

WESTBURY (WI)

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Blue Circle Industries PLC

**Westbury Cement Works
Westbury Chalk Pit Extension**

**Report on the Archaeological Evaluation:
Area A - Surface Collection of Artifacts**

Oxford Archaeological Unit

December 1995

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1 Summary

The fieldwalking exercise (Surface collection of artifacts) was undertaken on behalf of Blue Circle Industries PLC in accordance with a Brief prepared by Wiltshire County Council County Archaeological Service. The quantities of the materials recovered were small. The main categories of finds were worked flint and burnt unworked flint of prehistoric date, and ceramic building materials of post-medieval date. Very small numbers of other finds were recovered. The distributions of both the worked flint and burnt flint show a general scatter of finds with no specific concentrations. The ceramic building materials were less generally scattered but again did not reveal any significant concentrations. The other materials were found in such small quantities that their distributions are not significant.

2 Introduction

The fieldwalking exercise reported on in this document forms part of the archaeological evaluation undertaken on behalf of Blue Circle Industries PLC. The evaluation was required by Wiltshire County Council in respect of a proposed extension to the Westbury Chalk Pit (WCC County Archaeological Service, *Archaeological Evaluation Brief - Westbury Cement Works - Chalk Pit Extension*, 2 March 1995). The field evaluation was to be in three parts: i) Fieldwalking in the area to the north-east of the chalk pit (Area A); ii) excavation of a series of test pits to the south-west of the chalk quarry (Area B); and iii) targeted field evaluation following (i) and (ii). In addition, the OAU has undertaken a Desk-top Assessment, which is the subject of a separate report (OAU 1995). Area A, which forms the subject of this report is composed of two fields (OS parcels 5400 and 8903 (part)). The land is MoD property and forms part of the Salisbury Plain Training Area. Parts of both Areas A and B lie within the live firing range ('Danger Area' on Figure 1). Because of access problems relating to the MOD ranges, the fieldwalking of Area A was done in two stages, with field 5400 being walked in April 1995 and field 8903 (part) in October 1995.

2.1 Topography and Geology

The site lies on high ground - at an elevation of at least 220 m - on the chalk escarpment forming the north-west edge of Salisbury Plain. It overlooks the town of Westbury and the wide valley of the Avon to the north and west. Field 5400 slopes gently from east to west, and has a slight dip in its western corner. Field 8903 has a slight slope from east north-east to west south-west.

2.2 Archaeological background

Bratton Camp, a bivallate Iron Age hill fort, lies to the north-east of the site. In the areas to the south and east of Area A there is evidence for occupation from early prehistoric to the post-medieval periods. There are no known archaeological remains from within Area A. Long River Road which runs along the south-west edge of the two field, and the road which runs north-east between fields 5400 and 8903, are both long established roads. The archaeological remains within 1 km of the present chalk pit are considered more fully in the Desk-based Assessment prepared for Blue Circle Industries by the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU 1995).

2.3 Crop and ground conditions

Both fields are currently under arable cultivation. The first stage of fieldwalking took place in April 1995 after sowing in field 5400; at the time of the fieldwalking the cereal crop was quite well advanced and varied over the field from just showing through to thick. In the north corner of the field the crop was most advanced and it was only just practical to fieldwalk in this area. The weather conditions during the first part of the fieldwalking exercise were dry and sunny. In October when OS parcel 8903 (part) was walked the weather was overcast. The field had not long been drilled and the cereal crop was just beginning to show through.

Table 1: Transects: grid references and correlation between transects from April and October field walking exercises.

		Fieldwork Transect label	Transect Grid Reference (south end)
		OS parcel 5400 (April 1995)	
		1	389317 150974
		2	389340 150960
		3	389365 150936
		4	389390 150919
		5	389414 150903
		6	389437 150888
Fieldwork Transect label	Transect Grid Reference (south end)		7
			389460 150869
			8
			389484 150850
			9
			389509 150841
OS parcel 8903 (part) (October 1995)			10
			389534 150817
A	389559 150794	=	11
			389558 150837
B	389583 150781	=	12
			389584 150584
C	389608 150766	=	13
			389608 150877
D	389633 150752	=	14
			389633 150897
E	389656 150736	=	15
			189658 150918
F	389681 150719	=	16
			389684 150942
G	389708 150701	=	17
			389710 150963
H	389731 150689	=	18
			389735 150981
J	389755 150676		
K	389780 150707		
L	389803 150753		
M	389831 150799		
N	389851 150844		

2.4 Methodology

The grid for the surface collection was aligned on the OS grid and the fieldwalking lines, or transects, spaced 25 m apart. Within the lines the search units were of 25 m length. In accordance with guidelines set by WCC, each transect is identified by the grid reference of its south end (Table 1) (WCC County Archaeological Service, *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire*, [draft] April 1995, section 5.5.1). The transects in both fields are numbered, lettered, from west to east. During fieldwork the transects were walk from south to north.

The finds recovered during the surface collection exercise were processed (washed and boxed), quantified and the data entered into a database. The digital was then plotted onto a CAD generated digital plan. The finds are plotted at the north end of the relevant collection unit.

