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Archaeological Field Unit

**Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval Features at The
Lady Adrian School, Cambridge: An Archaeological
Investigation**

Taleyna Fletcher

2004

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. 723

Commissioned by *Cambridgeshire County Council Property and Procurement*

**Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval Features at the Lady Adrian
School, Cambridge: An Archaeological Investigation**

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SUMMARY

The Archaeological Field Unit (AFU) of Cambridgeshire County Council conducted an archaeological evaluation on the playing fields of Chesterton Community College, to the north-west of the Lady Adrian School, Courtney Way, Cambridge between 11th and 18th May 2004. The work was commissioned by Mr Richard Bircham of the Property and Procurement Division of Cambridgeshire County Council. The work was carried out in advance of development of the site for a car park as part of the plans for expansion and development of the existing school site.

The investigation comprised one open area excavation measuring approximately 40m² in an area previously investigated by the AFU (Hickling 2003), and two additional trenches, totalling 40m in length within the proposed development area.

Both trenches and the open area revealed the presence of archaeological features; two prehistoric pits a prehistoric ditch with evidence of a re-cut in the Roman period, two medieval ditches, one with stakeholes in its base, a post-medieval furrow and a rubbish pit.














Archaeology was encountered at approximately 0.50m from the ground surface.

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Drawing Conventions

Sections

Limit of Excavation	
Cut	
Cut - Conjectured	
Soil Horizon	
Soil Horizon - Conjectured	
Intrusion/Truncation	
Top of Natural	
Top Surface	
Break in Section	
Cut Number	
Deposit Number	117
Ordnance Datum	 18.45m ODN
Environmental Sample	
Stone Inclusions	

Plans

Limit of Excavation	
Deposit - Conjectured	
Natural Features	
Intrusion/Truncation	
Sondages/Machine Strip	
Illustrated Section	
Archaeological Deposit	
Modern Deposit	
Excavated Slot	
Cut Number	118

Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval Features at the Lady Adrian School, Cambridge: An Archaeological Investigation (TL 4523 6017)

1 INTRODUCTION

Between the 11th and 18th May 2004 the Archaeological Field Unit (AFU) of Cambridgeshire County Council undertook an excavation on land adjacent to the Lady Adrian School, Courtney Way, Cambridge (TL 4523 6017). The site is located 1.5km north of the centre of Cambridge.

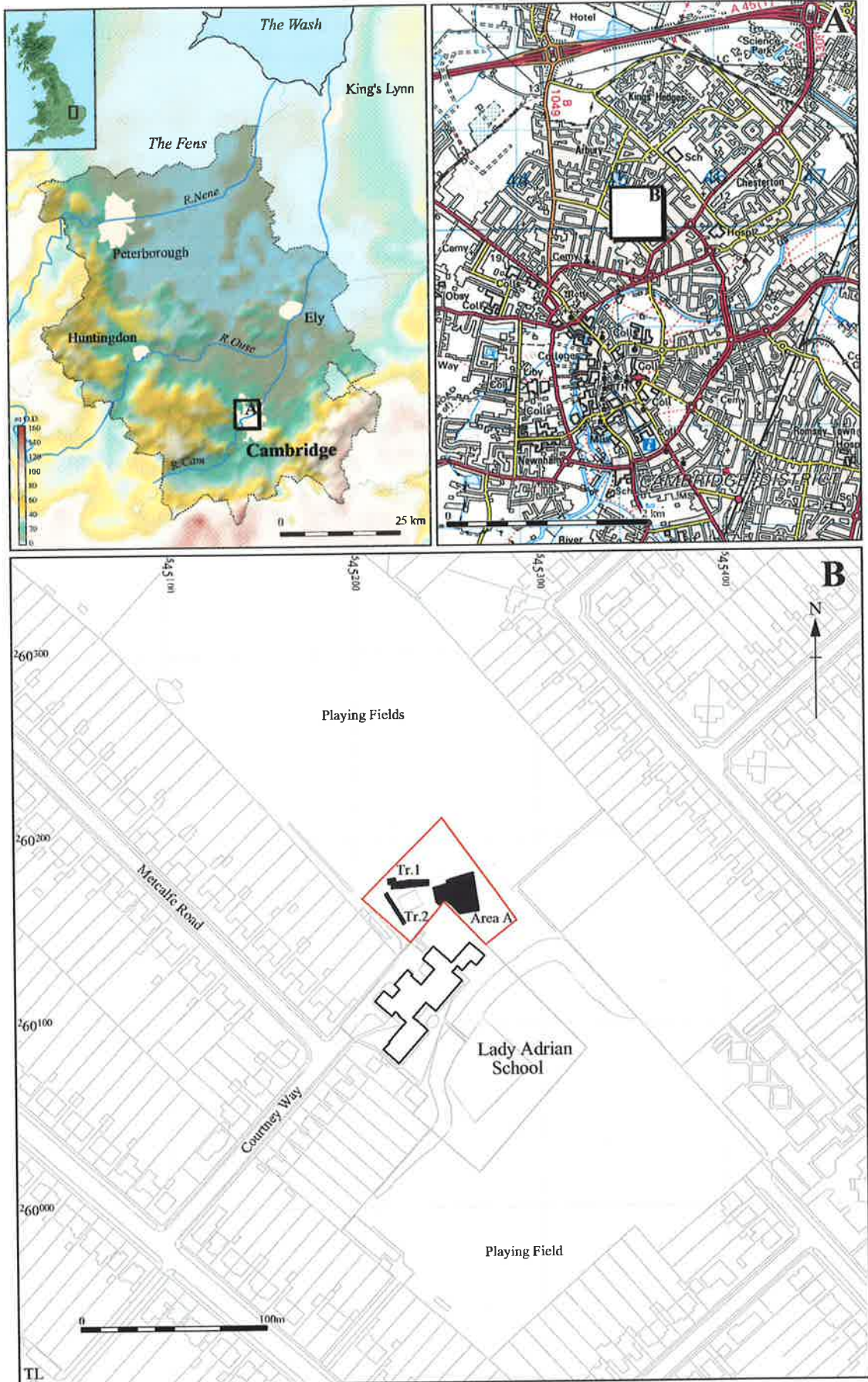
The work was commissioned by Mr Richard Bircham of the Cambridgeshire County Council Property and Procurement Division in advance of the development of the site for a new 49 space car park set within the playing fields of Chesterton Community College to the north-west of the existing buildings. The car park is part of the redevelopment of the new Area Special School. The sub-surface drains and underground service trenches will be in the subject area, which required investigation.

