



## **The interim results of an archaeological investigation at Stone Chapel Field, Syndale, Faversham, Kent.**

**The Kent Archaeological Field School**  
Director; Paul Wilkinson, PhD., MIFA., FRSA., MSIA.  
School Farm Oast, Graveney Road  
Faversham, Kent, ME13 8UP

# Contents

1. Abstract.....	page 4.
2. Introduction.....	page 5.
3. The research questions.....	page 6.
4. Archaeological sites in the area.....	page 8
5. The geology of the area.....	page 11.
6. Stone Chapel: An chronology of archaeological investigation.....	page 15.
7. The Romano-Celtic temple: A methodology.....	page 25.
8. Religion.....	page 29.
9. Field-walking at Syndale.....	page 33.
10. Geophysical survey.....	page 38.
11. Evaluation and recording strategies.....	page 40.
12. Results of the 2005 investigation.....	page 42.
13. Conclusion.....	page 75
14. Bibliography.....	page 77.
15. Appendices.....	page 79.
16. Plans and sections.....	CD (opposite page)

## List of Illustrations

*Front cover:* This is a section of an Ordnance Survey Surveyors' Drawing of c.1798 held at the British library. It shows with great clarity the route of the Roman Watling Street through Syndale Park, the park landscaping and "Ruins of an Old Chapel". Just to the north of the Old Chapel is the remains of an medieval road leading past the chapel and on into Faversham.

- Fig. 1* Romano-Celtic temple at Loubers  
*Fig. 2* Romano-Celtic temple at Stone Chapel  
*Fig. 3* Typical Romano-Celtic temple  
*Fig. 4* Chateauneuf and Lausanne temples  
*Fig. 5* Alternative layouts to Stone Chapel  
*Fig. 6* Site location  
*Fig. 7* Geophysical survey at Stone Chapel Field  
*Fig. 8* Hawley's excavation of 1931  
*Fig. 9* Anglo-Saxon jewellery made at Faversham  
*Fig. 10* Hanging bowl with cruciform mounts  
*Fig. 11* Geology of the Faversham area  
*Fig. 12* Aerial photograph of Syndale Park  
*Fig. 13* Hawley and Livett excavating in 1926  
*Fig. 14* Hawley excavating in 1926  
*Fig. 15* Irvine's drawings of Stone Chapel  
*Figs. 16, 17* Irvine's drawings of Stone Chapel  
*Fig. 18* Altar base photographed by Meates in 1968  
*Fig. 19* Roman foundations exposed by Meates  
*Figs. 20, 21, 22* Photographs by Meates  
*Figs. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28* Ground plans of temples  
*Fig. 29* Model of a Romano-Celtic temple  
*Fig. 30* Roman mausoleum plan  
*Figs 31* Stone Chapel plan  
*Fig. 32* Christian icons from Kings Field  
*Fig. 33* Christian painted plaster from Lullingstone  
*Fig. 34* Field walking: Roman brick and tile  
*Fig. 35* Metal detector survey  
*Fig. 36* Results of the geophysical survey  
*Fig. 37* Geophysical survey of Stone Chapel Field  
*Fig. 49* View of Stone Chapel Field  
*Fig. 50* English Heritage sign at Stone Chapel  
*Fig. 51* Site plan of the 2005 investigation  
*Fig. 52* Stone Chapel from the air  
*Fig. 53* Roman perimeter wall  
*Fig. 54* Detail of exposed Roman wall  
*Fig. 55* Close-up of collapsed Roman wall  
*Fig. 56* Grave of animals  
*Fig. 57* Human skeleton being investigated  
*Fig. 58* Foundation of Roman perimeter wall  
*Fig. 59* Painted plaster  
*Fig. 60* View looking north-east  
*Fig. 61* Site plan of the trenches  
*Fig. 62* East side of Stone Chapel  
*Fig. 63* Roman cobbled surfaces exposed  
*Figs. 64, 65* Section of the Roman wall  
*Fig. 66* Trench 8  
*Fig. 67* View of Trench 9  
*Fig. 68* Slot D  
*Figs. 69, 70* Trench 13  
*Fig. 71* The archaeological team of August 2005  
*Fig. 72* Site location plan 1:25 000 (A4)  
*Fig. 73* Trench layout (A4)  
*Fig. 74* The 1931 excavations overlaid the OS map  
*Fig. 75* Geological map (A4)  
*Fig. 76* Trench 1: plan (A3)  
*Fig. 77* Trench 1: Area A, plan (A4)  
*Fig. 78* Trench 1: Area A, sections (A4)  
*Fig. 79* Trench 1: Area B, plan and section  
*Fig. 80* Trench 1: Area C, plan and section  
*Fig. 81* Trench 1: Area D, plan and section  
*Fig. 82* Trench 1: Area E, plan and section  
*Fig. 83* Trench 1: Area F, plan and section  
*Fig. 84* Trench 1: Area G, plan and section  
*Fig. 85* Trench 1: Area I, plan  
*Fig. 86* Trench 1: Area J, plan  
*Fig. 87* Trench 1: Area K, plan and section  
*Fig. 88* Trench 2, plan and section  
*Fig. 89* Trench 5, plan and section  
*Fig. 90* Trench 6, plan and section  
*Fig. 91* Trench 8, plan  
*Fig. 92* Trench 9, plan  
*Fig. 93* Trench 10, plan  
*Fig. 94* Trench 11, plan  
*Fig. 95* Trench 12, plan and section  
*Fig. 96* Trench 13, plan and section  
*Fig. 97* Trench 15, plan and section  
*Fig. 98* Trenches 9-13, layout plan (A3)

Figures can be found on the attached CD.

## 1. Abstract

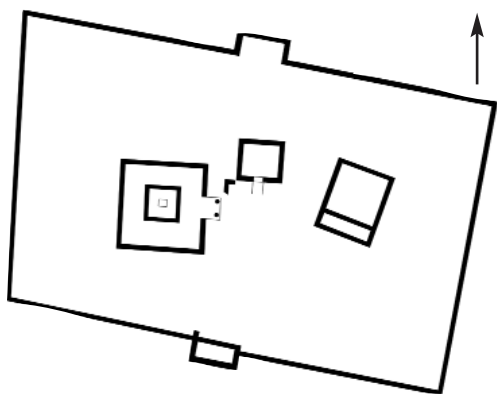
**In August 2005** the Kent Archaeological Field School (KAFS) undertook an archaeological investigation of the the important but little understood site of Stone Chapel just to the west of Faversham in Kent and alongside Watling Street, the main Roman road from Richborough to London.

The upstanding building known as Stone Chapel and its immediate environs are a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Part of the building (Building A. **Fig. 2**) has most recently been considered to be of original Roman build, and more particularly the remains of a Romano-Celtic mausoleum. A chronology of previous archaeological investigations and a examination of their conclusions (Chapter Six) suggests that this interpretation is incorrect. Furthermore, analytical work on Building A by KAFS suggests that its layout is not the usual configuration of a Romano-Celtic mausoleum. For example, the west doorway is on the wrong side for a pagan religious building but on the more usual side for a Christian religious building and the internal altar is out of place for a pagan temple but probably correct for a Christian church. This work raised the strong possibility that the 'Roman' monument as scheduled is not Roman but post-dates the Roman period and supports the theory that it is a candidate for the programme of rebuilding Roman pagan structures overseen by Augustine in the late 6th and early 7th centuries. Arising from this analysis, Chapter Three presents the specific questions that we were hoping to answer.

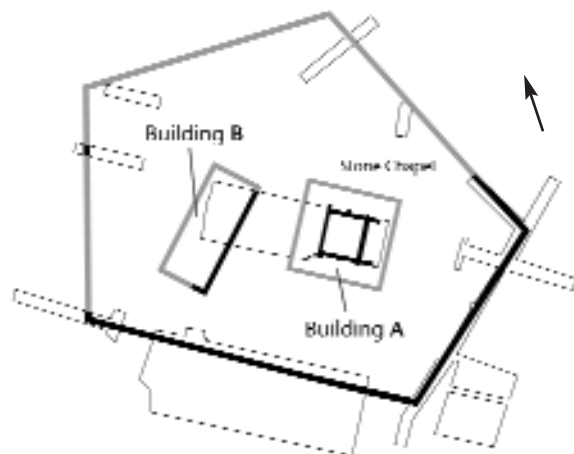
The subsequent archaeological investigation by KAFS (Chapters 13, 14) revealed a late Roman perimeter stone wall surrounding a *temenos* or sacred precinct with the two known Roman buildings within the precinct, one of which has probably been mis-interpreted as a mausoleum. The overall plan revealed by investigation and excavation is in keeping with similar precinct configurations surrounding Romano-Celtic temple sites found throughout northern Europe (see **Figs. 1, 24-26** and Chapter Seven). Furthermore the part of the field on which the Roman and post-Roman buildings stand is not as previously thought by earlier investigators sterile (Philp 1983) but has archaeological features from the Iron Age, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, and the Medieval period.

Our work has shown that the Roman buildings were part of a Romano-Celtic temple complex probably rebuilt in the 6th and 7th centuries as a Christian church and subsequently enlarged in the Saxon and medieval periods making the site unique in Britain.

The present volume is an interim report, which summarises the results of landscape analysis, field walking, geophysical survey, test-pitting and finally archaeological evaluation followed by coin and pottery spot-dating. The final report is to be published as a full colour monograph with attached CD Rom.



**Fig. 1** The Romano-Celtic temple complex at Loubers in the Pyrenees area of France has all the characteristics associated with this type of monument. The temple with the east entrance, and associated buildings set at odd angles to the main temple are all enclosed by a perimeter wall.



**Fig. 2** The Romano-Celtic temple complex at Stone Chapel Field as revealed by excavation by the KAFS in 2005. The black lines are the exposed perimeter wall, the grey lines the hypothetical location of the perimeter wall and the (dotted line) the position of the medieval nave .



## 2. Introduction

*A people without history  
Is not redeemed from time, for history is a pattern  
Of timeless moments, So, while the light fails  
On a winter's afternoon, in a secluded chapel  
History is now and England.*

*Little Gidding, by T. S. Eliot: Collected Poems, 1909-1962*

When Britain became part of the Roman Empire, its landscape was transformed by a new architecture more quickly and more radically than in any other time in history.

The earliest and most obvious changes were the construction of Roman roads, cities and forts, the surviving remains of which are still the most visible evidence of Britain's Roman past. Although very little of the religious sites can still be seen, in their time they were just as important a part of the pattern and organisation of that landscape.

John Jackson perceived the Roman landscape as a 'symbol of social and religious beliefs' (Jackson 1984) with a distinction between the rigid 'political' landscape of the Roman authorities and the 'vernacular' landscape made by the local inhabitants to meet their individual needs and way of life.

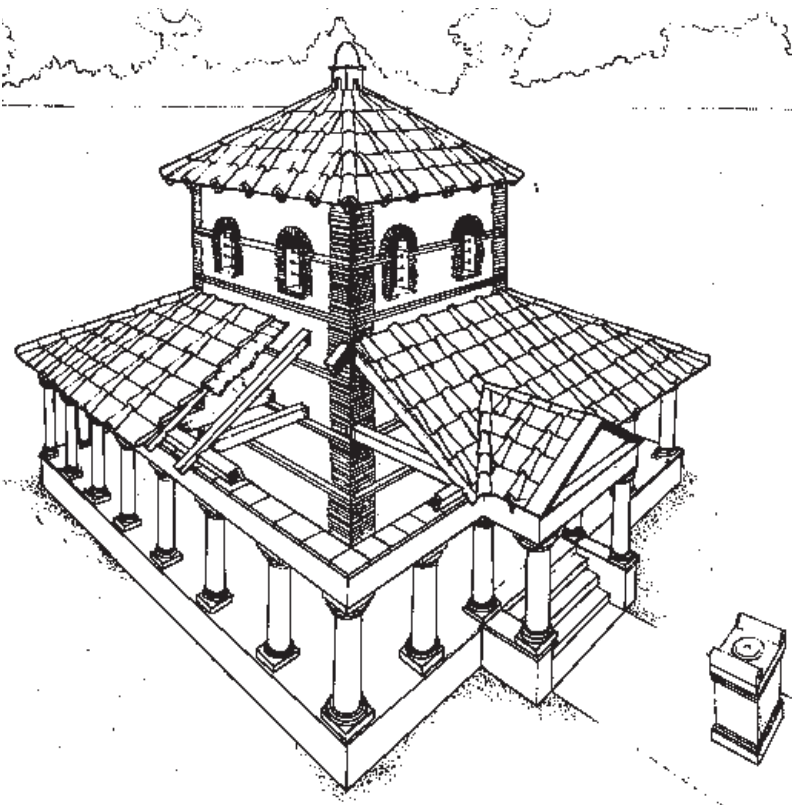
Both the Romans and local inhabitants believed that various natural features of the landscape had divine associations, either as the homes of the gods or as gods themselves. In both cultures the same kind of place attracted feelings of reverence which the Romans expressed in terms of the worship of river gods, the nymphs or other deities of springs and woodland places.

In addition to the well-known large rural complexes such as Uley and Nettleton which have a temple as their focus, there are many temples which have a more simple configuration. The temples in question are usually of the type known as Romano-Celtic, common to Gaul (except Provence), Roman Germany and southern Britain. Their building materials and constructional techniques are Roman, but they differ from classical Roman temples in plan and elevation. Whilst large numbers of Romano-Celtic temples are known from 4th century Roman Britain, only a few survived until the 390s. In 1998 Dorothy Watts

could only catalogue 20 possible examples, and only 12 were still in use by 400 with only four of these outside the West Country (Watts 1998). The recent (2005) archaeological evidence from Stone Chapel suggests that a Romano-Celtic temple complex was probably built there in the late 4th early 5th centuries when paganism was beginning rapidly to decline (Dark 2000).

This makes the site at Stone Chapel of particular importance.

**Fig. 3** A typical Romano-Celtic temple drawn by Guy de Bedoyere. It shows the *cella*, or internal cult room, which is usually square in plan, placed concentrically within a square ambulatory, sometimes on a plinth, and of normally twice the *cella*'s linear dimension. They may have a porch in front, but not a pedimental facade; indeed, the usual reconstruction shows the *cella* as a tower rising above the lean-to roof of the ambulatory with the door on the east facing the outside altar.



### 3. The research questions

*“So continuity – the continuous use of sites or structures for ritual purposes remains a topic of central interest”* (Blair 1996)

John Blair suggests that many Early English churches may overlie Roman monuments, and that many more may reuse Roman monuments, possibly after a lapse of centuries. Blair writes that any church that overlies a Roman building or pre-Roman earthwork deserves to be fully investigated.

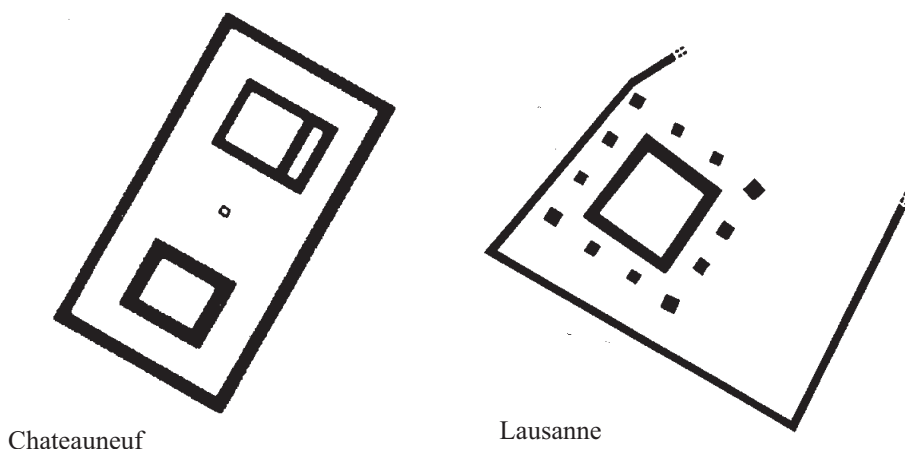
That an Early English church overlays Roman structures at Stone Chapel is undisputed. However, recent close analysis of the fabric of the upstanding buildings and particularly of Building A (**Fig. 2**) by the KAFS (see also Wolstencroft 2004) has given rise to doubts over the current interpretation of Building A as an original Roman structure. These doubts are reinforced when the surviving archives of the previous investigators are examined (Irvine 1874, Hawley 1931, Meates 1968, Fletcher & Meates 1969, 1971, Taylor and Yonge 1981, Philp 1983).

