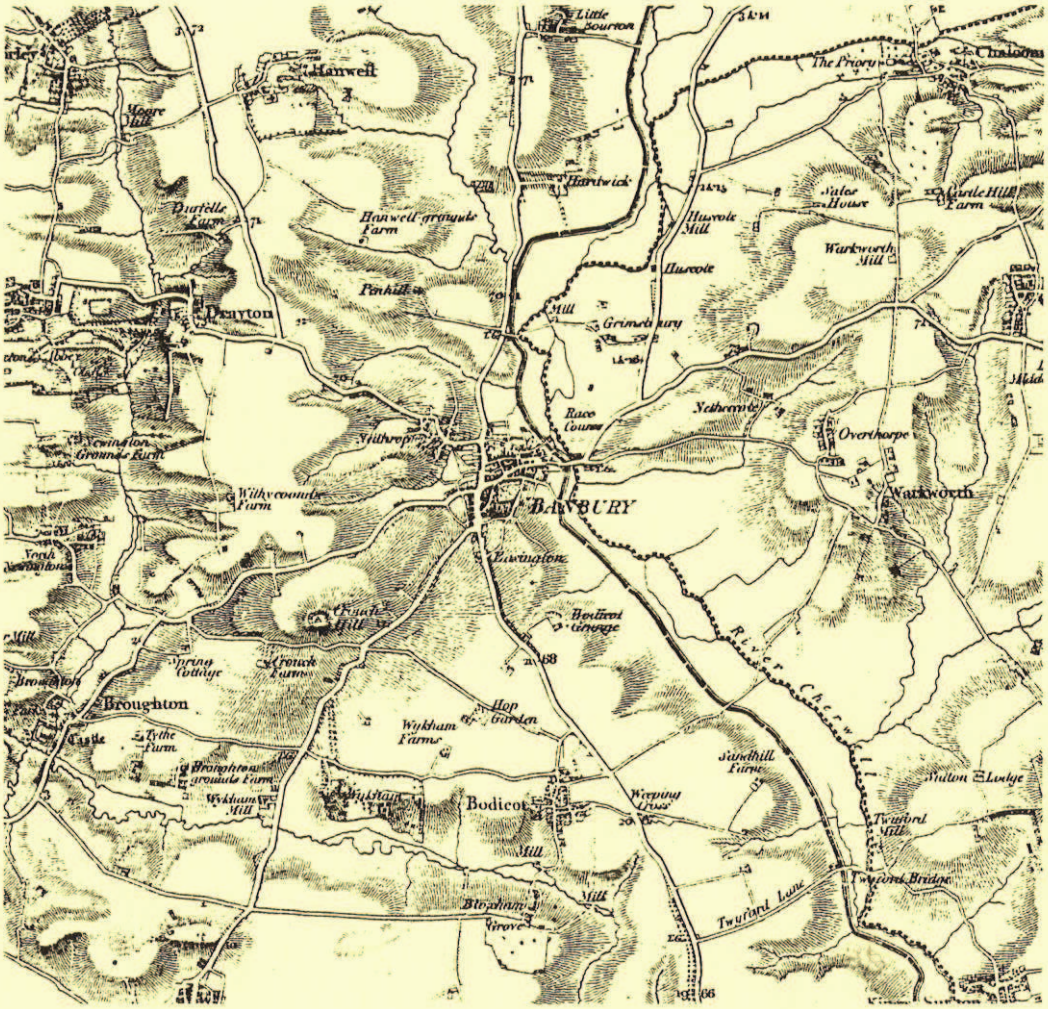
BANBURY

OLD GRIMSBURY (MANOR FARM)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

BANBURY OLD GRIMSBURY (MANOR FARM) ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION 1993

Summary

Archaeological evaluation of land Lying E and W of Manor Farm, Old Grimsbury, Banbury, in August 1993 showed that activity had taken place in the area W of the farm from the 13th century onwards. The earliest medieval features were mainly ditches. In the later medieval period there was evidence for a possible building or buildings in the SW part of the site, associated with N-S and E-W trackways and with agricultural activity to the N. The buildings may have survived in use into the early 17th century. The field E of the farm was devoid of archaeological features.

Introduction and archaeological background

The Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out an evaluation of land at Manor Farm, Old Grimsbury, Banbury, in advance of determination of a planning application for housing construction. The work was commissioned by Clews Architects Partnership on behalf of Messrs JL and WH Stroud.

The site (Figs 1 and 2, centred c SP 46504165) was in two halves, each consisting of a small pasture field lying one E (Wadd Ground) and one W (Square Close, more recently known as Back Field - the earlier names are those given in the Banbury Tithe Award of 1852) of Manor Farm on the N side of Manor Road. Both had originally been larger fields, but are now truncated to the N by Hennef Way, the E-W link road constructed in 1985 connecting N Banbury with the M40. Rescue work carried out on the line of the road during its construction revealed activity of a number of periods from the Bronze Age onwards, with a concentration of late Saxon and medieval features, centred on the higher ground around Grimsbury House immediately NW of the W half of the present site (Allen 1991). The 1985 work was carried out on the premise that the place name (Grimsbury, Domesday 'Grimberie') should indicate the presence of an earthwork, probably of prehistoric or possibly Anglo-Saxon date (Gelling 1954, 413). While no evidence for such a feature was found, the concentration of features in the area was notable, and the possibility that occupation extended both E and S of the identified features was a consideration in requesting archaeological work on the present site. In addition to this, other evidence indicated the presence of extant archaeological features, probably of medieval date, in the W field.

Strategy

The strategy adopted was different for the two halves of the site. For the W half, where surface features of probable medieval date were evident, trial excavation was preceded by a preliminary earthwork survey and geophysical survey. In the E field, where aerial photographs indicated the former presence of ridge and furrow, but topographical considerations (the fact that the field was relatively low-lying) and the absence of visible earthworks suggested that early activity was fairly unlikely, trenching was carried out without the application of other techniques.

Wadd Ground (E of Manor Farm, Fig 3)

The present field lies adjacent to and to the E of Manor Farm. It is now roughly square, with an area of c 0.80 ha. The aerial photographs indicate that most of the field was covered with ridge and furrow aligned approximately N-S, with slight traces of possible E-W aligned ridge and furrow located at the southern edge of the field. The contemporary surface character of the field is fairly flat, with occasional irregularities, particularly in the SW corner adjacent to a small pond. The appearance of the field was of well established grazing, though this was not in fact the case (see below).

Four trenches (1-4), each c 30 m x c 1.9 m, amounting to a little more than a 2% sample, were excavated by a JCB JS110 360° machine. No ancient features were detected. For this reason detailed

plans and section drawings of these trenches are not included in this report, though they are retained in the project archive. Summary context information for these trenches is, however, presented in table 1 below.

The subsoil was a mixed clay with localised patches of sand with manganese staining in places. Above this were more mixed clays which may also have been natural deposits. In most of trenches 1, 2 and 3 these were directly overlaid by extensive spreads of rubble. These spreads probably belonged to a single deposit which consisted largely of brick (of 19th and 20th century types), but also contained occasional limestone blocks, concrete, iron and plastic etc. The layer varied in thickness. It derived from the relatively recent use of most of the field as a temporary dump during nearby construction work, an operation which must have involved stripping topsoil from the field before dumping. The rubble should have been completely removed before reinstatement of the field (Bill Stroud pers comm) but clearly this was not done consistently. In trench 4, where stripping and dumping had not taken place, the levelled topsoil pile was evident in section, being noticeably lighter in colour than the underlying very dark greyish brown established topsoil.

Features were very difficult to detect in the clays underlying the topsoil and dumping layers. Even relatively recent features such as field drains and an electrical cable did not show until they were hit by the machine. The fills of the cuts for these features were indistinguishable from the surrounding deposits. It is unclear if this is a result of particular characteristics of the clay, or of mixing caused by agricultural activity. The former seems more likely, however. In trench 3 a length of field drain was noted out of position but fairly close to a short stretch of in situ drain. Close examination of the area showed two recent ploughmarks filled with brown dark clay loam terminating near the end of the truncated drain. These had obviously been responsible for the displacement of the loose length of drain. The marks were, however, quite clear, and disturbance caused by regular recent ploughing should have been detectable. Because of the lack of certainty over the identification of cut features all the trenches were probably excavated to a greater depth than would otherwise have been necessary, in order to ensure that the bases of cut features, indistinguishable above, did not appear in the subsoil underlying the clay layers. Features filled with grey clay were in fact seen in the subsoil, but on investigation all proved to be natural in origin.

With the exception of material from the recent dumping layers, all of 19th-20th century date and none of which was retained, there were no finds of any kind. The absence of medieval and earlier post-medieval material was remarkable, particularly in view of the proximity of trenches 1 and 2 to the buildings of Manor Farm.

Back Field (W of Manor Farm, Fig 4)

The field slopes quite noticeably from NW to SE. Before the commencement of fieldwork it was rough pasture. A marked patch in the centre of the field, probably corresponding to the area of most intensive medieval activity, was approximately defined by the occurrence of rough grass of a different type from that in the rest of the field. In the SE corner of the field the site of a row of stone cottages demolished perhaps in the 1940s was still evident as a scatter and piles of grass-covered building material.

Earthwork Survey

A rapid survey of the earthworks in the field was carried out on 13th July 1993 by R Morse and P Booth of OAU. Important features were initially identified on the ground and then sketch plotted at a scale of 1:500. Critical points were measured from a number of locations on the circumference of the field. The principal features located in the survey can be found on Fig 4.

The northern part of the field was occupied by ridge and furrow, aligned roughly N-S. In the SE corner of the field the line of the boundary enclosing the stone cottages, shown on the OS 1:2500 map but now removed, was followed approximately by a low curving grass-covered earthwork (A) which clearly

served as a track linking the gate in the S side of the field with that on the W side of the farmyard of Old Manor Farm. This track may have been formed in part of material derived from the demolition of the cottages and perhaps their garden wall, but it also included more recent dumped material since large lumps of concrete were evident at one point. The most substantial pile of building rubble derived from the cottages themselves is shown on the plan.

North of the curving track the southern limit of the ridge and furrow in the E part of the field was defined by a faint ENE-WSW aligned hollow. This may have linked up with other hollows which focused on a central point (F) in the field, but its westward continuation beyond point B was unclear. On the W side of the field a further E-W hollow (C) was an equivalent feature and also probably connected to point F. The S side of C was slightly but clearly defined up to point D, where it turned to the S for a distance of some 4-5 m before fading out. E of this point the definition of C was very uncertain. Both hollows B and C may have linked to an apparent NNW-SSE aligned ?hollow way (E) which ran roughly through the centre of the field. This was on the same alignment as the ridge and furrow but seems to have been a distinct feature. It was best defined on the N side of the field. Further S, at point G, the course of the hollow way appeared to narrow or be overlaid by a poorly-defined, small, elongated mound (G), the S side of which was approximately in line with the N edges of the E-W hollows B and C. This lay immediately adjacent to the focal point of all the hollows (F) and defined its NE corner, though it is uncertain if this was the original function of G. A rather similar, irregularly-shaped mound (H) lay on the SE side of F. This was fairly well-defined on its W side (and to a lesser extent on the N) but faded out to E and S.

On the NW and SW sides of the focal point F were two possible house platforms, one on each side of the E-W hollow C. The definition of the sides of these platforms away from the edges of the hollows was problematical, and depended as much on changes in vegetation as on earthwork indications. The approximate dimensions of the NW platform (I) were 18 m N-S x 7.5 m E-W and of the SW platform (J) 17 m E-W x 9 m N-S. The rough grass covering the probable platforms I and J also extended over mounds G and H as well as occurring in the intervening hollows. S of house platform J the W edge of the ?hollow way (K) continued to be quite marked, but there was no corresponding feature on its E side, where the field continued to slope away.

In the SW corner of the field there were no evident features of any kind, the area being roughly level, except for a southward dip just N of the S hedge. This may have represented part of the natural contour of the ground.

Geophysical survey

The extent and type of geophysical survey was determined on the basis of the earthwork survey. The large part of the field was covered by magnetometry while a smaller area, concentrated around the probable house platforms, was also the subject of a resistivity survey. The work was carried out by Alister Bartlett of Bartlett-Clark Consultancy. His results are summarised here while the full report can be found with the appropriate illustrations in Appendix 3.

The magnetometer survey detected a number of magnetic disturbances and features, including a series of clearly defined parallel linear features which align with the ridge and furrow markings in the northern half of the earthwork survey. These are arrowed on the half tone plot. A number of other linear magnetic anomalies can also be seen (eg a, b and c as outlined on appendix plot 2i), but they do not form any clear pattern of enclosures or boundaries. They may have been incompletely detected, or they perhaps represent only minor silted furrows or hollows. There are also some more localised anomalies which may indicate pits (circled on plot), although such features are difficult to distinguish from some of the smaller of the spike-like anomalies caused by pieces of buried iron, of which a considerable number are present.

Some magnetic disturbances were detected which may relate to the earthwork in the SW corner of the field. The corner of the earthwork noted at D on Figure 4 appears to have been located, and to form

part of an enclosure. The enclosure is represented in part by positive anomalies which may indicate lengths of ditch, but is also defined by a more continuous band of low readings (arrowed, and labelled d on the half tone appendix plot 2ii. A negative magnetic response of this kind can be caused by a reduction in depth of topsoil over a bank. There is a cluster of irregular pit-like anomalies (e) within this enclosure.

Very strong magnetic disturbances were detected in the SE corner of the survey in the area corresponding to the site of the demolished cottages.

There is little magnetic activity in the vicinity of the house platforms and hollow ways in the centre of the site. This is not unusual, given that the earthworks are largely extant, and therefore contain little magnetically detectable fill, and that masonry is not usually detected in a magnetic survey. The resistivity survey does however show considerable activity in this area, including a region of high readings corresponding to the house platform I. These readings extend further to the W than the platform as indicated on appendix plan 1, and there are also disturbances to the N. The house platform J is also marked by a number of high readings, although they are not as clearly concentrated as at I. There are lower readings between the two platforms and to the E of the survey corresponding to the hollow ways.