The excavations were carried out in accordance with a County Archaeology Office Brief (Gdaniec, March 2004). The archaeological objectives for the excavation were recorded in the specification for the site (Macaulay 2004). The specification (and location of the trenches) was approved by the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Office (CAO) before the start of the excavation. The location of the open area was also determined by the Chesterton Community College athletics running track in the playing field, which was still in use at the time of the investigations.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The site lies north-west of the junction between Gilbert Road and Milton Road and 1.5km north of the centre of Cambridge.

The British Geological survey has mapped the underlying geology and the site lies on 2nd Terrace Gravels (BGS Sheet 188). The site was under grass and formed part of the playing fields for Chesterton Community College. The site lies above the 10m (OD) contour, on the northern side of the River Cam. The former topography has been lost due to the 20th century expansion of Cambridge. The land to the south has been radically altered by 20th century quarrying (and subsequent rubbish tipping). Only the land north of the Lady Adrian School has not been severely truncated by later development.



Based upon Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown Copyright.
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Figure.1 Location of the investigations (black) with the development area outlined (red)

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Prehistoric

Previous investigations have taken place on this site as part of the evaluation of the New Milton Road Primary School, which incorporated a single trench within the subject development area (Hickling 2003). Within this east west orientated trench, a single ditch was recorded which was believed to be Bronze Age in date and orientated north to south. This alignment was totally different to the modern streets and houses, which are in turn based on the alignment of the pre-20th century field system. This ditch was considered to be a relic of an earlier field system and indicator that there was surviving prehistoric archaeology on the site.

A Neolithic flint axe and arrow head (SMR CB2430) were found 400m west of the development site. Apart from this there is no evidence in the immediate vicinity for occupation before the Iron Age. However, Middle Bronze Age structures and a "buried soil" were identified a little further away at the East Waste Landfill site, Butt Lane, Milton (Connor 1998).

Iron Age material has been recovered from excavations on the Roman sites at Arbury Road and Kings Hedges, 900m north of the development site (SMR 05414a, 05415a, 05416a, 05419a and 05422a) and at the Roman town and/or fort at Castle Hill, 1km to the south-west, (SMR 05251a and 08768). This suggests that the Roman settlement pattern is probably heavily based on the earlier Iron Age one.

3.2 Romano-British

Previous archaeological excavations at Arbury Road and Kings Hedges revealed a high status 2nd-3rd century villa with associated agricultural field systems and settlement. Extensive Roman settlement remains have also been found 400-800m to the north, around Humphreys Road and as far as Alex Wood Road, including stone buildings, ovens, hearths, wells and burials dating to the 3rd century (e.g. SMR 05427, 05430). Other Roman remains have been found on Chesterton Road (drain pipes) and Victoria Road (pottery sherds). Castle Hill is the site of a Roman town and possibly a fort, which has been continuously occupied through the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods, to the present day (SMR 05075, 05086, 05087, 05251 and 08768-CB10525), including a Civil War sence on the site of the castle.

3.3 Anglo-Saxon

Anglo-Saxon remains have been found at Swanns Gravel Pit, 300m south of the site (Early Saxon cemetery) and settlement remains at Castle Hill (SMR

04422). Two bronze brooches were found at the junction of Gilbert Road and Milton Road in 1938, possibly relating to burials.

3.4 Medieval

Although evidence of medieval settlement was found at the excavations at Humphreys Road (SMR 5430), the only other medieval evidence is ridge and furrow, the remains of medieval arable agriculture (SMR 5527, 5527a and 10106).

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Excavation

An open area (Area A) approximately 40m² and two trenches totalling 41m in length were opened using a 360° mechanical excavator using a 1.8m wide flat-bladed ditching bucket, under the constant supervision of an archaeologist. Where features were encountered in Trench 2 the trench was widened. The machine continued to remove overburden and deposits until reaching the interface between the soil horizons and the natural gravels, the level at which archaeological features were encountered. After a site meeting with the County Archaeology Office, a further 4 trenches were opened to establish whether any further activity to the south and east of area A could be revealed. These trenches were all empty, with no evidence of any archaeological features and were backfilled immediately following authorisation from Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Office.

4.2 Trench and Area locations

The position of Area A was determined by the location of the ditch, believed to be Bronze Age, found in Trench 8 of the evaluation (Hickling 2003). The discovery of this ditch required further investigation, the aim of which was to fully determine the orientation and function of this feature and to establish through subsequent trenching if there were any co-axial ditches or related features. In addition to Area A, a further six trenches were excavated, two of which (Trench 1 and 2) contained archaeological features. The location of all trenches was approved by the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Office (CAO) (Fig. 1).

4.3 Recording

After machining, the trenches were cleaned in order to fully expose the archaeological features and to understand their extent and relationships within

the trench. All features were hand excavated and recorded using the AFU standard contextual recording system. The trenches were planned at a scale of 1:50 and sections were drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 depending on size and detail required. Colour slide and monochrome photographs were taken as well as digital photographs using a Canon A40 Powershot Digital camera. Environmental samples were taken where appropriate. The spoil heaps were scanned visually for pottery and bone.

Context numbers allocated to Trench 8 during the evaluation stage of work on the site have been amalgamated into the context list for this stage of investigations.

For the purpose of this report, all cut numbers are shown in **bold** text and layers and deposits in standard text.

4.4 Surveying

The trench locations were surveyed using a Leica Total Station Theodolite and tied in to the Ordnance Survey grid. The nearest benchmark was on Gilbert Road, this was traversed into the site in order that levels could be taken on sections. The individual trench plans showing feature locations were then incorporated with the surveying data.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Prehistoric

Group 1: Pits

This group comprised two pits of similar dimension and fill sequence. Despite the lack of secure dating evidence, these are considered likely to be contemporary and the earliest features discovered on the site.

Pit 17

Context **17** filled by **12 – 16**. This circular pit was located against the south-west edge of Area A, and as a result was not fully revealed in plan. Both this pit and ditch **22 et al** were truncated by a later ditch **49 et al**, suggesting perhaps that they may have been open at the same time and together formed a segmented boundary. This pit measures approximately 2.50m in diameter with a maximum depth of 1.10m. The pit had moderately steep, slightly uneven edges sloping down onto a rounded base.