The current interpretation of the site is based on the work of Sir Eric Fletcher and Lt. Colonel Meates. They decided, largely due to the lack of evidence to the contrary, that the structure just had to be a Roman mausoleum.

However, there are a number of unanswered questions associated with Fletcher and Meates’ work which the current research attempts to address:

1. Why were the original Roman foundations of Building A of a different plan to the present ‘Roman’ building that sits on it (**Fig. 18**);
2. Why was there virtually no Roman pottery retrieved from the excavations inside Building A, a point remarked upon by the earlier excavators Hawley and Livett in 1926;
3. And most important of all, what was the significance of another Roman building (Building B) to the west of Building A, and on a different alignment, discovered by Fletcher and Meates in their 1977 campaign.

The key fact in Fletcher and Meates’ argument against a Romano-Celtic temple was that “traces of a peristyle wall could not be found” (Fletcher & Meates 1969. 276). However, on numerous sites throughout Europe the peristyle wall just comprises pillar pads which may not have survived in the archaeological record (**Fig. 4**).



**Fig. 4** The identification of the Roman building at Stone Chapel by Meates as not a Romano-Celtic temple hinged on the provision that a peristyle wall could not be found (Fletcher & Meates 1969). In Europe about 15% of Romano-Celtic temples do not have a surviving peristyle wall. This example from Lausanne shows post pads which are easily missed on excavation. At Chateauneuf the annex building at the top has a foundation configuration similar to Stone Chapel whilst the temple (below) has lost its peristyle wall.

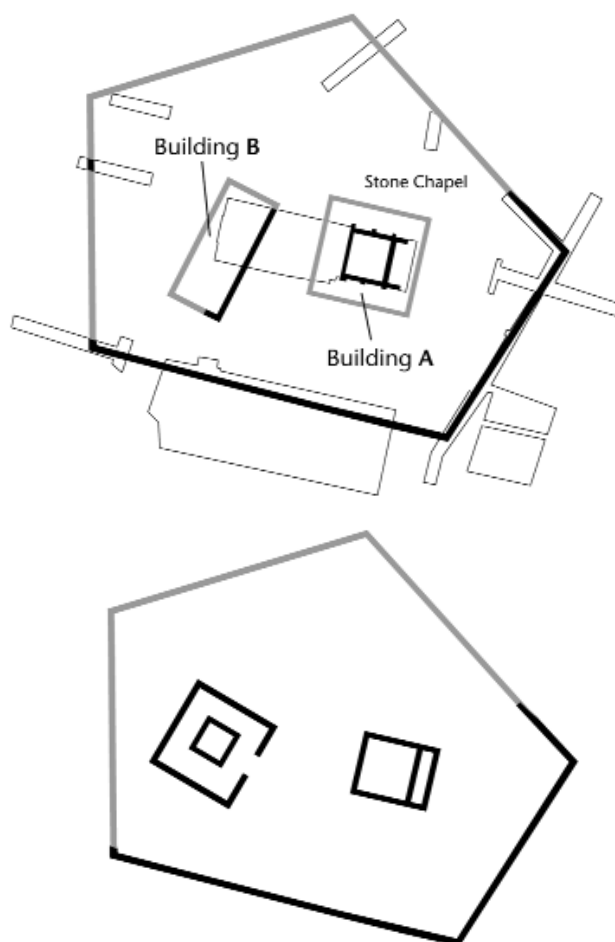
Another important point which needed further research was that Meates writing in the *Faversham Magazine* in the summer of 1968 was of the opinion that he had discovered three inhumations burials in coffins under the altar adjacent to the east wall inside Building A (Meates 1968. 21). The timber retrieved from this context was later dated to AD550+/-110 years, but by then Fletcher and Meates had changed their minds and said that the timber could have been from the planks left by the earlier excavations of the Kent Archaeological Society (KAS). But in 1968 Meates had said the burials and coffins were below the level reached by the KAS (Meates 1968. 20). If their first prognosis was correct, and these were coffins dating to the 6th-7th century then of course Fletcher and Meates would have needed to re-write their conclusions.

Building on these discrepancies the fundamental questions that we were hoping to answer were:

1. Whether the upstanding Building A was really a structure dating from the Roman period.
2. What was the function of the undisputed Roman buildings evidenced by the foundations beneath Building A.
3. What was the significance of the Roman building to the west of Building A.

One of the most important research questions that needed to be answered was what was the exact layout of the complex inside the Scheduled Area. Could it be that Building B is in fact the Romano-Celtic temple and Building A which all previous researchers have focused on, is an annex or storeroom (Fig. 5).

The main aims of the evaluation programme were therefore to investigate with non-intrusive methods the nature and building history of the Roman buildings inside the Scheduled Area; to seek any traces of a pre-Roman precursor to the Roman buildings outside the Scheduled Area, and by careful site recording, to dissect the archaeological remains to accumulate sufficient data to enable a proposal to be put forward to English Heritage for an intrusive investigation within the Scheduled Area.



**Fig. 5** The layout of the Romano-Celtic temple complex at Stone Chapel as revealed by excavation. The trenches of the KAFS can be identified, they enabled investigation of the exposed and hitherto unknown Roman perimeter wall surrounding the Roman buildings and defining the sacred precinct or *temenos*. It is thought that the focus of the complex is Building A but this building could be a storeroom or annex. This hypothesis is reinforced by the configuration of the Roman foundations underneath the present building. If this is the case then Building B could be the Romano-Celtic temple and as such untouched by earlier investigators.

## 4. Archaeological sites in the area



The area investigated at Stone Chapel Field (**Fig. 6**), is broadly rectangular in shape and measures about 2.4ha. It is located on the north side of Watling Street (A2) and opposite the junction with Newnham Road, just to the west of Ospringe.

Stone Chapel itself is located in the centre of Church Field, which sits in a valley near to Watling Street and is adjacent to the archaeological site of the Roman town of *Durolevum* at Syndale, west of Faversham in Kent. The site centre is taken as NGR TQ 9916 6132.

The standing ecclesiastical remains of Stone Chapel and its immediate environs are a Scheduled Monument and subject to a recent detailed report by English Heritage. The religious complex at Stone Chapel Field, lies within a landscape rich in the archaeological remains of past activity. The distribution of these sites is itemised in the Sites and Monument Records kept at Kent County Council, County Hall, Kent, and English Heritage, Swindon, Wiltshire.

### Prehistory

Excavations at Stone Chapel Field recovered four struck flints. The report by Barry Bishop (Appendix IV) quantifies and describes the material, offers some comments on its significance and recommends any further work required. All of the material was recovered from unstratified contexts.

Further afield there is considerable evidence of prehistoric activity centered on the still functioning springs of Luddenham (1.5km), Hog Brook (2km), Bax Farm (2.5km), and School Farm (3km) where large numbers of struck flints have been retrieved in field-walking by the KAFS. Polished flint axes have also been recovered in the vicinity of Stonebridge Pond near Faversham (2km).



### Iron Age

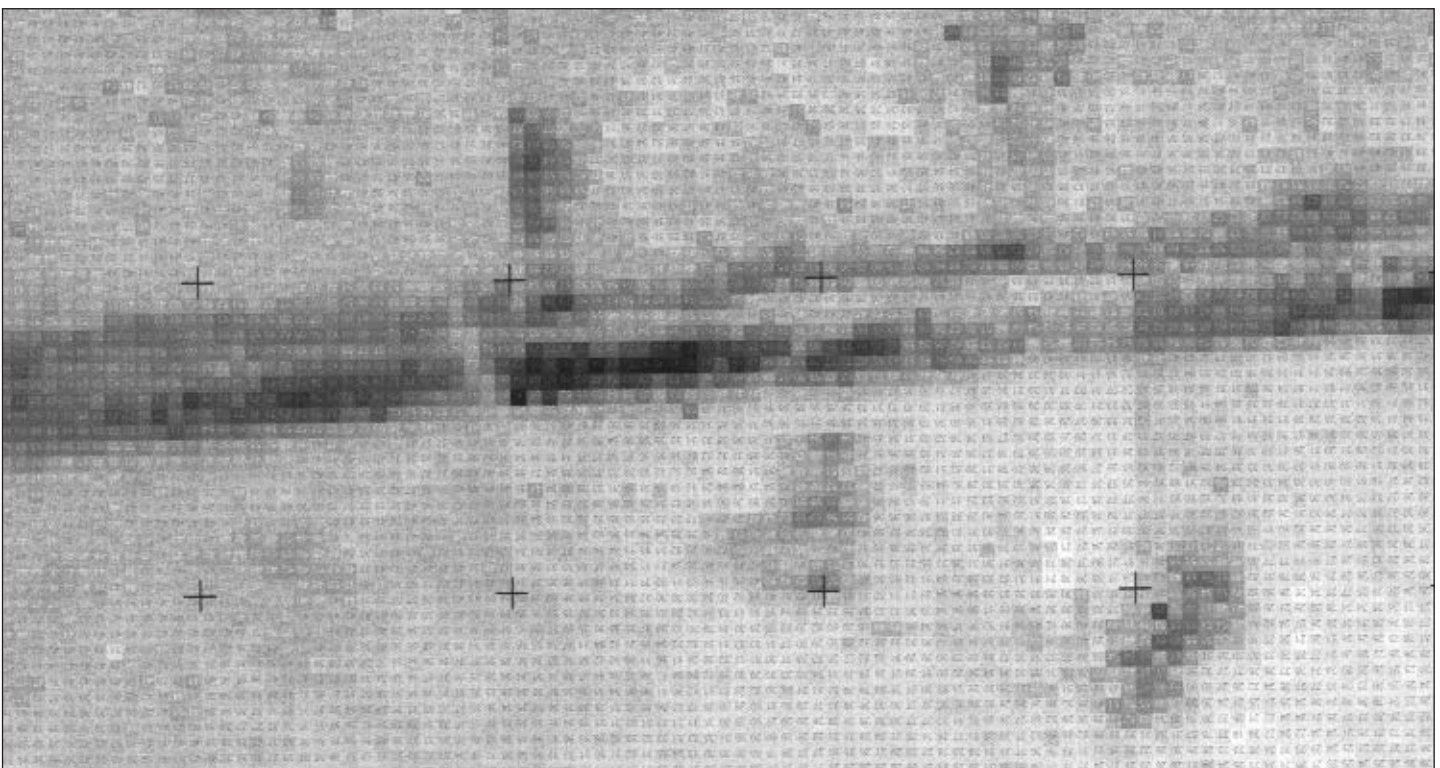
Iron Age pottery in large quantities has been retrieved in field-walking in the environs of Stone Chapel. An Iron Age ditch running almost parallel to the late Roman perimeter wall was revealed in the course of the 2005 investigation, and has been dated by pottery retrieved from its lower levels to the Middle to Late Iron-Age infilled in about AD120-150 (dated by a fresh sherd of Samain ware Dr 18/31). This ditch seems to follow the alignment of the Roman perimeter stone wall and could suggest an earlier Iron-Age sacred area as noted at other Romano-Celtic temple sites (Rodwell: 1980).

### Romano-British

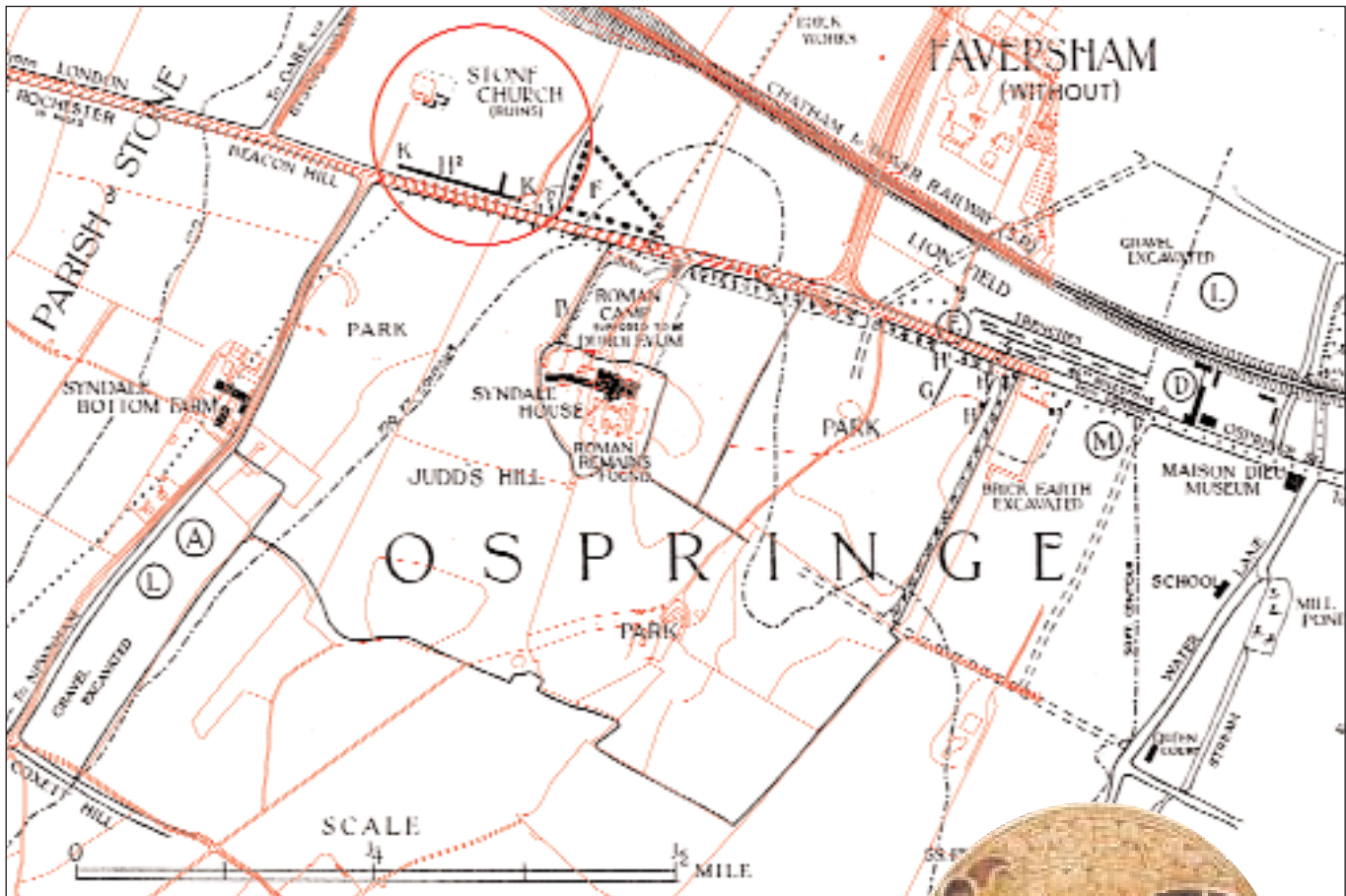
Four seasons of field work by Paul Wilkinson for Swale Borough Council (Swale Survey 2000) identified three large Roman villa complexes in the vicinity of Stone Chapel. At Deerton Street (1.5km to the west) excavation by the KAFS has uncovered a substantial Roman villa estate with a large villa building, a stone barn, bath-house, small temple and port facilities whilst at Luddenham (1.5km to the north) there are the remains of another Roman villa and associated buildings. At Bax Farm (2.5km to the west) recent excavation by the KAFS on a site located by the Swale Survey has revealed an unusual late Roman octagonal bath house with associated structures.

A Roman road has been identified and partly excavated by the KAFS leading from Watling Street opposite Stone Chapel Field down the Syndale Valley to the Anglo-Saxon village of Newnham. At Newnham work by the KAFS has identified the re-use of 22 Roman Corinthian fluted columns in the Anglo-Saxon structure of the church.

Work by the KAFS (2003-7) in Syndale Park has revealed the extent of the Roman town of *Durolevum*, the route of Watling Street, its associated cemeteries, and a early Roman military fortified enclosure dating from the Claudian period. An investigation by Time Team in 2003 was disappointing.