The magnetic susceptibility survey (appendix plan 2iii) produced generally low readings, except for the modern disturbances to the SE of the site. It may however be significant that there are enhanced values from within the enclosure to the SW of the site, including a relatively high reading close to the magnetic anomalies at e. An additional check on susceptibility values was made by taking measurements from soil samples collected at 40 m intervals across the site. These readings confirmed the generally low level of response away from areas of modern disturbance, as indicated by the field coil measurements shown on appendix plot 2, but also gave an enhanced value in the SW corner.

In conclusion, the features detected in the magnetometer survey include an enclosure related to the earthworks in the SW corner of the field, which may be associated with other magnetic disturbances (at e on appendix plot 2ii). The ridge and furrow was also clearly detected. Other features may be present, but interpretation of the smaller features is difficult, given the disturbed condition of the site, as indicated by the number of anomalies representing scattered pieces of buried iron. There are substantial modern disturbances at the site of the former cottages in the SE corner of the field. The house platforms and earthworks at the centre of the site responded more clearly to the resistivity survey than to the magnetometer. The high readings from the platforms could be partly a topographical effect, caused by reduced moisture content in the raised areas, but irregular deposits of masonry or rubble, or areas of paving could be present.

Excavation

Eight trenches (trenches 5-12, Figs 5-11) were excavated, representing (as in Wadd Ground) just over 2% of the total area available. Rather than being randomly sited the location of the trenches was determined on the basis of the earthwork survey and provisional results from the geophysical survey. The possibility of locating N-S aligned linear features identified in the 1985 work was also considered, and trenches 5 and 6 were sited with this possibility (inter alia) in mind. Unless otherwise stated the trenches were 30 m long x 1.9 m wide. All were excavated by JCB JS110 360. In most cases the trenches were machined down to or just below the top of the natural subsoil, usually a reddish or red-brown clay, sometimes with patches of sand. It was only at this level that cut features could be discerned, and even then identification was often difficult, particularly once the clay had dried, which it did very quickly. In trenches where deposits of potential significance occurred well above the level of the subsoil machining was usually halted at these layers which were then examined by hand. Stone surfaces or spreads located in trenches 9, 12 and (to a lesser extent) 7 were treated in this way. In trench 10, surfaces relating to the destruction of the cottages known to be of post-medieval date were partly removed by machine to provide a view of any earlier features.

Trench 5 (aligned E-W) Fig 5

The earliest feature was a possible small oval pit or posthole (511), only part of which projected from the S edge of the trench. This was cut by a N-S aligned gully (509), c 0.68 m wide and 0.25 m deep, which lay beneath a general layer (507) identified as extending across the whole trench beneath a lower ploughsoil 501. Layer 507, of dark olive-brown clay, was very difficult to define and its relationship to most of the cut features in the trench was problematical. The fill (508) of gully 509 was the only deposit which was identified with some confidence as underlying 507 (though the fill 510 of feature 511 must also have been beneath 507). All the remaining cut features in the trench were thought to have cut through 507, though this could not be demonstrated with total confidence. All the feature fills were of grey-brown clays

These features included two more gullies, 513 and 503, both about 0.50 m wide, aligned roughly NNW-SSE and NE-SW respectively. 513 was very shallow and was better defined in plan than in section. 503 was about 0.20 m deep with fairly steeply sloping sides. Its fill (504) produced pottery datable probably to the 15th century. At the W end of the trench was a much larger feature, 505, a ditch up to c 1.70 m wide and 0.75 m deep, aligned N-S like the majority of the other features. Its fill contained two 11th-12th century sherds.

The base of a medieval plough furrow, 516, survived in the bottom of the trench after machining. It was filled with 515 which was cut by a fairly recent field drain 514. 514, like the fills of the other features which appeared to cut 507, was overlaid by 501, a ploughsoil below the modern topsoil (500). 514, nevertheless, may originally have been cut through 501, with the subsequent development of the soil having obliterated all traces of this event.

Trench 6 (aligned E-W) Fig 6

The bases of three N-S aligned plough furrows were identified after machining. These were 608 at the extreme W end of the trench, 609 roughly in the middle and 610 towards the E. It is clear from the spacing that there would have been another furrow between 608 and 609, but all trace of this (in plan) was removed by the machining. None of the plough furrows was examined in detail; 609, however, was recorded as being overlaid by a general layer of brown sandy clay (602) up to c 0.15 m thick, which may have been comparable to layer 507 in trench 5. 602 was cut by two parallel gullies or ditches (605 and 607), aligned c NNE-SSW. These were respectively c 1.00 m and 1.70 m wide and 0.35 m and c 0.50 m deep and filled with dark brown and dark grey-brown clay. These fills (respectively 604 and 606) each produced a single sherd, that in 604 dated to the 13th century and that in 606 assigned a 13th-15th century range. The relationship of a further gully/ditch (612), c 0.90 m wide and 0.40 m deep and aligned c ENE-WSW, to layer 602 is unclear, but this feature, like 605 and 607, may also have cut the furrow 609. The upper fill (611) of 613 was notable in containing much charcoal and fired clay.

601 and 600 were respectively a ploughsoil, perhaps of medieval date, and the modern topsoil.

Trench 7 (aligned N-S) Fig 7

A general clay layer (702) up to 0.25 m thick and containing 14th century sherds extended about two thirds of the way along the trench from the S end. It was cut close to its N extremity by an ESE-WNW aligned ditch (705) c 1.40 m wide and up to 0.50 m deep. A 'primary' fill (704) of grey-brown clay occurred on the S side only. The angle of this fill was so steep that it is likely that the overlying fill (703) was in a secondary cut of the feature (the profile of the N side of 705 was much less steeply sloping than the S side, which also suggests a recut). This secondary fill produced a substantial group of pottery datable to the 14th century.

Some 4.5 m N of 705 a further ditch (708) was aligned almost parallel to it. This was c 0.60 m wide and 0.25 m deep and was filled with dark blue-grey clay (707) in contrast to the dark brownish-grey

clay of 703 (the upper fill of 705). Nevertheless it is likely that the two ditches were linked in function (and presumably also in date) since they defined the S and N sides of the E-W holloway identified as an earthwork feature. Within trench 7 the holloway was numbered 711, though it did not form a distinguishable feature which could be clearly located in section. On the ground its appearance was as a wide furrow, and like the true furrows its line was followed by a field drain which obscured the relationship of the 'ploughsoils' 709 (to the N) and 701 (to the S) which met in the vicinity of 711. These layers may have overlaid (and filled) 711, but the comparison with trench 9 to the E suggests that 711 may have been overlaid only by the recent topsoil (700). A further ESE-WNW linear feature (713) was located at the N edge of the holloway and was tentatively equated with the lower part of 909 in trench 9. The existence of this feature was only noted at the end of the excavation and it was not recorded in section. Unfortunately its relationship to 708, which lay partly to the N, is unknown, principally because it was obscured by a further field drain. It may be that 713 was the later of the two, but this is quite uncertain, and there were no finds from either feature. 711 may have been later in date than both these features, but this is also uncertain.

Trench 8 (aligned E-W) Fig 8

This trench was sited to permit an examination of the more northerly of the two putative house platforms and of the adjacent N-S holloway to the E. No clear evidence for the house platform was recovered. At the E end of the trench was a group of roughly N-S aligned ditches. Two parallel ditches (811 lying E of 814), the former narrow and deep (c 0.40 m wide x 0.50 m deep), the latter wide and shallow (c 1.20 m wide x 0.40 m deep) were both cut by a later ditch (809) resembling 814 in profile but even larger (2.00 m wide x 0.50 m deep). 809 lay E of 811 and only marginally cut 814. All the fills were of grey or greenish-grey clay; 810 (in 811) and 813 (in 814) each produced a single sherd assignable to the 12th-14th and 13th centuries respectively, 808, in the later cut 809, contained a few sherds of later 13th century or later date. Immediately W of 814 was the eastern terminus of a roughly E-W aligned ditch 805 which ran most of the length of the trench, curving slightly to the NW at its W end. This ditch was c 0.90 m wide and 0.40 m deep. When the terminus was excavated it proved to contain two cuts, 820 to the S (filled with 819 and 818) cut by 817 (filled with 816 and 815, which produced a small group of 13th century or later pottery) to the N. The latter was thought possibly to be a pit. It is also possible that 805 turned to the S from the point at which it appeared to terminate (the S side of the feature being obscured beneath the edge of the trench at this point), though it should be noted that the dished profile of the base of 820 would not have been consistent with this.

In the centre of the trench the fill of 805 was overlaid by a 4 m wide N-S aligned hollow (806) filled with dark grey clay loam. This feature was the N-S holloway identified on the earthwork plan running immediately E of the putative house platform. This feature probably, and the remaining features certainly, were overlaid by a dark grey green clay layer (802) up to c 0.40 m thick, which perhaps represented a medieval ploughsoil. It in turn was sealed by a later ploughsoil (801) which lay directly beneath the modern turf and topsoil (800). There was no clear evidence to explain the existence of the apparent platform visible at ground level.

Trench 9 (aligned N-S) Fig 9

This trench was sited to examine the southerly of the two putative house platforms, while at its northern end giving a section through the E-W holloway between the platforms and examining a possible western extension at the S end of the northerly house platform, a feature whose existence was hinted at by the resistivity survey. This latter feature proved to be illusory, but the southern platform and the holloway were both identified.

At the N end of the trench were two probable roughly E-W aligned linear features. 917, at the extreme N, was perhaps 2.00 m (plus) in width (its N edge lay beyond the end of the trench), while 916, c 3.00 m further S, was c 1.70 m across. Neither was excavated, but the fill (914) of 916 produced a good group of late 13th century pottery. Both features were possibly overlaid by a mottled brown and blue-grey clay layer 913, up to 0.11 m thick, which was identified in the northern third of the trench (this

relationship, which was only tentatively noted on site, seems rather unlikely). To the S of a later cut (909), layer 907, similar in composition, colour and thickness, may have been equivalent to 913, though it is not clear if this layer was present immediately S of 909. 907 was overlaid by 902 and 906, which were probably the same deposit, up to c 0.35 m thick, seen in different parts of the trench, though it should be noted that while 902 contained a single 13th-14th century sherd the pottery from 906, though mainly of medieval date, also included a small sherd datable to the late 16th century or later. This deposit was overlaid by stony layers 901 and 908 which extended over the southern half of the trench forming a fairly well-defined platform. The former was possibly a makeup layer for the latter, which survived only in a limited area adjacent to the S edge of the E-W holloway. 908 had been damaged by post-medieval ploughing, represented most clearly by 904, a layer containing small ironstone fragments up to c 0.05 m long which overlaid the somewhat irregular N edge of 908 where it was best preserved. Elsewhere in the trench, 901 and 908 were directly overlaid by the modern topsoil 900. (The latest pottery from 901 was datable to the 15th-16th centuries, while 904 included 17th century pottery. The pottery from 900 was later again in date, but nevertheless did not include 19th and 20th century material).

Also immediately beneath 900 was 910, the upper fill of a wide cut 909 situated c 1.60 m N of the N edge of 908. This cut lay directly beneath the dip in the modern ground surface interpreted as an E-W holloway, but the relationship between the two is difficult to determine. The profile of the lower part of 909 (filled by 911) is too steeply sloping to represent a holloway, but it is possible that after 911 had accumulated the resulting hollow served as an access. Both 911 and the overlying fill 910 were generally similar to the fills of other cut features on the site, though 910, a light brown clay silt, was noted as containing numerous snail shells, which contrasts with all the other recorded fills. The occurrence of 909 late in the stratigraphic sequence is apparently consistent with feature 711 in trench 7 to the W, though the lower part of 909 was considered to mirror feature 713, just to the N of 711.

Trench 10 (26 m N-S with 6 m E-W extension) Fig 10

This trench was sited to determine the nature and degree of survival of the post-medieval stone cottages in the SE corner of the field. Time constraints did not permit a detailed investigation of the post-medieval deposits revealed (and finds were not recovered from the recent demolition layers). Consequently the trench was extended to the N and to the W beyond the limits of the post-medieval structures and excavation to the level of the subsoil was confined to these areas.

In the westerly extension a single subcircular pit (1010) c 0.80 m across and 0.23 m deep contained only a fragment of animal bone. No other features which cut the subsoil (1003) were seen. 1003 was overlaid by a brown silty clay ?ploughsoil (1008) which was sealed by deposits relating to the post-medieval structures and contained two sherds of 13th-14th century date. At the S end of the trench a grey sandy loam (1006) may have been comparable to 1008, but the difference in recorded soil type makes it difficult to support this suggestion.

The principal structural feature was a N-S aligned wall (1001) constructed of large roughly squared ironstone blocks. The wall was 0.60-0.70 m thick and extended c 6.60 m southwards from the NW corner of the building, which fortuitously lay within the trench. The largest blocks were up to c 0.60 x 0.40 x 0.15 m, and the eastward return of the wall, in places three courses high, survived to a height of c 0.30 m. The stones appeared to have been laid directly on the clay layer (1008, see above), without the use of a foundation or construction trench. The southerly limit of the wall was not positively identified, but it is possible that the stones of the SW corner had been removed. The location of the corner was probably indicated by a group of flattish stones (1011) which may have formed a surface within this corner. If so the internal N-S dimension of the building would have been c 9.60-9.70 m.

To the S of this putative SW corner, and offset from it c 1 m to the W, was a further N-S aligned wall. This was identified as a band of small ironstone rubble (1004) over 1 m wide, presumably representing the spread of superstructure material. At the S end of the trench, where a length of 4 m was machined to a greater depth than the main part of the trench, this wall line was clearly seen as a foundation or

robber trench c 0.60-0.70 m wide (1012) filled with yellow-brown sand and ironstone fragments (1005). The structural features were butted or overlaid by a number of deposits containing post-medieval artefacts and building materials. Of these 1007, to the N of wall 1001, may have been contemporary with the use of the building, while 1002 represented the spread of debris across the building at the time of demolition. It was sealed by a thin topsoil (1000), only at most c 0.10 m in depth. The spread of domestic rubbish within 1002 was most densely concentrated towards the N end of the trench. This fact, together with the relatively high quality of the character of the masonry in 1001, suggest that 1001 formed the wall of the building and that the wall in cut 1011 to the S defined a garden in front of the cottages. The thickness of the two walls is similar, so there is nothing to choose between them on that basis.

