

Archaeological Field Unit

**Iron Age Settlement and a Roman Vineyard
on Land off Hall Drive, Caldecote:
An Archaeological Evaluation**

S Kenney

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Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. 200

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An Archaeological Evaluation**

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation of a 2.39ha area was undertaken on land off Hall Drive, Highfields, Caldecote, Cambridgeshire (TL3529/5858). This was carried out in advance of a proposed housing development and in response to a brief from the County Archaeology Office.

Nine trenches were opened and archaeological features were observed in all of them. Medieval furrows were found to continue the pattern seen in neighbouring excavations to the north, and on aerial photographs. A curvilinear ditch was excavated that may be part of an Iron Age roundhouse. A system of parallel ditches bounded by a ditch perpendicular to this system was dated to the early Roman period, and showed great similarity to the Iron Age and Roman field systems and enclosures excavated just to the north of Hall Drive.

Similar Roman agricultural features have been identified on several sites in Cambridgeshire and neighbouring counties. At Wollaston in Northamptonshire, for example, grape pollen provided evidence to support an interpretation that the features may relate to a vineyard. While no evidence like this has been found so far at Caldecote, the closest parallel physically for these features is the arrangement found at Wollaston.

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**Iron Age Settlement and a Roman Vineyard
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An Archaeological Evaluation
TL 3529/5858**

1 INTRODUCTION

Between the 10th of September and 12th of October 2001, the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council (AFU) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land off Hall Drive, Caldecote, Cambridgeshire (TL 3529/5858). The work was carried out at the request of Wilcon Homes (Anglia) Ltd, and was in response to a brief set by the County Archaeology Office (CAO); it was supervised on-site by the author.

The site lies on the eastern side of Caldecote Highfields, bounded to the north by Hall Drive and to the east by East Drive. It is irregular in plan, approximately 2.39ha in area, and had been rough pasture before the evaluation took place.

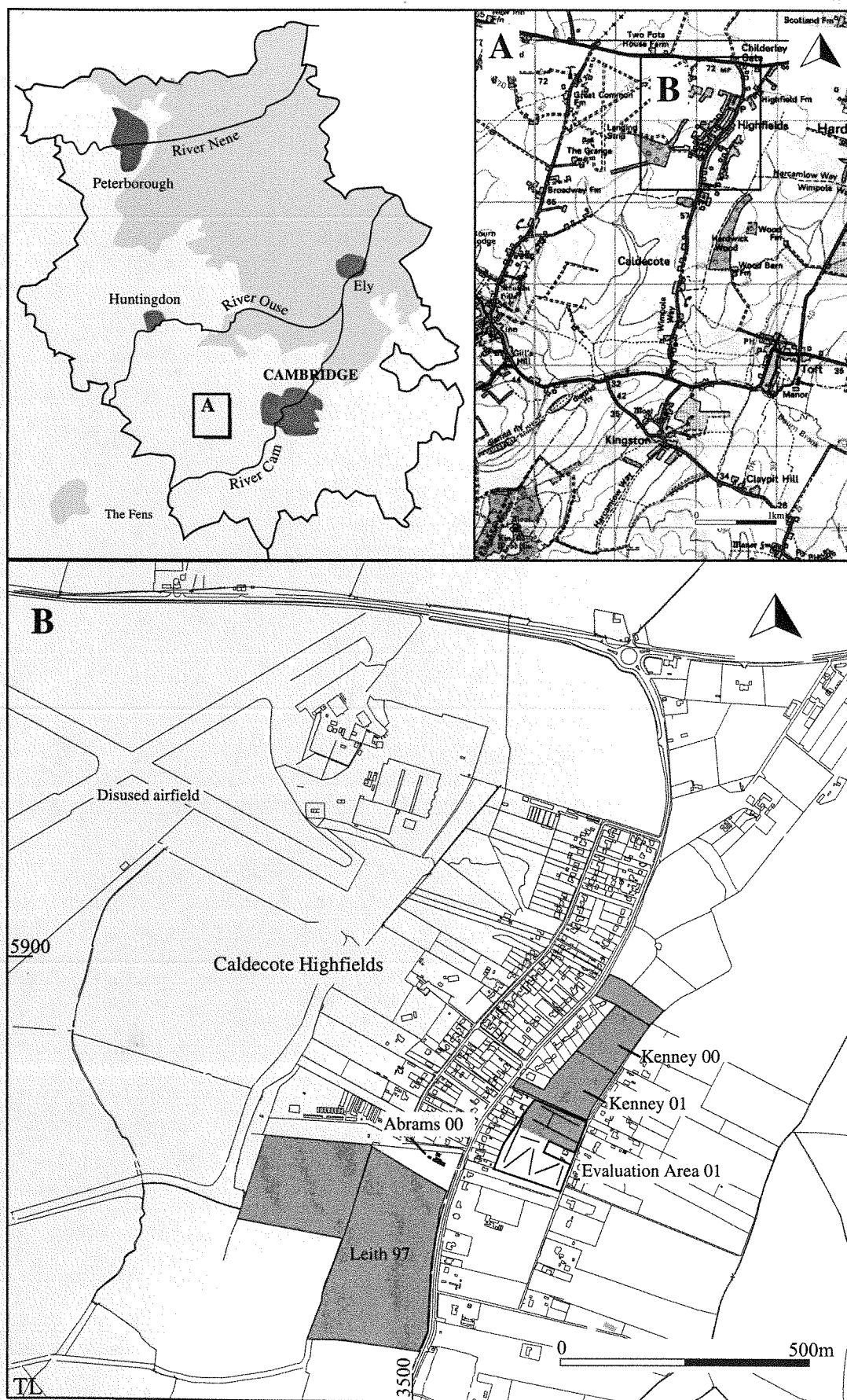
The presence of archaeological remains was considered likely by the CAO on the basis of information contained in the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). An evaluation was carried out upon part of the present subject area in 1996, which revealed the presence of ditches with at least two differing alignments, and medieval ridge and furrow cultivation. The current phase of evaluation was designed to complement the earlier work and provide a wider and more detailed picture of the features located in 1996.

Weather conditions during the fieldwork were occasionally poor, but since this occurred during excavation, there were no factors that are likely to have had an adverse effect upon context recognition. Accordingly, the confidence rating to be applied to the results is judged to be high.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Geology

According to the British Geological Survey, the site lies on Pleistocene Boulder Clay overlying the Upper Cretaceous Gault Clay. The Boulder Clay in this area is riddled with veins and patches of gravels and sand, and contains numerous geological erratics, including sandstones and limestones.



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Figure 1 Site Location Plan. All areas of tone were evaluated in 1996 by Niall Oakey. Subsequent work by other excavators is labelled.

2.2 Topography

The site is located on some of the higher ground in the parish at between 69m OD and 66m OD. As with the land to the north of the site, the ground slopes down from south-east to north-west.

3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Historical Background

Lying 9km west of Cambridge, Caldecote was mentioned in Domesday, and the spelling of the name was identical to the modern one. The name means 'cold cottages', which was probably intended as a term of reproach (Reaney 1926). The village is strung out along what was the Kingston to Childerley road, formerly known as Strympole Way. Caldecote proper is mostly focussed around the church near the Bourn Brook. The more recent development at Highfields is located approximately 2.5kms north of the church.

Recorded in Domesday as having a population of fifteen in 1086, Caldecote followed a national trend of increasing agricultural prosperity and growing populations rising to a peak in the 13th and 14th centuries, followed by a dramatic and drastic decline. In 1377, 78 people in the parish contributed to the poll tax, but by 1554 the population had slumped to 9 householders.

