Wessex Archaeology

Yelnow Villa, Colworth Science Park Bedfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of Results

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May 2009

Yelnow Villa, Colworth Science Park, Bedfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of Results

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Videotext Communications Ltd. to carry out a archaeological recording and post-excavation analysis on an evaluation at Yelnow Villa at Colworth Science Park, Bedfordshire (centred on NGR 497250 259750) as part of Channel 4's 'Time Team' television series. Seven trenches were excavated to demonstrate the extent, character and condition of the villa remains.

The evaluation has provided a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the Yelnow villa site and the activity in the immediate locale. At least two, and possibly three broad phases of activity were identified. In addition, the unstratified find of a Neolithic stone macehead is of interest, but could not be related to any traces of activity of this period on the site.

The remains of one, possibly two round-houses of probable Middle to Late Iron Age date were revealed, with remnants of stone walling and interior surface. These structures had been heavily truncated, and produced only a small quantity of artefactual material.

The excavated evidence is insufficient to demonstrate continuity between the Iron Age and Romano-British phases of the site, but the villa may have developed from a native predecessor. The round-house(s) lay within a sub-rectangular enclosure, as revealed by the geophysical survey, but as this feature was not excavated it is uncertain whether it was contemporary with the Iron Age occupation or later, or whether it incorporated more than one phase of ditches.

Two areas of increased magnetic response shown by the geophysical survey are considered typical of the response normally associated with villa buildings. The more southerly of the two areas of probable buildings was not investigated, but the five trenches excavated across the northern area, located within what had been identified from previous archaeological fieldwork as the 'villa field', did locate structural evidence of that villa, albeit in a very truncated state.

Although the trenches located stone and possibly timber structures we still know little about the character, phasing and footprint of the villa buildings. The results suggest that the stone building was a compact structure, but which incorporated 'high status' features such as heated floor areas and painted plaster walls. The chronology suggested by the finds spans the Romano-British period, but with an emphasis on the later period, i.e. 3rd and 4th centuries AD.

The results of the Time Team evaluation clearly supplement previous and ongoing work on the Colworth site, and could be utilised in any future post-excavation work on the site. In the meantime, a short summary of the results of the evaluation will be submitted to the *Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal* for inclusion in the annual round-up of archaeology in the county.

Yelnow Villa, Colworth Science Park, Bedfordshire

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Acknowledgements

This programme of post-excavation and assessment work was commissioned and funded by Videotext Communications Ltd, and Wessex Archaeology would like to thank the staff at Videotext, and in particular Michael Douglas (Series Editor), Jane Hammond (Production Manager), Jim Mower (Assistant Producer), Tom Scott (Researcher) and Emily Woodburn (Production Coordinator) for their considerable help during the recording and post-excavation work.

The geophysical survey was undertaken by John Gater, Emma Wood and Jimmy Hancock of GSB Prospection. The field survey was undertaken by Henry Chapman, University of Birmingham. The excavation strategy was devised by Neil Holbrook (Cotswold Archaeology), and the fieldwork was monitored by Martin Oake and Hannah Firth of Bedfordshire County Council's Heritage and Environment Service.

The excavations were undertaken by Time Team's retained archaeologists, Phil Harding (Wessex Archaeology), Helen Geake, Brigid Gallagher, Ian Powlesland, Raksha Dave, Faye Simpson, Tracey Smith and Matt Williams, assisted by Liz Davis, Alison Bell, Christiane Meckseper, Jeremy Oetgen, Jerry Stone and Helen Parslow of Albion Archaeology, and local metal detectorists Brad Wilcox and Richard Martin. On-site recording was co-ordinated by Jon Milward, and find processing by Talla Hopper, both of Wessex Archaeology.

The archive was collated and all post-excavation assessment and analysis undertaken by Wessex Archaeology. This report was compiled by Jon Milward, with specialist reports prepared by Rob Perrin (finds), Nicholas Cooke (coins), Jessica Grimm (animal bone) and Ruth Pelling (palaeo-environmental). The illustrations were prepared by Keneth Lymer. The post-excavation project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Lorraine Mepham.

Finally, thanks are extended to the landowners, Unilever Ltd. for their hospitality and cooperation during the fieldwork.

Yelnow Villa, Colworth Science Park, Bedfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of Results

1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Videotext Communications Ltd on behalf of Channel 4 to participate in an archaeological evaluation as part of the 'Time Team' television series at Yelnow Villa at Colworth Science Park in Bedfordshire (centred on NGR 497250 259750), hereafter referred to as 'the Site'.

1.1.2 This report documents the results of archaeological survey and evaluation undertaken by Time Team, and presents an assessment of the results of these works.

1.2 Site Description

1.2.1 The Site under investigation comprised two adjacent, roughly rectangular fields, designated fields 11 and 12 by the landowner, Unilever; all trenching and survey during the current project took place in field 12, which covers just over 10ha (**Figure 1**). A flat plateau of *c*. 1000m² on the northern side of field 12 slopes down to the southern field boundary where there is a small stream, which is a tributary of the Great River Ouse, located 3km away. Previous archaeological work on the Site (see below) strongly suggests the plateau to be the site of a Roman villa. The Site lies approximately 11km north-west of Bedford.

1.2.2 Both fields 11 and 12 are under a Higher Level Countryside Stewardship Agreement. Part of field 12 is under a set-aside agreement with the Rural Payments Agency. Derogation was organised to allow the works to take place without breaching the conditions of the protection of the monument.

1.2.3 The Site is at a height of approximately 80m aOD. The underlying geology consists of boulder clay with local outcrops of Great Oolitic limestone (British Geological Survey, Sheet 186).

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

1.3.1 The following is taken from a general survey of Roman Bedfordshire, summarised for the project design (Simco 1984; Videotext Communications 2008). By the time of the Roman conquest the Bedfordshire area was fairly densely settled, both by Belgic newcomers and by survivors of the original Iron Age population. This settlement took the form of large numbers of farmsteads, occurring in most areas of the county, each consisting of a group of dwellings surrounded by enclosed fields and wider areas of pasture and occupied by small groups of related families. Evidence from burials in the form of grave goods suggests that contact with the Roman world was already well established with extensive trade and exchange in operation.

1.3.2 Evidence of the first Roman military advance into Bedfordshire is difficult to find. No military sites have been clearly identified in the county and few Iron Age sites show any evidence of conflict or violent destruction. The apparent absence of any serious military conflict could be explained by the centralised control of the *Catuvellauni* under tribal rulers. Surrender by these rulers would, therefore, have indicated a surrender of all tribal groups in the area. Political control would then have come under control of the Roman military. High status native burials indicate that status and wealth were maintained whilst under Roman control. It would have been in the interest of the Roman authorities to maintain the agricultural cycle and disrupt the local economy as little as possible. Troops and administrators depended on the local agrarian economy for their food supply, but the impact of the Roman presence, at least initially, appears to have been minimal.

1.3.3 Despite the major native rebellion of AD 60-1 the countryside at large does not appear to have been drastically affected. A major fire at Godmanchester (approximately 25km to the north-east of the Site) may be attributable to the revolt. Gradually, town and rural life settled into a more stable pattern with the trappings of Roman life becoming more acceptable.

1.3.4 The social hierarchy of Britain during the Roman period was rooted in the Iron Age. Families which held power before the conquest went on to play an important part in the Roman administration of the province. *Verulamium* (St Albans), as the *civitas* capital, provided the tribal administration for the Bedfordshire area. It is likely that each tribe was further subdivided into administrative units called *pagi*, which may have been based on pre-Roman arrangements. The area of land covered by a *pagus* is unclear, although small towns probably acted as administrative centres for the countryside around them. Within Bedfordshire, Sandy may have served this function.

1.3.5 Social hierarchy is reflected in the settlements of Roman Bedfordshire by differing standards of living seen in material remains. The vast majority of sites were single farmsteads, with undistinguished dwellings and farm buildings, set in a group of rectangular fields. The most completely recorded example of this kind of settlement in the county is at Odell, very close to the Site, consisting of a pre-Roman farmstead, superseded by Roman style buildings in the late 1st century AD. Although no major sites of the type have been excavated in Bedfordshire, it is clear that some wealthier villa sites are present. At Newnham, just east of Bedford, for example, an extensive villa site was uncovered, including a hypocaust, cobbled yard, painted wall plaster and evidence for farm buildings and metal working.

1.3.6 Most of the villa sites in the county are likely to have belonged to native aristocracy enjoying a higher level of wealth than the majority of the population. Bedfordshire does not demonstrate great natural resources from which the authorities could derive wealth, other than the good agricultural land itself. Control of land, and therefore crops, must have been an important basis for power in the county. Farmsteads and villas were engaged in mixed agriculture, both arable and stock farming. Grain, particularly wheat and barley, were probably the most financially rewarding crops. The most common farm animals appear to have been cattle, sheep and goats.

1.4 Previous Archaeological Work

1.4.1 The Colworth Science Park has attracted interest in its archaeological heritage from staff members since at least the late 1960s when samian ware, possibly from the villa site, was identified by a local archaeologist, Bill Kuhlicke. An informal group of interested employees formed, led by Professor A. James who built a relationship with the Bedfordshire Archaeological Society and Bedfordshire County Council heritage officers.

1.4.2 In the late 1970s another Unilever employee, Glyn James, and his father excavated a small test pit in the 'villa field', revealing what appeared to be an *in situ* wall and a paved floor surface. Photographs of the masonry in this test pit exist (Videotext Communications 2008, figs. 20-1), but its precise location is not known.

1.4.3 During the early 1980s, as interest grew, a divisional manager, Gerry Dring, conducted field walking on the estate, gathering roof tiles from the villa site, thought at the time to be medieval. Coins were also recovered from the villa field.

1.4.4 Gerry Dring was joined by Dave Hall and John Hutchings who first published information about the site in 1972 in the *Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal: 'A Romano British settlement near Colworth covering 6 acres with a scatter of building stone, roof tiles and pottery. Site of a medieval village and Moat with 13th century pottery. The Roman finds have been interpreted as indicating the possible site of a villa. Pottery and coins suggest a 3rd-4th century date'* (Hall and Hutchings 1972).

1.4.5 As more finds emerged and interest grew, local archaeologists became more involved. A note by local authority field investigator 'DHB' in November 1980 describes the following: *'The Roman Villa: Walking was concentrated in one area … Lying on the surface of this area … was a large amount of Roman tile and pottery. 33 sherds of pottery were recovered from this search, including Nene Valley and Oxford wares (with one sherd of a castor box), one sherd of possibly black burnished ware, a base sherd of a Nene Valley mortarium, and various shelly wares, grey wares and oxidised sandy ware sherds also present. This puts a probable date of 3rd-4th centuries AD on the site, although the presence of one Belgic sherd with fine grog may indicate an earlier origin for the site ... 175 pieces of tile were recovered, mainly roof tile with both tegula and imbreces [sic] represented. There are also 14 pieces with combing on (flue/box tiles?) and one probable piece of brick … A rapid random investigation of the area to the south east of that just described revealed a large amount of tile on the surface with some pottery. The tile here seems to survive in larger pieces and possibly greater concentration'* (HER no. 2669/4).

1.4.6 It is clear from the sketch map accompanying this note that this is field 12, the villa site. The location of the material recovered from this fieldwalking exercise is unknown.

1.4.7 In 1982 local press reports (*Bedfordshire on Sunday*, 10/10/82) about the site inspired Professor A. James to write to A. M. Griffin, County Planning Officer at Bedfordshire County Council, requesting that his local group be allowed to carry out a full excavation of the site, but the request was turned down.

1.4.8 No further work was carried out on the site until the current 'Colworth Archaeological Society' grew from informal fieldwalking conducted by staff members in 2002/03; the society was officially formed in 2004. The Society has since undertaken an extensive survey of the archaeology within the estate boundaries, conducting fieldwalking over the villa during 2005/06 and metal detecting surveys in co-operation with Martin Oake (Bedfordshire County Council Archaeologist), Julian Watters (Bedfordshire Finds Liaison Officer, Portable Antiquities Scheme) and Jim Inglis (Bedford Museum).

1.4.9 Field 12 has produced the highest density of archaeological material, including pottery, roof tile and box flue tile. Several other locations in the fields around the site have also produced Romano-British finds.

1.4.10 A large volume of building material is obvious on the surface of the villa site. A fieldwalking survey produced density plots corresponding with the location of building remains observed on aerial photographs, and yielded approximately one metric tonne of material including faced stonework, tesserae, box flue tiles and *tegulae*.

1.4.11 Pottery recovered from the fieldwalking survey on the villa site has produced Oxfordshire and Nene Valley colour coated finewares, Harrold shelly wares and sandy greywares, all suggesting a date range of AD 250-410.

1.4.12 Large numbers of coins have been recovered, both from fieldwalking and from metal detecting, on the villa site itself and across field 12. Approximately 350 coins have been recovered so far, demonstrating peaks of activity during the periods AD 260-75 and AD 348-64.

1.4.13 Small finds have also been found across the site and have included brooches, spoons, bracelets, military belt buckles, bronze pins and a single small piece of gold jewellery. Further exploration of the area has produced evidence of burnt areas, metal-working slag and quernstones, indicating agricultural and industrial activity.

Discussion

1.4.14 The Yelnow 'Villa' (Colworth) site presents compelling evidence for a large and wealthy villa complex. There are several aspects to the site, however, that do present interesting questions. The villa is in an unusual position. Most villa sites identified in Bedfordshire are on valley slopes or close to known Roman roads or towns, such as Godmanchester or Irchester. Yelnow sits almost exactly midway between Watling Street and another Roman road known to run through the eastern and western boundaries of the county. The site is also located at the head of a river tributary, not a valley slope. It has been postulated that the villa may represent a wealthy agricultural estate making use of the Great River Ouse, to transport grain. The sheer volume of coins from the villa field supports the assumption of wealth as the number recorded is almost four times that recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme for the two closest parishes, Sharnbrook and Odell. The coins, along with a single find of gold jewellery, abundance of metal finds from detecting and indications of substantial building remains all suggest wealth, with the military belt buckles perhaps suggesting a connection to authority – an Imperial Estate?