Trench 11 (15 m N-S) Fig 11

This trench was excavated to examine the continuation of the slight E-W holloway to the E of the house platforms in the centre of the field.

At the S end of the trench a roughly E-W aligned ditch (1104) was up to 2 m and 0.44 m deep, with a somewhat irregular profile. The fill of this feature (1105) appeared to be cut by a shallow N-S gulley (1106) c 0.65 m wide filled with light grey-brown clay (1107), virtually indistinguishable from 1105, which produced a few mid 13th century (or later) sherds. Some 4.50 m N of its intersection with 1104, 1106 met another major linear feature (1108), apparently aligned c NW-SE. This had similar dimensions to 1104, but its plan and orientation were much less regular. The relationship between 1108 and 1106 was not determined and the fill (1109) of 1108 contained only two 13th-15th century sherds, insufficiently distinguishable from the material in 1106 to resolve the issue .

N of 1108 were a number of unrelated features. 1110, adjacent to 1108, lay partly beneath the W baulk from which it projected c 0.50 m. It was relatively wide (0.80 m) and shallow (0.20 m deep). N of 1110 was a circular stone packed posthole (1112) c 0.45 m across. N again were two irregular features, 1120 and 1116, neither of which was examined. 1116 might have been the terminal of an E-W aligned linear feature projecting from the W baulk of the trench, but it may have been a natural feature. The irregular outline of 1120 suggests that it too was a natural feature. At the extreme N end of the trench 1118 may have represented the S edge of another E-W aligned feature. It, too, was not examined. It was cut by a N-S field drain, this being, remarkably, the only instance on the site where the cut of the drain was clearly visible.

All the features in the southern half of the trench were overlaid by 1102, a mixed sandy clay layer which probably represented medieval ploughing. The posthole 1112 was recorded as cutting this layer. The relationship of the features in the N part of the trench (1120, 1116 and 1118) to 1102 was not recorded, but it is likely that they, too, lay below it. 1101, like 1102, was probably a medieval ploughsoil. It ranged from 0.20 m thick at the N end of the trench to c 0.40 m thick at the S, and was overlaid by the modern topsoil (1100). There was no evidence for the presence of the holloway. Since this was only a very slight superficial feature, however, the absence of related sub-surface features is not surprising

Trench 12 (14 m E-W) Fig 11

This trench was sited to examine the superficially featureless area between the house platforms and a possible N-S earthwork towards the W side of the field.

No definite cut features were seen in this trench. The clay subsoil (1205) was overlaid by a mixed grey brown silty clay with charcoal flecks (1204) which contained pottery sherds. This in turn was sealed by 1203, a similar dark grey brown layer, also with charcoal, which contained a group of 14th-15th century pottery. 1203 was up to c 0.32 m in depth, being thickest towards the E end of the trench where it was overlaid by a stone spread 1202, comparable to layer 901/908 in trench 9, which projected some 3.50 m from the E end of the trench. 1202 was mainly composed of small ironstone fragments

up to 0.17 m in length, but towards its fairly well defined W edge an isolated roughly square block c 0.27 x 0.28 m could have been a padstone for a timber structure. The layer contained a group of pottery of which the latest material dated to the 16th century.

To the W of 1202 and possibly butting against it was a further clay layer (1207) very similar in character to 1203 (which was overlaid by both 1202 and 1207) but distinguished by being less compact and clayey. It is uncertain whether this was 1203 in a disturbed form (in which case it could not have butted the stones of 1202) or was a distinct deposit. Pottery from this layer, like that from 1202, included 16th century material. Both 1202 and 1207 were overlaid by 1201, a mid brown silty clay layer up to c 0.11 m thick, which lay beneath the modern turf and topsoil. 1201 also contained 16th century (and later?) pottery.

The finds

The only finds of any significance were sherds of medieval pottery, some 380 of which were recovered. Where relevant for dating these have been referred to in the trench descriptions above. A general summary of the pottery is presented in Appendix 2 below, and this information, together with a summary of the other finds, is listed in Table 2. More detailed notes are contained in the project archive. The only finds of note apart from the medieval pottery were two fragments of Roman pottery, unstratified in trench 11, a number of pieces of struck flint, all from medieval and later contexts (mainly in trench 9), and a single copper alloy fragment from the 14th-15th century layer 1203.

Discussion of the sequence in trenches 5-12

The medieval features in Back Field fall into two broad groups. The first is a group of cut features, mainly ditches and gullies, the majority of which are aligned approximately N-S or E-W. The second is composed of features which relate to earthworks still visible in the field today. These are the N-S aligned ridge and furrow in the N part of the field, the E-W and N-S holloways, and the house platforms and other level areas in the southwestern part of the field. These two groups of features are largely, but not necessarily entirely, mutually exclusive.

Major problems of interpretation were presented by the difficulty of determining the agricultural history of the site because it was so difficult to identify consistently the successive plough layers which it was felt were present. In most of the trenches two layers of potential ploughing were detected beneath the modern topsoil. There was usually a substantial accumulation of deposits above the top of the subsoil (the only point at which cut features were readily identified) and below the modern topsoil. This was generally felt to represent at least two episodes of ploughing. It was noticeable that where these deposits had perhaps been protected from later ploughing by the presence of late medieval stone surfaces the build-up of these deposits was particularly substantial and was never less than c 0.40 m. It was also noticeable that the layers underlying the stone surfaces were reasonably productive of pottery (though this may simply reflect the fact that the presence of the stone deposits meant that the underlying layers were excavated, if at all, by hand rather than by machine). A comparable layer to these just mentioned was 702 in trench 7 at the W edge of the site. It is possible that this layer was connected with those seen in trenches 9 and 12. It is notable that these three trenches produced 85% of all the medieval sherds from the site. A concentration of domestic activity and/or (at the least) rubbish disposal is strongly suggested here.

The relationship of cut features and the (probably later) ridge and furrow to these layers was very difficult to treat consistently. Even more problematical were the E-W and N-S holloways. There is little doubt from surface evidence that these features existed, but they did not appear consistently in the trenches located to find them. The N-S holloway (E) was seen in trench 8, where it postdated an E-W ditch, but the appearance of the E-W holloway was more erratic. It was not seen in trench 11, in the eastern part of the field, and at the western side where it was evident as a surface feature it was not located in section. In trench 9, between platforms I and J, it may have been present as the upper part of a wide ?ditch (909) which appeared to be cut from below the base of the modern topsoil and to be

closely related to the N edge of the platform (J) to the S. The N-S holloway, however, was recorded as having been partly filled by the layer underlying the modern topsoil.

Despite these difficulties the ceramic evidence tends to support the simplified division of the features into two broad groups. Most of the cut features which produce pottery are datable to the 13th-14th centuries, whereas the southerly house platform J (in trench 9) and the comparable paved area in trench 12 consistently produced pottery which extended into the 16th century, if not a little later. There was no clear evidence for structures on the 'platforms', and trench 8 produced no evidence at all for the existence of the northerly platform defined as an earthwork (I). The inconsistency of the above and below ground evidence is rather perplexing - there was no suggestion on the surface that platforms I and J were not identical in character yet, when examined, one had (damaged) stone surfaces and the other did not. A single large stone at the westerly margin of the stone spread in trench 12 might have been a post base for part of a timber structure. It seems that timber structures, at best, are all that could have been in place on the platforms, and that if these structures did not have stone rubble floors they would be almost impossible to detect in conventional archaeological evaluations on soils of the type encountered here. The relative concentrations of pottery (but not of other artefact/ecofact types) support the idea that the platforms were associated with domestic activity.

Summary and conclusions

There were no ancient features in the eastern part of the site, Wadd Ground. In the Back Field, on the slightly higher ground W of Manor Farm, a few residual flints indicate activity probably of Bronze Age date in the vicinity, perhaps deriving from a settlement focus a little to the NW (cf Allen 1991, 40-41). Other pre-medieval activity is indicated only by two unstratified Roman sherds.

A very few sherds dated 10th-12th century occurred in later features. These, like the earlier material, may have derived from a known area of activity of this date located nearer to Grimsbury House (Allen 1991, 42-43). In contrast with the evidence from the Grimsbury House area, the earliest features at Manor Farm does not seem to have dated to before the 13th century. The primary activity at this time seems to have been the digging of ditches and gullies which probably defined roughly rectilinear enclosures aligned approximately E-W. (The N-S ditch 505 located at the W end of trench 5 may have been the same feature as the N-S ditch 222 considered by Allen (1991, 27 and 32-33) to indicate the eastern limit of features seen during the construction of Hennef Way). An E-W trackway may also possibly have been defined at this time.

The function of the ditches may have been to define plots of agricultural (or garden?) land. The relationship between the ditch cuts and fills and a number of episodes of ?agricultural activity represented by general and widespread layers is very difficult to determine owing to the character of the clay soils. In the SW part of the site these layers were beneath spreads of stone and related deposits, associated with relatively high concentrations of pottery (dating from the 14th century onwards), which may represent the location of timber buildings with stone floors. The mixed character of the layers beneath the stone surfaces, and the fact that they too were quite productive of pottery, may suggest that there was an earlier phase of domestic activity, perhaps also including timber buildings, which have left no identifiable trace in the intractable soils.

The possible late medieval buildings were in use into the early post-medieval period, and perhaps as late as the 17th century. These buildings were part of an organised pattern of land use, with open fields, divided by a N-S holloway, to the N and the domestic area largely confined to an area to the S of an E-W holloway.

The date of the earliest use of the sites of the present Manor Farm and Wildmere Farm is not known, but the existing house of Manor Farm is datable to the 17th century. The now demolished cottages which stood immediately W of Manor Farm are described as being of similar character to the farm house itself, and seem to be represented on an enclosure map of 1765. It may be that the buildings of Manor Farm and the adjacent cottages were the immediate successors of buildings in the SW part of

Back Field and that these in turn had succeeded an earlier focus of settlement still further NW up the slope towards Grimsbury House (Allen 1991, 43).

Paul Booth, September 1993

References

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Appendix 1: Summary Trench Descriptions

Note: N/E = not excavated
U/S = unstratified

CONTEXT	TYPE	WIDTH	DEPTH	COMMENTS
Trench 1				
100	layer	30 m +	0.15-0.35 m	turf and topsoil
101	layer	c 20 m +	0.10-0.21 m	modern rubble
102	layer	30 m +	up to 0.37 m	?natural clay
103	layer	10 m +	0.14 m	?natural clay
104	layer	30 m +	0.12-0.14 m	?natural clay
105	layer	-	-	natural clay
Trench 2				
200	layer	30 m +	0.15-0.17 m	turf and topsoil
201	layer	30 m +	0.10-0.20 m	modern rubble
202	layer	30 m +	0.25 m	natural clay
203	layer	30 m +	0.12 m	natural clay
204	layer	30 m +	-	natural clay
205	?feature	2.00 x 0.38	0.33 m	natural feature in 202
206	?feature	1.70 x 0.30	0.30 m	natural feature in 202
Trench 3				
300	layer	30 m +	0.16-0.27 m	turf and topsoil
301	layer	30 m +	0.10-0.15 m	modern rubble
302	layer	30 m +	0.13-0.19 m	?natural clay
303	layer	30 m +	0.10-0.16 m	?natural clay
304	layer	30 m +	-	natural clay
Trench 4				
400	layer	c 6 m	0.01-0.30 m	redeposited topsoil
401	layer	30 m +	0.30-0.31 m	turf and topsoil
402	layer	30 m +	0.15-0.16 m	?natural clay
403	layer	30 m +	0.14-0.16 m	?natural clay
404	layer	30 m +	0.15-0.20 m	?natural clay
405	layer	30 m +	-	natural clay
Trench 5				
500	layer	30 m +	0.20 m	turf and topsoil
501	layer	30 m +	0.25-0.30 m	?ploughsoil
502	layer	30 m +	-	natural clay subsoil
503	cut	0.50 m	0.20 m	N-S gully
504	fill	0.50 m	0.20 m	fill of 503

505	cut	1.70 m	c 0.75 m	N-S ditch
506	fill	1.70 m	c 0.75 m	fill of 505
507	layer	30 m +	0.30 m max.	
508	fill	0.68 m	0.25 m	fill of 509
509	cut	0.68 m	0.25 m	N-S gully
510	fill	0.60 m +	0.20 m	fill of 511
511	cut	0.60 m +	0.20 m	small ?pit
512	fill	c 0.50 m	0.10 m	fill of 513
513	cut	c 0.50 m	0.10 m	N-S gully
514	pipe	0.09 m	-	field drain in 515
515	fill	1.30 m	N/E	fill of 516
516	cut	1.30 m	N/E	medieval furrow
517	finds ref.			for U/S-topsoil finds
Trench 6				
600	layer	30 m +	0.20 m	turf and topsoil
601	layer	30 m +	0.18 m	ploughsoil
602	layer	30 m +	0.15 m	?medieval ploughsoil
603	layer	30 m +	-	natural clay subsoil
604	fill	1.00 m	0.35 m	fill of 605
605	cut	1.00 m	0.35 m	NNE-SSW gully/ditch
606	fill	1.70 m	0.50 m	fill of 607
607	cut	1.70 m	0.50 m	NNE-SSW ditch
608	cut/fill	2.00 m +	N/E	medieval furrow
609	cut/fill	2.50 m	N/E	medieval furrow
610	cut/fill	1.60 m	N/E	medieval furrow
611	fill	0.88 m	0.29 m	upper fill of 612
612	cut	0.88 m	0.41 m	NE-SW ditch
613	fill	0.40	0.13 m	lower fill of 612
Trench 7				
700	layer	30 m +	0.25 m	turf and topsoil
701	layer	30 m +	0.25 m	ploughsoil
702	layer	c 19 m +	0.25 m max.	cut by 705
703	fill	c 1.40 m	0.48 m	'upper' fill of 705
704	fill	c 0.70 m	c 0.54 m	'lower' fill of 705
705	cut	1.50 m	c 0.54 m	E-W ditch
706	layer	30 m +		natural clay subsoil
707	fill	0.60 m	0.25 m	fill of 708
708	cut	0.60 m	0.25 m	E-W gully
709	layer	c 10 m +	0.31 m max.	?ploughsoil

