

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS
AT
MADINGLEY HALL,
MADINGLEY,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE,
1992**

DRAFT

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Abstract

An archaeological excavation was conducted in the meadow to the southeast of Madingley Hall (NGR 39266043).

Substantive settlement evidence dating from Saxon times was discovered. Ditches, probably toft or field boundaries, containing significant quantities of Mid Saxon to Medieval pottery were excavated. Major changes in landuse were observed following the acquisition of this former village land and the construction of Madingley Hall and its grounds in the mid-sixteenth century. The development and subsequent destruction of the west arm of the village could be identified. Landscaping occurred again in the mid-eighteenth century when Capability Brown designed a new layout for the gardens to the north and east of the Hall, consequently preserving as earthworks the remains of the former houses and garden plots of the once thriving west street of Madingley village.

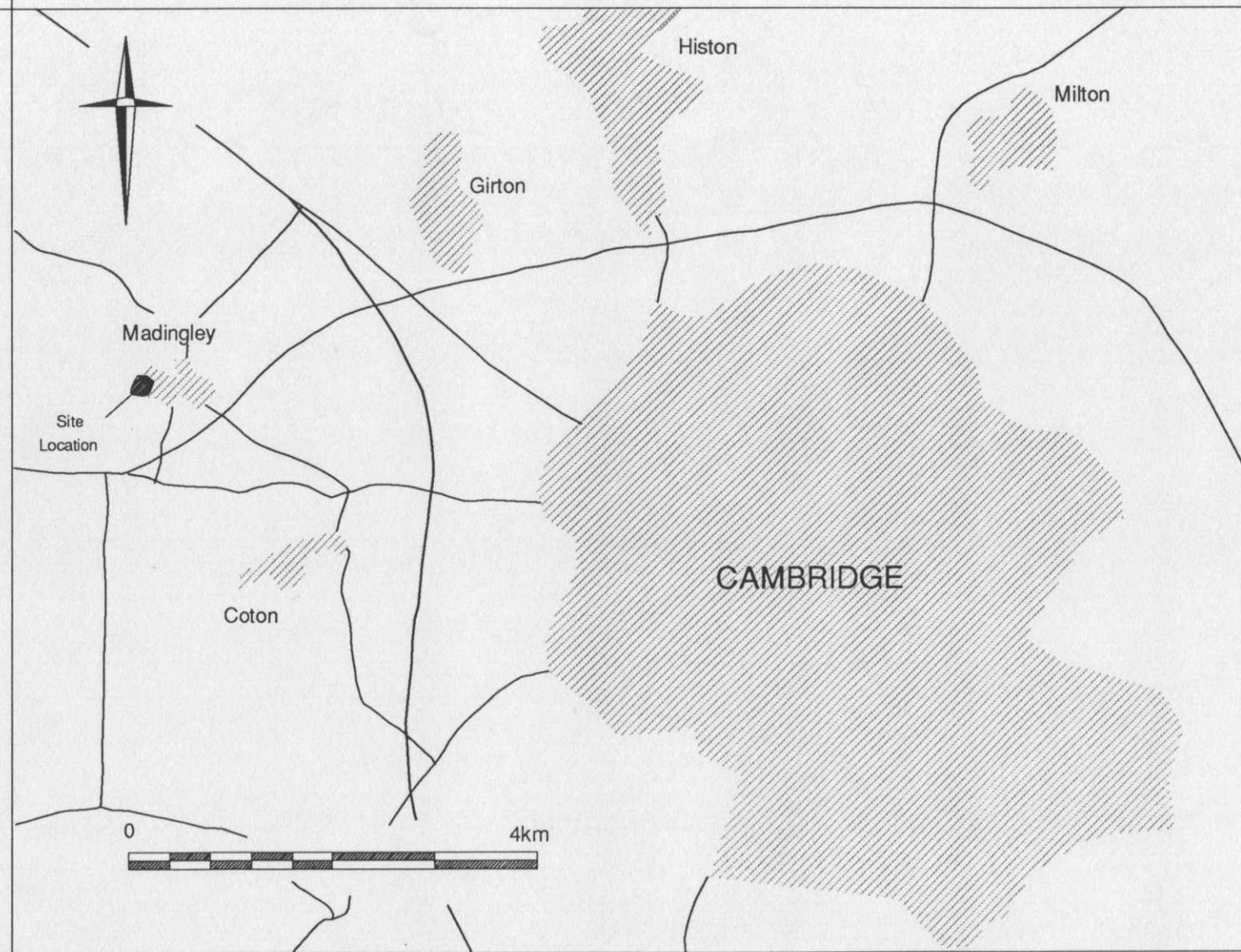
INTRODUCTION

In anticipation of the construction of a new access road, located to the immediate southeast of Madingley Hall, archaeological investigations were conducted in the summer of 1991 in order to assess the presence, nature and preservation of potential underlying archaeological remains (MDR-91; Gdaniec 1991). The results indicated significant remains relating not only to the medieval village landscape but also to earlier settlement, dating from the mid-Saxon period. In addition, the levelling layers and parkland plantings, contemporary with the early years of the Hall, provided information concerning the scale of the formal garden layout of the mid-sixteenth century and the subsequent landscaping of the mid-eighteenth century.

In the light of the investigation results further archaeological work was considered necessary if the road construction was to proceed. The near-total excavation of the road length was, therefore, undertaken in January and February of 1992 and was funded by The University of Cambridge Board of Extra-mural Studies (Madingley Hall).

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Figure 1 Location Map

The Historical Background

Site Location and Topography

Madingley Hall is located approximately three and a half miles to the northwest of Cambridge (Fig. 1) and is set within roughly three hundred acres of park and woodlands. The Hall grounds cover the former west end of the village once occupied by the houses and fields of the medieval village. Most of the village is on an irregular strip of chalk marl which lies between the boulder clay, on the high ground to the southwest, and the gault of the low ground to the northeast.

The site is situated on a small natural knoll at the west end of a meadow, formerly part of the Hall grounds, to the southeast of Madingley Hall (Fig. 2). The eastern wall of the walled garden bounded the site to the west and the ground sloped away to the east, c.5m from the edge of the excavation. The topographic features, extant within the meadow to the east of the excavation area, relate to the remains of numerous houses, outbuildings, garden plots and laneways which stood along the original west street of Madingley village (RCHM 1968: 187). Most noteworthy among the earthworks is the substantial hollow-way (the west street) which survives for a distance of 168m, is 15.5m wide and 1.5-2.0m deep. At the southernmost end of the hollow-way a cobbled surface survives. While the date of the surface is unknown, it may be presumed that its last use as a public thoroughfare was prior to the final closure of the street in the mid-eighteenth century.

Cultivation remains are evident around the village of Madingley as earthwork enclosures and medieval ridge and furrow agriculture (RCHM *op. cit.*, J. Ette *pers. comm.*). Enclosure occurred late in Madingley's history (1807) prior to which the open three field system was employed. The presence of chalk marl, boulder and gault clays resulted in heavy land which required drainage to allow better crop growth. In c. 1800 Sir Charles Cotton implemented land improvements in the form of hollow draining. A brick-built culvert, evident in the easement of a new sewer, may represent such improvements (Hunter 1991: 7).

Madingley Hall 1543-1992

A full history of Madingley Hall has been previously documented (RCHM 1968, Allen 1986, Munby 1988, Wright 1989) from which a basic outline has been drawn:

The construction of Madingley Hall began in 1543 by John Hynde, who had had connections with Madingley since 1526. He was given leave to close the west street of the village as early as 1546, initiating a decline in the livelihoods of its inhabitants. John Hynde's successor, Francis Hynde, was responsible for the completion of the Hall, which may then have

become the main family residence, instead of the hunting lodge it was before. During Sir John Hynde Cotton's (the fourth Baronet) ownership of the Hall, the west street was closed completely and some houses dismantled. He enlarged the park in 1743-4 incorporating the acquired land of former house plots. In 1756, desiring the fashionable 'natural' vistas of the time, Sir John commissioned Lancelot 'Capability' Brown to landscape the grounds to the north and east of the Hall. This resulted in the demolition of all houses which stood along the former west street and the levelling of the surrounding land for new parkland purposes.

Little happened to alter the landscape over the next hundred or so years. It was not until Col. Harding took possession of the Hall in 1906 that further change occurred. Following the massive restoration works to the Hall, he and Mrs. Harding commenced work on the gardens, dismantling the earthen bank in front of the north loggia and creating others from the excavation of a pond. They restored the north and south gardens to their original early eighteenth century formality and replanted avenues and groupings of trees to the north and east.

In 1947 Madingley Hall, its grounds and other properties were bought by the University of Cambridge and the Board of Extra-mural Studies moved its headquarters there in 1975. Recent work has seen the adornment and maintenance of the gracious surrounding gardens.