The small population recorded during the medieval period persisted so that an estimate of the population in 1728 was fifteen families. Thereafter a gradual rise took place until there were 144 residents in 1851, but agricultural depression in the later 19th century was probably the reason for further decline and it was only when 20th century development in the Highfields, Caldecote area took place that earlier levels were regained. By 1911 the population had reached 160 and thereafter it has risen steadily (Victoria County History 1973, 17).

Before enclosure in 1854 Caldecote had three open fields, of which the most northerly, Dams (or North) field covered much of the area to the west of Highfields Road (CRO 296/P8). At the time of enclosure Dams field was common pastureland. The land to the east of the road was divided into enclosures around Highfields farm, owned by Clare College. The ownership of the subject site was not mentioned, although the AP survey of 1996 clearly indicated the presence of medieval ridge and furrow.

3.2 Archaeological Background and Previous Work

3.21 Early Prehistoric

There are no entries in the SMR for Caldecote pertaining to finds from the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age periods, however, during

excavations in 2000 to the north of the current site, a Neolithic flaked flint axe was recovered from one of the medieval furrows.

3.22 Iron Age

Evidence of Iron Age settlement has recently been excavated c200m to the north of the subject site (Kenney 2001). This consisted of roundhouses, enclosures and a single quarry pit. Approximately 700m to the south-west of the subject site, three phases of Iron Age enclosures, a possible track way and various settlement features were excavated and these probably form part of the same Iron Age landscape as the site mentioned above. Also, an Iron Age coin is reported from close by (SMR 3304). The subject site is located between these recorded sites and as such presented a good opportunity to obtain further evidence of Iron Age activity.

3.23 Roman

The evaluation trenches and excavation areas completed prior to the construction of the Wilcon Homes development to the south-west of the subject site revealed a number of ditches forming an agricultural system. These ditches produced pottery dating to the second to fourth centuries AD. The density of artefacts in the ditches towards the northern part the field suggests that the focus of Roman settlement was probably located towards the northern part of Highfields. Indeed to the north of the subject site recent excavations have confirmed this to be the case, as part of a Roman settlement was excavated in 2000 (Kenney forthcoming). This settlement consisted of at least one building within a substantial enclosure ditch, as well as a pond, quarries and several gravel surfaces. Pottery from these features has been provisionally dated to the first to second centuries AD. Therefore, evidence of Roman activity on the subject site was considered likely. Also, the SMR records the chance find (SMR 0119) of a ditch or pit containing a piece of Samian pottery. Although the map reference is vague this is interpreted as being in the immediate vicinity of Highfields.

3.24 Medieval

A search of the Cambridgeshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) revealed little reported archaeological information. Various soilmarks and cropmarks of medieval ridge and furrow agriculture around Highfields have been recorded from aerial photographs (SMR 0192, 11434, 11435). Also, a review of the aerial photographic evidence available for Highfields was undertaken in 1996 as part of preparations for work undertaken directly south of the subject site. This revealed clear evidence of medieval ridge and furrow cropmarks on a broadly east west alignment. Earthworks of putative house platforms are recorded from the southern end of Highfields (SMR 11226, 11225). Evidence of medieval settlement was excavated to the south-west of the subject site, (Leith 1997, see Fig. 1).

3.25 Previous Archaeological Investigations

Little archaeological work was carried out in Caldecote until 1996, when an evaluation covering 20.5ha was undertaken in two discrete areas to the west and east of Highfields Road. In the western area, a field system of Roman date was revealed, while in the eastern area, an Iron Age settlement and associated field system was found (Oakey 1996).

In 1997, development proposals led to the excavation of key segments of the western area, which uncovered further evidence of the Roman field system, as well as three phases of hitherto undiscovered Late Iron Age agricultural features (Leith 1997).

To the east of Highfields Road, excavations in 2000 of part of the eastern evaluation area revealed an Iron Age roundhouse and part of a field system, a Roman boundary, building foundation trenches and a possible funerary enclosure. Also uncovered was part of a multi-phase enclosure and a second roundhouse, as predicted from the evaluation (Kenney 2001).

An excavation was conducted on the land of Caldecote Primary School in 2000 which revealed Iron Age pits and a ditch of Iron Age or Romano-British date (Abrams 2000).

At the same time as the evaluation was taking place, excavation was under way just to the north of the subject site, and adjacent to the area of the 2000 excavations. The remainder of the multi-phase Iron Age enclosure was revealed, with a roundhouse within it. Part of a second roundhouse lay to the west of this enclosure, while to the east was a Roman agricultural system of parallel ditches which may be a vineyard (Kenney forthcoming).

4 METHODOLOGY

Nine trenches, with a total length of 63.1 m, were opened using a mechanical excavator with a 2.1m toothless ditching bucket, under the supervision of an archaeologist (see Fig. 1). This constitutes a 5.5% sample of the site. The trenching scheme was designed to give maximum coverage across the subject site and to identify features regardless of their orientation, while avoiding areas previously evaluated in 1996. The 1996 trenches are shown on the figures with their original designations (E1-E5) in order to give the fullest picture of the archaeological potential of the site.

The trenches were cleaned by hand where appropriate, photographed, and base planned by hand at a scale of 1:100. Discrete features were half-sectioned and linear features were sectioned at intervals where appropriate, while furrows were tested to confirm the interpretation. Recording followed the standard AFU methodologies, using a single context system and with hand drawn sections supplemented by colour and monochrome photographs. Bulk soil samples of 20l were taken from nine features in order to assess the potential for environmental remains. A metal detecting survey was carried out across the site on two separate occasions.