710	finds ref.			for U/S finds
711	'hollow'/cut	c 2.80 m	?	E-W holloway
712	fill	c 1.00 m	N/E	fill of 713
713	cut	c 1.00 m	N/E	ESE-WNW ?ditch
Trench 8				
800	layer	30 m +	0.25 m	turf and topsoil
801	layer	30 m +	0.20-0.50 m	?ploughsoil
802	layer	30 m +	0.40 m max.	possible ploughsoil
803	layer	30 m +		natural clay subsoil
804	fill	0.90 m	0.30 m	upper fill of 805
805	cut	0.90 m	0.40 m	ESE-WNW ditch
806	layer	c 4 m	N/E	'fill' of N-S holloway
807	fill	0.55 m	0.10 m	lower fill of 805
808	fill	1.25 m	0.15-0.20 m	lower fill of 809
809	cut	2.00 m	0.50 m	N-S ditch
810	fill	0.40 m	0.50 m	fill of 811
811	cut	0.40 m	0.50 m	N-S gully cut by 809
812	fill	1.20 m	0.10 m	upper fill of 814
813	fill	c 1.15 m	0.25 m	lower fill of 814
814	cut	1.20 m	0.40 m	N-S ditch cut by 809
815	fill	0.96 m	0.40 m	upper fill of 817
816	fill	0.52 m	0.10 m	lower fill of 817
817	cut	0.90 m	0.50 m	pit/ditch terminal of 804
818	fill	0.50 m	0.38 m	upper fill of 820
819	fill	0.60 m	0.10 m	lower fill of 820
820	cut	0.60 m +	0.45 m	?E-W ditch cut by 817
821	finds ref.			for U/S finds
Trench 9				
900	layer	30 m +	0.15-0.25 m	turf and topsoil
901	layer	17 m +	0.15 m	stony 'platform' base
902	layer	?17 m +	0.43 m max.	?same as 906
903	layer	30 m +		natural clay subsoil
904	layer	c 17 m +	0.03-0.10 m	plough disturbance of 901 and 908
905	finds ref.			for U/S finds
906	layer	unknown	0.30 m max.	?same as 902
907	layer	4 m +	0.12 m	possibly same as 913
908	layer	c 1.80 m	?c 0.10 m	N edge of stone platform
909	cut	2.30 m	0.56 m	E-W ditch/holloway

910	fill	2.30 m	0.37 m max.	upper fill of 909
911	fill	1.30 m	0.28 m max.	lower fill of 909
912	layer	c 7.50 m +	0.32 m	ploughsoil ?same as 906
913	layer	c 7.70 m +	0.11 m	possible ploughsoil, may be same as 907
914	fill	1.70 m	N/E	fill of 916
915	fill	1.50 m +	N/E	fill of 917
916	cut	1.70 m	N/E	E-W ?ditch
917	cut	1.50 m +	N/E	E-W ?ditch
Trench 10				
1000	layer	25.50 m +	0.10-0.20 m	turf and topsoil
1001	wall	0.60-0.70 m	? c 0.30 m	?W wall of cottages
1002	layer	25.50 m +	? c 0.02 +	demolition layer
1003	layer	25.50 m +		natural clay subsoil
1004	layer	c 1.00 m +	N/E	destruction debris of wall
1005	fill	0.60-0.70 m	N/E	fill of 1012
1006	layer	4 m +	N/E	layer beneath building
1007	layer	3 m +	0.30 m	
1008	layer	?25.50 m +	0.33 m	?ploughsoil, cf 1006 but different texture
1009	fill	0.80 m	0.23 m	fill of 1010
1010	cut	0.80 m	0.23 m	small pit
1011	layer	2.20 m	N/E	?floor within building
1012	cut	0.60-0.70 m	N/E	N-S foundation/robber trench beneath 1004
Trench 11				
1100	layer	14.50 m +	0.20 m	turf and topsoil
1101	layer	14.50 m +	0.20-0.40 m	?ploughsoil
1102	layer	14.50 m +	0.20 m	ploughsoil/disturbed subsoil
1103	layer	14.50 m +		natural clay subsoil
1104	cut	2.00 m	0.44 m	E-W ?ditch
1105	fill	2.00 m	0.44 m	fill of 1104
1106	cut	0.65 m	0.14 m	N-S gully cuts 1105
1107	fill	0.65 m	0.14 m	fill of 1106
1108	cut	1.95 m	0.50 m	NW-SE ditch
1109	fill	1.95 m	0.50 m	fill of 1108
1110	cut	0.80 m	0.20 m	?shallow pit
1111	fill	0.80 m	0.20 m	fill of 1110
1112	fill	0.45 m	0.15 m	fill of 1113, stone packing
1113	cut	0.45 m	0.15 m	posthole

1114	finds ref.			for U/S finds
1115	fill	c 1.10 m	N/E	fill of 1120
1116	cut	c 0.80 m	N/E	possible terminal of E-W ditch
1117	fill	c 0.80 m	N/E	fill of 1116
1118	cut	0.50 m +	N/E	edge of ?E-W ditch
1119	fill	0.50 m +	N/E	fill of 1118
1120	cut	1.10 m	N/E	irregular ?natural feature
Trench 12				
1200	layer	13.50 m +	c 0.21-0.25 m	turf and topsoil
1201	layer	13.50 m +	0.11 m	?ploughsoil
1202	layer	3.50 m +	0.12 m	stone platform
1203	layer	13.50 m +	0.26 m max.	layer beneath platform
1204	layer	13.50 m +	0.12 m max.	possible plough disturbance of subsoil
1205	layer	13.50 m +		natural clay subsoil
1206	finds ref.			for U/S finds
1207	layer	10 m +	0.24 m	at same level as 1202

Table 1: Summary of context information

Appendix 2: A note on the pottery, based on information provided by Cathy Keevill

Some 380 medieval and post-medieval sherds weighing c 3.9 kg were recovered from the evaluation trenches 5-12. Two unstratified Roman sherds came from trench 11 and no earlier material was noted. The medieval and later pottery was comparable to material from other sites within Banbury such as Cornhill (Fasham 1972) and Banbury Castle (Rodwell 1977; Fasham 1984).

The main fabric type was an oolitic limestone fabric (Oxford fabric BB and Banbury type 5 (Fasham 1972)). This is probably from Gloucestershire/Wiltshire, perhaps from the known kiln site at Minety, and is dated 13th-15th century. It is suggested that this fabric was in use from the mid 13th century onwards in Banbury (Fasham 1972, 332). Other types included the fine sandy jug fabric (Oxford fabric AM, Banbury fabric 8), a product of the Brill/Boarstall (Bucks) kilns. These are mainly dated to the 13th-14th century but continue into the 15th. Late-medieval and post-medieval Brill/Boarstall wares were also present in the assemblage.

Oxford fabric AE (Banbury fabric 18), a sand/limestone tempered fabric, is also present. MDQG (medieval quartz and grog) may be a variant of this fabric type. Oxford fabric AE is dated 10th-12th centuries in Oxford, but in Banbury seems to be more long lived and may have continued in use into the late 13th-early 14th centuries (Fasham 1984, 99 suggests 15th century). The other relatively common fabric in this assemblage is MDWW (medieval white ware), similar to types found at Chilvers Coton, North Warwickshire (Mayes and Scott 1984, fabric types A and B, Warwick fabric 105) dated 13th-15th century.

There are occasional sherds datable to the 10th/11th-12th centuries, but none of these is securely stratified in an early context. The great bulk of the pottery dates from about the middle of the 13th

century onwards. Most of the sherds associated with cut features can be assigned to the 13th-15th centuries. The material from the possible house platforms, late in the stratigraphic sequence, is mainly 15th-16th century, with occasional later sherds coming from overlying topsoil layers.

Context	Type	Ceramic date (TPQ)	Pottery (no.sherds)	Fired Clay (no.frags)	Bone (no. frags)	Misc.
501	ploughsoil	?13-14C	1			
504	gully fill	?15C	10	3		flint 1
506	ditch fill	?13-15C	2	3	1	
517	finds ref.	?13-14C	6			
604	gully fill	13C	1	2		
606	ditch fill	13-15C	1	1	1	
611	ditch fill			2	1	
702	layer	?14C (+)	11			
703	ditch fill	14C	54			
710	finds ref.	16C	30			
801	ploughsoil	10-12C	1	1	1	
807	ditch fill			1		
808	ditch fill	late 13C +	9	3	4	
810	gully fill	13C	1			
813	ditch fill	12-14C	1	2		
815	?pit fill	13C	9			
821	finds ref.	early 18C	4			
900	topsoil	late 17-18C	9		1	flint 1
901	stone layer	15-16C	41	1	4	
902	layer	13-14C	1			flint 5
904	?ploughsoil	17C	10			
905	finds ref.	16-17C	7			flint 1
906	layer	16C	12		8	
914	ditch fill	late 13C	43			
1008	?ploughsoil	13-14C	2			
1107	gully fill	mid 13C +	7		1	
1109	ditch fill	13-15C	2	1	1	
1114	finds ref.	Roman (2-4C)	2			
1201	ploughsoil	16C	20		15	
1202	stone layer	16C	24	2	3	Fe nail 1
1203	layer	14-15C	40	1		Cu alloy frag 1
1206	finds ref.	13-15C	13			Fe nail 1

1207	layer	16C	8		3	

Table 2: Summary quantification of finds by context

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Mayes, P, and Scott, K, 1984, **Pottery kilns at Chilvers Coton, Nuneaton**, Soc Med Archaeol Monograph No 10

Rodwell, K A, 1977, Excavations on the site of Banbury Castle, 1973-4, **Oxoniensia** 41 (for 1976), 90-147

Appendix 3: Geophysical survey by Alister Bartlett

BANBURY, OXFORDSHIRE

Report on Archaeogeophysical Survey of field at Old Grimsbury

1993

A.D.H. Bartlett

Bartlett-Clark Consultancy

Banbury, Oxfordshire

Report on Archaeogeophysical Survey, 1993

Introduction

This survey was commissioned by the Oxford Archaeological Unit as part of an archaeological evaluation of a field at Old Grimsbury, Banbury. Fieldwork for the survey was carried out on 27-28 July 1993, and initial plots of the results were supplied for use during subsequent trial excavations.

The area covered by the survey is shown on plan 1, where the survey outline has been marked on an enlarged copy of a map extract. The survey was tied to a 30m x 50m site grid as indicated by crosses on the plan. The field boundaries are not everywhere clearly marked, and the new road forming the northern boundarty of the field has been drawn in on the map as supplied to us. Measurements which will allow the survey grid to be relocated on the ground are therefore also indicated on the plan. A sketch of the earthworks visible in the field, as recently surveyed by OAU, is also incorporated in the plan.

Features noted in the earthwork survey include intermittently defined hollow ways (B,C,E,K on plan). These intersect at F, close to two probable house platforms (I and J). The site of some demolished cottages is enclosed by a low earthwork, A, and another earthwork is visible in part in the south west corner of the field at D. A ridge and furrow cultivation pattern fills the northern half of the field. It was hoped that a magnetometer survey would add to this picture, either by locating more earthworks, or by identifying disturbances associated with possible medieval or later occupation of the site.

A magnetometer survey does not usually detect masonry, and so an area 30 x 50m centred on the house platforms I and J was surveyed also by resistivity to test whether any structural remains are likely to be present. Magnetic susceptibility readings, which can provide an additional indication of occupation activity, were also collected at 20m intervals across the site.

Survey procedure

The area as indicated on plan 1 was surveyed using a Geoscan FM18 fluxgate gradiometer with readings recorded at a rate of 3 per metre along traverses 1m apart, to give the results as plotted on plan 2. The survey is displayed both as a graphical or trace plot, and as a half tone plot, which provides an alternative view in plan of the detected features. High readings are represented by dark shading on the half tone plot.

The plots included here are based on a processed version of the data in which high readings (usually caused by buried iron) have been truncated, irregularities in line spacing caused by variations in the instrument zero setting have been corrected, and the results smoothed to reduce background noise levels and emphasise the broader features which may be archaeologically significant.

Soil magnetic susceptibility measurements were taken using a Bartington MS2D field coil at 20m intervals across the site. These are plotted in the form of shaded squares at 1:2500 scale (plan 2iii).

Resistivity readings were collected at 1m intervals using a Geoscan RM4 meter with 0.5m probe spacing. The results are presented on plan 3 in the form of plots similar to those used for the magnetometer survey.

Results

The magnetometer survey detected a number of magnetic disturbances and features, including a series of clearly defined parallel linear features which align with the ridge and furrow markings in the northern half of the survey. These are arrowed on the half tone plot. A number of other linear magnetic anomalies can also be seen (eg a, b, c as outlined on plot 2i), but they do not form any clear pattern of enclosures or boundaries. They may have been incompletely detected, or they perhaps represent only minor silted furrows or hollows. There are also some more localised anomalies which may indicate pits (circled on plot), although such features are difficult to distinguish from some of the smaller of the spike-like anomalies caused by pieces of buried iron, of which a considerable number are present.

Some magnetic disturbances were detected which may relate to the earthwork in the south west corner of the field. The corner of the earthwork noted at D on plan 1 appears to have been located, and to form part of an enclosure. The enclosure is represented in part by positive anomalies which may indicate lengths of ditch, but is also defined by a more continuous band of low readings (arrowed, and labelled d on the half tone plot 2ii). A negative magnetic response of this kind can be caused by a reduction in depth of topsoil over a bank. There is a cluster of irregular pit-like anomalies (e) within this enclosure.

Very strong magnetic disturbances were detected in the south east corner of the survey in the area corresponding to the site of the demolished cottages.