Five fills were recorded within this pit, although the pit is truncated from above, therefore it must be considered that there may have been more upper

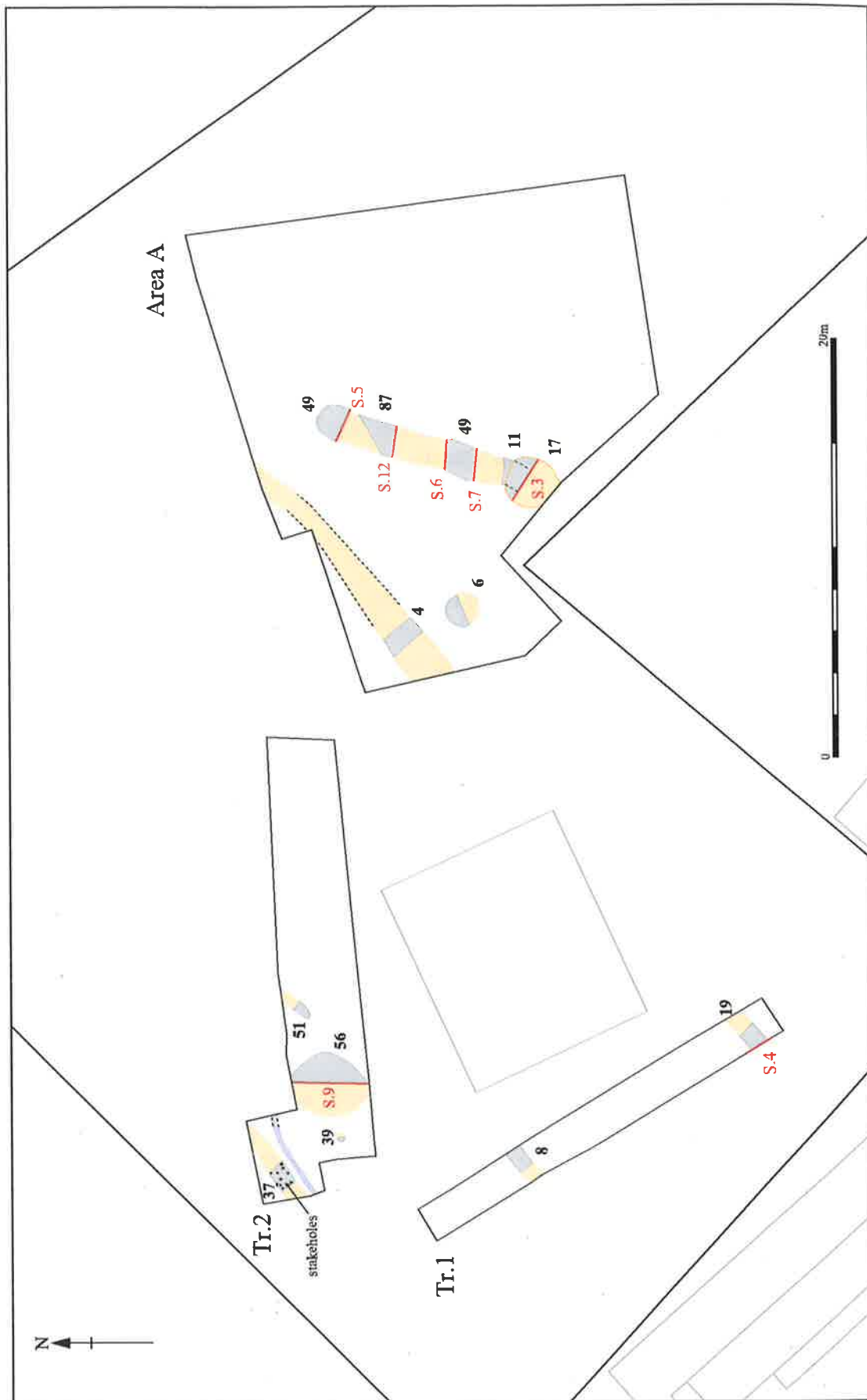


Figure 2 Location of trenches and Area A

deposits lost by truncation. The primary fill of the pit, (16), was an orangey grey, silty clay with occasional pebble stone inclusions. This deposit was difficult to distinguish from the natural during excavation, and so is likely to be the result of collapse of the lower southern side of the pit edge. The next two fills in the sequence (15 and 14) were both very similar orangey grey silt and clay mixed fills with occasional pebble stones. Both fills respected the line of the lower fill and contained no artefacts, suggesting they are slumped deposits either accumulating naturally or a result of being dumped into the pit from the same side. The next fill, 13 was a mid orangey grey sandy silt containing moderate amounts of stones and charcoal flecks. The quantity of the charcoal suggests that this deposit was not formed naturally as a result of the pit being left open, but in fact a deliberate deposition within the pit. This fill contained a single flint, likely to be a preparation flake from the making of tools. The upper deposit, (12) was an orangey light brown sandy silt with occasional small pebble stone inclusions. This deposit was likely to have been the result of a natural slump from the side of the pit into the upper remnants having being long out of use or perhaps the remnants of a bank which was located on the southeast side which has been pushed into the pit. This event of a re-deposited of natural from a bank having been pushed into the pit from the south-eastern side, (represented here by context 12) is likely to be contemporary with 23, the fill of ditch 22 less than 6m to the north. This deposit also appears to have been pushed in from the same side and is followed by the re-cut ditch 49 (represented in this section by 11).

A sample was taken and analysed, which produced a significant amount of charcoal. A few fragments of charred wheat were present within the sample, but there was no dating evidence or other significant inclusions. No artefacts were recovered from this fill. This upper fill was truncated by ditch 11, which was Roman in date.

Soil samples were taken from all five deposits within this pit. All contexts contained modern rootlets and charcoal flecks and context 12 contained a few fragments of charred wheat (See Appendix 2).

Pit 56

Context 56, filled by 52, 53, 54 and 55. This large pit was sub-oval in plan, with moderate sloping edges and a concave base (plate 1). The length of this feature was more than 3.75m, with a width of 3.05m and a maximum depth of 1.10m. Two worked flints were found within the secondary and tertiary deposits. This pit was similar in size to pit 17 located to the south-east in area A. Although they cannot be directly linked by dateable evidence or fill sequence, it is possible that these features are contemporary, and that this pit may form another part of the early boundary system. However, the exact function of the pit remains unknown. The site was dry and set on free draining soils, and as there was no obvious close water supply, this pit may have been used for the storage of water.