**Fig. 7** Geophysical survey of Syndale Park, just to the east of the study area of Stone Chapel Field revealed with startling clarity the main Roman road in Britain from Richborough/Dover to London. The road, now called Watling Street, which on investigation was about 11m wide, 1.5m thick, and built of seven distinct layers of marine gravel mixed with lime on a raised agger of dumped brickearth. Datable artefacts from the earliest and latest layers indicates the road was built about AD50 and went out of use in the early 5th century. The dark patches either side of the road are the remains of Roman buildings- the lost Roman town of *Durolevum*.

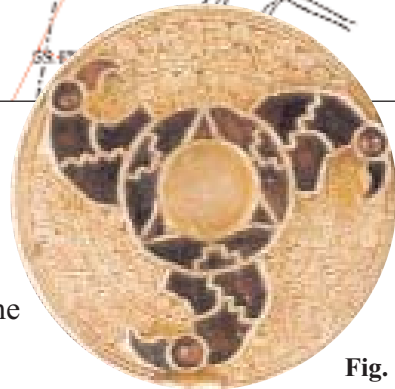


**Fig. 8** The map of the excavations carried out by Hawley and published by the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1931 overlaid on a modern OS map. Unfortunately no proper report survives from these excavations.

Other Roman sites in the vicinity of Stone Chapel can be gauged by the excavation activity of Hawley in 1926-31 (**Fig. 8**) published by the Society of Antiquaries in 1931. In Stone Chapel Field Hawley trenched alongside the A2 (Watling Street) and found signs of Roman houses and a hearth. In Syndale Park itself he found the remains of two skeletons, the location (G, H) of which has recently been re-excavated by the KAFS. A number of Roman cremations were uncovered by the Field School, and where Hawley thought he had discovered the foundations of a Roman building the Field School uncovered the remains of a Roman mausoleum.

### Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

Adjacent to the excavated Roman cemetery in Lion Field is the Anglo-Saxon cemetery of Kings Field which in the mid 19th century was damaged by workmen constructing the railway. Our only survival, from what is probably the most important Anglo-Saxon cemetery in Kent, is what Mr Gibbs, the local grocer managed to buy from the workmen. Of particular interest is the diversity of the grave goods from late Roman pottery, gold Anglo-Saxon jewellery (probably made at Faversham, **Fig. 9**) to British-made hanging bowls with cruciform mounts. The above example (**Fig. 10**) from Faversham found in an early 7th century grave shows the Christian cross framed by two fish, and is thought to have been made in north or western Christian Britain (Blair 2005).



**Fig. 9**



**Fig. 10**



## 5. The geology of the area

The **Faversham district** is covered by the Geological Sheet 273 to a scale of 1:50.000, and is notable for its wealth of geological, archaeological and historic interest.

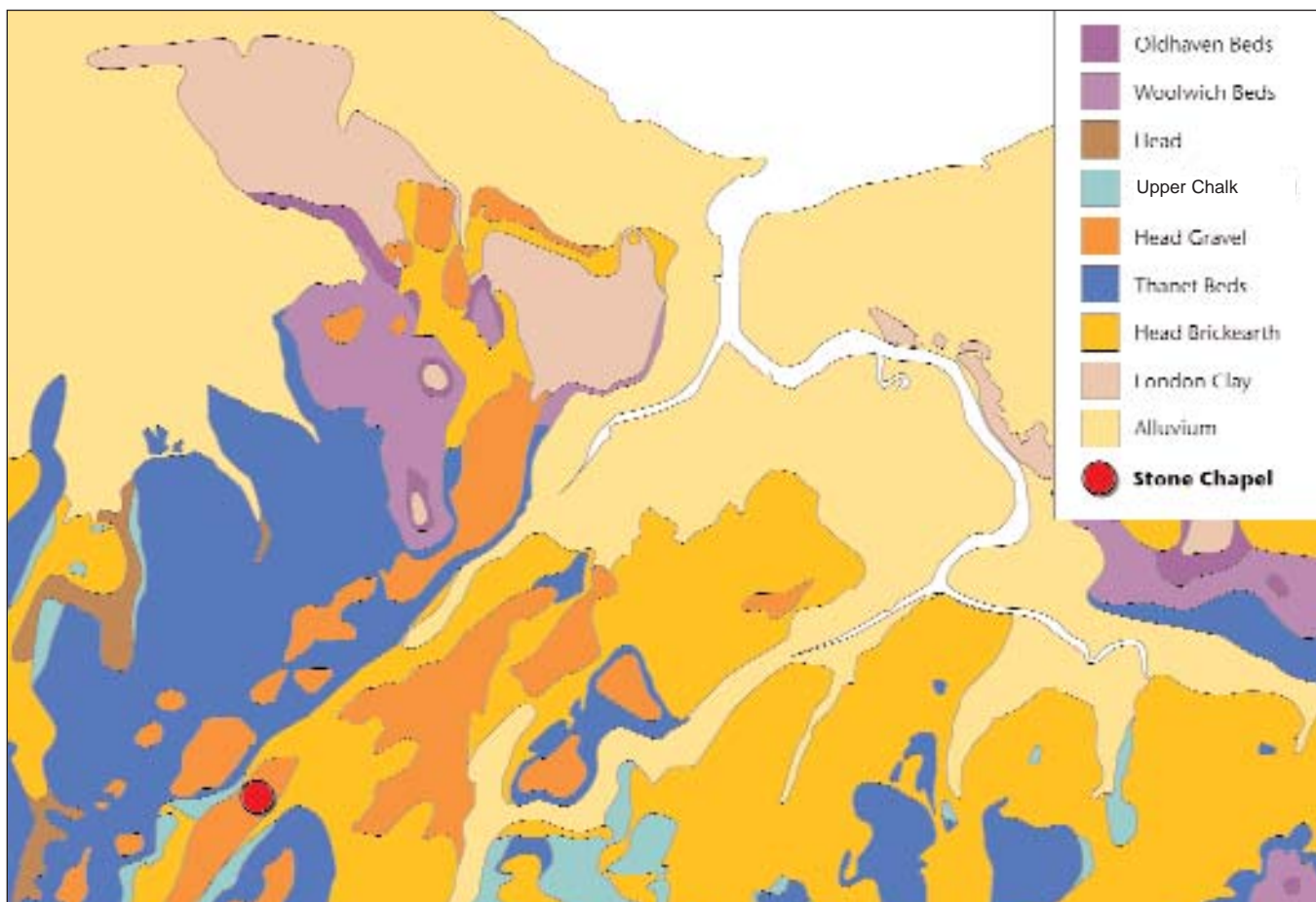
The original geological survey was undertaken by Whitaker in 1867 and published on Sheet 3 in 1868. Between 1937 and 1946 Holmes and Buchan, carried out the six-inch survey and in 1938 Dr Earp surveyed a tract east of Faversham. All of this new and revised information is encapsulated in the recently reissued New Series one-inch (1:63.360) sheets on the scale of 1:50.000. The map consulted for Stone Chapel Field is Sheet 273; Solid and Drift Edition, 1:50.000 Series.

The Faversham district shown on Sheet 273 (**Fig. 11**) is delineated by the Isle of Sheppey on the west and the Isle of Thanet to the east. The coastal strip – the area of the Swale estuary – is of interest geologically whilst geological conditions inland dictate the local economic activity.

The main towns are Faversham, just to the east of Stone Chapel Field and Whitstable, which is about 6km to the east of Faversham. The area of sea to the north of Whitstable is described by Samuel Lewis (Lewis 1831: 460) as containing “Great quantities of Roman pottery which have been found in dredging for oysters round a rock, now called the Pudding-pan, which is supposed by some to have been the island *Caunos* of Ptolemy, though now covered by the sea”.

Faversham, formerly renowned for its manufacture of gunpowder is located on a tidal creek determined by the late Quaternary topography of the area. The nearby Tertiary sand belts enabled the growth of coppice wood, which were used to make charcoal – one of the essential ingredients of gunpowder.

John Speed writing in 1611 remarks that the soil of the Faversham District is “in all places fruitful, and



**Fig. 11** Geology in the Faversham area.

in plenty equals any other of the realm .....". Today fruit growing, hops and market gardening are still important on the easily worked soils of the sandy lower Tertiary formations and of the brickearths near Faversham.

The rich alluvial marshlands of Sheppey, and Faversham afford excellent pasture for grazing. The general geology of the area is more varied than it appears. Upper chalk is the oldest formation found in the district outcropping to the south and east of Faversham, where brickearth largely covers it. Of the Tertiary beds below the London Clay, the Thanet Beds outcrop around Faversham, whilst the Woolwich Beds and Oldhaven Beds occur near Oare and to the east of Faversham at Goodnestone.

London Clay is found on the Isle of Harty and forms hills in the marshes north of Faversham. Drift deposits of Alluvium and Head Brickearth, the former in the marshes and the latter in valleys and hill slopes. Head Gravel, frequently found in association with the brickearth, is more prevalent than River Gravels, which are almost exclusively confined to the river systems of the Stour.

Natural drainage in the vicinity of Stone Chapel Field is characterised by the valley at Ospringe, east of Stone Chapel Field, which is normally dry, but after a prolonged period of rain does produce a stream that flows under Watling Street into the creeks of Faversham. At no time in its history was it strong enough to accomplish much erosion or distribute material as gravel terraces. The creeks to the north of Stone Chapel Field and indeed the creeks that serve the maritime activity of Faversham have been produced by marine drowning of an essentially 'dry-valley' topography.

Evidence suggests (Linder 1940: 283) 0.2m tectonic down warping in the North Sea basin from the Neolithic period has led to the local drowning of the North Kent coast accelerated by fluctuating sea levels. The Swale Channel itself occupies a valley in the London Clay that is devoid of river deposits other than alluvial mud, which is largely estuarine in origin (Geological Survey of Great Britain, 1981).



**Fig. 12** The vertical aerial photograph provided by Getmapping shows a wealth of features apart from geology. The route of the Roman Watling Street (blue line). Archaeological trenching by Canterbury Archaeological Trust in the field (red dot) to the east of Stone Chapel Field. Roman Durolevum was a ribbon development on both sides of Watling Street.



## 6. Stone Chapel: A chronology of archaeological investigation

**The ruined church** of Stone, near Faversham in Kent is known as the Chapel of Our Lady of Elwarton at Stone, and is probably connected in some way with the medieval hamlet of Elverton situated probably to the north-west of the church.

The ruined church and its immediate surrounding has been scheduled under the Ancient Monument Acts since 1946 and is listed as a building of special architectural and historical importance under Section 32 of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1962. Its status has recently (16th June 1995) been re-affirmed by English Heritage (Monument No: SM/25474).

It is thought to be the only known example in Britain of an apparent upstanding Roman building subsequently incorporated in a Christian church.

However, the interpretation of the ruins has been a subject of debate for many years. Hasted, writing in 1798 was in no doubt the separate piece of ancient building was Roman. He wrote:

*"The Romans undoubtedly had some strong military post on this hill, (overlooking Stone Chapel) on the summit of which there are the remains of a very deep and broad ditch, the south and east sides are still entire, as is a small part of the north side at the eastern corners of it, the remaining part of the north side was filled up not many years since. The west side has nothing left of it.....At the bottom of the hill, in the next field to this, are the ruins of Stone Chapel, in which a number of Roman bricks are interspersed among the flints and in the midst of the south wall of it, there is a separate piece of a Roman building about a rod in length, and near three feet high, composed of two rows of Roman tiles, of about fourteen inches square each, and on them are laid small stones levelled but of no regular size or shape, for about a foot high, and then tiles again, and so on alternately." (Hasted 1798. vol VI: 50-3).*

Two early campaigns of archaeological investigation have taken place in the past, and both by modern standards, unrecorded. The first was carried out by the Kent Archaeological Society (KAS) in 1872. The society held its AGM in Faversham on July 30th & 31st 1872 and its members made a field trip to Stone Chapel on the 31st. Mr T.G. Godfrey-Faussett read the assembled through a paper on the excavations which were reported in *Archaeologica Cantania* in 1874:

*"Excavations had been made within the chancel. The trees, brushwood and several feet of soil which covered its site having been cleared away, the north and south walls were exposed to view even to their foundations. Parts of both, sixteen feet long, were found to be of original Roman Masonry. These walls are composed of layers of hewn tufa, with here and there occasionally a piece of ragstone, and are bounded by string courses of Roman Brick. The foundations of two cross walls were found beneath the chancel floor, showing that the north and south walls had formed two sides of a nearly square Roman building."*



**Fig. 13** Hawley and Livett showing their excavations of 1926 and the earlier excavations of the KAS to an interested group. Both men were emphatic that the exposed 'Roman' building was in fact Saxon. They based their assumption on the fact that no Roman artefacts or pottery had been retrieved whilst excavating the internal 'Roman' floors of the building (Building A). The photograph was taken looking east to where Watling Street climbs up the hill through the Roman town of Durolevum.

*In the middle of the western cross wall was seen the step at the entrance to the chancel; at the east end three altar steps formed of Roman bricks were discovered, and above them the solid altar itself was found.....*

*During excavations quantities of Roman tiles, a great many blocks of tufa and fragments of Roman pottery were found together with human bones and pieces of coloured glass bearing patterns of Early English design. Roman coins of various dates had formerly been dug up in the field next the church." (Arch Cant. Vol IX 1874. IXXviii-IXXix).*

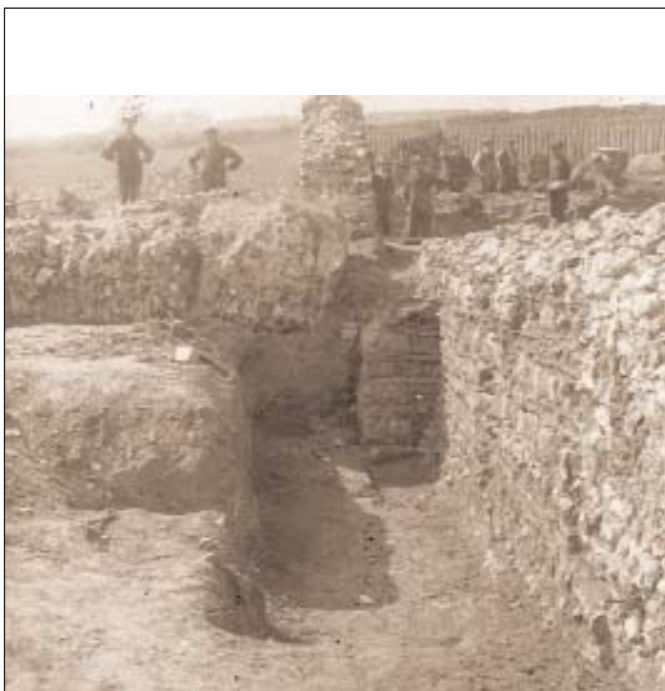
In 1875 J.T. Irvine following an examination of the ruins exposed by the KAS (Building A) wrote that the masonry was "far too Roman to be Roman" (Irvine 1875: 255), and expressed the opinion that the 'Roman' building was early medieval.

The other early archaeological investigation was by Lt. Col. W. Hawley in 1926 which again, did not produce a report. All that has survived is an excellent set of photographs made available for this report by the kindness of Arthur Percival of the Faversham Society and a recently located article that was published in the *East Kent News* on Saturday May 22nd 1926. The newspaper article, (see Appendix) is our only account of the Hawley dig in 1926 and reported:

***"Stone Chapel, recent investigations described. Opinion that original building was Saxon***

*The investigations at the ruins of Stone Church which were undertaken some months ago by Colonel Hawley FSA, and in which Canon G Livett FSA, has also been greatly interested, have now been concluded. Very careful excavation work has been done, the result of which has been that more definite data has been obtained than was revealed by the work undertaken in 1872 by Mr Irvine.....When the excavation of the interior was carried out the remains of three floors could clearly be seen. Colonel Hawley described in detail these floors....On digging for the wall foundations a quantity of black matter was observed including decayed wood, evidently birch. It was impossible to account for this layer of dark matter. These had been several interments both in the chapel (Building A) and the nave, but every one of them had been molested at some time or other. On the north side of the chapel there had been two burials and the last had been buried across the lower extremities of the first!*

*On a tour of the excavations Canon Livett then dealt with the architectural features of the church, the company following him round the ruins...Calling attention to a large part of the south wall of the nave which fell over in May 1913, probably due to the growth of trees... there was the question, then, as to whether the building was not of Saxon origin... the method of construction here, too, was similar to that of Reculver, the same meticulous care being shown in regard to pattern..... Canon Livett pointed out a fragment of the altar step, to which was attached some of the coloured plaster, and he mentioned that a burial was found under the altar".*



**Fig. 14** The picture (left) taken by Hawley looking west shows the large portion of the medieval south wall which fell over in May 1913. The picture on the right, again looking west shows that the medieval nave was built as a separate building with the east wall having no access to the 'Roman' building (Building A). A point remarked upon by Canon Livett in 1926.

