

**Neolithic and Roman remains
on the Lufkins Farm reservoir site,
Great Bentley, Essex
October-November 2007**

**report prepared by
Howard Brooks and Ben Holloway**

**on behalf of
A O Poole & Sons and George Wright Farms**

NGR: TM 0975 2215 (c)
CAT project ref.: 07/10e
Colchester and Ipswich Museums accession code: 2007.118
ECC HEM project code: FRLF 07



Colchester Archaeological Trust
12 Lexden Road,
Colchester,
Essex CO3 3NF

tel.: (01206) 541051
(01206) 500124
email: archaeologists@catuk.org

CAT Report 450
December 2007

Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Archaeological background	2
4	Aims and strategy	2
5	Results of the evaluation	2
6	Finds	
6.1	The ?loomweight and structural clay <i>by Nina Crummy</i>	9
6.2	The prehistoric pottery <i>by Stephen Benfield</i>	9
6.3	The Roman pottery <i>by Stephen Benfield</i>	12
6.4	The flints <i>by Hazel Martingell</i>	13
6.5	Charred plant macrofossils <i>by Val Fryer</i>	16
6.6	Organic material <i>by Emma Hogarth</i>	16
6.7	Other finds <i>by Howard Brooks</i>	17
7	Discussion	18
8	Acknowledgements	20
9	References	20
10	Abbreviations and glossary	21
11	Archive deposition	21
	Figures	after p 22
	EHER summary sheet	

List of figures

- Fig 1 Location of site, showing cropmarks (in green).
- Fig 2 Location of trenches, with interpretation of evaluated features.
- Figs 3-8 Inserts to Figure 2.
- Fig 9 Distribution of prehistoric pottery.
- Fig 10 Distribution of prehistoric struck flints and burnt flints.
- Fig 11 Distribution of Roman pottery and ?Roman structural clay.
- Fig 12 T2, T4, T10, T14: sections.
- Fig 13 T16, T26, T39, T47: sections.
- Fig 14 T48, T50, T51, T56: sections.
- Fig 15 T59, T60, T61, T66, T68, T73, T76: sections.
- Fig 16 Prehistoric pottery.

1 Summary

The Tendring peninsula's archaeological potential is defined by extensive areas of cropmarks, very few of which have been excavated.

In advance of an application to construct an agricultural reservoir, a group of important cropmarks (including a ring-ditch and a potential Neolithic enclosure) was excluded from the application site in order to protect them.

An evaluation by 84 trial-trenches revealed thinly-spread activity ranging from the Neolithic to the Roman period, discounting modern field boundaries. The most important archaeological feature was a Neolithic pit containing at least four early Neolithic bowls, associated with flints, burnt flints and conglomerate stones. This pit group may be associated with the potential Neolithic enclosure, which lies 25m to the east.

Other prehistoric features and finds, principally Neolithic, occur sporadically across the evaluation site, but not at a density to suggest intensive or long-lived activity.

A Roman field system separated the area occupied by the earlier monuments from Roman fields and paddocks, in one of which was a possible Roman agricultural structure.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

2.1 This is the archive report on an archaeological trial-trenching evaluation on a 6.8 hectare parcel of arable land intended for the construction of an agricultural reservoir to serve Lufkins Farm at Frating. The evaluation site lies between Lufkins Farm and Brook Farm, wholly within Great Bentley parish in Essex.

2.2 Site centre was at NGR TM 0975 2215.

2.3 The archaeological work was commissioned by Mr D K Symes and Mr Peter Orrock (Mineral Services Ltd) on behalf of A O Poole & Sons and George Wright Farms, and was carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) between 23rd October and 5th November 2007. Post-excavation work was carried out between November and December 2007.

2.4 A planning application (ESS/28/07) for the reservoir was submitted to Essex County Council (ECC) in 2007. In response to consultation, the ECC Historic Environment Management (HEM) team made the following recommendation in line with DoE Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG16):

'The applicant should be required to conduct a field evaluation to establish the nature and complexity of the surviving archaeological deposits. This should be undertaken prior to a planning decision being made. This evaluation would enable due consideration to be given to the archaeological implications and would lead to proposals for mitigation of disturbance and/or the need for further investigation...'

2.5 A brief detailing the required archaeological work (a 5% evaluation by trial-trenches) was written by the HEM team officer (Mr Adrian Gascoyne). All archaeological work was carried out according to a WSI (Written Scheme of Investigation) written in response to the HEM team brief and agreed with the HEM team.

2.6 In addition to the WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with the Colchester Archaeological Trust's *Policies and procedures* (CAT 1999), Colchester Borough Council's *Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester Museums* (CM 2003), the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IFA 1999) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IFA 2001). The guidance contained in the documents *Management of archaeological projects* (MAP 2), and *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource assessment* (EAA 3), *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy* (EAA 8), and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14) was also followed.

3 Archaeological background

This archaeological background is based on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held by Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford.

Much of the Tendring area is rich in cropmarks, a high proportion of which appear to relate to prehistoric activity. The application site was one of high archaeological potential. EHER notes cropmarks of a single ring-ditch, a rectangular enclosure and a length of double-ditched trackway adjacent to the proposed development site (EHER no 2612). To the immediate north are more cropmarks, comprising a further enclosure, linear features and pits (EHER no 17562). Previous experience has demonstrated that, in many cases, only a proportion of surviving below-ground archaeological features/deposits are revealed as cropmarks. There was thus the potential for significant survival of archaeological material within the application site.

4 Aims and strategy

The aim of the evaluation was to recover sufficient evidence to characterise the nature, date, function and importance of the archaeological features in the application site.

5 Results of the evaluation (Figs 1-15)

This section gives an archaeological summary of each of the 84 trenches on the evaluation site, with context and finds dating information.

All features were sealed by topsoil layer L1 and by a lower horizon (L2), and all features cut natural ground L3. L1 and L2 were removed by machine. All excavation below that level was done by hand.

Trench 1: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T1 contained two natural features (F16 and F17).

Trench 2: summary and dating (Figs 1-3, 12)

T2 contained two small pits (F1 and F5). F5 was undated, but F1 contained a small abraded sherd of probable prehistoric pottery.

Trench 3: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T3 contained three features (F2, F3, F4). F2 was either a ditch terminus or an oval pit extending beyond the trench edge. F3 was a ditch and F4 was a shallow pit. F2 contained a prehistoric flint, and F3 a prehistoric potsherd. F4 was undated.

Ditch F3 is in precise alignment with ditches F6 (T9), F25 (T9) and F28 (T20). Both F3 and F25 contained single prehistoric potsherds. However, this ditch alignment may continue to the south as F52 (T34) and F63 (T47), the second of which (F63) is dated by Roman pottery. Although the possibility that the line of this prehistoric ditch continuing to the south as a Roman ditch cannot be absolutely ruled out, it seems much more likely that both ditches, and the whole rectilinear field system of the type evident here (see Fig 2), are Roman in date, and that the two ditches contained residual prehistoric material.

F2 may be the terminus of a ditch aligned at right-angles to ditch F3, with the gap between the two perhaps defining a field gate.

Trench 4: summary and dating (Figs 1-3, 12)

T4 contained two natural features (F13 and F18).

Trench 5: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T5 contained two natural features (F11 and F12).

Trench 6: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T6 contained a small, undated pit (F19) and a natural feature (F22).

Trench 7: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T7 contained a natural feature (F21).

Trench 8: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T8 contained a natural feature (F20).

Trench 9: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T9 contained a ditch (F6). Although undated here, this ditch is almost certainly Roman in date (see discussion of this under T3 above).

Trench 10: summary and dating (Figs 1-3, 12)

T10 was the most archaeologically significant trench in this evaluation. Two north-west to south-east aligned ditches (F10 and F15) both had natural-looking fills, but F15 contained a prehistoric potsherd and a chip from a conglomerate stone of the type found in adjacent pit F7 (below).

To the north of these features was a cluster of three pits (F7, F8, F9). F9 was undated. F8 contained a sherd of Neolithic pottery, but the outstanding assemblage of finds from this evaluation came from pit F7. This pit was only half-sectioned, but it produced sherds from at least four early Neolithic undecorated carinated bowls (Fig 16), eleven struck flints (some of which are certainly Neolithic), two burnt flints, and a collection of stones including a large lump of indurated brown conglomerate (12kg), two crystalline white quartz pebbles, a sandstone chip, and two ?natural red pebbles. Whereas it is quite possible that some of these stones have been accidentally included in the fill of this pit, it is difficult to argue that the whole group of pottery and stones is accidental, especially the inclusion of the 12kg lump of conglomerate. There can be very little doubt that this group is a deliberate deposit. There are several points of interest here. First, the flints include a chip from a polished stone axe; this could be simply a waste flake from the remodelling of an axe, or a more significant deposit. Second, this group of material is quite close to the east edge of the evaluation site, and only 25m to the south-east is the cropmark of what resembles a Neolithic mortuary enclosure or ploughed-out barrow. Assuming that this cropmark identification is correct, then a connection with this deposit may be postulated.

Trench 11: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T11 contained a natural feature (F14).

Trench 12: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T12 contained a natural feature or tree-throw pit (F12).

Trench 13: summary and dating (Figs 1-3, 12)

T13 contained three ditches (F24, F25, F29). F24 and F29 contained no finds, and are undated. Ditch F25 contained a single prehistoric sherd, of a type which suggests a Middle Iron Age date. However, this same ditch is almost certainly Roman in date (see T3 above).

The proximity of undated ditch F24 to the cropmark enclosure to the east invites speculation that they may be associated.

Trench 14: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T14 contained a modern agricultural drain (F33).

Trench 15: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T15 contained a natural feature (F34).

Trench 16: summary and dating (Figs 1-3, 13)

T16 contained a small, undated, post-hole-sized cut F40 at its northern edge.

At the southern edge of the trench was an apparently isolated group of three features (F37, F38, F39). Apart from the Neolithic material in T10, this pit group contained the largest assemblage of prehistoric material on the site, ie nine potsherds, a fragment of ceramic ?loomweight, six burnt flints, and thirteen struck

flints. An environmental sample from F37 showed that burning had taken place nearby.

Trench 17: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T17 contained a natural feature (F32).

Trench 18: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T18 contained a natural feature or tree-throw pit (F31).

Trench 19: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T19 contained a natural feature (F30).

Trench 20: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T20 contained a natural feature (F28) and two ditches (F26 and F27). F27 was undated, and was aligned west-east. It may be a natural feature.

F26, although undated in this trench, was part of Roman ditch F3/F6/F25 (see T13, T9, T3).

Trench 21: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T21 contained a natural feature (F35).

Trench 22: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T22 contained a natural feature (F36).

Trench 23: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 24: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

T24 contained a small, undated, post-hole-shaped cut (F43).

Trench 25: summary and dating (Figs 1-3)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 26: summary and dating (Figs 1-3, 13)

T26 contained a natural feature or undated ditch terminus (F42) and a ditch (F41).

Although undated in this trench, F41 was aligned with F44 in T29 and F88 in T39 (F88 contained a sherd of prehistoric pottery). The ditch F41/F44/F88 was also aligned with the cropmark ditch beyond the east edge of the site. As argued above (T3), a Roman date for this ditch, and for the rectilinear ditch system to which it belongs, seems more likely than the prehistoric date suggested by the single, probably residual sherd in F88.

Trench 27: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T27 contained a modern agricultural drain (F45).

Trench 28: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 29: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T29 contained a ditch (F44). Though undated in this trench, F44 was a part of the rectilinear Roman field system (see above, T26 and T3).

Trench 30: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 31: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T31 contained an undated ditch or ?natural feature (F30).

Trench 32: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 33: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T33 contained a small, undated cut (F47) and an undated ditch (F47); both could be natural features.

Trench 34: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4-5)

T34 contained two ditches. The first was a post-medieval or modern field boundary ditch (F49), which was also excavated in T46 and T58. Although no modern finds were recovered from it, its soft moist loamy fill showed that it was a recent feature.

The second was undated ditch F52. However, it was aligned with Roman ditch F63 in T47, and there is little doubt that they are the same feature and part of the rectilinear Roman field system.

Trench 35: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5)

T35 contained an undated and possibly natural ditch (F54).

Trench 36: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5)

T36 contained an undated pit (F55) and a ditch (F58). Although F58 is undated, it was aligned with Roman ditch F80 in T48 to the south, and both features were probably parts of the same ditch.

Trench 37: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5)

T37 contained a ditch or natural feature (F56); this was aligned with ditch F81 in T48 to the south-west.

Trench 38: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5)

T38 contained a small natural feature or tree-throw pit (F53).

Trench 39: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4, 13)

T39 contained a large ditch (F88), apparently dated by a sherd of prehistoric pottery.

This ditch was aligned with F44 in T29 and with F41 in T26, and all three features are very probably parts of the same ditch. Ditch F41/F44/F88 was also aligned with the cropmark ditch beyond the east edge of the site. As argued above (T3), a Roman date for this ditch, and for the rectilinear ditch system to which it belongs, seems more likely than the prehistoric date suggested by the single, probably residual sherd in F88.

Trench 40: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T40 contained two undated ditches (F86 and F87).

F86 was aligned with ditch F119 to the south-west (T51) and with F85 to the north-west (T41). All three features were very probably parts of the same ditch. Although this is apparently dated by the sherd of prehistoric pottery in F119, it is more likely that this ditch was part of the rectilinear Roman field system (Fig 2), especially in view of the fact that it was parallel to ditch F88/F44/F41 (above), and to ditch F92/F95 (below, T53 and 54).

Trench 41: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T41 contained two undated ditches (F84 and F85) and two undated pits (F93 and F94). Pit F93 cut ditch F85, and pit F94 cut ditch F84.

Ditch F85 was aligned with ditch F86 (T40) and with ditch F119 (T51), both to the south-west. All three features were very probably parts of the same Roman ditch.

Trench 42: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 43: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T43 contained a natural feature (F83).

Trench 44: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T44 contained two undated features, ie a ditch (F50), and a ditch or natural feature (F51).

Trench 45: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T45 contained an undated and possibly natural ditch (F54).

Trench 46: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T46 contained a post-medieval or modern field boundary ditch (F49), which was also excavated in T34 and T58. Although no modern finds were recovered from it, its soft moist loamy fill showed that it was a recent feature.

Trench 47: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5, 13)

T47 contained ten archaeological features, ie more than any other trench. These were pits F64-F69 and F73, post-pits with post-holes F70 and F72, and ditch F63.

If we are correct in interpreting various ditch fragments in T34, T36, T47 and T48 as continuous ditches, then the features in T47 appear to have been contained within a paddock defined by Roman ditches F63/F52 to the west and F58/F80 to the east.

At face value, the pits would indicate domestic activity and the post-holes indicate that a structure stood here. However, the argument for any sustained domestic activity here is undermined by the almost complete absence of domestic debris, such as animal bones, shell, quantities of pottery, etc, apart from the single Roman sherd from pit F65.