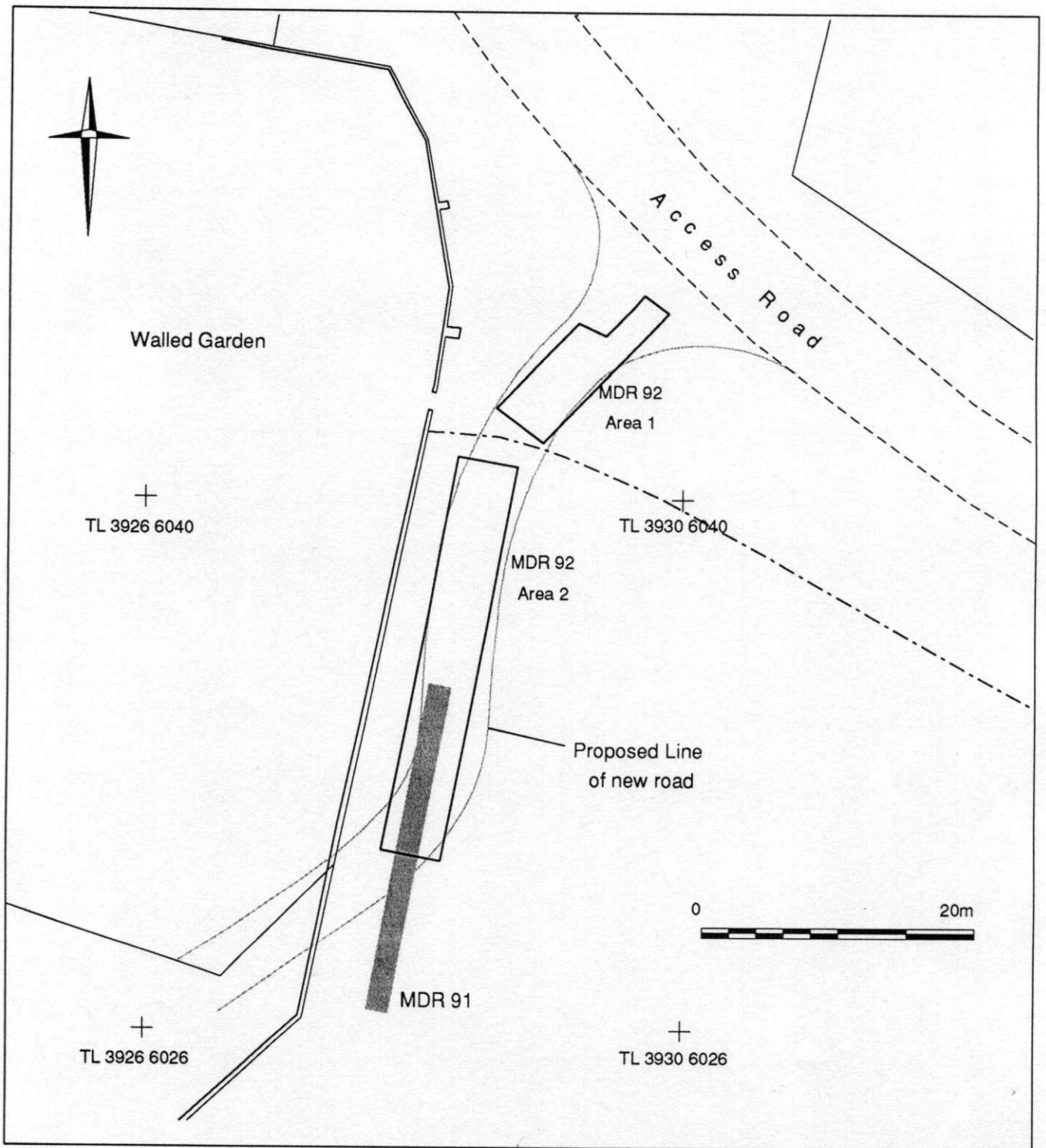


Figure 2 Location of Trenches

Methods of Investigation

The Trench Design

Two 4m wide areas were excavated, using a JCB with a toothless ditching bucket, on the line of the access road (Fig. 2). The road width was designed to be 4m wide and c.65m long (N-S). Area 1, 13.5m long, was located to the north of a fence separating the existing access road from the meadow (it had been requested that the fence be left undisturbed during the excavation). The southeastern corner of Area 1 was left unexcavated due to the presence of an electricity cable, and the northwestern limit was defined by the presence of substantial tree roots and further services. Area 2 was 29.5m long and located to the south of the fence-line. Approximately half of the former assessment trench (MDR-91) lay within the area.

Sampling

Certain ambiguities arose during the excavation of the assessment trench in 1991 which, it was hoped, could be answered in the fuller excavation of the road width. A sampling programme was devised to test the buried soil, evident at the southernmost end of the assessment trench. This would entail the hand digging of the buried soil during the machine stripping of the new area. Similarly, it was anticipated that the medieval garden soils would be substantially evident in the new areas. Upon recognition of these layers, hand dug metre² test pits laid out on a regular grid, would enable the systematic study of the artefact densities within these horizons. However, no such layers survived due to the thorough intermixing of the soils caused by the intensive reworking of the grounds in Post-Medieval times. The sampling programme was thus abandoned.

Both areas were machined to the top of the subsoil at which level the features were evident (Figs. 3 and 4). The fills of significant features were sampled (5 litres) for macrobotanical evidence (results forthcoming).

Recording

The Unit-modified version of the Museum of London recording system (Spence 1990) was employed. Discrete stratigraphic entities (*e.g.* a cut, a fill) were assigned individual *context* numbers and these are indicated in the text as [#]. The archaeological sequence has been described by stratigraphic *phases*. These are indicated by Roman numerals and their sub-division into text-sections by Arabic numbers (*e.g.* IV.3). The archive, which comprises context description sheets, plans, sections and photographs, is housed with the Cambridge Archaeological Unit.

A note concerning the phasing

The features have been organised into phases by chronological period. This was achieved by both stratigraphic relationship and pottery (or other diagnostic artefact) dating. By arranging the features by period, instead of by strictly stratigraphic succession, it was hoped that elements of landscape continuity or change would be emphasised.

The 1991 assessment results have not been reproduced here. Features in both the assessment trench and in the excavations (Fig. 4) retain the 1991 context numbers but are described according to the new evidence. In no case did the results substantially change. Considering the relatively narrow width of the excavation it is, of course, possible that the information gained may be either over-simplified or exaggerated in relation to the wider context of the uninvestigated settlement complex.

