



Archaeological Monitoring South of Cheddington Road, Pitstone, Buckinghamshire

Archaeological Monitoring Report

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Archaeological Monitoring South of Cheddington Road, Pitstone, Buckinghamshire

Archaeological Monitoring Report

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Summary

Between the 8th and 12th of October 2018, Oxford Archaeology East (OA East) was commissioned by Anglian Water Services to undertake monitoring of a topsoil strip at the proposed site of a works compound, amounting to a total area of 0.36ha. Metal detecting and surface collection resulted in the recovery of twenty-nine individual finds from topsoil and subsoil deposits. The finds were a mix of ceramic building material (CBM) and various metal artefacts, predominantly dating to the post medieval and modern periods. No pattern to the distribution or type of finds was observed and they are likely present as the result of random discard or accidental loss over periods of sparse human activity.

Acknowledgements

OA East would like to thank Anglian Water Services for commissioning this project and we are grateful to Lucy Lawrence who monitored the work on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council. The project was managed for OA East by Louise Moan. The fieldwork was directed and carried out by the author. Survey and digitizing was carried out by David Brown. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the management of Natasha Dodwell and prepared the archive under the supervision of Kat Hamilton.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 OA East was commissioned by Anglian Water Services to undertake archaeological monitoring of topsoil stripping at the site South of Cheddington Road, Pitstone, Buckinghamshire. The works carried out were undertaken in advance of the establishment of a works compound area, measuring 60m x 60m.
- 1.1.2 The Buckinghamshire HER describes the finding of Roman and early medieval coins in the near vicinity. The compound works may adversely affect unknown heritage assets, requiring the works to be monitored.
- 1.1.3 A written scheme of investigation was produced by OA East (Clarke, 2018) detailing the methodology that would be undertaken.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site lies in a rural setting to the northwest of Pitstone within an agricultural field south of Cheddington Road at a height of c.105m OD (Fig.1)
- 1.2.2 The geology of the area is mapped as a bedrock of West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation and Zig Zag Chalk Formation (undifferentiated). No superficial deposits are recorded.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric

- 1.3.1 A Neolithic polished flint axe was discovered during drainage trenching (HER MBC2258) c.400m south-east of the site.

Roman

- 1.3.2 Some 300m west of the site there is evidence for a possible Roman villa, in the form of finds of pottery and Roman building material including tegula and imbrex tiles (HER MBC3794; HER MBC3795, HER MBC3796).
- 1.3.3 A possible Roman road, the Viatores Road, believed to be a main driving line of the Claudian invasion in AD 43 is believed to have passed close to the site, approximately 300m to the east, on a northwest to southeast alignment (HER MBC8063).
- 1.3.4 A total of three Romano-British coins were found by metal detecting within the boundary of the site (HER MBC2172)

Anglo-Saxon and medieval

- 1.3.5 In addition to the Roman coins described above, metal detecting also recovered three silver pennies of Coewulf II of Mercia from within the area of the site (HER MBC2172). These coins are from the same London mint and possibly represent the loss of a single purse or, potentially, a hoard. An additional Saxon coin was found immediately to the south of site (HER MBC28788).

- 1.3.6 A moated medieval site was identified at Yardley farm (Erail house) c.500m northeast of site (HER MBC7310, not mapped).

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To determine or confirm the general nature of any archaeological remains present.
- ii. To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any archaeological remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 Prior to the site being stripped, a metal detector and field walking survey was undertaken across the site. All finds were recovered and plotted three dimensionally by GPS.
- 2.2.2 Under the supervision of a qualified and experienced archaeologist, the topsoil was stripped in 0.1m spits (to a maximum depth of 0.35m) by a sixteen tonne 360 mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket (Plate 1).
- 2.2.3 Following the topsoil strip, and the exposure of a site wide subsoil deposit, the site was again subject to a field walking and metal detector survey; with finds being recovered and plotted three dimensionally.
- 2.2.4 All finds were given a unique small finds number taken from the site register, which was used as the identifier for the finds on the finds plot.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

- 3.1.1 The archaeological remains encountered during the fieldwork were restricted to finds recovered from topsoil and subsoil deposits. Across the site the mechanical stripping exposed a subsoil of pale brown grey silt (Plate 2) and in no areas was the natural geology encountered.
- 3.1.2 The results of the monitoring are shown in Table 1 below, which gives details of the finds recovered from the site. Attached to this report is also a plan of the site with the locations of all the finds plotted on to it (Fig. 2).
- 3.1.3 A total of two contexts were identified on site, context (1) being the topsoil and context (2) being the subsoil.