1.4.15 Further building remains downslope, close to a water source, may suggest a bath-house, temple or (from the aerial photographs) a mausoleum. Surface

finds consist of a scatter of late medieval pottery, which may be explained by the close proximity of a moated manorial site.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Project Aims

2.1.1 A project design for the work was compiled by Videotext Communications (Videotext Communications 2008), providing full details of the circumstances and methods of the project and defines a clearly defined research programme, the primary aims of which are listed below:

- To determine the date sequence of sub-surface archaeological remains within the area of the Site.
- To establish the condition of sub-surface archaeological remains within the area of the Site.
- To determine as far as possible, the extent of sub-surface archaeological remains within the area of the Site.

2.1.2 This assessment report has been produced in consideration of local and regional research agendas. This includes Bedfordshire Archaeology's resource assessment with research agenda and strategy (Oake *et al.* 2007) which identifies a requirement for quantified results to provide a more coherent picture of the specific sites for comparison, and to increase our understanding of the Roman sites in the region.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Geophysical Survey

3.1.1 Prior to the excavation of evaluation trenches, a geophysical survey was carried out across the Site using a combination of resistance and magnetic survey (**Figure 1**). The survey grid was set out by Dr Henry Chapman and tied in to the Ordnance Survey grid using a Trimble real time differential GPS system.

3.1.2 Conditions for magnetic survey were generally good as the ground cover consisted of stubble. However, two areas within the field were set-aside for 'pea crop experiments' and were surrounded by fences with metal uprights which can clearly be seen in the data.

3.1.3 At the time of the survey the field was very dry; although an attempt was made to collect resistance data it was impossible to get a good electrical contact so no further work was carried out (this technique could usefully be employed in the future when the moisture levels are more favourable).

3.1.4 Ground Penetrating Radar was also tested, but the clays proved impenetrable.

3.1.5 Small-scale ferrous responses within the magnetic data are likely to be modern in origin and will not be discussed within the report unless deemed relevant.

3.2 Evaluation Trenches

3.2.1 Seven trenches of varying sizes were excavated, their locations determined in order to investigate and to clarify geophysical anomalies and to investigate standing earthworks (**Figure 1**).

3.2.2 The trenches were excavated using a combination of machine and hand digging. All machine trenches were excavated under constant archaeological supervision and ceased at the identification of significant archaeological remains or at natural geology if this was encountered first. When machine excavation had ceased all trenches were cleaned by hand and archaeological deposits investigated.

3.2.3 At various stages during excavation the deposits were scanned by a metal detector and signals marked in order to facilitate investigation. The excavated up-cast was scanned by metal detector.

3.2.4 All archaeological deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* record sheets with a unique numbering system for individual contexts. Trenches were located using a Trimble Real Time Differential GPS survey system. All archaeological features and deposits were planned at a scale of 1:20 with sections drawn at 1:10. All principal strata and features were related to the Ordnance Survey datum.

3.2.5 A full photographic record of the investigations and individual features was maintained, utilising digital images. The photographic record illustrated both the detail and general context of the archaeology revealed and the Site as a whole.

3.2.6 At the completion of the work, all trenches were reinstated using the excavated soil.

3.2.7 A unique Site code (YEL 08) was agreed prior to the commencement of works. The work was carried out from the 25th to 28th July 2008. The archive and all artefacts were subsequently transported to the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury where they were processed and assessed for this report.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Details of individual excavated contexts and features, the full geophysical report (GSB 2007), the summary of the landscape and earthwork survey and details of artefactual and environmental assessments, are retained in the archive. Details of the excavated sequences can be found in **Appendix 1**.

4.2 Geophysical Survey (Figure 2)

4.2.1 The survey identified a complex of archaeological features, dominated by a large rectilinear ditched enclosure. However, it appears that the modern ploughing is coincidentally aligned with the enclosure ditches and as a consequence there is some uncertainty as to whether some responses are archaeological or agricultural in origin.

4.2.2 The enclosure ditch system (A), which comprises double ditches on the western and northern sections, clearly encompasses an area of increased magnetic response (B). The latter is typical of the magnetic noise normally associated with villa buildings. It had been assumed in advance of the current work that the site comprised a substantial stone-built villa, but the geophysics and trenching indicated that it was more likely to have been a timber structure built partially on stone foundations. Whilst it has not been possible to provide a detailed plan of the building, the footprint has at least been pinpointed. In addition, the results suggest more than one period of occupation as demonstrated by the linear anomalies (C) which may suggest a further, perhaps later enclosure, attached to (A).

4.2.3 Other evidence for multi-period activity was inferred from the presence of sub-circular anomalies (D). At least one round-house, of Iron Age date, was discovered and the evaluation trenches suggested the presence of multiple ditches, as indicated in the magnetic data.

4.2.4 Perhaps the most surprising element to emerge from the survey was the complex of archaeological anomalies (E) set within another area of increased magnetic response, once again typical of villa buildings. Due to the lack of time, it was not possible to excavate any of the features but the geophysical results are very clear. The western ditch in this area is on the same alignment as (A) and the implications are that this is directly linked with the main enclosure. A break in the ditch (F) could have been an entrance to the whole complex, perhaps associated with ditch (G), but the alignments are somewhat perplexing and any association is only implied, not proven.

4.2.5 Linear responses immediately to the south-west of the enclosure complex, running on a northwest-southeast alignment, have been interpreted as either '*?Archaeology'* or '*Trends'*, although some may simply be ploughing effects. Further away from the main site are a handful of anomalies (H) which are likely to be of archaeological interest, although it is difficult to provide a more precise interpretation.

4.2.6 The areas set-aside for the pea crops can be seen as a line of small ferrous responses (I) which relate to the metal uprights of the fence. One 20m grid could not be surveyed due to a separate area of peas and the presence of the 'finds tent'. A modern field drain can be seen bisecting the data, again aligned with the ploughing direction.

4.3 Evaluation Trenches

Iron Age

4.3.1 The Iron Age deposits were located on the same plateau as the Romano-British archaeology, but slightly farther to the north-west. In Trench 5, which was located over two semi-circular geophysical anomalies, evidence for one, possibly two round-houses was found (**Figure 3**).

Structure(s)

4.3.2 The structure, or structures, investigated comprised a short length of ditch (508) on the southern side and the curving edge of a depression (511) on the northern side. Both matched the geophysical anomalies (Figure 2, anomalies D). These two elements could represent two separate buildings,

but their position and alignment correspond to parts of a single structure. The primary fill of (508) contained a single sherd of Late Iron Age pottery.

4.3.3 Within this putative structure were the remnants of a pebble stone surface (506) defined at its perimeter by larger pieces of limestone. This surface was set into the natural clay on the base of depression (511) on the northern side. This part of the structure had been covered when the building went out of use by a layer of occupation debris (503/504), flecked with charcoal and containing pottery and animal bone; the pottery included a mixture of Late Iron Age and Romano-British wares, with nothing definitely later than 2nd century AD. In section it looked as if a perimeter wall, probably partly represented by the larger stones at the edge of (506), had existed at the base of the slope into the depression. A deposit (510) which was either placed during construction or developed against the outer edge of the wall was butted by layer (503) after the wall was removed.

4.3.4 To the south, a post-hole (509) lay on the outer edge of ditch (508). According to the section through these features, the cutting of the post-hole occurred after the ditch had partly silted up. This strongly suggests that post-hole (509) was not part of the initial build. It could represent local structural maintenance and repair, or a complete re-build utilising the same perimeter ditch. The final silting episode in ditch (508) occurred in the void left by the removal of the post from (509). It must, therefore, have developed after the structure had been demolished, although it only contained Iron Age pottery.

*Roman (**Figures 4-6**)*

Platform

4.3.5 The stratigraphically earliest deposits in Trenches 1 and 4 (119 and 405 respectively) resembled the natural clay but were 'dirty' in appearance and were interpreted as an episode of pre-construction landscaping, using re-deposited natural clay to re-work the shape of the plateau and to create a level platform for the villa's construction.

Stone Surface

4.3.6 A rough stone pavement (105) occurred in the southern half of Trench 1 (**Figure 4, Plate 1**) and the majority of the area covered by Trench 4 (402) (**Figure 5, Plate 4**). This surface occurred close to the edge of the topographically flat area considered to be the villa platform and is thought to have formed a crescent-shaped yard surface around the south-east facing aspect of the main building.

4.3.7 The rough nature of the surface, especially in Trench 4, was probably the result of root action after it went out of use. Either that, or the surface was always rough to a degree and only designed to provide consolidation of the clay soil during wet periods.

4.3.8 In Trench 1 the average size of the yard surface stones was smaller than those that made up the surface (402), and these areas may have had different functions. For example, the archaeological evidence suggests that there may have been timber buildings on (105) but not on (402). At least four features in Trench 1 - two beam slots, a post-hole and a stone-lined drain - could be directly attributed to or were associated with timber-framed buildings. Surface (105) would have provided an ideal surface for such structures. A small amount of Romano-British ceramic building material was recovered from the surface, but no closely datable pottery or other finds.

4.3.9 A stone-lined drain (116) (**Figure 4, Plate 2**) was partially excavated and gave the impression that it had been constructed at the same time as the stone surface (105). It appeared to drain directly into ditch (110).

Timber structure(s)

4.3.10 The possible structurally-related features in Trench 1 comprised two post-holes (107, 113) and two narrow and shallow gullies (111, 120), which may have been beam slots. Although it is assumed that these features were Romano-British, it is not known where they fit into the chronology of the Site; a single sherd of Romano-British pottery came from (107), and another from (120), but these are not closely datable. One beam slot (111) cut the other (120). Post-holes (107) and (113) were isolated and not even associated with the stone surface (105). One distinct feature of post-hole (107) was that it contained pitched stone packing on two of its sides, and so may have supported a timber at an angle rather than vertically.

Stone Structure(s)

4.3.11 Evidence of Roman stone-built architecture on the platform was present in Trenches 3 and 7 (**Figure 6**). In association with demolition debris were the remains of three walls and interior surfaces. It was not clear whether these could be attributed to a single phase of construction and were part of the same building, or represented a range of buildings that spanned a period of occupation. No datable material was found directly associated with the structural remains.

4.3.12 When the overburden was removed from Trench 7 a complex horizon of deposits was exposed (**Figure 6, Plate 5**). Amongst demolition material and post-habitation silting were the *in situ* remnants of a baked clay floor surface (702), which was overlain by evidence of burning (712).

4.3.13 Limited removal of some of the rubble (705) and silt (709) in the northern half of the trench determined that these surfaces were bounded by a limestone wall which had been 'robbed' to the top of its footings (708).

4.3.14 In Trench 3, located immediately adjacent to Trench 7, were more stratified features and deposits representative of construction and demolition of a substantial stone-built building. The *in situ* structural elements recorded in this trench included two wall footings, one of which strongly suggested that under-floor heating had been a feature of the building at some stage.

4.3.15 The investigation by sondage of a curvilinear ditch (306) filled with box-flue tile fragments, which was adjacent to masonry visible on the surface of the trench, determined that the ditch had truncated the retaining wall and backfill of a subterranean area. This area appeared to have been a void below a floor, partly supported at ground level on a step around the inner edge of a foundation (309), which also served as retaining perimeter to the area. This arrangement would presumably have allowed the transfer of heat supplied by a furnace located elsewhere into a room immediately above.

4.3.16 Although severely truncated by ditch (306), a corner of the revetment or foundation structure had been preserved. A deposit considered to be the remnant backfill of the under-floor cavity was removed and the inner face of the wall exposed (**Figure 6, Plate 6**). This was finely constructed from large, flat-faced, uneven courses of limestone, and is considered too fine to be merely a buried foundation. A narrow step, *c.* 0.1m wide at ground level,

reduced the thickness of the footings, and therefore the width of the above-ground wall, to 0.3m. This step has been interpreted as the perimeter support for the floor which may have been elsewhere supported on an array of *pilae* (brick-built pillars or piers).

4.3.17 The other evidence of a wall in Trench 3 lay to the south-west of (309) and ran perpendicular to its alignment. This was a linear arrangement of stone (324), 0.5m wide and at least 2.9m in length, interpreted as either the top of a foundation, or disturbed demolition rubble in a robber cut (**Figure 6**, **Plate 7**). It is assumed the north-west end of the feature represented the approximate position of a wall terminal. If this was a gap for an entrance, then the opposing terminal would have been located beyond the edge of the trench.

4.3.18 The 'back-end' of a structure could have been represented in Trench 3 by an unexcavated gully tentatively interpreted as a beam slot (321). This ran perpendicular to wall (324) and parallel to wall (309) and so fitted the orientation of the structural footprint identified for this area. It is appreciated, however, that this may be coincidental, an equally plausible interpretation being that the feature was merely a drainage ditch that provided run-off from the plateau.

Other features

4.3.19 Ditch (110) in Trench 1 (see above) may have had an association with stone surface (105) and drain (116) (**Figure 4**). It was orientated north-east to south-west and probably provided drainage off the construction platform down the natural slope of the field. It had steep flat sides and a wide base. There was no discernible variation in the fill (106), which appeared to be the product of gradual silting.

4.3.20 Stone surface (105) was cut by one other feature, ditch (109). This was orientated north-west to south-east, approximately perpendicular to ditch (110). It was not clear, however when this feature was dug, nor whether it was in use at the same time as stone surface (105) or possible beam slots (111, 120). Ditch (109) appeared to have silted up naturally; pottery from this feature was of late Romano-British date, including a shelly ware jar.

4.3.21 The majority of the excavated surface of Trench 2 was covered by a single feature, a large depression or ditch (206) (**Figure 5**). This corresponded to the terminal of a well defined linear geophysical anomaly that appears to form part of a trapezoidal enclosure (**Figure 2**, anomaly A). The eastern edge of the feature was lined with limestone blocks (208), which may have been a deliberate attempt to stabilise this edge.