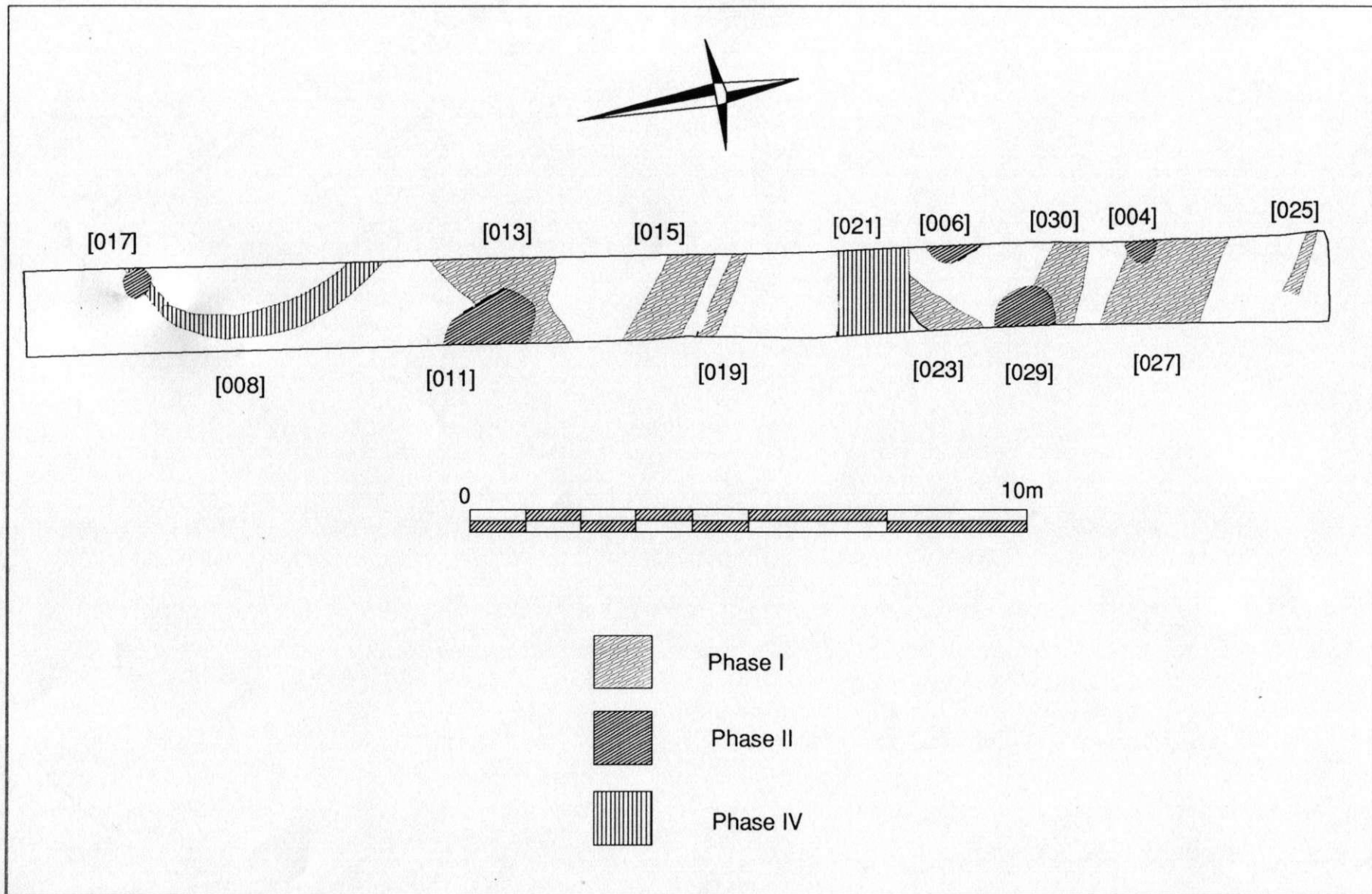


Fig 3 Phasing in 1991 Assessment Trench

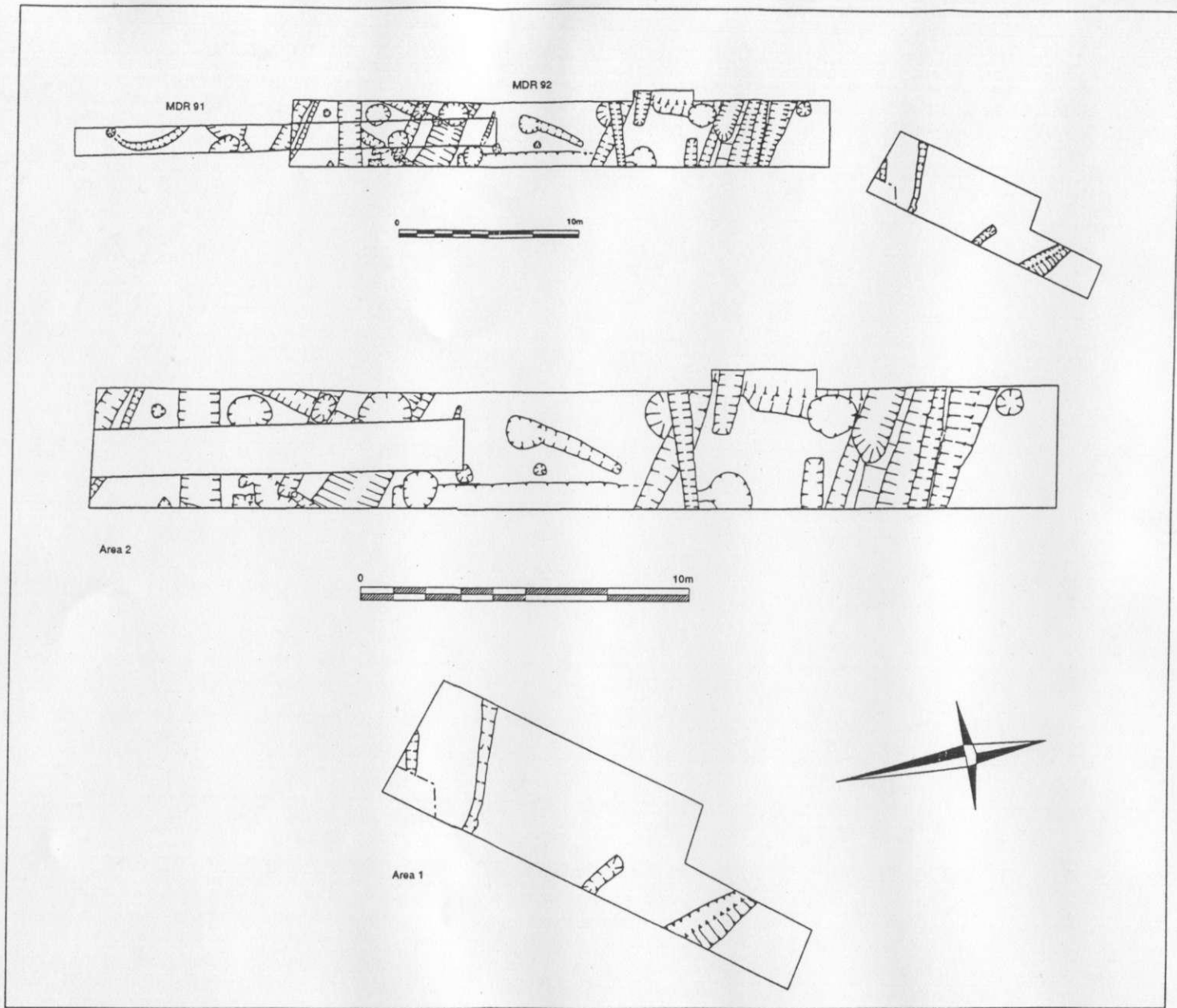


Figure 4 Trench Base Plan

THE INVESTIGATIONS

Phase I (Fig. 5)

I.1 026, 027, 040, 069

A NW-SE oriented ditch ([027]), recorded during the assessment, was further examined within the wider excavation trench. With a V-shaped profile it was 1.40 - 1.50m wide and sloped gently eastwards from 43.76 - 43.66m OD. It was filled with a green-stained pale brownish grey silty clay with occasional, fine sub-rounded chalk fragments and sub-angular flints ([026]). Sherds of Saxon pottery and bone fragments were recovered.

A second, early ditch was seen on a N-S alignment ([069]). It ran against the western edge of excavation and in order to establish its nature the trench was extended by 0.60m further west. This revealed the lower western edge of the ditch which sloped gradually to a roughly flat base c. 0.40m wide. The eastern edge had a shallow upper "shelf" (0.95m in 0.14m) which broke sharply to a steeper lower edge with concave sides. [069] was filled with an homogenous, compacted light-mid grey silty clay with thin lenses of green, slightly sandy clay ([040]). Included throughout were occasional medium flints, charcoal flecks, frequent flecks and rounded and sub-angular fine to medium chalk fragments which increased in density and size towards the base of the fill. Although the ditch was truncated to the north and south by later features [040] was discrete within the ditch edges and markedly different to the fills of later features. A slight westward curve occurred at the southern limit of [069] which may be suggestive of a butt end, although truncation at this junction prevented further definition. Finds recovered from the fill included fragments of a highly decorated bone comb, a silver pin and Saxon pottery sherds. One curved tile fragment is of more ambiguous date.

I.2 046, 085

A shallow ditch oriented NE-SW ([085]) had regular steep edges which met the flat base sharply. It was 0.40m wide and 10mm deep. It contained a soft mid grey slightly silty clay ([046]) with occasional fine rounded chalk fragments occurring towards the base. This ditch was seen to be perpendicular to a larger NW-SE ditch ([027]), but two later features disturbed the junction of [085] and [027] leaving their relationship unclear. A stratigraphical relationship, however, indicates that this ditch is earlier than a Phase II ditch. ([031]), see below).

Discussion

The earliest activity identified from the excavations dates from the mid-Saxon period (7th-9th century). The Phase I ditches may represent field boundaries. Despite the lack of a stratigraphic relationship between [027] and [085] due to later truncation, their perpendicular alignment suggests that they may represent a division of land separated by a drainage ditch ([085]). It is difficult to determine quite what [069] represents. While the nature of the finds recovered from its fill (bone comb fragments and the silver pin) raises its status above that of ordinary pit or ditch, that it is part of an established settlement cannot be doubted.

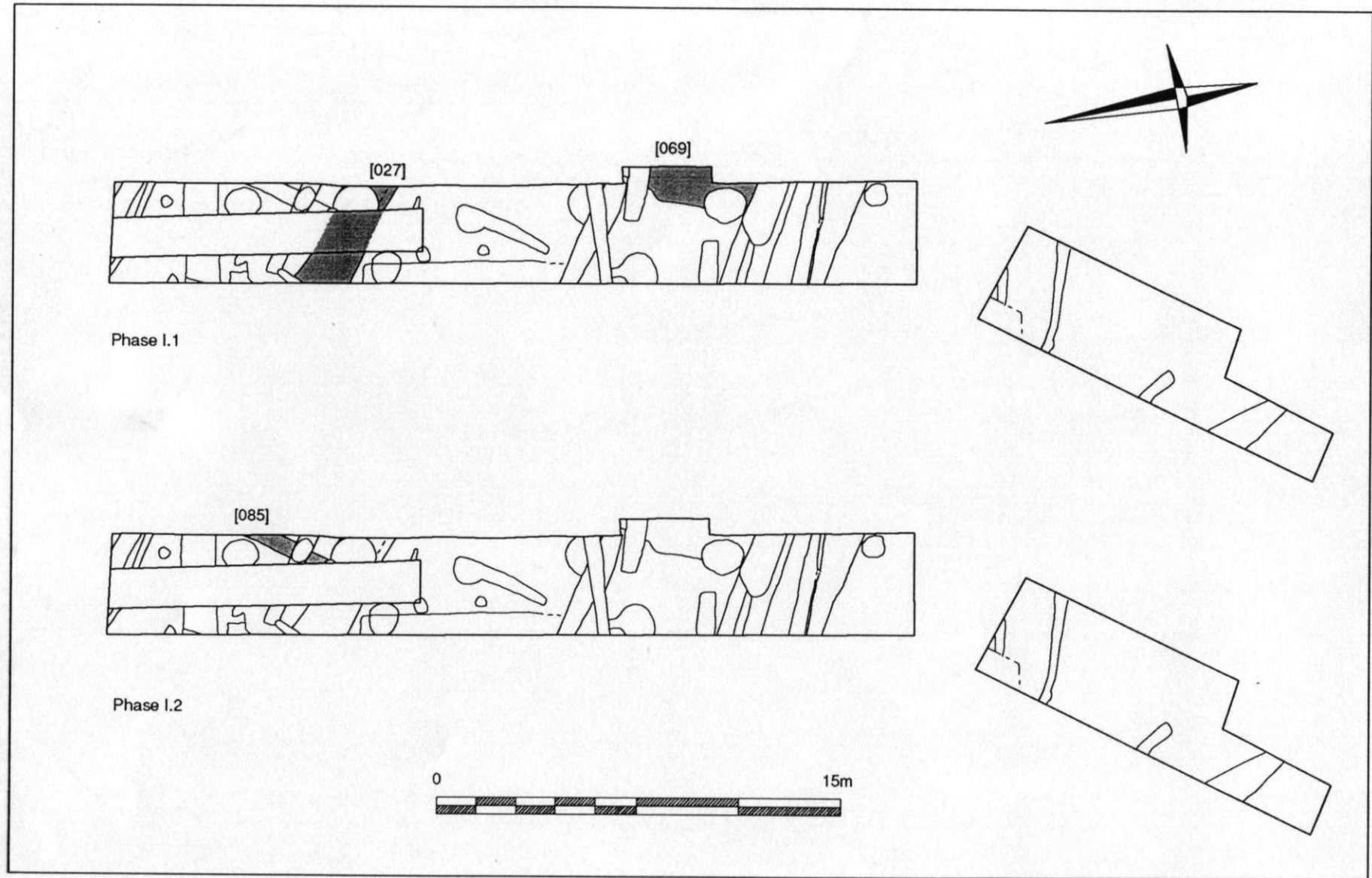


Figure 5 Phases I.1 and I.2

Phase II (Fig. 6)

II.1 018, 019, 030, 031, 038, 061, 062, 063

A NW-SE aligned U-shaped ditch ([019]) was 0.40m wide and 0.27m deep. It was filled with a compact, dark brownish grey silty clay ([018]) with occasional flecks of charcoal and fine chalk fragments. Sherds of late Saxon pottery were recovered from the fill.

Five metres to the north of [019] a parallel U-shaped ditch ([031]) was 0.54m wide and 0.37m deep, its base lying at 44.31m OD. It had steep sides which tapered to a roughly flat base. Its fill ([030]) consisted of a soft mid brownish grey silty clay with occasional fine to medium chalk fragments, sub-angular flints and contained Saxo-Norman pottery and bone fragments.

Further north a flat based U-shaped ditch ([061]), oriented NW-SE was 0.57m wide and only 0.17m deep. It had shallow, concave edges and its base lay at 43.39m OD. [061] extended 1.40m west of the eastern trench edge where it was seen to be truncated by the butt end of a later feature ([057], see below). It contained a firm, mid brownish grey silty clay ([038]) with occasional fine chalk and charcoal flecks. Saxo-Norman St. Neots Ware pottery and bone fragments were incorporated with the fill. This ditch was one of several ditches cut on a similar alignment, and formed part of a long lived boundary zone (see discussion below).

Two metres north of [061] was a wide, flat-based, U-shaped ditch ([063]), oriented NW-SE. It had a maximum depth of 0.75m and was at least 1.20m wide at the top, to where it was truncated on its southern edge by a later feature cut on the same alignment. Its base lay at 43.10m OD. The remaining northern edge was fairly steep (40 in 60mm) and slightly convex. [063] was filled with a soft light to mid brownish grey silty clay ([062]) with occasional to moderate, fine to medium sub-round chalk, sub-angular flint fragments, mussel shells and charcoal flecks. 11th century pottery and bone fragments were recovered from the fill.