Interpretation of post-holes found in a narrow trench is always difficult. There may have been a Roman structure here, but its form is difficult to interpret.

The structural clay fragments from T59 to the south of here may be components of a clay structure (?building) which was associated with this post-hole structure.

Trench 48: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5, 14)

T48 contained three ditches (F80, F91, F124) and two possible erosion hollows (F99, F123).

Ditch F80 contained a Roman potsherd. The ditch was aligned with F58 in T36 to form one of the possible paddock boundaries (see discussion in T47, above). Ditch F81 was undated, but its alignment with F56 in T37 to form another possible paddock edge at right-angles to that which extends between T36 and T48 suggests that it might be a Roman ditch. The other ditch (F124) was undated.

Two features (F99, F123) to the south of the above ditches appeared to be erosion hollows. Both features contained single Roman potsherds and residual prehistoric flints. If this interpretation is correct, then they may have been connected with the movement of stock.

Trench 49: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5)

T49 contained an undated ditch or natural feature (F61).

Trench 50: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5, 14)

T50 contained a ditch (F71) and what appeared to be a ditch terminal (F57). Ditch F71 contained a burnt flint, and for that reason might be prehistoric in date. However, in view of the fact that there are Roman ditches in the vicinity, this flint might be residual in a Roman ditch.

Ditch F57, though undated here, might be another Roman ditch. It was aligned with other ditch fragments in T61 and T60, which, collectively, are at right-angles to the Roman ditch in T36 and T48.

Trench 51: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4, 14)

T51 contained two ditches (F89, F119). F89 was undated. F119 contained a sherd of prehistoric pottery, but, for reasons argued above, it is more likely to be a Roman ditch continuing through T40 and T41, and running parallel to the Roman ditch in T39, T29 and T26.

Trench 52: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T52 contained two undated ditches or natural features (F127 and F128). The existence of another Roman ditch running parallel to those extending through

T51/T40/T41 and T39/T29/T26 is indicated by the alignment of F92 and F95 in T53 and T54 to the east.

Trench 53: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T53 contained a ditch (F92) and two small natural features (F90, F91).

Trench 55: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 56: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4, 14)

T56 contained two pits (F131-F132). F132 was undated, but F131 contained a small group of presumably prehistoric burnt flints.

Trench 57: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T57 contained a post-medieval or modern field boundary (F97) and two undated or natural ditches (F133-F134).

Trench 58: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4-5)

T58 contained a post-medieval or modern field boundary ditch (F49), which was also excavated in T46 and T34 to the north. Although no modern finds were recovered from it, its soft moist loamy fill showed that it was a recent feature.

Trench 59: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5, 15)

T59 contained a broad, undated ditch (F122), and a pit (F120) which produced a number of clay fragments. At face value, it would seem that these must derive from an adjacent structure containing clay, but the lack of wattle holes or surviving surfaces means that we cannot be certain on this point.

Trench 60: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5, 15)

T60 contained a ditch (F62), four post- or stake holes (F75-F78), and a pit (F74).

Ditch F62, though undated here, might be another Roman ditch. It was aligned with other ditch fragments in T61 and T50, which collectively are at right-angles to the Roman ditch in T36 and T48.

Pit F74 contained an interesting group of material, ie fourteen struck flints, twelve burnt flints, four natural pebbles, and four pieces of indurated conglomerate stone (the largest piece being a 2kg fragment). This would appear to be a deliberate deposit of material. The 2kg conglomerate lump is identical to the larger fragment (12kg) found in F7 in T10.

The four post- or stake holes F75-F78 formed a rough line east to west. It is unclear whether they were associated with pit F74 or ditch F62.

Trench 61: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5, 15)

T61 contained a ditch (F59). Though undated here, this might be another Roman ditch. It was aligned with other ditch fragments in T60 and T50, which collectively are at right-angles to the Roman ditch in T36 and T48.

Trench 62: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5)

T62 contained a natural feature (F79).

Trench 63: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T63 contained a natural feature (F101).

Trench 64: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 65: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

T65 contained an undated ditch (F102) and an undated pit (F103).

Trench 66: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4, 15)

T66 contained two pits (F104-F105). F105 was undated, but F104 contained a small group of presumably prehistoric burnt flints.

Trench 67: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 68: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4, 15)

T68 contained an undated ditch (F130) and three undated pits (F125-F126, F129).

Trench 69: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 70: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 4)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 71: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 5)

There were no archaeological features or deposits in this trench.

Trench 72: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 6)

T72 contained two ditches (F106-F107). F106 was undated, but F107 contained two prehistoric flints, including an arrowhead roughout.

Trench 73: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 6, 15)

T73 contained a Roman ditch (F108). This produced the largest group of Roman material apart from that in T47. In view of the approximate east-west orientation of this ditch, it is possible to speculate that some of the undated ditches in this part of the site (ie T72, T74) may also be fragments of the Roman field system.

Trench 74: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 6)

T74 contained two undated ditches (F109-F110).

Trench 75: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 6)

T75 contained an undated ditch (F111).

Trench 76: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 7, 15)

T76 contained a sinuous Roman ditch (F112), dated by three Roman sherds.

Trench 77: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 7)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 78: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 7)

T78 contained an undated ditch (F113) and an undated pit (F114).

Trench 79: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 8)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 80: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 8)

T80 contained a natural feature (F115) and an undated pit (F116). An environmental sample from this pit showed that burning had taken place nearby (report below, section 6.6).

Trench 81: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 8)

T81 contained an undated ditch (F117).

Trench 82: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 8)

T82 contained a natural feature (F118).

Trench 83: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 8)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 84: summary and dating (Figs 1-2, 8)

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench.

6 Finds

6.1 The loomweight and structural clay

by Nina Crummy

A fragment of fired clay from F37 is probably part of a loomweight, but cannot be closely dated. The fragments of structural clay from F98 have no voids from wattles or riven timber and only a small part of one flat original surface remains. There is too little material to assign it to a particular structure.

(20) F37. Pit. Prehistoric. Abraded fragment of fired ceramic with no original surfaces remaining. The fabric is sandy, with much grit, and is fired hard; probably from a loomweight. Weight 23 g.

(39) F98. Pit. Prehistoric. Abraded fragments of structural clay, the fabric is sandy with occasional flint pebbles and fine grit. There are no wattle voids and only one piece has an original surface, which is more or less flat. Weight 877 g.

6.2 The prehistoric pottery (Fig 16)

by Stephen Benfield

Introduction

The evaluation produced a total of 1,721 g of prehistoric (pre-Belgic) pottery. The prehistoric pottery fabrics (Table 1) follow those devised for the recording of prehistoric pottery in Essex (Brown 1988). For each context, the number of sherds and weight of the pottery was recorded by fabric for each feature by finds number. Where more than one fabric type is recorded, a total weight of prehistoric pottery for that finds number is also given. This is set out in the catalogue of pottery listed below.

A small selection of the Early Neolithic pottery was kindly examined by Nigel Brown of the ECC HEM team who confirmed the identification. He also commented on the exceptionally large size of some of the sherds, as well as external wear just below the rim of one of the sherds associated with the pot (Figure 16.1).

Table 1: prehistoric pottery fabrics used in this report.

size of inclusions:

S - small (<1 mm)

M - medium (1-2 mm)

L - large (>2 mm)

density of inclusions:

1 = less than 6 per square cm

2 = 6 to 10 per square cm

3 = more than 10 per square cm.

Fabric B	flint, S-M 2
Fabric C	flint, S-M with occasional L
Fabric D	flint, S-L 2 poorly sorted
Fabric E	flint, and sand S-M 2
Fabric I	sand, S-M 2-3
Fabric M	grog, often with some sand or flint and occasional small rounded or sub-angular voids
Fabric V	flint, S-M 1

Discussion

Parts of four, possibly five, Early Neolithic bowls (Fig 16.1-4) can be recognised among the sherds from one pit, ie F7 (T10). Three of the pots are undecorated carinated bowls, with concave necks and rolled rims. The fourth pot (Fig 16.4), also undecorated, is probably a carinated bowl of similar form but with a more rounded rolled rim. A possible fifth pot is represented only by lower body or base sherds.

In total, about 100 sherds (99 sherds with some sherd fragments), weighing 1,570g, were recovered from excavated half of the feature. All of the sherds are flint-tempered, the flint-temper being generally rather patchy and uneven in its density and coarseness. The colour of the sherds is predominantly brown, varying from dark grey-brown to grey-brown and red-brown to pale-brown. The colour of some surfaces is rather patchy.

Effort was made to trace joins among the sherds. As a result of this, part of one carinated bowl (Fig 16.1) could be reconstructed. This consists of seven joining sherds forming much of the body profile and three rim sherds which could not be joined with the body. Another few small rim sherds and a further two joining sherds from the body, just above the carination, are also probably part of this pot. This shows that this pot was a partial pot when deposited in the pit. Five sherds from the rounded lower body or base of a bowl could be joined together, and there is a further sherd which is clearly part of this base, but could not be joined to it. It is possible that this base is part of one of the bowls recognised from their rims. However, the difference in fabric suggests that it may not be part of any of them and it could represent a fifth vessel from the pit. That aside, it again represents a significant part of a single pot that had been put into the pit. Of the other three pots (Fig 16.2-3), only single rim sherds could be recognised and no sherds were found that join with them.

On the partial pot, the carinated bowl (Fig 16.1), much of the surviving part close to the central base of pot is a pale brown, in contrast to the general grey-brown colour of the other areas of its surface. Also, the pot is abraded in this paler area, so that the grits of the flint-temper are more prominent in the surface. Although only a part of the pot was recovered, this localised change to the base suggests that it had been exposed to some source of damage not suffered by the rest of the pot. One explanation might be heating, possibly from being placed into embers or ash during use. Nigel Brown commented that, on one of the non-joining rim sherds associated with this pot, there is an area of wear on the mid part of the neck, while the area just above, immediately below the rim, is not worn. He has seen similar wear patterns on other Early Neolithic bowls. This pattern of wear could result from something having been tied around the mid area of the neck of the pot.

Three other sherds can probably be dated as Early Neolithic. These are a bowl rim (Fig 16.6) from F8 (T10), and two sherds from F2 (T3), probably both from the same pot, but not joining. One of the sherds has a ledge at the carination (Fig 16.5). Both of these pots are flint-tempered and have dark red-brown, brown or dark grey-brown surfaces, with grey-brown or dark grey-brown fabric.

One small sand-tempered sherd from F25 (T13) is likely to be of Middle Iron Age date.

The remainder of the prehistoric sherds are almost entirely flint-tempered, although two sherds, one from F15 (T10) and one from F88 (T39), are tempered with sand and grog. All of these sherds, in the absence of diagnostic features, can only be dated as prehistoric (Lavender 2007).

Catalogue of prehistoric pottery

T2

F1, finds number 1 (less than 1 g).

Fragment of very abraded pottery, red-brown sandy fabric.

T3

F2, finds number 2 (21 g).

Illustrated Fig 16.5. Fabric C sherd with a ledge on exterior, dark grey-brown interior surface and fabric, patchy grey brown exterior, second sherd (not illustrated) non-joining, almost certainly from the same pot, sherds about 9 mm thick.

F3, finds number 5 (7 g).

Fabric C, single sherd, 9 mm thick, abraded red-brown exterior surfaces, dark grey-brown fabric, similar to some sherds from F7 (T10).

T4

F13, finds number 7 (17 g).

Fabric D, single sherd, 2 joining pieces recently broken, up to 12 mm thick, exterior abraded, dark grey-brown interior surface and fabric, red-brown exterior.

T10

F7 (pit), finds number 10 (1,570 g).

95 sherds and some small fragments representing parts of at least four flint-tempered bowls. All four pots can be dated as Early Neolithic.

Illustrated Fig 16.1. Fabric D, rim and body above carination, from a plain carinated bowl with rolled rim, a large part of the body of a carinated round-based bowl, consisting of 5 joining sherds forming an area from the lower body side up to the base of the rim, is almost certainly part of this pot but there is no absolute join with the rim pieces, and they are illustrated as one vessel, in all 14 sherds can be attributed to this pot with some confidence. Other similar non-joining sherds are possibly part of the rounded base, grey-brown surfaces and grey fabric, traces of horizontal wipe marks on rim interior. Much of the surviving area close to the central base of pot is a pale-brown colour, in contrast to the general grey-brown colour of the other areas of its surface. The pot is abraded in this area and so the grits of the flint-temper are more prominent in the surface. Also, one of the non-joining rim sherds, there is an area of wear on the mid part of the neck, while the area just above, immediately below the rim, is not worn.

Illustrated Fig 16.2. Fabric D, although with the addition of dark burnt organic matter in the fabric, large sherd, rim and body above carination, from a plain carinated bowl with rolled rim, surfaces so eroded or abraded that the grits of the flint-temper are proud of the fabric, especially so on exterior surface, grey-brown fabric and surfaces with small patch of red-brown on rim.

Illustrated Fig 16.3. Fabric C, sherd from rim and body, probably from a plain carinated bowl, flat-topped rim, thick sherd – up to 10 mm thick, surfaces and fabric brown to dark grey-brown.

Illustrated Fig 16.4. Fabric D, although with the addition of dark burnt organic matter in the fabric, rim and upper body sherd from a bowl with a rounded rolled rim, thick body – up to 13-14 mm, lower part of wall curving slightly outward, fabric grey-brown interior and red-brown exterior sandwich, surface grey-brown interior and brown/red-brown exterior, very faint traces of vertical wipe marks on exterior of pot.

Other T10 sherds

There are non-joining sherds from 2 or 3 vessels, most probably parts of the four bowls identified above. Also there is a group of 5 joining sherds from the rounded body of a bowl with patchy fine flint-temper (Fabric B/V), and also some smudgy dark inclusions in the fabric which are probably burnt organic matter. The sherds have patchy grey-brown surfaces and dark-grey-brown fabric. 1 other non-joining sherd is clearly part of this group. The fabric of these sherds is different from that of the four other recognised pots and could indicate that it is part of an otherwise unidentified fifth pot.

F8, finds number 13 (38 g).

Illustrated Fig 16.6. Fabric D (32 g), 2 joining sherds, 8 mm thick, from the rim of a bowl, edge of rim broken away, also 1 body sherd 6 mm thick, similar to the Early Neolithic carinated bowls in F7 (T10), dated Early Neolithic.

Fabric E (6 g), single sherd, 6 mm thick, dark grey-brown surfaces and fabric, burnished or smoothed on both surfaces.

F15, finds number 11 (4 g).

Fabric M, sherd, 6 mm thick, and 6 fragments, grey-brown fabric tempered with sand and some red-brown grog.

T13

F25, finds number 17 (6 g).

Fabric I, 1 sherd, sandy fabric, grey-brown surfaces and dark grey-brown fabric.