3 Results

The quantities of artifacts recovered during fieldwalking are small (see Appendices 1 and 2) and the inferences which can be drawn from them limited. There are more finds of all categories from Field 5400 than from Field 8903 (Figures 2-6). The main classes of material found were flint, both worked and burnt unworked, and ceramic building materials. The flint is not sufficiently distinctive to be closely dated, but is of prehistoric date, possibly Neolithic or Bronze Age. The bulk of the flint was recovered from field 5400, during the first phase of fieldwalking. The ceramic building materials are post-medieval in date.

3.1 Flint (Figures 2 & 3)

The flint recovered consisted of worked flint (mainly flakes but including 1 core and 3 or 4 pieces of waste or debitage) and unworked burnt flint. (A brief report on the flint can be found in Appendix 3.). The quantity of material is small and reveals no real concentrations. Its absence over much of field 8903 is most the obvious point.

A very small quantity of flint was recovered from field 8903. The worked flint distribution (Figure 2) appears to centre on Transect H, but it must be stressed that the numbers involved are small: a total of 9 flakes and 1 piece of waste. The quantity of burnt unworked flint recovered from field 8903 was negligible (only 3 pieces) (Figure 3).

Much more flint was recovered from field 5400 than from 8903: 70 flakes, 1 core, 3 possible waste pieces and 91 pieces of burnt flint. The material was quite evenly spread across the field with no obvious concentrations (Figures 2 & 3). The largest quantities of flint were found on Transects 9, 12 and 13 (Table 2 and Figure 2). It must be stressed that the quantities of flint involved are not large - see Table 2. Transect 13 also produced the largest quantity of burnt flint (Figure 3): but again the actual figures are small - only 20 pieces. To the east of Transect 13 the absence of worked flint is noticeable.

Transect	flake	core	waste	burnt flint
9	18	0	?1	20
12	10	0	0	1
13	14	0	0	20
H	8	0	0	1

3.2 Ceramic building materials [CBM] (Figure 4)

The ceramic building materials consists of brick, tile and material which could be either brick or tile, but which is too small to identify with certainty. The distribution is limited to the western part of both parcel 5400 and to a spread across the middle of 8903. In the latter case the material seems mainly to be distributed away from the roads bordering the field. In the former case the distribution may in part be a product of the topography: the western corner of the field is the lowest lying part. The distribution of other finds is confined to this part of the field.

3.3 Other materials (Figure 5 & 6)

Other materials were recovered in such small quantities during the field walking that their distributions are not particularly significant. They do however show a similar pattern to that for ceramic building materials in that they are concentrated in the western part of field 5400. Very little pottery was recovered and none of this was early in date. The earliest ceramics were early post-medieval (16th- to 17th-century in date). The absence of pottery and other finds, other than flint, of prehistoric, Romano-British or medieval date is noteworthy.

4 Discussion and Interpretation

Only significant finds found during the fieldwalking were worked flint and pieces of burnt unworked flint. The quantities of both worked and burnt flint were the small, and the worked flint insufficiently distinctive to be closely datable. It is possibly Neolithic or Bronze Age in date. There is an absence of other prehistoric finds and in particular pottery. No Iron Age or Romano-British material was found, and no Saxon or medieval finds. The bulk of the finds consisted of post-medieval building materials. Farm buildings are known to have existed in the area in the past, for example Bournes Barn within the bounds of the present quarry (OAU 1995, Gazetteer No 44), and the building materials may be derived from these.

References

- OAU 1995 Oxford Archaeological Unit, *Westbury Cement Works. Westbury Chalk Pit Extension - Desk-Based Archaeological Assessment* (December 1995)
- WCC CAS 1995a WCC County Archaeological Service, *Archaeological Evaluation Brief - Westbury Cement Works - Chalk Pit Extension*, 2 March 1995
- WCC CAS 1995b WCC County Archaeological Service, *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire*, [draft] April 1995

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Fieldwork:	<i>Project Manager</i>	Ian Scott
	<i>Fieldwork supervisors:</i>	Andy Parkinson, Greg Pugh;
	<i>Fieldwork technicians:</i>	Angela Boyle, Steve Laurie-Lynch; Neil McNab; Neville Redvers-Higgins
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	<i>Data entry:</i>	Ashley Macintyre
	<i>Plotting:</i>	Paul Backhouse
Artifacts:	<i>Processing:</i>	Kay Proctor/Bob Bailey
	<i>Quantification:</i>	Ian Scott
Report:	<i>Text:</i>	Ian Scott
	<i>Flint assessment:</i>	Pippa Bradley

Appendices

Appendix 1: Fieldwalking, phase 1, April 1995 - OS parcel 5400

(i) Flint

Transect	Bag	flakes	cores	other	burnt flint	Comments
1	-	-	-	-	-	
2	-	-	-	-	-	
3	1	-	-	-	1	
	2	-	-	-	1	
	4	1	-	-	-	
4	1	-	-	-	1	
	2	-	-	-	1	
	3	1	-	-	2	
	4	1	-	-	1	
	5	1	-	-	-	
5	2	1	-	-	-	
	3	1	-	-	2	
	5	1	-	-	-	
	6	-	-	-	1	
	7	2	-	-	3	
6	2	1	-	-	-	
	5	1	-	-	1	
	6	1	-	-	-	
	7	-	-	-	1	
7	1	-	-	-	2	
	2	1	-	-	-	
	3	1	-	-	1	
	4	-	-	-	1	
	6	1	-	-	-	
	9	2	-	-	-	
	10	1	-	-	1	
	11	-	-	-	3	