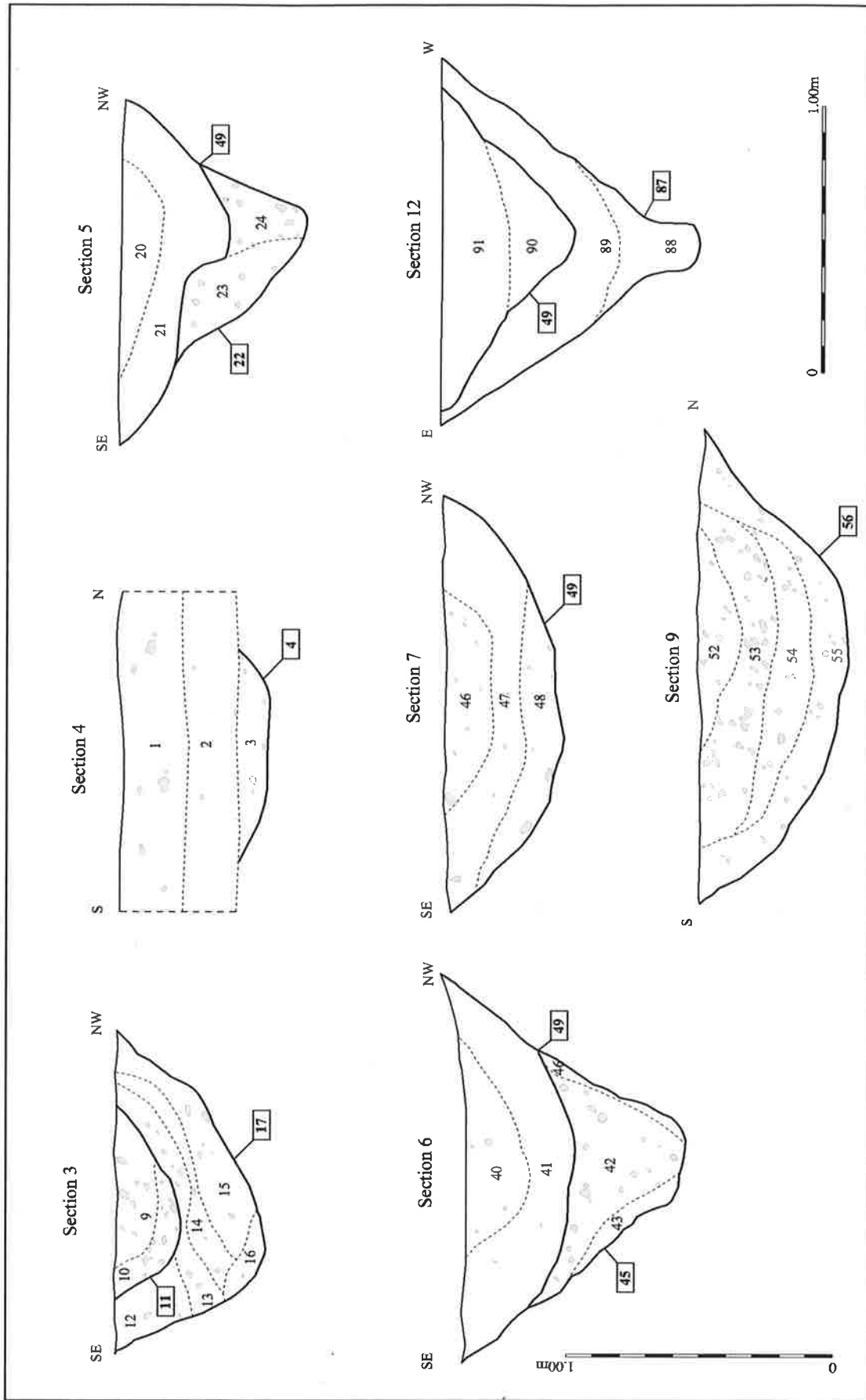


Figure 3 Sections (section 12 from evaluation stage)

The sequence of fills represents four separate events. The primary fill, context 55, is a result of silting as the pit has been exposed to natural weathering and erosion from the gentle sloping edges allowing water to easily wash in. Following this, context 54 was a brownish, dark grey clayey silt material with frequent charcoal flecks from which a single flint was recovered. This deposit may represent deliberate backfilling of rubbish. Above this was a loose, orangey, light grey sandy silt, context 53, from which another single flint flake was recovered. This deposit may represent an accumulation of natural material, or perhaps this deposit was designed to seal the lower humic fill. The upper fill, context 42 was a deposit of natural silting which has built up as the pit went out of use.

Soil samples were taken from each of the deposits. All contained a few charcoal flecks, and the sample from context 53 contained a few grains of wheat. Overall however, nothing significant was recorded from the samples (See Appendix 2).



Plate 1 Pit 56

5.2 Roman (?)

Group 2: Boundary Ditches

This group comprised a short length of ditch (**22 et al**). This boundary was later reinstated/re-cut by a single continuous length of ditch (**49 et al**). As a result, the earliest ditch **22 et al** is not visible in plan in Figure 2.

Ditch 22 et al

Context **22** filled by 23 and 24, **45** filled by 42, 43 and 46, **87**, filled by 88 and 89. This short length of ditch was 7m long with a maximum width of 1.40m and aligned north-east to south-west. The northern terminus (**22**) was very clear in plan, yet the southern terminus was not visible at all as the ditch had been completely truncated away by a later re-cut (**49 et al**). However, it was confirmed that this ditch terminated within a 1m segment excavated in which both of the two drawn sections (fig 3, section 6 and 7) show different profiles. Section 6 clearly shows the continuation of this ditch (represented here as **45**), as well as the later re-cut (**49**), whereas section 7 shows only the re-cut (**49**), evidence that the ditch terminated within this slot. The depth of the cut appears to vary along its length.

The shallowest part of the ditch was at its northern terminus where a depth of 0.64m was recorded. A depth of 0.95m was recorded at cut **87** from the evaluation, which was significantly deeper, however this may be due to the fact that the open area was machined to a slightly lower depth than the evaluation Trench 8.

The ditch then becomes shallow again towards its southern end where a depth of 0.77m was measured. This variation in depth suggests perhaps this ditch was perhaps dug by different people, or not at one time, or that the ground into which they were digging varied in compaction and difficulty to remove.

The profile of the ditch is consistent throughout its length. All sections of this feature show very steep sloping edges, and a narrow base, although excavated section **87** is the only one in which the top of the cut could still be seen and has not been obliterated by the later re-cut ditch (**49 et al**). The narrow base of the ditch does vary slightly however. For example, section 12 (cut **87**) shows a very narrow gully-like profile in the base, whereas section 5 (**22**) and section 6 (**45**) show simply a narrow rounded base profile. The fill sequence within this ditch appears to vary slightly.

