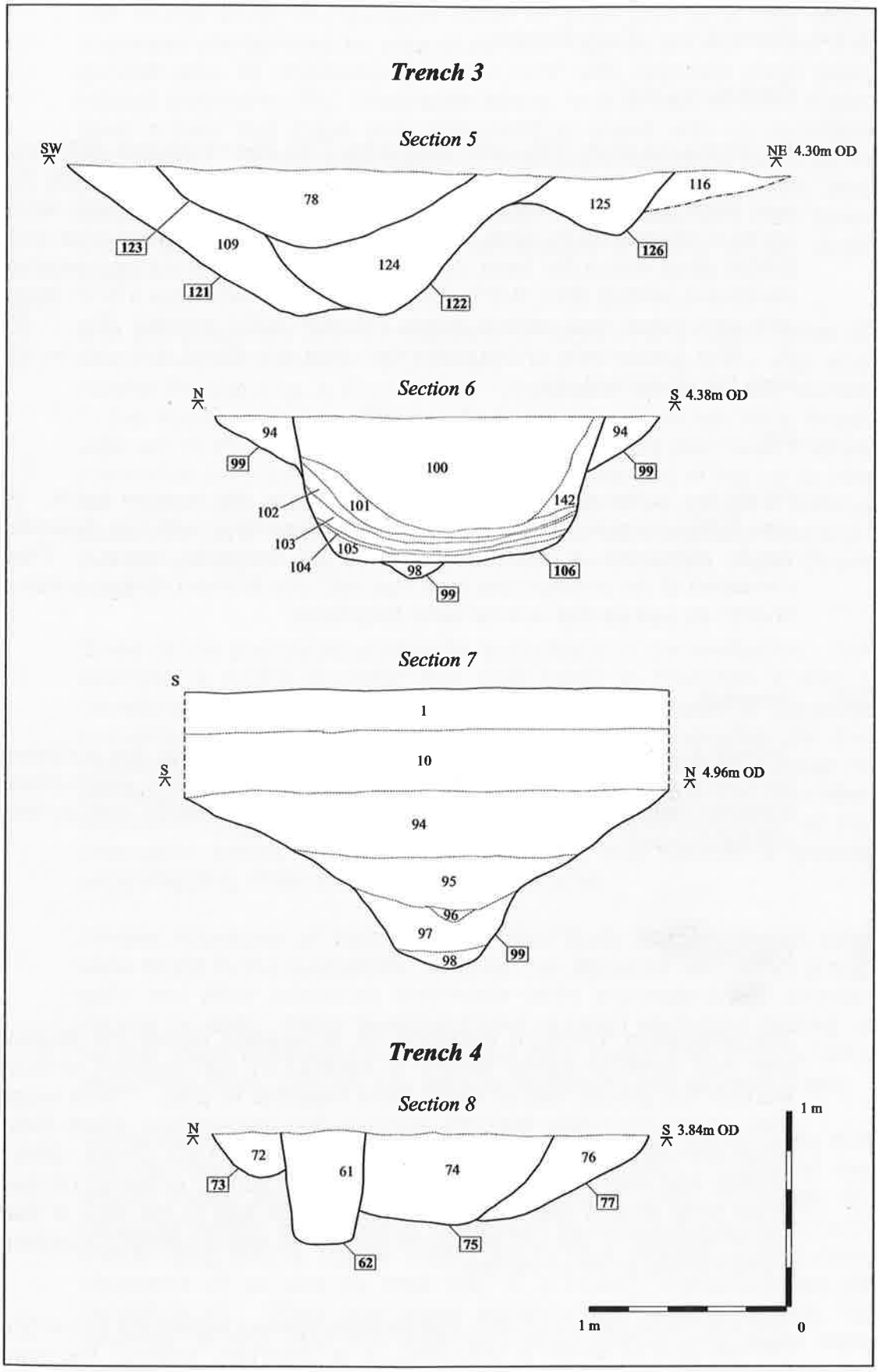

Figure 7: Sections from Trenches 3 and 4

5.4.4 *Phase 4* (Early Roman)

Enclosure Ditch

An enclosure ditch (**77**), with recut ditch (**75**) and revetment (**62**) was observed in Trench 3 (ditch **121** and recuts **122** and **123**). Ditch **77** was more than 0.77m wide and 0.44m deep (Fig.7, S. 8). It was recut on its northern side by ditch **75,** which was more than 0.95m wide and 0.46m deep with a flat base. This recut was cut by a sub-rectangular revetment setting (**62**), 0.95m long and 0.40m wide and 0.57m deep with very steep near vertical edges between c.80° and 90° (Fig. 7, S. 8). One hand-made undiagnosic Iron Age rim sherd was recovered from the revetment slot.