4.3.22 Two main phases of silting responsible for the filling of (206) were observed. Fill (211/203) preceded (205/209). Finds were recovered from all of these fills and the pottery provides a late Romano-British date.

4.3.23 A large feature in Trench 3, (306), was initially interpreted as a robber cut due to an apparent association with wall (309) (see above). It became clear, however, that this was just a curvilinear ditch, with no consistency in character along its recorded length. It contained two fills, both the product of deliberate backfill (314, 305); both fills produced late Romano-British pottery, including Nene Valley colour coated wares. Along its length, ditch (306) adopted a narrower 'V' shaped profile before ending as a wider, shallow

feature in which (305) constituted the sole fill. The function of ditch (306) could not be ascertained, but it does represent a continuation of activity on the plateau after the building represented by wall (309) was abandoned.

4.3.24 A ditch (312) at the north-west end of Trench 3 could not be traced more than a very short distance either side of the trench edge. This feature also produced late Romano-British pottery.

4.3.25 Just south of ditch (312) was a burnt, stony area (325). This was only partially exposed but the geophysical results suggested that it was discrete and localised rather than linear in nature. This could represent anything from *in situ* evidence of industrial activity to dumped demolition rubble and hearth material, possibly concealing structural remains. No finds were recovered from (325).

4.3.26 Two intercutting ditches were the only features present in Trench 6 (**Figure 7**). This trench was located south of the 'villa plateau', towards the boundary of field 12. The earliest of these features remained unexcavated (604). This was a curvilinear feature aligned north-east to south-west across the trench.

4.3.27 Feature (604) was cut by ditch (602). In profile it had symmetrical steep sloping sides with a narrow base. The fill (603) was very charcoal-rich and was sampled for the retrieval of palaeo-environmental evidence, which produced large quantities of grain (bread type wheat), a species not recorded in Britain before the Late Saxon period. This feature, then, must belong to a phase much later than the villa, although the only datable cultural material it contained comprised six Romano-British pottery sherds.

Post Medieval / Modern

4.3.28 Two agricultural furrows were detected truncating the archaeology in Trenches 2 (213) and 3 (304). These were easily discernible due to their width and the ephemeral nature of their edges. The fills were essentially the same as the topsoil.

5 FINDS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Finds were recovered from all of the seven trenches excavated. All finds have been quantified by material type within each context, and totals by material type and by trench are presented in **Table 1**. Subsequent to quantification, all finds have been at least visually scanned in order to gain an overall idea of the range of types present, their condition, and their potential date range. Spot dates have been recorded for selected material types as appropriate (pottery, ceramic building material). All finds data are currently held on an Access database.

5.1.2 This section presents an overview of the finds assemblage, on which is based an assessment of the potential of this assemblage to contribute to an understanding of the site in its local and regional context, with particular reference to the character and development of the villa and other structures.

5.2 Pottery

5.2.1 The pottery was recorded using simple fabric classifications, based on principal inclusion (e.g. shell-gritted ware) or firing technique (e.g. grey ware); some known ware types have been identified (e.g. Oxfordshire and Nene Valley wares). Simple form codes were also used and, where possible, the fabric classifications and form codes follow those used to record pottery from other Bedfordshire sites (supplied by A. Slowikowski of Albion Archaeology).

5.2.2 The pottery assemblage contains pottery dating from the middle and late Iron Age and early Roman periods through to the late Roman period, although the amount that can be dated to the later 2nd and 3rd centuries AD appears relatively small. Over 90% is of Roman date. Most of the Iron Age pottery was recovered from a number of discrete features in Trench 5. The average sherd weight is just over 15g. **Table 2** shows the pottery assemblage by ware type.

Mid to Late Iron Age/early Roman

5.2.3 The pottery identified as Iron Age comprises a variety of shell-gritted fabrics. The sherds considered to be mid to late Iron Age in date have a fabric containing fine shell (F16B), while the later Iron Age material has fabrics containing larger pieces of shell (F07, F16), or a combination of shell and grog (F08). Some of these later Iron Age fabrics could have been in production and/or use in the early Roman period. The only recognisable forms are jars, one of which has a plain rim and another has a cordon on the outside of the rim with finger-impressed decoration. The Iron Age pottery was concentrated in and around the round-house structures in Trench 5; one sherd was also recovered from curvilinear ditch (306) in Trench 3.

Roman

5.2.4 The only imported wares are South Gaulish and Central Gaulish samian ware and amphora. Identifiable samian ware forms include 27 and 33 of South Gaulish origin and a form 31 from Central Gaul. Other non-local wares comprise vessels from the Nene Valley, Oxfordshire and Mancetter-Hartshill production sites, Black Burnished ware from south Dorset (BB1) and, possibly, BB2.

5.2.5 By sherd count, grey wares (R06B) and shell-gritted wares (R13) each comprised 33% of the assemblage (27% and 48%, respectively, by weight). Visually, there is much variety in the grey ware with different coloured fabrics and surfaces; there is also some variety in hardness and inclusions. Most of the recognisable grey ware forms are jars with various rims types, although bowls and dishes are also represented and there is one indented beaker among the assemblage. A number of sherds are decorated with burnished lines, girth grooves or rouletting. One jar rim has three cuts on the rim, incised post-firing.

5.2.6 Some of the grey ware bowls and dishes are reminiscent of BB1 forms. One variety of grey ware appears to be a more direct imitation of BB1, having a similar fabric, colour and finish; this was recorded under a separate code (R07A). Recognisable forms in this fabric comprise a flanged bowl and a probable dish with burnished intersecting arc decoration. One base fragment has zones of burnished and scored lines internally.

5.2.7 Most of the shell-gritted ware forms are also jars, including a number with undercut rims; there are also examples of lid-seated and large storage jars. The few bowls are large, curved-sided and with flanged rims and one has an incised wavy-line and stabbed decoration on the flange. A number of vessels and sherds carry external rilling. The small amounts of grog-tempered ware (R09A, R09F) included a wide, curved-sided bowl in a hard cream fabric; this fabric is common locally.

5.2.8 One of the Oxfordshire ware sherds is from an imitation samian form 38 bowl. The Nene Valley colour-coated ware vessels comprise flanged bowls, plain-rimmed dishes, wide-mouthed bowls and beakers. Some of the latter are in an orange fabric and one sherd has white-painted circular motif decoration. The Oxfordshire mortarium is a beaded flanged type with multi-coloured quartz trituration grits, while that from the Nene Valley has a grooved flange. The Mancetter-Hartshill mortaria comprised two sherds with red ironstone trituration grits. Some Nene Valley cream ware was also recovered. A few sherds have red-painted bands, and others are from flagons; another cream ware flagon is probably also of Nene Valley origin. Sherds from vessels in a white/buff/pink gritty ware were also recovered. This fabric is common locally and, on the basis of the forms produced, seems to be a regional variant of *Verulamium*-region wares.

5.2.9 The shell-gritted wares were almost certainly produced at the Harrold kiln site, some 6km to the south-west up the Great Ouse valley (Brown 1994). It is likely that all of the grey wares are the products of local kilns, a large number of which are known. The closest to the site are those at Knotting, Souldrop, Bozeat, Turvey and Wollaston (all within 10km) and there are at least another dozen production centres within a 20km radius (Swan 1984, appendix A). Other kiln sites undoubtedly await discovery.

5.3 Ceramic Building Material (CBM)

5.3.1 Around 90kg of CBM was recovered and all is of Romano-British date. The CBM comprises fragments of *imbrex* and *tegula* roof tiles, box flue tile and brick; there are no complete items. Almost all of the CBM is in a shell-gritted fabric and was, as the pottery, almost certainly produced in the Harrold kilns (Brown 1994). One tile, possibly part of a *pila*, is in a reddish-orange fabric.

5.3.2 A total of 39% by weight was from topsoil or unstratified layers. No CBM was recovered from Trench 6 and there was only a small amount from Trench 5. Trench 3 produced the most tile (53% by weight) followed by Trench 1 (17%), Trench 2 (13%) and Trench 4 (10%).

5.3.3 Thirteen *tegulae* have cutaways sufficiently complete to allow categorisation according to Warry's typology (Warry 2006). One conforms to Type A (*c*. 40-120 AD), two to Type D (*c*. 240 – 380 AD) and 10 to Type C4 (*c*. 160-260 AD). Five *tegulae* have semi-circular signatures. One box-tile fragment has some cursive letters, probably incised pre-firing and an *imbrex* also appears to have a letter or mark (a 'V' with a short line at right angles to one of the arms of the 'V'), again seemingly incised or stamped before firing. Five box-tile fragments have circular vents and a number of the brick fragments have small holes which mostly do not penetrate all the way through. One unusual *imbrex* fragment has an integral solid 'end' which is decorated with a single groove following the curved line of the ridge; similar *imbrices* have

previously been recovered from the Site (Videotext Communications 2008, fig. 14). One piece of CBM appears to have been made into a tessera.

5.4 Stone

5.4.1 The stone mainly comprises roof-tile fragments in local cornbrash limestone, quern fragments in Millstone Grit and a greensand whetstone. One small piece of limestone has shaped curved edges and may have also been used as a whetstone. A larger greensand fragment has two straight and one curved sides and may have been part of a door socket stone. This was retrieved from curvilinear ditch (306). An interesting but chronologically displaced stone object is half a polished Neolithic macehead (of uncertain source), broken across the central perforation (**Back cover**).

5.5 Flint

5.5.1 The flint comprises various undiagnostic flake and core fragments which, in the absence of evidence of retouching or other utilisation, can only be broadly dated as Neolithic or Bronze Age.

5.6 Glass

5.6.1 Two pieces of diagnostic glass were recovered, both Romano-British. One is a window edge fragment from Trench 7 in blue-green glass with a maximum thickness of 3mm. The other is the base of a blown glass vessel, probably a tubular unguent bottle, recovered from curvilinear ditch (306). The glass is olive green in colour and the base has a diameter of *c.* 40mm with a central pontil mark.

5.7 Coins

5.7.1 Eighteen definite and one possible copper alloy coins were recovered. All of these are Roman coins, predominantly of the late 3rd and 4th centuries AD. In general the coins are in poor condition, with many show signs of corrosion. A number also show signs of pre-depositional wear.

5.7.2 Two of the coins from the Site could not be closely dated (ditch 306, silting layer 401). Both of these are small, extremely worn coins, and have been dated, on the basis of their size alone. A third copper alloy disc (layer 401) is of the right size and form to have been a coin. However, no traces of engraving can be found on either the obverse or reverse, both of which bear evidence of heavy scratching. It is unclear whether this object represents a coin modified for some other purpose, or whether it was created for some other purpose in mind.

5.7.3 The earliest coin from the site came from ditch (306). This is a *sestertius* of Marcus Aurelius, struck in AD 163 – 164. It is, however, very heavily worn. With no mechanism for removing them from circulation, large bronze issues of the first and second century AD may easily have continued in circulation until the 'Augustan' system of coinage was finally abandoned in *c*. AD 260.

5.7.4 Over half of the coins (ten of the 18) are radiate *antoniniani* of the late 3rd century AD. Seven of these ten are thought likely to be copies or probable copies. These are contemporary copies of 'official' coinage, possibly struck to compensate for gaps in supply of coinage to Britain and to supply

sufficient small change for the provinces needs. It is unclear whether these copies were officially sanctioned, if at all, but they are not uncommon as site finds, and seem to have circulated in the same fashion as officially struck coins.

5.7.5 The remaining five coins all date to the 4th century AD, and comprise two coins of the House of Constantine and three of the House of Valentinian. These represent the dominant periods of coin loss in the 4th century, and suggest that the site continued in use throughout much of the 4th century. The presence of the worn Valentinianic coins indicates that the site probably remained in use into the late 4th century AD.

5.7.6 The small assemblage of coins from the Site indicate that it was occupied during the late 3rd and 4th centuries AD, despite the majority being recovered from unstratified contexts. The single earlier coin, of Marcus Aurelius, may relate to earlier activity on the site, or could have been in circulation for some time prior to its loss.

5.8 Metalwork

5.8.1 As well as coins, objects of copper alloy, iron and lead were recovered. All iron and copper alloy objects have been X-radiographed, as an aid to identification, and also to act as a basic record. All of the metal objects came from Romano-British contexts, or were associated with Romano-British finds in unstratified contexts.

5.8.2 Copper alloy

5.8.3 Identifiable copper alloy objects comprise a buckle with an iron pin (501); two fittings (topsoil in Trenches 1 and 4), a pin (ditch 109), and a spoon (robber trench 704). Other objects comprise miscellaneous small scraps of sheet or wire of unknown function.

5.8.4 Iron

5.8.5 The ironwork consists largely of nails and other structural items (tacks, bolts, chain links. There are two knives, and five other objects are possibly tools. Other objects comprise miscellaneous fittings, rod, strip and sheet fragments of unknown function, or are unidentifiable.

5.8.6 Lead

5.8.7 Apart from one perforated weight (60g, ditch 312), all of the lead consists of waste/offcut fragments.

5.9 Jet

5.9.1 A jet ring was found in the curvilinear ditch (306) in Trench 3. It has an internal diameter of *c*. 18mm, and a maximum width of *c*. 27mm. The bezel is circular and undecorated and has a diameter of *c*. 11mm. There are two incised lines externally across the ring either side of the bezel. The ring is asymmetrical in shape with one arm curved and the other flat then curved (Allason-Jones 1996, nos. 168-9). It is incomplete, with a c 10mm piece missing opposite the bezel.

5.10 Animal Bone

Introduction

5.10.1 A total of 587 bones of mammals and birds was hand-recovered from the Site. Conjoining fragments that were demonstrably from the same bone were counted as one bone in order to minimise distortion, so totals vary from the raw fragment counts presented in **Table 1**. No fragments were recorded as 'medium mammal' or 'large mammal'; these were instead consigned to the unidentified category.