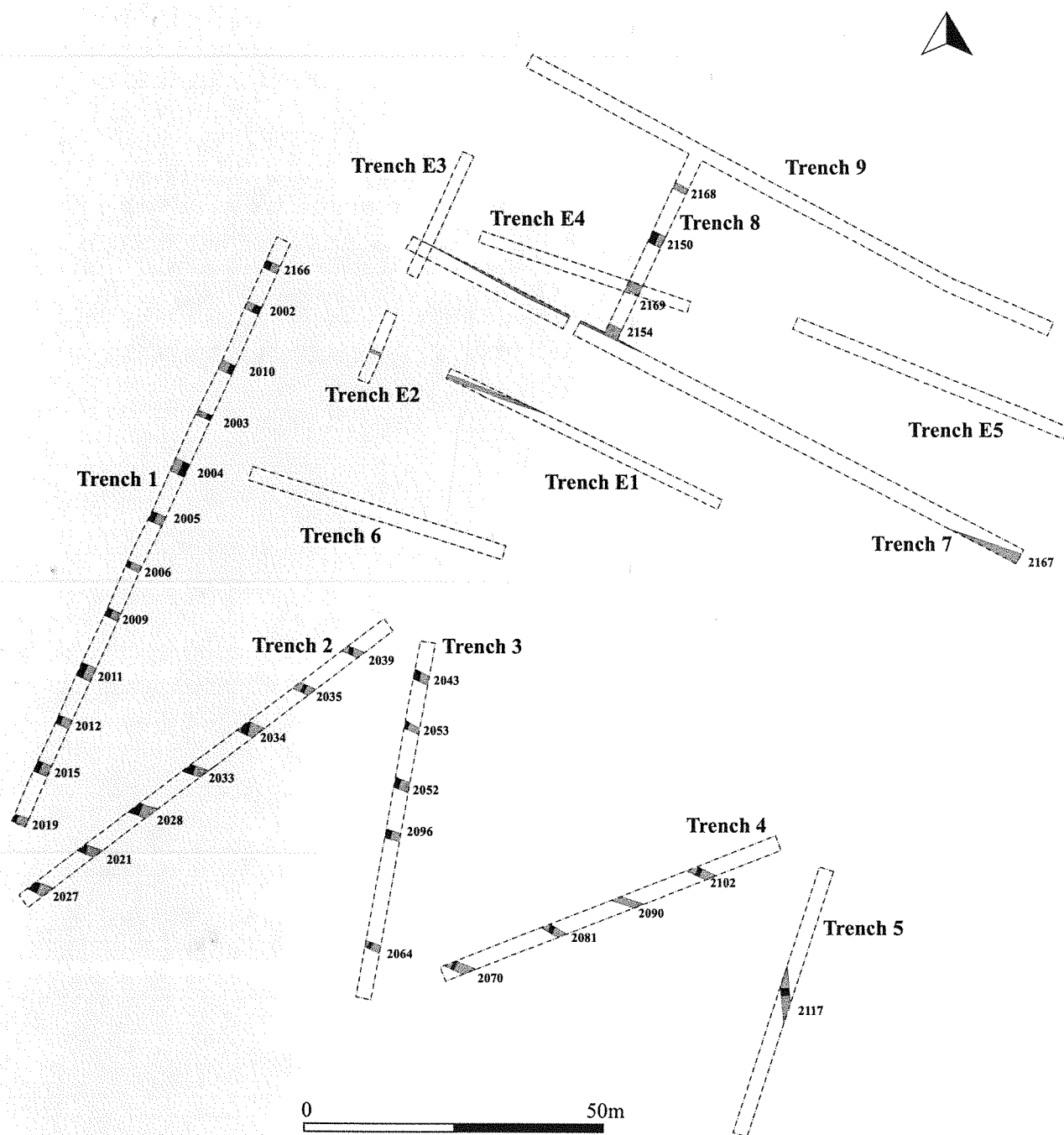


Figure 2 2001 trenches (1-9) and 1996 trenches (E1-E5) showing medieval furrows

5 RESULTS

In the following sections, bold numbers denotes the cut of a feature. The medieval furrows are not described in the same detail as the features of earlier periods.

5.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was 107.5m long and contained sixteen features of which thirteen were furrows. At the northern end of the trench, 0.15m of modern topsoil overlay 0.12m of subsoil, while at the southern end, 0.17m of topsoil overlay 0.2m of subsoil.

From north to south, the features were as follows:

Furrow **2166** was 1.4m wide, 0.12m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2002** was 1.4m wide, 0.12m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2010** was 1.7m wide, 0.38m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2003** was 1.1m wide, 0.2m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2004** was 2.4m wide, 0.08m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2005** was 1.7m wide, 0.14m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-WESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2008** was 0.88m wide, 0.33m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained a single fill 2007, a light olive brown silty clay with moderate stones and occasional chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2006** was 1.1m wide, 0.08m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2009** was 1.4m wide, 0.17m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. Post-medieval Essex Redware pottery dating to the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries was recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2011** was 2.5m wide, 0.1m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2012** was 1.6m wide, 0.11m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2014** was 0.72m wide, 0.21m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2013, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. Below this was 2018, a dark greyish brown, light yellowish brown and olive yellow mixed clay fill with occasional small stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2015** was 2.0m wide, 0.18m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2017** was 0.6m wide, 0.26m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained a single fill, 2016, a light olive brown silty clay with moderate stones and chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2019** was at least 1.6m wide, 0.1m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 69m long and contained fourteen features of which seven were furrows. At the north-eastern end of the trench, 0.20m of modern topsoil overlay 0.20m of subsoil, while at the south-western end, 0.1m of topsoil overlay 0.20m of subsoil.

From north-east to south-west, the features were as follows:

Ditch butt-end **2042** was 0.4m wide, 0.15m deep, at least 0.7m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2040, a very dark grey silty clay with moderate stones. Below this was 2041, an olive brown silty clay with moderate stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2050** was 0.66m wide, 0.18m deep, at least 4.5m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained a single fill, 2049, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2039** was 1.2m wide, 0.11m deep, at least 3.2m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2038** was 0.53m wide, 0.30m deep, at least 4.5m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2036, a light olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. Below this was 2037, a light brownish grey clay with moderate chalk flecks and occasional stones. Roman greyware was recovered from fill 2036.

Furrow **2035** was 1.4m wide, 0.13m deep, at least 3.3m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2034** was 2.0m wide, 0.13m deep, at least 4m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2014** was 0.72m wide, 0.21m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2013, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. Below this was 2018, a dark greyish brown, light yellowish brown and olive yellow mixed clay fill with occasional small stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2015** was 2.0m wide, 0.18m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2017** was 0.6m wide, 0.26m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained a single fill, 2016, a light olive brown silty clay with moderate stones and chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2019** was at least 1.6m wide, 0.1m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 69m long and contained fourteen features of which seven were furrows. At the north-eastern end of the trench, 0.20m of modern topsoil overlay 0.20m of subsoil, while at the south-western end, 0.1m of topsoil overlay 0.20m of subsoil.

From north-east to south-west, the features were as follows:

Ditch butt-end **2042** was 0.4m wide, 0.15m deep, at least 0.7m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2040, a very dark grey silty clay with moderate stones. Below this was 2041, an olive brown silty clay with moderate stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2050** was 0.66m wide, 0.18m deep, at least 4.5m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained a single fill, 2049, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2039** was 1.2m wide, 0.11m deep, at least 3.2m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2038** was 0.53m wide, 0.30m deep, at least 4.5m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2036, a light olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. Below this was 2037, a light brownish grey clay with moderate chalk flecks and occasional stones. Roman greyware was recovered from fill 2036.

Furrow **2035** was 1.4m wide, 0.13m deep, at least 3.3m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2034** was 2.0m wide, 0.13m deep, at least 4m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