Pit

Pit **66** lay in the middle of the trench, partly in the western baulk. It was 0.86m long and 0.18m deep and was backfilled with two deposits which contained a moderate amount of domestic waste. This consisted of six undiagnostic Iron Age and one Romano-British pottery sherds as well as four animal bone fragments.

5.5 Trench 5

Trench 4 was 14.3m long and ran east to west along the northern boundary of the site. Machining removed the modern overburden material (between 0.69m and 0.71m deep) which directly overlay the natural subsoil.

6 Discussion

The evaluation found no evidence for occupation before the Middle Iron Age although earlier activity is attested by the recovery of four worked flint pieces, two of which were Neolithic in date. There were also no pre-Iron Age features found in the excavations which took place adjacent to the east and west of the site in 1972 (Pryor 1984). Bronze Age and Neolithic ritual and domestic activity occurred on the lower lying ground near and into the fen edge well to the east of the site at between *c.* 2m OD and up to 4m OD as well as several hundred metres to the south of the site.

The site found part of an Iron Age to Early Roman settlement at *c.*4.5m OD the size of which is unknown. It is uncertain, whether this Iron Age/Roman site represents one of four separate settlements (defined by Pryor in 1980, 115) at Cat's Water, Padholme Road/Newark Road

and to the south of Padholme Road or even part of a very large dispersed site covering an area of at least 700m by 600m. There is a general area of cropmarks over a *c.*1km² with relatively small gaps without cropmarks (Fig. 2) but excavations, for example, at Cat's Water have shown that there was settlement in areas with no recorded cropmarks. Recent excavations in both Cambridgeshire (such as at Love's Farm and Bob's Wood; pers. comm. Mark Hinman) and Northamptonshire (at Dirft; pers. comm. Andy Chapman) may have found single settled agricultural landscapes covering similar large areas.

The evaluation site is in the middle of an area of cropmarks, some of which were excavated in 1972 (Areas I and II) directly to the east and west of the site (Fig. 4; Pryor 1984). Occupation within the site started in the Middle Iron Age although Early Iron Age features were found adjacent to the west in Area I (Pryor 1984). Pottery recovered implies occupation from *c.*5th or 4th century BC until the end of the 1st or into the 2nd century AD (Appendix 3). There is some evidence for shifting occupation over time with later features (later Iron Age and Romano-British) on higher ground on the southern and eastern areas (Pryor 1984).

Some of the postulated cropmarks were found in the evaluation. For example, a *c.*12m diameter ring ditch found in Trenches 2 and 3 corresponded to a circular cropmark. On the whole, however, far more archaeological features were found than were indicated by the cropmarks. The 1972 excavations also demonstrated a number of discrepancies between cropmark interpretation and the site plan after excavation (Figs. 3 and 4). It is possible that a re-evaluation of the cropmarks across the whole area (Fig. 2) may provide a greater understanding of the site and the areas around.

Several structures of both Iron Age and Early Romano-British date were found in the evaluation. At least one structure was within a ring gully and other postholes may have been associated with angular ditches or slots. Other features found included enclosure ditches, a parallel linear north-west to south-east ditch traced from Pryor's 1972 excavation Area I into the site, angular ditches as well as various pits.

These structures, together with artefactural evidence, demonstrate that the site represents long term domestic occupation. Some of the animal bones appear to have been butchery waste (Appendix 5). Industrial activity in the vicinity is attested by secondary evidence with copper slag and a copper object found in a Romano-British ditch (Appendix 2) as well as fired clay in a nearby Romano-British pit (Appendix 4). There was some evidence for pastoral farming, for example, in one Late Iron Age/Transitional period ditch there were young and neonatal animal remains (Appendix 5). There was little evidence for arable farming on the site, although this may have been in part due to environmental ecofacts not surviving well. A few poorly

surviving charred cereal grains were, however, recovered from Early Romano-British features (Appendix 6).

7 Conclusions

Part of an Iron Age to Early Roman settlement survived in the majority of the excavation area although archaeological remains in the extreme eastern and southern areas of the site has been largely removed by Pryor's Area II excavated in 1972, a road access point and modern activity.

