

Archaeological Field Unit

# Prehistoric and Romano British Remains on Land Adjacent to 28 St Anne's Lane, Godmanchester

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**Cambridgeshire County Council**

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*Commissioned By Gatehouse Estates*



## **SUMMARY**

*Between the 5th of October and the 5th of November 1997 the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council undertook evaluation by means of trial trenching on land adjacent to 28 St Anne's Lane, Godmanchester. The work was commissioned by Mr J Holmes of Gatehouse Estates on behalf of Amblecroft Estates Ltd. in advance of the proposed development of the site for housing with associated gardens and car parking. The evaluation revealed a well preserved sequence of Prehistoric and Romano - British remains surviving to within 0.25m of the present ground surface. Whilst the nature and dating of the earlier deposits remains enigmatic Roman activity would seem to be related to the expansion, in terms of area, of the town in the third to fourth centuries AD. Evidence for structures, enclosures, domestic rubbish pits and open areas surfaced with compacted gravel are all present within the development area. The presence of the partially burnt remains of a woman within one of the enclosure ditches may provide further evidence of a major disaster previously interpreted by Green as a massacre during the third century AD. In addition the subject site is located within an area of high potential to examine the late Roman to early Saxon transition. Any subsequent excavation is likely to contribute significant new information to the study of the end of the Roman occupation of this important small town.*



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>16</b>
	<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>17</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>17</b>
	<b>LIST OF APPENDICES</b>	
	Appendix I Context Index	18
	Appendix II Pottery Assessment Report	20
	<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	
	Figure 1: Site Location	3
	Figure 2: Trench 1 & 2	7
	Figure 3: Trench 3	11
	Figure 4: Stratigraphic Matrix	15



# **Prehistoric and Romano British Remains on Land Adjacent to 28 St Anne's Lane, Godmanchester.**

## **An Evaluation**

**TL 2481 / 7048**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

Between the 5th of October and the 5th of November 1997 the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council (AFU) undertook evaluation by means of trial trenching on land adjacent to 28 St Anne's Lane, Godmanchester. The work was commissioned by Mr J Holmes of Gatehouse Estates on behalf of Amblecroft Ltd., in advance of the proposed development of the site for housing with associated gardens and car parking. The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with AFU specification WW 97/12, drawn up in response to a Design Brief written by Simon Kaner of the County Council Archaeology Section.

### **2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY**

The site is situated within the town of Godmanchester on the southern side of St Anne's Lane and rests on the undifferentiated terrace gravels of the river Ouse, which in this area overlay Oxford Clays.

### **3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

Detailed accounts of the development of Godmanchester may be found in Green (1977) and Victoria County History Vol I & II for Huntingdonshire. A brief summary, highlighting information relevant to the proposed development area, is given below.

The Ouse valley in the vicinity of Godmanchester has yielded abundant evidence of prehistoric activity. Dispersed Iron Age settlement existed in the area, although the town owes its Roman development to its situation on an important Roman Road (Ermine street) adjacent to a crossing of the Ouse. A fort was established on this river crossing soon after the conquest, the projected eastern circuit (Green, 1977, fig.4) of which falls to the west of the present development site. Settlement grew rapidly around this early nucleus and along Ermine Street; re-development in the early second century saw the construction of the massive mansio and bath house,



whose remains have been excavated to the southwest of the development site on Pinfold Lane.

Green encountered early Saxon pottery associated with timber buildings close to the mansio site (1977, 22) and elsewhere within the formerly enclosed Roman town, indicating sub-Roman continuity or re-occupation. There is some evidence to suggest that Godmanchester formed the southern twin of a double burh, and was re-fortified along with Huntingdon during the early tenth century. Late Saxon boundary ditches have been noted in the vicinity of Pinfold Lane. A charter of 1212 established Godmanchester as a self-governing manor or liberty, and the town remained prosperous throughout the medieval period. The town plan, however, lacks signs of large scale medieval re-planning and tenements seem to have been established haphazardly along the various roads and lanes. St Anne's Lane follows the southern boundary of The Great Park, created by an award of lands to Merton Priory by King Stephen between AD 1135 - 1154 and is probably dateable to this period.

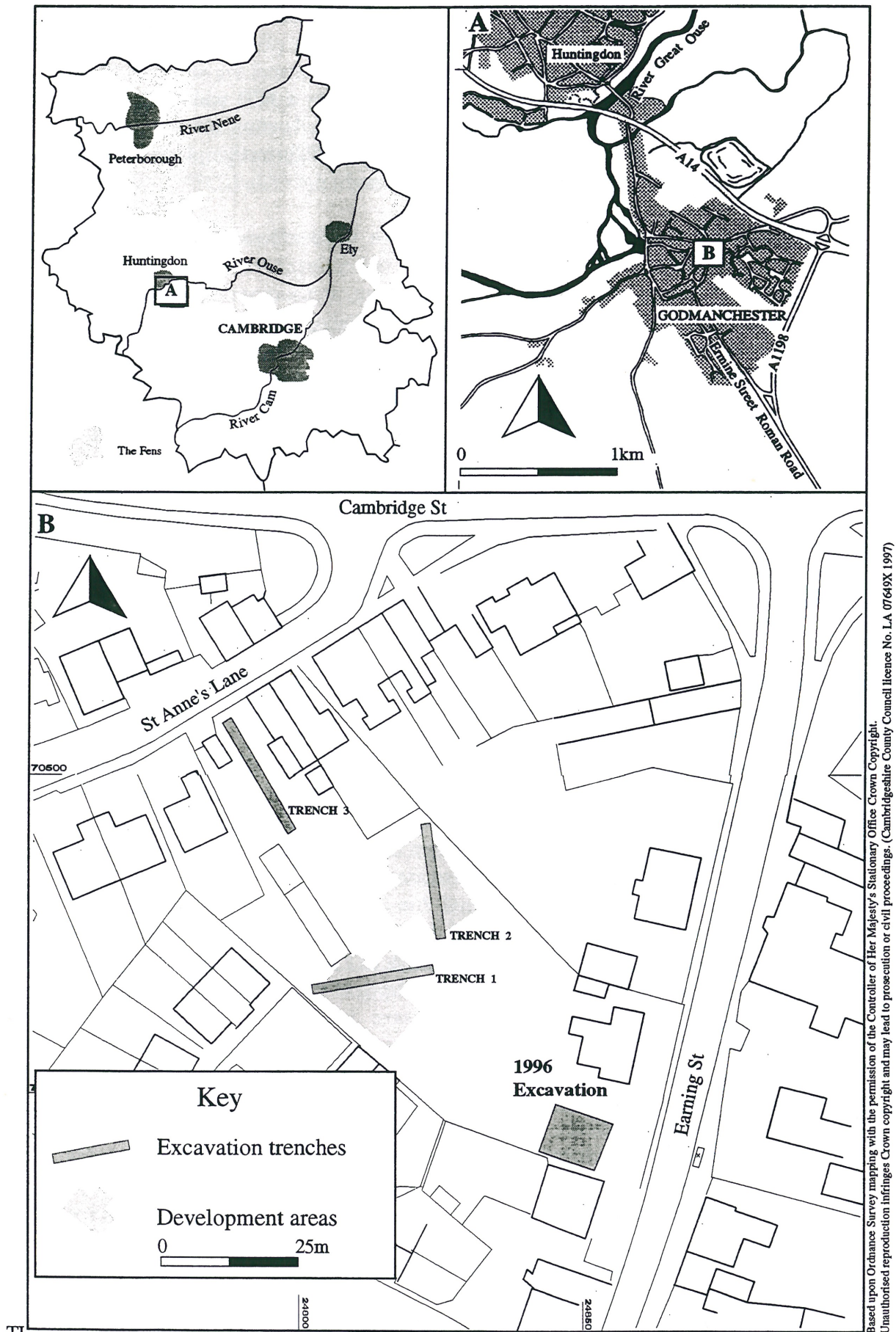
A plan of the 'Commenable Messuages, Cottages, and Toftsteads' of Godmanchester dating to 1803 (Hunts CRO pm2/12), indicates open ground in the vicinity of the present development site. The OS 25" map of 1885 (Hunts CRO) also shows open ground in the vicinity of the present development site.