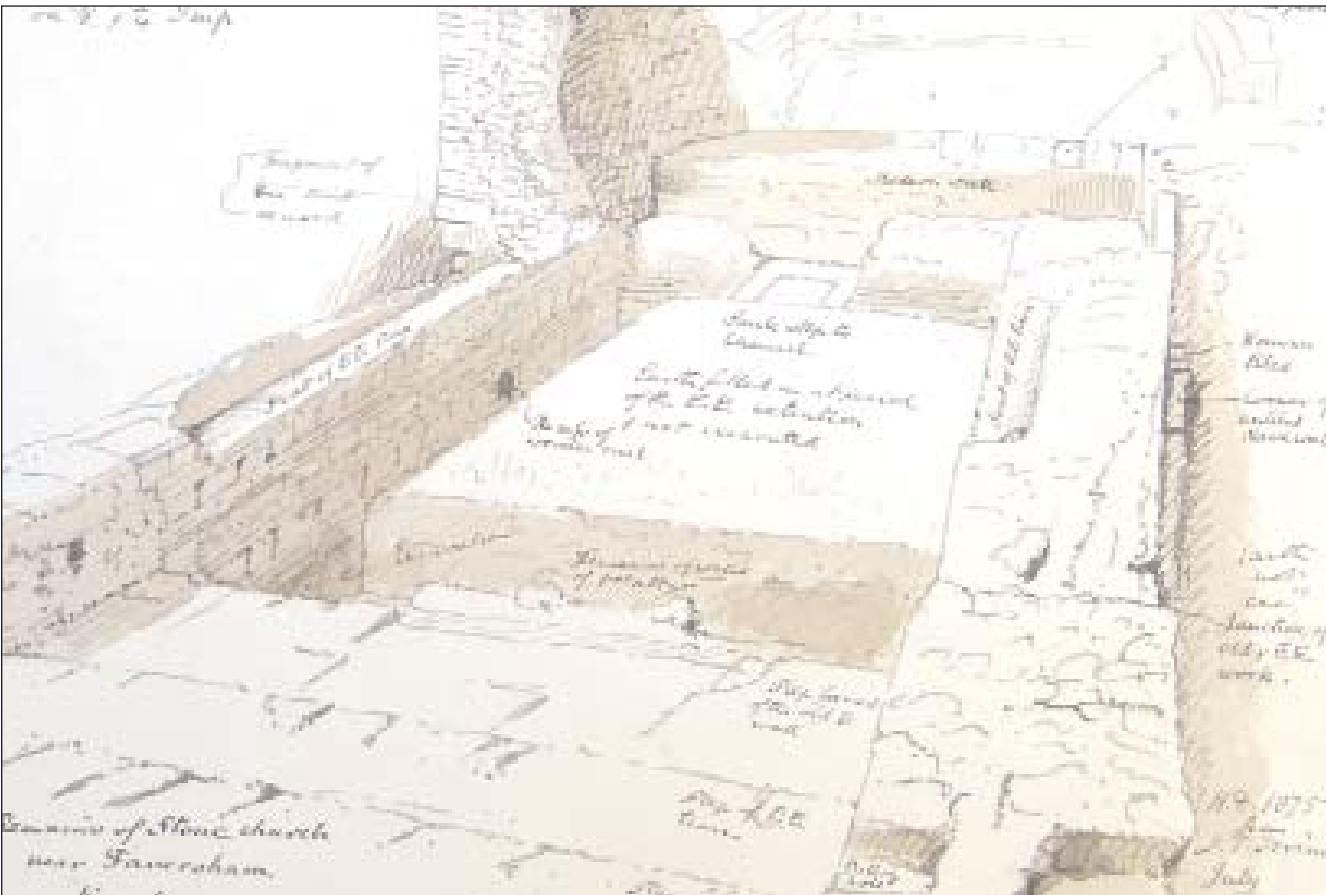
Livett then dwelt particularly on the fact that at a later period a new wall was built close against the original 'Roman' west wall and also across its doorway and that this wall was built upon some older foundations. This, he remarked, seemed to show that "the original building (*Building A*) had been allowed to get into a state of ruin and that it ceased to be used, the western extension being then used as the Church".

Canon Livett was emphatic that it was "out of the question" that the fabric of the original building was of Roman date: "Wherever he had investigated Roman work he had found quantities of Roman relics. But nothing Roman had been found in these ruins although the whole district was covered with Roman remains."

Interestingly Livett's prognosis was mirrored by an earlier investigator – James T. Irvine who published in 1875 an account of his analysis of the ruins and including a good set of coloured drawing which, coming so soon after the excavations by the KAS gives us an invaluable record of what was uncovered. Irvine approached the ruins in the high summer of 1874:

*"Passing through part of a field then richly clad with wheat in the ear and on reaching the low mound which the western side of the churchyard present, and whose level everywhere is raised above the outside within a few feet lay part of the west wall of the church exposed by excavation to its base. I advanced to, and looked down over, a wooden fence which shut off the chancel, into its east, south, and west sides laid over by excavation. I almost was tempted to think that here, at last, that long looked for thing, a church of the age of Roman Christianity in Britain had turned up....."*

*The ancient portion was indeed so remarkable that I could not help at first being rather dazzled with the show of the abundant and carefully laid red tile courses. But I had not looked, however, for many minutes before an indescribable sort of feeling began to pervade me, that the mass, after all, did not possess that feeling of consistency which is immediately the result to a practiced eye" (Irvine 1875: 250-1).*



**Fig. 15** Copies of Irvin's drawings are preserved in Northampton Library at a scale of 1:12. Of some importance is that they show in some clarity the trenches and sections excavated by the KAS in 1872. Irvine was of the opinion that there had been an earlier wooden nave and the *cella* (*Building A*) had been built later as a chancel against the flat eastern face of an earlier and wider wooden nave into which it was not bonded.



What worried Irvine and indeed, later investigators was that the 'Roman' work didn't quite gel – it wasn't quite right and Irvine with all his experience of Roman buildings was uneasy, even more so when he started to draw the uncovered remains:

*"A more careful inspection of the walls began to show that the construction did not quite harmonise with the abundant examples of Roman walling I had seen."* (Irvine 1875: 252)

Irvine recorded that each stretch of 'Roman' walling was constructed differently. In the north wall the various rows of Kentish rag stone and light cream tufa imitate a *dambrod* (draughtboard) pattern, whilst the south wall is constructed "in a rude sort of mosaic arcading."

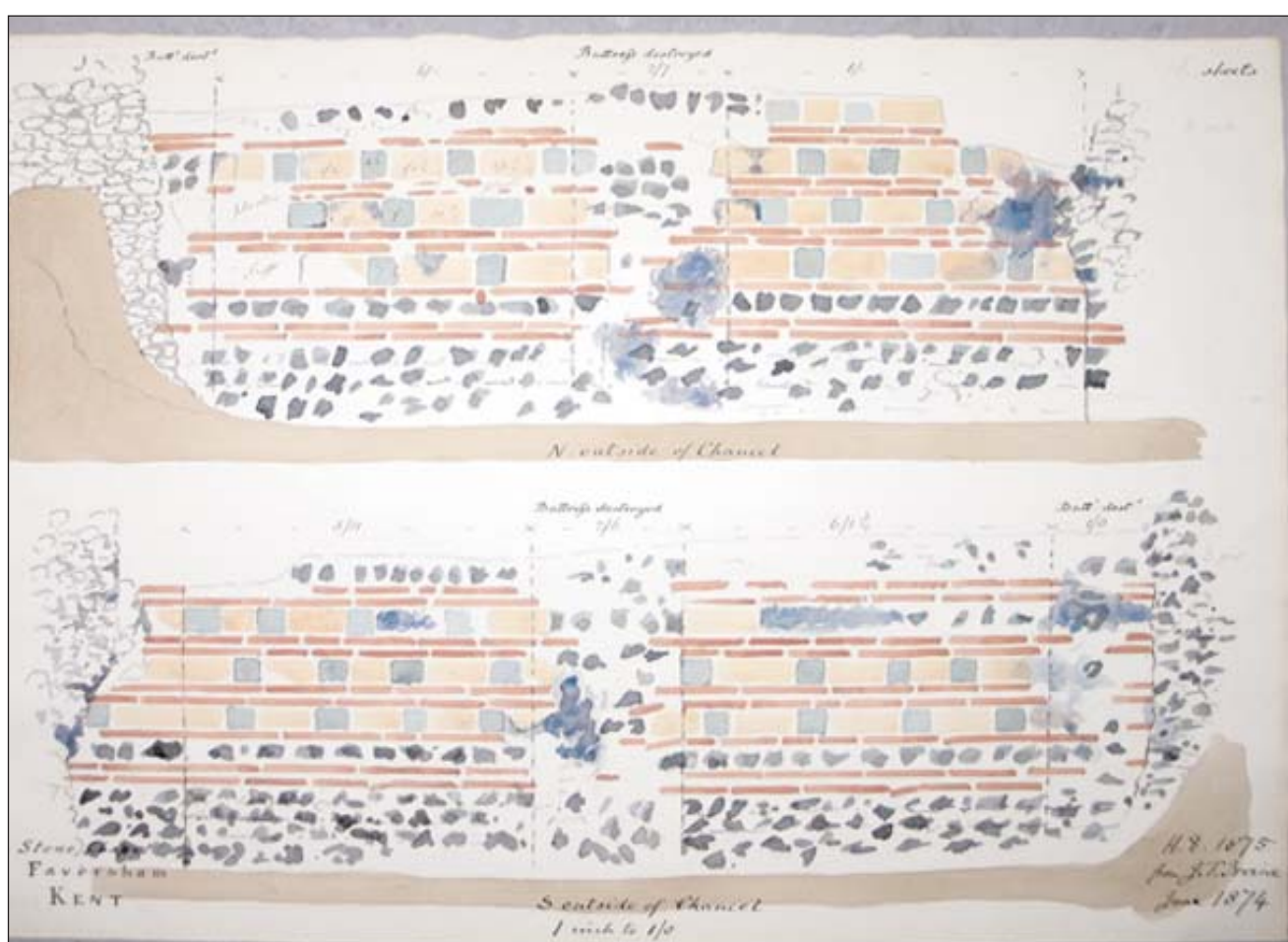
Various writers have suggested the patterning of stone and tile is a late Roman feature for display but Irvine notes that:

*"the whole of the exterior of walls had been at some time plastered over, of this there are considerable remains on the north side, that most sheltered from wet and frost."*

*The insides of the walls were built of Kentish ragstone with tile layers – but very little tufa. The interior had been plastered with a strong hard white mortar, remaining in parts; this had been painted red".*

Of critical importance are Irvine's section drawings which when compared with Fletcher and Meates excavation of 1968 and the recent evaluation (2005) by Catherine Wolstencroft will give us a more detailed understanding of the stratification of the upstanding building.

A number of important architectural points on the 'Roman' build were noticed by Irvine:



**Fig. 16** Irvine spent many weeks working on his drawings, the dates run from June to September 1874. The original seven coloured drawings are drawn at a scale of 1in to 1ft (1:12) and were copied by 'H. Dryden. 1875' and are preserved at the Local Studies Centre in Northampton. Irvine's almost photographic drawings of the vertical faces of the *cella* and the excavation trenches dug by the KAS in 1872 is an important resource for our understanding of the building.

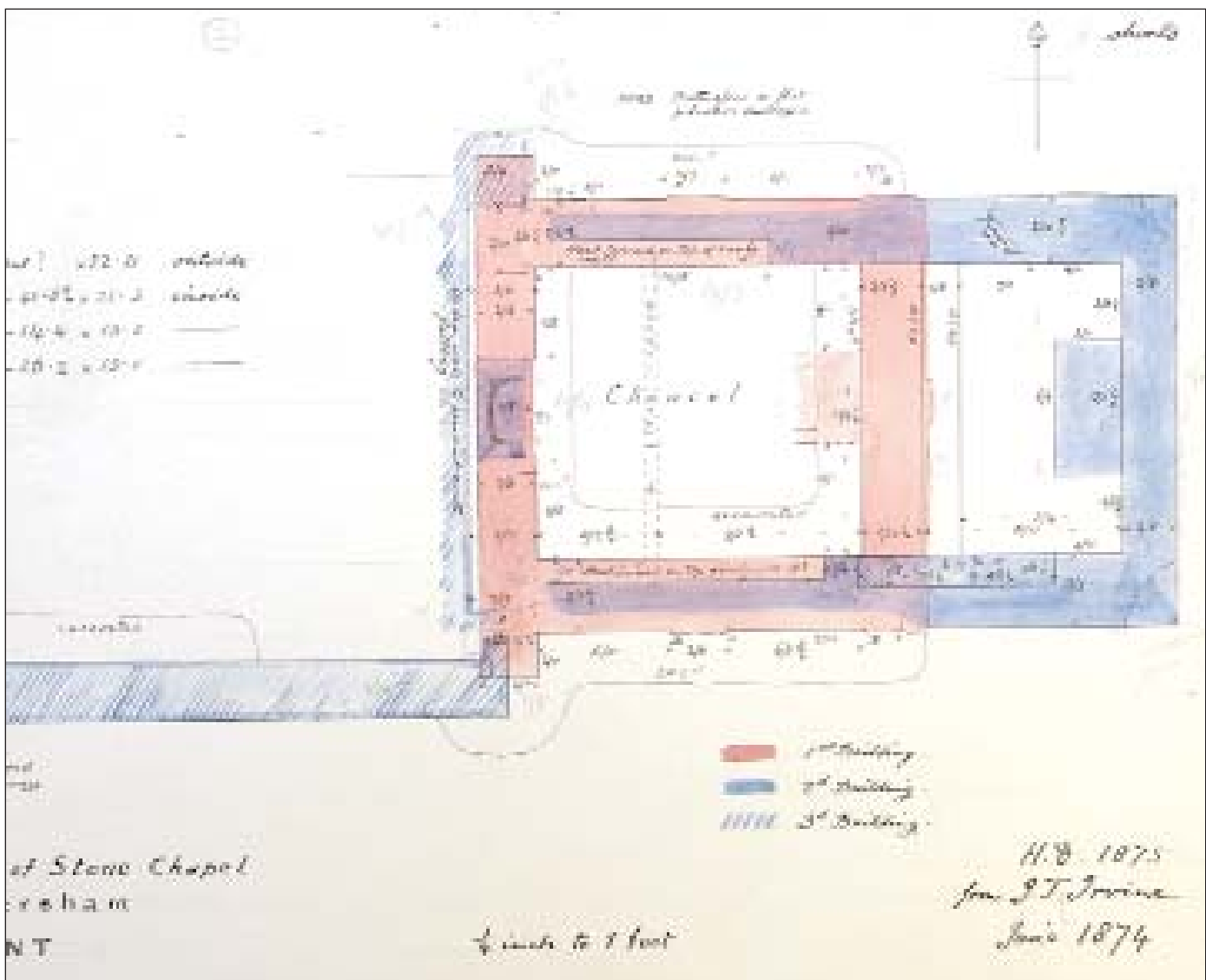


"On each side remained distinct traces of central buttresses or pilasters, whose width could be still obtained from projecting fragments of their bonding tiles; and similar marks could be seen of those at the angles of the east wall."

On the interior of the 'Roman' building Irvine recorded that the KAS excavators had missed two important points: "one was that the unmoved ground in the side of their excavation fronting the old east wall had preserved a section through the rough end walls of the early altar; this was about 3ft 11in long." But to Irvine the most remarkable discovery was the slots built into the 'Roman' brick-work for a wooden altar-rail: "I could scarcely conceive it possible at first." He notes that the mason on building the 'Roman' wall had allowed space for the fitting of an altar-rail.