The archaeological deposits therefore survive in an area *c.*45m by 30m, under modern topsoil and subsoil between 0.35 and 0.52m thick. There were at least four phases of activity with dense to moderate concentrations of features across the site. The condition of the archaeological deposits within this area is good with structures including posthole remains some within ring gullies, surviving along with ditches, pits and other features. Of particular interest is the possibility of copper alloy working in the vicinity.

Artefacts survive, in varible conditions. Pottery is on the whole good except some of the hand made pottery which is fragile due to their coarse shelly inclusions having been leached out (Appendix 3). Copper alloy objects have been affected by the soil conditions and will require conservation and stabilisation. Animal bone, in contrast, has not been adversely affected with even small bones recovered (Appendix 5). The potential for ecofacts is not good with the survival of charred grains being poor (Appendix 6).

Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the Peterborough City Council Archaeology Service.

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Appendix 1: Context Summary

Cont	Tr. No.	Category	Type	Function	Phase/Equivalent
1	All	Layer	Topsoil	-	Modern
2	1	Fill of **3**	Pit		Phase 3
3	1	Cut	Pit		Phase 3
4	1	Fill of **5**	Ditch or slot	?Structure 1	Phase 1
5	1	Cut	Ditch or slot	?Structure 1	Phase 1
6	1	Fill of **7**	Posthole	?Structure 1	Phase 1
7	1	Cut	Posthole	?Structure 1	Phase 1
8	1	Fill of **9**	Posthole	?Structure 1	Phase 1
9	1	Cut	Posthole	?Structure 1	Phase 1
10	All	Layer	Subsoil	Cultivation	Medieval Plough Layer?
11	1	Cut	Pit		Phase 2
12	1	Fill of **11**	Pit		Phase 2
13	1	Cut	?Ring Gully	?Structure 1	Phase 1
14	1	Fill of **13**	?Ring Gully	?Structure 1	Phase 1
15	1	Cut	Ditch		Phase 3; Equivalent to **18**
16	1	Fill of **15**	Ditch		Phase 3
17	4	Fill of **18**	Ditch		Phase 3
18	4	Cut	Ditch		Phase 3; Equivalent to **15**
19	1	Fill of **20**	Ditch or Slot	?Ring Gully	Phase 3
20	1	Cut	Ditch or Slot	?Ring Gully	Phase 3; Equivalent to **36**
21	1	Fill of **22**	Ditch	?Boundary ?Enclosure	Phase 2
22	1	Cut	Ditch	?Boundary ?Enclosure	Phase 2; Equivalent to **136**
23	1	Fill of **24**	Posthole	?Structure 2	Phase 3
24	1	Cut	Posthole	?Structure 2	Phase 3
25	4	Fill of **26**	Pit		?Phase 2
26	4	Cut	Pit		?Phase 2
27	4	Fill of **28**	?Slot	?Structure 6	?Phase 3
28	4	Cut	?Slot	?Structure 6	?Phase 3
29	1	Fill of **30**	Ditch		Phase 2
30	1	Cut	Ditch		Phase 2
31	1	Fill of **32**	Pit		Phase 3
32	1	Cut	Pit		Phase 3
33	1	Fill of **34**	Posthole	?Structure 1	Phase 1
34	1	Cut	Posthole	?Structure 1	Phase 1
35	1	Fill of **36**	Ditch or Slot	?Ring Gully	Phase 3
36	1	Cut	Ditch or Slot	?Ring Gully	Phase 3; Equivalent to **20**
37	1	Fill of **38**	Posthole	?Structure 1	Phase 1
38	1	Cut	Posthole	?Structure 1	Phase 1
39	1	Fill of **24**	Posthole	?Structure 2	Phase 3
40	4	Fill of **41**	Pit		Phase 2
41	4	Cut	Pit		Phase 2