As part of a series of excavations to examine the layout of the town defences Green placed at least one trench - referred to as The Unigate Site (unpublished) - on land adjacent to the western boundary of the present development area. Information regarding the findings of this work is limited at present. In a letter to the AFU (dated 12/09/97) Green states *'the butt end of the Flavian (AD 69 - AD 96) town ditch was located where an early road passed through the circuit, but the later third century defenses were not located. As transpired in later work, the east and west sides of these defences were never erected - butt ends of the unfinished walls were found elsewhere. Other features of note on this site included quarries, first century huts and a grubenhaus enclosure with associated fifth century material. A post medieval masonry building facing onto Earning Street was found at the south end (of Trench 1)'.*

According to Green's interpretation the current development area would appear to fall just outside the limits of the first century defences but would lie securely within the limits of the later third century town circuit.

Groundworks monitoring was undertaken by the AFU on land adjacent to 22 Earning Street (Kemp 1996) less than 50m to the south east of the current development site. Although lying within the boundaries of the Roman, Saxon and Medieval settlements as defined by Green in 1977, Kemp found no evidence of the major construction, occupation and demolition sequences associated with, in particular, Roman urban development. Although the scope of the monitoring work was clearly restrictive for the purposes of archaeological investigation only the presence of a single Roman ditch was noted, aligned north north - east to south south - west. Other features noted within the monitoring zone were a single post Medieval ditch and small scale agricultural quarry pits.





**Figure 1: Site Location**



## **4 METHODOLOGY**

Three trial trenches were opened to varying depths using a JCB with a toothless ditching bucket. Machining included the controlled removal of certain archaeologically significant deposits in order to allow the full stratigraphic sequence to be characterised within a relatively short time period.

All sections and the bases of the trial trenches were cleaned and recorded. Excavation of surviving deposits and features was selective and conducted to characterise the nature and extent of the surviving archaeological remains. A representative sample of unstratified artefacts (including a scan using a metal detector) was collected from the spoil heaps created by the excavation of the separate trenches. Rapid spot dating of the material was conducted by P Copleston upon returning to the AFU headquarters. Photographs were taken and plan and section drawings made where appropriate.

All deposits were recorded using the AFU's single context system.

All site records and artefacts are held currently at the AFU headquarters at Fulbourn and stored under the site code GODSAL 97.

## **5 RESULTS**

### **Trench 1**

Measuring 15m east - west by 1.50m north - south, Trench 1 was located diagonally across the foundation plan of the first of two proposed bungalows within the western half of the proposed development area (Fig 2a).

Excavation reached a maximum depth of 1.10m below present ground surface (BPS) with natural deposits in evidence at a depth of *c* 8.50m OD. Archaeological deposits were first encountered at 9.00m OD, a depth of *c* 0.40m BPS.

The earliest deposit revealed within Trench 1 (layer 39) was a compact mid to light orange brown sandy clay silt layer 0.20m - 0.40m in depth. The absence of visible inclusions within this layer suggests that it had probably been naturally deposited. The underlying natural geology of the area should be gravel and was observed directly below layer 39 within the sides of cut features at *c* 8.20m OD.

### **The Romano - British Period**

Stratigraphically the earliest feature recorded is a small pit 42 (41) subcircular in plan, 0.70m x 0.69m x 0.11m in depth located towards the southern limit of the trench. No finds were retrieved from this feature despite 100% excavation but it is important to note that this pit appears to be sealed by make up layer 12 into which

the majority of other features are cut. This serves to highlight the possibility of an earlier phase of activity within the area of the subject site. It is entirely possible that pit 42 could be pre Roman in date although this cannot at present be proven.

Layer 12, a mid yellow sandy clay silt of variable thickness and uncertain extent would appear to be roughly dateable to the Roman period (2nd Century *terminus post quem* (TPQ)) although any artefacts recovered came from the top of this layer.

The earliest phase of activity clearly dateable to the Romano - British Period consists of a series of three ditches all aligned roughly north - west to south - east.

Ditch 40 (69), 0.53m deep extends into the west and east limits of excavation. Fill (69) contains quantities of pottery, bone, oyster and mussel shell much of which is burnt. A wide range of artefactual materials are present dating from the first to third centuries AD. A slight step or gully is present along the base on the southern side of the ditch cut. This irregularity in the base of the feature is not sufficiently pronounced to suggest a defensive function.

Ditch 11 (10), 1.50m wide x 0.08m deep is heavily truncated with vertical sides and a flat base.

Ditch 14 (13) extending into the northern limit of Trench 1 is of unknown extent or depth but is dateable to the third to third centuries AD.

All of the above ditches are truncated by a series of features with possible structural interpretations such as beam slots or post holes indicating a probable change in use for this area. The limited area available for investigation makes further interpretation difficult although it is quite possible that the infilling of these ditches was a deliberate act associated with the expansion in terms of area of the town in the third century.

Cut 5 (4), rectilinear in plan, 0.70m wide, 0.18m in depth with vertical sides and flat base, extends into the north and south limits of excavation. The interpretation of this feature is not clear. It would conform in terms of size and shape to the corner of a wall foundation trench. The absence of stone footings or debris from robbing activity within fill (4) may suggest wooden foundations set within a rectilinear beamslot although additional excavation would be required to confirm this possibility.

Cut 7 (6), subcircular in plan, 0.46m x 0.40m (unex.), Cut 9 (8), subcircular in plan, 0.96m x 0.74m, Cut 16 (15), subcircular in plan, 1.08m x 0.44m and Cut 24 (23), subcircular in plan, 0.38m x 0.22m are all undated and represent a series of small pits or possible post holes the significance of which remains unclear at the time of writing.