Transect	Bag	flakes	cores	other	burnt flint	Comments
8	1	1	-	?1*	-	*possible irregular waste
	2	1	-	-	-	
	3	1	-	-	1	
	4	-	1	-	1	
	6	-	-	-	1	
	8	-	-	-	3	
	9	-	-	-	2	
	10	-	-	-	1	
	11	-	-	-	1	
9	1	-	-	-	1	
	2	1	-	-	1	
	3	-	-	-	1	
	4	1	-	-	1	
	5	2	-	-	4	
	6	3	-	-	-	
	7	6	-	?1*	3	*possible irregular waste
	9	3	-	-	1*	*large
	11	-	-	-	2	
	12	2	-	-	6	
10	2	-	-	-	1	
	5	-	-	-	2	
	6	-	-	-	1	
	8	1	-	-	-	
	9	-	-	-	1	
	11	1	-	-	-	
	12	1	-	-	-	
	13	-	-	-	1	
11	4	1	-	-	-	
	5	1	-	-	-	
	6	-	-	-	1	

Transect	Bag	flakes	cores	other	burnt flint	Comments
11 (cont)	7	1	-	-	-	
	12	-	-	-	2	
12	2	2	-	-	-	
	6	1	-	-	-	
	7	1	-	-	-	
	8	2	-	-	1	
	9	1	-	-	-	
	11	1	-	-	-	
	13	2	-	-	-	
13	2	-	-	-	6	
	3	-	-	-	2	
	4	1	-	-	2	
	5	3	-	-	3	
	6	2	-	-	1	
	7	4	-	-	-	
	8	-	-	-	4	
	9	2	-	-	1	
	11	2	-	-	1	
14	2	-	-	-	2	
	3	-	-	-	2	
15	-	-	-	-		
16	1	-	-	-	1	
	3	-	-	-	2	
	5	-	-	-	1	
17	1	?1	-	?1*	-	*possible irregular waste
18	-	-	-	-	-	
Totals		70	1	3	91	

Appendix 1: Fieldwalking, phase 1, April 1995 - OS parcel 5400

(ii) Finds other than Flint

Transect	Bag	CBM	earthen ware	misc fired clay	other finds	Comments
1	1	1	2*	-	-	*post-med
2	1	2	1*	-	-	* (uncertain date)
3	2	1	-	1	1* 1+	*slate +china, transfer-printed
	3	1	-	-	-	
	4	1	-	-	-	
4	1	1	-	1	1*	*slate
	2	2	-	3	1*	*slate
	3	3	2*	-	-	*post-med
	4	-	-	2	-	
5	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	1	-	-	1	-	
	2	2	1*	4	1+	*post-med +china, white
	3	12	3*	-	1+ 2#	* glazed, post- med +tile, stone #coal
	5	2	-	3	-	
	6	12	1*	-	1+ 1# 1-	*glazed, post- med +flowerpot #slate -cinder
	7	1	-	-	-	
	7	3	-	1*	-	-
8	2	1	-	-	-	
	3	1	-	-	1*	*glass, ?bottle
	4	2	-	-	1*	*glass, brown bottle

Transect	Bag	CBM	earthen ware	misc fired clay	other finds	Comments
8 (cont)	5	1	-	-	-	
	6	1	-	-	-	
9	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	2	-	1*	-	-	*post med
	3	3	-	-	1*	*slate
					2+	+slag
12	2	2	-	-	-	
12	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	9	1	-	-	-	
14	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	2	1	-	-	-	
17	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals		54	12	15	16	

Appendix 2: Fieldwalking, phase 2, October 1995 - OS parcel 8903 (part)

(i) Flint

Transect	Bag	flakes	cores	other	burnt unworked flint	Comments
A	-	-	-	-	-	
B	-	-	-	-	-	
C	-	-	-	-	-	
D	-	-	-	-	-	
E	-	-	-	-	-	
F	2	1	-	-	-	
	8	-	-	-	1	
	9	-	-	-	1	
G	-	-	-	-	-	
H	4	1	-	-	-	
	6	2	-	-	-	
	7	1	-	-	1	
	8	2	-	-	-	
	10	1	-	-	-	
	11	1	-	-	-	
J	7	-	-	1	-	irregular debitage
K	-	-	-	-	-	
L	-	-	-	-	-	
M	-	-	-	-	-	
N	-	-	-	-	-	
Totals		9	0	1	3	

Appendix 2: Fieldwalking, phase 2, October 1995 - OS parcel 8903 (part)