5.10.2 All bone fragments were in good condition, which resulted in 57% identified bones. At 4%, the number of loose teeth is low and thus re-working probably minimal. Gnawing marks made by dog were seen on 7% of the bones and thus some scavenger bias can be assumed. Only three bones showed signs of contact with fire and the burning of bone waste or their use as fuel can largely be excluded.

Animal Husbandry

5.10.3 The material included horse (n=1), cattle (58%), sheep/goat (33%), pig (6%), dog (2%) and bird (1%). Trench 1 topsoil contained a badger mandible and might be intrusive. The bird bones derive from domestic fowl and mallard/duck. It seems that the diet of beef and mutton was supplemented by small proportions of pork and poultry. Fowling might be attested by mallard. Ditch (306) contained a goat horn core. Goat horns were valued as a raw material and were often a trading commodity.

5.10.4 In total, 46 bones could be aged to provide insight in the population structure of the animals. Trench 2 topsoil and silting layer (401) contained the remains of foetal/neonate sheep/goat indicating local breeding (Reichstein 1994). A total of 27 bones could be measured to provide insight into the phenotype of the Yelnow animals during the Roman period. Trench 1 topsoil contained a complete sheep metatarsus with a GL of 132.5 mm resulting in a height at the withers of 60 cm (Teichert 1975). A cattle humerus in silting layer (401) had a GLC of 253 mm which results in a height at the withers of 1.21 m (Matolcsi 1970). Both are normal values for the Roman period. Trench 3 topsoil contained a dog ulna with a GL of 94 mm resulting in a height at the withers of 27 cm (Harcourt 1974). The ulna clearly belonged to a small dog with slightly bowed legs. Ditch (306) contained a metacarpus II of dog with a GL of 36 mm and a metacarpus V with a GL of 41 mm, resulting in a height at the withers of 32 and 39 cm (Clark 1995). Both indicate quite small dogs typical of the Roman period.

Consumption and deposition

5.10.5 Although the assemblage is small, the presence of elements of all parts of the animal body makes it likely that the animals were butchered locally. Butchery marks were seen on 3% of the bones and were made by knives and cleavers. A typical Roman butchery activity could be observed on a cattle scapula. The *spina* of the scapula had been chopped off whilst stripping off the meat (Lauwerier 1988).

5.11 Other Finds

5.11.1 Other finds comprise small quantities of wall plaster, *opus signinum*, fired clay and marine shell (oyster). Most of the wall plaster came from Trench 3 and has a red painted surface. *Opus signinum* was retrieved from Trenches 1 and 3, some from the curvilinear ditch in the latter. The fired clay came from Trenches 2, 4, 5 and 7. The fragments from Trenches 4, 5 and 7 have wattle impressions, while that from Trench 2 has incised marks, around 20mm long, made by an object with tines or similar.

5.12 Potential and Recommendations

5.12.1 This is a relatively small finds assemblage, in which only pottery, ceramic building material, iron nails and animal bone occurred in any significant quantity. The assemblage augments the material already collected from the site, but adds little new information. A significant proportion of the assemblage came from topsoil or otherwise insecurely dated contexts. The finds have already been recorded to a minimum archive level, and no further analysis is recommended, except as part of any wider programme of research on the whole material assemblage recovered from the Site.

6 PALAEO-ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Six bulk samples were taken from burnt deposits considered to be potential industrial indicators. Three samples were taken from deposits within an Iron Age structure in Trench 5, and three samples came from contexts believed to be Romano-British, including silts from above stone surface (105/402) and ditch fill (603) (ditch 602). Samples were processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant remains and charcoals. In addition, two sub-samples were taken from layers in Trench 5 for the retrieval of molluscs.

6.1.2 Bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods. The flot was retained on a 0.5 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 5.6 mm, 2mm and 1mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. Flots were scanned under a x10 – x40 stereo-binocular microscope and the presence of charred remains quantified (**Table 3**) to record the preservation and nature of the charred plant and wood charcoal remains. Grain present was counted and the range of species noted. Chaff and weed seeds were fully quantified. Identifications are based on well established morphological criteria and by comparison with modern reference material held by Wessex Archaeology. Nomenclature and taxonomic order of wild species follow Stace (1997).

6.2 Charred Plant Remains and Charcoal

Iron Age

6.2.1 The three Iron Age samples came from ditch (508) and from surface (506) and overlying occupation layer (504) within the structure. All three samples produced small flots containing frequent rootlets and with small quantities of charcoal and seeds or chaff. Small quantities of cereal remains were present in the ditch sample (fill 505) and the structure surface (506). One species was noted, *Triticum spelta* (spelt wheat), the characteristic wheat of the

period across southern Britain (Greig 1991). A cereal-sized culm (straw) node and rhizome (root) segment were present in the ditch fill. Occupation layer (504) produced a flot containing three weed seeds (*Chenopodium album* and *Galium* sp.) and a small quantity of charcoal.

Romano-British

6.2.2 Two samples from Romano-British contexts produced much larger flots than the Iron Age samples with greater quantities of charred grain and chaff. Samples 1 and 2, from silting layer (401) and ditch (306) respectively, produced flots containing charcoal (of mixed taxa), and both grain and glume bases of *Triticum spelta* (spelt wheat) or *Triticum spelta/dicoccum* (spelt/emmer wheat). A small number of weed seeds were present in each flot, all being taxa of catholic habitat preferences, but typical species of disturbed or cultivated soils (*Chenopodium album*, *Vicia/Lathyrus* sp., *Medicago/Trifolium/Lotus* sp., *Polygonum persicaria*, *Rumex* sp. and *Bromus* sp.). Occasional grain and chaff of *Triticum aestivum/turgidum* type (bread/rivet type free-threshing wheat) were noted in ditch (306). This latter flot was much larger than that from silting layer (401), with significantly greater numbers of grain and chaff, as well as more abundant charcoal. This is probably directly related to the context type, the ditch fill deriving from deliberately backfilled or dumped material.

?Post-Roman

6.2.3 The final deposit was taken from ditch (602), originally thought to be Romano-British. This produced a large flot containing abundant grain (in excess of 1000), as well as large charcoal fragments. Unlike the other deposits of this period, the grain identified was almost entirely of *Triticum aestivum/turgidum* type (free-threshing bread type or rivet wheat). A number of rachis internodes were also present. While the majority of these were not identifiable to species two types were recognised: *Triticum aestivum* type (bread type wheat) and probably *Triticum turgidum* (rivet wheat). This second species is a late introduction to the British Isles, not recorded prior to the Late Saxon period (Moffett 1992; Campbell 1994). Additional cereals included occasional grains of *Hordeum vulgare* (barley) and *Avena* sp. (oats) and rachis fragments of *Secale cereale* (rye). This range of cereals is typical of the Saxon, medieval and post-medieval period (Greig 1991).

6.2.4 A single pulse and a stoned fruit consisting of a fragment of stone and some adhering flesh also represent possible cultivars. A more extensive weed flora was recovered from this deposit which included ruderal or arable weeds with catholic habitat requirements (*Chenopodium album*, *Atriplex* sp., *Rumex* sp., *Fallopia convolvulus*, *Odontites verna/Euphrasia* sp., *Galium aparine*, and so on), as well as *Anthemis cotula* (stinking mayweed), more strongly associated with arable crops. This last species is rarely recorded prior to the Roman period and is particularly characteristic of medieval arable assemblages. Finally, seeds of *Lolium temulentum/multiflorum* (rye grass) were present, both species typical of medieval arable fields and waste places and late introductions into the British Isles.

6.3 Land and Fresh/Brackish Water Molluscs

6.3.1 Samples of one litre were processed by standard methods (Evans 1972) for land snails. The flots (0.5mm) were rapidly assessed by scanning under a x 10 – x 40 stereo-binocular microscope to provide some information about shell preservation and species representation. The numbers of shells and

the presence of taxonomic groups were quantified (**Table 4**). Nomenclature is according to Kerney (1999).

6.3.2 The samples were taken from layers above the round-house floor surface (506). Molluscs were only recovered in very low numbers and the species recovered were mainly open country species.

6.4 Discussion

6.4.1 The range of charred plant remains for the Iron Age period is as would be expected, with spelt wheat the dominant cereal present. The small quantity of grain and chaff and charcoal is such that there is no benefit in further work on the samples. It is not possible to speculate on the origin of the material other than to suggest that it represents background scatters of crop processing debris.

6.4.2 The Romano-British material has much greater potential for analysis although the small number of samples necessarily limits any interpretation. Two contexts (silting layer 401, and ditch fill 314) produced cereal species appropriate for the period, notably spelt wheat. The greater concentration of remains compared to the Iron Age period may be the result of increased scale of arable activity and the volume of cereals entering the site. The occasional free-threshing wheats from the ditch fill (314), are likely to be intrusive later material. The high proportion of grain in relation to chaff is likely to indicate that either spikelet forks are represented for which the chaff has largely been destroyed during burning, chaff surviving charring less well than grain (Boardman and Jones 1990), or that processed grain is represented with occasional impurities. It is not possible to distinguish between these two deposit types. The level of analysis conducted during the assessment is sufficient for these deposits, more detailed analysis being unlikely to extend the species list any further.

6.4.3 The final sample, from ditch (602), is likely to derive from medieval material. Free-threshing wheat, while occasionally recorded in prehistoric and Roman sites, rarely forms a significant component of such assemblages and is not through to have been cultivated in southern Britain until the post-Roman period. In addition the free-threshing wheat represented appears to include a tetraploid species, *Triticum turgidum* or rivet wheat, a late Saxon or early medieval introduction (Moffett 1991; Campbell 1995). The combination of free-threshing wheat, barley, oats and rye is particularly characteristic of the medieval period (Greig 1991). The deposit is likely to represent a deposit of grain either burnt in storage, or by accident during drying or deliberately if spoiled by fungal or insect attack. Sufficient detail was recorded at the assessment stage that more detailed analysis is unlikely to extend the species list further.

6.4.4 Potential and recommendations

6.4.5 Grain or glume bases from the Romano-British deposits would be appropriate for radiocarbon dating. The small flots with roots of the Iron Age deposits would suggest they are inappropriate for dating having the potential to contain instructive material. The large deposit of free-threshing grain from ditch (602) is suitable for radiocarbon dating, but as stated above raises a question as to the date of the ditch.

6.4.6 No further work is recommended on the charred plant remains or charcoal, or on the land snails.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1.1 The Time Team evaluation has provided a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the Yelnow villa site and the activity in the immediate locale. At least two, and possibly three broad phases of activity were identified. In addition, the unstratified find of a Neolithic stone macehead is of interest, but could not be related to any traces of activity of this period on the site.

7.1.2 The geophysical survey produced evidence for possible round-houses in the north of the site, and on investigation the remains of one, possibly two round-houses of probable Middle to Late Iron Age date were revealed, with remnants of stone walling and interior surface. These structures had been heavily truncated, and produced only a small quantity of artefactual material.

7.1.3 The ceramic evidence, which provides the primary evidence for the site, is insufficient to demonstrate continuity between the Iron Age and Romano-British phases of the site, but the villa may have developed from a native predecessor. This is comparable to the situation at other villas such Odell and Cotterstock and, if this was not a 'new' foundation, it accounts for the location of the site away from the major Roman road network. An Iron Age farmstead here would have been accessible from the Great River Ouse and by Iron Age trackways. The round-house(s) lay within a sub-rectangular enclosure, as revealed by the geophysical survey, but as this feature was not excavated it is uncertain whether it was contemporary with the Iron Age occupation or later, or whether it incorporated more than one phase of ditches.

7.1.4 What can be observed is that the two areas of increased magnetic response shown by the geophysical survey, which are considered typical of the response normally associated with villa buildings, are neatly bounded by the enclosure ditches. The more southerly of the two areas of probable buildings was not investigated, but the five trenches excavated across the northern area, located within what had been identified from previous archaeological fieldwork as the 'villa field' (field 12), did locate structural evidence of that villa, albeit in a very truncated state.

7.1.5 Although the trenches located stone and possibly timber structures we still know little about the character, phasing and footprint of the villa buildings. The results at this level suggest that the stone building was not a sprawling complex at its full extent but a compact structure. It is, however, clear that at some stage this incorporated a building which had 'high status' features such as heated floor areas and painted plaster walls. Quantities of ceramic and stone building material were recovered, including unusual *imbrex* roof tile forms.

7.1.6 The chronology suggested by the finds (pottery and coins) spans the Romano-British period, but with an emphasis on the later period, i.e. 3rd and 4th centuries AD. There is little datable material, however, that can be regarded as well stratified, much of it deriving instead from demolition and other post-occupation deposits.

7.1.7 The finds recovered from the villa were not extensive, either in terms of quantity or range; there was little evidence, for example, of the range of fine metalwork recovered from previous fieldwalking and other investigations on the site. No brooches were recovered, and little other jewellery 9one jet ring); identifiable personal possessions are restricted to a single buckle. Some evidence for the site economy is provided by the quernstones.

7.1.8 Sources of supply are largely local – much of the pottery, and ceramic and stone building material, for example, came from sources within the local area (i.e. within 20km of the site). The pottery also includes some regional and a few continental imports, while the Millstone Grit quern fragments are from Derbyshire or South Yorkshire. The single glass vessel gives a hint of 'luxury' traded items.

7.1.9 In terms of comparative sites, there are a few other villa sites known from Bedfordshire, although no major sites have been excavated. A possible villa has been identified from surface finds at Odell, just 3km further up the Great Ouse valley from Sharnbrook; other sites are known at Newnham, just east of Bedford, and at Totternhoe, about 37km to the south. Other villa sites in the region, such as Stanwick (11km to the north) and Cotterstock (32km to the north), appear to be much larger complexes; Cotterstock, for example, has been suggested as a likely administrative centre.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1.1 Analysis of the stratigraphic relationships between the features on this Site has allowed for the production of a basic chronological narrative which documents the sequence of activity represented by the archaeology. It is believed there is little scope for refinement of the phasing already conducted and no further work is recommended. A short summary of the results of the evaluation will be submitted to the *Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal* for inclusion in the annual round-up of archaeology in the county.