All of the above features are sealed by a homogenous mid grey sandy clay silt layer (3) which is up to 0.65m thick. Quite how this layer was deposited or what it may represent are unclear. The depths of the small pits and ditches sealed by this layer are extremely shallow and this would tend to suggest that they have been truncated.



The most obvious interpretation would seem to be that truncation has occurred as a result of agricultural practices such as ploughing and that layer (3) represents an accumulation of plough soil. Artefacts recovered range in date from the second to the fourth centuries AD. Despite the fact that the ceramics display little evidence of abrasion - a common effect of continuous agricultural activity - farming seems to offer the most likely interpretation for this build up of soil.

### **Later Romano -British Activity**

Layer (2), a compacted gravel surface c 20mm thick set on a cobble foundation at the eastern end of the trench seals (3) and indicates the beginning of a new phase of activity on the site. No intrusive features or structures were observed within (2) prior to removal by machine. Observable within Trench 3 as layer (18), surface (2) represents an open area such as a yard and is likely to have been laid during the late third to fourth century AD. The projected line of a Roman thoroughfare crosses the southern end of the development area (Green 1977) and it remains a possibility that the cobble and gravel surface at the eastern limit of the trench may in fact represent evidence for the edge of this road. Excavation beyond the southern limit of the footprint of building 1 would be highly desirable to confirm this possibility.

Layer (25) a gravel surface, associated repair (26) and underlying make up (28) seem to represent an expansion to surface (2) westwards. No dateable artefacts were present within these contexts which represent the final phase of (presumed) Romano - British activity within Trench 1.

### **Post Medieval Period**

Directly sealing the final phase of Romano - British activity is a thin layer of post - medieval garden soil 1, varying in thickness from 0.15m to 0.45m which contained material ranging in date from the second to the seventeenth centuries AD. Despite such a thin covering disturbance to the underlying archaeological deposits is minimal.

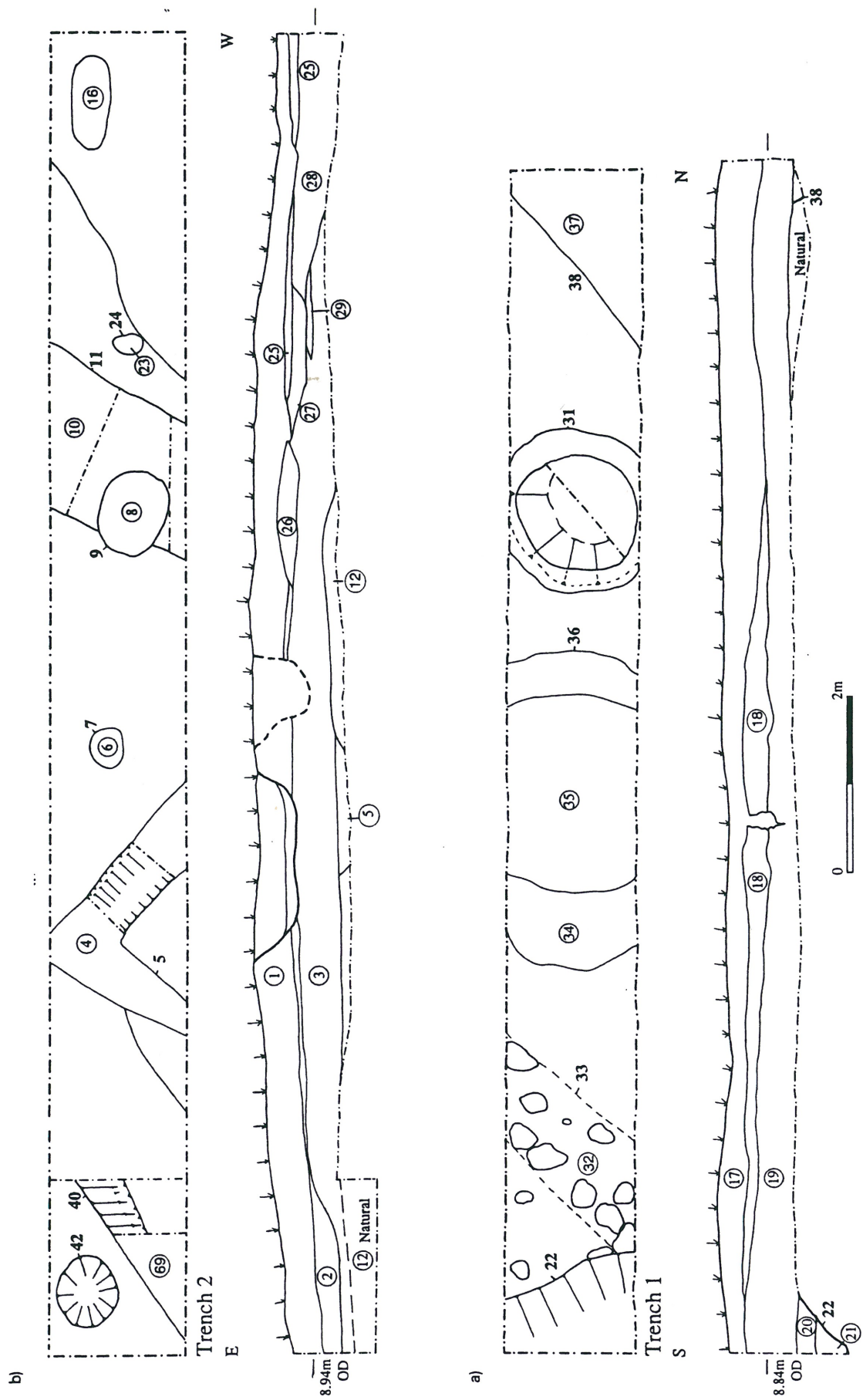


Figure 2a & b: Trench 1 & 2 Plans and Sections



## **Trench 2**

Measuring 13.50m north - south by 1.50m east - west, Trench 2 was located diagonally across the foundation plan of the second of two proposed bungalows within the eastern half of the proposed development area (Fig 2b).

Archaeological deposits attributable to the Romano British period were first revealed at 9.09m OD ( 0.30m BPS). Due to the nature of the stratified deposits encountered machining was continued and earlier phases of Roman activity were revealed within the base of the trench at a depth of c 8.50m OD.

Stratigraphically the earliest deposit, revealed in the base of the trench was layer 39, identical in every respect to layer 39 in Trench 1. There is nothing to suggest that this deposit was not naturally deposited.

Truncating this deposit are a number of archaeological features.