II.2

014, 015, 049, 057

A NW-SE ditch ([015]) of a wide U-shaped profile, was 0.40m deep and 0.80m wide. It was filled with a mixed dark brownish grey silty clay ([014]) with pockets of redeposited natural and humic loam, resulting from root action. Fine to medium angular flints, moderate chalk flecks and a large fragment of a fossil ammonite were incorporated within [014]. Saxo-Norman pottery and residual sherds of Middle Saxon pottery (7th-8th century) were recovered.

A NW-SE aligned, broadly U-shaped ditch ([057]) butt-ended at 2.40m from the western trench edge. It had an average depth of 0.50m and its irregular rounded base sloped eastwards between 43.16 and 43.08m OD. Its northern edge had been truncated by a later feature ([036]). It contained a fairly loose dark greyish brown silty clay ([049]) which became more compact towards the base. Frequent fine to medium rounded chalk fragments occurred against the southern edge. The horned skull of a cow was excavated

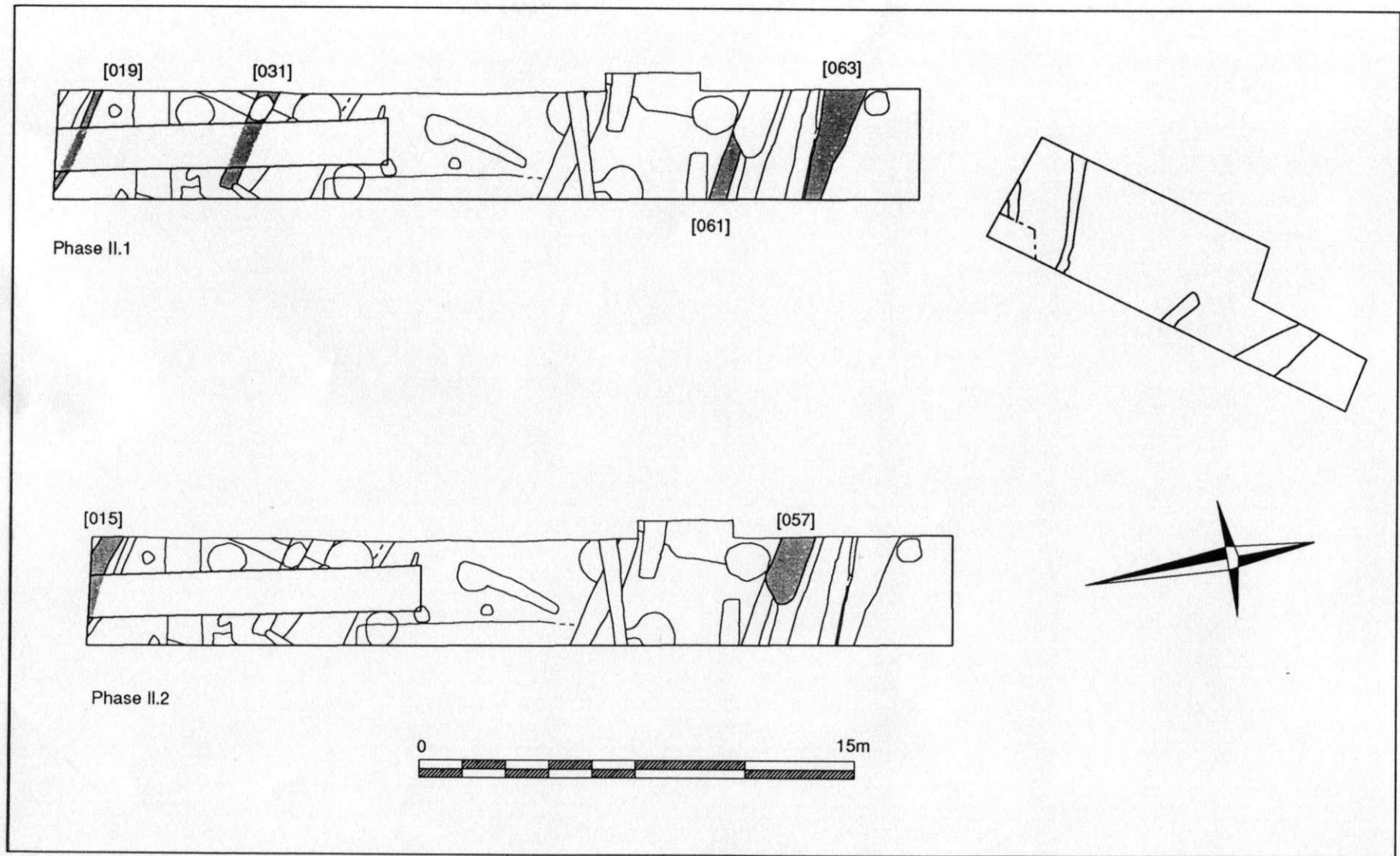


Figure 6 Phases II.1 and II.2

from the ditch butt and many disarticulated long bones, perhaps from the same animal, were recovered from the rest of the fill. Sherds of 10th-11th century St. Neots Ware dated the ditch, although residual middle Saxon sherds, probably derived from the truncation of a Saxon feature ([069]).

Discussion

The Phase II ditches indicate the continuity of landuse into the Saxo-Norman period (9th-11th centuries). All the ditches shared the same alignment and pottery types. Of note are the II.1 ditches ([061] and [063]) which define an early phase of what becomes a long-lived boundary zone (Fig. 6). It may be that a field (or area of land), closely associated with nearby settlement, is demarcated here and this is later redefined by the butting II.2 ditch, [057]. It is possible that the boundary was established in the earlier, Saxon, period but was entirely truncated by later Saxo-Norman features. The depth and alignment of [063] mirrors that of [027] (Phase I.1) and it is conceivable that they form the parallel north and south ditches of an enclosure. It would follow that [069] (Phase I.1), being on a perpendicular alignment, could link up the two ditches. However, the profile and relative depth of the latter indicated that this could not be so. Whether [063] acted as a main drain to [069] remains open to question. The smaller II.1 ditches, to the south of the 'boundary zone', may well represent smaller plot divisions within a larger field or landownership system.

Phase III (Fig. 7)

III.1 039, 066, 047, 052, 064, 065

Oriented E-W was a butt-ending shallow ditch ([066]). It was 70mm deep and 0.50m wide. It had regular fairly steep edges which sharply met a flat base lying at 43.64m OD. The ditch contained a firm mid greyish brown silty clay ([039]) with occasional chalk flecks and fine angular flints. The top of the fill was very mixed due to extensive root disturbance. Residual Saxon sherds as well as 14th century pottery and a fragment of slag were recovered.

A 0.47m wide ditch ([052]), aligned ESE-WNW, had a maximum depth of *c.* 0.20m and sloped eastwards from 43.51 - 43.40m OD. Its steep southern edge met the rounded base gradually, while the concave northern edge was shallower. It was filled with a charcoal-rich dark brownish grey silty clay ([047]) with moderate complete and fragmentary bones and occasional chalk flecks and fine pebbles. A rim fragment of a 13th-14th century jug was associated with residual sherds of Saxo-Norman pottery.

Little of the upper profile of a NW-SE ditch ([065]) survived. It was 0.50m deep, with a steep north edge (0.20 in 0.50m) which met the 0.20m wide flat base sharply. It contained a fill of mid brownish grey silty clay ([064]) with occasional flecks and fine fragments of rounded chalk, sub-angular flint, charcoal and fossil shell. Mixed, residual pottery sherds were recovered (Roman to Saxon). However, it was stratigraphically later than [063], which it truncated to the north, and earlier than [050] which later recut [065].

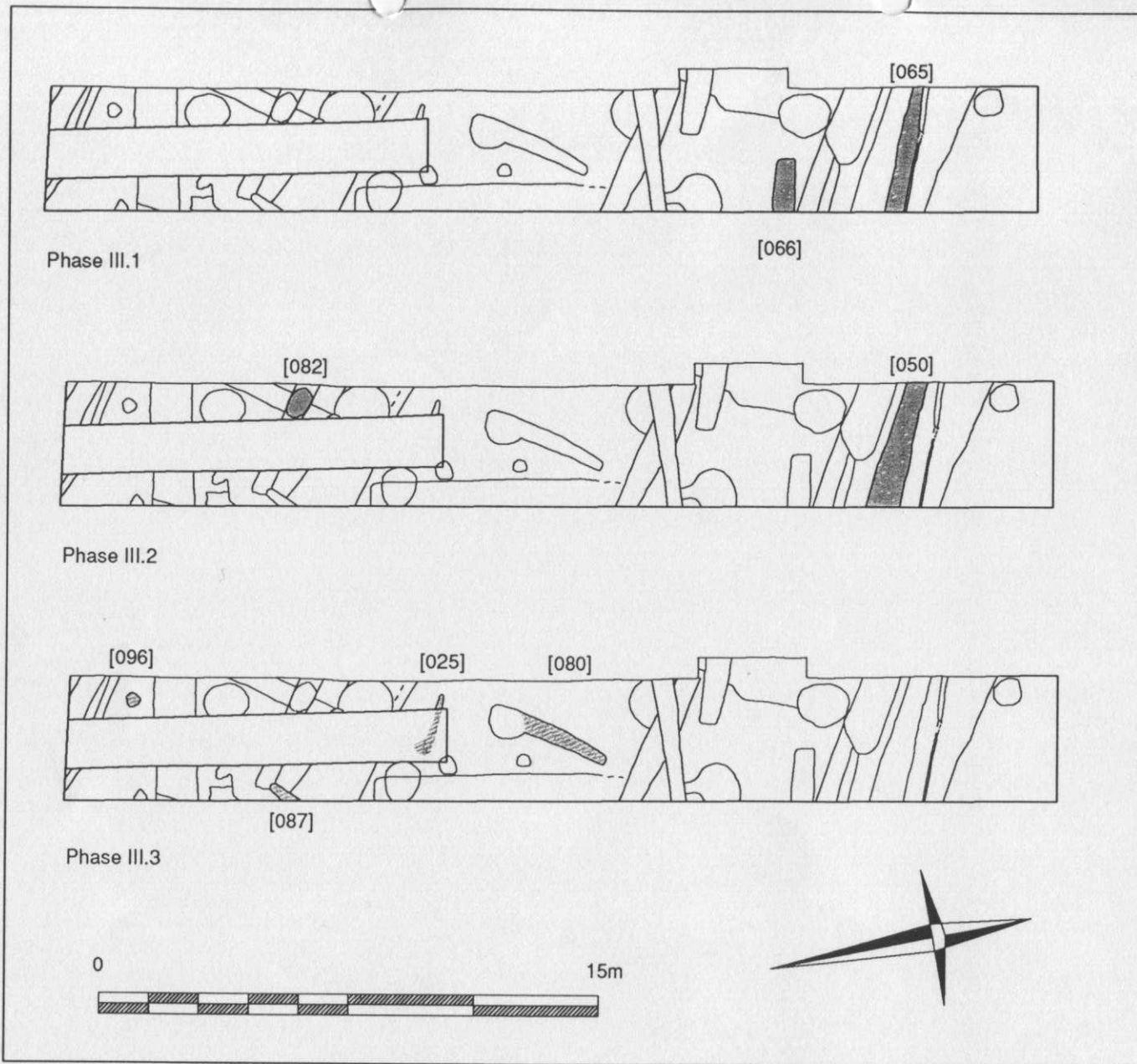


Figure 7 Phases III.1, III.2 and III.3

III.2 036, 050, 081, 082

A flat-based ditch ([050]) oriented NW-SE, had an upper width of 1.60m and evenly sloping edges narrowing to a base width of 0.73m. The base of the ditch lay between c. 43.16 and 43.08m OD, sloping down towards the east. It was filled with a dark brownish grey silty clay ([036]) with occasional charcoal flecks, medium-large angular flints (35-60mm) large rounded sandstone pebbles (60mm +) and moderate freshwater mussel shells. Numerous 13th-14th century sherds, residual earlier sherds and bones were incorporated within the fill. The residual Saxon and Saxo-Norman sherds probably derived from earlier ditch fills cut by [050] ([063] and [067]).