T16

F37, finds number 20 (31 g).

Fabric D (21 g), 4 sherds, up to 8 mm thick, brown interior surfaces, dark grey-brown fabric, red brown exterior, similar to sherds from F7 (T10).

Fabric E (10 g), 3 small very abraded sherds, up to 8 mm thick, some dark smudges in fabric appear to be organic temper, possibly dung, red-brown surfaces, grey core.

F38, finds number 19 (5 g).

Fabric V, 1 small sherd, 5 mm thick, pale grey-brown interior surface, grey-brown fabric and dark grey-brown exterior surface, surface laminating from body of fabric.

F39, finds number 22 (2 g).

Fabric C/D, 2 sherd fragments, 8 mm thick, dark grey-brown interior surface and fabric, red-brown exterior.

T39

F88, finds number 36 (6 g).

Fabric M, single very abraded sherd with rounded edges, 9 mm thick, red-brown surfaces and fabric, tempered with dark grog and sand.

T51

F119, finds number 46 (13 g).

Fabric E, single sherd, 5-6 mm thick, abraded, red-brown surfaces and fabric.

6.3 The Roman pottery

by Stephen Benfield

Introduction

There are 22 sherds, weighing 352 g, of Roman pottery from the evaluation. The pottery has been recorded using the Roman pottery fabric type series devised for *CAR 10*, in which the fabrics are recorded as two-letter codes. These letter codes, together with the full fabric name, are set out in Table 2. An additional code for Romanising coarse wares (Fabric RCW) has been introduced and this fabric is described below. Where appropriate, the fabric code for the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection has been included (Tomber & Dore 1998). The pot forms were recorded, where possible, using the Camulodunum (Cam) Roman pottery form type series (Hawkes & Hull 1947; Hull 1958). The pottery fabrics and the vessel forms present in each site context were recorded for each finds number. The number of sherds was recorded and the identifiable pottery forms present for each fabric type. The total weight of pottery and an overall spot date was recorded for each finds number. This information is set out in the catalogue of Roman pottery below.

Fabrics and descriptions additional to *CAR 10* fabrics used in this report:

Fabric RCW, Romanising coarse ware

Sherd thickness is generally medium to thin, and surfaces are dark grey-brown. The fabric is grey-brown with red-brown margins and contains fragments of burnt organic matter and grog. The fabric sometimes has a tendency to laminate.

Table 2: Roman pottery fabric codes and fabric names used in this report (after *CAR 10*).

Fabric code	Fabric name	National Roman Fabric Reference Collection fabric code
DJ	coarse oxidised and related wares	COL WH
GX	other coarse wares, principally locally-produced grey wares	
RCW	Romanising coarse wares	

Discussion

The small quantity of Roman pottery was recovered from features in four of the trenches, ie T47, T48, T73 and T76. Only one vessel form type could be recognised and closely dated, ie a Cam 243-244/246 reeded-rim bowl from F63 (T47). The form is dated Claudio-Neronian to Hadrianic. However, the bowl has a rounded body profile and can be more closely dated as Claudio-Neronian (*CAR 10*, 478). About 20% of the pot is present, as joining sherds forming most of the profile. A number of the of the other pottery sherds can also be suggested as of early Roman, 1st- or early 2nd-century date. The sherd from F108 (T73) is in a Romanising fabric

containing dark organic temper (Fabric RCW) and can be dated as 1st century. Several sherds in Fabric GX, from F99 (T48) and F108 (T73), while not containing any organic temper, have a soft, silty fabric and are probably also of 1st- or early 2nd-century date. Rim sherds from a small jar or beaker, from F112 (T76), can be dated as probably 1st-2nd century, as can a sherd of Colchester coarse oxidised ware, from F65 (T47), which is probably from a flagon. However, some grey ware sherds, F65 (T47) and F123 (T48), can only securely be broadly dated as Roman. One sherd, from F80 (T48), suggests a date that is early 2nd-3rd or 4th century. This sherd is from a bowl with a basal chamfer, a feature common on some bowls of black-burnished ware type which span the period from the early 2nd to the 4th centuries.

Catalogue of Roman pottery

T47

F63, finds number 28 (109 g).

Fabric GX, Cam 243-244/246 bowl with a rounded body profile, partial pot – 7 sherds all joining, representing about 20% of the pot, fabric is very micaceous with abundant visible silver mica, Claudio-Neronian (*CAR 10*, 478).

F65, finds number 29 (64 g).

Fabric DJ, 1 sherd, recently broken, abraded, 1st-2nd/3rd century;

Fabric GX, base sherd from a jar or bowl, abraded, Roman, ?1st-2nd century.

T48

F80, finds number 35 (9 g).

Fabric GX, single sherd from a bowl with a basal chamfer as is common on some black-burnished ware form types, sandy red-brown fabric and dark-grey surfaces, micaceous fabric with common visible silver mica, Roman, ?early 2nd-3rd/4th century.

F99, finds number 40 (8 g).

Fabric GX, rim sherd from a jar or bowl, sandy red-brown fabric and dark-grey surfaces, Roman probably 1st-early 2nd century.

F123, finds number 47 (3 g).

Fabric GX, 1 sherd, slightly micaceous fabric with common visible silver mica, Roman.

T73

F108, finds number 44 (150 g).

Fabric RCW, 7 sherds from the base of a jar or bowl, several joining, sandy red-brown fabric with flecks of burnt organic matter, dark-grey surfaces, Roman 1st century.

T76

F112, finds number 52 (9 g).

Fabric GX, 3 sherds from a small jar or bowl, rim and neck sherd join, very abraded, several small nicks or notches below rim are possibly excavation damage, Roman, ?1st-2nd century.

6.4 The flints

by Hazel Martingell

Summary

This is a particularly interesting collection of 78 worked flints, consisting of five cores and waste blocks, 40 flakes, seventeen blades, two retouched flakes, three notched blades, one retouched small arrowhead-shaped piece, one piercer/borer, four scrapers and four micro-denticulates or serrated blades (used for cutting plants and processing them).

As is usual, the most interesting artefact is an unstratified find, a serrated blade (finds no 50). This has shining particles of plant gloss on the serrated edge facet, indicating that it has been used. Serrated blades are typically Neolithic artefacts, but can also be found in Mesolithic contexts.

From the north-east corner of the site, to the west of the cropmarks, came four of the retouched pieces, two more serrated blades, one of the scrapers on a blade, a piercer/borer, and eight waste flakes. They are all likely to be Neolithic.

More worked flints were recovered from the eastern part of the site, south of the cropmarks. These included a very fine Neolithic scraper (T49), another serrated blade fragment (slightly burnt), and 21 waste pieces.

From T17 came an unusual retouched piece in the shape of a small arrowhead, and from the adjacent T16 came a retouched flake, and twelve flakes and blades.

In summary, ten of the fifteen retouched artefacts are likely to be Neolithic. It is suggested that there are sites where tools were made (where there will be much waste material) and that there are sites where tools were modified and sharpened. It looks as though the occupation site at Lufkins Farm was mostly concerned with the latter work. The finds of two flakes from polished Neolithic axes, and the lack of primary waste, would indicate this.

Catalogue

T3

F2, finds number 4
1 flake fragment, secondary
1 blade butt part, tertiary

T3

F3, finds number 2
1 end scraper on blade, notched and retouched right edge, tertiary

T8

U/S, finds number 6
1 blade flake; tertiary

T10

F7, finds number 9
1 core, irregular with frosted fractured surfaces.
1 core on flake
1 micro-denticulate on blade, secondary
1 flake from polished axe, slight patination
5 flakes, secondary

T10

F7, finds number 16
1 micro-denticulate on a blade, secondary, cortex backing opposite denticulate edge, 56mm long
1 piercer/borer on a blade, tertiary

T11

F14, finds number 8
1 blade, distal end, thin section, grey flint

T16

F37, finds number 20
1 blade, secondary, 38mm long
4 flakes, thinning, thin sections, tertiary
2 flakes, fragments, burnt

T16

F38, finds number 19
1 retouched flake, butt part, burnt light grey, good
3 flakes, tertiary
1 blade, distal part, secondary

T16

F39, finds number 55
1 blade, secondary, thin section, 53mm long

T17

U/S finds number 15
1 retouched point (arrowhead) tertiary

T29

F44, finds number 22
1 bladelet, secondary

T34

F49, finds number 25
1 blade off curving core edge, edge damaged, tertiary

T48

F99, finds number 40
1 waste block, end of flint nodule
3 flakes, secondary
1 flake fragment, tertiary, burnt grey

T49

L1, finds number 31
1 scraper on flake, retouch all round, broken distal end
1 blade, proximal part, worn right edge
1 blade, secondary

T53

F92, finds number 37
1 flake secondary
1 flake from broad blade, secondary

T57

F97, finds number 38
1 blade core on flint nodule (looks like axe blade edge)

T60

F74, finds number 32
1 blade fragment, secondary
3 blades, secondary (trimming waste)
2 blades, tertiary (trimming waste)
6 flakes, tertiary (burnt, trimming waste)

T60

F74, finds number 33
1 core, blade, on flint nodule
1 flake, secondary

T61

F59, finds number 27
1 micro-denticulate on blade fragment, slightly burnt

T72

F107, finds number 43
1 flake, tertiary
1 flake, tertiary (arrowhead rough out?)

U/S finds number 12
1 scraper fragment?, burnt, secondary
1 flake from polished axe
2 flakes, secondary
2 flakes, tertiary

U/S finds number 18
1 blade, secondary

U/S finds number 50
1 micro-denticulate and retouched blade, secondary, plant gloss on left facet and right edge
1 scraper on flake, round, tertiary, worn edges
1 flake, tertiary, retouched and worn on left edge

U/S finds number 54
1 core, blade, bi-polar, small

5 flakes and waste blocks, secondary
1 flake, tertiary, edge damaged, fire crackled
1 notched and retouched flake, primary
1 notched natural elongated flint
1 notched flake, secondary

6.5 Charred macrofossils and other plant remains

by Val Fryer

Introduction and method statement

The evaluation revealed a number of pits, ditches and other discrete features of prehistoric and later date. Samples for the evaluation of the content and preservation of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken from fills of two pits of probable prehistoric date (F37 and F116).

The samples were processed by manual water flotation/washover, and the flots were collected in a 500-micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16, and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed below on Table 3. All plant remains were charred. Modern fibrous roots were present within sample 21.

Results

Both assemblages are primarily composed of charcoal/charred wood fragments, although sample 45 also contains a number of mineralised soil concretions. Much of the charcoal within sample 21 has a very flaked appearance, with some pieces also having tarry surface concretions, and it would appear most likely that this material was burnt at a very high temperature. The material from sample 45 is somewhat different, as the charcoal fragments are mostly very rounded and abraded, probably indicating either prolonged exposure to the elements prior to burial or subsequent disturbance. A number of fragments also have heavy surface concretions of minerals and fine grits, possibly indicative of immersion in water.

Conclusions and recommendations for further work

In summary, both assemblages are probably derived from hearth/fire waste, with wood being the principal fuel of choice. Although the current assemblage is limited in composition, it does indicate that well-preserved plant macrofossils are present within the archaeological horizon on this site: if further excavations are proposed, additional plant macrofossil samples of approximately 20-30 litres in volume should be taken from all well-sealed and dated features. Material suitable for identification and C14 dating is present within both of the current assemblages and can be removed if required.

Table 3: charred plant macrofossils and other remains.

Sample no	21	45
Context no	F37	F116
Trench no	T10	T80
Charcoal <2mm	xxxx	x
Charcoal >2mm	xxxx	xxxx
Charcoal >5mm	xx	
Mineralised soil concretions		xx
Sample volume (litres)	20	10
Volume of flot (litres)	0.4	0.2
% flot sorted	50%	100%

Key:

x = 1-10 specimens
xx = 10-50 specimens
xxxx = 100+ specimens

6.6 The organic material

by Emma Hogarth

Two samples of unidentified burnt material were examined by Emma Hogarth of Colchester and Ipswich Museums.

Catalogue

T56

F131

Finds number 48 (associated with burnt flints)

Unidentified organic material with horizontal fibrous layers. Not pottery.

T68

F125

Finds number 49 (no associated finds)

Unidentified. Most likely to be wood. Definitely organic, but lacks the fibrous layers in the other sample.

It is recommended that if any more of this material comes out of dated contexts during any follow-up work, it should be examined microscopically.

6.7 Other finds

by Howard Brooks

This list includes all finds not listed in specialist reports (above).

Catalogue

T10

F7, pit

Finds number 9

1 burnt flint, 16g

1 ?natural pebble, 16g

1 ?sandstone chip, 202g

Finds number 14

1 very large (12kg) lump of indurated conglomerate

2 crystalline quartz pebble fragments, 202g

1 burnt flint, 106g.

1 ?natural pebble, 97g

F15, pit

Finds number 11

1 indurated conglomerate stone chip, 14g

T16

F37, pit

Finds number 20

4 burnt flints, 19g

F38, pit

Finds number 19

1 burnt flint, 29g

T34

F49, recent field boundary

Finds number 24

1 peg-tile fragment, 34g

Finds number 52

1 peg-tile fragment, 71g

1 post-medieval brick fragment, 81g

T47

F63, ditch

Finds number 28

1 burnt flint, 4g

2 ?natural pebbles, 81g

T48

F99, erosion hollow?

Finds number 40

5 burnt flints, 55g

F123, erosion hollow?

Finds number 47

3 conglomerate stone chips, 48g

T50

F71, ditch

Finds number 30

1 burnt flint, 9g

T56

F131, pit

Finds number 49

7 burnt flints, 69g

T59

F98, pit

Finds number 39

5 ?natural pebbles, 137g

T60

F74, pit ?

Finds number 33

12 burnt flints, 263g

4 natural pebbles, 52g

3 conglomerate chips, 64g

Finds number 34

1 large indurated conglomerate lump, 2kg

T66

F104, pit

Finds number 42

8 burnt flints, 231g

1 ?natural pebble, 76g

7 Discussion

Prehistoric

In her analysis of the flints from this site, Hazel Martingell points out that ten out of the fifteen retouched pieces are Neolithic. In view of this, it would seem that the weight of evidence is against any pre-Neolithic activity on this site.

There is no doubt that the most important group of finds or features belongs to the Neolithic period. The Neolithic remains are concentrated in T10, in the extreme north-east corner of the evaluation site. Here, pit F7 produced an interesting group of material which not only includes fragments of at least four carinated, early Neolithic bowls, but also a group of Neolithic cores, micro-denticulates, and flakes (including one from a polished axe), two burnt flints, and a number of natural stones including two white crystalline quartz pebbles, two ?natural pebbles, a ?sandstone chip, and a very large (12kg) lump of indurated conglomerate.