Small Finds Number	Context	Material	Description	Date
1	1	Ceramic	Pottery Sherd	Post med
2	1	CBM	Tile	Post med
3	1	Fe	Artefact	Post med-modern
4	1	Fe	Fitting	Med-Modern
5	1	CBM	Brick	Med-Post med
6	1	Pb	Artefact	Modern
7	1	CBM	Tile	Post med
8	1	Al	Artefact	Modern
9	1	CBM	Brick	Med-Post med
10	1	CBM	Tile	Med-Post med
11	1	CBM	Tile	Med-Post med
12	1	CBM	Tile	Med-Post med
13	1	CBM	Tile	Post med
14	2	Fe	Washer	Modern
15	VOID			
16	2	Cu Alloy	Artefact	Med-Post med
17	2	CBM	Tile	Med-Post med
18	2	Fe	Horseshoe	Modern
19	2	CBM	Brick	Med-Post med
20	2	Cu Alloy	Buckle	Modern
21	2	Pb	Seal	Modern
22	2	Cu Alloy	Artefact	Modern
23	2	CBM	Tile	Post med
24	2	CBM	Brick	Med-Post med
25	2	Al	Artefact	undated
26	2	Pb	Artefact	undated
27	2	Cu Alloy	Coin/Token	undated
28	2	CBM	Tile	Med-Post med
29	2	CBM	Undiagnostic	Roman? Med?
30	2	Cu Alloy	Buckle	Modern

Table 1. List of finds recovered from site

- 3.1.4 Of the twenty-nine finds recovered from the site, fifteen of them (52%) were fragments of CBM. The remaining finds consisted of various items of metal work including; lead, copper alloy and iron artefacts.

- 3.1.5 Most of the finds on site were located in the northeast quadrant, with a distinct cluster of CBM (SFs 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 132) located in the very northeast corner of the site.
- 3.1.6 Nine of the fifteen pieces of CBM recovered were found in the topsoil layer (60%), whereas only 4 of the fourteen pieces of metal work (29%) were found in the topsoil layer.
- 3.1.7 The majority of the metalwork recovered from site was found on the eastern side of site, approximately half way between the north and south boundaries of the site (SFs 3, 14, 16, 20, 21, 22).

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 The subsoil layer was clearly distinguishable from the topsoil layer above it, being a pale grey brown clay with frequent chalk inclusions. No archaeological features were recorded cutting this subsoil layer.
- 4.1.2 The absence of rain and other adverse weather conditions as well as good ground conditions meant that there was no hinderance to the works being carried out.
- 4.1.3 Accordingly, the results of this investigation are believed to be reliable.

4.2 Interpretation

- 4.2.1 Despite the earlier finding of both Roman and Anglo-Saxon coins within the area of the site (see above, Archaeological and Historical Background), the finds recovered during the monitoring date almost exclusively to the post medieval and modern periods. Equally, there appears to be no clear pattern to either their location on site or the composition of the assemblage. The lack of cohesiveness of the finds assemblage suggests the material was deposited in the course of casual discard, manuring and/or unintentional loss and are of little archaeological significance.

APPENDIX A FINDS REPORTS

A.1 Metal Work

By Denis Sami

Factual Data

- A.1.1 A total of thirteen metal artefacts were recovered from top-soil contexts 1 and sub-soil context 2. The assemblage consists of five incomplete copper-alloy objects, four iron finds and four lead artefacts; all dating to the post-medieval and modern periods (Table 2).
- A.1.2 The largest functional group of objects is related to the presence of horses in the area; SFs 20 and 30 are both parts of (probably modern) horse harness buckles and an incomplete horseshoe was also recovered (SF 18).
- A.1.3 There is no consistency in the function and chronology of finds, and the assemblage appears to be the result of discard or unintentional lost from sporadic human activity.

Statement of Potential

- A.1.4 The assemblage is disparate, poorly preserved and provides little useful archaeological information.