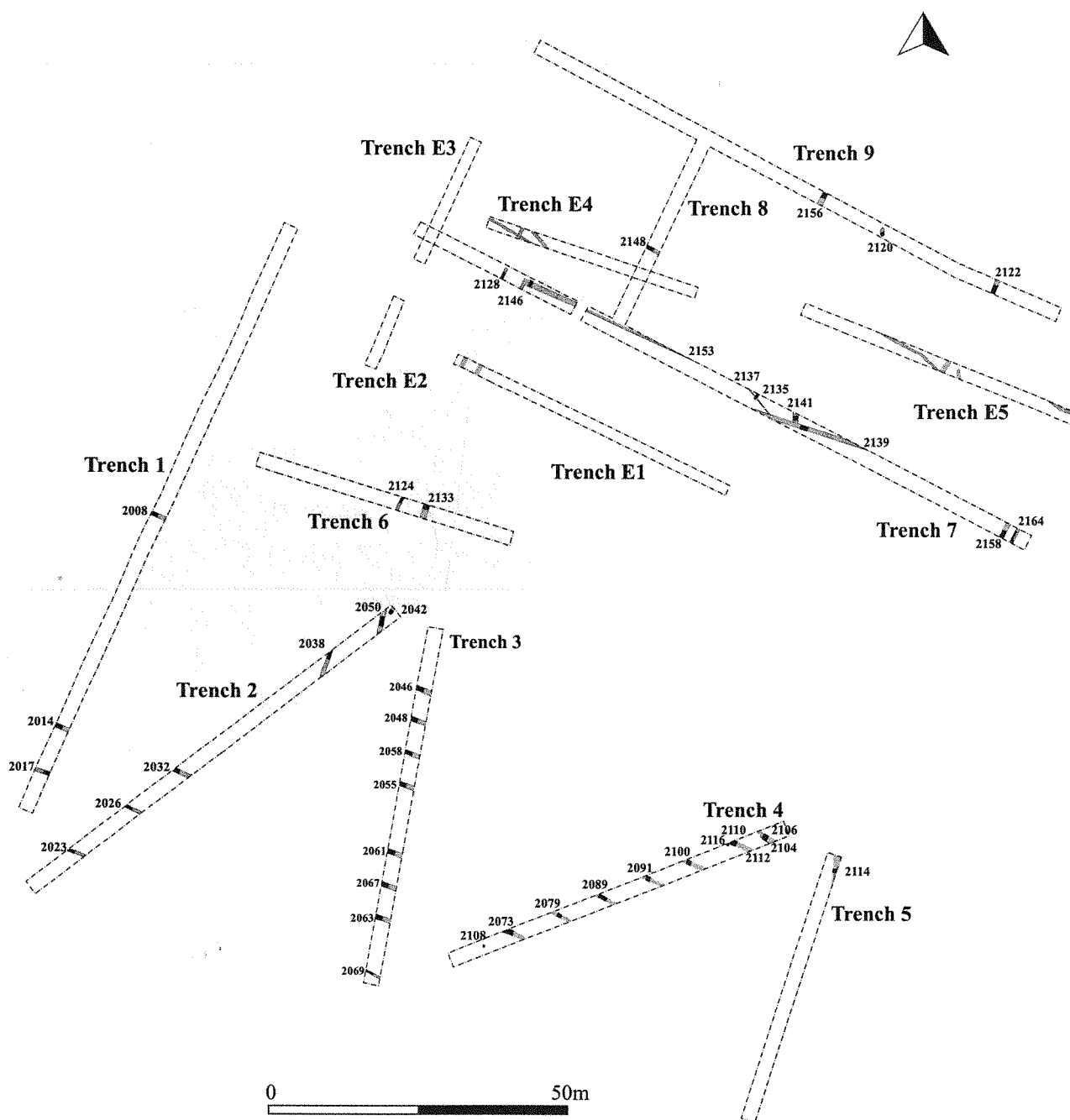


Figure 3 2001 trenches (1-9) and 1996 trenches (E1-E5) showing Roman and Iron Age features

Furrow **2033** was 1.5m wide, 0.09m deep, at least 4m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2032** was 0.9m wide, 0.25m deep, at least 3m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2030, an olive brown silty clay with moderate stones. Below this was 2031, a dark greyish brown, light yellowish brown and olive yellow mixed clay fill with occasional small stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2028** was 2m wide, 0.11m deep, at least 4.2m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2026** was 0.6m wide, 0.25m deep, at least 2.7m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2024, an olive brown silty clay with moderate stones and rare chalk flecks. Below this was 2025, a dark greyish brown, light yellowish brown and olive yellow mixed clay fill with occasional small stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2021** was 1.5m wide, 0.16m deep, at least 3.5m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2023** was 0.43m wide, 0.23m deep, at least 3m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained a single fill, 2022, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2027** was 1.7m wide, 0.08m deep, at least 3.5m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was 60m long and contained thirteen features of which six were furrows. At the northern end of the trench 0.17m of modern topsoil overlay 0.22m of subsoil, while at the southern end, 0.09m of topsoil overlay 0.21m of subsoil.

From north to south, the features were as follows:

Furrow **2043** was 1.5m wide, 0.36m deep, at least 2.8m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. Two sherds of burnt Roman greyware were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2046** was 0.7m wide, 0.26m deep, at least 2.3m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2044, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. Below this was 2045, a light olive brown and light yellow brown mixed clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. Roman greyware was recovered from fill 2044.

Furrow **2053** was 1.3m wide, 0.3m deep, at least 2.8m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

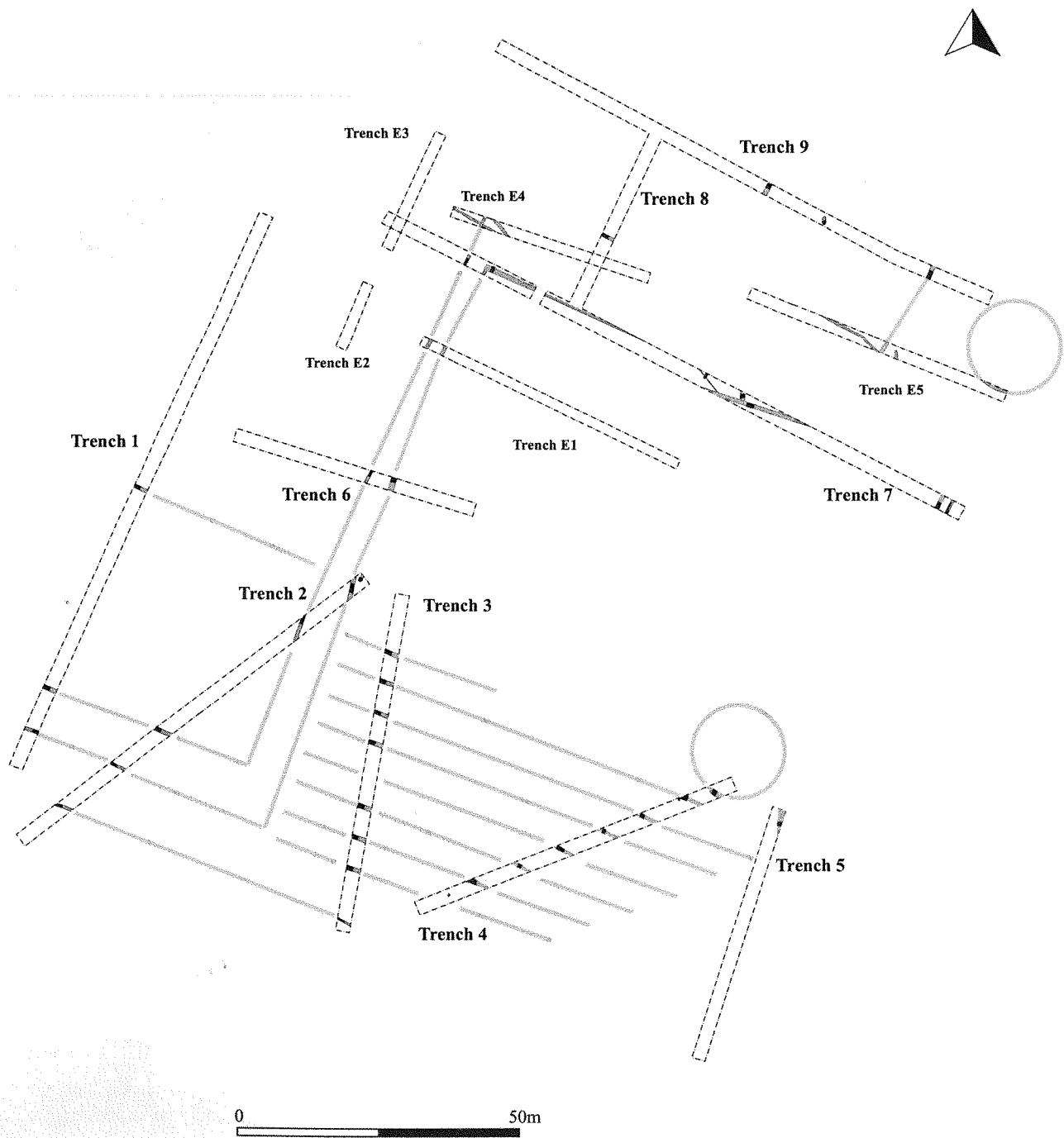


Figure 4 2001 trenches (1-9) and 1996 trenches (E1-E5) showing speculative extrapolation of features