There is little magnetic activity in the vicinity of the house platforms and hollow ways in the centre of the site. This is not unlikely, given that the earthworks are largely extant, and therefore contain little magnetically detectable fill, and that masonry is not usually identifiable in a magnetic survey. The resisitivity survey does however show considerable activity in this area, including a region of high readings corresponding to the house platform I. These readings extend further to the west than the platform as indicated on plan 1, and there are also disturbances to the north. The house platform J is also marked by a number of high readings, although they are not as clearly concentrated as at I. There are lower readings between the two platforms and to the east of the survey corresponding to the hollow ways.

The magnetic susceptibility survey (plan 2iii) produced generally low readings, except for the modern disturbances to the south east of the site. It may however be significant that there are enhanced values from within the enclosure to the south west of the site, including a relatively high reading close to the magnetic anomalies at e. An additional check on susceptibility values was made by taking measurements from soil samples

collected at 40m intervals across the site. These readings confirmed the generally low level of response away from areas of modern disturbance, as indicated by the field coil measurements shown on plot 2, but also gave an enhanced value in the south west corner.

Conclusions

Features detected in the magnetometer survey include an enclosure related to the earthworks in the south west corner of the field. This may also be associated with other magnetic disturbances (at e on plot 2ii). The ridge and furrow was also clearly detected. Other features may be present, but interpretation of the smaller features is difficult, given the disturbed condition of the site, as indicated by the number of anomalies representing scattered pieces of buried iron. There are also substantial modern disturbances at the site of the former cottages at the south east corner of the field.

The house platforms and earthworks at the centre of the site responded more clearly to the resistivity survey than to the magnetometer. The high readings from the platforms could be partly a topographical effect, caused by reduced moisture content in the raised areas, but irregular deposits of masonry or rubble, or areas of paving could well be present.

A. Bartlett BSc MPhil

Unit 2
S.T.E.P. Centre
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES 0865 200864

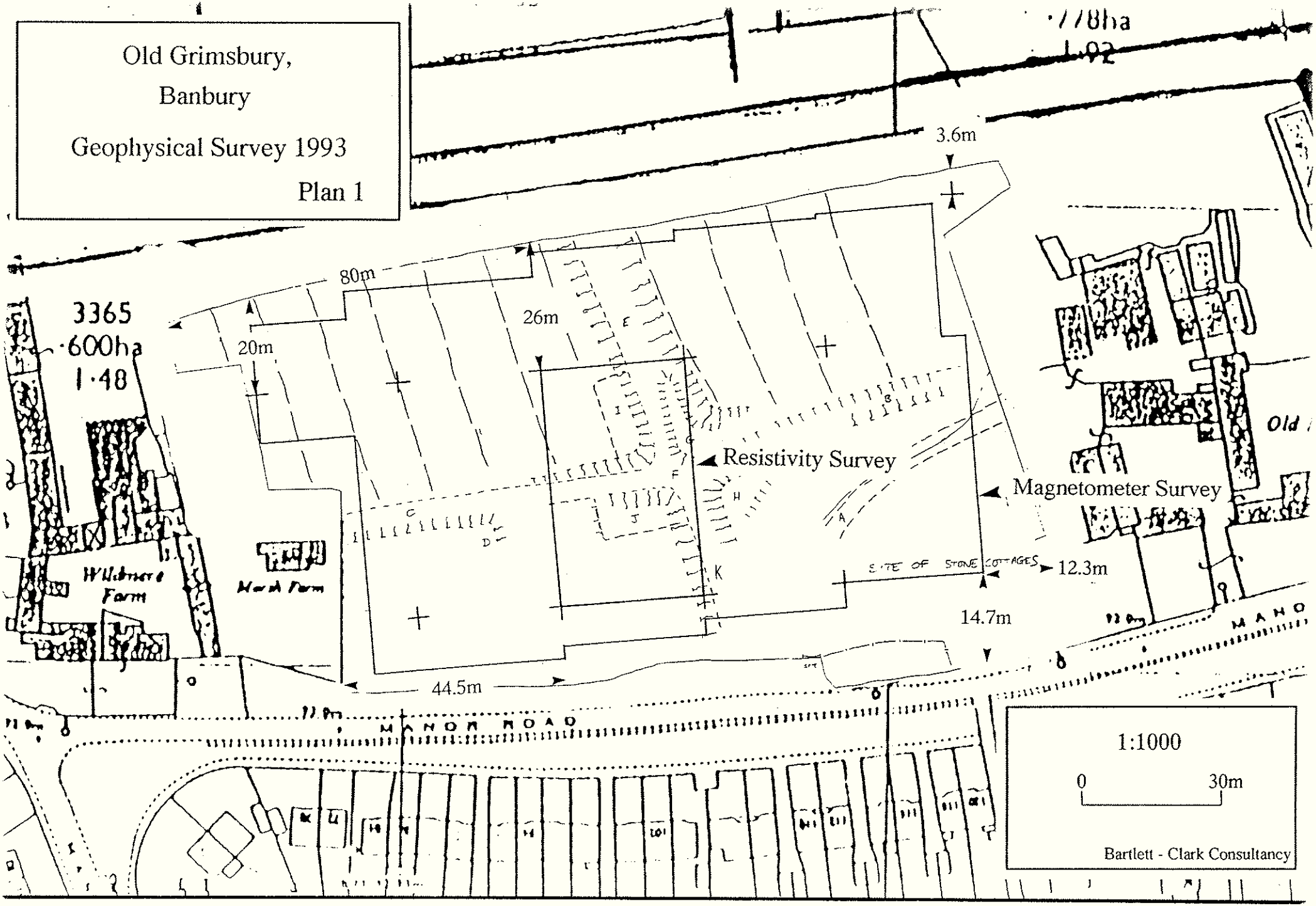
18 August 1993

B.Y. Turton MA assisted with the fieldwork for this survey.

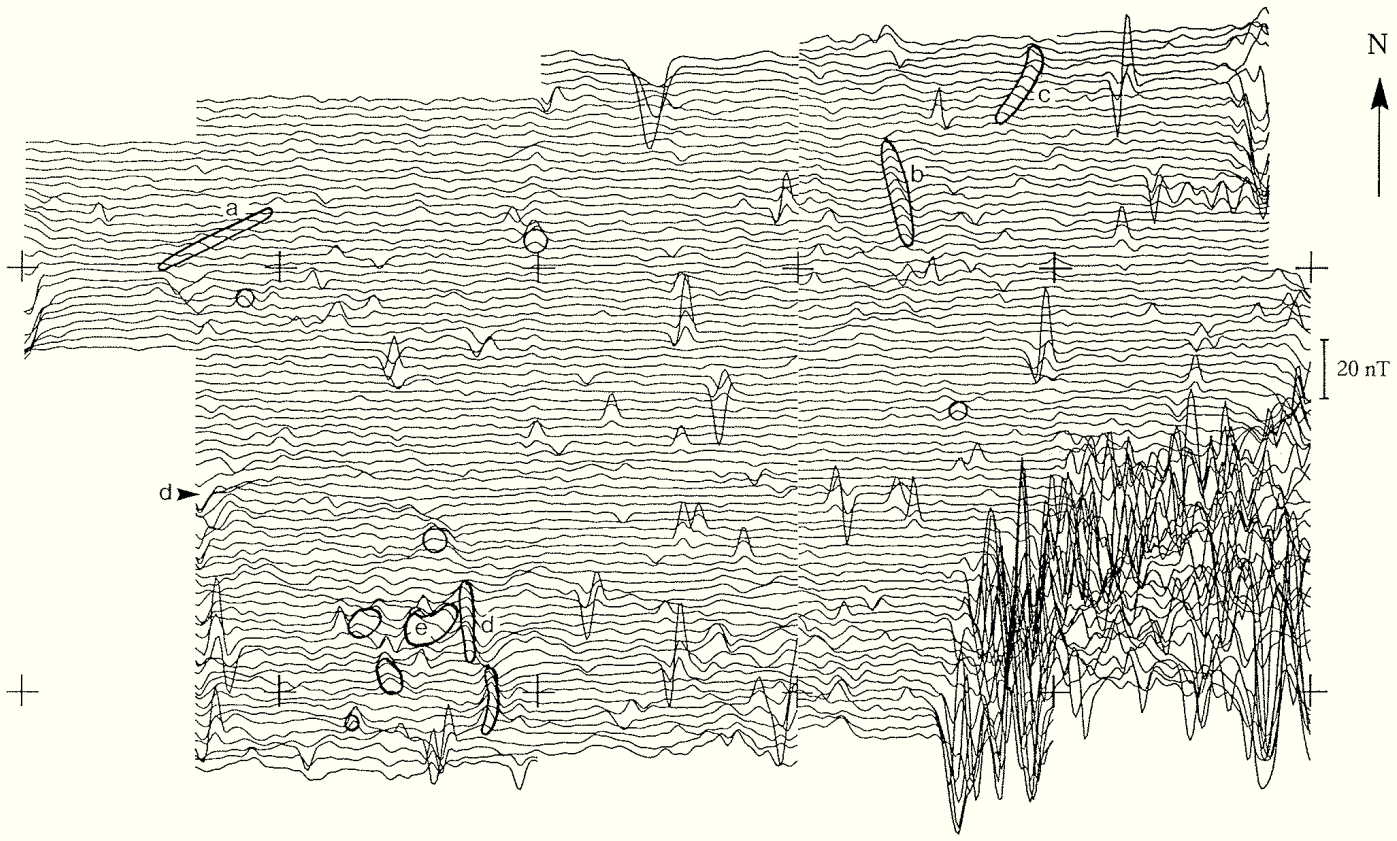
Old Grimsbury,
Banbury

Geophysical Survey 1993

Plan 1



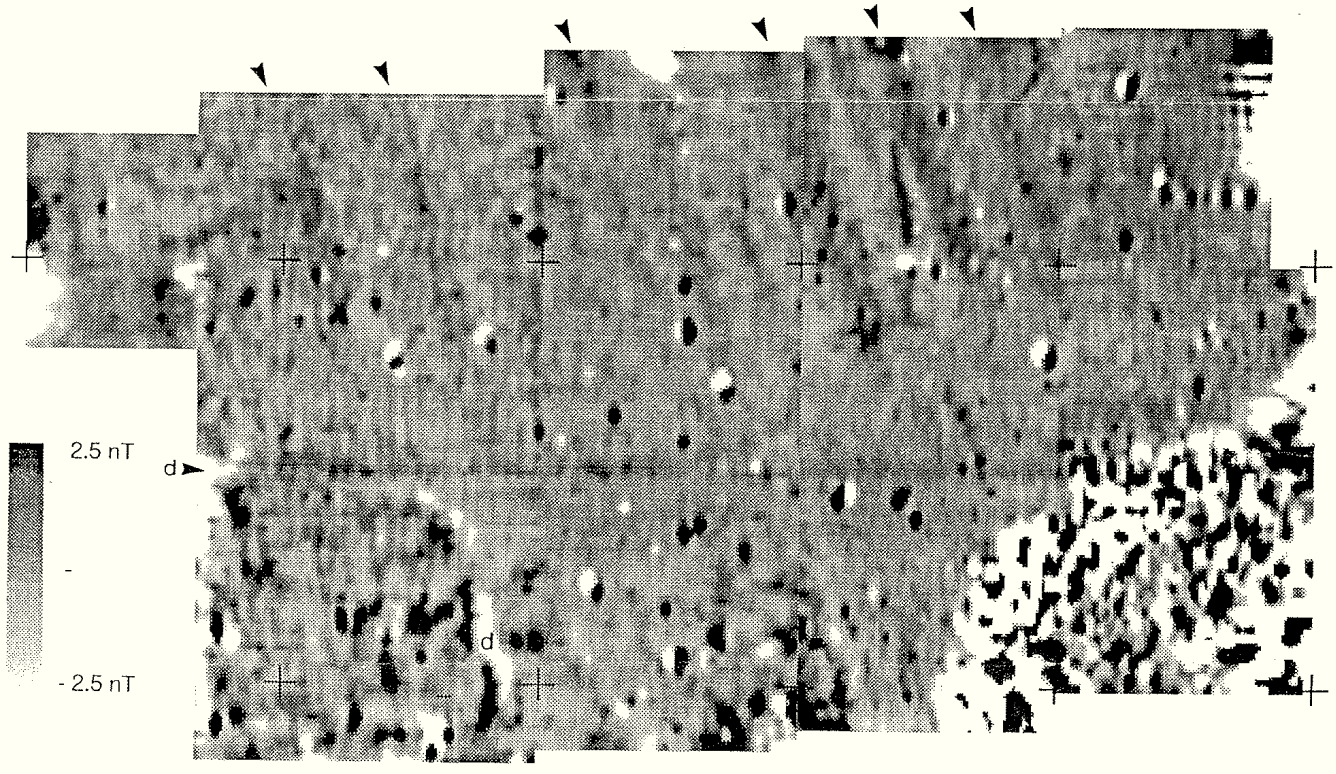
Location of survey (showing cropmarks as mapped by OAU)



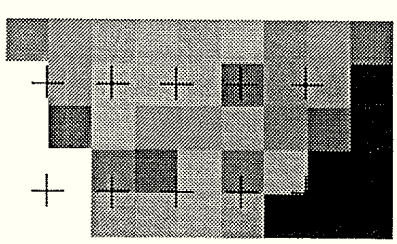
(i) Magnetometer Survey

magnetic anomalies

1:625



(ii) Magnetometer Survey: half tone plot



25 (x 10^{-8} SI/kg)