There is no real doubt that the pottery and worked Neolithic flints have been deliberately deposited in pit F7; the question is why the natural stones were in the same pit. Whereas it would be easy to dismiss the occasional pebble as an accidental inclusion, it is more difficult to ignore larger groups of material, especially when they include very large pieces such as the 12kg lump of conglomerate. Again, the weight of the evidence points towards this being a deliberately deposited group of material. This is not the place to try to read the mind of Neolithic people, but there are a number of points about the conglomerate and other stones which may be relevant. First, the natural pebbles deposited in this feature, and in other features on the site, are almost without exception all coloured red (which may indicate deliberate selection of stones the colour of which was significant at the time). The second is the inclusion of the white quartz pebbles. The use of and significance of white stones is recognised elsewhere in the monumental architecture of the Neolithic period. The

best-known is perhaps the colossal white quartz façade on the passage grave at New Grange, County Meath, Ireland (<http://www.knowth.com/newgrange.htm>). Closer to home, at the Neolithic henge monuments at Thornborough in North Yorkshire, it is believed that the inner faces of the henge banks were lined with quartz¹. In addition, white quartz stones are often found in association with Neolithic stone circles (Pitts 2001, 225). For these reasons, the white quartz pebbles in pit F7 may be significant finds.

The conglomerate is a type of stone which is sometimes seen built into the face of medieval churches, as at St Andrew's (Marks Tey) and St Mary's (West Bergholt). In an article written in 1987, Robin Turner explains that this stone, though often mistaken for a puddingstone, is in fact correctly termed an 'indurated conglomerate'. He goes on to say that it is quite a common find in north and east Essex, and that farmers sometimes plough up lumps weighing several tonnes (Turner 1987). The inclusion of a large lump of this stone in F7 (12kg), of a smaller (2kg) piece in T60, and of smaller pieces (chips) elsewhere in T10, T60 and also in T48 may indicate deliberate deposition.

There is other prehistoric material from other features in T10, ie a total of three sherds from F15 and F8, and a conglomerate chip from F15, but the most important association for pit group F7 is almost certainly the cropmark features to the east (Fig 2). Here, in the area excluded from the application site, are two prehistoric monuments which only exist as cropmarks – a ring-ditch and a rectilinear, parallel-sided enclosure. Definitive statements on cropmarks which have not been excavated can only be tentative, at best, but a few points can be made here. First, the ring-ditch. This is a strong cropmark, and its identification as a ploughed-out barrow is convincing. In date, it could be Bronze Age, or possibly Neolithic. The enclosure is a much fainter cropmark, but is still quite convincing. In form, it mostly resembles the class of Neolithic monuments known as 'mortuary enclosures'. These can include a wide range of monuments, from ploughed-out long barrows to areas of ground enclosed by a ditch, within which various mortuary activities took place (including, perhaps, the exposure of the dead). Clearly, these interpretations could only be tested by excavation, but the interpretation of the rectilinear enclosure as a Neolithic mortuary enclosure is greatly strengthened by the discovery of the pit group in F7, only 25m to its west. A detailed discussion of Neolithic mortuary enclosures is beyond the brief of this report, but a few points may be made here. A mortuary enclosure at Rivenhall was sample-excavated by David Buckley in 1986 (Buckley *et al* 1988). Four trenches produced pottery and flints which confirmed the suspected Neolithic date for the monument. The Rivenhall enclosure measured 49m x 19m. The Great Bentley example is the same length, but considerably wider at approximately 30m. In that respect, it is closer in size, though not in shape, to the more ovate enclosures at Ashen and Lawford 2 (*op cit*, fig 11). A later plan of mortuary enclosures shows fourteen examples in Essex (Holgate 1996, fig 3), not including the Great Bentley example.

Another find of potential interest is the unidentified burnt organic material from T56 and T68. Unfortunately, the T56 example is only associated with burnt flints, presumably prehistoric, but not necessarily so, and the T68 material has no associated finds. A modern date for this material cannot be absolutely ruled out, but if this material were to be recovered from contexts dated by prehistoric ceramics, then this could be an important addition to the range of finds from this site.

Apart from the group of material in T10, there was also prehistoric material elsewhere on the evaluation site, typically single prehistoric flints, sherds, or burnt flints, but it was very thinly spread across the site. The exception to this was a concentration of material at the south end of T16. This small group of material from three intercutting features includes thirteen prehistoric worked flints, five burnt flints, and ten sherds of prehistoric pottery. There is no other prehistoric material near this position, so it presumably represents an isolated pit group.

Roman (Fig 2)

Apart from the cropmark enclosures discussed above, local cropmarks include a major linear feature, presumably a field ditch, heading WSW-ENE towards the evaluation

¹ HB remembers seeing this on TV coverage of the excavation, but is unable to find it in print

site. The field ditch intercepted in T26, T29 and T39 is clearly the same feature, showing that the cropmark continued further to the WSW than was originally thought.

This major field ditch appears to be the axis of a larger field system. The evidence for this is a number of other field ditches which are more or less at right-angles to the main axis or more or less parallel to it (Fig 2). There are other ditches to the south of the main evaluation site area, on the haul road. Collectively, these ditches define a rectilinear and co-axial field system. The question is the date of this field system. At a simple level, the ditches around T47 and T48 contained Roman material, and are certainly Roman in date. The other ditches, where dated at all, contained single prehistoric sherds or flints. This might suggest a two-phase field system, laid out in prehistory and added to in the Roman period. However, there is a problem with this interpretation. First, rectilinear field systems are not generally pre-Roman. Second, the only convincing prehistoric context for this site is a Neolithic pit, and a Neolithic field system, though not by any means implausible, is much less likely than a Roman one. For these reasons, the view taken here is that the field system is Roman in date, and that some of the ditches contained residual prehistoric finds.

If this interpretation is correct, then it can be postulated that the Roman field system was laid out in reference to the monuments which occupied the land beforehand, and that the two principal features (the ring-ditch and the possible mortuary enclosure), were deliberately partitioned off from the other areas of activity by the field ditch intercepted by T20, T13 and T9. This is not hard to believe – the mounds would surely still have been visible in the Roman period and their significance appreciated and respected by the local population.

The other Roman ditches created other fields and/or areas of activity. To the west of the monument area was a 'blank' area, presumably a field. To its south there were fields or paddocks. The south-eastern part of the site contained a small group of Roman ditches, post-holes and pits. Lack of domestic debris such as quantities of pottery, brick/tile and food waste probably rules out a domestic interpretation for any activity here, though the pits and post-holes may have been connected with a structure of Roman date, possibly of an agricultural purpose.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank A O Poole & Sons and George Wright Farms for commissioning and funding the work, via Mineral Services Lt (Mr Peter Orrock).

The project was managed by B Holloway, and the site work was carried out by B Hurrell, L Driver, M Górniak, C Lister, N Rayner, D Ross and A Wightman, with digital survey carried out by C Lister.

The project was monitored for the ECC HEM team by Mr Adrian Gascoyne.

9 References

- | | | |
|---|------|---|
| Brown, N | 1988 | 'A Late Bronze Age enclosure at Lofts Farm, Essex', in <i>Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society</i> , 54 , 263-64 |
| Brown, N | 2001 | 'Pottery', in 'Prehistoric settlement and burials at Elms Farm, Heybridge', by M Atkinson and S Preston, <i>Essex Archaeology and History</i> , 32 , 57-66 |
| Buckley, D G,
Major, H, &
Milton, B | 1988 | 'Excavation of a possible Neolithic long barrow or mortuary enclosure at Rivenhall, Essex, 1986', in <i>Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society</i> , 54 , 77-92 |
| CAR 10 | 1999 | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 10: Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-86</i> , by R P Symonds and S Wade, ed by P Bidwell and A Croom |
| CAT | 1999 | <i>Policies and procedures</i> |
| CM | 2003 | <i>Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester Museums</i> |
| EAA 3 | 1997 | <i>Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource assessment</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 3 , ed by J Glazebrook |

EAA 8	2000	<i>Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 8 , ed by N Brown and J Glazebrook
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14 , ed by D Gurney
Hawkes, C F C, & Hull, M R	1947	<i>Camulodunum, first report on the excavations at Colchester 1930-39</i> , RRCSAL, 14
Holgate, R	1996	'Essex c 400-1500 BC', in <i>The Archaeology of Essex: Proceedings of the Writtle Conference</i> , ed by O Bedwin, 15-25
Hull, M R	1958	<i>Roman Colchester</i> , RRCSAL, 20
IFA	1999	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i>
IFA	2001	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
Lavender, N	2007	'Prehistoric pottery', in <i>Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments and Middle Iron Age settlement at Lodge Farm, St Osyth, Essex</i> , by M Germany, East Anglian Archaeology, 117 , 62-77
MAP 2	1991	<i>Management of archaeological projects</i> , second edition (English Heritage)
Pitts, M	2001	<i>Hengeworld</i> (Arrow Books)
Tomber, R, & Dore, J	1998	<i>The National Roman Fabric Reference Collection, a handbook</i> , MoLAS, Monograph, 2
Turner, R	1987	'The sources of indurated conglomerate from early medieval churches in north and East Essex', in <i>Essex Archaeology and History</i> , 18 , 120

Web reference: <http://www.knowth.com/newgrange.htm>

10 Abbreviations and glossary

AOD	above Ordnance Datum
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CM	Colchester and Ipswich Museums
context	specific location on an archaeological site, especially one where finds are made
core	flint lump from which flakes or blades are detached by percussion
denticulate	having small tooth-like notches (which give it a sawing function)
ECC	Essex County Council
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, held by Essex County Council
flake	a flint piece knocked off a larger core (will sometimes be retouched)
feature	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain, a floor; can contain 'contexts'
fill	the soil filling up a hole such as a pit or ditch
HEM	Historic Environment Management
IFA	Institute of Field Archaeologists
Iron Age	period immediately before the Romans, dating from 800 BC to AD 43
Middle Iron Age	period dating from 5th century BC to mid 2nd century BC
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
prehistoric	belonging to the Stone, Bronze or Iron Ages (before the Romans)
retouched	a flint flake which has been modified to make it a functional tool
Roman	the period from AD 43 to around AD 430
RRCSAL	Report of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London

11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3NF, but it will be permanently deposited with Colchester and Ipswich Museums, under accession code COLEM 2007.118.

© Colchester Archaeological Trust 2007

Distribution list:

D K Symes
Mr Peter Orrock (Mineral Services Ltd)
Mr Martin Winter, Colchester and Ipswich Museums
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



Colchester Archaeological Trust

12 Lexden Road,
Colchester,
Essex CO3 3NF

tel.: (01206) 541051
(01206) 500124
email: archaeologists@catuk.org

Checked by: Philip Crummy
Date: 17.12.07

adamsx c:/reports07/lufkins farm/report450.doc

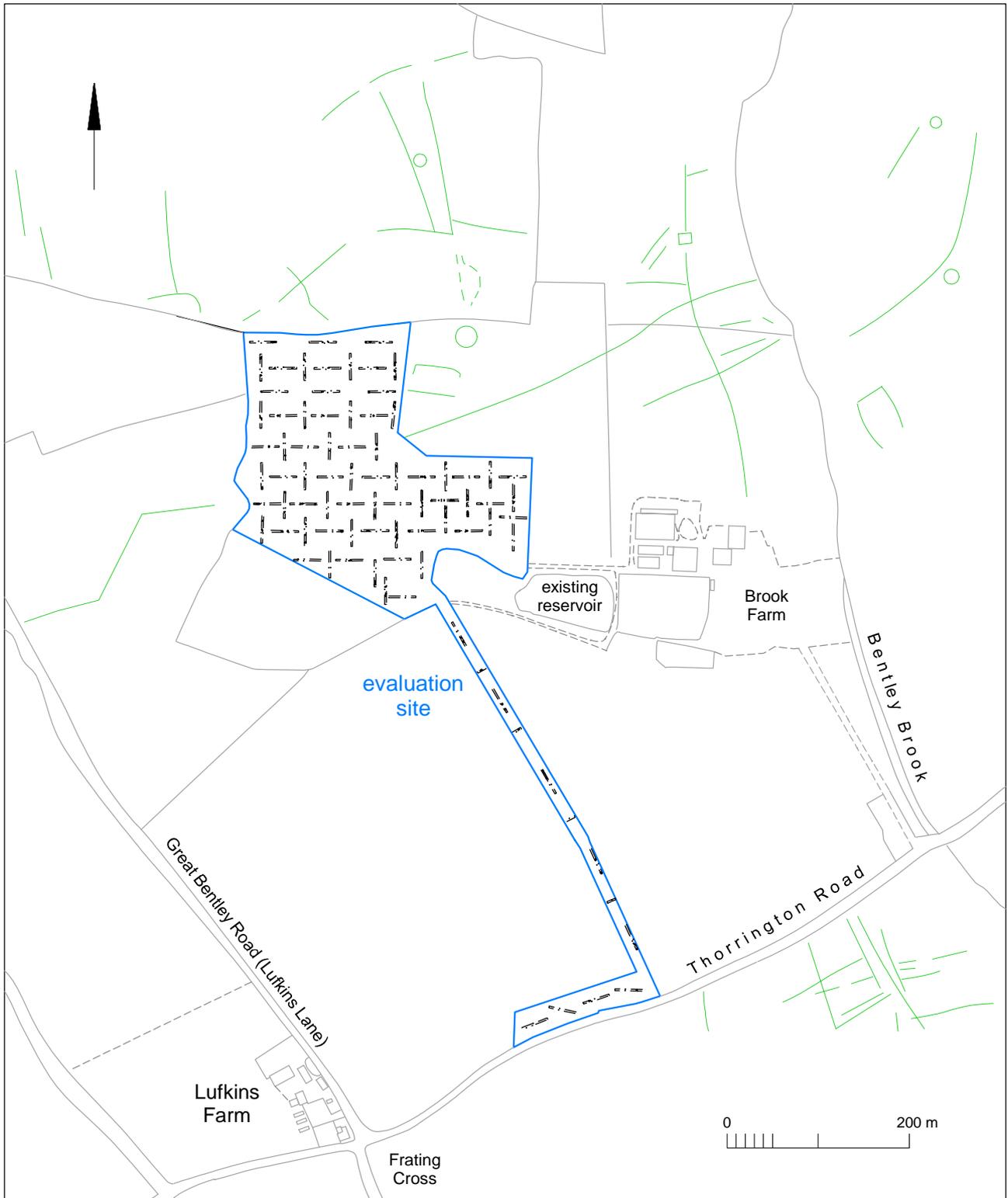


Fig 1 Location of site, showing cropmarks (in green).