## **The Romano - British Period**

Pit 22 (20)(21), extending into the southern, eastern and western limits of excavation contained moderate quantities of pottery and animal bone. This material was derived almost exclusively from the upper of the two fills (20). The ceramics are dateable to the third to fourth centuries AD with a large and unabraded first century component. The animal bone which consists mainly of fragments bearing clear evidence of butchery, is generally in a good state of preservation. The primary function of this feature is unclear at present although the relatively small quantities of artefacts present within the fills do not suggest rubbish disposal as a primary function.

Pit 36 (34)(35), Dia 3.40m (unexc.), extending into the eastern and western limits of excavation contains a dark, relatively finds rich fill (35), dateable to the second to third centuries AD overlying a lighter, apparently sterile fill (34) similar to the sequence seen within Pit 22, 3.50m to the south. These two features may well be contemporary although additional excavation is required to confirm this.

Ditch 38 (37) (unexc.) aligned north - west, south - east, extends into the northern, western and eastern limits of Trench 2. Fragments of a human skull exhibiting evidence of burning were recovered from the exposed surface of this ditch and have been refitted by Ian Baxter with additional elements of the same skeleton recovered during the initial scan of the machine excavated spoil from this trench. These remains indicate the presence of the skeleton of an adult human female aged between 24 and 40 years of age at the time of death within the ditch. Although no pathologies or predispositional injuries were observed the presence of burning on the skull is reminiscent of other human remains previously encountered within the town (Green 1977). These remains, often only partially articulated, have been seen by Green as evidence of a massacre within the town and have been dated elsewhere to the third century AD and it is this event which may well have provided the impetus to fortify the town. Excavation is necessary to establish whether the



individual present within ditch 38 has simply been dumped as part of the post disaster clearance or is an earlier inhumation. Ceramics recovered from this feature are only broadly dateable to the Roman period.

Feature 33 (32) is almost certainly the result of localised root disturbance but in plan does appear to extend in a linear band 1.10m wide, aligned north - west, south - east into the eastern and western limits of excavation. The alignment of this feature is repeated c 8.00m to the north by Ditch 38.

### **Later Roman Activity**

Sealing the earliest surviving Romano British phase of occupation was layer (19), a moderately compacted mid - light grey clay silt up to 0.60m thick. It seems probable that this layer (equivalent to layer (3) in Trench 1) built up as a result of agricultural activity and would seem to indicate that farming was taking place within the town boundary.

The interpretation of feature 31 is uncertain. Roughly circular in plan, Dia 1.80m, Cut 31 was excavated to a depth of 0.70m below the level of the base of the trench before health and safety considerations prevented further work. The sides of the feature were found to have been severely undercut, suggesting erosion through weathering. The single clay fill however, is reminiscent of post - packing although no post impression was observable during excavation. This feature is not readily dateable as the few sherds of Roman pottery recovered are all heavily abraded and therefore possibly represent residual material. The position of this feature would appear to correspond with the limits of yard surface (18), observed in the sides of the machine excavated trench. Although rather tenuous at this stage, it is possible that Cut 31 represents one of a series of post settings along the northern boundary of a sizeable gravelled surface.

Layer (18), max depth 0.30m, extends northwards 9.75m from the southern limit of Trench 2. Consisting of a band of moderately compacted gravel in a sandy clay silt matrix this layer may be seen as surviving evidence of a yard surface, delineated to the north by possible post setting 31. Only two pot sherds were recovered from this machine excavated context, both dateable to the third to fourth centuries AD. Layer (18) is the latest stratified deposit of archaeological significance within Trench 2 and is sealed by a layer of post medieval garden soil (17). Surviving to within 0.40m BPS (9.04m OD) it is possible that this deposit, recorded within Trench 1 as Layer (2) and contemporary with (49) in Trench 3, represents the final phase of Roman activity within this portion of the Roman town. As such tighter dating through the recovery of a larger finds assemblage is highly desirable.



### **Trench 3**

Measuring 20.00m north - south by 1.50m east - west, Trench 3 was located in the north of the proposed development area, perpendicular to St Anne's Lane.

Archaeologically significant deposits were first encountered at 9.45m OD, a depth of c 0.25m BPS (Fig 3).

Naturally lain gravel (66) was present at the southern end of the trench at a depth of 8.25m OD overlain by (65) a sterile mid to light whitish yellow sandy silty clay layer. Layer (64) also potentially naturally lain was observed at a depth of 8.45m OD, 5m from the northern limit of the trench. It is worth noting here that (64) appears much darker than (65) to the south, possibly indicating that it has been disturbed or even re - deposited.

### **The Prehistoric Period**

Pit 63 (62) 0.60m deep with steeply sloping sides and a flat base extends into the northern and western limits of excavation. Fill (62) a blackish brown fine clay silt is quite distinct from those of the stratigraphically later Romano - British features both in terms of its make up and also the complete absence of inclusions.

Cut 68 (67) linear in plan, aligned north - east to south - west with curving sides and a concave base was observed in section towards the southern end of the trench. Fill (67) is identical in every respect to (62) to the north suggesting that they may be contemporary.

Layer (61), a light grey brown sandy clay silt with frequent mid orange brown mottles, 0.18m in depth seals pit 63. It seems possible that this is a buried soil horizon although the absence of dateable artefacts and the limited area of excavation do not allow for clear interpretation.

Layer (60), a light grey brown sandy clay silt 0.16m in depth contained a single flint flake and would seem to define the upper limit of surviving prehistoric stratigraphy.

### **The Romano - British Period**

Stratigraphically the earliest deposit dateable to this period is layer (59), a mid - light grey brown silty clay containing pottery dateable to the second century AD. This layer would appear to seal ditch 68 which is presumed to be pre Roman in origin. Layer (59) may well represent the make up and levelling of an area of the expanding town in the third or fourth century.

Layer (75), a thin (40mm) compact gravel surface is evidence for the first in a series of open gravelled areas. The type of activities taking place or precise