(ii) Finds other than flint

Transect	Bag	CBM	earthen ware	Misc fired clay	other finds	Comments
A-	1	1	-	-	-	
B	-	-	-	-	-	-
C	1				1*	*glass, lt green, ?window
	3	2	-	-	-	
D	2	2	-	-	-	
	5	1	-	-	-	
E	1	3	-	-	-	
	2	2	-	-	-	
	3	1	-	-	-	
F	2	5	-	-	-	
	3	1	-	-	-	
	5	1	-	-	-	
G	5	2	-	-	-	
	6	1	-	-	-	
H	4	2	-	-	-	
	6	2	-	-	-	
	8	1	-	-	-	
	9	2	-	-	-	
	12	1	-	-	-	
I	-	-	-	-	-	-
J	6	1	-	-	-	
	7	1	-	-	-	
	8	2	-	1	-	
	9	1	-	-	-	
	11	-	-	-	1	-

Transect	Bag	CBM	earthen ware	Misc fired clay	other finds	Comments
K	5	1	-	-	-	
	6	1	-	-	-	
	8	1	-	-	-	
L	-	-	-	-	-	-
M	-	-	-	-	-	-
N	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals		38	0	2	1	

Appendix 3: The Worked Flint

by Philippa Bradley

The flint is generally very heavily corticated being white or bluish grey in colour; cortex where present is thin and white, cream or light brown in colour. The material was abraded and a few pieces were iron-stained. The burnt unworked flint is mostly very heavily calcined, a few pieces were less heavily burnt and a light grey in colour.

OS Parcel 5400

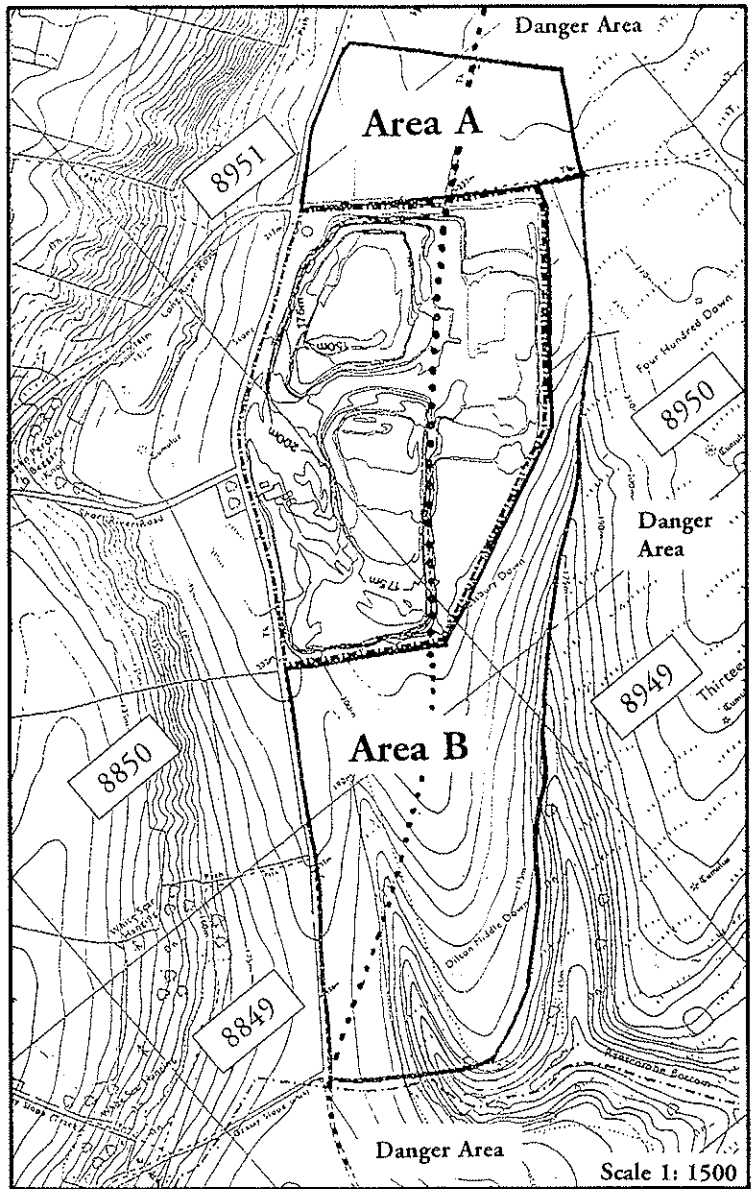
A small assemblage of 74 pieces of worked flint and 81 burnt unworked flints was recovered from fieldwalking in Field 5400. The assemblage consists of 70 flakes, three pieces of irregular waste and a core. Both hard- and soft-hammers were used. There appeared to be little in the way of platform preparation. The core has two platforms but had not been extensively worked. The majority of the burnt unworked flints are small *c* 5-10 g although there are a few pieces weighing up to 200 g. The flint seems to be thinly distributed across the field although there seemed to be some bias in the recovery in some areas (eg transects 1-2 and 14-18).

The lack of retouched forms or diagnostic debitage make dating this assemblage difficult. However, this material would not be out of place in a Neolithic or Bronze Age context.