In 1967 Sir Eric Fletcher and Lieut. Colonel Meates were invited to excavate the building and to solve the problem of its original date and purpose. The altar itself was re-excavated by Fletcher and Meates where:

*"Upon the smooth surface of the Roman floor, at a point four feet west of the east wall and three feet south of the north wall, a large block of Roman concrete was found mortared securely to the floor. This block showed vertical faces on both its north and west sides, the latter having received a vertical rendering one inch thick of plaster painted red. The mortar and plaster indicated that it had formed part of the original Roman building."* (Fletcher & Meates 1969. 280).



**Fig. 17** Irvine thought that the dividing stone wall between the *cella* and the nave had been built by the KAS in 1872 "as a retaining wall", but Hawley and Livett in 1926 state that it was part of the original medieval building "on earlier foundations" and allowed no access to the 'Roman' *cella* of Building A. Canon Livett was emphatic that "the original building (*Building A*) had been allowed to get into a state of ruin" and that it had ceased to be used, the western section only being used as the church. This drawing by Irvine shows in some detail the 'Roman' altar, the dividing wall, and the trenches dug by the KAS in 1872.

They surmised that at the east end of the Roman building a "podium, pedestal or an altar or indeed a podium supporting a pedestal or altar." For supporting evidence they cite the Romano-Christian church at Silchester where no podium seems to have existed; but a mosaic floor, five feet square may have supported the altar. Fletcher and Meates initial investigation focused on whether the surviving 'Roman' structure was part of a typical Romano-Celtic temple with an external ambulatory. Meates wrote:

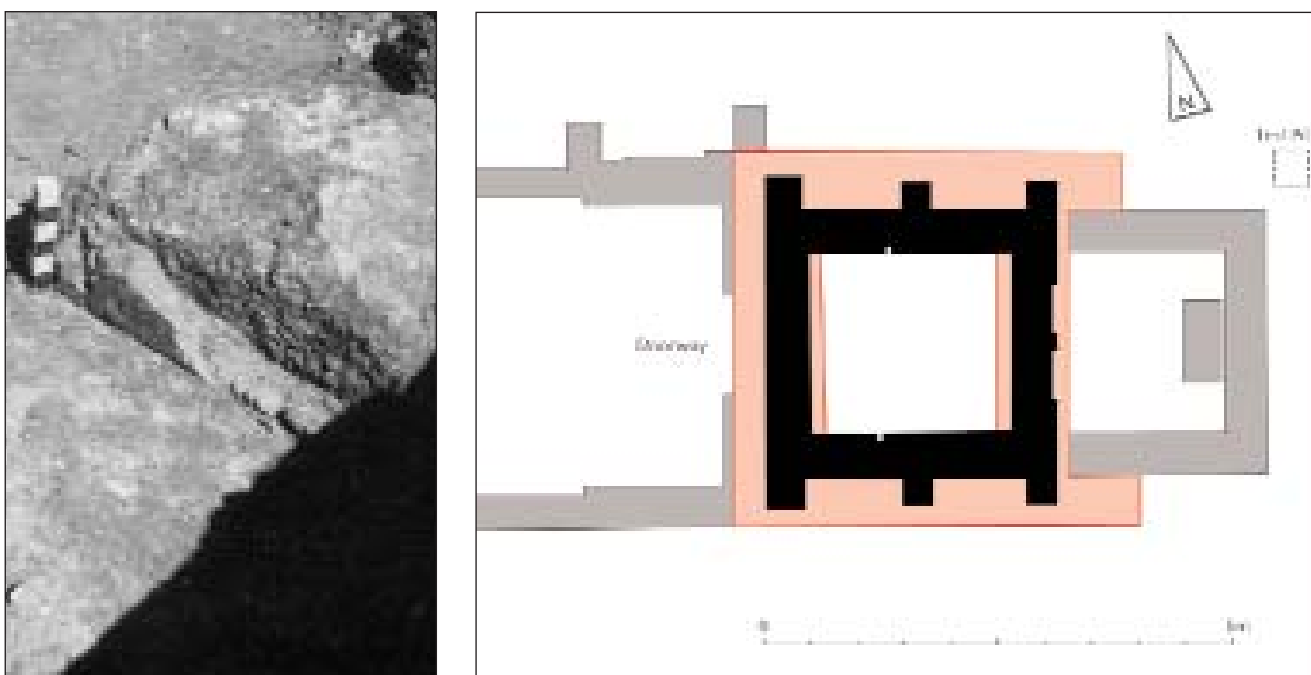
*"The distinguishing feature of such temples in Britain, numerous examples of which are known to have existed, including a number in Kent, is the square plan, with one square inside another. It is assumed that the inner hall housed the deity and was surrounded by either an open or closed ambulatory for votives to the shrine. The average width of the ambulatory of Romano-Celtic temples in Britain is eight feet. A north-south section was therefore cut 15 feet southward from the centre of the south wall and eight feet northward from the centre of the north wall, to look for any traces of a peristyle wall of which none was found."* (Fletcher & Meates 1969)

The foundation raft uncovered by Fletcher and Meates on which the present 'Roman' building sits is disturbing. Taylor and Yonge wrote in 1981 that "the rather complex plan of the mortared-flint raft of the *cella* is strangely unrelated to that of the simple square building which it supports" (Taylor and Yonge 1981: 142).

Fletcher and Meates explanation of this point was not convincing. They suggest that when the foundations were built "the length of the building had not necessarily been decided: "Roman builders often tended to be lavish with their foundation, and to lay out a much larger foundation that was required" (Fletcher & Meates 1969: 277).

Photographs and the unpublished section drawings by Fletcher and Meates show quite clearly that the first courses of the foundations are of a different build and a different footprint than the present 'Roman' building. Indeed one of the drawings shows the remains of an earlier Roman wall further to the north than the surviving structure.

One other important discovery by Fletcher and Meates was the "positive evidence of a floor." Inside the building an area of *opus signinum* floor was uncovered along the inside of the north wall



**Fig. 18** Photograph by Meates in 1968 showing the altar base on the east wall inside the *cella* building. The horizontal *opus* floor is continued vertically up the outer face of the altar. Both Irvine and Hawley had noted its existence. Hawley wrote that a burial was found under the altar, and initially Meates thought he also had burials. The Roman foundation (right) as exposed by Fletcher and Meates (pink) shows that it was probably not built for the later building (black) sitting on it. The foundations are likely to be for a two-roomed *cella* of a Romano-Celtic temple.

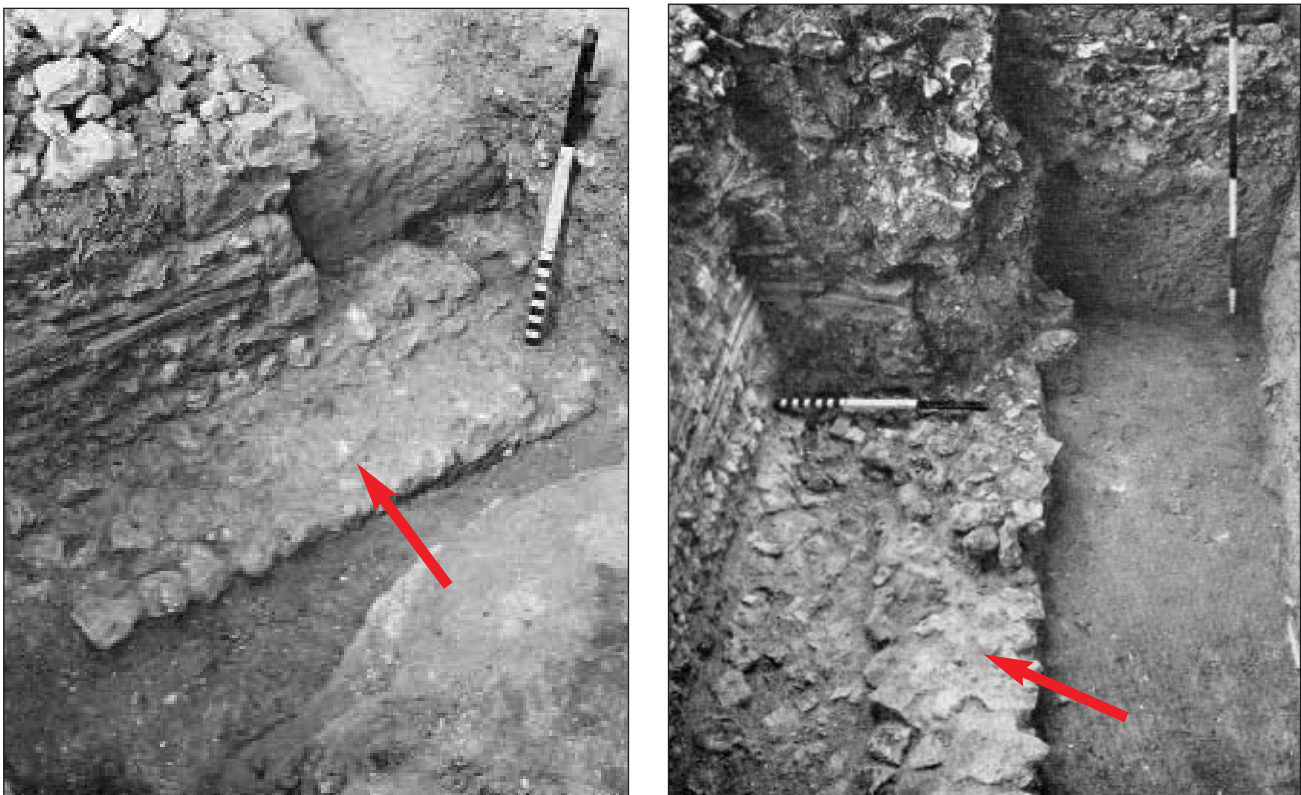
where a quarter round fillet was still attached to the lowest double tile course. The floor surface had survived in large patches and was about three inches thick laid on a rubble subfloor of about 3-6 inches which overlaid a packing of clay which averaged about two feet in thickness which itself lay upon the undisturbed clay and flint subsoil.

A small pit was observed almost in the centre of the building and Fletcher and Meates excavated an east-west section. The 'Roman' *opus signinum* floor had been cut through "perhaps originally for the insertion of a burial" (Fletcher & Meates 1969: 279) or more likely to see if there was a burial there. The backfill contained large fragments of tile, greensand stone, fragments and parts of the *opus signinum* floor. "No datable object was obtained from the pit filling" (Fletcher & Meates 1969: 280) or indeed anywhere else in the interior of the 'Roman' building, apart from three sherds of Roman flagons dating from the 2nd century and found in the "packing below the Roman floor".

This is a point of some importance – no Roman pottery was retrieved by Fletcher or Meates from any of the stratified layers of 'Roman flooring'. An area of about four metres square was investigated by Meates and no Roman (or indeed any other period) pottery sherds were recovered and yet archaeologists from the KAFS working in Roman buildings (campaign of 2005) just a few metres away recovered many hundreds of Roman pottery sherds on top of floors, in floors and below floors.

Hawley and Livett excavating in 1926 also remarked on the lack of Roman finds from within the stratified levels inside the 'Roman' building.

Fletcher and Meates were fully aware of the importance of pottery sherds for dating purposes. At Lullingstone working just outside the Romano-Celtic 'mausoleum' Meates found "the surface of the path contained a few sherds of second century pottery trodden into it" (Meates 1977: 127). Interestingly, and never widely published is Meates thoughts on the ongoing excavation



**Fig. 19** Two photographs taken by Meates of the 1968 excavations show the remains of an earlier Roman building. The flint wall remains (left) are inside the *cella* on the west side and sitting on the foundation raft whilst on the north side outside, the remains of an earlier Roman wall can be seen both in the photograph and in Meates section drawing.

discoveries. Writing in the 1968 summer edition of the *Faversham Magazine* he outlined his excavation strategy:

*"The plan of excavation was simple. This consists of a north-south section across the centre of the (Roman) building and a long east-west section including part of the chancel and part of the nave. Four separate grids were thus devised for investigation of the interior of the central portion. On excavation it quickly became clear that the latter was indeed of Roman build and date."* (Meates 1968: 20)

Meates further wrote that: "Excavation was taken down to foundation level inside the walls, and outside the south wall, all to below the levels reached in the former excavation. Both the west and south walls showed projecting rafts of carefully packed flints, with mortar, and a chalk spread on the south exterior. There is also slight evidence of exterior buttresses to the south and north walls, cut away when the medieval additions were made" (Meates 1968: 21).

Although Meates was sure of the provenance of the 'Roman' building, particularly since he had uncovered large areas of *opus signinum* floor with a quarter-round moulding Meates also uncovered:

*"Three possible inhumations were also found within the (Roman) building, all at foundation level and beneath the level of the opus signinum floor. Two lay north-south along the east wall, with the third along the south wall. In appearance these burials may have been in wooden coffins, the wood of which is thick, uneven and much carbonized by decay. A packing of fine sand accompanies all three, a phenomenon which has been noted to be of frequent*



**Fig. 20** According to Meates: "the plan of excavation was simple. This consisted of a north-south section across the centre of the building, and a long east-west section including part of the chancel and part of the nave. Four separate grids were thus devised for investigation of the interior of the central portion. On excavation it quickly became clear that the latter was indeed of Roman build and date, the remains of an *opus signinum* floor, smoothly rendered, with quarter round moulding coming to light. Remains of red painted wall-plaster was found still to adhere to the face of the wall...The quarter-round moulding had stopped at each end of the stone sill of the western doorway, showing that this (*sill*) was part of the original Roman construction" (Meates, *Faversham Magazine*, Summer 1968).



*occurrence at East Hill, Dartford. These possible burials remain to be investigated, when their character, period and significance will be established. They do not appear to have been reached at the previous excavation (by the Kent Archaeological Society). If they prove to be burials of Roman date"..... (Meates 1968: 21).*

In his report of 1969 Meates amends his earlier observations about being three burials and writes: "The excavations conducted in 1872 by the Kent Archaeological Society involved trenching not only along the faces of the north and south exterior but also along the east, south and west of the interior" (Fletcher & Meates 1969: 278).

In his section drawing of 1969 (A-A Fletcher & Meates 1969: Fig 4) Meates has had a complete change of interpretation and the possible burials of 1968 are annotated 'KAS Trench with carbonised planks'.

Meates continued: "A sample was submitted to the British Museum who produced a date of



**Fig. 21** The photograph (top) taken by Meates of the internal south wall of Building A shows the possible altar rail socket or slot as noted by Irvine in 1875. Of particular interest is the internal bench built into the wall itself on both the south and north sides. Other early medieval churches are now known to have had this feature including St Helen's, Isles of Scilly and at Ardwall Island (Dumfries and Galloway). The monolith step (above) shows considerable wear and if Meates is correct in that it was part of the original build then it does suggest a congregational use of the building in the early medieval period as according to Irvine the medieval and post-medieval floors had covered the step and no further wear would have taken place- or the step is Roman and re-used in the later 'Roman' building.

AD550 +/- 110 years.

It was noted that the material was not pure 'charcoal' but included traces of iron oxide which could suggest nails were part of the original assemblage.

Again, Hawley and Livett working in 1926 had stated that "there had been several interments both in the chapel and the nave....on the north side of the chapel (*Building A*) there had been two burials...Canon Livett mentioned that a burial was found under the altar" (*East Kent News* May 22nd: 1926).

Interestingly Irvine's drawings recorded just months after the Kent Archaeological Societies excavation in 1872 show where the 1872 trenches were dug – and the trench dug along the inside of the east wall is not deep enough to impact on the levels Meates reached. It is possible that Meates original assumption in the summer of 1968– that there were inhumation burials in wooden coffins seems to be borne out by the British Museum Carbon-14 dates.

The evidence revealed by earlier excavators- the side seating, the wear on the entrance step, the contemporary altar alongside the east wall with probable burials under it- attested by two archaeologists in separate campaigns, and dated by Carbon 14 to the 6th-7th century, the lack of Roman pottery and coins in the stratification inside of the building.

The very build itself on ill-fitting Roman foundations suggest the building that has survived (*Building A*) was most likely built after AD410, and most likely in the 6th or 7th centuries on earlier Roman foundations.