Methods Statement

- A.1.5 The medieval horse and its equipment by Clark (1995) was used as reference. The assemblage was quantified and fully described in the below catalogue sorted by SF numbers. Measurements such as length (L), width (W), thickness (Th), diameter (D) and weight (Wg) are provided with a description of the artefacts together with a suggested chronology.

SF	Context	Feat	Mat	Artefact	Preserv.	Description	L	W	Th	D	Wg	Spot date
3	1	Top-soil	Fe	Artefact	Incomplete	Fragment of hand-forged curved object with square cross-section on one end (13 mm) and developing into a flat rectangular in section terminal at the opposite end.	132	23	9	0	0	PM/MOD
4	1	Top-soil	Fe	Fitting	Incomplete	A tapering stem with rectangular cross-section (16x10 mm) and missing tip. The head is very large, slightly doomed and rectangular in plan measuring 47x53 mm.	51	0	0	0	0	M to MOD
6	1	Topsoil	Pb	Artefact	Complete	Folded triangular leaf of lead	22	30	1.4	0	13.6	MOD
8	1	Topsoil	Pb	Artefact	Incomplete	Very thin and partially folded leaf of metal	32	21	0.3	0	0.8	MOD
14	2	Subsoil	Fe	Washer	Complete	A large flat ring with rectangular cross-section. Internal diam 18 mm	0	0	3	45	28	MOD
16	2	Subsoil	CuA	Artefact	Incomplete	Thin strip of metal with a straight edge on one side and a curved edge on the other side. Both ends are expanded	60	14	1	0	5.3	M/PM
18	2	Subsoil	Fe	Horse-shoe	Incomplete	Part of Toe, quarter and heel with three rectangular holes and two nails with pyramidal head still attached	116	41	6	0	0	MOD
20	2	Subsoil	CuA	Buckle	Incomplete	Part of a loop of a rectangular buckle with circular cross-section	33	45	5	0	11.8	MOD
21	2	Subsoil	Pb	Seal	Complete	Possible circular whole seal. On one side is in relieve Z.P.L./CeC. On the reverse DORNO	0	0	6	23	15	MOD
22	2	Subsoil	CuA	Artefact	Incomplete	On one end is a sub-circular loop with rectangular cross-section showing heavy wear (internal diam. 6 mm). The loop steps into a straight bar of metal with rectangular cross-section. The other end of the artefact is formed by sub-pyramidal base showing iron rust.	53	7	3.5	0	13	MOD
26	2	Subsoil	Pb	Artefact	Incomplete	Lump of metal	17	20	0	0	5.5	
27	2	Subsoil	CuA	Coin/Token	Incomplete	Illegible and poorly preserved	0	0	1.2	18.6	2.4	
30	2	Subsoil	CuA	Buckle	Complete	D shaped frame with circular cross-section. Iron pin is missing but anchorage is still attached to the axis	0	32	4	0	14	MOD

Table 2. Catalogue of spot-dated metalwork objects: M (Medieval), PM (Post-medieval), MOD (Modern).

A.2 Pottery

By Ted Levermore and Carole Fletcher

Results

- A.2.1 A single fragment of pottery (8g) was recovered from the topsoil. SF1 is probably a piece of post-medieval red ware or derived from a horticultural vessel. It comprised a rounded rim (estimated diameter of 20cm) made in mid to dark red clay with rare quartz and fine flint inclusions. Its small size and presence in the topsoil means its archaeological significance is negligible.

A.3 Ceramic Building Material

By Ted Levermore

Introduction

- A.3.1 Archaeological work recovered 22 fragments, 572g, of ceramic building material (CBM) from the topsoil and subsoil. This assemblage comprised post-medieval brick and tile fragments.

Methodology

- A.3.2 The assemblage was quantified by context, fabric and form and counted and weighed to the nearest whole gram. Width, length and thickness were recorded where possible. Woodforde (1976) and McComish (2015) formed the basis of reference material for identification and dating. The quantified data and fabric descriptions are presented on an Excel spreadsheet held with the site archive. A summary of the catalogue can be found in Table 3.
- A.3.3 All fragments had been assigned small find numbers, these have been recorded in the catalogue.

Results

Fabrics

- A.3.4 Eleven fabrics were recorded for this assemblage. The fabrics recorded were all typical CBM recipes, with preferences towards large and unsorted inclusions in the earlier forms and refined fabrics for the later post-medieval and early modern material. Full fabric descriptions can be found with the site archive.