Ditch **2048** was 0.75m wide, 0.2m deep, at least 2.3m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained a single fill, 2047, a light olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2058** was 0.8m wide, 0.4m deep, at least 2.3m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2056, a pale yellow and olive yellow silty clay with frequent stones and chalk flecks. Below this was 2057, an olive silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2052** was 1.5m wide, 0.32m deep, at least 2.8m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2055** was 0.7m wide, 0.2m deep, at least 2.3m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained a single fill, 2054, an olive brown silty clay with moderate stones and frequent chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2096** was 1.5m wide, 0.2m deep, at least 2.8m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2061** was 0.76m wide, 0.17m deep, at least 2.3m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2059, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. Below this was 2060, a light brownish grey and olive yellow mixed clay with occasional stones and frequent chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2067** was 0.77m wide, 0.22m deep, at least 2.3m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2065, an olive brown silty clay with rare stones and chalk flecks. Below this was 2066, a light brownish grey and olive yellow mixed clay with occasional stones and frequent chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2063** was 0.65m wide, 0.2m deep, at least 2.3m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2062, an olive brown silty clay with frequent small stones and chalk flecks. Below this was 2074, a light olive brown clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2064** was 1.6m wide, 0.08m deep, at least 2.8m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2069** was 0.6m wide, 0.16m deep, at least 2.3m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained a single fill, 2068, an olive brown silty clay with frequent stones and chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

5.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 was 59m long and contained fourteen features of which six were furrows. At the northern end of the trench, 0.18m of modern topsoil overlay 0.3m of subsoil, while at the southern end, 0.17m of topsoil overlay 0.2m of subsoil.

From north-east to south-west, the features were as follows:

Curvilinear ditch **2106** was 0.4m wide, 0.2m deep, at least 3.5m long and was oriented WNW-ESE, curving away to the north and east. It contained a single fill, 2105, a greyish brown silty clay with occasional stones. It was impossible to determine the stratigraphic relationship between this feature and **2104** due to the similarity of their fills, although it is very unlikely that they were contemporary. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Curvilinear ditch butt-end **2104** was 0.4m wide, 0.07m deep, at least 2m long and was oriented WNW-ESE, curving away to the east. It contained a single fill, 2103, a greyish brown silty clay with occasional stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2110** was 0.45m wide, 0.23m deep, at least 2m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained a single fill, 2109, a greyish brown silty clay with occasional stones. It was impossible to determine the stratigraphic relationship between this feature and **2112** due to the similarity of their fills, although it is very unlikely that they were contemporary. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2112** was 0.49m wide, 0.36m deep, at least 2m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained a single fill, 2111, a greyish brown silty clay with occasional stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Possible posthole **2116** was 0.28m wide, 0.13m deep and at least 0.31m long. It contained a single fill, 2115, an olive brown silty clay. It was thought likely that this feature was slightly truncated by **2112**, but this was not completely clear even in the baulk section. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2102** was 1.3m wide, 0.1m deep, at least 4m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2100** was 0.96m wide, 0.34m deep, at least 4m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2098, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. Below this was 2099, a light olive brown and light yellowish brown mixed clay with frequent chalk flecks. Roman greyware was recovered from fill 2098.

Ditch **2091** was 0.8m wide, 0.21m deep, at least 3.8m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2092, a light olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and rare chalk flecks. Below this was 2093, a light yellowish brown silty clay with occasional chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

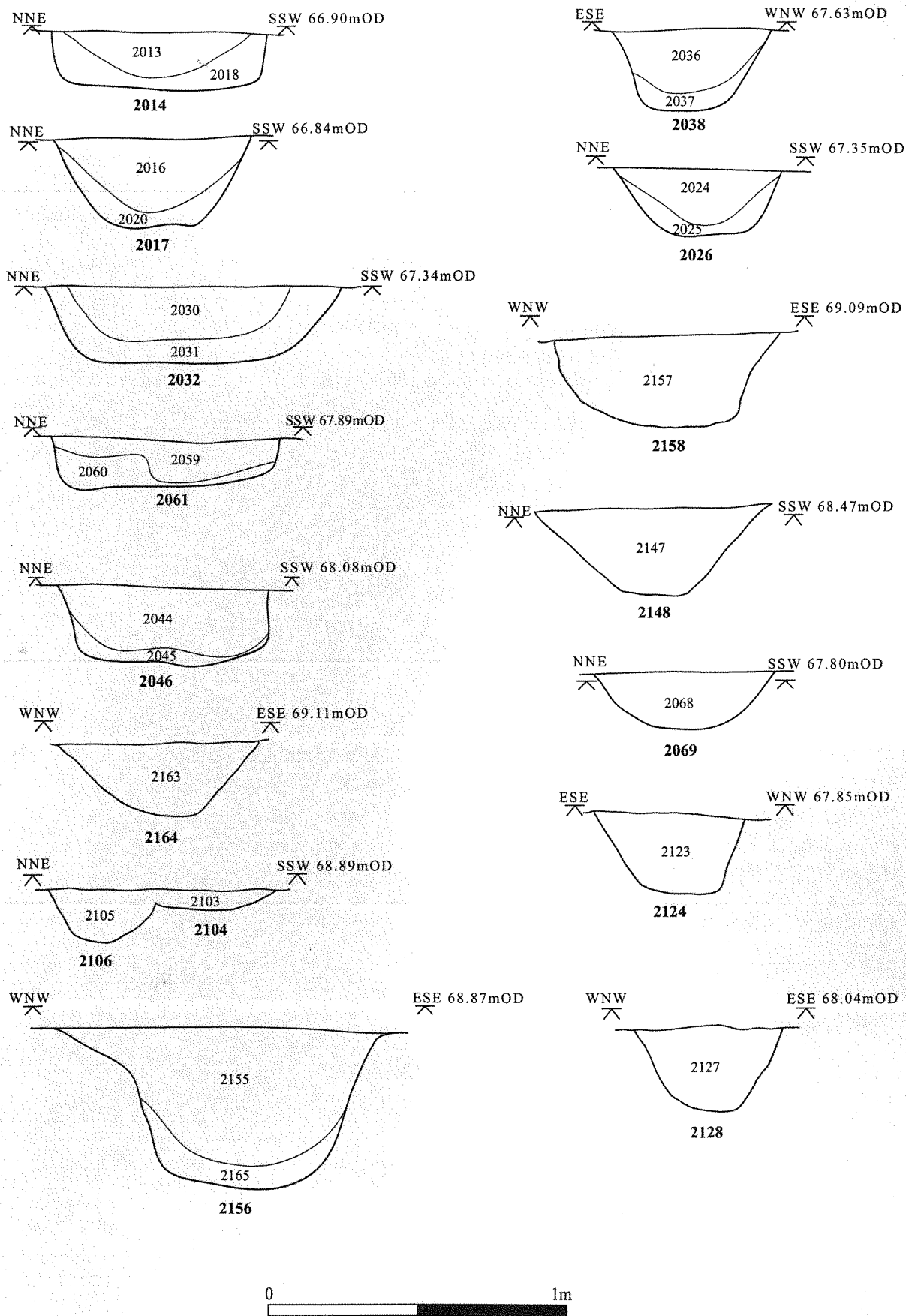


Figure 5 Sections

Furrow **2090** was 1m wide, at least 5m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2089** was 0.66m wide, 0.2m deep, at least 3.6m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2087, a dark greyish brown silty clay with occasional stones. Below this was 2088, a light brownish grey and olive yellow mixed clay with occasional stones and frequent chalk flecks. Roman greyware and oxidised greyware was recovered from fill 2087.