OS Parcel 8903 (part)

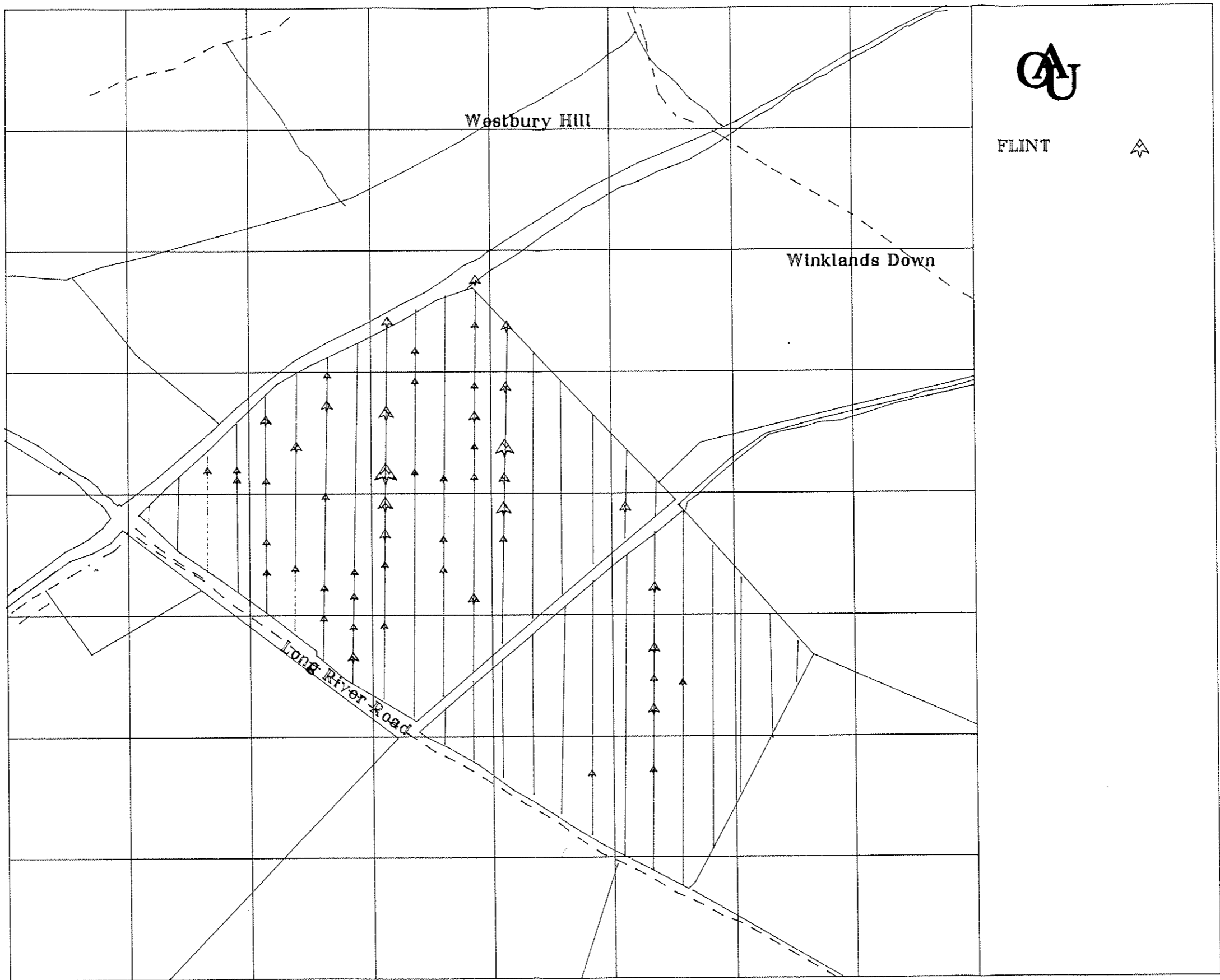
Ten pieces of worked flint and three pieces of burnt unworked flint were recovered from the fieldwalking in Field 8903.

The assemblage consisted of nine flakes and one piece of irregular debitage. The flint is very similar in character to the material recovered from the initial phase of fieldwalking and may be of the same date. However, the lack of diagnostic retouched forms or debitage and the size of this assemblage hamper dating. The quantity of flint from field 8903 was very sparse.