Assemblage

- A.3.5 The assemblage was fragmentary and abraded and therefore provided little useful archaeological information. Generally, this material is late and likely relates to post-medieval agricultural processes, such as manuring. The material presents little more than background noise.

Feature	SF	Form	Abrasion	Date	Comment	Count	Weight (g)
Topsoil (1)	2	Tile	slight	Pmed	Fragment of a 1/2-inch tile with black/dark grey firing glaze on all faces except lower bed. Body has a slight bow.	1	57
	5	Brick	mod	Med-Pmed	Fragment of brick made in purplish silt fabric, remnant smoothed fine sanded face	1	101
	7	Tile	slight	Pmed	Fragment of a 1/2-inch tile with black/dark grey firing glaze on all faces except lower bed. Body has a slight bow.	1	28
	9	Brick	severe	Med-Pmed	Fragment of severely abraded brick made in purplish silty fabric	1	37
	10	Tile	severe	Med-Pmed	Fragment of a 1/2-inch tile made in a porous fabric.	1	11
	11	Tile	severe	Med-Pmed	Fragment of a 1/2-inch tile made in a porous fabric. Body has a slight curve.	1	25
	12	Tile	severe	Med-Pmed	Fragment of a 1/2-inch tile made in a porous fabric. Body has a slight curve.	1	35
	13	Tile	mod	Pmed	Fragment of a 1/2-inch peg tile, round hole, with curved body. Sanded on outer face.	1	41
Subsoil (2)	17	Tile	mod	Med-Pmed	Fragment of thick tile (~1inch), probably med-pmed fabric	1	56
	23	Tile	severe	Pmed	Fragment of possible tile, single face. Smoothed/wiped with slight curve to the form	1	23
	19	Brick	severe	Med-Pmed	Fragment of brick made in fabric with flint and charred stone or coal inclusions	2	81
	24	Brick	severe	Med-Pmed	Corner fragment of a brick, made in a dark purplish-brown fabric. Like a pot fabric.	1	13
	28	Tile	severe	Med-Pmed	Refitting fragments of a tile	8	32
	29	Undiag	severe	?Med ?Roman	Undiag fragment of CBM, orange face with grey and pink core. Poss med or roman.	1	32
Total						22	572

Table 3. Summary CBM catalogue

APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Clark, J. 1995, The Medieval Horse and Its Equipment c.1150–c.1450, London

McComish, J.M. 2015. A Guide to Ceramic Building Materials. York Archaeological Trust. Report Number 2015/36. Web Based Report.

Woodforde, J. 1976. Bricks: To Build a House. Routledge and Kegan Paul.

APPENDIX C

OASIS REPORT FORM

Project Details

OASIS Number	Oxfordar3-330891
Project Name	Archaeological Monitoring South of Cheddington Road, Pitstone, Buckinghamshire

Start of Fieldwork	8/10/18	End of Fieldwork	12/10/18
Previous Work	None	Future Work	No

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	XBUPIT18	Planning App. No.	N/A
HER Number	AYBCM:2018.147	Related Numbers	

Prompt	Water Act 1989 and subsequent codes of practice
Development Type	Water Pipeline
Place in Planning Process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Techniques used (tick all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography – interpretation | <input type="checkbox"/> Grab-sampling | <input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new | <input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-core | <input type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch | <input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning | <input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording of Fabric/Structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Augering | <input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors | <input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search | <input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling | <input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking | <input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography | |

Monument	Period	Object	Period
None	Choose an item.	CBM	Post Medieval (1540 to 1901)
	Choose an item.	Metal Work	Post Medieval (1540 to 1901)

Project Location

County	Buckinghamshire	Address (including Postcode)
District	Aylesbury Vale	Cheddington Road
Parish	Pitstone	Pitstone
HER office	Buckinghamshire	Buckinghamshire
Size of Study Area	0.36Ha	LU7 9AQ
National Grid Ref	SP 9297 1599	

Project Originators

Organisation	OAE
Project Brief Originator	Phil Markham
Project Design Originator	Louise Bush
Project Manager	Louise Bush
Project Supervisor	Dan Firth

Project Archives

	Location	ID
Physical Archive (Finds)	Buckinghamshire County Museum	
Digital Archive	OA East	XBUPIT18
Paper Archive	Buckinghamshire County Museum	