**Fig. 22** The wall (left) is part of the structure of the *cella* (*Building A*). The build is unlikely to be of a Roman date, the layers of broken tiles, bricks and flints is in the same chaotic style as the early churches of St Martins in Canterbury, Lower Halstow, and Teynham most of which are reputed to have been built in the 7th-8th centuries.

## 7. The Romano-Celtic temple: A typology

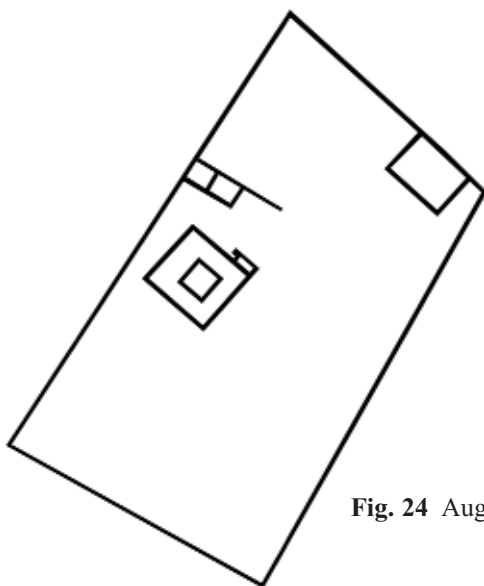


Fig. 24 Augst

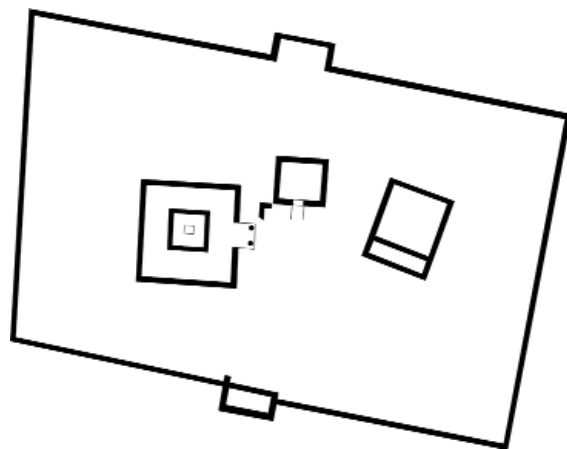


Fig. 25 Loubers

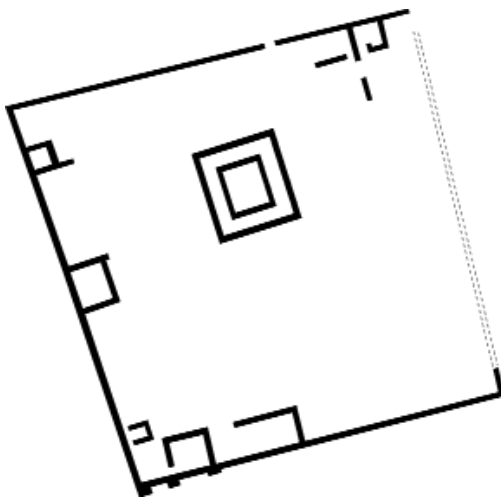


Fig. 23 Steinsel

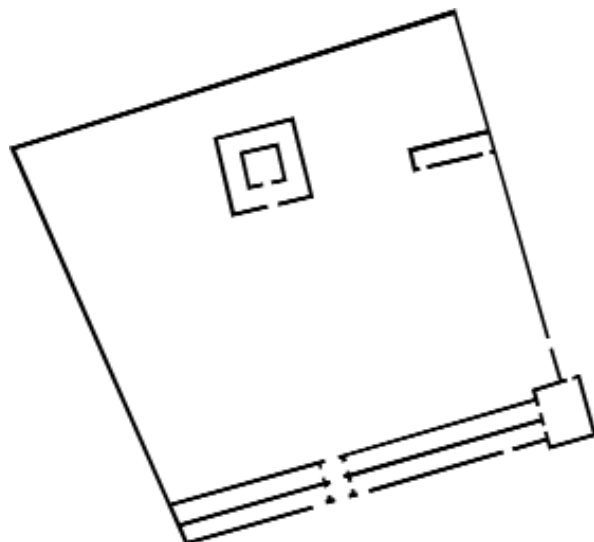


Fig. 26 Matagne-La-Grande

**The accepted use** of the term ‘Romano-Celtic temple’ is taken to mean a square, rectangular, circular or polygonal building called a *cella* which is surrounded by an ambulatory. The essence of the layout is usually two concentric functional spaces. The architectural nomenclature we now use was first formalised by Wheeler and refined by Lewis (1966) and Warwick Rodwell (1980).

It has been shown by both scholars that the Romano-Celtic temple had its roots in the Iron Age and developed into its final form in the Roman period.

It is recognised that reconstruction of the type is fraught with difficulties and is usually based on the surviving *cellae* at Autun and Périgueux, the Titelberg relief (Lewis, 1966, Fig 43) and a Roman coin of Augustus 29-27 BC albeit minted in a part of the Roman Empire devoid of Romano-Celtic temples. However, the coin shows a temple with a tower-like *cella* and a colonnaded portico in front.

It is usually assumed by past excavators that the two concentric circuits of a Romano-Celtic temple are contemporary in construction, but this is not necessarily the case.

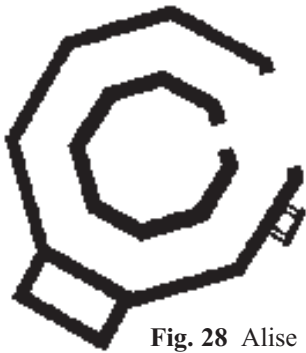


Fig. 28 Alise



Fig. 27 Cocheren



Fig. 29 Polygonal Romano-Celtic temples are not unknown (left) It was normal for the door to face east or south-east. Many of these buildings were raised above ground level on a podium or plinth with an open colonnaded ambulatory (above) which may or may not, as at Stone Chapel, survive in the archaeological record.

Ambulatories could be and were added to simple *cellae*. The Lullingstone temple-mausoleum is an example often cited although Warwick Rodwell suggested that Meates, the excavator showed: "a basic lack of understanding of the most elementary building matters (*of Lullingstone temple*) and it has led the excavators to present conclusions which are in headlong collision with the evidence and a major re-interpretation is necessary" (Rodwell, 1980: 22).

Romano-Celtic temples can be rectangular, square, circular or polygonal *cella* which are contained by an ambulatory. There are usually two concentric functions and spaces one or both of which to be roofed. An open-centred structure, that is a temple without a *cella* is not a Romano-Celtic temple, but a peristyle temple as illustrated by Springhead temple II and Lewis' Type III reconstructions.

The term of 'Romano-Celtic' was introduced by Wheeler in 1928 after work at the Romano-British temple at Harlow in West Essex. Frere writing in 1984 highlights Wheelers "brilliant and important paper, based, as far as the site was concerned on the results of very partial amateur excavation supported by only a single day's visit by Wheeler" (France and Gobel, 1985: 11).

### The origins of Romano-Celtic temples

Celtic religion was primarily to do with the worship of natural forces of nature; venerating rivers, ponds, springs, trees and standing stones. It seems that for Celtic sanctuaries there was no need for structures or statues. The concept for both was probably introduced by the Greek and Roman expansion beyond the Mediterranean hinter-land.

Pliny states that one of the usual types of sanctuary in the pre-Roman times was the grove (Nat. Hist. XVI: 95). Lucan writes about the destruction of a sacred wood near *Marsella* (Marseille) by Caesar (Phar. III, 399 ff), and Tacitus describes the sacred groves on Anglesey in north Wales (Annals, XIV).

The place name element *nemeton* to be found in Nimes in France and Nettleton in Britain is thought to have originally meant a sacred grove, and only later a temple.



It seems all that the Celtic people required for worship was a piece of enclosed land to separate the sacred spot from the profane. The function of such sacred enclosures is open to conjecture, it seems they could be used for intertribal gatherings, markets, games and for settling disputes.

The cult object, be it tree, post or spring would have occupied the most important area.

It is likely that even routine offerings to the gods were left in the open. Strabo describes the treasure at Toulouse kept in the open or deposited in pools (IV, 1: 13) whilst Caesar writes about the heaps of spoil left in the open (B.G. VI: 17).

The Celts and the Romans shared similar spiritual beliefs that involved both tombs and cemeteries. Both barrow and temple evolved to accommodate different but in some ways similar religious rites associated with the tomb and cemetery.

However, very few Romano-Celtic temples are connected with burials, and on the few occasions they are archaeological investigation has indicated a hero or aristocratic ancestor worship rather than an ordinary burial.

The most well-known example in Britain of probable ancestor worship is the so-called Romano-Celtic temple at Lullingstone in Kent with its two lead coffins buried in a vault under the *cella* floor. Other examples in Europe include Chagnon, Niederweiler (Grenier, 1960: 220) and Cadra near Locarno .

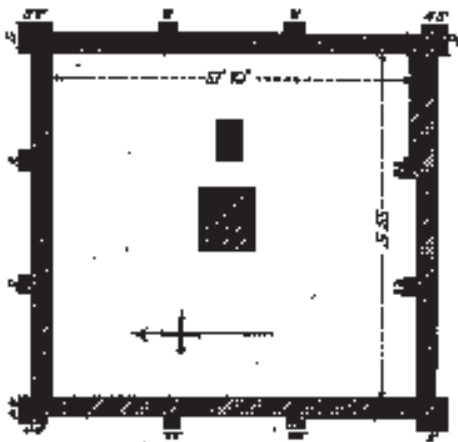
Roofed temples of pre-Roman date are elusive and although a number of Romano-Celtic temples have shown on investigation to have a Iron Age predecessor. It is considered such structures would be unroofed and probably indicate a continuing but late usage of the henge tradition.

Looking at all the evidence the conclusion seems unavoidable that the development and spread of the Romano-Celtic temple took place very largely under Roman rule (Lewis, 1966: 9). This new form of building probably evolved in central or eastern France and seems to be an amalgam of Roman architectural style, building techniques and Iron-Age (Celtic) open-air religious rites.

The spread of the Romano-Celtic temple is likely to have followed the spread of Romanization, and with more exposure to Roman ideology more money would be spent on embellishing and re-building earlier, but more simple, shrines.

### Mausolea

Several examples of walled cemeteries have been found in Kent (**Fig. 30**) at Springhead, Borden and Lockham. These represent private cemeteries of well to-do families and often contain monuments.



**Fig. 30** A typical, regular walled mausoleum found inside a square enclosure. In contrast the enclosure wall at Stone Chapel is not square and belongs to the Romano-Celtic temple tradition.

Almost without exception the walled enclosures are either square or rectangular. At Cherechel inscriptions provided details of how the cemetery and mausoleum were organised. The Roman senator M. Antonius Julius Sererianus had laid out a square area of land outside the Roman city as a cemetery for his fellow Christians, with a *cella* memoria for himself and his family. Sererianus had been a martyr whose original mausoleum had been destroyed but rebuilt. (CIL, VIII: 9585). Another inscription from the same cemetery refers to an *acubitorium*, a funerary mausoleum containing several bodies and a priest (CIL, VIII: 9586).

Family Christian mausolea were usually small rectangular structures occasionally with an apse at one end.

These buildings would hold the dead of a family over a period of two or three generations.

Inside the building a masonry platform acted as a table for the funeral banquet, while an altar may be erected over the most important grave.

At Trier the Christian mausolea were simple buildings consisting of plain rectangular structures enclosing groups of stone coffins. One of these mausolea under the west end of the present church was aligned east-west with the doorway at the east end, and measured 5m by 4m externally. The burials, in massive undecorated stone coffins, consisted of three adults and one child. The burials all lay in earth-dug graves beneath the floor (Cuppers, 1965: 172).

On the road north from Trier at St Maximin's Roman the cemetery surrounded a small rectangular building 5m by 6m and aligned east-west which contained a single burial in a stone coffin. During the 4th century this building was replaced by a more elaborate structure 6m wide by 16m long divided into a vestibule at the east end, a main chamber or nave and an apse at the west end. Within the nave 17 burials including five in stone coffins were found. Surrounding all these mausoleums at St Maximin's were numerous stone coffins.

In Roman Britain the mausolea situated in the cemetery at Poundbury, on the outskirts of Dorchester (Dorset) are worthy of mention. In the early 4th century the earlier Roman cemetery had expanded into a neighbouring enclosure in one corner of the enclosure two masonry mausolea overlay groups of burials in lead and stone coffins.

The mausolea were simple rectangular structures of mortared flint and measured 4m by 6m the long side aligned east-west. Two lead coffins below the floor were of interest as one was inscribed IN DNE (In Nomine [Two] Domine). A further six similar mausolea were identified by Green in yet another expansion of the original cemetery.

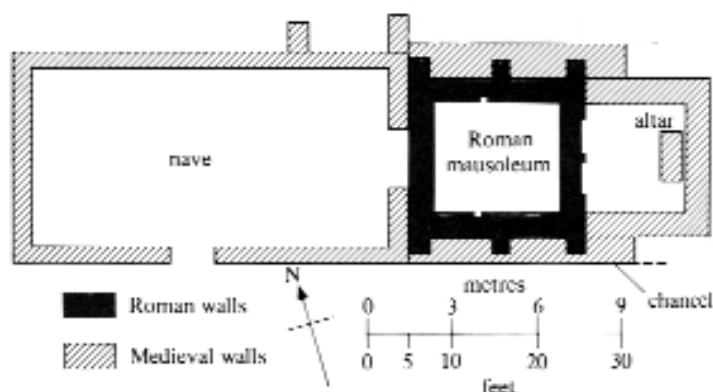
In Kent the villa at Lullingstone was overlooked by a mausoleum in the form of a Romano-Celtic temple. It was built over two burials in the late 3rd, early 4th centuries.

One burial had been removed in the late 4th century but the remaining burial, a lead coffin decorated with scallop shells contained the body of a man packed in gypsum. The graves were aligned north-south and contained grave goods adjacent to them.

At Lullingstone the Romano-Celtic pagan temple mausoleum went out of use in the late 4th century probably because the family became Christian.

Overlaying the western part of the temple was the remains of a Saxon church first recorded in the Christian Rent Roll of the diocese of Rochester in AD1115.

The church is orientated so that its sanctuary was sited over the *cella* of the pagan temple, the two axis differing by only two degrees of arc.



**Fig. 31** At Stone Chapel (left) the present accepted interpretation is shown. However, there is evidence for burials under the altar in the 'Roman' building (Building A) which was probably re-built as a Christian church in the 6th century.

## 8. Religion

**Three main types** of religion are found in Roman Britain; the Celtic, the Roman, and the Oriental. All these religions were capable of assimilating beliefs, rites and practices from each other. (Cumont 1922).



**Fig. 32** To the east of Stone Chapel is the Roman cemetery at Lion Field and close to this the Saxon cemetery at Kings Field, which contained Christian icons (above).

But clearly the result was not homogeneous; legionary centres like York were more open to Roman influence (Frere 1967: 195) while frontier forts manned by non-Roman auxiliaries together with towns and ports frequented by foreign traders, were more susceptible to religions from the Orient (Lewis 1966: 99).

Celtic beliefs seem to have survived in country districts and beyond the Roman frontier (Frere 1967: 313).

Indeed the wide geographical range of Celtic iconography and architecture like the horned god and the square porticoed temple make it legitimate to draw parallels between northern Gaul and Southern Britain (Ross 1967: 127) of the three traditions, clearly the Roman occupies the pivotal position, both as the official tradition and as the intermediary between the Oriental and Celtic traditions. The Roman

tradition had certain superficial similarities to the Celtic tradition, for example the divine founder of the Roman race was Mars who had a wide range of responsibilities, including success in war and in peace, health and fertility (Rose 1948: 21).

This made him an ideal candidate for patron to the Celtic gods. (Ross 1970: 159).

Roman religion and its gods had traits that allowed a certain amount of assimilation to the Celtic religion through the famous '*interpretatio Romano*' of Tacitus (Tacitus Germ: 43) Roman religion was unimaginative and timid, whereas the Greeks uncovered their heads for prayer to expose themselves to divine influence, the Romans covered their to avert evil omens (Ferguson, 1970: 99) and yet, almost all Roman mythology was derived from Greece. Each Greek and Roman god had their own special sphere of influence: the Romans were very careful to address the right god on the right occasion by the right name (Catullus XXXIV: 21-2).