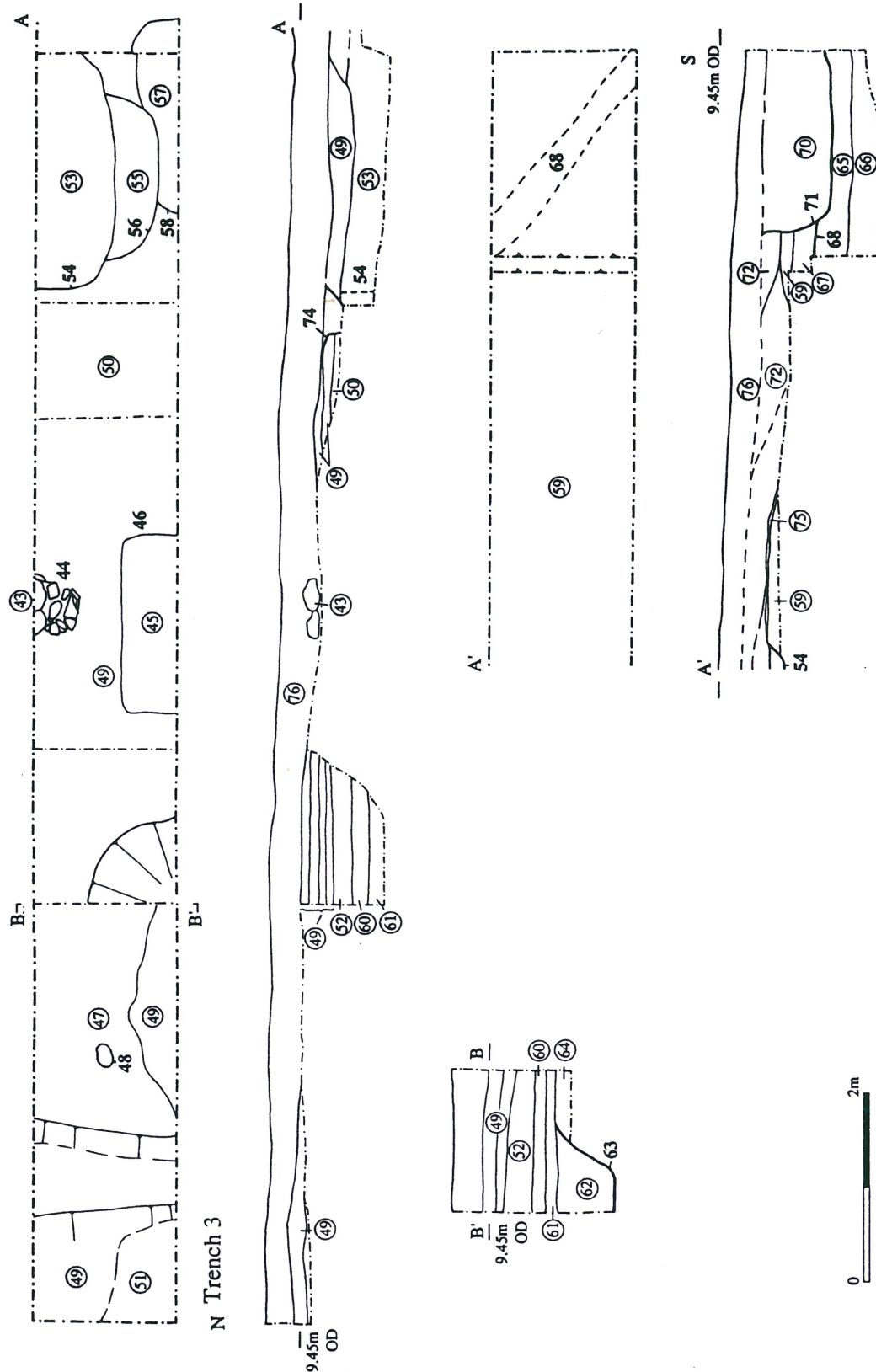


Figure 3: Trench 3 Plan and Section



dating for the laying of this 'yard' are unknown. No evidence for resurfacing is apparent in section suggesting a fairly short-lived usage.

A series of rubbish pits, extent unknown, 54 (53), 56 (55), 58 (57), truncate surface (75) indicating a change of usage for the area. A wide range of domestic ceramics were recovered from the surfaces of these pits. Both kitchen and fine wares are represented with vessels dateable from the first to fourth centuries being present within clearly contemporary fills. Residuality does not seem to offer a clear explanation of such a mixed assemblage at the present time, given the apparent lack of dateable first century deposits across the subject site.

A series of broadly contemporary dump layers, (50), (51), (52), (72), seal the earlier pitting. A considerable amount of redeposited burnt material including bone and charcoal is in evidence within these layers (except (72)) and as with the underlying pits a wide range of first to fourth century materials are present. It would seem that these layers represent an attempt to raise the ground level and prepare for the laying of a new sequence of yard surfaces.

Context (49) 0.30m in depth represents a series of at least three distinct heavily compacted gravel surfaces each of equal thickness. All three surfaces are well laid, the earliest being set on a clay and gravel foundation layer. The surfaces extend c 13m to the south of the St Anne's Lane frontage and are thought to be fourth century in origin although once again first to fourth century material (including sherds from a *Dressel 20* Spanish Amphora used to import olive oil) was recovered from the top of the latest surface. The top of dump layer (72) appears in section to match the level of (49) and may indicate the presence of a beaten earth continuation of these surfaces. Very little evidence of occupational build up was observed between individual surfaces indicating that they had been kept clean and well maintained during use.

Three structural features associated with the final phase of (49) were observed.

Cut 46 (45) rectilinear in plan 1.86m wide and extending into the western limit of Trench 3 was filled with a mid yellowish brown silty clay. This may well prove to be the base of a small timber framed outbuilding.

Post hole 48 (47) diameter 0.20m is situated c 4m to the north of 46. It is unknown at present whether the two features form part of the same structure.

Cut 74 (73) rectilinear in plan 0.m wide x 0.40m deep, aligned east - west, with steeply sloping sides and a concave base extends into the western and eastern limits of excavation. This gully or possible beam slot would appear to demarcate the boundary of the better lain surfaces uniformly numbered as 49 to the north. Although elements of these surfaces clearly continue to the south of the line of Cut 74 these surfaces tend to be thicker, less compacted and with less visible evidence for repair and replacement. Further excavation should ensure that each individual element of these deposits is recorded separately within the single context system.



## **The Post Medieval Period**

Directly overlying gravel surfaces (49) is a thin layer of post medieval garden soil. This layer (76) is no more than 0.25m thick adjacent to St Anne's Lane. No evidence of medieval or additional post medieval activity was observed suggesting that the area has remained as open ground since the abandonment of this part of the Roman town at some time in the fourth century AD. The lack of any significant depth of overburden along the frontage of the development area means that those deposits relating to the final phases of Romano - British activity within the town are directly threatened by the proposed development.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

The recent evaluation of the proposed development area on land adjacent to 28 St Anne's Lane clearly demonstrates the exceptional level of preservation of archaeologically significant deposits from the Roman and earlier periods present within the town of Godmanchester.

At least ten distinct phases of activity have been identified within the subject site, primarily associated with the expansion (in area) of the Romano - British town in the third to fourth centuries AD (Fig 4).

The archaeological record would however appear to commence at some earlier, as yet undatable period in prehistory. This is evidenced by a pit and an associated ditch (Phase 1) sealed by up to two layers of buried soil (Phase 2), all present within Trench 3. A single secondary flake of cobble flint was recovered from the upper of these layers and probably dates to the later prehistoric periods (S Kemp pers comm.).

Activity during the Roman period begins with levelling and ground make up in Trenches 1 and 3, (Phase 3) followed by the laying of a gravel surface (presumably external) which was also recorded in Trench 3. Possibly contemporary with this activity are a series of apparently unrelated ditches of unknown function within Trench 1 (Phase 4). Dating material suggests the earliest date for this activity falls into the third century AD.