8.1.2 The results of the Time Team evaluation clearly supplement previous and ongoing work on the Colworth site, and could be utilised in any future proposed publication or synthetic work on the site.

9 ARCHIVE

9.1.1 The excavated finds and archive, including plans, photographs and written records are currently held at the Wessex Archaeology offices under the project code 65311 and site code YEL08. It is intended that the paper archive should be deposited with the Bedford Museum. The finds archive will be returned to the landowners, Unilever, at Colworth Science Park, where it will be held with other material and records from the Site.

10 REFERENCES

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Table 1: Finds totals by material and by trench (number / weight in grammes)

Material	Tr 1	Tr 2	Tr 3	Tr 4	Tr 5	Tr 6	Tr 7	unstrat	Total
Pottery	202/2506	151/2464	189/2792	98/2028	63/1027	6/33	50/838	-	**759/11,688**
Iron Age	-	-	*3/11*	-	*48/699*	-	*2/29*	-	***53/739***
RB	*202/2506*	*151/2464*	*186/2781*	*98/2028*	*15/328*	*6/33*	*48/809*	-	***706/10,949***
Ceramic Building Material	241/16426	152/12602	399/48646	79/9130	4/189	-	50/6464	-	**925/93,457**
Opus Signinum	3/42	-	3/284	-	-	-	-	-	**6/326**
Mortar	-	-	4/257	-	-	-	-	-	**4/257**
Wall Plaster	2/17	-	5/158	-	-	-	-	-	**7/175**
Fired Clay	-	2/125	-	2/40	3/10	-	1/40	-	**8/215**
Stone	2/1916	3/400	4/1723	-	1/9	1/37	1/1688	1/173	**13/5946**
Flint	3/17	1/14	1/18	1/7	9/95	-	1/8	-	**16/159**
Glass	-	-	1/12	-	-	-	1/1	-	**2/13**
Metalwork (no. objects)	244	132	179	121	9	-	45	-	**730**
Copper Alloy	*8*	*4*	*7*	*7*	*2*	-	*1*	-	***29***
Iron	*234*	*128*	*166*	*113*	*6*	-	*44*	-	***691***
Lead	*2*	-	*6*	*1*	*1*	-	-	-	***10***
Jet	-	-	1/2	-	-	-	-	-	**1/2**
Shell	9/206	1/1	1/18	3/30	-	-	-	-	**14/255**
Animal Bone	149/2377	220/2473	88/830	125/3074	50/659	-	13/372	-	**645/9785**

Table 2: Pottery totals by ware type

Period	Ware*	Description	No. sherds	Weight (g)
IRON AGE	F07	Shell	18	218
	F08	Shell and grog	3	11
	F16	Coarse shelly	8	58
	F16B	Fine shelly	24	452
		sub-total Iron Age	*53*	*739*
ROMANO-BRITISH	-	Dressel 2-4 amphora	1	11
	-	Pélichet 47 amphora	2	45
	R01A	Samian (Central Gaulish)	4	15
	R01B	Samian (Southern Gaulish)	10	38
	R03	Whiteware (source unknown)	1	12
	R03B	Gritty whiteware	3	26
	R05A	Orange sandy	31	160
	R06B	Coarse greyware	247	3087
	R06E	Calcareous greyware	1	10
	R06J	Greyware with shell flecks	1	17
	R07A	Black Burnished ware (BB1)	6	40
	R07C	Gritty blackware (local)	21	295
	R07G	Black Burnished ware (BB2)	1	8
	R09A	Pink grogged	6	60
	R09F	Hard cream grogged	1	171
	R10A	Buff gritty	5	34
	R11D	Oxford parchment ware	27	228
	R11E	Oxford mortaria (white)	1	48
	R12A	Nene Valley mortaria	1	72
	R12B	Nene Valley colour coat	79	806
	R12C	Nene Valley parchment ware	4	56
	R13	Shelly	249	5647
	R18A	Pink gritty	2	39
	R20	Mancetter/Hartshill mortaria	2	24
		sub-total Romano-British	*706*	*10,949*
		TOTAL	**759**	**11,688**

* Bedfordshire type series

Table 3: Assessment of the charred plant remains and charcoal

	Sample	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Context	401	314	603	505	504	503
	Feature	-	306	602	508	-	-
	Feature Type	layer	ditch	Ditch	ditch	layer	layer
	Trench	4	3	6	5	5	5
	Date	RB	RB	RB	IA	IA	IA
	Sample volume (litres)	20	9	12	25	9	9
	Flot volume (ml)/% roots	65	350	300	15/10%	5/10%	6
Cereal Grain							
Triticum spelta L.	Spelt wheat grain	++	++	-	-	-	-
Triticum spelta/dicoccum L.	Spelt/Emmer wheat grain	++	+++	-	-	-	2
Triticum aestivum/turgidum L.	Bread/Rivet type wheat	-	+	++++	-	-	-
Triticum sp.	Wheat	-	-	-	2	-	-
Hordeum vulgare sl.	Barley	-	-	+	-	-	-
Avena sp.	Oats	-	-	+	-	-	-
Cerealia indet	Indeterminate grain	+	++	-	1	-	2
Total Grain		45	450	>1000	3	-	4
Cereal Chaff							
Triticum spelta L.	Spelt wheat glume base	16	34	-	-	-	10
Triticum spelta/dicoccum L.	Spelt/Emmer glume base	20	-	-	1	-	-
Triticum aestivum sl.	Bread wheat type rachis	-	3	1	-	-	-
Triticum cf. *turgidum* L.	cf. Rivet wheat rachis	-	-	4	-	-	-
Triticum aestivum/turgidum L.	Bread/Rivet wheat rachis	-	-	42	-	-	-
Secale cereale L.	Rye rachis	-	-	1	-	-	-
Hordeum vulgare sl.	Barley rachis	-	-	1	-	-	-
Cerealia indet	Indeterminate rachis	-	-	1	-	-	-
Cereal sized	Culm node	-	-	-	1	-	-
Other Economic Plants							
Vicia/Pisum sativum L.	Bean/Vetch/Pea	-	-	1	-	-	-
Prunus type	Plum/Sloe type fruit frag.	-	-	1	-	-	-
Weeds/Wild		-	-		-	-	-
Brassica/Sinapis sp.	Cabbage/Turnip/Mustard etc.	-	-	1	-	-	-
Chenopodium album L.	Fat Hen	2	1	5	-	2	-
Atriplex sp.	Orache	-	-	3	-	-	-
Chenopodiaceae		-	-	2	-	-	-
Vicia/Lathyrus sp.	Vetch/Vetchling/Tare etc.	1	-	10	-	-	-
Medicago/Trifolium/Lotus sp.	Medick/Clover/Trefoil etc	1	-	1	-	-	-
Polygonum persicaria L.	Red Shank/Persicaria	1	-	-	-	-	-
Rumex acetosella agg.	Sheep's sorrel	-	-	1	-	-	-
Rumex sp.	Docks	-	1	14	-	-	-
cf. *Fallopia convolvulus* (L.) A. Love	Black Bindweed	-	-	1	-	-	-
Polygonaceae		-	-	4	-	-	-
Odontites verna/Euphrasia sp.	Red Bartsia/Eyebright	-	-	3	-	-	-
Plantago lanceolata/media L.	Plantain	-	-	1	-	-	-
Galium aparine L.	Goosegrass/Cleavers	-	-	1	-	-	-
Galium sp.	Bedstraws	-	-	1	-	1	-
Anthemis cotula L.	Stinking Mayweed	-	-	5	-	-	-
Lolium/Festuca type	Rye-grass/Fescue	-	-	2	-	-	-
Lolium temulentum/multiflorum	Rye-grass	-	-	4	-	-	-
Bromus sp.	Brome grass	-	1	1	-	-	-
Monocotyledon	Rhizome segments	-	-	-	2	-	-
Charcoal (4/2mm)		20/20	170/110	160/20	3/2	1/<1	4/1

Table 4: Land snails from Trench 5

SITE PHASE	Iron Age	
FEATURE TYPE	Layers above Round house floor surface	
CONTEXT	504	503
SAMPLE	5	6
DEPTH (m)	spot	spot
VOLUME (L)	1	1
Open country species		
Helicella itala	-	C
Vallonia spp.	-	C
Catholic species		
Trichia hispida	+	-
Approx **totals**	0	3

KEY:
A = ≥10 items, B = 9 - 5 items, C = < 5 items, + = present

APPENDIX 1: Trench summaries

TRENCH 1			Type: Hand Dug	
Dimensions: 17.8 x 1.9m			**Ground level:** 88.85m aOD	
Context	**Description**			**depth**
100	-	Unstratified finds from Trench 1.		-
101	Topsoil	Topsoil. Agriculturally derived layer. Area considered to be rich in CBM, all very abraded, representing ploughing over a long period of time. Dark grey/brown silty clay. Sparse limestone <.2m. Common small limestone flint/chalk pebbles.		0.35m
102	Layer	Subsoil (B-Horizon). Mid brown clay. Sparse small-medium sized flint pebbles.		0.15m
103	Natural	Natural. Grey clay. Sparse, small fragments of chalk.		
104	Layer	Fill of ditch (109). Mid grey/brown silty clay. Moderate medium-large (0.1-0.2m) chunks of limestone.		**0.26m**
105	Surface	Stone surface. Randomly organised pieces of limestone forming a relatively level surface thought to be an external yard. Possibly joined with similar surface in Trench 4 to form a crescent in front of the Villa structure.		0.1m
106	Layer	Fill of ditch (**110**). Mid grey/brown silty clay. Rare large limestone blocks (<0.2m) and sparse medium sized limestone blocks (<0.1m). Single fill of ditch derived from the gradual silting up of this feature. Pottery obtained.		0.5m
107	**Cut**	**Post-hole. Pit dug to support structural timber. (L: 1.0m, W: 0.65m).**		**0.28m**
108	Layer	Final fill of post-hole (**107**). Grey silty clay. Sparse small sub-angular fragments of limestone.		**0.08m**
109	**Cut**	**Drainage ditch. Possibly associated with timber structure(s) on stone surface (105). (L: 5.3m, W: 0.96m).**		**0.26m**
110	**Cut**	**Drainage ditch. Ditch runs down slope from main area of activity. Possibly associated with stone built drain (116). (L. :>4.8m, W: 0.85m).**		**0.5m**
111	**Cut**	**Beam slot. May represent the presence of a wooden structure. (L:>3.1m, W: 0.2m).**		**0.2m**
112	Layer	Fill of beam slot (**111**). Mid grey/brown silty clay. Rare small-medium flint pebbles (80-100mm). Sparse large limestone blocks on surface (<0.25m). Fill developed in void after extraction of timber. Pottery obtained.		0.2m
113	**Cut**	**Post-hole. Only partially exposed; may have supported structural timber. (L: 0.7m).**		**0.22m**
114	Layer	Fill of post-hole (**113**). Mid grey silty clay. Sparse small sub-angular pieces of limestone.		0.22m
115	Layer	Fill of beam slot (**120**). This deposit accumulated in the depression of the beam slot after beam had been removed. Mid grey/brown, silty clay. Rare small sub-rounded pebbles (50-100mm). Sparse medium-large pieces of limestone on surface (<0.25mm).		0.06m
116	**Cut**	**Drain. Constructed with large flat limestone pieces which line the sides of a short, narrow gully (none at base). No evidence of capping but likely to have been present to formed a box shape. This feature may have continued into drain (110). (L: 1.9m, W: 0.3m).**		**0.3m**
117	Layer	Fill of drain (**116**). Mid brown silty clay, very common large pieces of limestone. Gradual silting up of feature during its use as a drain. (Depth:0.14m).		0.14m
118	Layer	Fill of post-hole (**107**). Naturally derived deposit used to support structural timber in post-hole (107). Light brown silty clay. Rare sub-angular limestone pieces (<0.2m) and flints.		0.18m
119	Layer	Redeposited natural. Yellowish-brown, mottled. Natural clay probably deposited during landscaping and construction of villa platform. This		-

		deposit occurs below stone pavement (105). It was only visible in the intervention through ditch (**110**).	
120	**Cut**	**Beam slot? An ephemeral feature which could be viewed in plan but was very shallow. No relationship could be ascertained but it is possibly associated with (111,)which is approximately perpendicular. (L: >3m, W: 0.28m).**	**0.06m**
121	**Cut**	**Large undefined feature. (L :> 2.4m, W :> 1.6m).**	**0.23m**
122	Layer	Fill of undefined feature (**121**). Grey clay with sparse small fragments of chalk. No archaeological components.	0.23m

TRENCH 2			Type: Hand Dug	
Dimensions: 8.9 x 4.3m			**Ground level:** 88.8m aOD	
Context	**Description**			**depth**
200	-	Unstratified.		-
201	Topsoil	Topsoil. Mid grey/brown silty clay. Rare small-large pieces of limestone. Agriculturally derived. Rare fragments of abraded CBM present.		0.3m
202	Layer	Fill of ditch (**206**). Mid grey/brown silty clay. Rare small angular fragments of limestone. Possibly tertiary deposit and the result of levelling off of the feature by ploughing over the depression.		0.07m
203	Layer	Fill of ditch (**206**). Light grey/brown. Fill of ditch/depression [206]. Probably derived from fluvial silt deposition.		0.12m
204	Layer	Fill of ditch (**212**). Possibly tertiary fill derived from ploughing over and levelling off of feature (206). Mid grey/brown silty clay. Rare small angular fragments of limestone.		**0.16m**
205	Layer	Fill of ditch (**212**). Grey/brown silty clay. Sparse medium-large pieces of limestone present. Major silting event in ditch/deposition (212).		0.38m
206	**Cut**	**Large feature; corresponds to geophysical anomaly (ditch). Only partially exposed. Two interventions excavated into this feature (L:>7m, W: >4.8m).**		**0.52m**
207	VOID			
208	Layer	Fill of ditch (**206**). Mid brown silty clay. Common large pieces of limestone at base of the context (<0.3m). Primary, original fill of (**206)**. Stone at base of this deposit may be a separate event.		**0.3m**
209	Layer	Fill of ditch (**206**). Grey/brown silty clay. Sparse medium-large sized pieces of limestone (<0.15m). Major silting in ditch/depression (**206)**.		**0.7m**
210	VOID			
211	Layer	Fill of ditch (**212**). Light grey brown. Silty clay.		**0.2m**
212	**Cut**	**Large ditch/depression. Same feature as (206) (L: >7m, W: >4.8m).**		**5m**
213	Cut	Plough furrow.		
214	Layer	Fill of plough furrow.		