Elaborate rituals were enacted to offer prayers to the gods or god. A veiled priest was attended by various individuals, all of whom had a particular role to play in the ceremony.

The sacrifice, as all pagan sacrifices were, is being performed in the open. The ritual is unlike anything practiced in the Christian faith. The first requirement was that there was nobody present who would contaminate the proceedings. Women, for instance, were excluded from sacrifices to Hercules and Mars. Next, the priest (*papa*) and those who are involved in the sacrifice wash their hands in holy water. Silence is then called for by the herald (*farete linguis*) "check your tongues". The flute player starts to play; he is employed to drown out any extraneous noises. The priests cover their heads with the folds of their togas, again to muffle any noises that may intrude on their thoughts, and taking up a platter heaped with sacred flour mixed with salt (*mola salsa*), sprinkled the mixture between the horns of the animal held firm by the attendants and over the sacrificial knife. The bull then had all its decorations removed while an attendant symbolically drew a knife along its back from head to tail.

It was at this point in the service that the prayer was made. The prayer has to be carefully written and memorised, any mistake at this point invalidated the entire ceremony.

The suppliant, standing, turned towards the cult-statue within the temple.

The climax of the ceremony had now been reached. The *papa*, standing on the right of the

animal, asked, “Do I strike?” (*agone*) and, on being told yes, struck the animal’s head with his hammer. The stunned animal would sink to its knees, then the knife-man (*cultravius*) stepped forward, lifted the animal’s head to the gods and slit its throat. Blood spurted everywhere, the moment of death was important, it had to be a clean death without incident.

The animal was then dismembered and the internal organs removed for inspection. These had to be perfect, because the inside of the animal was as important as the outside.

These organs, called *exta*, were cut into small pieces (*prosecta*) and put on the altar for the gods to consume as the meat was burnt in the flames. The whole procedure was detailed and exact, perfected by generations of tradition.

In the hands of skilled priests a sacrifice was both devout and moving (Wilkinson 2003: 176).

Death to the Romans was a final state, departed souls living in an underground Hades and Elysium or in the paradise across the ocean the Isles of the Blest (Toynbee 1971: 33-9) unless of course you were the Emperor who would on death, subject to certain criteria and procedures become a god. Roman tombs are inscribed ‘We are mortal, not immortal (*Sumus mortals immortals non sumus*).

The Romans buried their dead by inhumation or cremation and occasionally by embalming. Cremation was the dominant rite until the advent of Christianity, with the burial of the ashes in a tomb to shield the dead from the view of the gods of whom the deceased had no further need. The deceased was laid to rest, wearing a toga, on a litter or couch and if he were a magistrate, bearing his badges of office. The funeral procession would pass through the town to the place of cremation where he was burnt on a pyre and his ashes gathered and placed in a glass or pottery urn. If glass it was usually put inside a lead container. The container was then deposited in the sacred enclosure of the tomb and a bust erected to mark the spot (Wilkinson 2003: 183).

When the Romans conquered the Celts they came into contact with a belief that offered life after death. Caesar wrote: “The cardinal doctrine which they (the Celts) seek to teach is that souls do not die but after death pass from one to another (Caesar de Bello Gallico VI: 14).



**Fig. 33** The painted plaster retrieved from the Christian House Church at Lullingstone in Kent is unique in Britain. It dates from the 4th century and shows a large Chi-Rho monogram, set in a wreath and flanked by painted columns. The discovery of these images provide the most most significant evidence for early Christian worship in Kent.



It was this belief that led Lewis to suggest that the worship of the dead and afterlife was one of the roots from which the Romano-Celtic temple grew (Lewis 1966: 6). Indeed the Celts belief in an afterlife remained so dominant in the Romanised territories of southern Britain, northern Gaul and Germany that the marked presence of mainly Celtic deities with or without '*interpretatio Romano*' may be highlighted by the special type of Romano-Celtic temples which prospered throughout the first four centuries after the birth of Christ.

Oriental cults of which Christianity is one offered their initiates a purer life and life after death. Mithras offered life after death to its exclusively male devotees, Isis, on the other hand welcomed both sexes, as long as they were rich, whilst Christianity offered immortality, subject to certain criteria to all its devotees. Most of the Oriental cults ritual for immortality were performed on initiation rather than at the moment of death. With the expectation of an afterlife there was a move away from cremation to inhumation.

Christianity from its earliest days was very much concerned with death, burial and resurrection. Cemeteries, the dormitories of those awaiting the second coming were important establishments and followed a ritual established by the earliest Christians. The origins of the Christian burial rite are made quite clear by Athanasius and follow the Jewish custom based on the burial of Christ (Athanasius *Vita Antonii* 90 & Migne XXVI: 968).

Tertullian also states the Christian criteria for burial (Tertullian *De Resurrectione Carnis*: CXXVII) which follows the Gospel account (John 19: 39-42).

The central importance of the Christian belief in bodily resurrection, requiring the corpse to be protected by inhumation in stone cists, wooden coffins and shrouds, until the Day of Judgement (James 1992: 102).

By the late 2nd, early 3rd centuries Christian teachers such as Justin Martyr in Rome and Tertullian in Carthage were proposing the literal resurrection of the body at the moment of Resurrection. This concept proved more popular in the west. Indeed, the Roman authorities at Lyon in AD177 after martyring the Christians denied the request of the relatives for a Christian burial and cremated the bodies and scattered the ashes removing any hope of resurrection. (Eusebius *Hist Eccles* 1V Ch. 1: 61-63).

The account of John, (John 19: 39-42) touches on another important point; that the dead body should be placed in a grave not previously occupied. We have a contemporary account of the importance of this from Sidonius Apollinaris who writes about the near desecration of his grandfathers grave who had been Praetorian Prefect of Gaul under Constantine III in AD408 and been baptised a Christian. Sidonius was on his way to Clermont-Ferrand from his estate at Avitacum when he came to the cemetery where his grandfather was buried and saw gravediggers cutting a new grave through his grandfather's grave. The desecration was stopped and the gravediggers severely beaten (Sidonius Apollinaris Book III: letter XII).

Equally important as the grave not being disturbed and therefore preserving the body intact for a physical resurrection is the placing of the grave near to some holy person. The proximity to such a holy martyr or Bishop was thought to guarantee salvation as the person would act as patron at the Judgement.

Belief about resurrection probably lies behind the custom of orienting Christian burials with the head to the west, a custom presumably originating in the Christian practice of facing east in prayer, which in turn, arises from the various allusions to the sun as a metaphor for God and the belief that at the resurrection Christ would appear from the East. (Matthew 24: 27).

Indeed, with Constantine these biblical references to the sun seem to have culminated in his conversion to Christianity (Green 1977: 46-7).

## 11. Evaluation and recording strategies

**Archaeological investigation** in August 2005 involved the mechanical stripping by a tracked 360' JCB using a 2m toothless ditching bucket of areas in Stone Chapel Field (**Fig. 49**) which had been identified by field-walking and geophysical survey as having the greatest archaeological potential (**Figs. 34-37**).

An area of 3140 square metres in fourteen trenches were excavated by removing about 0.30m of modern topsoil. The topsoil was scanned by metal detector and small finds, mostly Roman coins and pottery were retrieved and plotted onto distribution sheets on site. Roman tile fragments underwent the same process of recording. The lower spit of ploughsoil was removed by hand excavation, and finds recorded on distribution sheets.

Structural remains were left in situ, but in most areas of evaluation a section was removed by hand trowling to sample the extent of buried remains and stratification in that part of the site. Sections were recorded by drawing cumulative sections which recorded more information and in a more comprehensive manner than the usual side of trench method. The O.D. heights for published sections are to found in the the selection of published drawings at the back of this report and will be in the forthcoming CD-Rom archive.

The detailed planning of rubble spreads proved invaluable in the elucidation of the post-Roman phases and the vigorous recovery of the available environmental data will make, it is hoped, a significant contribution to the overall interpretation of the site.

Stone Chapel Field is usually planted with cereals, by the direct drilling method, but for every four years or so a shallow ploughing is undertaken. Following such a ploughing in September 2003 the opportunity was taken to collect surface finds from the disturbed soil by students from the Kent Archaeological Field School (KAFS).

All finds including pottery and bone were recorded two dimensionally and small finds including coins



**Fig. 49** View of Stone Chapel and its field looking to the east and to Syndale and *Durolevum* beyond the trees.

were recorded three dimensionally.

The archaeological investigation of 2005 revealed extensive remains from the Iron Age, Roman, Post-Roman, and Medieval periods.

The finds were plotted onto site plans that were at the same scale of structures and features.

All context details were kept in a register and contexts recorded on a single context recording sheet.

The files containing these sheets form the basis of the site archive, which is kept at the Kent Archaeological Field School ([info@kafs.co.uk](mailto:info@kafs.co.uk)) and will be the subject of a final, published hard copy and CD report.

### Phasing summary

The structures and other features evaluated in Church Field have been ascribed by English Heritage prior to the investigation to five major phases spanning 16 centuries. The scheme of the English Heritage site phasing is shown below in **Fig. 50** where a series of simplified phases plans are drawn. Their summary is worth recording:

“Remains of a chapel (Chapel of our Lady of Eylwarton) probably Anglo-Saxon and later, incorporating remains of a 4th century Roman building. The sequence appears to be:

Phase I: a late Roman square building, possibly a mausoleum or Martyrium;

Phase II: A stone chancel and wooden nave built, possibly 600-650 incorporating the Roman building;

Phase III: The wooden nave replaced by a stone nave in the 10th or 11th century;

Phase IV: The chancel extended in the 13th century, although possibly in the 12th century;

Phase V: The nave extended westward in the 13th or 14th century, but after the chancel extension.

Mid Saxon sceattas of circa 730, and pennies of Alfred the Great were found during excavation.

The chapel was dissolved in 1547 and fell into ruins shortly after”.

*(NMR Monument Report, English Heritage).*

However, in a succinct and highly-regarded paper Catherine Wolstencroft has written a dissertation for a University of Leicester post-graduate certificate which brings fresh knowledge and interpretation to the structure (Wolstencroft, 2004).



**Fig. 50** Information board at Stone Chapel depicting the various phases of structure according to English Heritage.

## 12. Results of the 2005 investigation

The excavation trenches 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, revealed a substantial Roman perimeter wall built of flints bedded in mortar on the east, west, north-west and south sides of the ruined buildings of Stone Chapel. The overall plan revealed by excavation is in keeping with similar precinct configurations surrounding Romano-Celtic temple sites found throughout northern Europe. (see Fig. 2 and page 20 for elucidation).

The Roman perimeter flint wall material was utilised by Saxon and Norman builders to build the chancel and nave which was attached to the surviving 'Roman' building (Building A) which itself is probably not part of the original Roman build, and may date from post-Roman Britain.

The Roman building (Building B) discovered by Meates in 1977 (Fletcher and Meates 1977, 67-72) to the west of Building A (Fig. 2) has been examined in Test Pit (5) situated on the south side and its alignment, which is arbitrary to the surviving 'Roman' building confirmed.

Roman window glass, dark red and yellow ochre painted plaster, Roman building ceramics including hypocaust box flue tiles, and Roman pottery (BB2) from Test Pit 5 (Area H) date the use of this building (Building B) to about AD110-370.

More Roman stone buildings to the east were located outside of the Roman perimeter wall and set in terraced cobbled surfaces dating from AD270-400. The remains were exposed in Trenches 6 and 12, with even earlier Roman buildings dating from AD120-180 found under the still surviving Roman cobbled surfaces of the later buildings (Trench 12).

A ditch (209) running diagonally under the Roman cobbled surface in Trench 6 can be dated by pottery retrieved from its lower levels to the Middle to Late Iron-Age infilled (081) in about AD120-150 (dated by a fresh sherd of Samain ware- Dr 18/31). This ditch seems to follow the alignment of the Roman

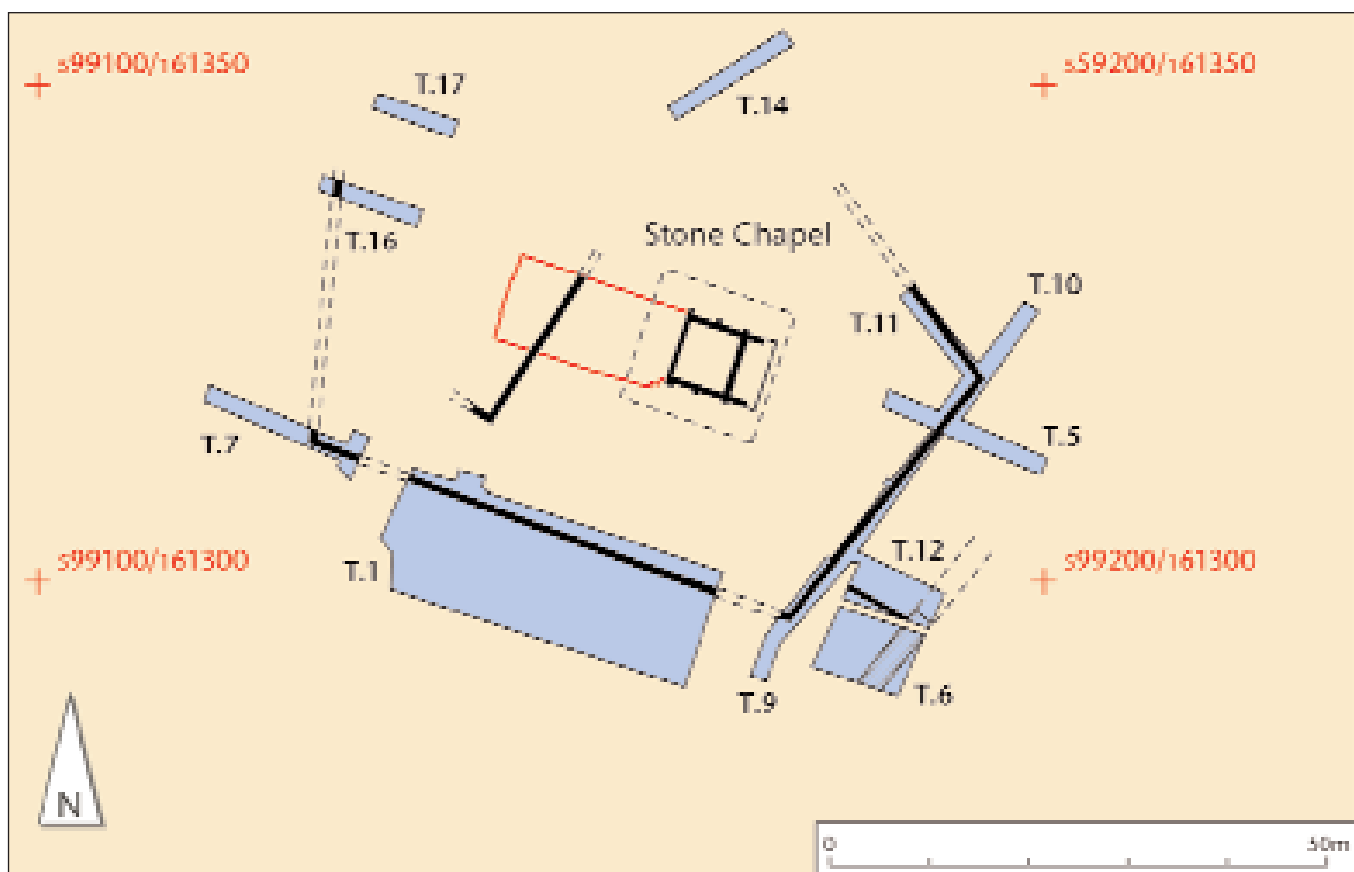


Fig. 51 The Roman precinct wall surrounding the sacred area or *temenos* of a Romano-Celtic temple site at Stone Chapel.



perimeter wall and could suggest an earlier Iron-Age sacred area as noted at other Romano-Celtic temple sites (Rodwell, 1980).

Evidence of more buildings, probably timber, both Roman, Saxon and Medieval were found south of the Roman perimeter wall in Trench 1. These buildings have a date range from AD 270-400, AD 450-650, and AD 1150-1350.