In the northern terminus (**22**), two deposits were recorded; both suggest rapid backfilling in quick succession. The first of these deposits, 23, was a very compacted mid-orangish brown sand with small to medium sized stone inclusions and patches of silt, very much resembling the "natural". This deposit may represent a bank which has been pushed or slumped in from the southeast side. The second deposit in the sequence in this terminus was 24; a mid greyish brown silt with small frequent stone inclusions. The darker, more silty nature of this deposit may suggest gradual build up and in wash which has accumulated against the edge of the cut and the firm sandy slump (23). Within **87**, (fig 4. Sec 12) a different sequence was recorded. A lower deposit (88) was recorded, this was a pale bluey grey sandy clay with gravel and occasional charcoal inclusions. A fill of this description was not recorded

elsewhere along this ditch. The upper deposit here, (89) was a pale brownish grey sandy clay with occasional gravel stone inclusions. The other terminus of the ditch, 45, contained three fills. Two deposits (43 and 46) of a light-to-mid orangish brown silt and sand could be seen clearly on the edges of the ditch cut, representing natural slumping and in wash settling on the edges. Above these slump deposits was context 42, the main fill of the ditch here. This distinct firm, mid greyish brown, sandy silt had a maximum depth of 0.38m, containing frequent small to medium sized gravel stones. No dating evidence was retrieved from any of the deposits within this ditch, suggesting perhaps that this boundary was some distance from any settlement or activity.

Soil samples were taken from contexts 23 and 24. The sample from 23 contained poorly preserved fragments of charred cereal grains. The sample from 34 contained charred grains of wheat and barley together with two modern seeds. These modern seeds may represent contamination or intrusion from above (See Appendix 2).

Ditch 49 et al.

Context 49, filled by 20 and 21 (see fig. 3, sec.5) 46, 47, 48 (see fig 3, sec.7) 40, 41 (see fig 3, sec. 6), 90, 91 (see fig. 4), 11, filled by 09 and 10 (see fig 3, sec 3). Although this ditch was identified during the excavations on site, its continuation and extent was only fully established during post excavation record checking. This accounts for one number (49) being used in more than one section to describe the cut, and being used during the reappraisal of the evaluation results.

This ditch, on a north-east to south-west orientation, appears to be a re-establishment/ maintenance re-cut of an earlier boundary represented by a short ditch (22 et al). It terminates at the north-east end and in the same place as 22 and continues beyond the south-west edge of Area A, with a total length of 20m revealed in plan.

The profile of the ditch is relatively constant along its length; a shallow, wide "U" shape with an average width of 1.35m, with a gently rounded base. The only exception to this is seen in section 5 (fig. 3, sec 5) where the base appears to dip down on the southeast side. This can be attributed to the compact nature of the deposit directly below (23, fill of 22), which may have been less easy to cut through when initially this ditch was dug. The lower fill sequence is constant throughout.

The lower deposit in each excavated section (contexts 90, 10, 21, 41 and 47) was a firm mid grey brown clayey or sandy silt containing occasional small gravel stones. From context 21 a sherd of Roman pottery was recovered and from 90 several small sherds of abraded pottery, initially believed to be Bronze Age was recovered. Upon re-appraisal of these sherds it was concluded that they were too small and abraded to provide any conclusive analysis and reliable dating evidence.

The upper deposit in each section (91, 09, 20, 40 and 46) appears to vary along the length. The three consecutive excavated sections from the northern terminus heading south (20, 40 and 91) contained a dark grey/blackish brown silty sandy deposit with frequent small stones and pieces of animal bone, however, the remaining section revealed an upper fill of mid orangish brown clayey silts. This suggests that the initial deposits within this ditch represents a single event of deliberate backfill, whereas the ditch then remained open and localised slumps and deposits accumulated within the upper remaining depth of the ditch. Section 7 reveals a slightly different sequence with a lower primary fill, 48 of a loose mid orange brown sand with occasional small stone inclusions. No comparison can be found for this deposit along the length of this ditch.

From context 20 three small and abraded sherds of possible Bronze Age Pottery were recovered, indicating possible activity from this date within the vicinity. However, a sherd of post-medieval French Stoneware was also present, believed to be intrusive.

Soil samples were taken from four deposits within this ditch. Context 09 contained evidence of a few cereal grains, and 10 contained barley grains. The sample from context 20 was the only one from the site, which produced a considerable volume from the flot, which included wood charcoal, a legume, a barley grain and a fragmented wheat grain. The sample from 21 only produced a few charcoal fragments.

5.3 Medieval/Post-medieval

Group 3: Ditches

This group comprised two ditches, one with stakeholes in the base, dated to the medieval/post medieval period. They were both on the same north-east to south-west alignment, as was the furrow (04 and 19) and located in Trenches 1 and 2.

Ditch 37

Context 37, filled by 36 and stakeholes 25 to 35. This ditch located in the extended area of Trench 2 was aligned north-east to south-west, visible for 4m and continued beyond the edges of the trench. This ditch had moderately steep shallow sides and a flat base, with a maximum width of 1m and a depth of up to 0.15m. Within the base of the ditch were ten stakeholes. The majority were vertical and up to 0.20m deep, not appearing to form any particular pattern.

These stakeholes could not be seen prior to excavation of the ditch and only became visible in the base, suggesting that stakes were inserted into the base

of the ditch once it was opened. The stakes must have then decayed or been removed before the ditch went into disuse and filled up.

The stakes may have formed part of a wattle fence, perhaps to enclose livestock, or even a settlement enclosure nearby. The fill within the ditch and the stakeholes was compact, mid greyish brown sandy silt with no obvious inclusions. The fill, 36, produced nine sherds of late/post-medieval pottery (see appendix 1), suggesting that there may be further activity dating to this period close by.



Plate 2 Medieval ditch containing several stakeholes cut into the base

Ditch 08

Context **08**, filled by 07. This ditch located in Trench 1 was aligned north-east to south-west and parallel to ditch **37** and furrow **19** et al. possibly forming part of a field system or settlement enclosure. Visible across the width of Trench 1, this ditch continues beyond the trench edges with a width of 0.70m and a maximum depth of 0.10m. This feature had very gradual sloping concave sides on to a slightly concave base. The fill comprised a light greyish brown silt with moderate gravel stone inclusions from which two pieces of animal bone were recovered together with the spout of a medieval Grimstone jug.

Group 4: Ridge and Furrow

Furrow 04 et al.