TRENCH 3			Type: Hand Dug	
Dimensions: 22.7 x 1.9m			**Ground level:** 89.15m aOD	
Context	**Description**			**depth**
301	-	Topsoil.		-
302	Surface	Stone surface (south-east of trench). Unexcavated spread of stone & tile rubble north of furrow (**304**). Possibly forms a compact rubble surface which may relate to surfaces found in Trenches 1 & 4. CBM obtained. Composed of dark yellow/brown silty clay with limestone inclusions.		-

303	Layer	Fill of furrow (**304**). Dark grey/brown silty clay. Moderate small-medium stones, angular, sub-angular, sub-rounded and rounded. Single fill of linear feature towards south end of trench. Occasional charcoal flecks observed.	0.17m
304	**Cut**	**Furrow. Product of ridge and furrow 19th century farming technique. (L :> 2m, W: 1.8m).**	
305	Layer	Fill of curvilinear ditch (**306**). Produced large amounts of CBM of which a representative sample was retained along with pot, bone, *opus signinum*, jet ring & fragment of glass vessel.	**0.33m**
306	**Cut**	**Ditch. Possible robber cut, truncates (309) rather than following it. Well defined in some interventions but not when it encounters the structural remains associated with (309). The damage of the cut to (309) suggests (315) is a fill. If this is the case than [306] is much wider towards the south then previously thought. (L: >8m, W: 1.4m).**	**0.3m**
307	Surface?	Floor surface? This is an unexcavated spread of very compact mixed yellow clay, stone and tile. Moderate small-med burnt clay lenses & charcoal flecks. Mid grey/yellow silty clay. Abundant small-medium angular limestone. Med-large abundant pebbles.	**-**
308	Natural?	Natural deposition? Dark brown/grey, silty clay. Abundant small-medium stone, angular-rounded. Firm malleable clay deposit in hollow north of structural remains, possibly deposited by natural processes?	0.16m
309	Structure	Wall foundations of (322). Demolished by (**306**). Possibly lined a sunken area and supported a floor 0.35m above base supported on a plinth. (L :> 2m, W: 0.5m, H: 0.5m).	**-**
310	Layer	Charcoal layer. Dark grey/brown silty clay. Sparse angular stones, very common charcoal and sparse CBM. Unexcavated charcoal layer situated below possible wall (309).	**-**
311	Layer	Fill of ditch (**312**). Brown/grey silty clay. Moderate angular stones and flint. Very sparse CBM. Fill of ditch (312) in north end of Trench 3. (Depth: 0.22m).	0.22m
312	**Cut**	**Ditch. Large straight boundary ditch which may not be Roman. (L :> 2.3m, W: 2.25m, D: 0.61m).**	**0.61m**
313	Layer	Ditch fill. Primary fill derived from naturally derived. Mid grey/brown silty clay, sparse small-med stone & sparse CBM fragments. Lowest of two fills in wide linear at north end of trench. Clearer than (311) and fewer inclusions.	**0.39m**
314	Layer	Deliberate backfill. Dump of waste material from burning event, poss. kiln related. High percentage of ash. Large charcoal flecks, mortar & daub.	**0.12m**
315	Layer	Building debris layer. Layer of building debris extends south of wall (309). Possibly formed through demolition or robbing of building. Filled poss. robber cut east of wall.	**0.19m**
316	Layer	Bedding for wall of (**306**). Remains of bedding for wall which was subsequently robbed. Deposits observed at base of, and cut by, ditch/robber cut (**306**). Very compact. Sparse small CBM fragments.	**-**
317	Layer	Building debris. Mixed and poorly sorted building debris, possibly derived from ploughing, may be fill of a furrow.	0.25m
318	Layer	Fill of ditch (**306**). It could not be ascertained whether this context was within a feature or a discrete deposit. Small fragments of CBM obtained.	**-**
319	Layer	Deposit. Building destruction only exposed in plan & could not be ascertained whether it was within a feature or a discrete deposit. Common plaster/mortar may have derived from demolition in vicinity.	**-**
320	Layer	Fill of gully (**321**). Mid grey/brown silty clay with sparse small limestone fragment and common pea-shale gravels. Secondary fill.	**-**
321	**Cut**	**Gully. This is clearly associated with the structural remains and**	**-**

		may have been a beam slot. (L :> 5.7, W: 0.45).	
322	**Cut**	**Foundation cut for wall. Large open cut which was lined with a stepped wall, presumably to support a raised floor over a cavity which could be heated. (L :> 0.2m, W: .5m).**	**0.5m**
323	Layer	Backfill of wall foundation cut (**322**). Mottled yellow/brown, grey/brown mix of natural clay and silty type local soil. Sparse village blocks of limestone. (Depth: 0.5m).	0.5m
324	Structure	Building foundation. Linear arrangement of semi-dressed pieces of limestone up to 0.4m in size. This represents either the top of a foundation, or disturbed demolition rubble in a robber cut (L :> 2.8m, W: 0.5m).	
325	Layer	Demolition activity. May represent a number of deposits but was not thoroughly investigated so grouped together. This may be feature fill, in close proximity to structural remains within robber cut? Similar to (**306**).	

TRENCH 4		Type: Hand Dug	
Dimensions: 17.1 x 1.9m		**Ground level:** 88.5m aOD	
Context	**Description**		**depth**
400	Topsoil	Topsoil.	
401	Layer	Silting. Developed after surface (402) went out of use. Pottery, CBM and bone were obtained. (401) consists of dark grey silty clay with rare small fragments of limestone. (Depth :< 0.15).	<0.15m
402	Surface	Stone pavement. Tightly packed limestone (100-400mm) formed a crescent on the slope below villa structure. (L :> 15.5m, W :> 6.6m, Dpth :< 0.15m).	<0.15m
403	**-**	Unstratified finds from Trench 4.	**-**
404	Layer	Redeposited natural. May represent creation of Villa platform, a landscaping event prior to construction of building during Roman period. Consists of mottled yellow, grey/brown silty clay.	**-**
405	Layer	Deposit between (400) & (401). Possible revetment of ridge from pre-existing ridge and furrow in the field.	-
406	Layer	Believed to be a remnant of a ridge from ridge and furrow ploughing.	

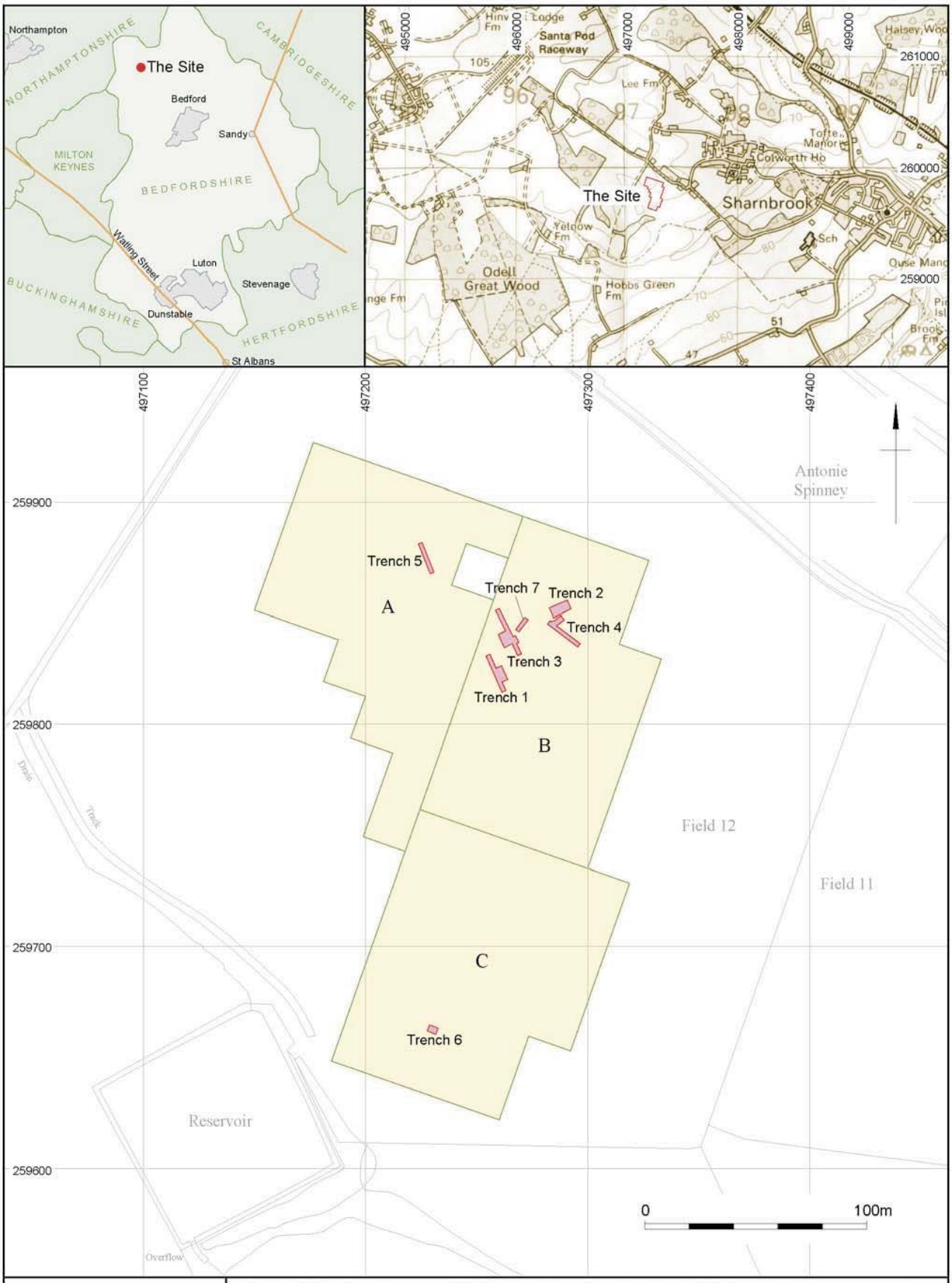
TRENCH 5		Type: Hand Dug	
Dimensions: 14.45 x 1.8m		**Ground level:** 90.0m aOD	
Context	**Description**		**depth**
500	-	Unstratified finds from Trench 5.	-
501	Topsoil	Topsoil. Agriculturally derived A-horizon. Pottery and iron. Composed of dark brown silty clay with common small stone fragments (chalk, limestone).	-
502	Layer	Upper subsoil. Situated below plough soil. Mid brown silty clay. Common small rounded chert pebbles, occasional small chalk pebbles and rare small-medium fragments of limestone.	<0.15m
503	Layer	Occupational layer. Developed above surface (506) after structure was demolished. Ashy appearance due to common charcoal flecks, also pottery and bone. Composed of dark grey/brown clayey silt.	0.2m
504	Layer	Occupational layer. Developed above surface (506) after structure had gone out of use/demolished. Ashy appearance due to common charcoal flecks, also pottery and bone. Composed of dark grey/brown clayey silt.	0.1m
505	Layer	Fill of ditch (**508**) & post-hole (**509**). Secondary silting developed within ditch (**508**) and post-hole (**509**). Common charcoal fragments, pottery & bone. Composed of dark grey/brown clayey silt.	0.52m
506	Layer	Interior surface of roundhouse. Layer of small well sorted stones to consolidate interior of roundhouse. Dirty mid brown silty clay,	-

		common small-med rounded chert pebbles, rare limestone, and chalk fragments.	
507	Layer	Primary fill of ditch (**508**). Naturally derived from breakdown of edges/surrounding soils of roundhouse ditch. Mid grey/yellow silty clay.	0.25m
508	**Cut**	**Roundhouse. Ditch seems to have functioned as drip drainage on the immediate perimeter of the structure as represented by post-hole (509) (L :> 2.0m, W: 1.1m).**	**0.45m**
509	**Cut**	**Post-hole. Represents Iron Age roundhouse, associated with and cut after (508) had partially silted up. May represent rebuilding/alignment of structure originally built in associated with [508] (L: 03m, W :> 0.2m).**	**0.28m**
510	Layer	Primary fill of construction cut (**511**). Naturally derived silting of [511]. Formed against pre-existing wall of roundhouse. Mid grey/yellow silty clay.	0.19m

TRENCH 6		Type: Hand Dug	
Dimensions: 4.15 x 3.05m		**Ground level:** 80.8m aOD	
Context	**Description**		**depth**
600	-	Unstratified finds from Trench 6.	-
601	Topsoil	Topsoil. Agriculturally derived. Mid brown silty clay with sparse small sub-rounded/angular stones.	0.38m
602	**Cut**	**Ditch. Narrow, slightly concave sides and base. (L :> 5m, W: 0.73m).**	**0.26m**
603	Layer	Secondary fill of ditch (**602**). Derived from material build-up, mixed with locally derived anthropogenic material. Abundant charcoal, pottery, CBM. Mottled grey/black silty clay, rare small sub-rounded stones.	0.26m
604	**Cut**	**Unexcavated ditch. Large boundary marker. (L :> 3.8, W: 1.6m).**	**-**
605	Layer	Fill of ditch (604). Secondary deposit, upper fill. Mottled mid brown silty clay, sparse small flecks of chalk & rare charcoal flecking.	-
606	Natural	Natural. Light brown silty clay. (L: 4.2, W :> 3m).	-