Phase 5 sees a major change in use for the area with rubbish pits for the disposal of a wide range of domestic refuse being cut within all three trenches. By far the largest assemblage of animal bone came from these features, 53% of the total. In these sheep / goat account for 22% or 46% if grouped with medium mammal bones. Cattle and large mammal together comprise 25% of the phase 5 assemblage. Pig and horse are both scarce and this is the only phase where goose and fowl are also present.

Ian Baxter notes that the features of phases 4 and 5 have the greatest potential for the recovery of human and animal bone, although significant amounts were also



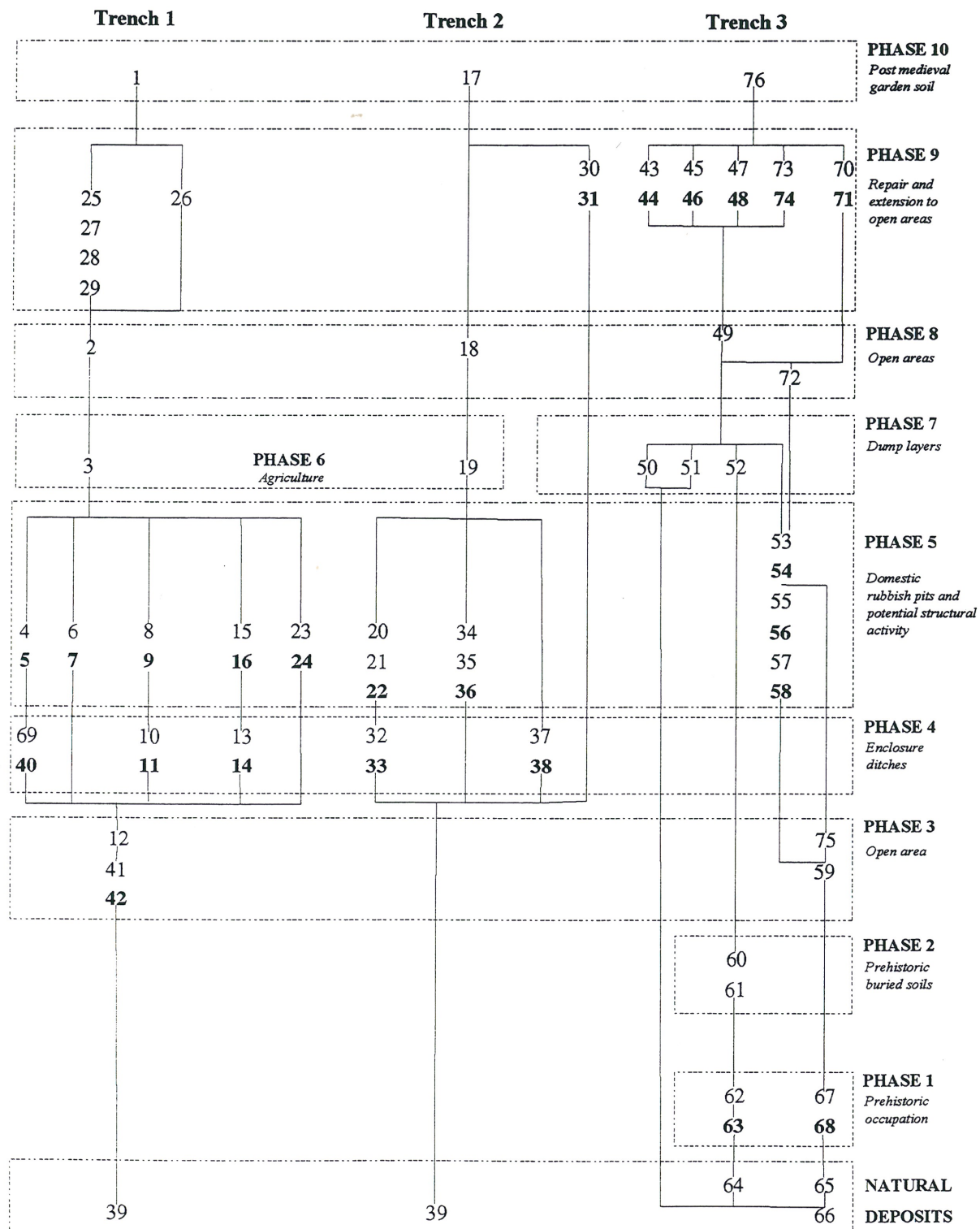
found in the dump layers of phase 7. Bulk sampling is recommended to maximise the retrieval of small animal bones following the guidelines established by English Heritage (Payne 1992).

Within Trenches 1 and 2 pitting is superseded by agricultural activity broadly dateable to the third to fourth centuries AD (Phase 7) which truncates all earlier features. According to Greens interpretation the subject site is clearly within the urban centre of the Romano - British town at this time. The practice of farming has previously been noted at a number of locations within the towns boundaries as a result of past excavations (Green 1975, 191 and Green 1977 20). This kind of activity would appear to take place behind the street frontages and given the lack of evidence for such activity within Trench 3 this may infer the presence of a Roman road in the vicinity of St Anne's Lane. The precise role of agriculture within the economy of the Roman town during the later Roman period remains uncertain but excavations currently being undertaken by Birmingham University Archaeological Field Unit (BUFAU) immediately to the south of the town on London Road may provide new evidence to address this issue.

Phase 7 consists of a series of dump layers, presumably to build up the level of the land along the proposed St Anne's Lane frontage prior to the laying of a new series of gravelled 'yard' surfaces across the whole of the subject site.

Phases 8 and 9 see the abandonment of agriculture in the immediate vicinity. At some time during the fourth century a series of gravel surfaces are laid down. These surfaces are better lain and more frequently replaced than those to the rear of the site and it is only within Trench 3 that any evidence of associated structures was noted.

Precise dating of all Romano - British deposits throughout this well stratified sequence has proven somewhat problematic. Almost all contexts sampled contain an equal mixture of first century ceramics and later third to fourth century material. Domestic kitchen and table wares are also equally well represented making the identification of specific activities within the area of the subject site impossible at present. A larger sample size from throughout the sequence may significantly enhance our understanding of the nature and development of this area of the town and perhaps most importantly identify the dating of the end of the Roman town. What these preliminary results do seem to support however, is an expansion in the enclosed area of the town during the third to fourth centuries AD as previously indicated by HJM Green.