Furrow **2081** was 0.9m wide, 0.22m deep, at least 4.5m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. This furrow cut ditch **2079**. No finds were recovered from this feature. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2079** was at least 0.4m wide, 0.16m deep, at least 4.5m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained a single fill, 2080, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2073** was 0.7m wide, 0.25m deep, at least 4m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained three fills, the upper of which was 2071, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. Below this was 2072, a light brownish grey and olive yellow mixed clay with occasional stones and frequent chalk flecks. Below this was 2083, an olive brown and olive yellow mixed clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Posthole **2108** was 0.35m in diameter and 0.3m deep. It contained a single fill, 2107, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2070** was 1.5m wide, 0.13m deep, at least 4.8m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

5.5 Trench 5

Trench 5 was 46.5m long and contained two features of which one was a furrow. At the northern end of the trench, 0.14m of modern topsoil overlay 0.24m of subsoil while at the southern end, 0.15m of topsoil overlay 0.22m of subsoil.

From north to south, the features were as follows:

Ditch **2114** was 1.1m wide, 0.4m deep, at least 5.5m long and was oriented N-S. It contained a single fill, 2113, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2117** was 1.1m wide, 0.1m deep, at least 9m long and was oriented NW-SE. Roman oxidised greyware was recovered from this feature.



Figure 6 Profiles showing relative depths of topsoil and subsoil in trenches

5.6 Trench 6

Trench 6 was 44m long and contained two features, both ditches. At the northern end of the trench, 0.24m of modern topsoil overlay 0.15m of subsoil, while at the southern end, 0.24m of topsoil overlay 0.15m of subsoil.

From east to west, the features were as follows:

Ditch **2133** was 1.04m wide, 0.34m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained three fills, the upper of which was 2130, a pale yellow and olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and frequent chalk flecks. Below this was 2131, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. Below this was 2132, an olive yellow silty clay with frequent chalk flecks. Roman oxidised greyware was recovered from fill 2130.

Ditch **2124** was 0.5m wide, 0.3m deep, at least 2.3m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained a single fill, 2123, a dark greyish brown silty clay with occasional stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

5.7 Trench 7

Trench 7 was 113.5m long with a 1m break to avoid a power cable and contained eleven features of which three were furrows. At the eastern end of the trench, 0.15m of modern topsoil overlay 0.2m of subsoil, while at the western end, 0.11m of topsoil overlay 0.1m of subsoil.

From east to west, the features were as follows:

Furrow **2167** was 1.2m wide, 0.1m deep, at least 1.0m long and was oriented WNWESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2164** was 0.69m wide, 0.28m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained a single fill, 2163, a dark greyish brown silty clay with occasional stones. Roman oxidised greyware was recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2158** was 0.73m wide, 0.31m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained a single fill, 2157, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2139** was 0.45m wide, 0.12m deep, at least 17m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2138, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. Below this was 2143, a light brownish grey and olive yellow mixed clay with occasional stones and frequent chalk flecks.

Ditch **2141** was 0.7m wide, 0.18m deep, at least 1.6m long and was oriented N-S. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2140, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. Below this was 2142, a light brownish grey and

olive yellow mixed clay with occasional stones and frequent chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2137** was 0.28m wide, 0.1m deep, at least 5.4m long and was oriented NW-SE. It contained a single fill, 2136, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2135** was 0.7m wide, 0.21m deep, at least 0.73m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained a single a 2134, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2153** was 0.56m wide, 0.18m deep, at least 29m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2151, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and yellow clay flecks. Below this was 2152, an olive brown and light yellowish brown clay with occasional chalk flecks and moderate stones. Roman greyware was recovered from fill 2151.

Furrow **2154** was 2m wide, 0.1m deep, at least 49m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2146** was 0.6m wide, 0.38m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2144, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and yellow clay flecks. Below this was 2145, an olive brown and light yellowish brown clay with occasional chalk flecks and moderate stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2128** was 0.53m wide, 0.27m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained a single fill, 2127, an olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.

5.8 Trench 8

Trench 8 was 33m long and contained four features of which three were furrows. At the northern end of the trench, 0.1m of modern topsoil overlay 0.2m of subsoil, while at the southern end, 0.1m of topsoil overlay 0.15m of subsoil.

From north to south, the features were as follows:

Furrow **2168** was 1.7m wide, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2150** was 2.1m wide, 0.41m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2148** was 0.8m wide, 0.3m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. It contained a single fill, 2147, a greyish brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. Roman oxidised greyware was recovered from this feature.

Furrow **2169** was 1.7m wide, at least 2.1m long and was oriented WNW-ESE. No finds were recovered from this feature.

5.9 Trench 9

Trench 9 was 98.5m long and contained three features. At the eastern end of the trench, 0.1m of modern topsoil overlay 0.1m of subsoil, while at the western end, 0.1m of topsoil overlay 0.2m of subsoil.

From east to west, the features were as follows:

Ditch **2122** was 0.85m wide, 0.3m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained a single fill, 2121, a light olive brown silty clay with occasional stones. Roman oxidised greyware was recovered from this feature

Pit **2120** was 0.6m wide, 0.15m deep, 1.2m long and was oriented N-S. It contained a single fill, 2119, a light olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Ditch **2156** was 1.1m wide, 0.5m deep, at least 2.1m long and was oriented NNE-SSW. It contained two fills, the upper of which was 2155, a light olive brown silty clay with occasional stones and chalk flecks. Below this was 2165, an olive brown clay with moderate chalk flecks and lumps. Roman oxidised greyware was recovered from fill 2155.

5.10 Summary of preliminary results from Highfields 2001 excavation

Area 3 (North)

Area 3 consisted of slightly more than half of the total excavation area. Three things quickly became apparent during the first stage of stripping the area. Firstly, the pattern and alignment of ridge and furrow observed during the previous year's excavations was clearly seen to continue across Area 3. The surviving medieval headland, which had been visible as an upstanding earthwork before stripping began, also extended into the new excavation area. This headland did not conform to the modern hedge line, but ran NNE-SSW across Area 3. When the topsoil and subsoil were removed, the headland could be seen to be tracing a path close to that of two parallel ditches that appeared to bound a trackway. Secondly, a series of parallel ditches ran perpendicular to the westernmost of the trackway ditches, forming a pattern obviously of agricultural origin and predating the ridge and furrow. Thirdly, the bulk of the enclosure system seen first in the evaluation and subsequently in the excavation of Area 2 was revealed and confirmation obtained that it contained a single roundhouse. Evaluation had not picked up archaeology other than the ridge and furrow in the south-west of Area 3, although Trench B4 had encountered the enclosure ditch system and the very edge of the roundhouse. Other features within this enclosure included a square four-post structure.