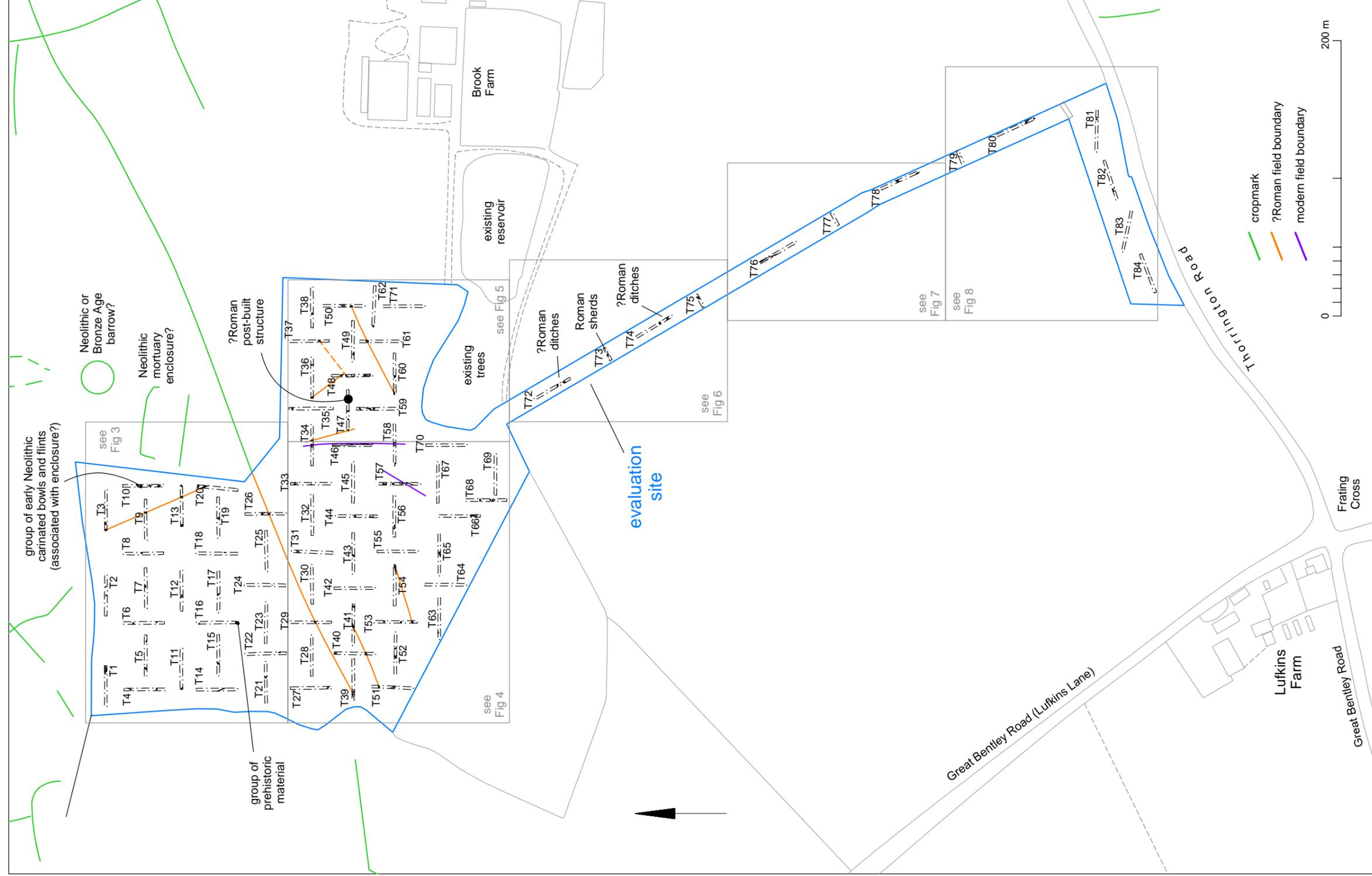


Fig 2 Location of trenches, with interpretation of evaluated features.

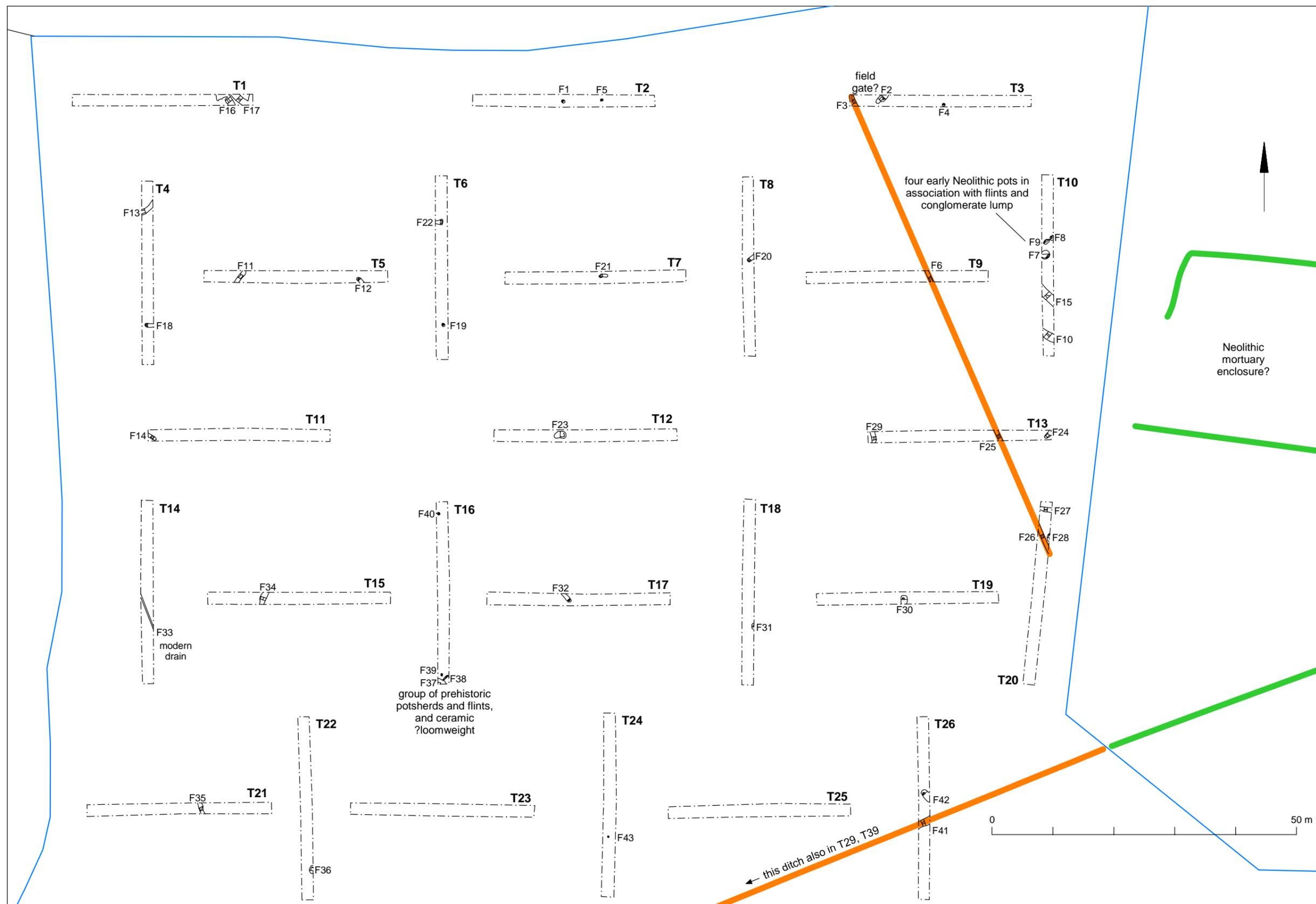


Fig 3 Insert to Fig 2.

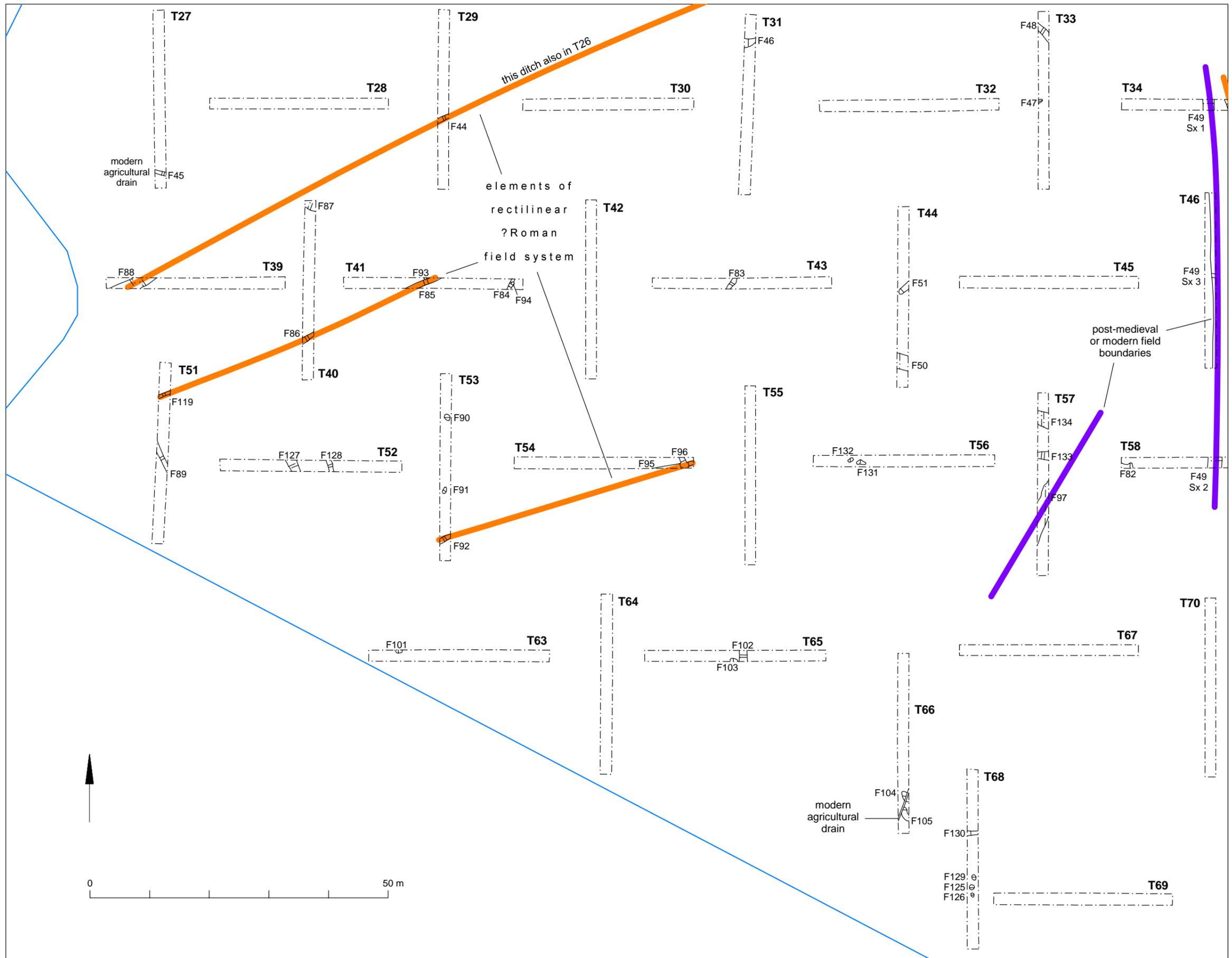


Fig 4 Insert to Fig 2.

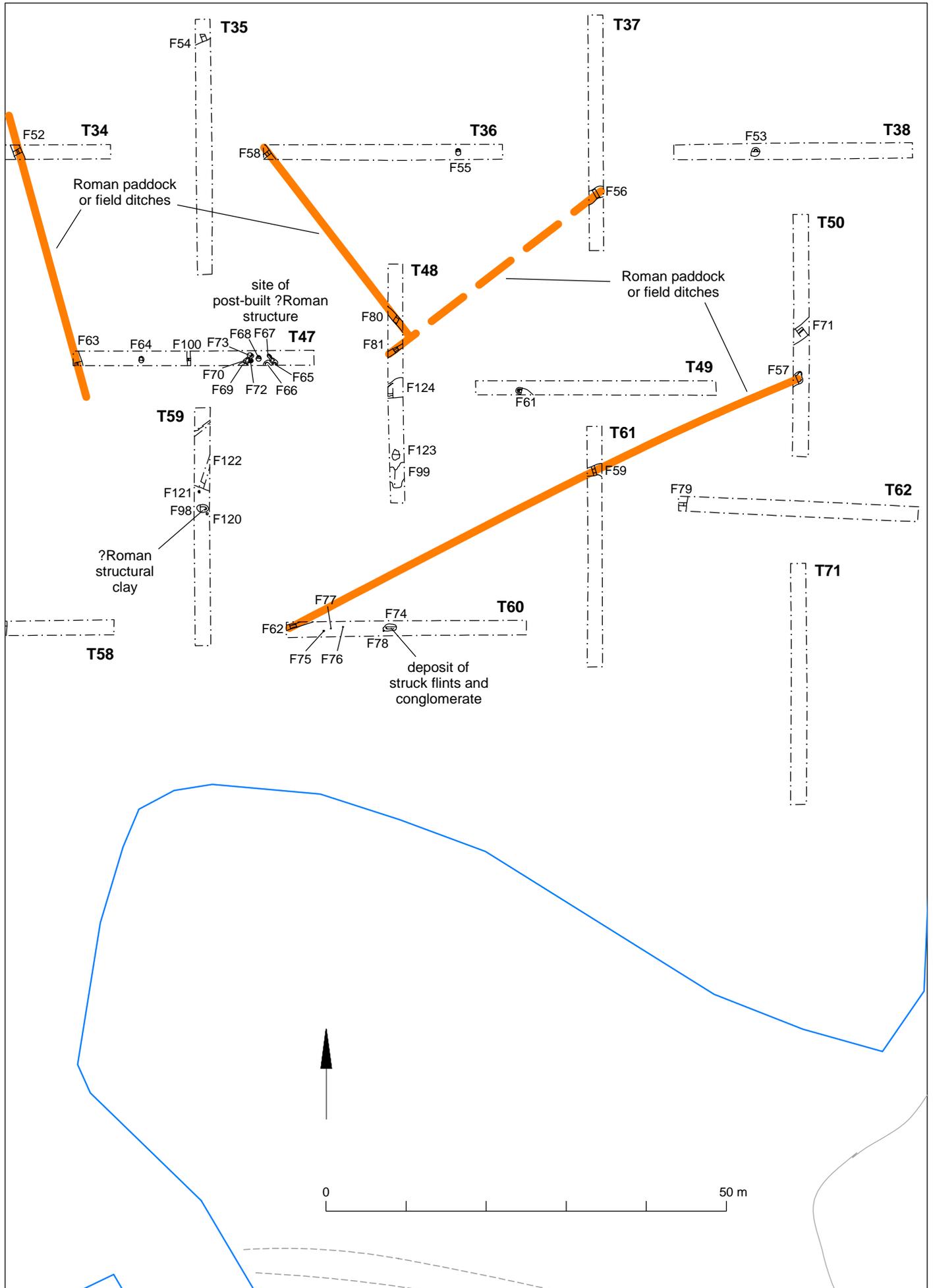


Fig 5 Insert to Fig 2.