0

1:2500

(iii) Magnetic Susceptibility Survey

Old Grimsbury,
Banbury

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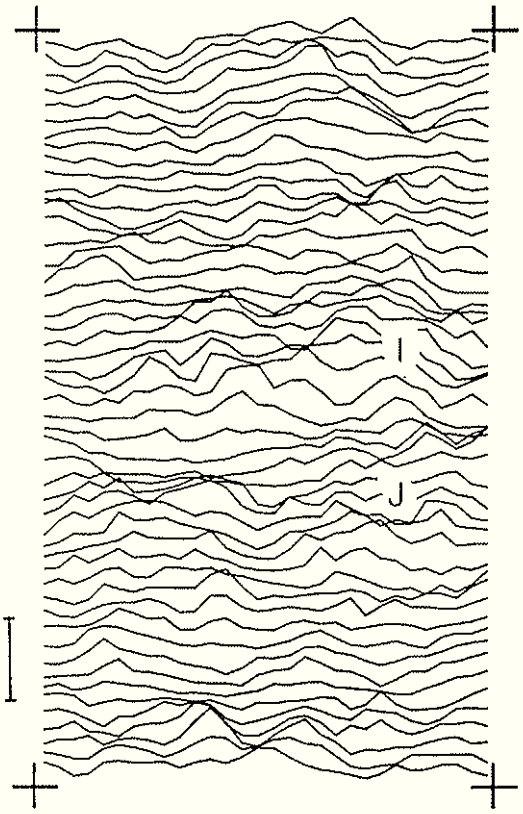
Plan 2

Resistivity Survey

N



(i)

(ii) Display range 7.5 ohms (white) to 13 ohms (black)

1:500

Old Grimsbury,
Banbury

Geophysical Survey 1993

Plan 3

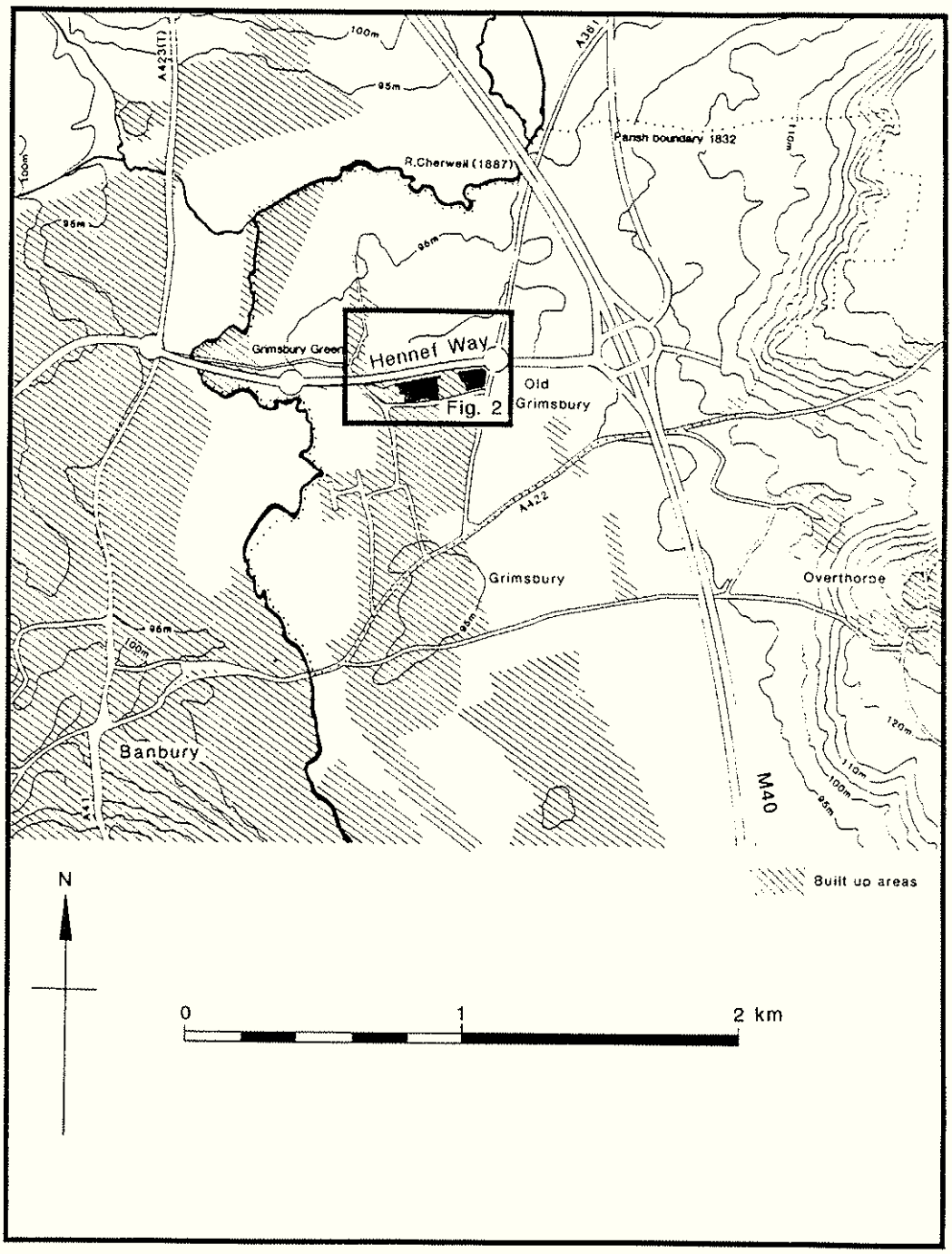

A423(T)
100m
95m
A361
Parish boundary 1832
110m
R.Cherwell (1887)
100m
95m
95m
Grimsbury Green
Hennef Way
Fig. 2
Old
Grimsbury
A422
Grimsbury
Overthorpe
95m
100m
Banbury
A41
120m
110m
100m
95m
M40
N
Built up areas
0
1
2 km

Figure 1

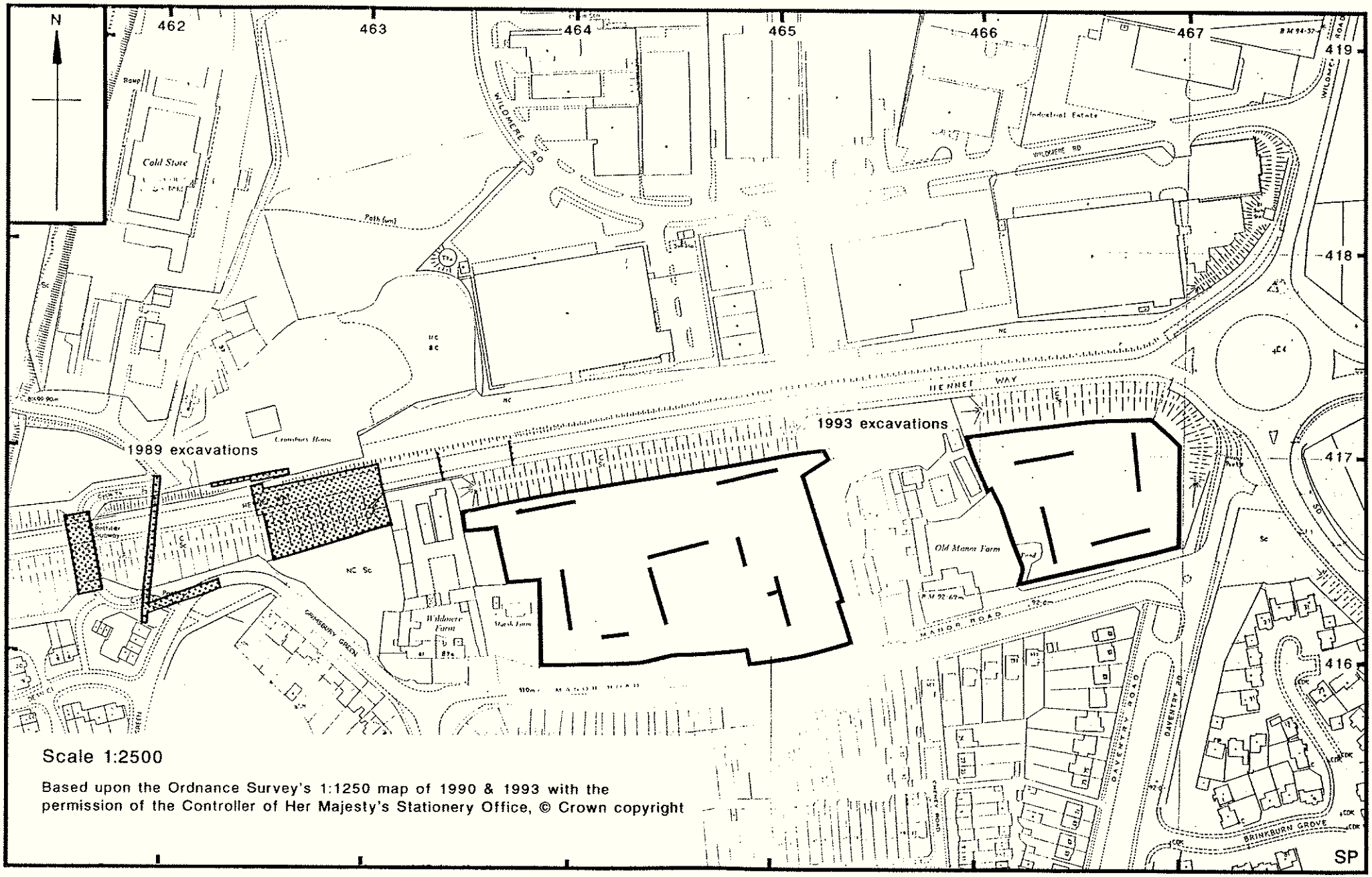

N
462
463
464
465
466
467
419
418
417
416
SP
1989 excavations
1993 excavations
HENNET WAY
WILDMERE RD
Cold Store
Industrial Estate
Old Manor Farm
Wildmere Farm
MANOR ROAD
DAVENTRY ROAD
BRINKBURN GROVE
GRIMSBURY GREEN
Scale 1:2500
Based upon the Ordnance Survey's 1:1250 map of 1990 & 1993 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown copyright

Figure 2

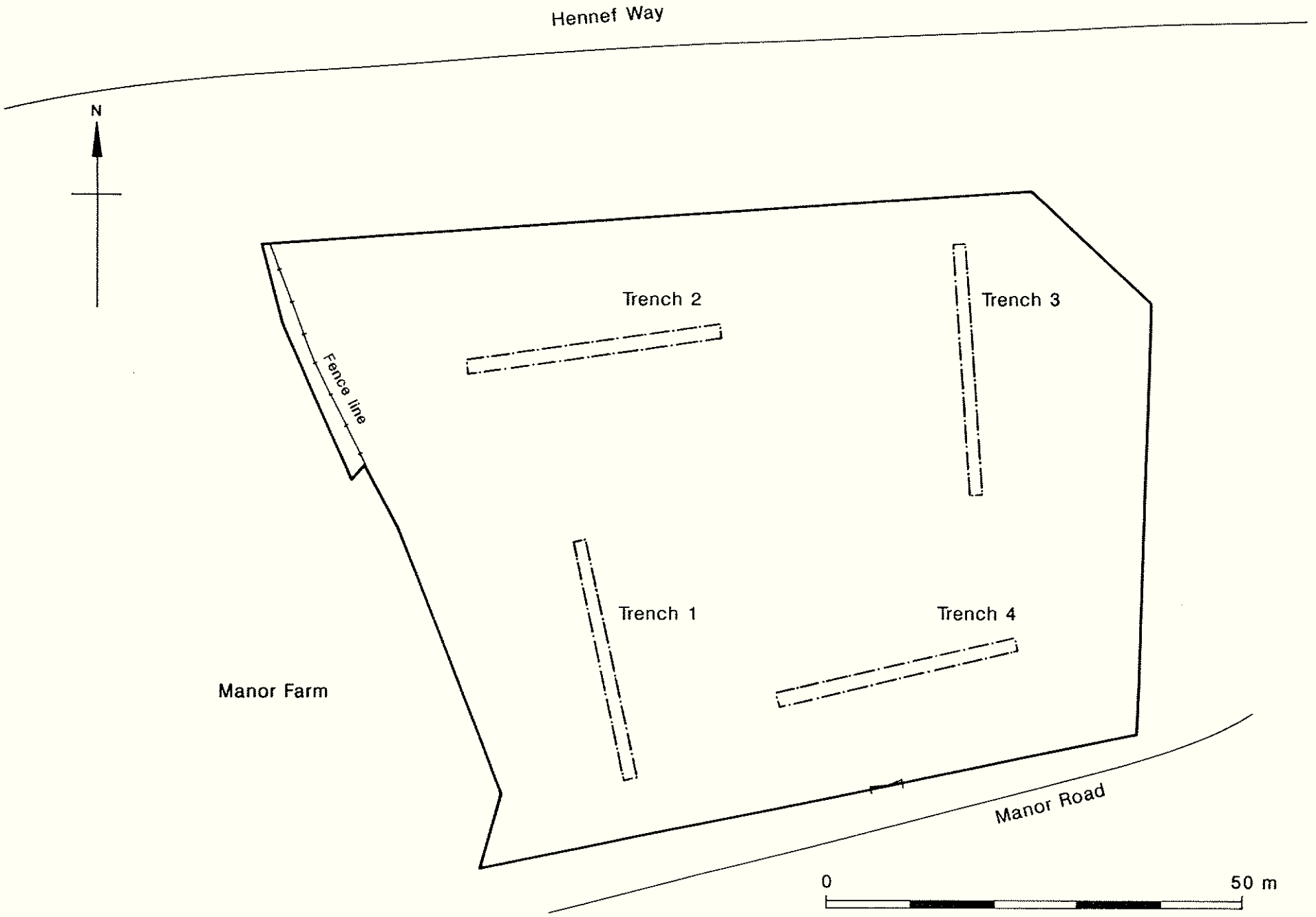

Hennef Way
N
Trench 2
Trench 3
Fence line
Trench 1
Trench 4
Manor Farm
Manor Road
0
50 m