Context **04**, filled by **03** and **19**, filled by **18**. This early post-medieval furrow was identified in Area A and continues through Trench 1. This furrow was on a north-east to south-west orientation, respecting the alignment of the other medieval/post medieval ditches on the site. The furrow appears to be wider in area A than in Trench 2, however this is likely to be due to the depth of machining, being slightly deeper in Trench 2. The dimensions therefore varied between **04**, where the feature was 2m wide and 0.14m deep and **19** where width was 0.78m and the depth was 0.07m. This is the same feature continuing; both fills containing clayey silty deposits with sherds of post-medieval earthenware and redware.

5.4 Undated and Modern

Ditch 51

Context **51**, filled by **50**. This ditch terminus was orientated on a north-east to south-west alignment, respecting the orientation of the other medieval/post-medieval ditches, suggesting that this ditch may be contemporary, despite the lack of finds from it. It is also roughly aligned with ditch **08** in Trench 1, which does not appear to return in Trench 2. It could be suggested that **08** could terminate somewhere between the two trenches thus forming an entranceway. The profile was irregular, with one steep side on the east and a shallow, stepped side on the west and a narrow rounded base. The deposit within this feature, **50**, was a light, pale grey silt with no obvious inclusions. Due to the light colouration of this feature, it is likely to be earlier than the darker filled medieval/post-medieval features.

Pit 06

Context **06**, filled by **05**. This post-medieval pit, was circular in plan, 1.70m wide with steep, almost vertical sloping edges. The pit was not fully excavated due to its depth, and having confirmed that it was post-medieval. The deposit, **05**, was a mid brown silty sand with mid orange brown patches. Finds from this pit included sherds of pottery dating between 1600 and 1900 (see appendix 1) as well as several iron hoops encountered at regular intervals as excavation increased in depth. This suggests that this pit was for rubbish into which a wooden barrel and other items of domestic waste have been deposited.

Posthole 38

Context **38**, filled by **37**. This shallow, undated posthole was subcircular in plan with a width of 0.20m and a maximum depth of 0.15m. The deposit was a moderately compacted, mid grey-brown clayey silt with occasional small

stone inclusions. There were no other associated features identified during the investigation, however, as this feature was located close to the western extent of Trench 2, there is a possibility that associated features may continue beyond the trench edge.

6 DISCUSSION

The area of the development attached to the Lady Adrian School has not been truncated and archaeological features remained intact whereas 20th century quarrying and subsequent rubbish tipping have radically altered the land to the south.

The earliest activity identified during this investigation was represented by two large pits (**17 and 56**). In the absence of any secure dating evidence, the flint assemblage from these pits has been studied. A single possibly Mesolithic or Early Neolithic flint blade was recovered from an upper fill in pit **56** (see Appendix 3). However, residuality cannot be ignored and this pit could be later in date. If it is later, it could be Bronze Age, as Bronze Age pottery has been identified from the site. The flints recovered from pit **17**, are small undiagnostic flakes, which although cannot attribute these features to any given period, they do suggest that there was some flint working in the vicinity. All of these flints were struck from the same chalky cortex, likely to have derived from the south Cambridgeshire region (B. Bishop, pers comm.)

The Roman activity on site was represented by a boundary formed by ditch **22** et al. which was later re-established by a shorter length of ditch cut into the top which contained Roman pottery. The re-cut, represented by **49** et al was identified fully during post-excavation analysis, and dated to the Roman period by a sherd of pottery found within a lower fill within the terminus. Upon the identification of this re-cut, it was considered necessary to reconsider the interpretations of the evaluation which initially located and recorded this boundary as Bronze Age in date (Hickling 2003). The re-cut can be seen within the part of the ditch excavated, (fig 4, section 12), however this was not the case during the initial work, and the sherds of possible Bronze Age pottery which were recorded, must now be assigned to the lower fill within the re-cut. This discovery leads us to a new interpretation of the site from that of the evaluation, suggesting that an earlier boundary existed comprising a ditch of prehistoric date, re-instated during the Roman period. The discovery of the possible Bronze Age pottery during the evaluation and within the upper fill of the re-cut terminal does however indicate that there may have been some Bronze Age activity within the area, perhaps disturbed when ditch **22** et al was dug causing some sherds of pottery to accumulate within the deposits.

This investigation also identified the survival of three medieval ditches and furrows, all on the same north-east to south-west alignment, one of which (**37**)

contained the remains of stakeholes within its base. These stakes may have been support posts for a wattle and daub fence line, perhaps for a domestic enclosure. These also suggest that medieval occupation was aligned differently to earlier Prehistoric and Roman field boundaries.

7 CONCLUSIONS

Investigations at the Lady Adrian School have identified the survival of archaeological features of Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval date. It identified the survival of two large, prehistoric pits and a boundary system established in the early Roman or Iron Age period that was maintained into the Roman period. A field system on an entirely different alignment, of medieval origin, was later established on the site.

To fully understand how these boundaries worked and fitted into the immediate environment warrants further investigation.

Little is known about this area in the prehistoric period, and this excavation allowed work to be carried out in an area that has been mostly lost through early 20th century residential development. Fortunately, there remains a substantial area of land presumably undisturbed, to the north of the investigation area currently under the Chesterton Community College playing fields, where future work may provide the opportunity to provide a better understanding of the immediate landscape and date of activity within this area.

This investigation has been highly significant in that it has provided evidence of surviving Prehistoric activity in this area as well as confirming the presence of Roman activity, already known to the south-west (Shire Hall) and north-east (Arbury). The work undertaken here has also demonstrated the excellent survival of archaeology at a depth of up to half a metre below the present ground level.

The small scale of the excavation prevents further meaningful interpretation at this stage.

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The brief for archaeological works was written by Kasia Gdaniec, County Archaeology Office, who visited the site and monitored the works.

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APPENDIX 1: POTTERY ASSESSMENT

By Carole Fletcher

METHODOLOGY

The basic guidance in MAP2 has been adhered to (English Heritage 1991). In addition the MPRG documents *Guidance for the processing and publication of medieval pottery from excavations* (Blake and Davey, 1983) and *A guide to the classification of medieval ceramic forms* (MPRG, 1998) act as a standard.

Spot dating was carried out using the AFU's in-house system based on that used at the Museum of London. Fabric classification has been carried out for all previously described types. New types have been given descriptive identifiers, but full fabric descriptions using binocular microscope and x20 magnification have yet to be carried out for these. All sherds have been counted classified, and weighed.

All the pottery has been spot dated on a context by context basis; this information was entered directly onto a quantification database (Access 2000), which allows for the appending of further data.

The AFU curates the pottery and archive until formal deposition of the site archive.