An ovoid pit ([082]), 1.0m long, 0.55m wide and 0.30m deep had a mixed, loose dark greyish brown clay loam fill ([081]) with pockets of redeposited natural clay and occasional fine rounded chalk fragments and moderate charcoal fragments. 13th century pottery dated the fill.

III.3 024, 025, 045, 080, 086, 087, 095, 096

A 0.25m wide gully ([025]), oriented NW-SE was seen to butt approximately 0.5m west of the previously excavated assessment trench. It contained a dark brownish grey silty clay ([024]) with occasional flecks and fine fragments of chalk and occasional to moderate charcoal fragments. No finds were recovered.

A short gully ([080]), aligned roughly NNE-SSW, was 0.53m wide and excavated to a maximum depth of 0.20m. A rounded butt end defined the northern extent of the feature and it was truncated by a large tree pit to the south. It had concave edges which met the base gradually towards the north end, becoming much steeper with a sharp junction with the base (at 44.0m OD) towards the south part of the feature. The gully was filled with a mid-dark grey silty clay ([045]) with occasional-moderate fine rounded and sub-angular fragments of chalk, flint and charcoal. No finds were recovered from the ditch but it was later truncated by a Phase IV pit ([074], see below).

A small gully ([087]), aligned NE-SW, was 0.38m wide, 0.20m deep and was excavated for a length of 1.10m southwest of the eastern trench edge where it formed a butt end. It cut the northern edge of the butt end of a NW-SE aligned earlier ditch ([031]) and had fairly steep, regular edges which gradually met a flat base (sloping eastwards from 44.24m - 44.16m OD). It was filled with a loose mid-dark grey clay ([086]) incorporating a thin lens of fragmentary charcoal, and occasional fine sub-rounded fragments of chalk and flint. [086] was generally distinct within [087] except where it merged with the fill of [031]. No finds were retrieved from the fill.

A circular posthole ([096]), 0.4m in diameter and surviving to a depth of 0.5m, had vertical sides and a flat base. It was filled with a light greyish brown soft silty clay ([095]) with occasional chalk flecks. No dating evidence was recovered from the fill, but bone fragments were included.

Discussion

During the 13th and 14th century new ditches were dug to re-establish the boundary previously described by the Phase II ditches. It is clear from their close situation and alignment that a single boundary ditch was all that would be apparent at any one time and that re-cutting/cleaning would be necessitated once it infilled. Fence lines may have been positioned alongside the boundary, possibly represented by [052]. As before, the density of bone and pottery sherds suggests that

settlement is close by and by this time had been established for a period of at least 300 years. Furthermore, the quantity of redeposited Saxo-Norman pottery has greater implications regarding the scale of the earlier settlement.

Phase IV (Figs. 8 and 9)

IV.1 067

Just below the topsoil was an irregular layer ([067]), 0.10m - 0.30m thick, of a dark greyish brown silty clay. It contained moderate flecks and fine fragments of chalk, sub-angular flint, charcoal, coal, brick/tile and included glass, bone and Post-Medieval pottery fragments. It may represent 'manured' (or prepared) garden soil, well aerated and therefore more workable than the otherwise heavy indigenous clay loam. It was seen to fill the remnant depressions left by naturally infilled features, thereby creating a more level 'landscaped' surface.

IV.2 003-006, 037, 068, 043, 060, 048, 058, 055, 056, 059, 092, 071-074, 077, 078, 088-091, 098-100

Partly cutting into the top of an infilled Saxon ditch was a sub-circular pit ([004]). It had a diameter of c.1.50m and was 0.20m deep with near vertical edges and a flat base. It contained a dark grey silty loam ([003]) with occasional charcoal flecks and fine rounded chalk fragments. 15th-16th century pottery dated the fill although residual Saxon and 12th century sherds were also present.

A large circular pit of diameter 1.35m and depth 0.40m ([006]) was filled with a fairly compact dark greyish brown silty clay ([005]) with occasional to moderate charcoal flecks and pockets of redeposited natural clay. When excavated during the assessment sherds of 14th century pottery were recovered from the fill and these are likely to have derived from earlier activity in the vicinity.

A circular pit ([068]), 1.55m in diameter, had near vertical edges and a generally flat base lying at 43.40m OD. It contained a mixed fill ([037]) consisting of a fairly compact mid-dark grey silty clay which, towards the top of the pit, mixed with a lighter greyish brown silty clay. Frequent flecks and fine fragments of rounded and sub-angular chalk occurred moderately throughout with fine gravels, charcoal and flecks of brick and tile occurring more occasionally. The 'gritty' nature of the fill suggests that it was a prepared soil, presumably in order to provide aeration within an otherwise heavy clay soil. [068] cut through the fill of an earlier ditch ([040]) part of which had become incorporated within the backfill of [037], giving rise to the generally mixed appearance of the pit fill.

An irregular pit of length 1.70m N-S, 1.00m E-W ([060]) had uneven, generally concave edges leading to a flat base. It contained a fill of moderately loose mid grey clayey silt ([043]) with moderate inclusions of fine rounded chalk fragments, rounded flint peagriffs and occasional fragments and lenses of charcoal. Decayed humic remains of old tree roots also occurred.

A ditch ([058]), aligned NW-SE, butt-ended 1.35m eastwards of the western trench edge. Within the trench section its fill was seen to lie between 44.26 and 43.61m OD and it had a maximum base width of 0.85m. Its edges were fairly steep (0.40 in 0.53m) and met the flat base sharply. The ditch was filled with a mixed light-mid grey silty clay ([048]) with light yellowish brown mottling and occasional flecks and fine fragments of rounded chalk and sub-angular flint. A 13th century rim sherd was recovered from [048], however