TRENCH 7		Type: Hand Dug	
Dimensions: 6.8 x 1.9m		**Ground level:** 89.08m aOD	
Context	**Description**		**depth**
700	-	Unstratified finds from Trench 7.	-
701	Topsoil	Topsoil. Agriculturally derived, consistent across whole field. Slightly less compact than underlying deposits. Dark grey/brown sandy clay. Moderate, med gravel & limestone.	0.4m
702	Layer	Surface. May be remnant of floor surface subjected to heat & vitrified or part of an industrial feature.	-
703	Layer	Deposit. Unexcavated clay deposit which is specific to this area. Mottled yellow & brown/grey sandy clay, sparse limestone.	-
704	**Cut**	**Robber trench cut. Cut directly over wall (708) suggests robbing of the wall masonry after building had gone out of use. (L: 1.9m, W: 0.8m).**	**0.2m**
705	Layer	Backfill of robber trench (**704**). Tertiary type fill, probably formed by ploughing. Dark grey/brown sandy clay medium gravel & limestone fragments. Tile and bone obtained.	0.2m
706	**Cut**	**Land drain or plough furrow. Not excavated.**	**-**
707	Layer	Fill of land drain or plough furrow (**706**). Unexcavated. Mottled grey/yellow & brown sandy clay, moderate small gravel/Limestone.	-
708	Structure	Remnant wall of Roman building. Exposed upper course of robbed wall (see (704)). North face may also have been robbed. (L :> 0.7m, W: 0.5m).	-

709	Layer	Deposit. Unexcavated layer cut by (704). Poss. extended east to seal (712). Sparse tile fragments & charcoal flecks.	-
710	Layer	Deposit. Unexcavated local charcoal rich deposit indicative of burning, either within hearth or industrial feature. Poss. located within layer (709).	-
711	Layer	Exterior Roman silt formation. Unexcavated deposit may represent a natural accumulation of silts on the exterior of the Roman structure represented by wall (708).	0.2m
712	Layer	Possible hearth. Unexcavated layer which may have been subjected to heat, and may be spread over stones to the south (713). Frequent charcoal flecks visible.	-
713	Structure	Remnant of wall. Random fragments of limestone, possibly indicative of a demolished wall or industrial feature. Associated with burnt clay (713). Continues below (709) and possibly (712).	-



Evaluation trench

Gradiometer survey area

Roman road

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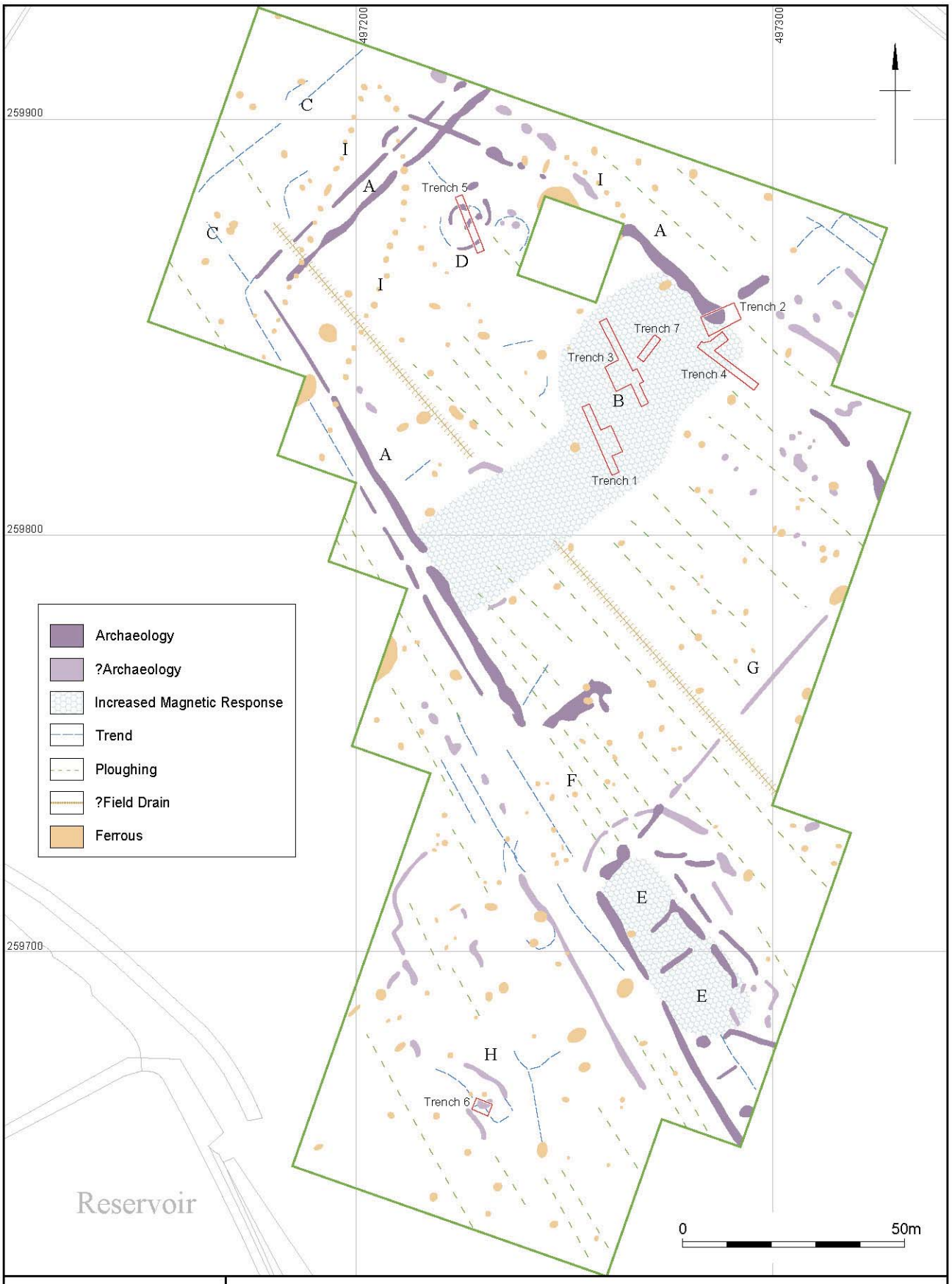
Date:	27/05/09	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	1:50000 & 1:2500	Illustrator:	KL
Path:	Y:PROJECTS\68738TT\Drawing Office\Report Figures\eval\09_02\68738_eval_f2.dwg		

Location of site and trenches

Figure 1



Evaluation trench

Gradiometer survey area

Wessex Archaeology

Date:	26/05/09	Revision Number:	0
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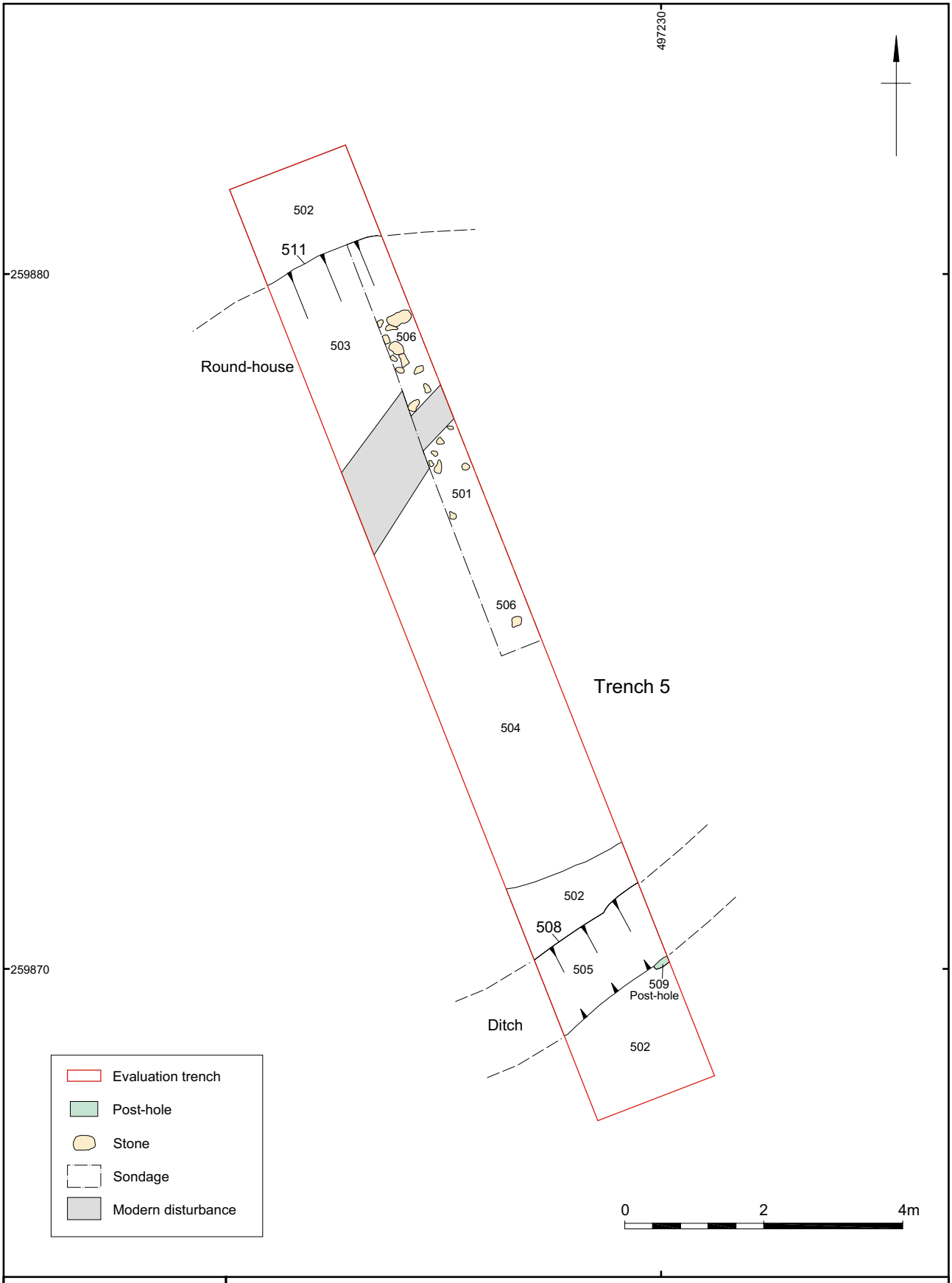
Results of the gradiometric survey

Figure 2



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Trench 5: plan

Figure 3

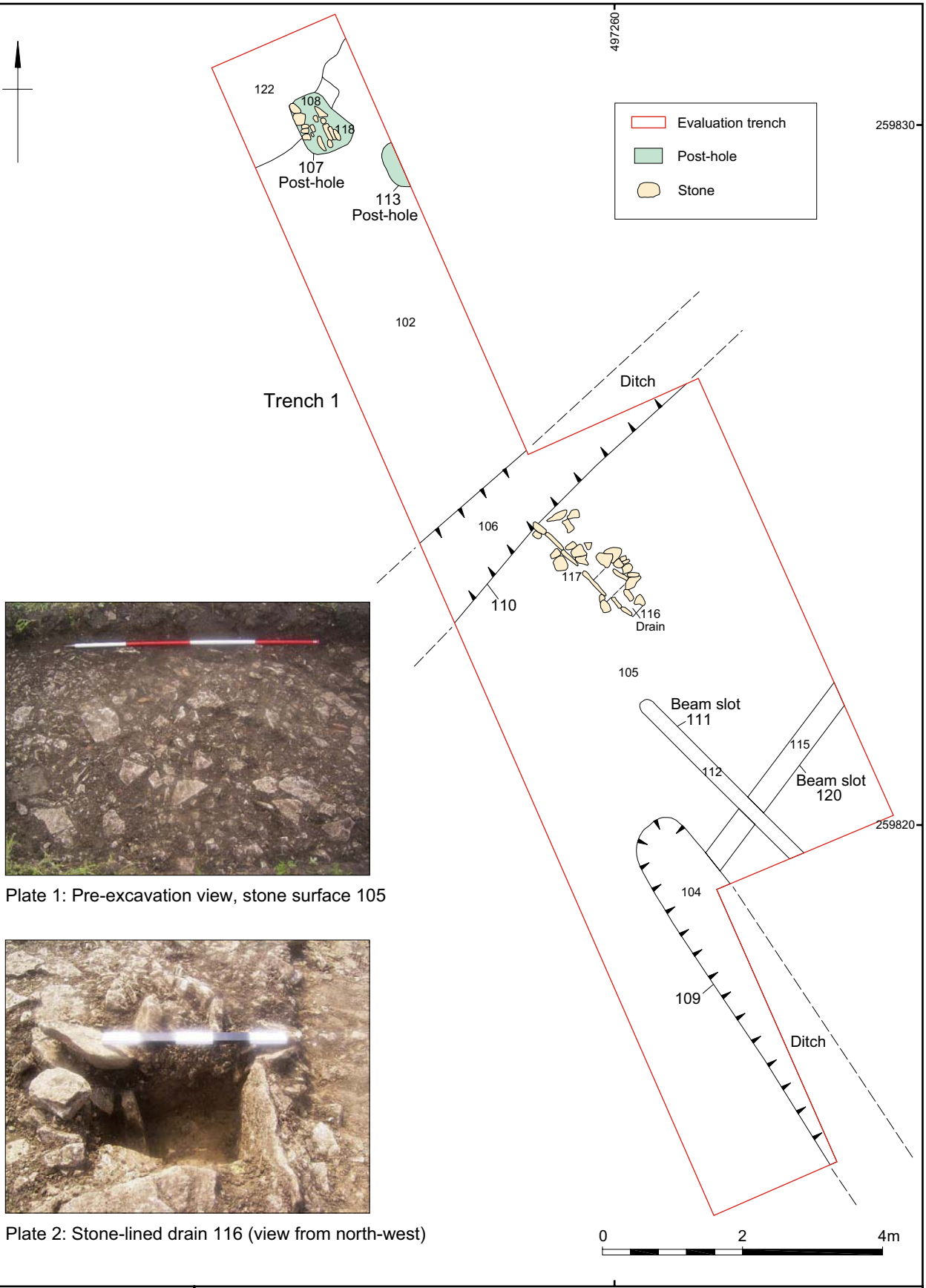

Plate 1: Pre-excavation view, stone surface 105

Plate 2: Stone-lined drain 116 (view from north-west)