**Figure 4: Stratigraphic Matrix Illustrating Provisional Phasing**



## RECOMMENDATIONS

This evaluation has highlighted the excellent state of preservation and therefore potential of the subject site for examining the processes of change occurring within Godmanchester, particularly the late Roman - early Saxon transition in this instance. Bearing in mind the current preference for mitigation strategies leading to preservation of archaeological deposits *in situ* priority should be given to the excavation of those deposits directly threatened by the proposed development. Within the subject site these deposits, present adjacent to the street frontage and within the footprints of the proposed dwellings relate to the perceived expansion of the Roman town in the 3rd to 4th Centuries AD and the end of Romano - British occupation. English Heritage (Archaeology Division Research Agenda) specifically targets this period as a priority for further research both in terms of processes of change (PC5 Empire to Kingdom c 200 -700 AD) and in terms of specific chronological periods (H2 The end of Roman Towns in Britain). It is important that the proposed excavation should contribute to and build upon the findings of past excavations within the town and it's environs, most notably those of HJM Green. The importance of the archaeological resource present within Godmanchester both for future excavation and research at a local, regional and to some extent national level cannot be stressed highly enough.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Mr J Holmes for commissioning this project, HJM Green for providing so much useful information on past excavations, I Baxter for examining the faunal and human remains, P Copleston for the ceramic analysis, Jon Cane for the illustrations and to Wendy Wilson, Dave Curry and Michelle Bullivant for their assistance with the excavation and recording of the Trial Trenches. This project was managed by W Wall.

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Victoria County History, County of Huntingdonshire



## APPENDIX I

### Context Index

Cntrt	Cut	Tr	Category	Type	Function	Description
1	1	1	Deposit	Topsoil		Clay Silt
2	2	1	Deposit	Layer	Surface	
3	3	1	Deposit	Layer	Agriculture	Clay Silt
4	5	1	Deposit	Wall		Clay Silt
5	5	1	Cut	Wall		
6	7	1	Deposit	Pit	Rubbish	
7	7	1	Cut	Pit	Rubbish	
8	9	1	Deposit	Pit	Rubbish	Clay Silt
9	9	1	Cut	Pit	Rubbish	
10	11	1	Deposit	Ditch		
11	11	1	Cut	Ditch		
12	12	1	Deposit	Layer		
13	14	1	Deposit	Ditch		
14	14	1	Cut	Ditch		
15	15	1	Deposit	Pit	Rubbish	
16	15	1	Cut	Pit	Rubbish	
17	17	2	Deposit	Layer	Topsoil	Clay Silt
18	18	2	Deposit	Layer		Clay Silt
19	19	2	Deposit	Layer	LPS	Clay Silt
20	22	2	Deposit	Pit	Rubbish	Clay Silt
21	22	2	Deposit	Pit	Rubbish	Clay Silt
22	22	2	Cut	Pit	Rubbish	
23	24	1	Deposit	Pit/Ph		
24	24	1	Cut	Pit		
25	25	1	Deposit	Layer		
26	26	1	Deposit	Layer		
27	27	1	Deposit	Layer		Clay Silt
28	28	1	Deposit	Subsoil		
29	29	1	Deposit	Layer	Gravel	
30	31	2	Deposit	Pit	Rubbish	Sandy Silty Clay
31	31	2	Cut	Pit	Rubbish	
32	33	2	Deposit	Trench		Clay Silt
33	33	2	Cut	Trench		
34	36	2	Deposit	Pit	Rubbish	
35	36	2	Deposit	Pit	Rubbish	
36	36	2	Cut	Pit	Rubbish	Clay Silt
37	38	2	Deposit	Ditch		Clay Silt
38	38	2	Cut	Ditch		
39	39	0.5	Deposit	Natural		
40	40	1	Cut	Ditch		
69	40	1	Deposit	Ditch		
41	42	1	Deposit	Pit	Rubbish	Clay Silt
42	42	1	Cut	Pit	Rubbish	
43	44	3	Deposit	Fill		
44	44	3	Cut	Cut		
45	46	3	Deposit	Fill		Clay Silt
46	46	3	Cut	Foundation		
47	48	3	Deposit	Posthole		Clay Silt
48	48	3	Cut	Posthole		
49	49	3	Deposit	Layer	Surface	Mid Orange Brown Sandy Gravel
50	50	3	Deposit	Layer		Mid Grey Clay Silt
51	51	3	Deposit	Layer		Mid Grey Clay Silt
52	52	3	Deposit	Layer		Mid Grey Clay Silt
53	54	3	Deposit	Pit	Rubbish	Mid Light Grey Clay Silt
54	54	3	Cut	Pit	Rubbish	
55	56	3	Deposit	Pit	Rubbish	
56	56	3	Cut	Pit	Rubbish	
57	58	3	Deposit	Pit	Rubbish	
58	58	3	Cut	Pit	Rubbish	
59	59	3	Deposit	Layer		Mid Light Grey Brown Silty Clay
60	60	3	Deposit	Layer		Light Grey Brown Sand Clay Silt

Cntxt	Cut	Tr	Category	Type	Function	Description
61	61	3	Deposit	Layer		Sandy Clay Silt
62	63	3	Deposit	Pit		
63	63	3	Cut	Pit		
64	64	3	Deposit	Layer		
65	65	3	Deposit	Natural		
66	66	3	Deposit	Natural		
67	68	3	Deposit	Ditch		
68	68	3	Cut	Ditch		
70	71	3	Deposit	Pit		
71	71	3	Cut	Pit		
72	72	3	Deposit	Layer		
73	74	3	Deposit	Gully		
74	74	3	Deposit	Gully		
75	75	3	Deposit	Layer	Surface	
76	76	3	Deposit	Topsoil		



## APPENDIX II

### POTTERY ASSESSMENT REPORT

by Phil Copleston

#### Methodology

This pottery assemblage consists of 8885g or 348 sherds, as listed below. Sherds were examined by eye within their context groups, after washing and drying, separated into fabrics, quantified by sherd weight and count, and notes made on the range of forms represented (where identifiable), together with their likely date range and condition (abrasion, etc.).

#### Occurrence, Phasing & Dates

The following contexts contain pottery: 3, 4, 10, 13, 18, 20, 21, 30, 35, 37, 43, 49, 50, 51, 52, 57, 59, 69, 72, and 75.

- Phases 1 and 2 ("Prehistoric" - the lowest excavated contexts) contain no pottery.
- Phase 3 ("Open Area") has an overall TPQ of 2nd century AD. Contexts 59 and 75 both have a 2nd century TPQ.
- Phase 4 ("Enclosure Ditches") has an overall TPQ of 3rd century AD. Context 10 has a 1st to 3rd date range; 13 and 69 all have a 3rd century TPQ, but context 38 is not specifically datable, other than Roman).
- Phase 5 ("Rubbish Pits/Structures") has a TPQ of 4th century AD (contexts 4, 20, 21, 35, 53 and 57).
- Phase 7 ("Dump Layers") overall has a TPQ of 14th century (due to intrusive material within context 3), with the remainder having a TPQ of 4th century AD (contexts 50, 51 and 52).
- Phase 8 ("Open Areas") has a TPQ of 3rd century AD (contexts 18, 49 and 72).
- Phase 9 ("Open Areas Repair & Extension") has a TPQ of 4th century AD (contexts 30 and 43).
- Phase 10 ("Garden Soil") contained unstratified pottery ranging in date from 2nd century AD to circa 17th century.