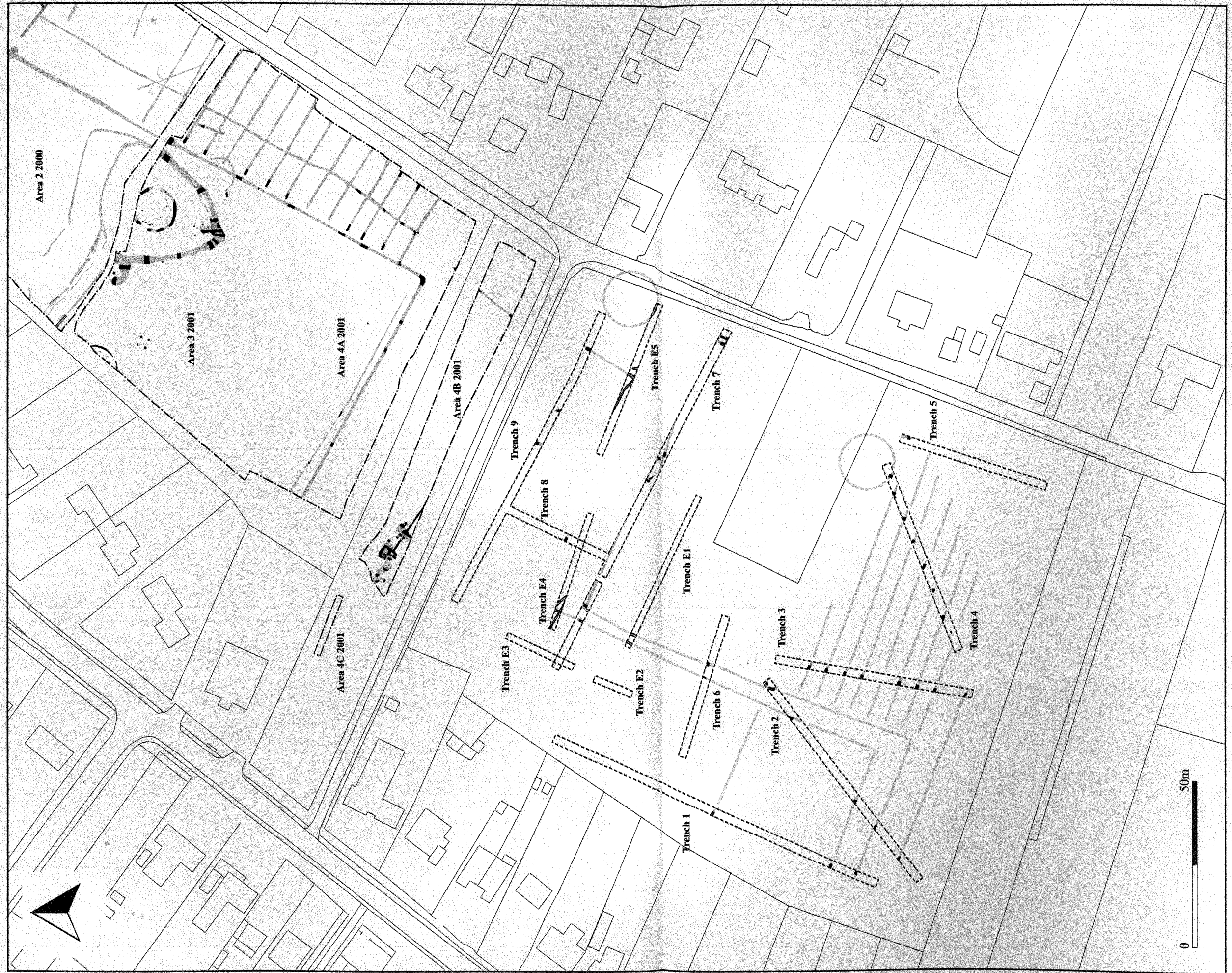


Figure 7 Speculative extrapolation of features found in 1996 and 2001 evaluations with features from 2001 excavation provisionally dated to the Iron Age and Roman periods. The phase of medieval furrows has been removed for clarity.

In the north-west corner of the site, two of the medieval furrows cut through a section of interrupted narrow circular ditch some 15m in diameter. This was interpreted as part of an Iron Age roundhouse and closely resembled the example found in Area 1 during the 2000 excavations. This feature was not revealed by the evaluation. Adjacent to this building lay four postholes in a square arrangement, a common feature of Iron Age sites, often interpreted as the foundations for grain stores.

To the east of this roundhouse lay the enclosure system containing the second roundhouse. The enclosure could now be seen to be roughly triangular in shape with a narrow 'passageway' to the west which seemed to be the entrance. The roundhouse gully had two very apparent phases, with the later one containing a black fill with numerous sherds of Iron Age pottery. Two medieval furrows truncated the roundhouse gully, but fortunately one passed directly through the entrance, narrowly missing the terminals. When the interior of the roundhouse was hand cleaned, a number of postholes were revealed and excavated, but as with the example in Area 1, they formed no obvious pattern.

East of the enclosure lay the agricultural system of nine parallel ditches running WNW-ESE and terminating to the west within 1m of a perpendicular bounding ditch. This arrangement of features was reminiscent of that found at Wollaston in Northamptonshire, which has been subsequently identified as a Roman vineyard. The example at Caldecote is physically almost identical in size, spacing and arrangement to that at Wollaston and has thus been provisionally given the same interpretation. It is possible that the western boundary ditch was first established for at least part of its length during the Iron Age and recut during the Roman period. Certainly, the more haphazard ditch that cuts across the vineyard planting trenches forming the eastern ditch of the trackway is a later Roman imposition.

To the south-west of the enclosure, a semicircular gully around 10m across was cut by the western trackway ditch. A similar feature was found in the southern part of Area 2 during the 2000 excavation.

Area 4 (South)

Area 4 consisted of slightly less than half of the total excavation area. Although it had been intended to be a single open area, this became logistically impossible because of service runs crossing part of it. The part directly to the south of Area 3 was designated 4A, while further to the south beyond the hedge that was to remain lay Area 4B. Area 4C was the name given to the trench to the west of Area 4B. As seen in evaluation Trenches B1 and B2, much of Area 4A appeared archaeologically blank apart from the ridge and furrow, however, the excavation revealed a very different story. The vineyard continued into Area 4A and ended, while the bounding ditch to the west turned a corner and headed north-westwards. The eastern ditch of the trackway also terminated in Area 4A, however, this may have been part of an entrance, since another terminal was located 15m further south. Evaluation trench F1 lay within Area 4B but revealed no archaeology. As it turned out, to the west of the trench lay a complex of pits cutting a narrow WNW-ESE gully. Area 4C revealed no archaeology, in common with evaluation Trench F2, to which it lay parallel.

In Area 4A the western bounding ditch of the vineyard took an abrupt turn ninety degrees to the north-west, continuing in a straight line to the baulk. Within this appeared a narrower and less substantial gully and the remains of a single small pit or posthole.

The vineyard trenches ended with the southernmost one joining the boundary ditch to the west some 9m before the ditch turned a corner westwards. The eastern ditch of the trackway terminated just south of the last vineyard trench.

In Area 4B, several pits that may have been Bronze Age in date were cut by a narrow gully of Middle Iron Age date, which was itself later truncated by numerous intercutting pits in two rough spatial groupings. The gully had also been cut in segments of varying depth, as well as having postholes inserted along its length at irregular intervals. At the east end of the trench, the ditch that originated at the southern edge of Area 4A was seen to continue southwards and this may be the same linear feature encountered in both Trench E5 (1996) and Trench 9 (2001).

6 DISCUSSION

The aim of the project was to establish the character, date, state of preservation, and extent of any archaeological remains within the site. Given the existing state of knowledge about the site and its immediate environs to the north, it was always likely that further archaeology would be revealed during the evaluation and this has proven to be the case.