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Trench 1: plan and photographs

Figure 4

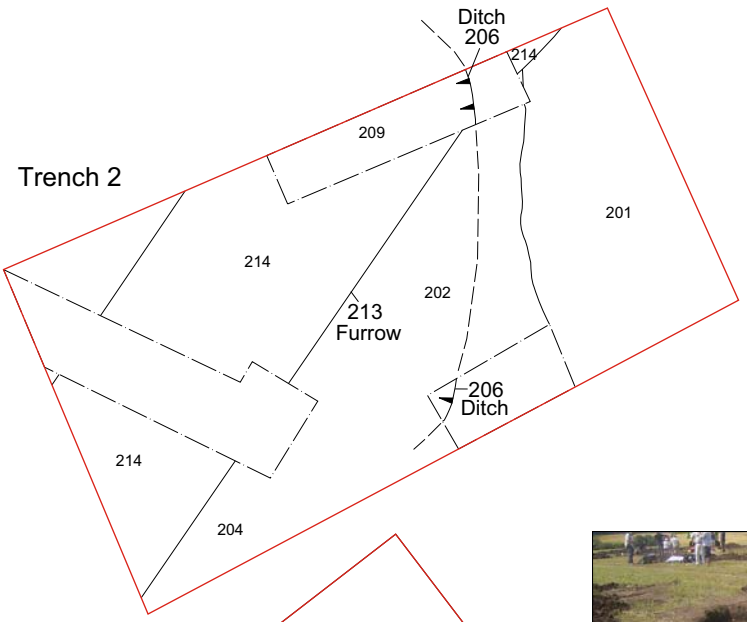

Plate 3: Pre-excavation view of Trench 2 (from the north-east)

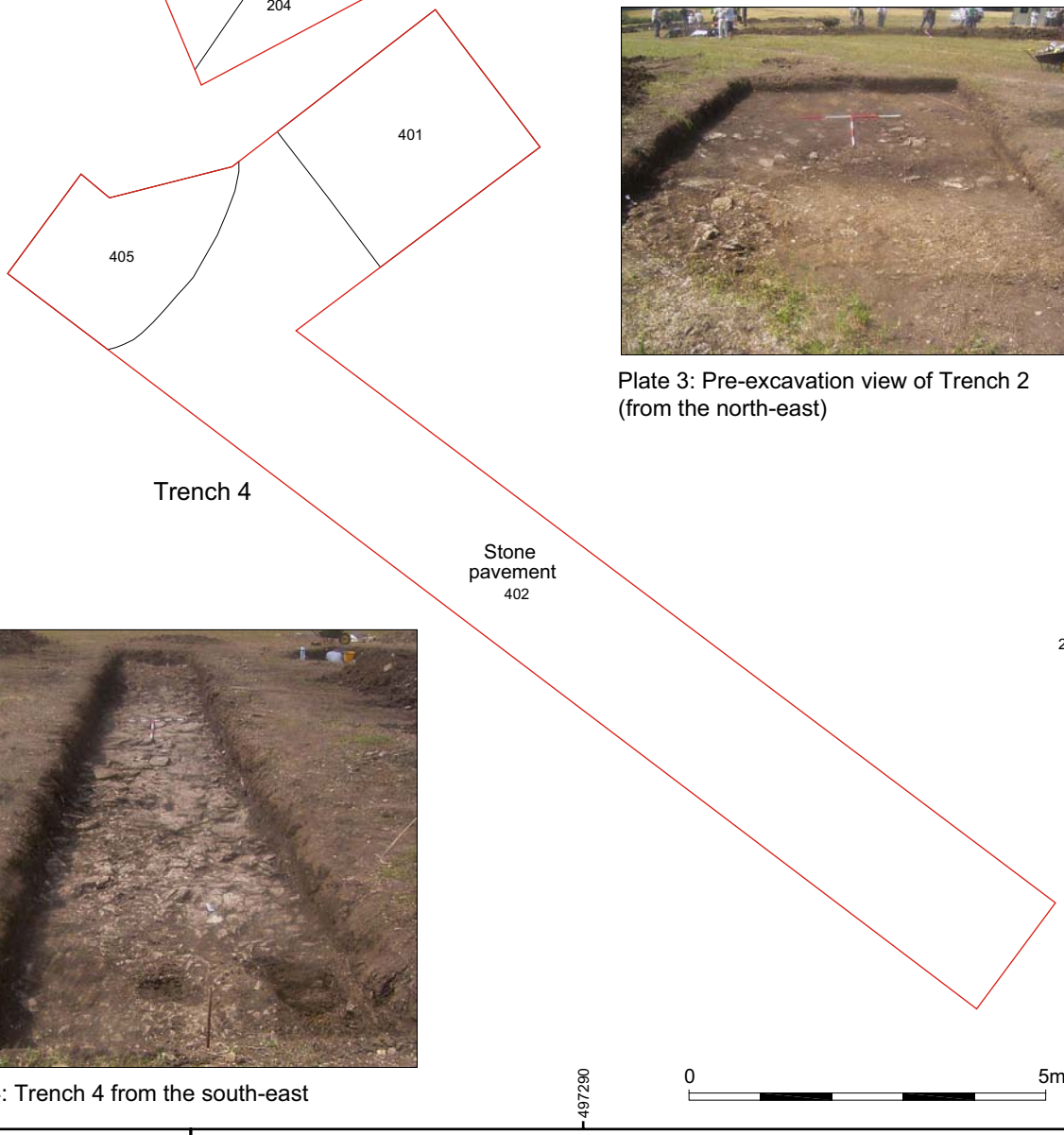

Plate 4: Trench 4 from the south-east

Evaluation trench

Sondage

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Trenches 2 and 4: plan and photographs

Figure 5

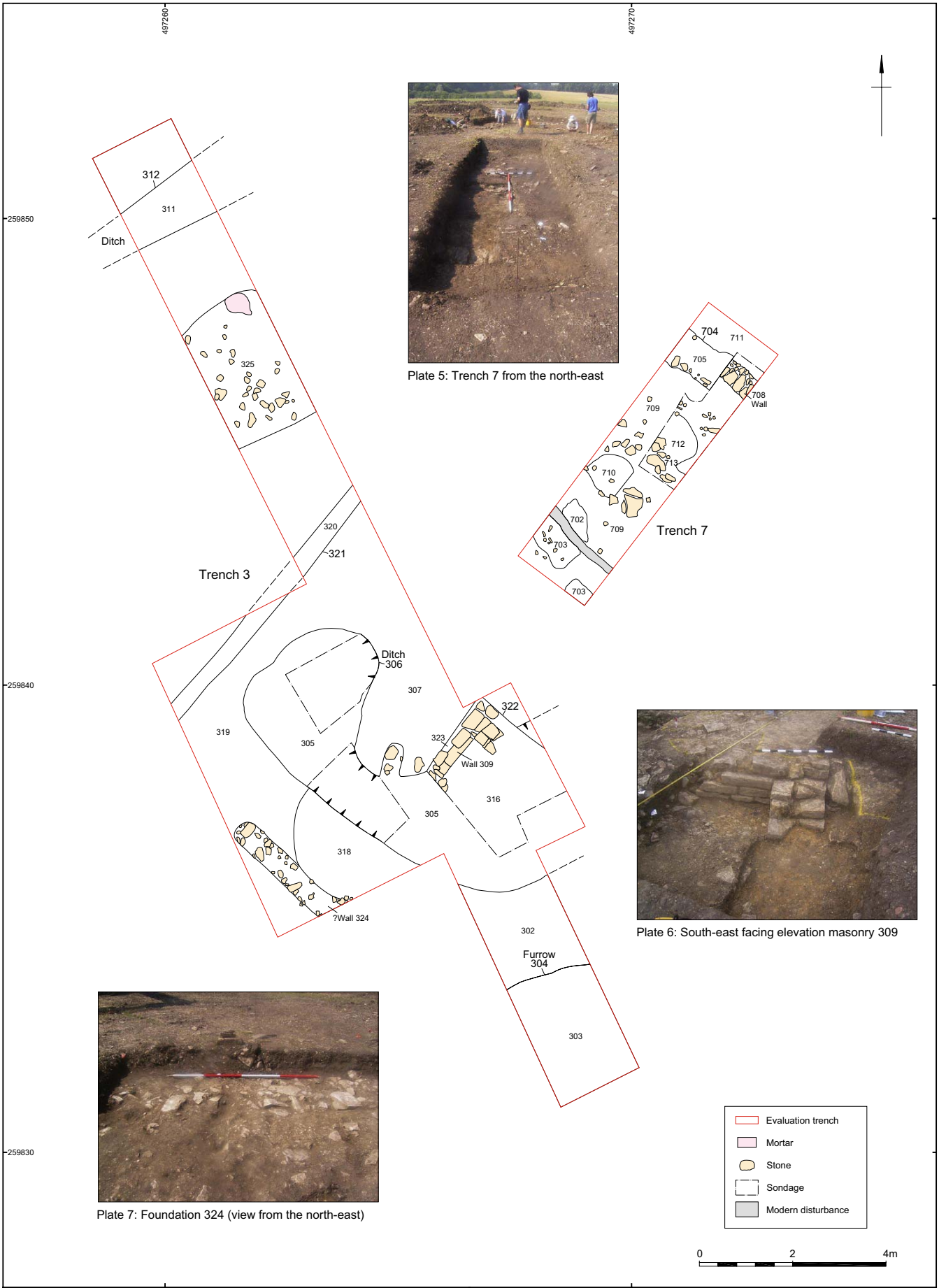

Plate 5: Trench 7 from the north-east

Plate 6: South-east facing elevation masonry 309

Plate 7: Foundation 324 (view from the north-east)

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Scale:	1:80	Illustrator:	KL
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Trenches 3 and 7: plan and photographs

Figure 6

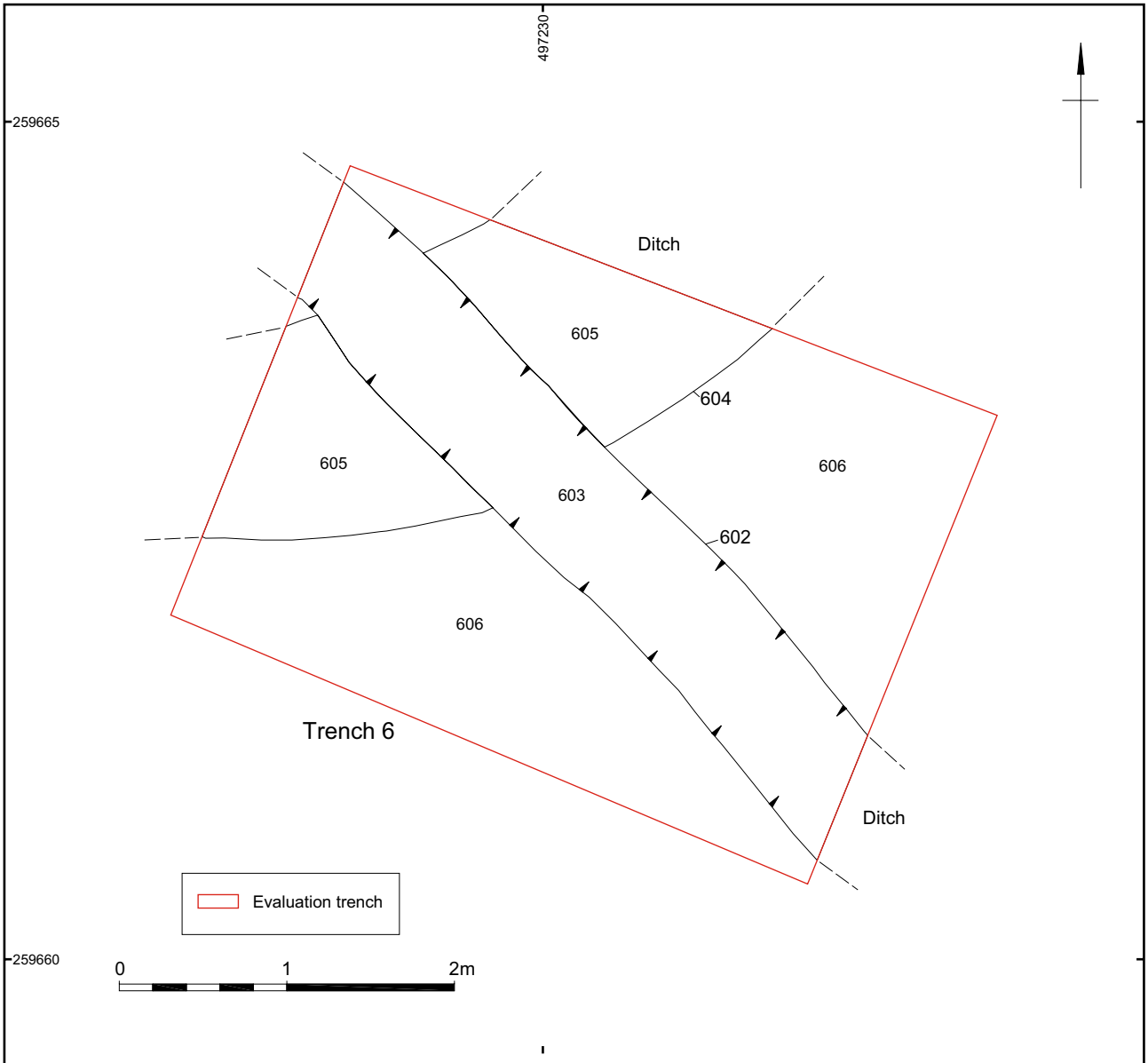

Plate 8: Post-excavation view of Trench 6 (view from the north-west)

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Trench 6: plan and photograph

Figure 7

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