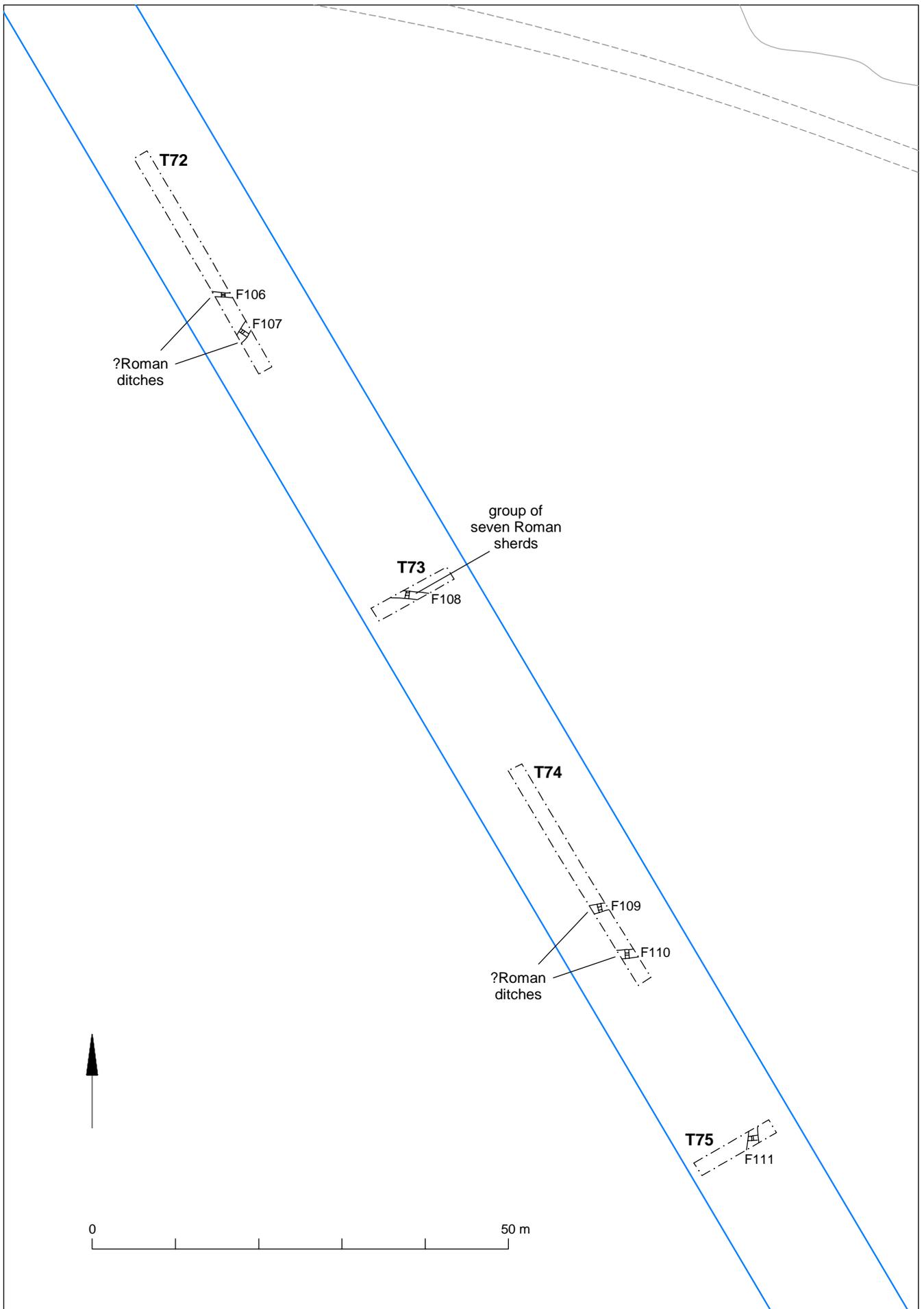


Fig 6 Insert to Fig 2.

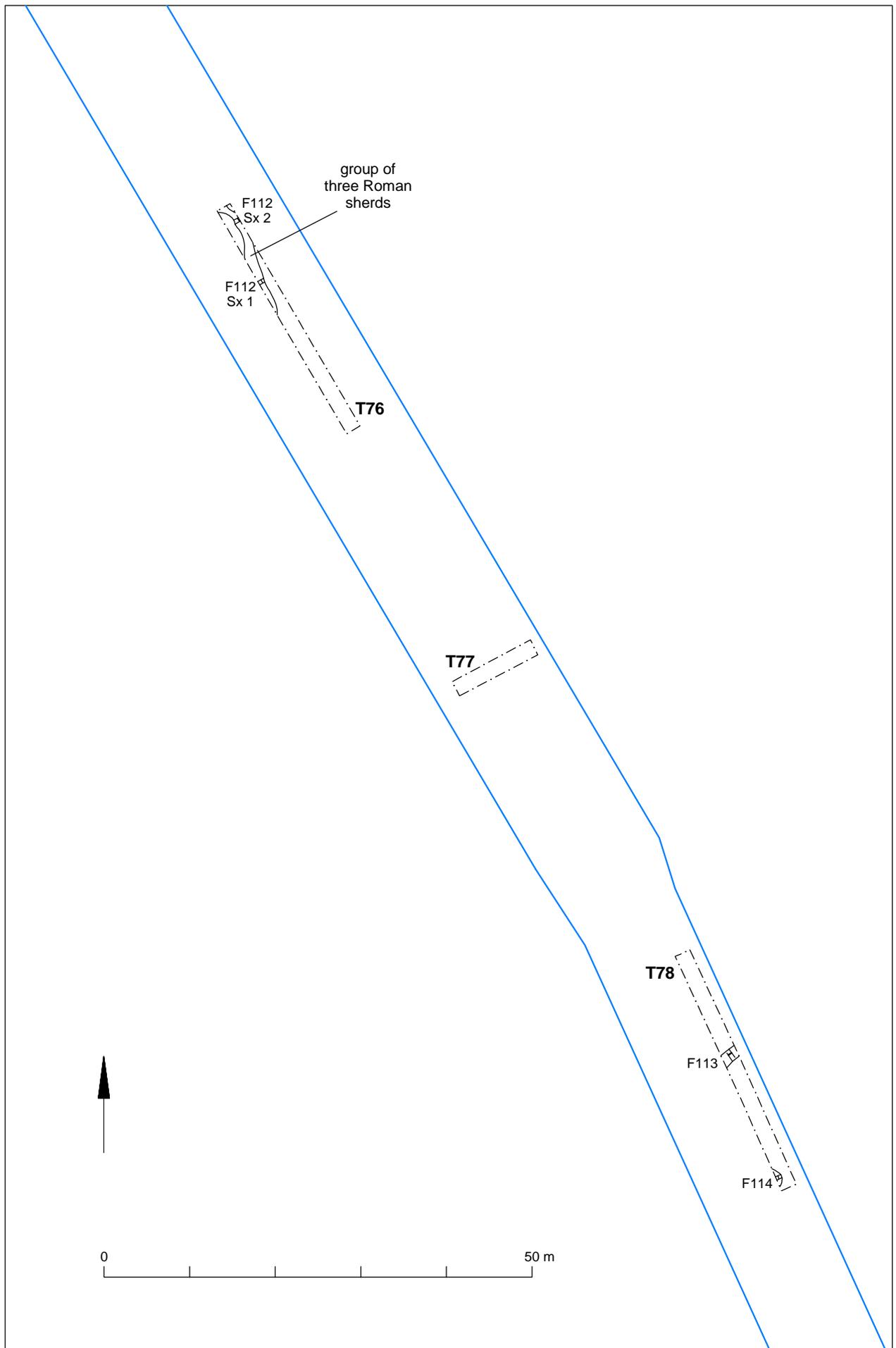


Fig 7 Insert to Fig 2.

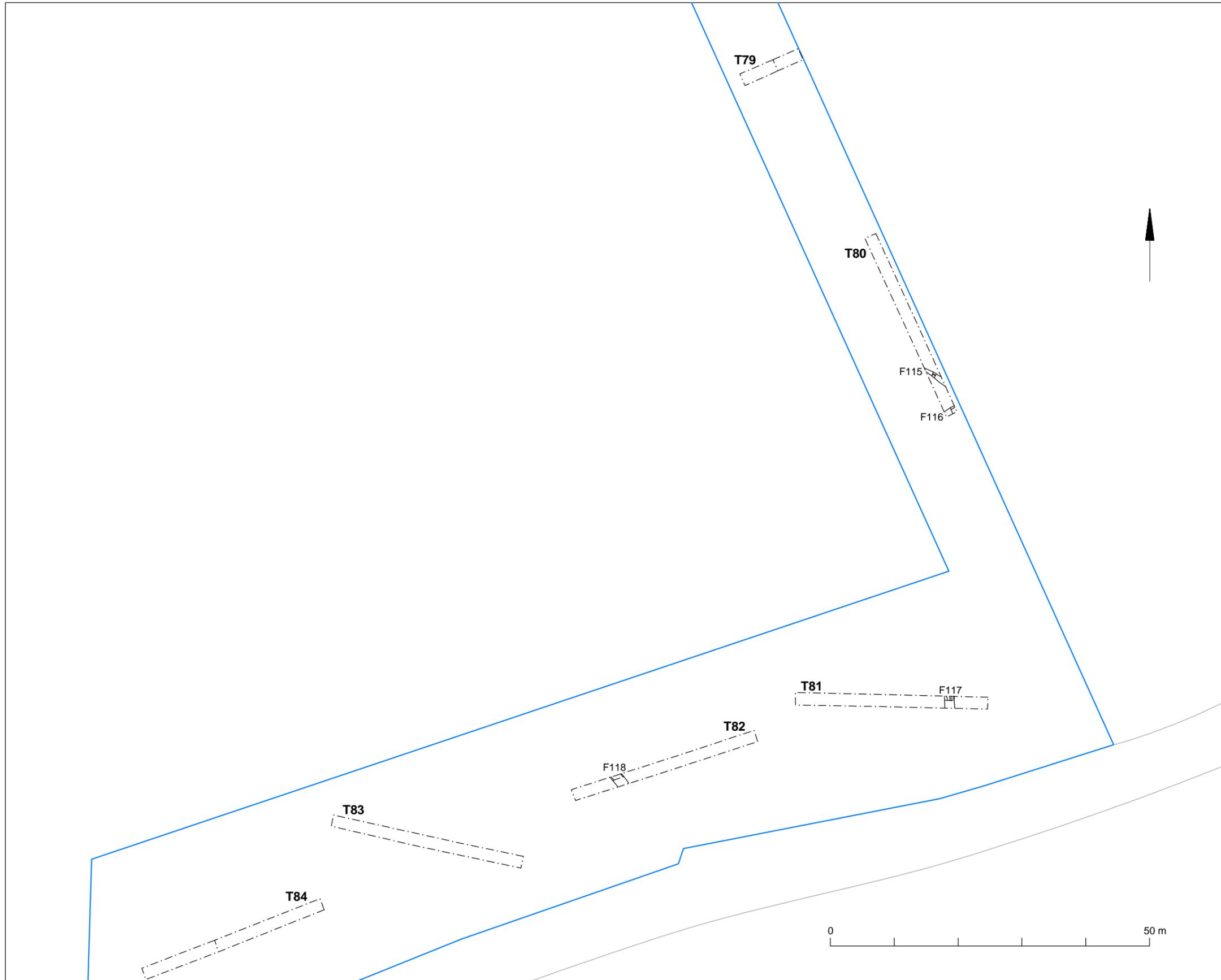


Fig 8 Insert to Fig 2.

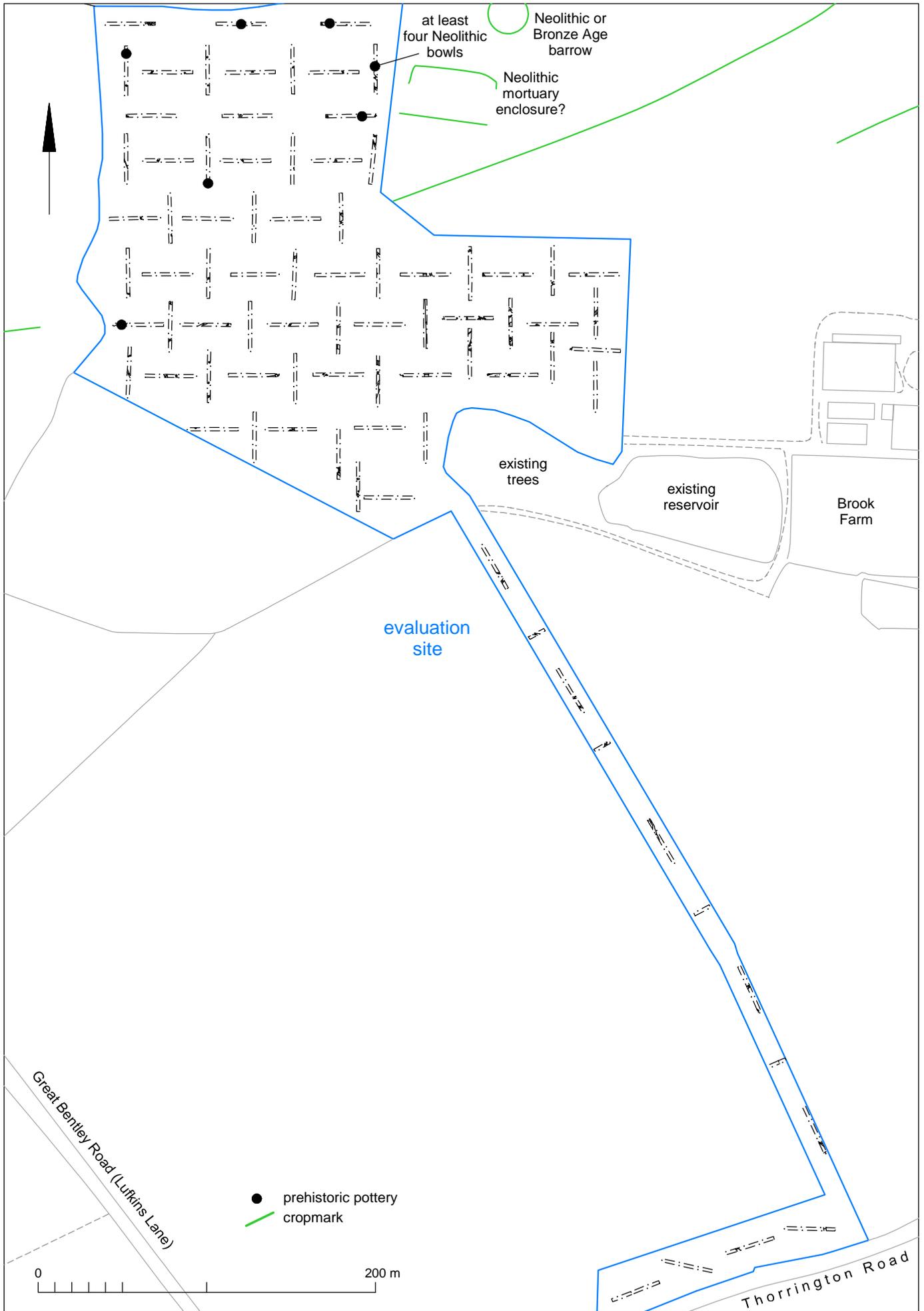


Fig 9 Distribution of prehistoric pottery.