THE ASSEMBLAGE

The fieldwork generated 29 sherds (0.427kg) of pottery. Sherds were recovered from seven contexts and are mainly post-medieval. Few fragments of medieval or earlier material were recovered. Context 20 produced three very leached and abraded sherds of Bronze Age pottery weighing 0.004kg, along with a sherd from 16th century German stoneware drinking vessel, context 21 contained a single abraded rim sherd from a Roman vessel and context 36 contained two abraded sherds of medieval sandy ware, the remaining six sherds are post-medieval. Context 07 produced a single large rim sherd from a medieval Grimston ware bridge spouted jug dated to the 13th or 14th century. Context 03 and 05 produced only post-medieval sherds including fragments of plant pot, alongside modern white earthenware and transfer printed vessels. Though the ceramics suggest activity on or around the site from the Bronze Age onwards the majority of the earlier pottery is residual within post-medieval contexts and the assemblage offers little potential for further study. No preservation bias has been recognised and no long-term storage problems are likely.

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Context	Fabric	Number of Sherds	Weight in Kg	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Vessel Forms
03	Earthenware	1	0.01	1700	1800	
05	Flowerpot	3	0.02	1800	1900	
05	Post-medieval Red Ware	3	0.03	1600	1800	
05	Transfer Printed Wares	3	0.04	1780	1900	plate
05	White Earthenware	2	0.01	1800	1900	plate
05	Bone China or English Porcelain	1	0.01	1780	Present?	
07	Grimston Ware	1	0.06	1200	1400	jug
18	Post-medieval Red Ware	1	0.14	1600	1800	bowl
20	Frechen Stoneware	1	0.01	1550	1700	
20	Bronze Age	3	0.00	2000BC	1000BC	
21	Roman	1	0.00	100AD	450AD	
36	Post-medieval Red Ware	6	0.09	1600	1800	
36	Sandy Ware	2	0.01	1200	1500	
36	Unknown	1	0.00	1450	1600	
90	Bronze Age	5		2000BC	1000BC	

APPENDIX 2. ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLE APPRAISAL

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction and methods

Samples were taken from across the excavated area and 15 were submitted for an initial appraisal. 10 litres of each sample were processed by bucket flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flot was collected in a 0.5mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through a 1mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. Sample 12 retained a considerable amount of charcoal and was refloated.

A magnet was dragged through each residue prior to sorting for artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification and the presence of any plant remains or other artefacts are noted in the table below.

1. Results

The flot volumes of all the samples except Sample 12 were very small. Preservation is by charring and is generally poor to moderate. Modern contaminants in the form of rootlets and a few common seeds such as *Chenopodium* sp. are present in most of the samples.

Charcoal fragments are present in most samples in varying quantities. Sample 12 is the only sample to contain a significant amount of charcoal. Charred seeds of common weed plants were absent. Charred grains of barley and wheat were present in some samples but in very low quantities. The residues were all artefactually sterile.

2. Conclusions and recommendations

The low density of charred plant macrofossils in this assemblage precludes the identification of any specific activity that may be associated with any feature. It is not considered that full analysis would add significantly to this interpretation and further work is not recommended.

Sample Number	Context Number	Cut Number	Feature Type	Sample Type	Sample Size (ltrs)	Volume processed (ltrs)	Comments	Flot Volume (ml)	Preservation	Legumes	Modern Seeds	Charcoal <2mm	Charcoal > 2mm	Other (from flot)
1	52	56	pit	Flotation	20	10	Flot contains a few charcoal flecks. Nothing significant	2	Charred					
2	53	56	pit	Flotation	20	10	Tiny flot volume but a few grains of wheat present	2	Charred		+			
3	54	56	pit	Flotation	20	10	Small flot volume. Contained fine charcoal flecks only.	3	Charred		+			
4	55	56	pit	Flotation	20	10	Tiny flot volume. 3 charcoal fragments but nothing else	1	Charred					
5	9	11	ditch	Flotation	20	10	Flot consists mainly of modern rootlets but does contain a few cereal grains (preservation moderate)	20	Charred					
6	10	11	ditch	Flotation	20	10	Flot contains modern rootlets and a few grains of barley. Preservation moderate.	15	Charred	+		+		
7	12	17	pit	Flotation	20	10	Few fragments of charred wheat. Modern rootlets	5	Charred			+		
8	13	17	pit	Flotation	20	10	Flot contains lots of small flecks of charcoal and modern rootlets	20	Charred			++		
9	14	17	pit	Flotation	20	10	Flot consists of mainly modern rootlets. A few flecks of charcoal are present	10	Charred					
10	15	17	pit	Flotation	20	10	Flot consists of mainly modern rootlets. A few flecks of charcoal are present	20	Charred					
11	16	17	pit	Flotation	20	10	Flot does not contain anything significant	10	Charred			+		
12	20	49	ditch	Flotation	20	10	The only flot of considerable volume. Consists of wood charcoal with a single legume (half a pea), one barley grain and a fragmented wheat grain	80	Charred			+	+++	
13	21	49	ditch	Flotation	20	20	Tiny flot volume. Contains a few fragments of charcoal (leaf buds?)	1	Charred			+		
14	23	22	ditch	Flotation	20	10	Flot contains charred fragments of poorly preserved cereal grains	2	Charred			+		
15	24	22	ditch	Flotation	20	10	Tiny volume but did contain 2 charred cereal grains (wheat and barley) and a couple of modern seeds	1	Charred			+		Cereal grains

APPENDIX 3. LITHICS ASSESSMENT

By Barry John Bishop

The excavations recovered four struck flints, consisting of a blade-like flake from context 09, a flake from context 13 a primary (cortical) blade from context 53 and a small, cortical end scraper from context 54. The material was all manufactured from a translucent dark grey flint of good knapping quality, and remnant cortex was thick, soft and white, suggesting that the material was procured directly from the parent chalk. The assemblage was in good condition indicating that, if not *in situ*, it was probably recovered from close to where it was originally discarded. No typologically diagnostic pieces were present, although technologically it was homogenous and characteristic of Mesolithic or Early Neolithic industries. Altogether the assemblage would be suggestive of a short-stay, possibly task specific, camp, typical of transient communities.