Physical Contents	Present?	Digital files associated with Finds	Paperwork associated with Finds
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Remains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Stratigraphic		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Stone/Lithic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

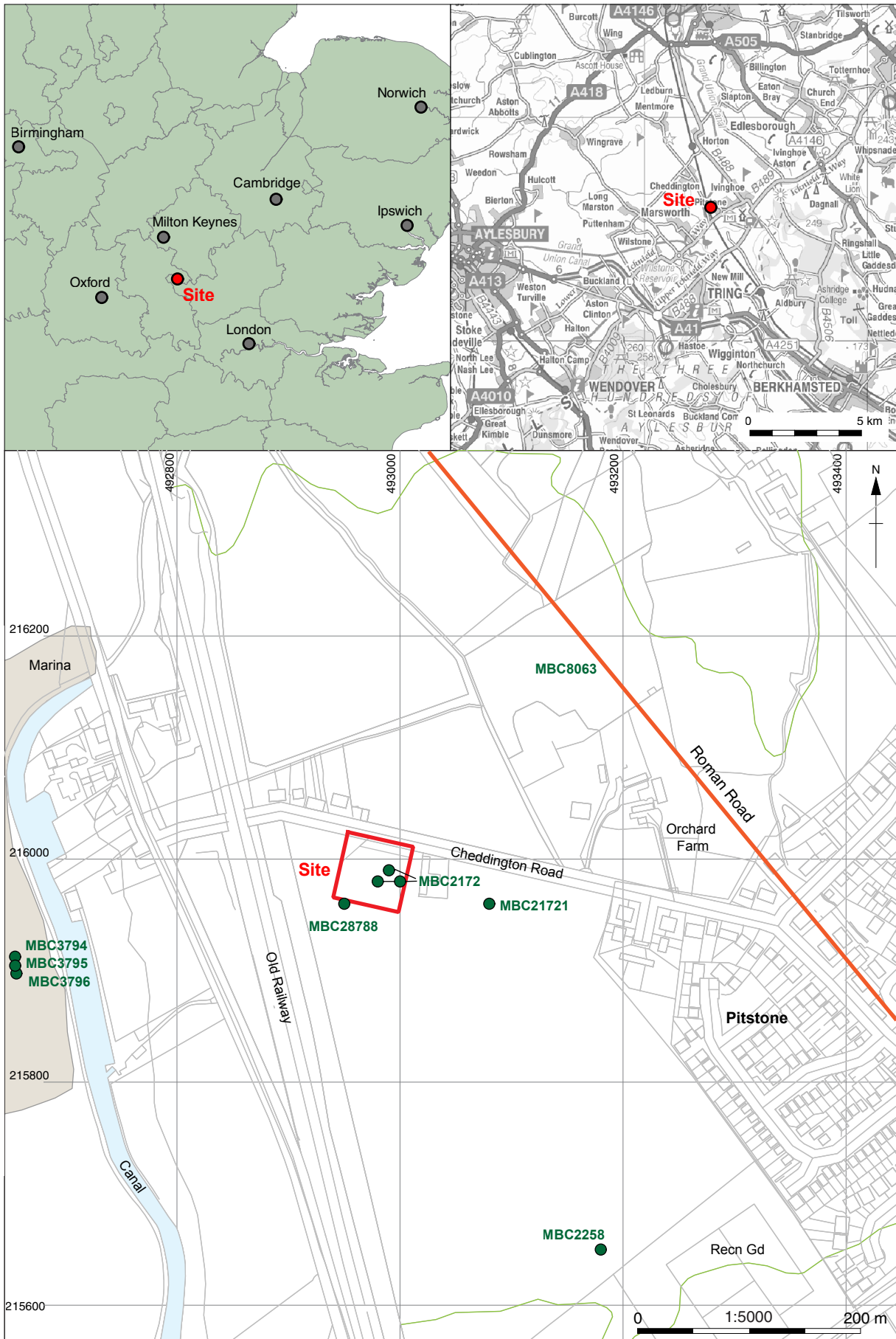
Digital Media

Database	<input type="checkbox"/>
GIS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Images (Digital photos)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Illustrations (Figures/Plates)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>
Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/>

Paper Media

Aerial Photos	<input type="checkbox"/>
Context Sheets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Correspondence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drawing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manuscript	<input type="checkbox"/>
Map	<input type="checkbox"/>
Matrices	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microfiche	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miscellaneous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research/Notes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photos (negatives/prints/slides)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sections	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>