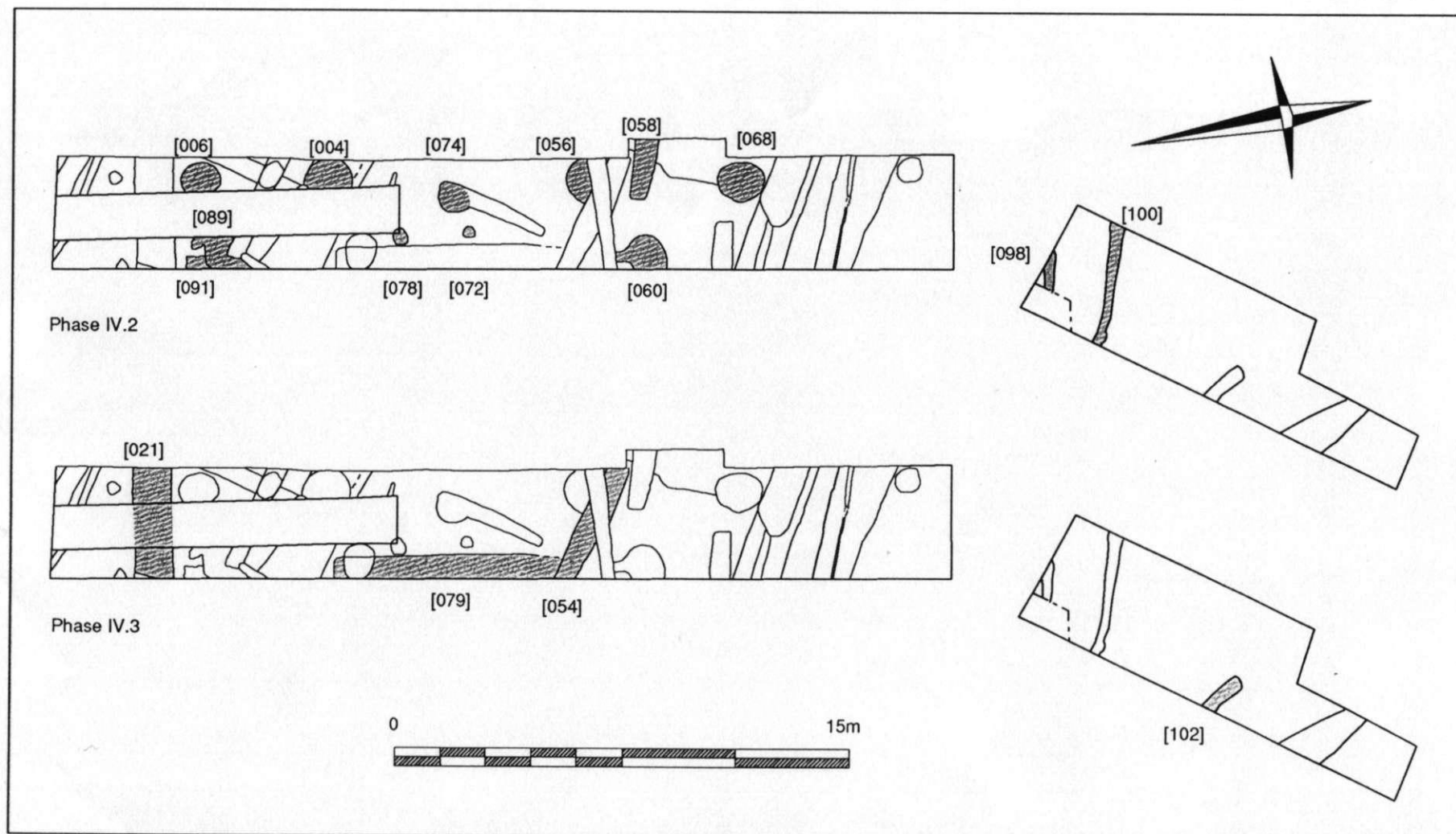


Figure 8 Phases IV.2 and IV.3

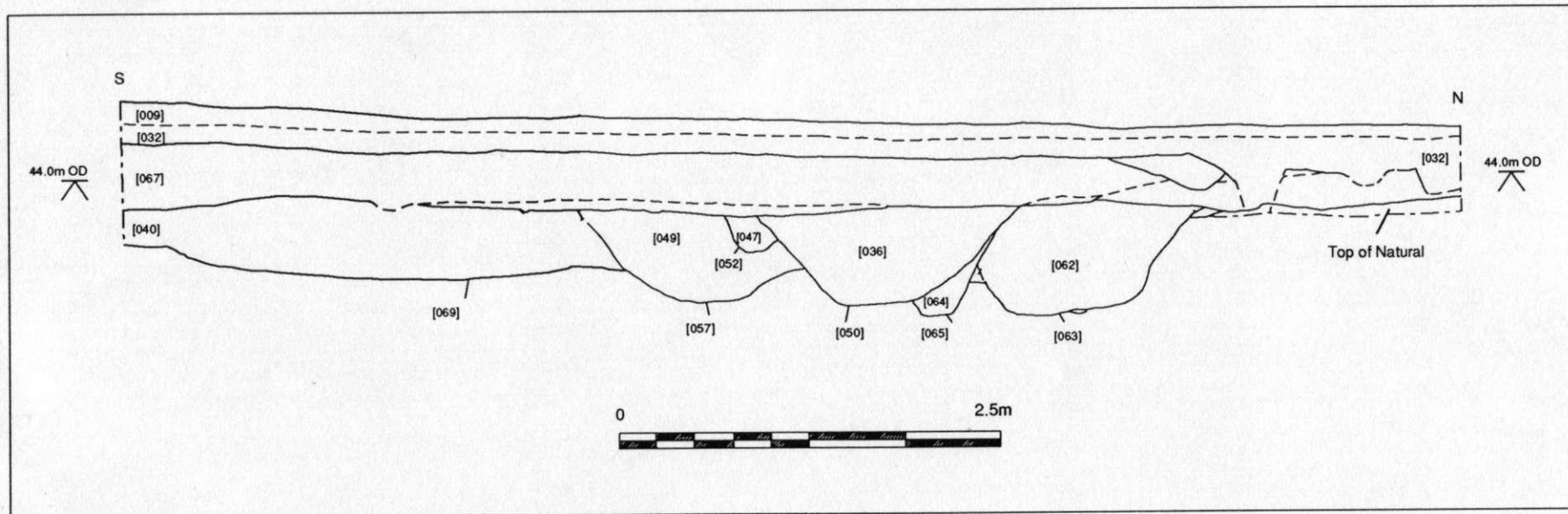


Figure 9 Area 2: Simplified East Facing Section Showing Boundary Ditch Sequence.

Phase IV.1 - [067]

Phase IV.4 - [032]

the ditch itself is later (probably 16th century) as it was seen to cut through the 'levelling layer' [067].

Below the base of a NW-SE ditch ([054]) was the truncated remains of an ovoid pit ([056]). Its northern edge had been cut away by a land drain trench and its southern edge was seen to merge with [054]. Its fill ([055]) was indistinguishable from the fill of [053], but it was seen to be distinct within the cut of [055]. Because of the near total truncation of this feature it is unclear whether it represents root disturbance (a tree pit ([092]) is adjacent to the SW) or the remains of an earlier pit.

Only the southern edge remained of a sub-circular feature ([092]), the northern edge having been truncated by a later feature ([042]). The irregular edge was fairly steep (0.25 in 0.50m) and gradually met an irregular flat base (at 43.97m OD). At this point a lens of natural clay was seen to be heavily disturbed by root action, extending the possible depth of the feature by a further 0.20m and forming a base sloping down to the north. It was filled with a dark-grey silty clay ([059]) with occasional to moderate flecks of brick, coal, charcoal and chalk. It may represent the cut for a large tree bowl and may be part of the same feature as [056].

Two small, circular pits ([072] and [078]) of diameters c. 0.33m were 0.10m deep and filled with a dark greyish brown silty clay loam ([071] and [077]). Occasional fine fragments of rounded chalk and flint, brick/tile, clay tobacco pipe and coal were inclusions within the fills, aerating the soil probably in advance of tree planting.

A sub-circular pit ([074]), c. 1.0m in diameter, had near vertical edges and a flat base resting at 43.87m OD. It was filled with a fairly loose mid-dark brown silty clay loam ([073]) with occasional fine fragments of coal, brick/tile and sub-rounded chalk and flint. Its northern edge truncated an earlier ditch ([080]).

A disturbed area of dirty clay natural mixed with a light grey silty clay ([088]) was contained in what appeared to be an irregular 'cut' ([089]). Flecks of charcoal and an abraded sherd of 14th century pottery were apparent within [088], but this context may relate to a disturbed area of extensive root action, eroding surrounding features and merging within their fills ([031] and [087]).

To the south of this disturbance was a further ambiguously defined area ([091]) also filled with a mixed dirty natural and light grey silty clay ([090]) which may, in fact, be further evidence of root disturbance.

A slightly curving, generally E-W oriented gully ([098]) was c. 0.25m wide and 0.18m deep. It had slightly concave edges leading to a sub-rounded base. A fine grained, soft mid brownish grey silty clay ([097]), with occasional flecks of chalk and charcoal, filled the gully. It contained a single sherd of middle Saxon pottery (7th - 8th century) in association with fragments of bone.

The edges of a roughly E-W oriented ditch were seen in full profile within the trench section edge. The ditch ([100]) was 0.70m wide at the top tapering to a 0.40m wide base, resting at 43.10m OD. Both edges were slightly concave, although steeper on the north side than the south. The base was sub-rounded. At 1.30m east of the western trench edge was a break of slope within the base, raising it by c. 30mm. It had been assumed that a butt end may have occurred at this point, but the fill ([099]) remained consistent throughout. It was a mid brownish grey silty clay incorporating a distinct 10mm thick lens of fragmentary charcoal which tipped down northwards into the ditch. Below this lens the fill was stained with a light olive green mottling. A residual flint microlith was found among other finds of glass, bone and burnt stone.

IV.3 020, 021, 044, 079, 053, 054, 083, 084, 093, 094, 101, 102

An E-W ditch ([021]) had near vertical sides and a flat base lying at 44.80m OD. It was 1.30m wide and 0.30m deep. [021] contained a soft dark brownish grey silty clay ([020]) with occasional flecks and fine fragments of chalk, charcoal and coal. 16th century pottery were recovered together with residual sherds of 13th century pottery.

A shallow (0.2m deep) vertical sided linear feature ([079]) was oriented N-S. Only its western edge was evident within the trench as it was truncated to the south and north by later features. It had an irregular, although basically flat, base (lying at c. 44.0m OD) punctured by extensive root action. It contained very dark brown loose clayish loam ([044]) with occasional fine to medium fragments of rounded chalk and flint, coal and charcoal. Finds include brick/tile fragments, glass, bone and pottery sherds.

A vertical-edged circular pit ([084]) had an undulating flattish base lying at 44.22m OD. It was filled with a fairly compact dark grey silty clay loam ([083]) with moderate fine fragments of coal, charcoal and sub-rounded chalk.

A circular pit ([094]), 0.40m in diameter, was 0.15m deep with irregular edges and base. It was filled with a friable, dark brown clay loam ([093]) incorporating occasional medium angular flints and stone and brick/tile fragments. Its irregular profile suggested root-action, which suggests its use as a tree pit.

A short length of ditch was excavated for 1.50m west of the eastern trench edge where it terminated in a squared butt end ([102]). It was 0.46m wide at the top (machined surface) tapering down sharply to a 0.25m wide flat base. The base generally rested at 42.17m OD, although it was seen to rise sharply towards the trench edge as if to terminate further east. The ditch was filled with a generally loose mid grey silty clay loam ([101]) with pockets of lighter yellowish brown dirty clay. Occasional flecks and fine fragments of sub-angular gravel, chalk, charcoal and occasional larger fragments of greenish sandstone were incorporated within the fill. Pottery, bone and a badly corroded copper alloy coin were recovered from [101]. The nature of this feature remains uncertain unless it may be described as a gardening trench.

A NW-SE aligned ditch ([054]) survived for a c. 0.20m maximum depth, its upper edges having been mostly truncated by a later feature ([042]). It was filled with a soft light-mid grey silty clay ([053]) which merged with the natural clays towards its base. Occasional flecks and fine fragments of charcoal, chalk and flint occurred throughout the fill.

IV.4 032

As seen during the assessment, an undulating layer (0.15 - 0.40m thick) of mid-dark brownish grey silty clay loam extended across the entire trench, effectively sealing all previously described contexts. It was seen to dip down into the remnant depressions of infilled ditches and occasionally merged with the later features (this phase). It contained lenses of fine rounded gravels which were also moderately included throughout. Also present were fragments of coal, charcoal, brick/tile and fine to medium rounded chalk fragments.