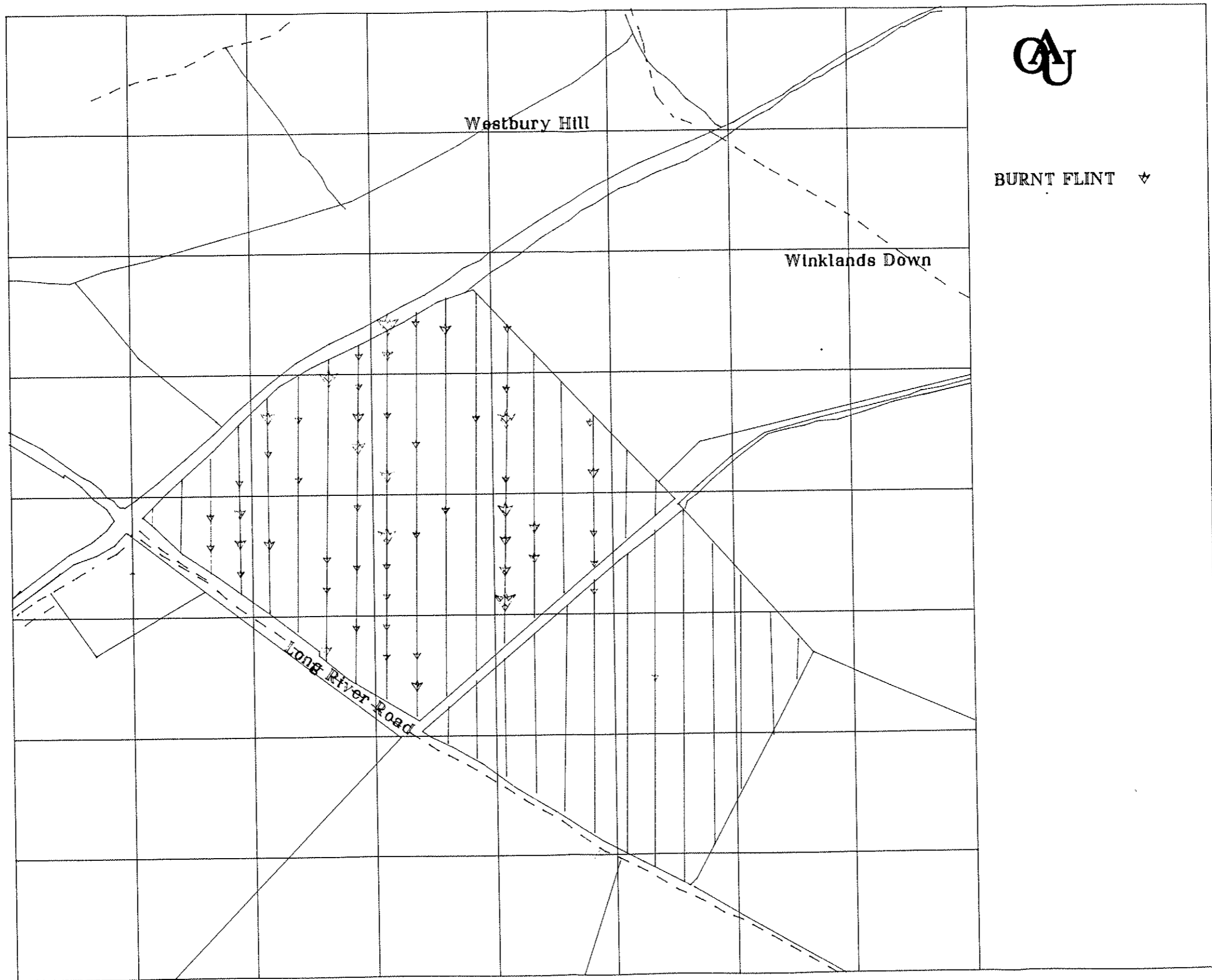
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Figure 1: Westbury Chalk Quarry (WECQU 95): Location of Evaluation Areas A and B



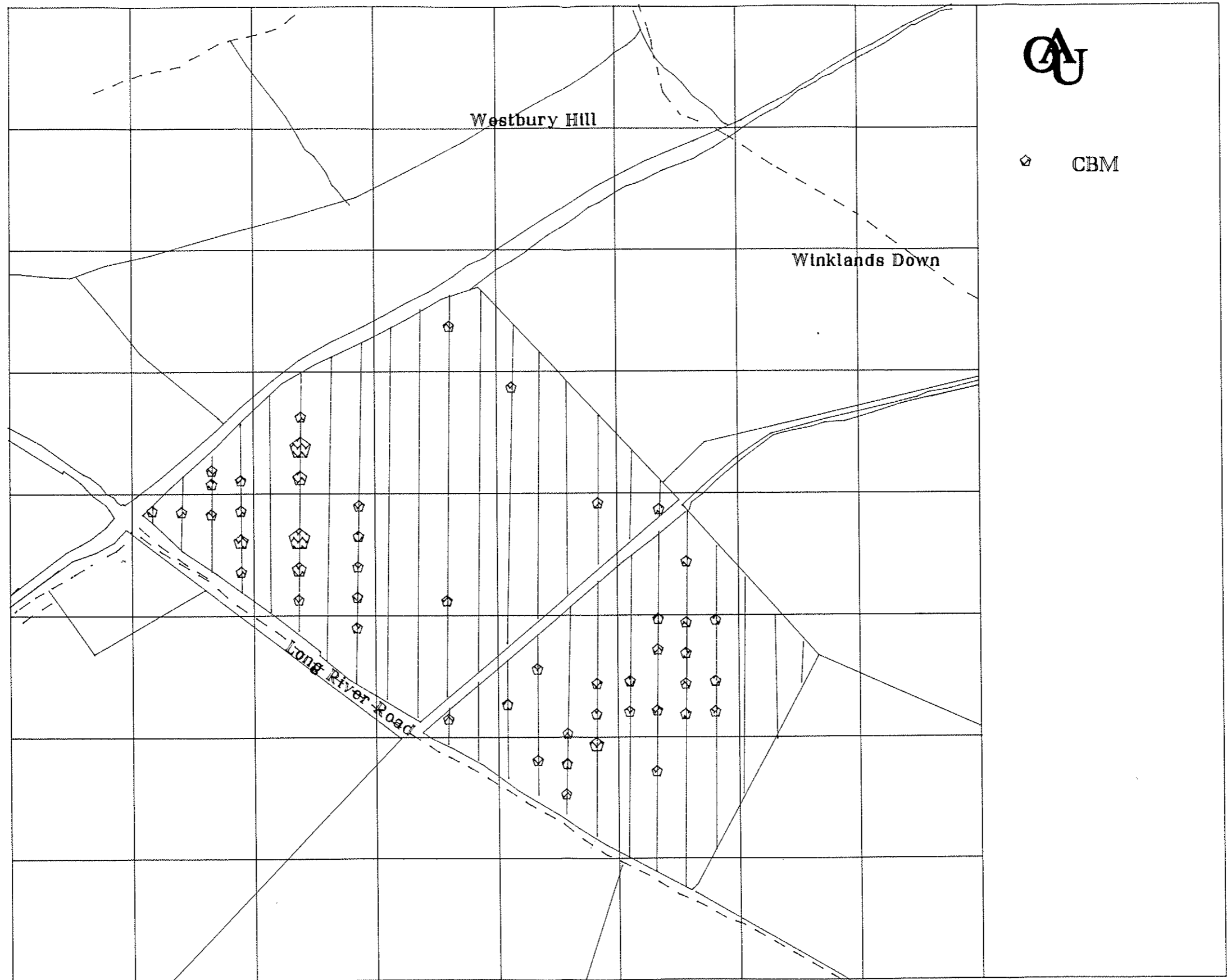
Results of Field walking at Westbury Chalk Quarry 1995