42	4	Fill of **43**	Posthole	?Structure 6	?Phase 3
43	4	Cut	Posthole	?Structure 6	?Phase 3
44	1	Fill of **46**	Pit		Phase 2
45	1	Fill of **46**	Pit		Phase 2
46	1	Cut	Pit		Phase 2
47	1	Fill of **32**	Pit		Phase 3
48	1	Fill of **51**	Ditch	?Boundary ?Enclosure	Phase 3
49	1	Fill of **51**	Ditch	?Boundary ?Enclosure	Phase 3
50	1	Fill of **51**	Ditch	?Boundary ?Enclosure	Phase 3
51	1	Cut	Ditch	?Boundary ?Enclosure	Phase 3; Equivalent to **57**
52	1	Fill of **53**	Ditch		Phase 3
53	1	Cut	Ditch		Phase 3
54	1	Fill of **55**	Pit		Phase 2
55	1	Cut	Pit		Phase 2
56	4	Fill of **57**	Ditch	?Boundary ?Enclosure	Phase 3
57	4	Cut	Ditch	?Boundary ?Enclosure	Phase 3; Equivalent to **51**
58	4	Fill of **60**	Pit		Phase 2
59	4	Fill of **60**	Pit		Phase 2
60	4	Cut	Pit		Phase 2
61	4	Fill of **62**	Posthole	?Revetment	Phase 4
62	4	Cut	Posthole	?Revetment	Phase 4
63	4	Fill of **66**	Pit		Phase 4
64	4	Fill of **66**	Pit		Phase 4
65	4	Fill of **66**	Pit		Phase 4
66	4	Cut	Pit		Phase 4
67	3	Fill of **69**	?Ditch		Phase 2
68	3	Fill of **69**	?Ditch		Phase 2
69	3	Cut	?Ditch	Enclosure	Phase 2; Equivalent to **128**
70	3	Fill of **71**	Posthole		?Phase 2
71	3	Cut	Posthole		?Phase 2
72	4	Fill of **73**	Ditch or slot		Phase 4
73	4	Cut	Ditch or slot		Phase 4
74	4	Fill of **75**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 4
75	4	Cut	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 4; Equivalent to **122**
76	4	Fill of **77**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 4
77	4	Cut	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 4; Equivalent to **121**
78	3	Fill of **123**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 4
79	2	Fill of **80**	Ditch		Phase 3
80	2	Cut	Ditch		Phase 3
81	2	Fill of **85**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 2
82	2	Fill of **85**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 2
83	2	Fill of **85**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 2
84	2	Fill of **85**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 2
85	2	Cut	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 2; Equivalent to **99**
86	3	Fill of **87**	Posthole	?Building 4	Phase 3
87	3	Cut	Posthole	?Building 4	Phase 3
88	3	Fill of **89**	Posthole	?Building 4	Phase 3
89	3	Cut	Posthole	?Building 4	Phase 3
90	3	Fill of **91**	Pit		Phase 4

91	3	Cut	Pit		Phase 4
92	3	Fill of **93**	Posthole		Phase 2
93	3	Cut	Posthole		Phase 2
94	3	Fill of **99**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 2
95	3	Fill of **99**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 2
96	3	Fill of **99**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 2
97	3	Fill of **99**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 2
98	3	Fill of **99**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 2
99	3	Cut	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 2; Equivalent to **85**
100	3	Fill of **106**	Pit		Phase 3
101	3	Fill of **106**	Pit		Phase 3
102	3	Fill of **106**	Pit		Phase 3
103	3	Fill of **106**	Pit		Phase 3
104	3	Fill of **106**	Pit		Phase 3
105	3	Fill of **106**	Pit		Phase 3
106	3	Cut	Pit		Phase 3
107	3	Fill of **141**	Ditch	Ring Gully ?Building 4	Phase 3
108	3	Layer		Buried layer	Phase 2; Equivalent to 116
109	3	Fill of **121**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 4
110	2	Fill of **112**	Ditch		Phase 3
111	2	Fill of **112**	Ditch		Phase 3
112	2	Cut	Ditch		Phase 3
113	2	Fill of **85**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 2
114	2	Fill of **115**	Ditch	Ring Gully Structure 4	Phase 3
115	2	Cut	Ditch	Ring Gully Structure 4	Phase 3; Equivalent to **126** and **141**
116	2	Layer		Buried layer	Phase 3; Equivalent to 108
117	2	Fill of **118**	?Pit		Phase 2
118	2	Cut	?Pit		Phase 2
119	2	Fill of **120**	?Pit		Phase 2
120	2	Cut	?Pit		Phase 2
121	3	Cut	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 4; Equivalent to **77**
122	3	Cut	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 4; Equivalent to **75**
123	3	Cut	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 4
124	3	Fill of **122**	Ditch	?Enclosure	Phase 4
125	3	Fill of **126**	Ditch	Ring Gully Structure 4	Phase 3
126	3	Cut	Ditch	Ring Gully Structure 4	Phase 3; Equivalent to **115** and **141**
127	3	Fill of **128**	Ditch	Enclosure	Phase 2
128	3	Cut	Ditch	Enclosure	Phase 2; ?Equivalent to **69**
129	3	Fill of **130**	Posthole	Structure 4	Phase 3
130	3	Cut	Posthole	Structure 4	Phase 3
131	3	Fill of **132**	Posthole	Structure 4	Phase 3
132	3	Cut	Posthole	Structure 4	Phase 3
133	3	Fill of **134**	Posthole	Structure 4	Phase 3
134	3	Cut	Posthole	Structure 4	Phase 3
135	2	Fill of **136**	Ditch		Phase 2
136	2	Cut	Ditch		Phase 2; Equivalent to **140**
137	2	Fill of **138**	Posthole	Structure 3	Phase 1
138	2	Cut	Posthole	Structure 3	Phase 1; Equivalent to **140**
139	2	Fill of **140**	Posthole	Structure 3	Phase 2
140	2	Cut	Posthole	Structure	Phase 2; Equivalent to **138**
141	3	Cut	Ditch	Ring Gully ?Building 4	Phase 3; Equivalent to **115** and **126**