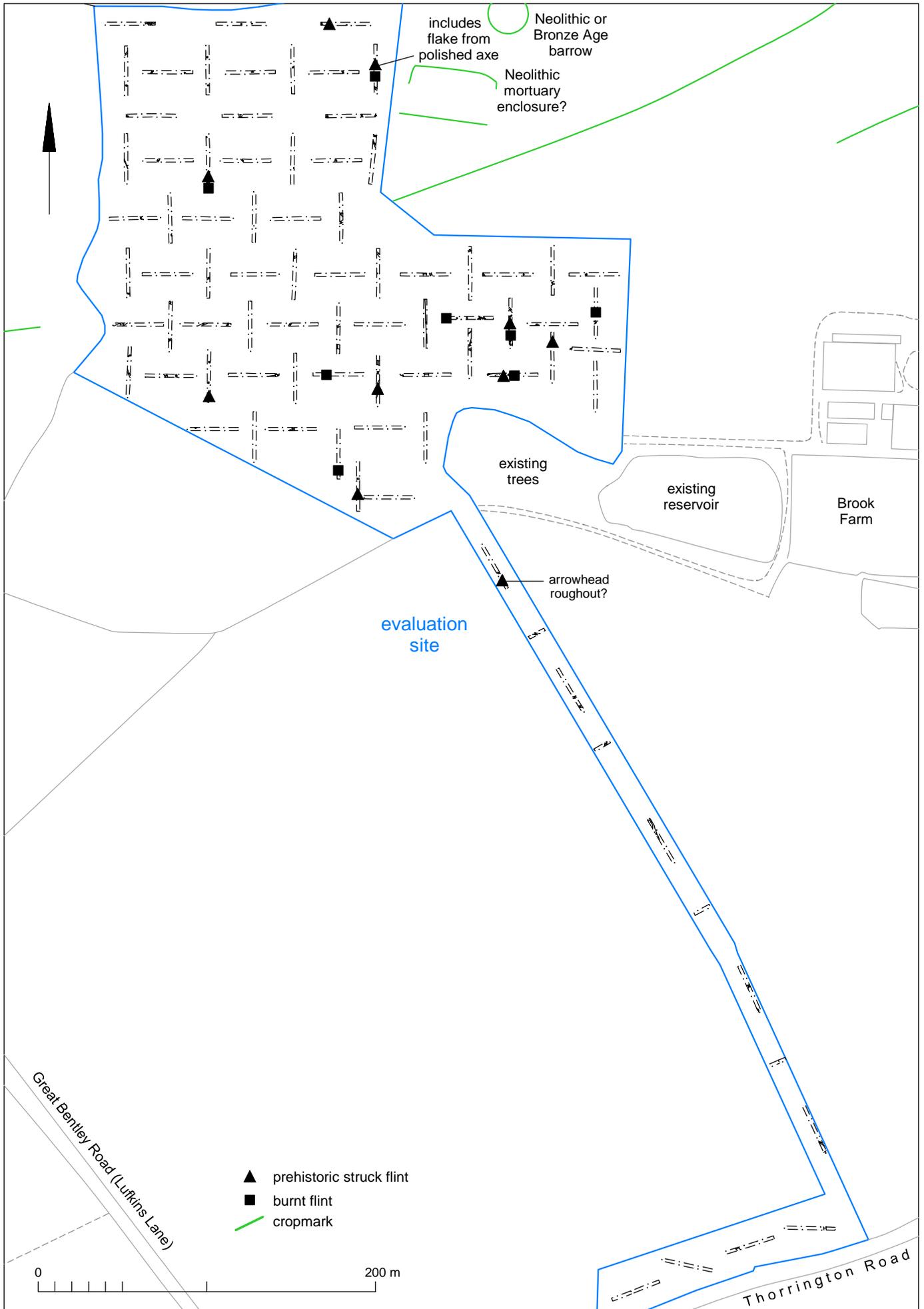


Fig 10 Distribution of prehistoric struck flints and burnt flints.

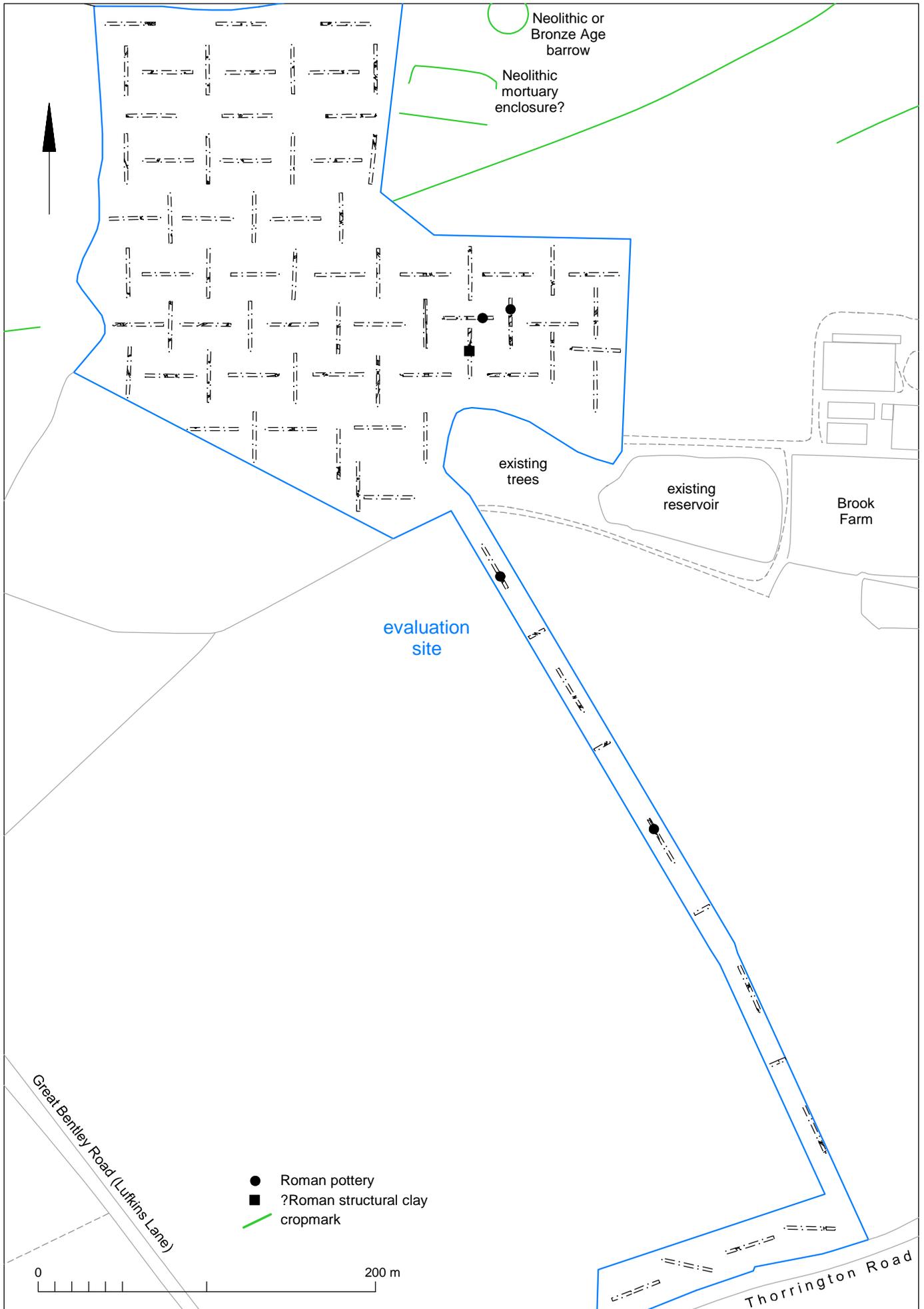


Fig 11 Distribution of Roman pottery and ?Roman structural clay.

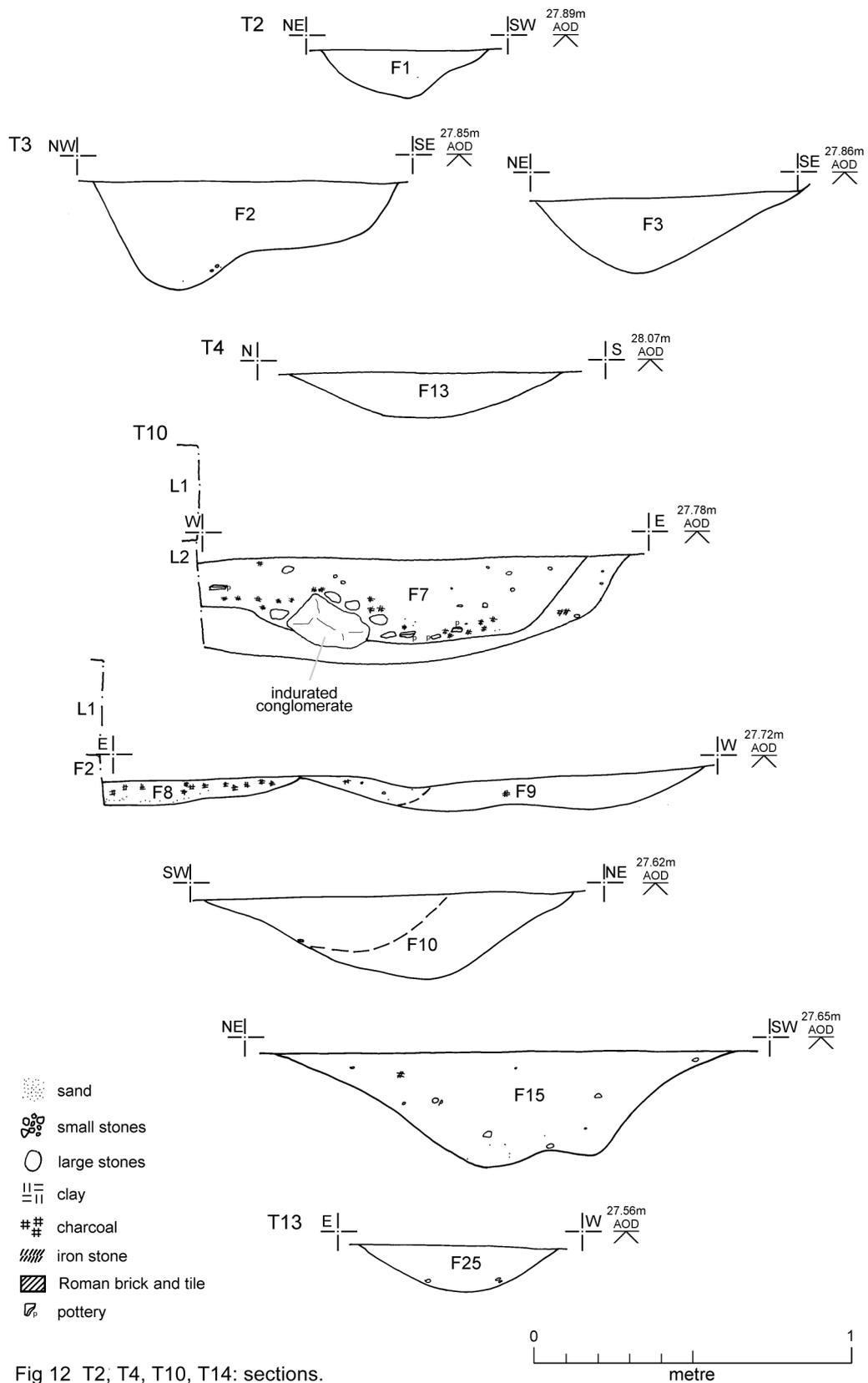


Fig 12 T2, T4, T10, T14: sections.

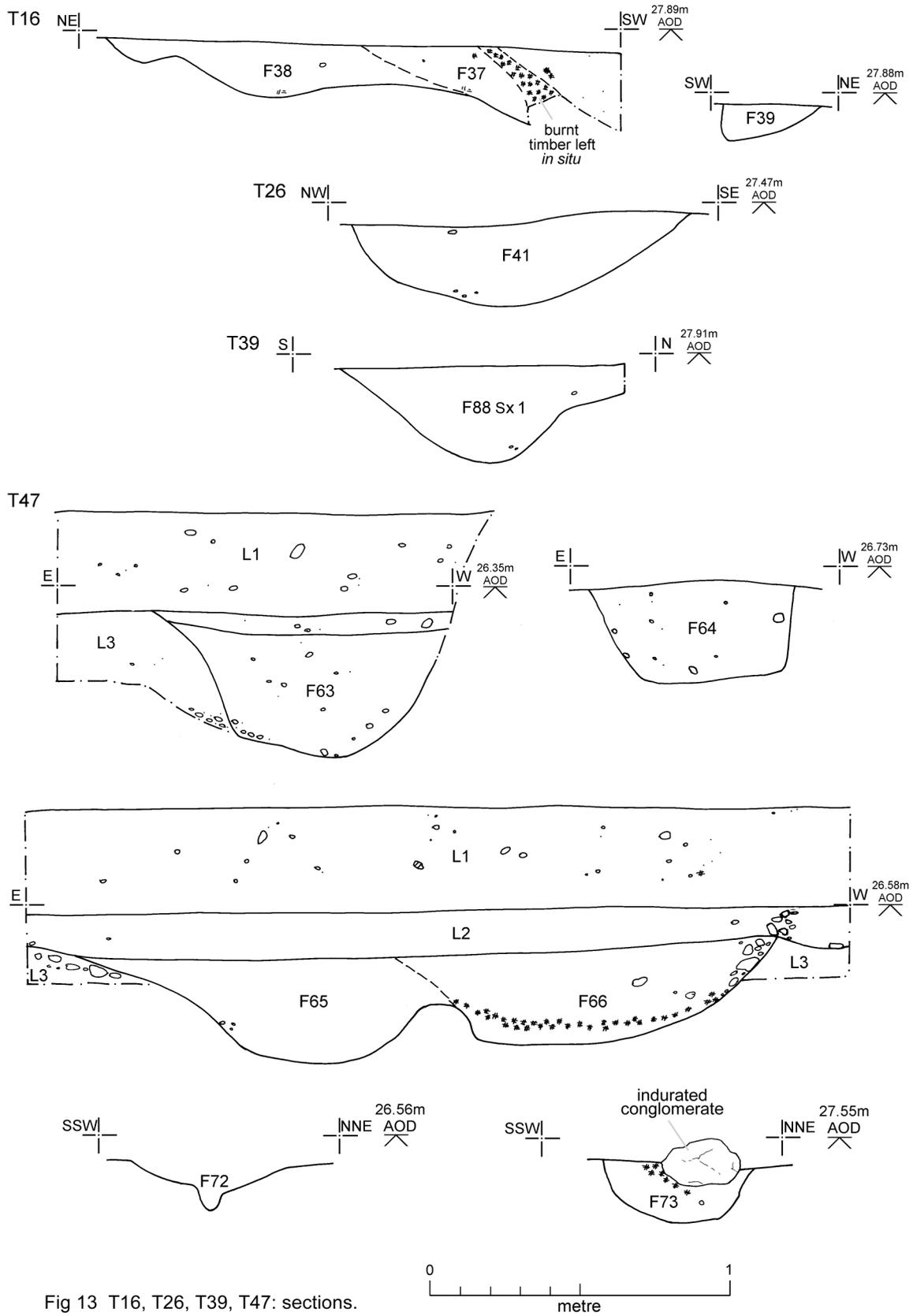


Fig 13 T16, T26, T39, T47: sections.