Figure 2:
Distribution of worked flint



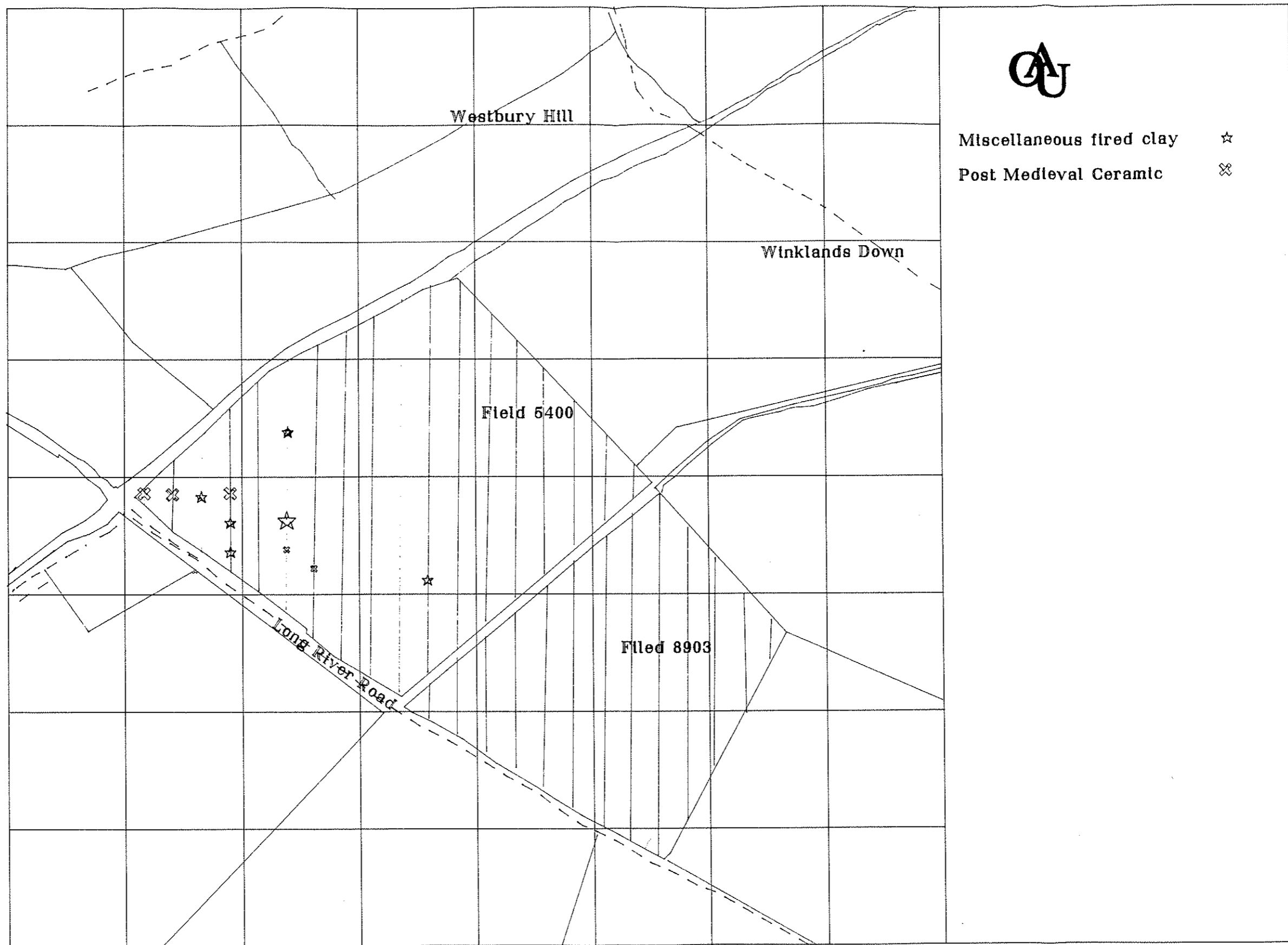
Results of Field walking at Westbury Chalk Quarry 1995