Although the assemblage of pottery recovered from the site is small, however, it is large enough to date the majority of the features (see Appendix A). The remaining features were dated by morphology and stratigraphy. Environmental evidence was similarly poor (see Appendix B) and the soils were deemed unlikely to preserve palynological evidence, but this does not preclude the possibility of finding suitable deposits in future (S Boreham pers. comm.). Three main phases of features were identified across the area, which could be broadly dated as Iron Age, Roman and medieval.

A small number of features present on this site relate to a phase of Iron Age occupation such as that seen in the excavation just to the north. Feature types encountered include both curvilinear and straight ditches and gullies, although no evidence was found of substantial enclosures. Curvilinear gully **2106** at the north-east end of Trench 4 is dissimilar to the other ditches in this trench and does not fit in with the pattern of their spacing. It may also have had a shallow recut on the outside, and it therefore suggests the eaves drip gully of a possible Iron Age roundhouse. During the evaluation in 1996, a similar feature was recognised but not excavated in Trench E5. Although it was not interpreted as part of a roundhouse at the time, it might be looked at again in the light of recent findings and more firmly attributed to the Iron Age. The features observed in the excavations to the north in 2000 and 2001 included roundhouses, enclosures, gullies, and a large quarry pit. The remains found to the

south of Hall Drive are almost identical to those found to the north, demonstrating a continuity of features across this landscape during the Iron Age and Roman periods. Indeed, excavations in 2000 produced evidence that there may have been unbroken use of this land spanning the Conquest period, and gathering further data to test this hypothesis has become a major research focus for continuing work in this area.

The excavation that was taking place to the north at the same time as this evaluation gave added information to aid the understanding of the Roman agricultural features. If the excavated ditch sections are extrapolated between trenches, the pattern that emerges is very similar to that seen 200m to the north (see fig 4). This involves at least eight parallel ditches approximately 5m apart, measuring 0.6-0.9m wide and up to 0.4m deep, often with near vertical sides and essentially flat bases. These ditches run WNW towards a wider perpendicular ditch, apparently acting as a boundary to the system. Each of the parallel ditches terminates in a square butt end approximately 0.7m short of this boundary. The ditches found in the excavation during 2001 are essentially identical, however, their spacing is slightly greater at 6m apart.

Features both broadly and closely resembling this pattern of ditches have been observed on sites around the county and further afield. At Godmanchester, a pattern similar to this has been observed in aerial photographs adjacent to a Roman villa site at Rectory Farm and was interpreted as Lazy Beds, a system of cultivation based upon ridges of soil upcast from spade dug parallel trenches (Green 1976). This method may be the precursor of medieval ridge and furrow and is most widely known from Ireland and the comparable Runrig system of Scotland. Close to the Car Dyke at Waterbeach, another example has been excavated and again interpreted as Lazy Beds (Macaulay 1999). Excavations at Wollaston in Northamptonshire have provided strong evidence for growing vines in similar features, with grape pollen being found in the features (Meadows 1997). At Butt Lane, Milton, excavation revealed a field system of very similar layout but of Iron Age date (Connor 1998). All of these examples share broad similarities, however, each differs slightly from the others and they might be said to represent a spectrum of variations on a theme. Of all these examples, the one that most closely resembles the features at Highfields is Wollaston, and it is therefore tempting to suggest that this might also have been a Roman vineyard. Although there is no direct evidence for grape pollen, the size, spacing and arrangement of the features is almost identical to the Northamptonshire site, so the possibility must be carefully considered. The planting trenches of Roman vineyards in northern Europe have been shown to have a broadly NW-SE alignment and a 5-6m spacing between rows, unlike in southern latitudes, where they can have as little as 3m between the vines. This is because the lower angle of the sun in northern Europe means that the spacing must be greater in order to achieve the same exposure (Wroxeter Roman Vineyard website).

The medieval phase consisted of the familiar pattern of slightly curving furrows up to 3m wide and between 6.5m and 8m apart. In several trenches, the furrows were observed to truncate the narrower Roman ditches and several other undated features.

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APPENDIX A

Ceramic Report by Stephen Macaulay

An assemblage of 32 sherds of pottery was recovered from the evaluation at Hall Drive, Caldecote. The majority of this material was Roman (97%), with 30 out of 32 sherds derived almost certainly from local sources. Pottery styles identified include cooking ware, table wares (bowls & flagons) and are entirely comprised of sandy ware fabric types. The assemblage was dominated, unsurprisingly, by local greywares (coarse wares) and can thus only be dated to the Roman period in general. The Roman pottery is, however, most likely to pre-date the 2nd century AD, based on the total lack of any Nene Valley or Horningsea wares, which dominate the later assemblages on Roman rural sites in the vicinity (Lucas 1994, Macaulay 1997).

The absence of storage vessels and fine table wares from the assemblage implies Roman domestic preparation and consumption activity (table and kitchen wares), however it is small and very likely to have been produced locally. The pottery is fairly abraded with only small fragments which may suggest that they were introduced to the features during manuring.

Context	Description	Total Wt (g)	Sherd Count.	Context Date Range
2009	Essex Redware (glazed)	5	1	Post-Medieval (17 th C)
2036	GW bs	5	1	Roman
2043	GW (burnt) bs	4	2	Roman
2044	GW bs	1	2	Roman
2087	GW bs, OGW bs	7	5	Roman
2095	OGW bs	8	1	Roman
2098	GW bs	7	1	Roman
2117	OGW bs	2	1	Roman
2121	OGW bs	6	2	Roman
2130	OGW bs (poss. storage jar)	6	1	Roman
2147	OGW bs	1	4	Roman
2151	GW bs	1	1	Roman
2155	OGW bs	1	1	Roman
2157	OGW rs (decorated)	9	1	Roman
2163	OGW bs	18	7	Roman
99999	GW rs	19	1	Roman

GW = greyware, OGW = oxidised greyware rs = rim sherd, bs = body sherd

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APPENDIX B

Environmental report by Rachel Fosberry

Methods

9 bulk samples were processed by flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. 10 litre samples were taken from the fills of mainly ditches and a 1 litre sample was taken from a posthole. All samples were treated with Decon-90 in an attempt to break down the heavy clay. The samples were processed using the AFU standard flotation machine. Flots were collected in 0.5mm meshes and residues were retained in a 1.0mm mesh. The dried residues and flots were scanned by eye. Any material present was noted in Table 1 below.

Results

Preservation of charred plant remains was very poor, with no survival except for small (<5mm) fragments of wood charcoal. These occurred in sample 4, the remaining samples being completely devoid of charred plant matter. Sample 4 also contained a single grain of barley and fragments of Hawthorn seeds. Both were identified as modern contaminants (Alan Clapham pers comm). A hammerstone (small find 1) was retrieved from sample 3, while a small amount of bone and pot were recovered from samples 5 and 7 respectively.

Conclusion

The general lack of plant remains suggests that conditions at the site do not favour preservation. No further analysis of these samples is required.

Table 1

Sample Number	Context Number	Initial Volume (litres)	Volume Processed (litres)	FLOT					RESIDUE						Comment
				Grain	Seeds	Charcoal	Bone	Pot	Grain	Seeds	Charcoal	Bones		Pot	
												Small	Large		
1	2075	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2	2036	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
3	2044	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Hammerstone
4	2087	10	10	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
5	2147	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	
6	2155	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
7	2157	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	
8	2105	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
9	2016	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

- + = present (1-5)
- ++ = frequent (6-25)
- +++ = common (26-100)
- ++++ = abundant (>100)



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