Figure 3

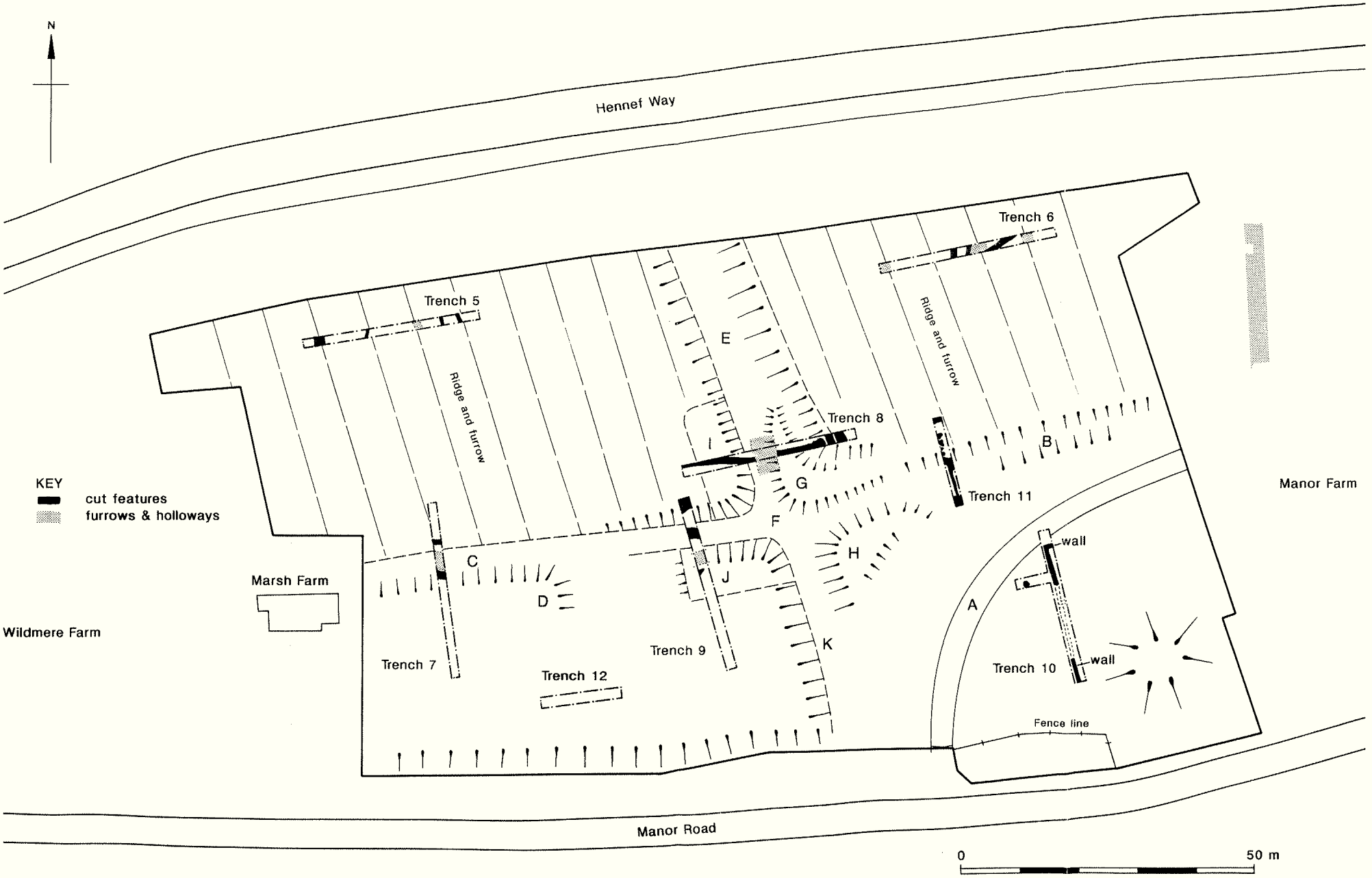
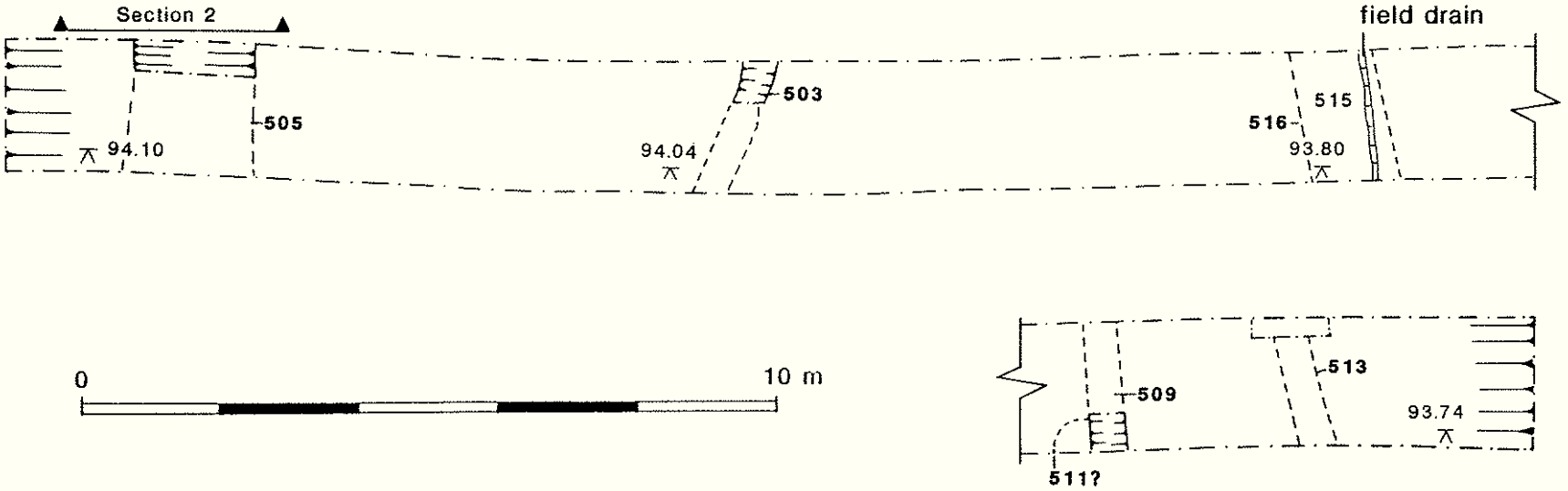

N
Hennef Way
Trench 6
Trench 5
Ridge and furrow
Ridge and furrow
E
Trench 8
B
G
Trench 11
F
H
C
J
D
K
Trench 7
Trench 9
Trench 12
A
wall
wall
Trench 10
Fence line
KEY
cut features
furrows & holloways
Marsh Farm
Wildmere Farm
Manor Farm
Manor Road
0
50 m

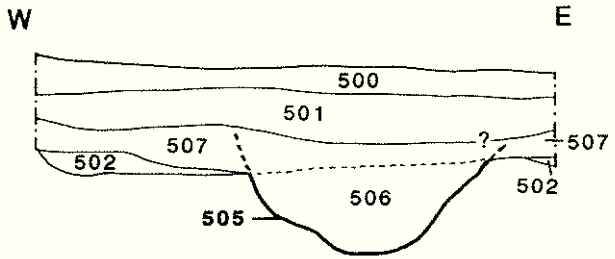
Figure 4

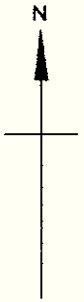
Trench 5

Plan 1:100



Section 2 1:50





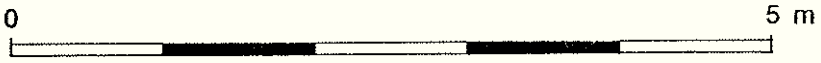
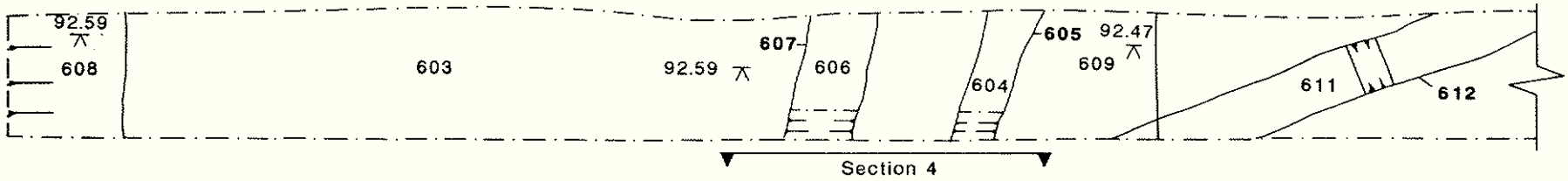
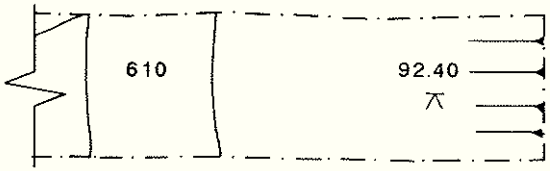


Figure 5

Trench 6

Plan 1:100





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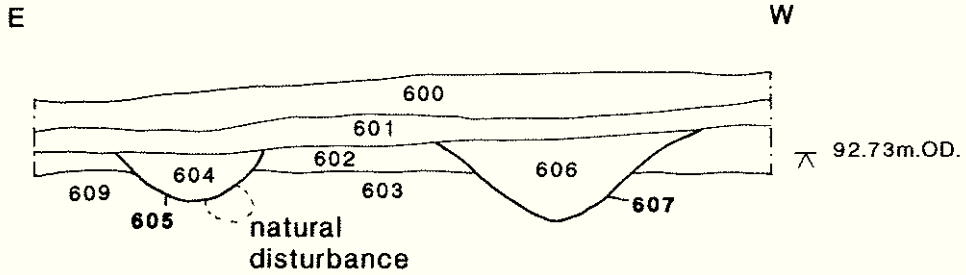
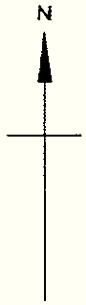




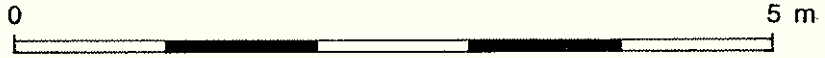
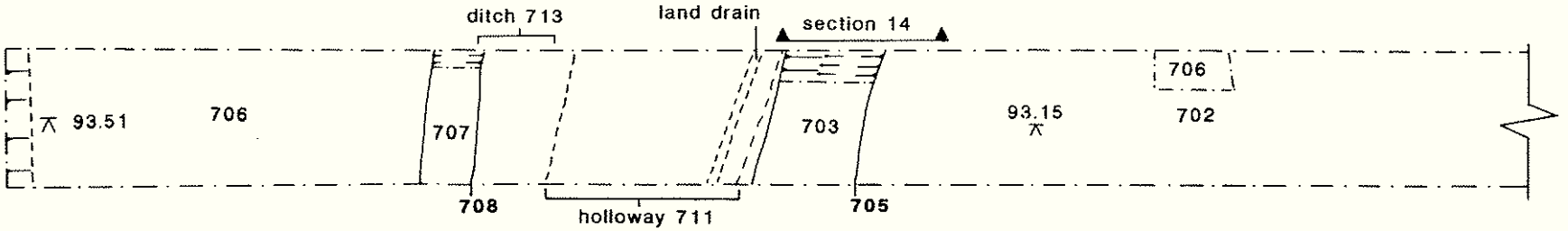
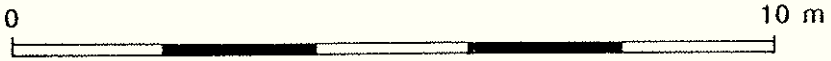


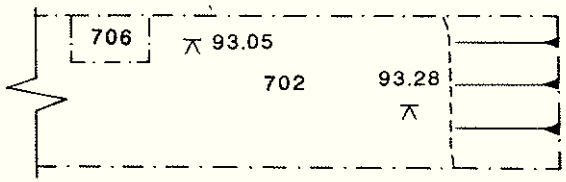
Figure 6

Trench 7

Plan 1:100







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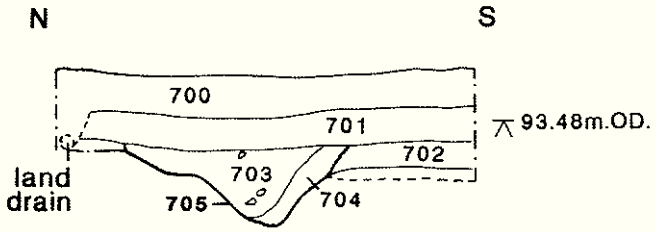
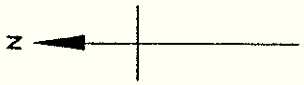




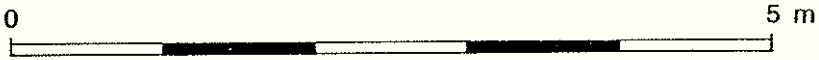
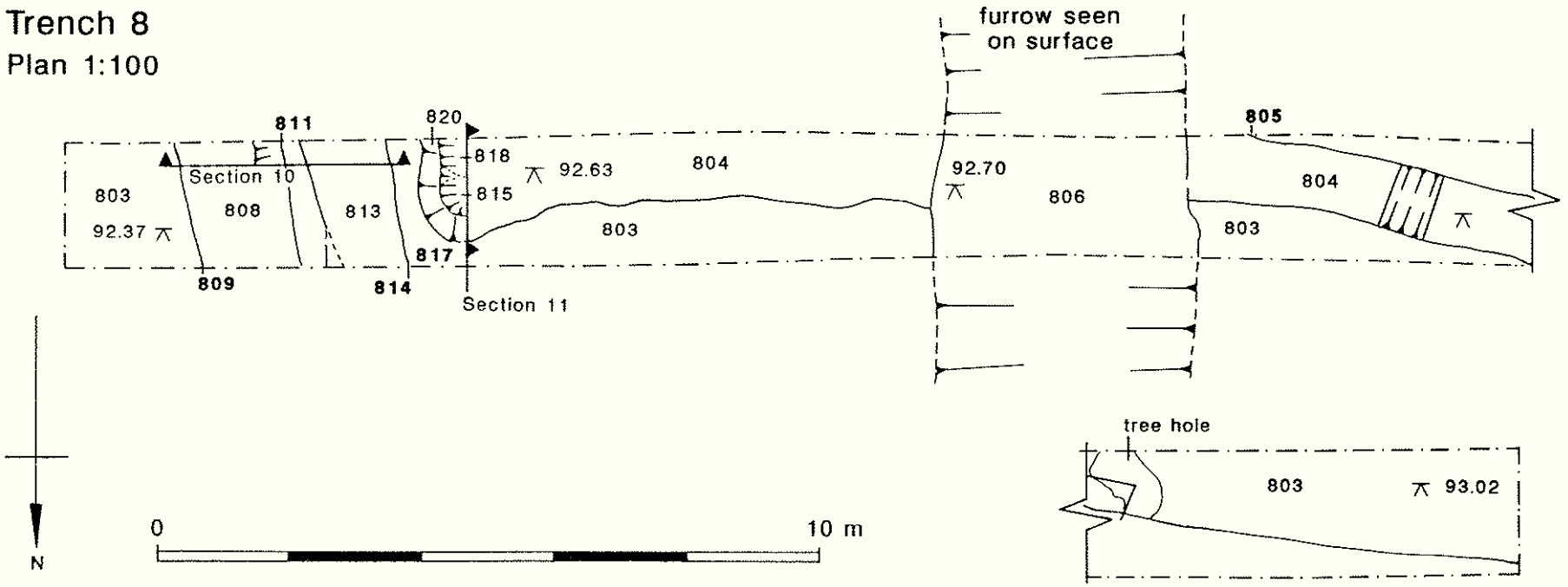