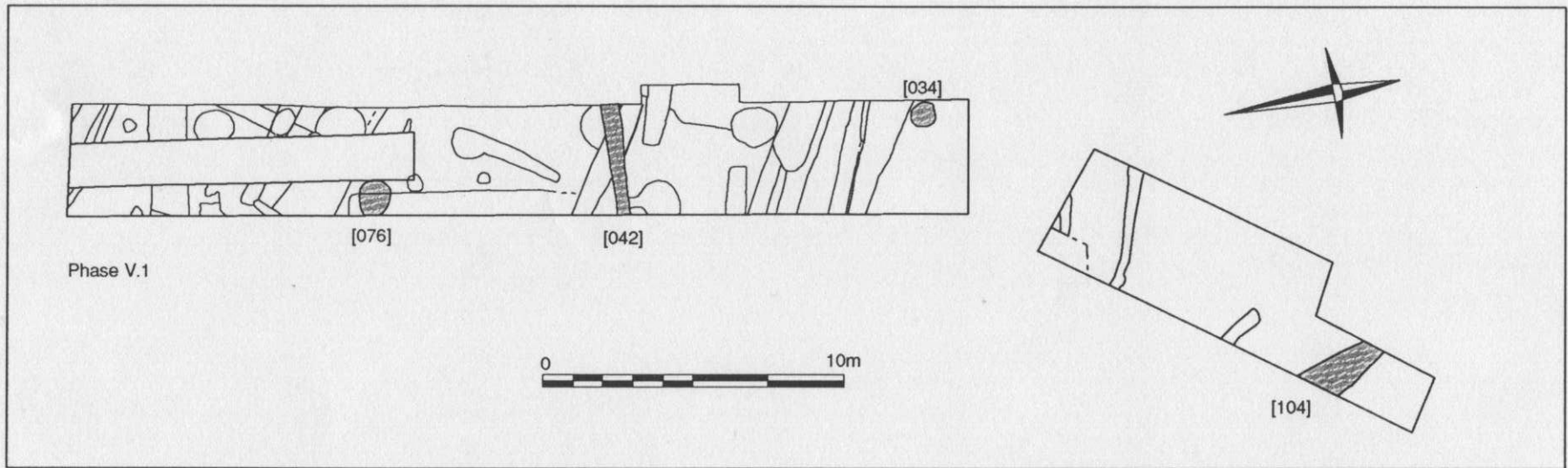


Figure 10 Phase V.1

Discussion

A dramatic change of landuse is evident within this phase (i.e. post 15th century). A layer of garden soil ([067]), aided by thick lenses of redeposited natural clay, both infilled the remnant depressions left in the top of earlier ditches and made up the ground surface towards the north end of Area 2 (Fig. 9). On this newly levelled surface trees were planted in formal rows (evident on the Kip engraving). Small gullies and wide, flat-based ditches are conspicuous by their total disregard for previous village-related alignment. The new orientation of the IV.3 ditches is now at variance with the former local systems and, therefore, is further suggestive of function change. The trees were later uprooted and a further layer of garden soil ([032]) was spread over the entire knoll. It is assumed that this event took place in the mid 18th century following the landscaping instruction for the grounds and vistas (see Discussion below).

Phase V (Fig. 10)

V.1 034 041, 042, 075, 076, 103, 104

A circular pit ([034]), 0.80m in diameter, was filled with a fairly compact mid-dark greyish brown silty clay loam with occasional fine to medium coal, charcoal fragments, moderate fine chalk and brick flecks and Post-Medieval pottery. The pit had a flat base, lying at 43.70m OD, and slightly concave edges.

An E-W aligned V-shaped trench ([042]) was cut from below the topsoil for the installation of a land drain. The trench was 1.35m wide at the top tapering down to a 0.20m base. It was backfilled with a soft mid-dark brown grey silty clay ([041]) with pockets of redeposited natural. Throughout the fill occurred occasional medium flint fragments, fine charcoal fragments, moderate fine rounded fragments of chalk and medium brick fragments. Redeposited Medieval pottery, bone and glass fragments were recovered from [041].

Cut through the end of an earlier ditch a large (c.1.1m) circular pit ([076]) had gently sloping sides which gradually met a flat base lying at 44.12m OD. Its fill was a loose dark brownish grey clay loam ([075]) with occasional fine fragments of sub-rounded chalk, flint and charcoal.

A Post-Medieval land drainage trench ([104]) was c. 0.25m wide and 0.53m deep. It was later decommissioned and the drain removed. The later 'robbing' trench was 1.25 - 1.50m wide at the top, tapering to the original narrow installation trench with irregular sides. It contained a mixed backfill ([103]) of loose light-mid grey silty clay with distinct pockets of light greyish white clayey crushed chalk. Below this upper backfill was a mixed loose dark greyish black clayey loam. Moderate fine to medium fragments of sub-rounded chalk, sub-angular flint and gravel, brick and charcoal occurred throughout.

Discussion

Two recent land drainage trenches and two tree planting pits (19th/20th century) were seen to cut through the final Phase IV levelling layer ([032]). The land drains presumably indicate the need for drainage of the walled garden following its restoration at the turn of the century and again in more recent times.

DISCUSSION

Summary

The access road excavations yielded substantial evidence of settlement related features dating from the mid-seventh century and continuing through to the mid-sixteenth century. The decline of the west arm of the village was apparent from the reclamation of land, formerly owned by properties which stood along the west street, and its subsequent conversion into the park landscape of the mid-eighteenth century following the commissioning of Capability Brown to landscape the Hall grounds. Nineteenth/twentieth century land drainage trenches and ground work features were also observed.

The Saxon to Saxo-Norman Period

Evidence of a single field, or enclosure, may exist in the form of the Phase I.1 ditches. Two wide ditches were laid out in a perpendicular arrangement and may have formed the boundary of a small field or garden plot. The quantity of animal bone and datable pottery recovered from the ditch fills suggests nearby habitation and is, therefore, indicative of settlement at Madingley from an early date. Only two ditches of the putative field system survive (the south and west) and these are heavily truncated by later, notably Medieval, features. It is possible that a third, northern ditch may have once been located within the area later to become a long-lived boundary ditch (one of the ditches within the sequence yielded Saxon to Saxo-Norman sherds). By the eleventh century one of six ditches had been dug on a northwest-southeast alignment, establishing the location of the boundary almost certainly after the ditches of the earlier field system had infilled. Despite none of the obvious house-features being present, such as hearths, rubbish pits or beam slots, the probability of these existing outside the excavated area is high. A ditch, or two intercutting pits ([013], Fig. 3), provided further evidence of Saxon settlement-related features in the previous year's investigations.

The finds retrieved from the Saxon ditches date from the seventh-ninth centuries and notable among them are the decorated bone comb fragments. The decoration parallels that on a comb from North Elmham, Norfolk, found in a Period II pit (Saxo-Norman, late ninth and tenth centuries. Wade-Martins 1980: 485-487). The overall late eighth-ninth century date produced by the finds has wider implications regarding contemporary settlement patterns. Prior to the late Saxon period, settlement probably consisted of loosely structured groups or even dispersed farmsteads that were subsequently arranged into larger settlements (Dodgshon 1980). Hall states that pottery evidence has shown

that the dispersed middle Saxon settlement units probably restructured to form a village pattern before the ninth century (Hall 1983), consequently leaving many of the isolated Saxon dwellings abandoned in the process. He also sees this date as likely for the establishment of sub-divided field systems based on strips, paving the way for the widespread and familiar land patterns of the Medieval period (see below). The undulating 'buried soil' layer evident at the southern end of the assessment trench may well represent a worked garden/croft soil. Through this layer the Saxon and Saxo-Norman features were cut. A small portion of what may be the same layer occurred to the north of the major boundary. If it once existed in the zone between, no trace of it remained due to thorough truncation.

The adopted agricultural regime of the small or dispersed Saxon settlements required self-supporting techniques, with each dwelling independently farming its surrounding land. Small fields and paddocks were associated with the houses together with intensively worked garden plots. Some crofts were never cultivated but used for middens and rubbish pits, later being turned into paddocks as at Wharram Percy (Hurst 1979). Paddocks were often enclosed by ditches which kept domestic animals from straying, and were sometimes further enclosed by hedges, which barred predators where geese and hens were penned.

The settlement type, whether small hamlet or isolated farmstead, is elusive in the narrow excavation width at Madingley. Nevertheless, the ditches and the high quantity of Saxon sherds and animal bone refuse clearly substantiate settlement in the close vicinity. The NW-SE ditch alignment, established during the Saxon period, proves to be influential in the layout of the later village foreshadowing subsequent development. A number of Saxo-Norman settlement locations have been recently discovered in Cambridgeshire. A large croft or toft boundary ditch, excavated at Caxton, produced 11th and 12th century pottery and was associated with properties which stood along a nearby hollow-way (Meredith 1991, Hunter 1991). Similarly, ditches yielding Saxo-Norman pottery were evidently associated with occupation at Duxford and Swavesey (Evans 1990 and 1991). In both cases Medieval settlements and/or field systems later developed around the earlier villages. Thus, while no dwellings have been investigated the field/garden systems associated with them have attested their presence. It is of note that local investigations largely exclude the findings of Saxon settlement. This may, on the one hand, be explained by the lack of archaeological investigation within relevant areas or that isolated farmsteads provided the main settlement type at that time in Cambridgeshire.

The Medieval Period

Aerial photographs of Madingley show well preserved ridge and furrow cultivation of the medieval strip fields in the present day pasture surrounding the Hall grounds. Bordering the hollow-way, to the

northwest of the church, are the surviving earthworks of the houses and tofts of the west street of the medieval village. An earthwork survey has plotted all such remains and indicate the village centre at the cross roads by the church with houses and crofts extending towards the arable lands (RCHM 1968). A more recent survey, however, shows possible evidence of further laneways (Taylor *pers. comm.*). Indeed mention of a *Wood Way, Cambridge Way, Barnard's Ditch Way* and other nameless lanes are made in a glebe terrier of 1615. Although the terrier post-dates the west street of the village it illustrates some of the numerous lanes that served Madingley.

The excavation results indicate small ditches relating to the possible crofts of houses which stood along the west side of the hollow-way and may have served as small drainage gullies. More importantly were the ditches which formed part of the boundary sequence (Phase III). It is possible that this long-lived and major boundary demarcated the limit of a toft or a laneway which was located further to the west of the main roadside dwellings along the west street. The ditches, aligned northwest-southeast, were the recuts of former ditches or new ones dug slightly to one side of a redundant, earlier ditch. Such constant re-digging indicates both the necessity of maintaining the boundary and the continuity of landuse. The pottery evidence shows the ditches spanning a period of five hundred years, from the earliest Saxo-Norman ditch in the eleventh century to the medieval ditches of the fifteenth century. These dates reflect the flourishing village life of the west street properties up until its closure in 1546 following acquisition of these west lands for the new Hall.

Transformation in landuse and settlement patterns, involving the creation of villages and the emergence of the open field system, occurred during the early Medieval period in lowland England. The problems of the origins of the village and open field systems have become intertwined as a result of the dialogue between historical geographers, archaeologists and documentary historians (Astill 1988a). The medieval village has been shown to refer to a particular settlement form which only developed in certain parts of England (Dodgshon 1980, Hall 1983, Dyer 1988). More usual were the isolated farmsteads and small hamlets, already common from the Saxon period, which farmed by means of an infield-outfield system. Land close to the settlement (the infield) was intensively cultivated while the wider expanses beyond (the outfield) were mostly used for pasture, brought only occasionally into cultivation for extra arable supply.