142	3	Fill of **106**	Pit		Phase 3
143	1	Fill of **144**	Posthole		Phase 3
144	1	Cut	Posthole		Phase 3
145	4	Fill of **146**	Ditch		Phase 3
146	4	Cut	Ditch		Phase 3

Appendix 2: Metal Objects and Slag

Metal Objects

by Rob Atkins

Two metal objects were recovered, both from Early Roman ditch fill 78 (ditch **123**). They consist of a circular copper alloy object (*c.*150mm in diameter) and a thin iron strip, 2mm in diameter and 62mm in length, which had been folded over.

Copper Alloy Slag

by Tom Eley

A total of 0.116kg of copper alloy slag was also recovered from Early Roman ditch fill 78 (ditch **123**). These fragments were a mixture of copper slag and fuel slag ash. This is likely to be copper alloy melting for the production of artefacts possibly in the vicinity of this deposit. It is noteworthy that a copper-alloy object was found in the same deposit (see above). Evidence for copper alloy working/smithies is rare for the Early Roman period and any further evidence recovered for this activity will be important.

Appendix 3: The Pottery

by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 49 sherds with a total weight of 906g (Table 2). It included a range of prehistoric and Romano-British wares which indicate that there was activity at the site from the Middle Iron Age to the earlier Roman period.

Fabric

The Iron Age fabrics were as follows:

F1: Moderate to dense shell up to 10mm. 19 sherds, 434g.

F2: Sparse to moderate shell up to 5mm, rare to sparse sub-angular quartz up to 1mm. 17 sherds, 305g.

'Belgic'. Wheel-thrown. Fine grey fabric, 1st century AD. 2 sherds, 15g.

The Romano-British assemblage (11 sherds, 152g) comprised entirely Black-burnished wares, Grey wares and Shelly wares, indicating that all the activity was limited to the earlier part of the period.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 2. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*.

Discussion

The range of pottery types at this site indicates that there was probably continuous occupation from the Middle Iron age to the earlier Roman period. The bulk of the Iron Age assemblage consisted of undiagnostic plain bodysherds, but a few body- and rimsherds do indicate a Middle Iron Age date. In the case of the former, a number of sherds were incised on the body, in a manner typical of the Scored Ware tradition (Elsdon 1992). Scored Ware, which is commonly found on Middle to Late Iron age sites in the south-east midlands, but particularly in Northamptonshire, is thought to be of Middle Iron Age date, ie. 5th/4th– 1st centuries BC (Knight 2002, 124-6). Most of the sherds from this site were lightly scored with vertical strokes, although a single, fairly small oviod-profile vessel had a combination of fairly deep, fine vertical and diagonal lines.

Both the sherds of wheel-thrown 'Belgic' pottery are from Butt-Beakers or similar, and appear typical of the tradition. The Romano-British wares were earlier types, and unlikely to be later than the 2nd century AD.

The Iron Age pottery are in reasonably good condition, although most of the coarse shelly inclusions have been leached out, meaning the sherds are somewhat fragile. Despite this, there are a number of large sherds, mainly from large vessels, suggesting that most of the assemblage consisted of primary deposits, with very little evidence of redeposition, other than in some of the Romano-British features.