Further Comments



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Figure 1: Site location map showing HER data

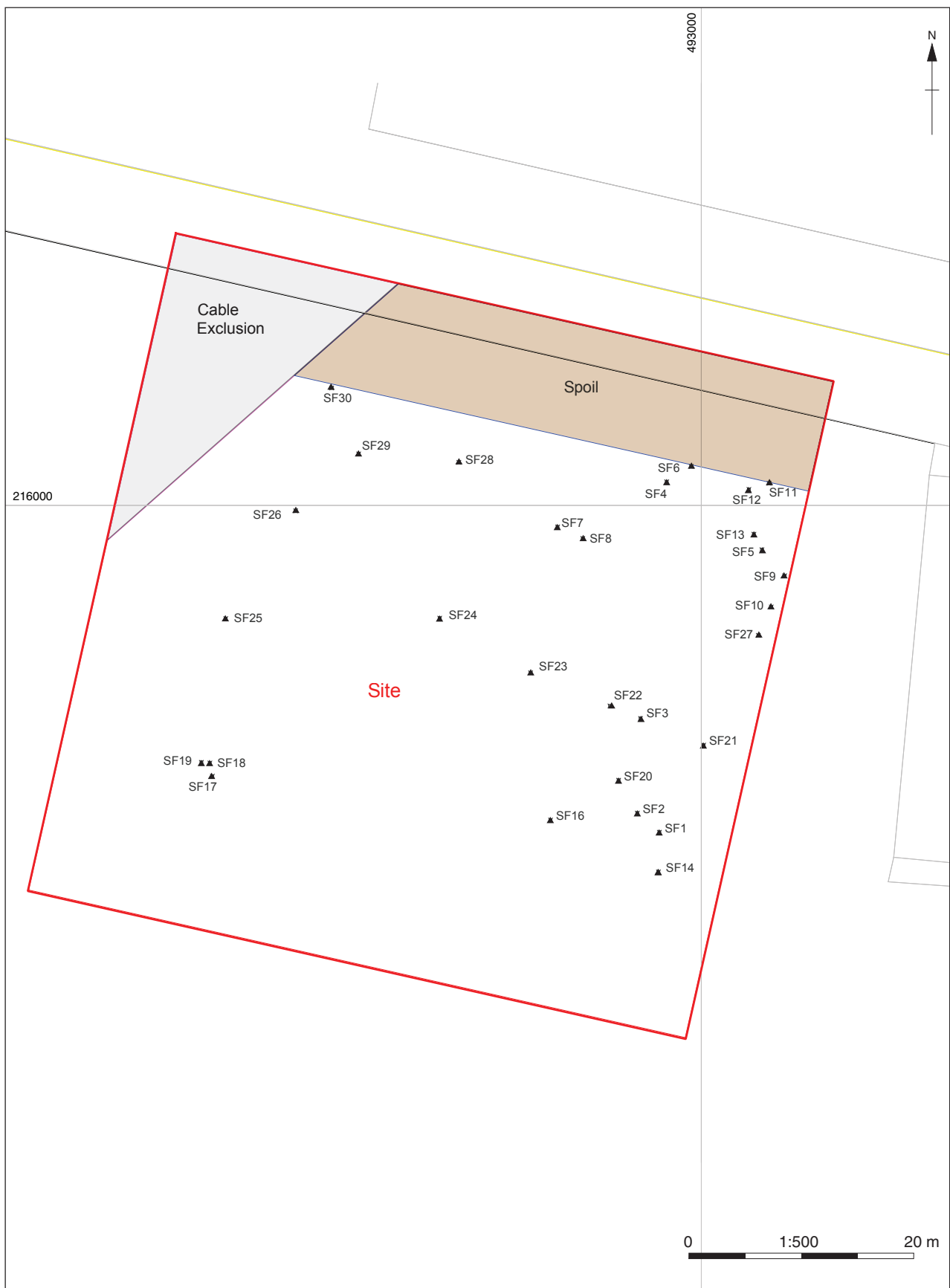


Figure 2: Site plan showing distribution of small finds. Scale 1:500



Plate 1: Machine stripping being undertaken on site, looking northwest



Plate 2: The site fully stripped, looking northwest



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