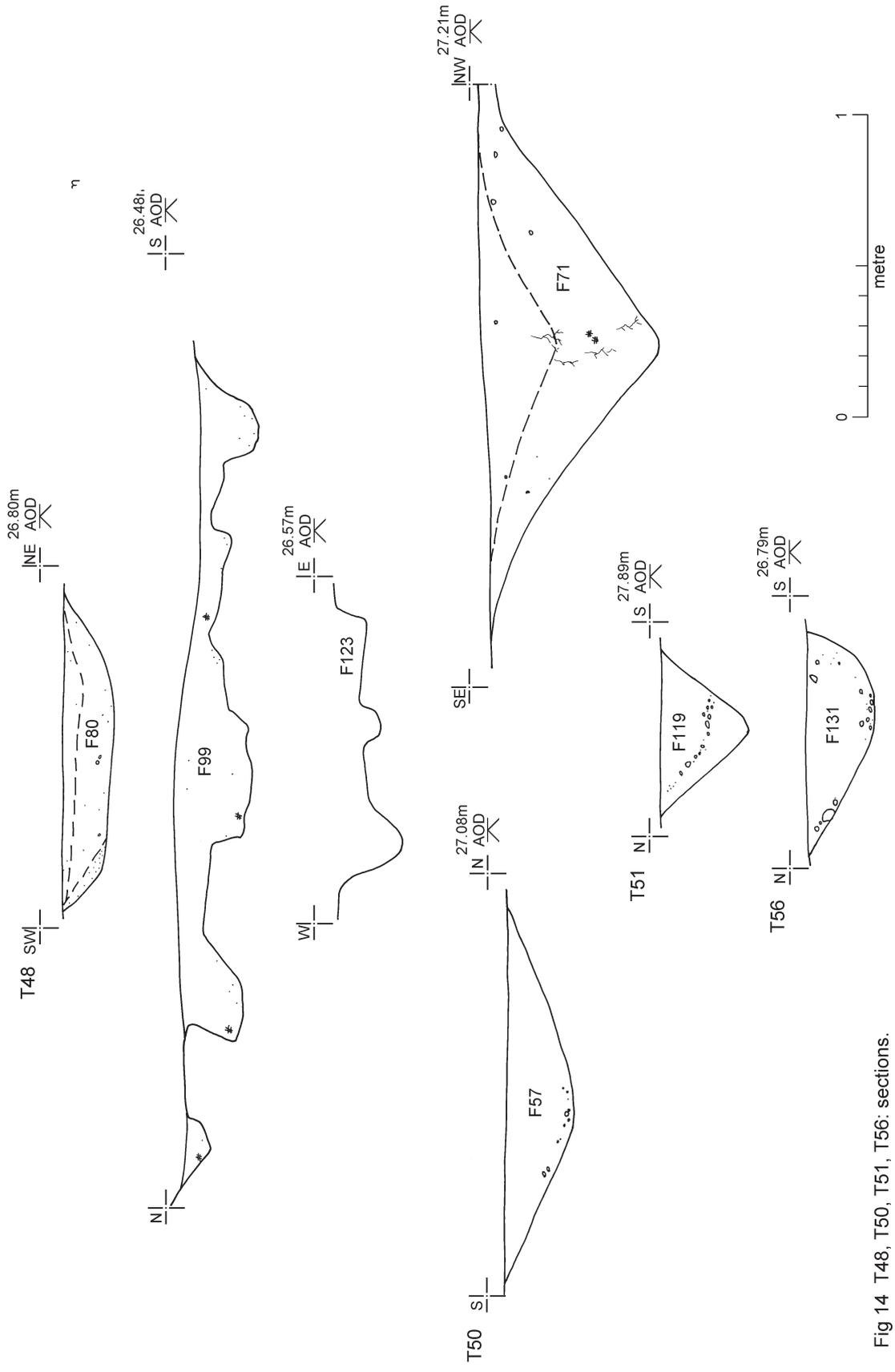


Fig 14 T48, T50, T51, T56: sections.

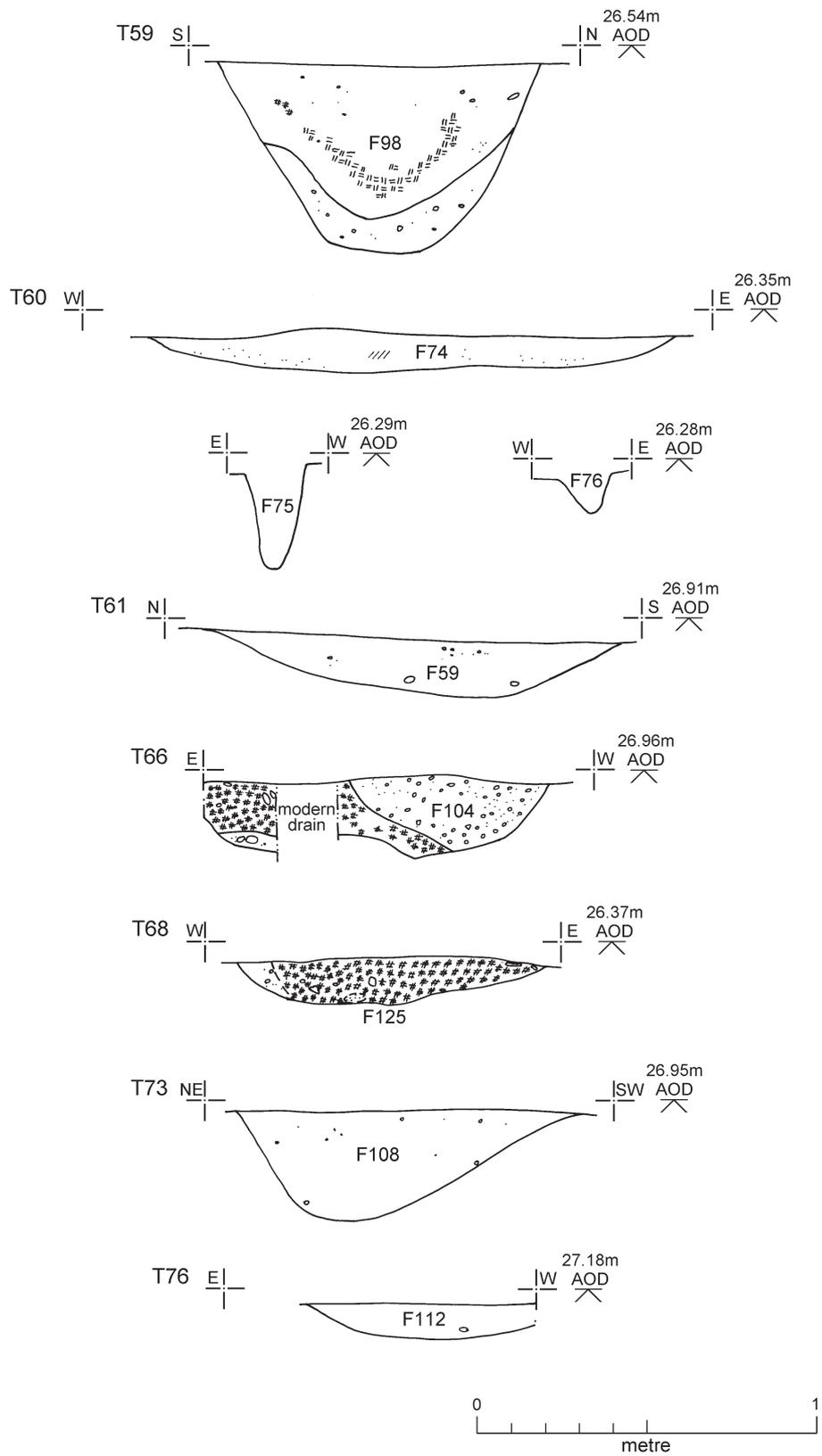


Fig 15 T59, T60, T61, T66, T68, T73, T76: sections.

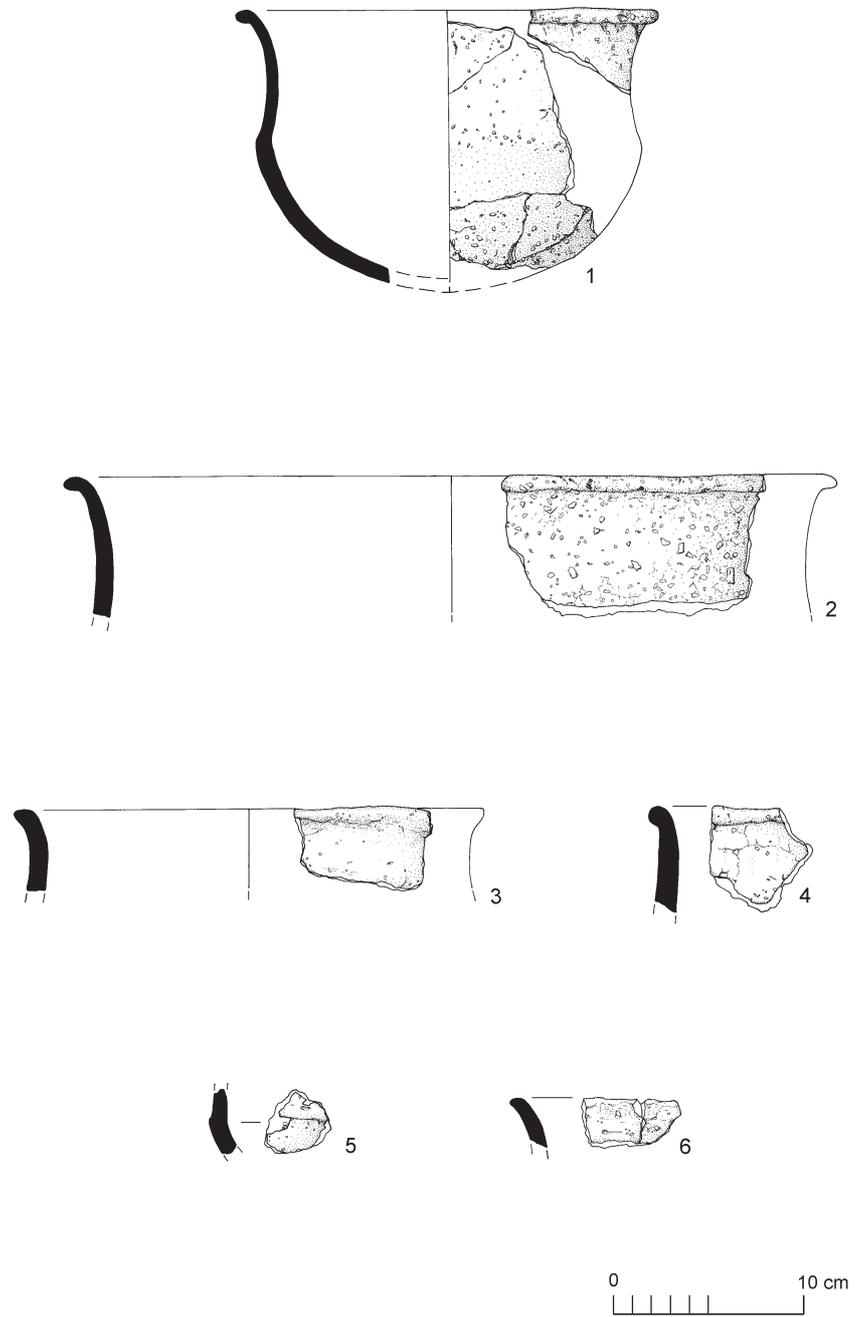


Fig 16 Prehistoric pottery.

**Essex Historic Environment Record/
Essex Archaeology and History**

Summary sheet

Site address: Lufkins Farm reservoir site, Great Bentley, Essex	
Parish: Great Bentley	District: Tendring
NGR: TM 0975 2215 (c)	HEM project code: FRLF 07 Museum accession code: COLEM 2007.118
Type of work: Trial-trenching evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: October-November 2007	Size of area investigated: 84 trenches in a site of 6.8 hectares (5% evaluation)
Location of curating museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museums	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? Not known	Related EHER nos: 2612, 17562
Final report: CAT Report 450 and summary in EAH	
Periods represented: Neolithic, Roman	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: <i>The Tendring peninsula's archaeological potential is defined by extensive areas of cropmarks, very few of which have been excavated.</i> <i>In advance of an application to construct an agricultural reservoir, a group of important cropmarks (including a ring-ditch and a potential Neolithic enclosure) was excluded from the application site in order to protect them.</i> <i>An evaluation by 84 trial-trenches revealed thinly-spread activity ranging from the Neolithic to the Roman period, discounting modern field boundaries. The most important archaeological feature was a Neolithic pit containing at least four early Neolithic bowls, associated with flints, burnt flints and conglomerate stones. This pit group may be associated with the potential Neolithic enclosure, which lies 25m to the east.</i> <i>Other prehistoric features and finds, principally Neolithic, occur sporadically across the evaluation site, but not at a density to suggest intensive or long-lived activity.</i> <i>A Roman field system separated the area occupied by the earlier monuments from Roman fields and paddocks, in one of which was a possible Roman agricultural structure.</i></p>	
Previous summaries/reports: None	
Author of summary: Howard Brooks and Ben Holloway	Date of summary: December 2007