The *Terminus Post Quem* for phases given above is generally late Roman, due to the presence of a few later sherds in key contexts. However, the bulk of the material is in fact early Roman, specifically ranging from the third quarter of the 1st century to the first quarter of the second century AD.

#### Condition and Residuality

Most artefacts are in unabraded condition, but the following contexts are of note:

- Context 30 contained a Samian small bowl (Dragendorff form 33 or 33g. dateable to late 1st/early 2nd century AD) in a very abraded and scored condition, in association with 3rd-4th century shelly Harrold ware, suggesting that this is residual.
- Context 35 also contained a Samian small bowl rim (of Dragendorff form 35 dateable to late 1st/early 2nd century AD) but burnt. This was not in association with any later material.
- Context 49 produced an early flagon handle, very abraded. Although all other material in this context appeared contemporary or earlier, it can not be ruled out that this context may date from a slightly later period.

## General Conclusions

This assemblage can be characterised as typically domestic in nature, demonstrated by the presence of cooking pots and food storage and preparation vessels, together with some fine table ware (Samian, flagons, etc.) and transport vessels (Amphorae). Most contexts contained pottery of early Roman date (shouldered jars, carinated jars, ring and dot decoration, early flagons and Samian forms datable to 1st to 2nd centuries AD), although some contain later material (3rd to 4th centuries).

**Table I**

Condition = unabraded, unless noted.

### CONTEXT - U/S

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
2	1	Samian	Dr.18/31 (or sim.) dish/bowl	2+	
17	3	NVCC	Jars		
45	4	NVGW	Jars, bowls		
11	2	BB wares			
47	3	Buff fabrics	Flagons		
274	29	GW			
38	3	Ox			
126	7	Shelly (prob. Harrold Ware)	Jars		
17	1	Med - developed St. Neots		1150-1350	
9	1	Transitional Redware		15-18	
22	2	Post-medieval Oxidised	Jar	18-19	

### CONTEXT - 3

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
5	1	Samian	Dr.18/31 dish/bowl	2+	
24	2	NVCC	Tall neck jar	3-4	
25	1	NVGW	Folded beaker	3-4	
32	3	GW	Jars	2-4	
60	2	Shelly	Jars	3-4	
44	1	GW		2-4	

### CONTEXT - 4

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
10	1	GW (partly oxidised)	Bowl		



**CONTEXT - 10**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
6	1	GW		1-3	
5	1	RW		1-3	
4	1	Shelly		1-3	

**CONTEXT - 13**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
629	15	Buff fabric	Jar (base+body+rim)	1-2	
53	3	GW	Flagon	2-3	
31	2	GW			

**CONTEXT - 18**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
49	2	Shelly	Jar rim		

**CONTEXT - 20**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
9	3	Samian	Dr.27 or 27g. small cup/bowl	2	
3	1	NVGW		2-4	
137	5	Grey to buff fabric	prob. Flagon	2+	+ paint decoration
190	17	GW	Jars, bowls		
42	2	Ox	Jars (shouldered)	1-2	Shoulder decoration
27	1	Shelly			
449	1	Amphora	Prob. globular Dressel 20 form	1-3	

**CONTEXT - 21**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
14	1	GW	Jar		

**CONTEXT - 30**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
10	1	Samian	Dr.33 or 33g. small bowl	1-2	v. abraded & scored
7	1	GW			
15	1	Shelly (Harrold)		3-4	

**CONTEXT - 35**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
4	1	Samian	Dr.35 small bowl rim	1-2	burnt
2	1	GW (micaious)			

**CONTEXT - 37**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
7	1	GW	Jar rim		
32	1	Amphora	Frag. only		

**CONTEXT - 43**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
3389	37	Amphora	Prob. globular Dressel 20 form	1-3	

**CONTEXT - 49**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
54	6	Samian	Dr.18 dish	mid-late 1st	
12	1	Buff fabric	Flagon		
5	1	Buff fabric, with red colour wash	Flagon handle	1-2	v. abraded
3	1	Buff fabric		1	With ring & dot decoration
2	1	CCGW (NV or import)	Small Jar	1	
36	6	GW	Jars		
15	3	RW	Jar		
79	2	Shelly (thin walled)	Jars?	1-2	
14	1	Shelly (handmade - late IA)		1BC/1AD?	
5	1	Limestone temper (IA/RB?)		1BC/1AD?	
17	1	GW/RW (handmade - Belgic?)		1BC/1AD?	Dec. on shoulder

**CONTEXT - 50**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
16	1	Samian	Dr.18 dish (or similar)	1	
288	10	Buff flagon fabric	Flagon		
99	6	GW	Jars	1-3	
62	2	RW	Jar	1-2	
258	9	Shelly		3-4	

**CONTEXT - 51**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
31	4	GW	Jars (although one base could be a flagon)	1-3	



**CONTEXT - 52**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
5	2	Samian	Dr.31 bowls	2-3	
22	4	GW	Jar or flagon	1-2	Ring & dot dec.
81	9	GW	Jars	2-4	
8	2	Ox	Jars	1-2	Ring & dot dec.
21	3	Ox- grog temper		3-4	Abraded
65	10	Shelly	Jars	3-4	

**CONTEXT - 53**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
9	1	Samian	Dr.18 plate rim	1	
287	9	Buff fabrics	Flagon (some of Hofheim type)	1+	
565	37	GW	Carinated & poppyhead jars	1-2	
107	10	RW	Jars (some carinated)	1-2+	
131	10	Shelly (thin walled)	Jars	1-2	
202	7	Shelly	Jars	3-4	

**CONTEXT - 57**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
6	1	GW			
3	1	RW	Small jar (with high shoulder)	1-2	
30	2	Shelly (thin walled)		1-2	

**CONTEXT - 59**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
19	1	Buff fabric	Flagon		
13	1	GW			
15	1	RW			
194	1	Grog tempered	Large storage jar	1-2	
42	2	Shelly (thin walled)		1-2	

**CONTEXT - 69**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
14	1	Samian (rim)	Dr.18 plate or 18/31 bowl	2+	
8	1	CC (import)	Narrow-necked jar	1-2	
3	2	GW	Small, narrow-necked jars	1-2	
4	1	RW	Bowl	1-3	

**CONTEXT - 72**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
48	1	BB1	Bowl (or sim. open vessel)	1-3	
15	2	GW	Carrinated jar		
3	1	Ox/GW	Small, narrow-necked jar	1-2	

**CONTEXT - 75**

Wt.(g)	Sherds	Fabric	Form	Date Range	Condition
34	1	RW	Narrow-necked jar		
13	1	Shelly (thin walled)	Jar	1-2	





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