Figure 3:
Distribution of burnt unworked flint



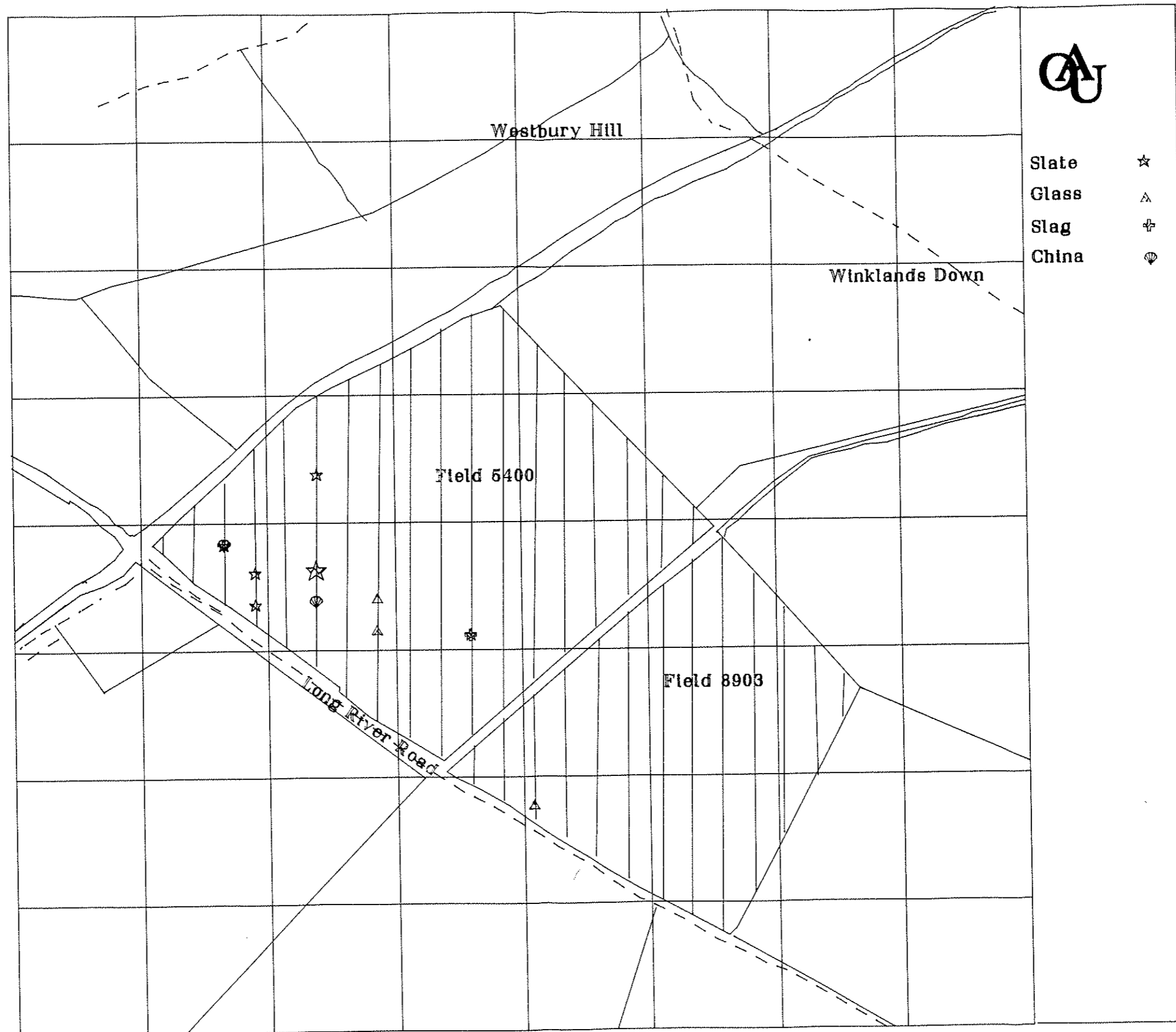
Results of Field walking at Westbury Chalk Quarry 1995

Figure 4:
Distribution of ceramic
building materials



Results of Field walking at Westbury Chalk Quarry 1996

Figure 5:
Distribution of miscellaneous fired
clay and post-medieval ceramics



Results of Field walking at Westbury Chalk Quarry 1996

Figure 6:
Distribution of miscellaneous



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