	F1		F2		Belgic		RB		
Context	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	Date
19	4	11							IA
21	1	22	1	8					IA
23	2	36							IA
31			5	120					MIA
48			3	32					IA
50			2	10					IA
56			1	4					IA
58			4	129					MIA
61	1	24							IA
63							1	11	RB
65	6	92							IA
67			1	2					IA
78	5	249			1	6	5	86	RB
100					1	9			LIA
111							5	55	RB
Total	19	434	17	305	2	15	11	152	

Table 2: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Appendix 4: The Lithic Material and Fired Clay

by Rob Atkins

Flint

Four worked flints were found residually, deriving from Phase 2, 3 and 4 features. An Early Neolithic blade or flake was recovered from 16 (ditch **15**), an Early Neolithic denticulated retouched flake from 61 (revetment **62**). This had been retouched into a tool for cutting (pers. comm. Richard Mortimer). A further possible worked flint debutage was recovered from the same fill 61. A worked flake was recovered from 67 (ditch **69**).

Fired Clay

Fired clay (0.119kg) was recovered from two fills (63 and 65) of an Early Roman pit (**66)** in Trench 4. Context 63 contained seven undiagnostic small pieces (98g), two had one side smoothed down to give a roughly flat edge. Fill 65 contained four small pieces (21g).

Appendix 5: The Faunal Remains

by Chris Faine

Introduction

A small collection of animal bone was recovered comprising 132 pieces of which 70 fragments were identifiable to species level (53% of the total sample). Fifteen contexts contained bone, all of which contained at least one element identifiable to species (Tables 3 and 4). The assemblage was recovered from a range of feature types such as pits, postholes and linear features. All bones were collected by hand, with preservation being extremely good although frequently fragmented.

All elements were assessed and catalogued in terms of siding (where appropriate), completeness, tooth wear stages (also where applicable), and epiphyseal fusion. In addition, any taphonomy *i.e.* burning, gnawing etc. was recorded where necessary. All unidentifiable fragments were classed as being from large/medium sized mammals. Completeness was assessed by percentage and anatomical zones present (Dobney and Reilly 1988). Tooth wear was assessed using Grant 1982 (table in archive).

	NISP	NISP %	MNI	MNI %
Cattle (*Bos*)	36	51.4%	3	37.5%
Sheep (*Ovis aries*)	27	41.4%	3	37.5%
Dog (*Canis*)	5	4.2%	1	12.4%
Pig (*Sus scrofa*)	2	2.8%	1	12.5%
Total:	**70**	**100%**	**8**	**100%**

Table 3: Animal bone species distribution for the entire assemblage

Context	Cattle (*Bos*)	Sheep (*Ovis aries*)	Dog (*Canis*)	Pig (*Sus scrofa*)	Total	Phase
31	4	-	-	-	4	3
50	2	6	2	-	10	3
58	1	-	-	-	1	2
59	-	1	-	-	1	2
61	2	1	-	-	3	4
63	3	-	-	-	3	4
65	-	1	-	-	1	4
78	18	10	-	-	28	4
94	-	2	-	-	2	2
98		1		-	1	2
100	1	2	-	-	3	3
105	-	-	-	2	2	3
109	5	2	3	-	10	4
111	-	1	-	-	1	3
	36	**27**	**5**	**2**	**70**	

Table 4: Animal bone species distribution by context and phase

Assessment

In terms of species the assemblage was dominated by domestic species. The broad species distribution for the assemblage in terms of fragments and minimum number of individuals can be seen in Table 3. Cattle and sheep/goat dominate, making up 51% and 39% of the total number of fragments respectively. Dog and pig were the only other species represented in the assemblage, comprising 7% and 3% respectively. Table 4 shows the species distribution by context and phase. From this it is clear that the vast majority of faunal remains were concentrated in 3 contexts.

By far the largest number of fragments came from Phase 4 Roman ditch fill 78 (ditch **123**), with 28 fragments of cattle and sheep/goat remains recovered. Analysis of the body part distribution for this context shows mostly parts of the cranial and axial skeleton. Although butchery marks can be seen, the lack of meat bearing elements such as forelimbs suggests that the butchery and primary processing of these animals had taken place elsewhere on the site.