Figure 7

Trench 8

Plan 1:100



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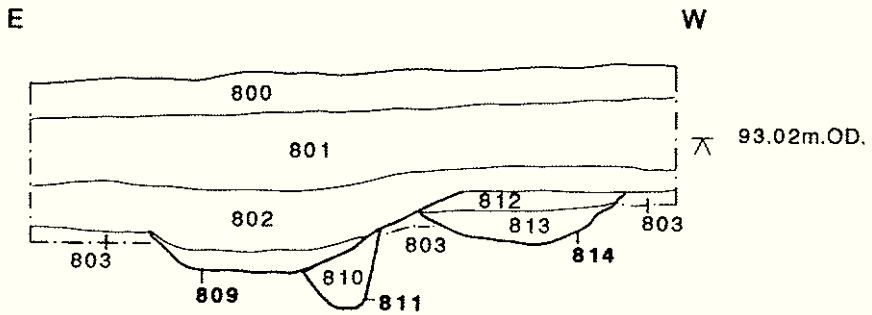

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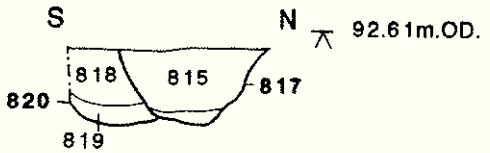


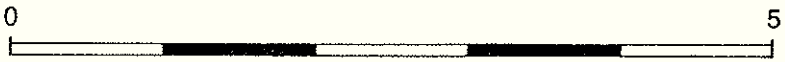
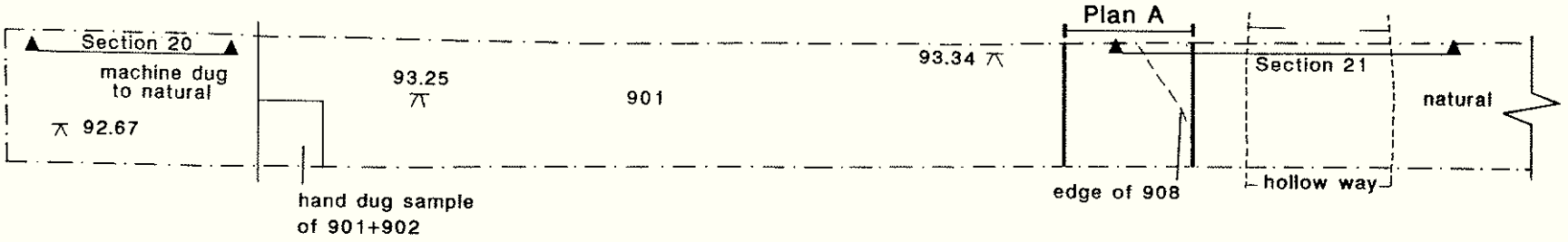
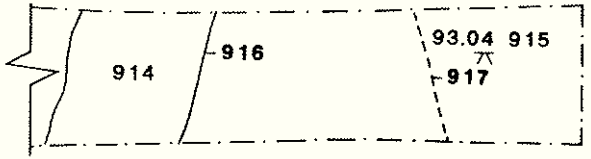


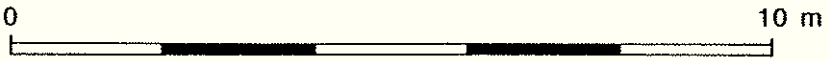
Figure 8

Trench 9 Plan 1:100



Plan A 1:50





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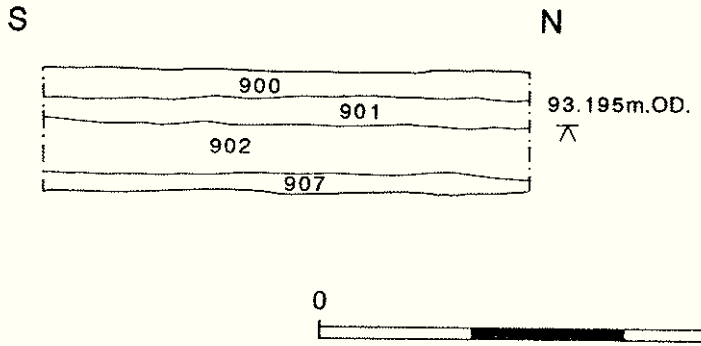

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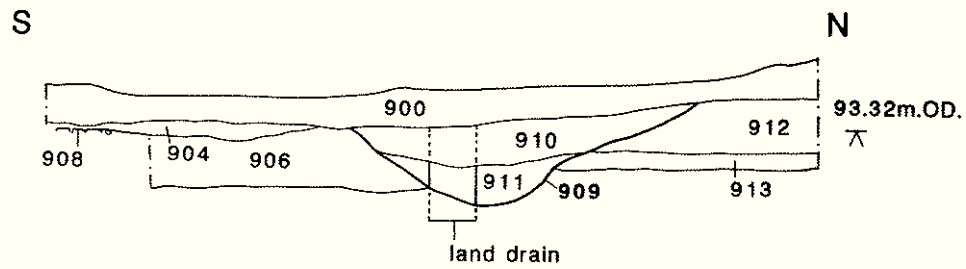


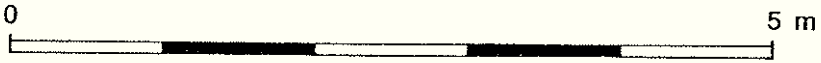


Figure 9

Trench 10

Plan 1:100

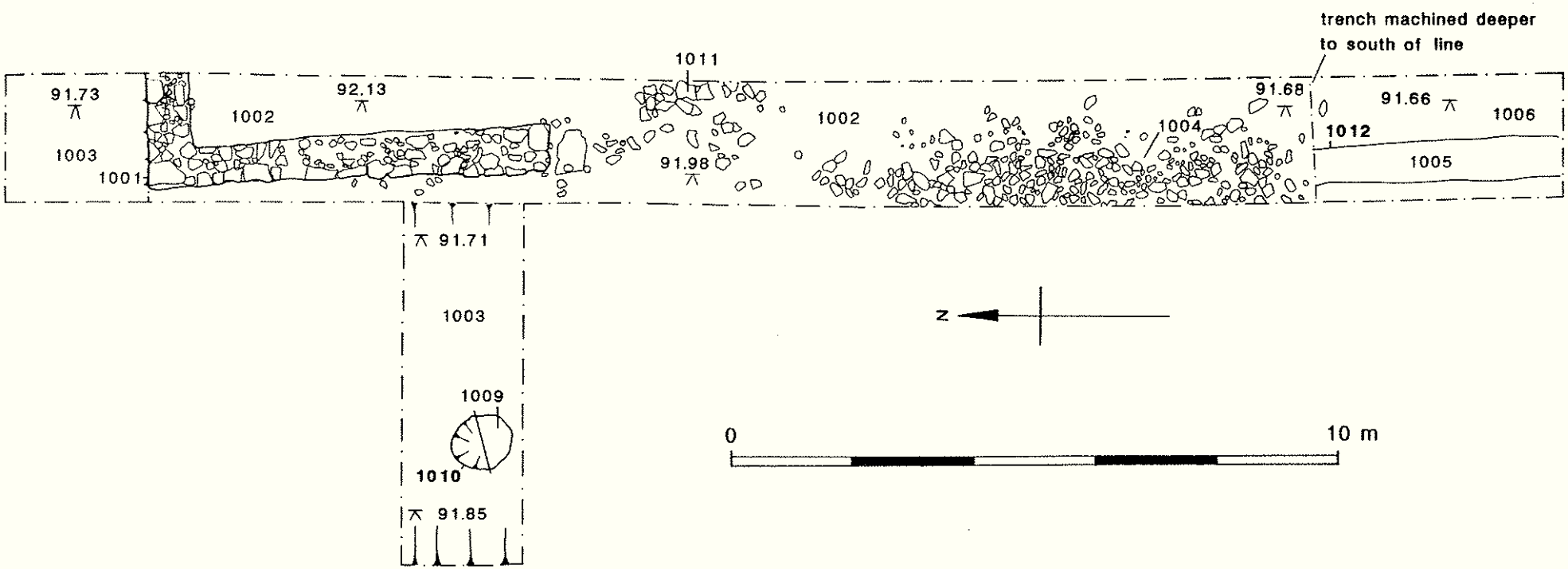
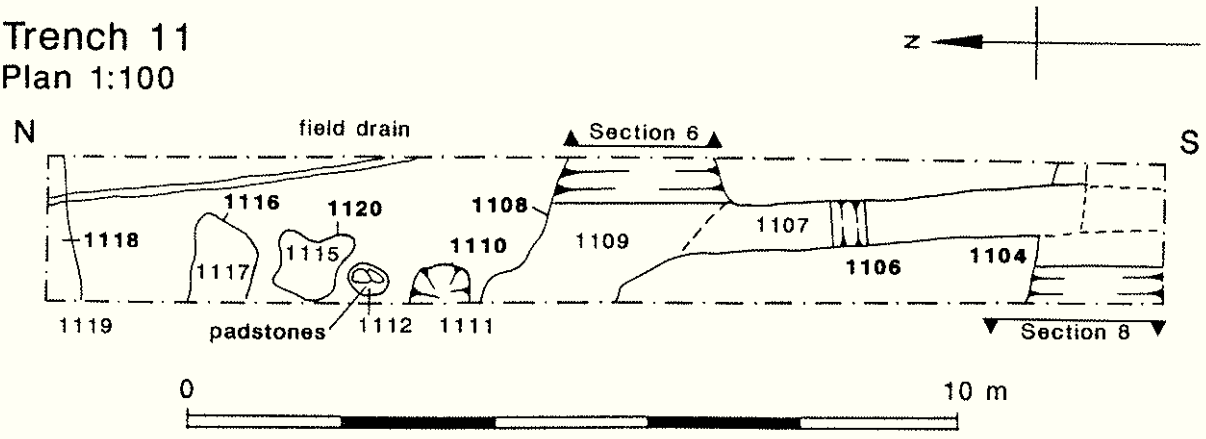


Figure 10

Trench 11
Plan 1:100



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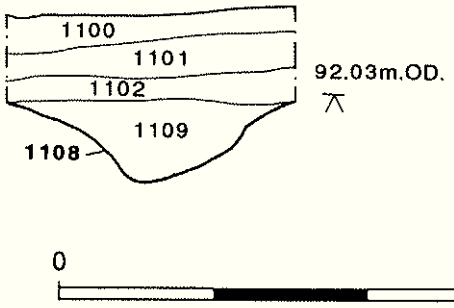

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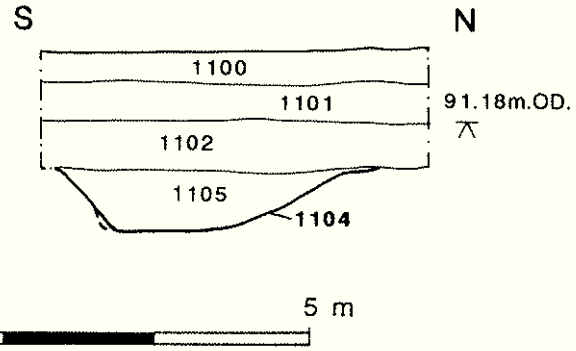
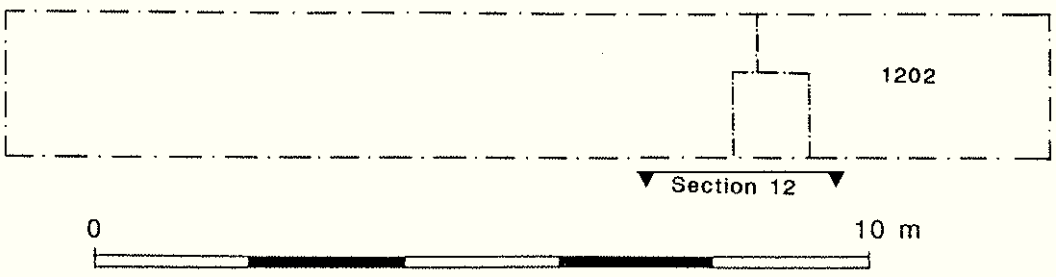


Trench 12
Plan 1:100



Section 12 1:50

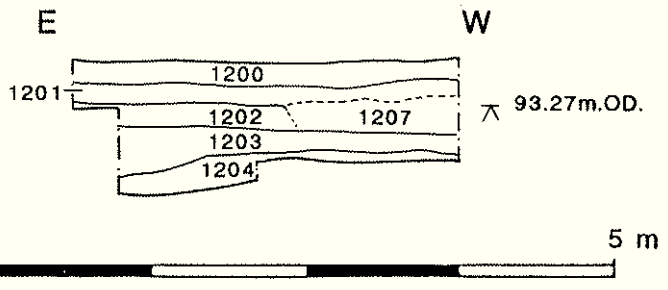


Figure 11

Oxford Archaeological Unit
46 Hythe Bridge Street
Oxford OX1 2EP

Tel: 0865 243888 Fax: 0865 793496

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