Exactly why the village developed has been the focus of regional debate. The increase in population would affect the resources of small communities and initiate the conscious reorganisation of the settlement. Hamlets expanded and many isolated farmsteads were abandoned or grouped to form nucleated villages, which in turn allowed a communal form of agriculture. The organisation into villages is reflected in the archaeological record where an absence of pre-twelfth century material from excavations of some deserted medieval villages indicate their

emergence as a sudden phenomenon, rather than as the development of an earlier settlement (Astill 1988b). It may be the case that earlier settlements were situated close by and that a shift in location occurred to re-group the already extant isolated dwellings.

A village could provide a communal form of agriculture within an open field system which smaller settlement forms simply could not sustain. The open fields lay beyond the village and were ploughed in strips of ridge and furrow which were bundled together into furlongs and into larger sectors called fields. The village and its open fields were, however, only common in certain parts of England, the Midlands and East Anglia in particular; the infield-outfield system prevailing in upland areas. The village itself was defined by the tofts (farms and their yards) and crofts associated with the houses which stood along the village streets and lanes. Aerial Photographs of the deserted medieval village of Goltho in Lincolnshire show how the thirty seven peasant crofts bordering the sunken street (hollow-way) define the village layout (Beresford 1987). The croft was a long strip of land at the head of which the house stood, and reached as far as the open fields. A back lane often divided the croft from the fields and was often bordered on one side by a ditch (and sometimes a bank) to restrain wandering domestic animals. The back lane, therefore, defined the rear extent of the village. It is unclear whether the major boundary at Madingley represents such a back lane. That it defines the limit of village/house activities, occurring southwards of the boundary, from other activities to the north is evident in the mass of features in Area 2 compared with a conspicuous paucity in Area 1. The Kip engraving of 1705 indicates a number of houses standing alongside the Medieval west street, (the hollow way, c. 100m east of the excavation area). By this date it is known that many houses of the Medieval village had been demolished in order to provide an open landscape to the east of the Hall. On the basis of the density of Medieval archaeological features it is, therefore, assumed that many more houses than Kip showed would have extended westwards along the hollow way, thereby closing the distance between the land parcels bounded by the Phase II and III ditches and the houses bordering the hollow way.

The Hall Period

The construction of Madingley Hall in the mid-fifteenth century initiated an abrupt change within the village landscape. The west street was closed off in 1546 and some of the roadside dwellings were demolished in order to provide parkland for the east grounds of the Hall.

This reclamation of land is apparent in the mixed layers of clay and topsoil of Phase IV.1, used to infill and level the ditches and pits of the village lands. Trees were planted in this newly acquired area (Phase IV.2 and 3), which may have served to screen off the village from the Hall's view. Such landscape alterations would have served as a display of the

new incumbent's wealth and status and to have securely established him within the ruling order of the community.

The mid-eighteenth century saw further landscape change of the, by now, Hall grounds. In 1756 Capability Brown was commissioned to rearrange the gardens to the north and east of the Hall. The contemporary fashion among the landed gentry was to replace existing symmetrical, formal gardens with open landscapes that were to create the impression of living in a rural idyll. The resulting landscape designs fashioned by Brown, Vanburgh, Bridgeman and Kent not only satisfied the contemporary tastes but, in some cases, left the ruined villages and farmland of earlier settlements preserved beneath the park grasslands as a testament to the scale of landscape change of the eighteenth century. This was, indeed, the case at Madingley where the previously described earthworks of the west street are presently visible in the meadow. Instead of the existing formal gardens which consisted of lawns, 'square pieces of water' and orderly plantings of trees, Brown was to create a more natural landscape. Within the draft agreement drawn up between Sir John Hynde Cotton and Capability Brown are the four articles describing the changes that were to take place (Stroud 1975: 79-80, Hunter 1991: 2-3). Among the changes listed is the clearing of certain trees and the planting of others in a carefully laid out, more natural arrangement; the total closure of the west street and demolition of all roadside dwellings. Only one building, Rectory Farm, escaped the demolition order. Other 'improvements' were the hiding of the road beyond the new serpentine lake and the creation of a curving coach road to the Hall. The sweeping curves and wooded landscape that resulted from the commission were to allow the arcadian feeling of living in harmony with nature, with all blemishes of the modern world being eradicated.

The Phase IV.4 levelling layer evident in both the excavation and assessment trench illustrates well the extent to which these alterations were carried out. The trees to the southeast of the Hall, evident on Kip's engraving of 1705, were uprooted and the resulting root pits infilled.

Drastic as the removal of peasant houses and the creation of splendid vistas for the benefit of a single family may seem, it was not uncommon practice within the garden landscape requirements of the eighteenth century. For example, Viscount Milton dismantled the village of Milton Abbas, Dorset, between 1770 and 1790 in order to create a landscaped park (Taylor 1983: 63). What resulted from the newly manicured landscape was the near perfect preservation of the medieval village system of Milton Abbas beneath the embankments and grassland covering the village ruins. Evident as earthworks are fourteen rectangular closes, bounded by low banks, containing the gardens of a group of houses which stood along the back street of the village. Similarly, the earthworks of house platforms, tofts, crofts and laneways are still clearly visible, preserved within the grounds to the southeast of Madingley Hall.

While the social history of landscape gardening lends aspects of the hierarchy of wealth, power and prestige of individual landowners for study, the physical remains incorporated or sealed beneath the gardens and parklands also allows for the livelihoods and nature of humbler inhabitants to be revealed. It is known, through documentary evidence as well as by the edifice and grounds, that the incumbents of Madingley Hall had always commanded a great deal of authority within the local, and more national, community. In contrast, the more silent population of the village acquires equal importance when considering the value of the empirical data retrieved during the exploration of such sites and its donation towards a greater understanding of Medieval village life.

Post-dating Capability Brown's landscape design, further garden adornment was made in the form of a circular structure ([008]), perhaps a small, ornamental summerhouse or folly, erected on the highest part of the knoll behind the east wall of the garden. The nature of this structure's foundation and building material is described in the assessment report. It was demolished at a later date, perhaps in the late nineteenth or the twentieth century when Col. and Mrs. Harding restored the then neglected gardens.

The late nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw little alteration regarding large scale ground intervention of the southeast area of the Hall grounds. Two service trenches (20th century) were installed and a couple of trees or shrubs planted near to the garden wall.

The land, presently a pasture field, in which the excavations took place is currently owned by the University Farm of the University of Cambridge. In years to come it can be said that the Madingley Hall grounds saw a further change in landuse towards the end of the twentieth century from parkland gardens to meadow, followed by the decommissioning of the pasture at the west end of the field, when a private access road was designed to allow the staff and peripatetic new incumbents of Madingley Hall access to the car park.

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APPENDIX 1

The Pottery Analysis (D.Hall)

Most of the pottery dates from the Saxon or Saxo-Norman period. The earliest sherds are of a hard, black ware with igneous (?) inclusions. The material is difficult to date within the period 400-800 AD, but in view of the occurrence of a few residual Roman sherds, and the thickness of some of the Saxon pieces, there is a likelihood that material of *early* Saxon date is present.

The middle Saxon period is well represented by both Ipswich and St. Neots wares. Many sherds of the latter type are of early date, *i.e.* 850-1050. Of considerable interest is a type of wheel-made ware in a fabric similar to the hand-made black Saxon sherds but also containing shell grits like St Neots ware (referred to as 'sandy shelly' below). The forms are typical of Saxo-Norman types and the dating is presumably the same. The source is, at present, unknown.

The post-Conquest sherds have some brown pieces, probably of the same type as identified at Denny Abbey, and there are other sherds of similar type to those found at Grimston, Norfolk and from the East Midlands, thirteenth to fourteenth century in date.

Context No.	Phase	Catalogue No.	Date Range
003	IV.2	004	1 St. Neots.
003	IV.2	142	3 E/Mid-Saxon; 2 sandy shelly; 2 St. Neots 1 12th-13th C; 2 17th C.
014	II.2	010	3 E/Mid-Saxon; 1 St. Neots; 1 Thetford.
018	II.1	011	1 sandy shelly; 1 (intrusive) 17th C.
020	IV.3	012	1 St. Neots; 2 12th C late St. Neots; 9 14th C 3 17th C.
026	I.1	013	4 E/Mid-Saxon; 1 sandy shelly; 1 St. Neots.
030	II.1	015	1 E/Mid Saxon; 3 St. Neots; 1 Thetford.
030	II.1	016	1 (residual) Romano-British (RB) grey ware; 1 sandy shelly; 2 St. Neots.
030	II.1	150	2 Sandy shelly; 2 sandy 12th C.
034	V.1	140	1 17th C.
035	Multi	120	3 St. Neots; 5 12th C; 11 13th C.
036	III.2	129	1 E/Mid-Saxon; 28 St. Neots (some pre- conquest types) 31 12th C (St. Neots and sand); 48 13th C; 17 14th C (some glazed)
036	III.2	138	1 sandy shelly; 7 St. Neots
038	II.1	194	1 St. Neots.
039	III.1	255	1 E/Mid-Saxon; 1 ?St. Neots.

040	I.1	231	1 Ipswich/Thetford; 1 St. Neots
040	I.1	229	1 sandy shelly; 1 (intrusive) 14th C.
041	V.1	113	1 17th C.
041	V.1	202	1 RB (col.coated); 2 12th C. St. Neots; 15 13th C; 4 14th C.
043	IV.2	115	1 E/Mid-Saxon; 1 sandy shelly; 18 13th C. 5 14th C.
044	IV.3	243	3 St. Neots; 2 14th C; 3 17th C; 1 18th C; 3 19th C.
047	III.1	232	1 E/Mid-Saxon; 1 (early) St. Neots; 1 15th C.
047	III.1	244	2 (early) St. Neots
048	IV.2	187	1 Thetford
049	II.2	154	5 E/Mid-Saxon; 3 Ipswich; 2 St. Neots; 3 Thetford.
049	II.2	191	2 (early) St. Neots.
055	IV.2	102	1 12th/13th C; 5 13th C.
062	II.1	111	1 St. Neots.
062	II.1	118	1 Ipswich; 1 sandy shelly; 1 St. Neots.
062	II.1	259	5 St. Neots.
064	III.1	198	2 Roman (samian and grey ware); 2 sandy shelly.
073	IV.2	169	1 St. Neots.
077	IV.2	174	1 St. Neots.
081	III.2	184	2 sandy shelly.
088	IV.2	256	1 Ipswich.
093	IV.3	285	1 16-17th C Babylon-type green glaze.
097	IV.2	171	1 sandy shelly.
101	IV.3	227	4 E/Mid-Saxon; 1 thin oxidised sherd.
103	V.1	264	1 13th C; 1 18th C.