The second largest assemblage was recovered from Roman ditch fill 109 (ditch **121**) with 10 fragments. Here the species distribution was wider than 78 and the body part distribution and evidence of butchery for this context are far more indicative of primary butchery waste than from fill 78 9above). It is worth noting that a dog femur from this context showed evidence of butchery also. The third largest assemblage, eight pieces was recovered from Late Iron Age/Transitional ditch fill 50 (ditch **51**). Whilst the body part analysis was indicative of domestic butchery waste, no cut or chop marks were seen. The age range of the six sheep/goat remains was interesting comprising very young juvenile or neonatal animals, with one neonatal femur showing severe deformation of the diaphysis. Animals killed at such an early developmental stage would been of little use (even for meat), and could represent the result of a particularly cold lambing season or an outbreak of disease (although this remains hypothetical at this stage).

Most of the assemblage was recovered from ditches (75%), pits (20%) and postholes (5%) implying that pits do not seem to be used for the disposal of waste (Table 5). The vast majority of bone came from Late Iron Age/Transitional (29%) or Early Roman contexts (64% of bone) with only 7% from Middle to Late Iron Age contexts.

	Cattle (*Bos*)	**Sheep (*Ovis aries*)**	**Dog (*Canis*)**	**Pig (*Sus scrofa*)**	**Total**
Ditch	28	20	5	-	**53**
Pit	8	4	-	2	**14**
Posthole	2	1	-	-	**3**

Table 5: Animal bone species distribution by feature type (NISP)

Conclusions

In terms of phases of use there appears to be little change in species representation between the Iron Age and Romano-British phases of the site at this point. The faunal assemblage as a whole was more indicative of middle/late Iron Age sites in East Anglia (Hambelton 1999, 45-57). This may indicate that the animal husbandry strategy did not change significantly from the Iron Age to Romano-British periods (although larger sample would be needed to see if this pattern is confirmed for the wider site). The remains were indicative of domestic and/or industrial waste, although whether that entailed meat or other industries such as tanning remains unclear at this stage.

Appendix 6: The Environmental Remains

by Rachel Fosberry

Introduction and Methods

Four bulk samples were taken from features within the excavated areas of the site in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations.

Ten litres of each sample were processed by bucket flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flot was collected in a 0.5mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through a 1mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residue was passed through 5mm and 2mm sieves and a magnet was dragged through each resulting fraction prior to sorting for artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification.

Results

The results are recorded in Table 6:

Sample No.	Context No.	Cut No.	Feature Type	Sample Type	Flot Volume (ml)	Cereals	Weed Seeds	Charcoal <2mm	Charcoal > 2mm	Large animal bones	Pottery
1	58	60	pit	flotation	3	0	0	++	+	0	0
2	78	123	ditch	flotation	90	++	+	+++	++	+	0
3	100	106	pit	flotation	70	+	+	++	++	+	+
4	23	24	post hole	flotation	15	0	0	+	0	0	0

Table 6: Environmental samples

Key to Table

+ = 1 – 10 specimens ++ = 10 – 100 specimens +++ = 100+ specimens

Plant macrofossils

Preservation is by charring and was generally poor to moderate. Charcoal fragments were present in all of the samples in varying quantities.

Modern contaminants in the form of rootlets and a few common seeds such as *Chenopodium* sp. (goosefoot) were present in all of the samples.

Cereals

Cereal grains were present in small quantities in two of the samples and include barley, prehistoric wheat and oats.

Animal bone

A few fragments of animal bone were recovered from the residues of samples 2 and 3.

Industrial activity

A few microscopic slag fragments were recovered from the residue of sample 2. No hammerscale was present.

Conclusions

The charred plant remains were sparse and all poorly preserved, probably due to taphonomic factors. The poor preservation did not allow detailed identifications. Samples one and four were both devoid of any plant material other than charcoal. Samples 2 and 3 produced a larger flot volume and contain small quantities of cereal grains including barley and wheat. The wheat grains were elongated in a form that was typical of the earlier spelt wheat rather than the later free-threshing varieties. However in the absence of chaff such as glume bases and rachis fragments, it was not possible to identify the wheat species. Both samples also contain seeds of possible crop contaminants such as *Vicia* sp. (vetch) and *Lolium* sp. (Rye-grass). The few oats in Sample 3 are also likely to be crop-contaminants.

In conclusion, the samples showed only a low abundance of charred material that was not considered worthy of further analysis. The poor preservation and lack of environmental remains from the evaluation probably means that the site has low potential for environmental remains/information if there is further work on the site.

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