APPENDIX 4. FINDS QUANTIFICATION TABLE

Context	Material	Object Name	Weight in kg	Comments
03	Ceramic	Vessel	0.01	
03	Ceramic	Brick	0.05	
05	Ceramic	Vessel	0.10	
05	Ceramic	Brick	0.15	
05	Glass	Glass	0.02	
05	Tile	Tile	0.03	
05	Metal	Metal-working debris	0.15	Discarded modern ironwork
05	Ceramic	Tobacco pipe	0.00	
05	Ceramic	Brick	0.03	
07	Bone	Bone	0.01	
07	Ceramic	Vessel	0.06	
09	Flint	flint	0.00	
13	Flint	flint	0.01	
18	Tile	Tile	0.01	
18	Fe	nail	0.00	
18	Ceramic	Vessel	0.14	
20	Ceramic	Vessel	0.01	
20	Bone	Bone	0.01	
21	Ceramic	Vessel	0.00	
36	Glass	Glass	0.00	
36	shell	shell	0.00	
36	coal	coal	0.01	
36	Ceramic	Vessel	0.10	
40	Bone	Bone	0.00	
53	Flint	flint	0.00	
54	Flint	flint	0.01	

APPENDIX 5: CONTEXT TABLE

Context Same as	Cut	Trench	Category	Feature Type	Function	Colour	Fine component	Coarse component	Compaction	Thickness/Extent	Shape in Plan/orientation	Group
1		All	layer		topsoil	orangey dark brown	clayey silt	fine sub-angular pebbles, Rare brick & tile	moderately compact			
2		All	layer		subsoil	orangey light brown	clayey silt	moderately fine pebbles	moderately compact			
3	4	A	fill		disuse	orangey mid brown	clayey silt	moderately fine and med size sub-angular pebbles. Some brick	moderately compact	single fill		4
4		A	cut	furrow	agricultural						Linear /	4
5	6	A	fill	pit	rubbish	mid brown	silt sand	freq small - med stones. Charcoal, glass, mod pot, CBM.	friable	single fill		
6		A	cut	pit							circular	
7		1	fill	ditch	disuse	light grey brown	silt	mod - freq gravel inclusions, root staining	moderate			3
8		1	cut	ditch							linear	3
9	11	A	fill		disuse	orangey mid brown	clayey silt	moderate med & coarse pebbles	friable	secondary fill		2
10	11	A	fill		disuse	orangey mid brown	clayey silt	freq fine & med sized pebbles	friable	SE side of cut		2
11		A	cut	ditch	demarcation						linear	
12	17	A	fill		disuse	orangey light brown	sandy silt	rare fine / med pebbles	compact			1
13	17	A	fill			orangey mid grey	sandy silt	mod sub-angular stones, charcoal flecks, worked flint	moderately compact			1
14	17	A	fill		disuse	orangey mid grey	clayey silt	rare med sub-angular stones	compact	slopes down to SE of cut		1
15	17	A	fill			greyish mid orange	silty clay	rare fine pebbles	moderately compact			1
16	17	A	fill		disuse	orangey mid grey	silty clay	rare fine pebbles	compact	southern side of base		1

Context Same as	Cut	Trench	Category	Feature Type	Function	Colour	Fine component	Coarse component	Compaction	Thickness/Extent	Shape in Plan/orientation	Group
17		A	cut	pit	demarcation						oval	1
18	19	1	fill	furrow	disuse	mid dark grey brown	clayey silt	mod gravel stones	moderate	single fill		4
19		1	cut	furrow	agricultural						linear	4
20	22	A	fill	ditch	disuse	dark brown	sandy silt	freq small stones, occ flint, charcoal lumps, occ pot & animal bone	friable			2
21	22	A	fill	ditch		mid grey brown	silt	freq small stones, pot	friable			2
22		A	cut	ditch							linear	2
23	22	A	fill	ditch	disuse	mid orange brown	sand	small - med stones	firm	se side of ditch section		2
24	22	A	fill	ditch	disuse	mid grey brown	silt	small - med stones, freq	firm	lower fill of ditch		2
25		2	Fill/cut	Stakehole	Fenceline?							3
26		2	Fill/cut	Stakehole	Fenceline?							3
27		2	Fill/cut	Stakehole	Fenceline?							3
28		2	Fill/cut	Stakehole	Fenceline?							3
29		2	Fill/cut	Stakehole	Fenceline?							3
30		2	Fill/cut	Stakehole	Fenceline?							3
31		2	Fill/cut	Stakehole	Fenceline?							3
32		2	Fill/cut	Stakehole	Fenceline?							3
33		2	Fill/cut	Stakehole	Fenceline?							3
34		2	Fill/cut	Stakehole	Fenceline?							3
35		2	Fill/cut	Stakehole	Fenceline?							3
36		2	fill	ditch	disuse	mid grey brown	clayey silt	occ stones & charcoal flecks	moderately compact	single fill		3
37		2	cut	ditch	boundary						linear	3
38	39	2	Fill	Posthole	?	mid grey brown	clayey silt	occ small stones	moderately compact			
39		2	cut	posthole	?						Sub-circular	

Context	Same as	Cut	Trench	Category	Feature Type	Function	Colour	Fine component	Coarse component	Compaction	Thickness/Extent	Shape in Plan/orientation	Group
40			A	fill	ditch	disuse	dark grey brown	silt	occ small stones, charcoal lumps, flint	friable			2
41	47, 21	45	A	fill	ditch	disuse	mid grey brown	sandy silt	occ small stones	firm	single fill		2
42		45	A	fill	ditch	disuse	mid grey brown	sandy silt	freq small stones	firm			2
43	44		A	fill	ditch		mid orange brown	sand	small stones	loose			2
44	43	45	A	fill	ditch	disuse	mid orange brown	sand	occ small stones	loose			
45			A	cut	ditch	boundary ditch							2
46		49	A	fill	ditch		light orangey brown	silty sand	freq small stones, some flint	friable	central part of section		2
47		49	A	fill	ditch	disuse	mid grey brown	silt	occ small - med stones	firm			2
48		49	A	fill	ditch	disuse	mid orange brown	sand	occ small & med stones	loose			2
49			A	cut	ditch	boundary						curvilinear	
50		51	2	fill	ditch	disuse	light pale grey	silt	occ stone inclusions	moderately compact			
51		50	2	cut	ditch (terminus)							linear	
52		56	2	fill		disuse	orangey pale grey	clayey silt	moderate fine & med angular pebbles, rare charcoal flecks	moderately loose			1
53		56	2	fill		disuse	orangey light grey	sandy silt	freq fine & med sub-angular pebbles	moderately loose			1
54		56	2	fill		backfill	brownish dark grey	clayey silt	moderate charcoal flecking, rare sub-angular pebbles	moderately compact	most of feature in middle		1
55		56	2	fill		disuse	greyish mid orange	clayey silt	freq charcoal flecks, rare sub-angular pebbles	moderately compact			1
56			2	cut	pit							oval	1



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