The Roman perimeter wall exposed in Trench 1 is a substantial structure built of large nodules of knapped flint set in creamy-white lime mortar. Roman pottery sherds found in the matrix of the Roman perimeter wall in Trench 1 suggest it was built in AD370-400 although a coin found in a secure context laying on the interior Roman surface abutting the wall dates from AD387-8 (Coin No. 3 Abdy Report 2005).

The wall was allowed to deteriorate to a point it started to tumble (**Fig. 55**), at this point or later it seems to have been utilised by Medieval builders for the construction, and/or extension of the Christian church attached to the west and east side of 'Roman' Building A (**Fig. 2**).

Medieval pottery retrieved from the robber trench of the Roman perimeter wall in Trench 1 date this event to about AD1150-1350.

Evaluation trenches further to the south exposed intensive Roman activity with the cobbled surface of a Roman road, running north/south found in Trench 2. A Roman coin of Valentinian retrieved from the matrix of the road surface dates the use of the road to about AD364-378.

In Trench 15, about midway between the Scheduled Area and Watling Street numerous rubbish pits were exposed, the majority date from AD270-400+ but some of the pits are Saxon dating from AD750-950.

Two trenches alongside Watling Street exposed numerous Roman features and cobbled internal floor surfaces with a hearth being exposed in Trench 13. The vast quantity of Roman pottery retrieved is late, dating from AD300-400+.

The hand trowling and sieving of exposed features in Trench 13 enabled large quantities of coins, pottery, bone, and burnt daub to be retrieved, but the paucity of Roman building ceramics suggest these Roman buildings fronting onto Watling Street, and probably a continuation of the Roman town of *Durolevum*, were of low-status, timber built, with thatched roofs, daub walls, and of domestic and industrial usage.



**Fig. 52** The view from the air of Stone Chapel (red arrow). To the south is the Roman Watling Street, now the A2. Trenches 4, 13, and 8 alongside this road exposed a major concentration of Roman buildings whilst to the east (right) at Syndale more of the Roman town of *Durolevum* has been found by KAFS excavations.

## Trench 1.

Evaluation Trench 1, situated to the south of the Scheduled Area and running west to east, the total excavated area measured about 30m by 11m (**Fig. 76**). The level at the top of the west end of the evaluation area was 18.27m O.D. At the east end 17.49m O.D. Topsoil was about 0.24m deep and demolition material and subsoil about 0.31m thick.

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed a number of archaeological features.

The most apparent and of some importance was the remains of a Roman stone wall running from east to west for about 30m (**Fig. 53**). The wall is about 0.61m wide, and is built of nodules of flint, the largest about 27x19cm, the smallest 7x12cm. There are four distinct layers of flint surviving set in a creamy-yellow lime mortar with no seashell or RBC inclusions. The top of the wall is about 0.55m below the present ground level at 17.72m OD. On investigation it was found that about 0.52m of the vertical structure survives to about 17.20m OD.

Substantial lengths of the wall had collapsed and these areas are shown in detail in **Fig. 76**. Other lengths of the wall have been robbed out, and again these areas are shown in detail in **Figs. 77-87**.

Investigation of the wall was focused on small areas of potential interest- these areas are:- A(1), B(1), C(1), D(1), E(1), F(1), G(1), H(1), I(1), J(1), K(1) and L(1). Each of these areas were thoroughly investigated and will be described in some detail.

Further south in areas I(1), J(1), K(1), cobbled surfaces were exposed probably dating from the late Roman period and possibly utilised throughout the Anglo-Saxon and early Medieval periods.

### Trench 1. Area A(1). (Figs. 76, 77).

An area about 2.00m east/west and about 11.00m north/south. Topsoil (030) was about 0.27m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few residual RBC well-worn inclusions which overlaid a stiff dark brown, grey sandy silty loam (074) with numerous inclusions of well-abraded RBC, flint fragments and chalk nodules, and it was about 0.26m thick.

This layer of subsoil (074) to the south of the robbed-out Roman perimeter wall overlaid undisturbed areas of archaeology starting with a probable floor surface of granular creamy-white mortar (062) some 50mm thick and about 0.53m below the present ground surface at 16.95m O.D. sitting on top of



**Fig. 53** Looking east along the exposed Roman perimeter wall towards the east in Trench 1. Watling Street is to the south whilst the ruined Church of Stone is to the left (North). An investigation of the Roman wall's foundations is taking place in the foreground.

a cobbled surface of well-rounded flints (093) set in a matrix of orange-brown silty clay about 0.11m thick (078)).

The pottery sherds retrieved include both abraded Roman pottery (AD270-400) and fragments of quern stones, but also 329gm of fresh medieval cooking pots and other wares dating from AD1150-1250. The abraded Roman pottery sherds and fragments of quern stones were retrieved from the surface (093) and in the matrix of the cobbles (078) whilst the Medieval pottery were retrieved from the surface of the creamy-white mortar spread (062) on top of the Roman cobbles (093). Nine Roman coins found in the matrix of the cobbles (078) probably date the use of the cobbles from the late 3rd to mid 4th century.

Two large Sarsen stones (092), possibly Medieval post-pads, were located on the surface of the creamy-white mortar floor layer (062) and more Medieval pottery was retrieved from the vicinity of the Sarsen stones. These include sherds of jugs dating from AD 1250-1350 and a roller stamped jug sherd dating from AD 1150-1250.

Immediately to the south of the robbed-out Roman wall (137) there is an area of flint wall tumble (169) from the demolished Roman wall capped by a spread of creamy yellow mortar with sea-shell inclusions (170). Again, pottery retrieved from below the wall tumble are abraded Roman sherds dating from AD 270-400 whilst the pottery sherds retrieved from the mortar surface (170) are fresh sherds dating from AD 1250-1350.

The robbed-out Roman perimeter wall trench (137) was infilled with a matrix of broken lumps of lime mortar, and small pieces of broken flint nodules. No investigation of the wall trench was undertaken at this point beyond a 0.27m sondage..

To the north of the Roman perimeter wall, and inside the presumed sacred precinct, the excavated area was about 0.35m below ground level and was trowled back to the same level (16.96m O.D.) as the external mortar floor spread (170) and revealed a demolition layer (095) comprising mortar lumps, Roman tile fragments and 18 well-abraded sherds of Roman pottery (AD 270-400) weighing 172gm. Also found on the surface of this demolition layer was the fresh base of an Anglo-Saxon cooking pot dating from AD 450-650 and weighing some 8gm at 16.78m OD.

### **Discussion**

*To the south of the Roman perimeter wall two distinct floor surfaces have been revealed, a Medieval floor made of mortar (062) which can be dated to about the 13th century, two possible post pads (092) that suggest the Medieval building could be timber built although a mortar floor does suggest a more substantial building.*

*Underlying the 13th century strata is a well-laid cobbled surface (093) dated from the pottery evidence to the late 3rd to early 5th century but it can be more closely dated by the coin evidence underlying to date from the late 3rd to mid 4th century. The Roman pottery, including a number of quern stones, does suggests domestic activity and the cobbled floor is likely to be an interior floor surface of a Roman timber building.*

*The base of the Anglo-Saxon cooking pot found to the north of the Roman perimeter wall and inside the probable Roman sacred area, and sitting on top of a demolition area of Roman material (095) is an indication that this part of the site was probably in use from the late 5th to early 7th centuries.*

### **Trench 1. Area B(1). (Fig. 79).**

An area about 1.15m east/west and about 2.00m north/south. Topsoil (030) was about 0.28m deep, a stiff brown grey sandy silty loam with a mass of 19th and 20th century material including broken drain pipes, medieval tile and 20th century china sherds which overlaid a zone of subsoil (074) of loose dark



brown grey sandy silty loam again filled with 19th and 20th century debris.

The layer was about 0.30m thick and overlaid an area of undisturbed archaeology (124) at about 17.66m O.D. which included a dump of human bones in a chalky brown black loam matrix.

Two pottery sherds retrieved from this matrix are of a very fine-sanded off-white fabric with an overall apple green glaze (M.3) weighing 6gm and dated to about AD 1250-1500.

No further investigation of this area took place and the slot was backfilled.

### **Discussion**

*An area of disturbed ground, probably the result of 20th century archaeological investigations. Context (124) is probably part of the Medieval graveyard associated with the Christian chapel.*

### **Trench 1. Area C(1). (Fig. 80).**

An area about 1.00m east/west and about 2.50m north/south. Area C(1) was a slot cut across the line of the Roman perimeter wall to evaluate the construction of the structure and measured about 1.00m in width and 2.50m in length (Fig. 54).

The Roman wall, exposed by area excavation is at this point about 0.67m below ground level at

17.22m O.D. and is about 0.61m wide. It is built of well-rounded nodules of flint, the largest about 270x190mm and the smallest about 70x120mm. There are four distinct layers of flint courses surviving and the flints are set in a creamy-white-yellow lime mortar with no sea-shell or RBC inclusions.

Samples of the mortar were taken for future C-14 dating by ORAU.

The slot to the south of the Roman wall exposed large nodules of flint, largest 140x70mm and the smallest 180x90mm which is likely to be tumble from the decayed or demolished Roman wall, some of the nodules still having creamy-white-yellow lime mortar attached to them. Under this collapsed wall of flint nodules and loose pieces of lime mortar (114) one fresh sherd (11gm) of a medieval cooking pot was found dating from AD1250-1500. This layer was about 0.19m thick. Immediately under it there was a distinct layer of brown/dark yellow sandy silt with pebble inclusions (123) about 0.12m thick. Below (123) a layer of brown/dark yellow sandy silty gravel with large nodules (120x60mm) of flint and some well abraded sherds of Roman pottery which were too small to be identified sat in the top layers of what was deemed to be the natural geology or re-deposited material (127) at 0.52m below the level of the Roman wall which is about 1.19m below ground level at 16.70m O.D. The Roman wall was seen to have been built directly on to the natural strata at this depth.

There was no evidence for any builders trench to the south of the Roman wall.

To the north of the Roman wall excavation of Roman demolition material (036) some 0.11m thick revealed a strata (134) of brown/dark yellow sandy silt with fragments of medieval roofing tile and large and small nodules of well rounded flint (260x150mm, 180x210mm) some 0.10m thick sitting on a distinct chalk area comprising small granules of chalk tamped down to make a surface (138) of about 40mm to 60mm thick. One fresh sherd (8gm) of Roman pottery BB2 pie-dish dated to about AD170-250 was retrieved from this chalk surface. Under the chalk was the probable natural geology encountered to the south of the Roman wall, a layer of brown/dark yellow sandy silty gravel with



**Fig. 54** Catherine Wilkinson excavating the northern part of Area C(1) and examining Context 134, a layer of brown/dark yellow sandy silty gravel on which the Roman wall sat. The Roman wall was built directly on top of this natural or re-deposited strata.

nodules of flint (127). There was no evidence for a builders trench on the north (internal precinct) side of the Roman wall, the chalk surface (138) abutting directly up to it, and is 0.79m below present ground level at 17.01m O.D.

### **Discussion**

*Excavation revealed a substantial stone Roman wall built of flint nodules set in lime mortar which was probably still part-standing in the 13th, 14th centuries. The chalk surface on the north side of the wall, and inside the probable sacred precinct is most likely Roman dating from the late 2nd, mid 3rd centuries, and could be part of the Roman ground level inside of the Roman perimeter wall.*

### **Trench 1. Area D(1). (Fig. 81).**

An area about 10.00m east-west and about 3.00m north-south. Topsoil (030) was about 0.24m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a number of residual medieval and Roman building ceramics fragments which overlaid a stiff dark brown grey sandy silty loam subsoil (074) with numerous inclusions of well-abraded RBC, flint fragments and chalk nodules about 0.31m thick (**Fig. 55**). Below the subsoil (074) the stratum (109) was about 0.12m thick, and was light brown to mid brown sandy silt, quite stiff, some chalk inclusions from marling, some RBC fairly fresh fragments, lumps of *opus signinum*, and a 6gm fragment of abraded medieval cooking pot dated to about AD1000-1200.

Immediately below this was a dark brown sandy silty clay stratum (106) some 0.14m thick with two abraded fragments of a Roman C97 Oxfordshire Red Colour coated mortarium (5gm) dated to about AD240-400 and one fresh sherd (6gm) of a medieval (M5) cooking pot dated about AD1150-1250.

Under (106) was a thin layer (30mm) of black to dark brown sandy silty clay (113) which sat on a surface of large nodules of flint (163) some 0.84m below ground level at 16.93m O.D.

Pottery sherds from (113) in the area north of the Roman perimeter wall and inside the probable sacred area include one sherd (4gm) of abraded Late Iron Age IA3, and 42 fresh Roman pottery sherds



**Fig. 55** Trench 1, Area D(1). looking east along the collapsed Roman wall with Stone Chapel to the north (left). The amount of demolished flint wall can be gauged from this picture. Fresh sherds of Roman pottery found within the matrix of the wall date the construction of the perimeter wall from AD 350-400.

(390gm) dating to the late 4th and early 5th centuries and including Late Roman handmade grog tempered ware and Oxfordshire Red Colour-coated ware.

With the removal of contexts (106, 113,) the remaining structure of the Roman wall (100) and its tumble (099) became apparent. In the demolition zone on top of the Roman wall (100) abraded pottery sherds of Central Gaulish Samain (13gm) dating from AD120-200 were retrieved along with Oxfordshire Whiteware M22 mortarium (21gm) dated to AD300-400 and a fresh sherd of Black shell-tempered ware jar (10gm) dated to about AD350-400.

Just to the west of context (100) a slot some 300mm wide had been cut through the Roman wall structure and the slot (038), possibly a horizontal beam slot for a building, contained abraded Roman pottery sherds and a fresh sherd (2gm) from a medieval cooking pot dating from AD1150-1350.

Just to the south of (038) a cluster of large Sarsen stones (139), probably a post pad, was situated some 2.00m to the west of another large (0.50m x 0.70m) Sarsen stone, again probably used as a post pad, and in between a substantial layer of lime mortar suggesting a floor surface (077) was revealed with eight sherds (111gm) of very fresh medieval cooking pots dating from AD1000-1200 and AD1150-1250 sitting on the surface. The floor was not investigated further.

The Roman wall at this point had been rebuilt (040) to about 1.30m width and six very fresh medieval pottery sherds (225gm) retrieved from this rebuilt matrix can be dated to AD1150-1525 and include a lid-seated pipkin and a jug.

Just to the south of the rebuilt perimeter wall a grave had been cut through the structure of the wall which contained the articulated skeletons of three dogs (047). Pottery found in the fill of the grave, a dark grey sandy silt, is medieval and dating from AD1150-1250, but also included was a sherd of china porcelain dating from AD1800-1900.

To the north of the rebuilt perimeter wall (040) investigation revealed the remains of another wall (140) about 1.35m wide, built of flint nodules set in creamy yellow lime mortar. It was built at right angles to



**Fig. 56** Grave (047). A dog is seen associated with Orpheus on 4th century mosaics, but only in Britain, and could be reference to Orpheus descent to the underworld. The funeral significance of dogs has been discussed elsewhere in this interim report..

the Roman perimeter wall and headed north into the probable sacred area of the precinct.

A Roman coin found in the matrix of the wall (140) is of Constantinopolis and can be dated to the AD 330's. A slot was cut on the north side of Area D to clarify the stratification sequence. Under a layer of large flints (163), possibly a surface there was a re-deposited layer of orange-grey sandy silt with some inclusions of charcoal (164). Excavation stopped at 16.89m O.D., about 0.88m below ground surface.

### **Discussion**

*Excavation revealed a substantial Roman wall stone built of flint nodules set in mortar adjacent to a cobbled surface dated by Roman pottery laying on its surface to the late 4th, early 5th centuries.*

The Roman wall, which was probably still part-standing in the 13th, 14th centuries seems to have been rebuilt in Area D(1) to a wider width in the 11th to 13th centuries and continued in use up to the early 16th century.

It is likely, given the discovery of the horizontal beam slot, possible Sarsen stone post-pads and areas of mortar floor that Area D(1) has revealed a re-use of the Roman wall as part of a building dating as early as the 11th century which could have continued in use as late as the early 16th century.

The grave (047) containing the three dog burials\*- cut into the area outside of the Roman perimeter wall (**Fig. 56**) does have exciting possibilities, but the evidence could suggest a post-medieval deposition. However, it is considered worthwhile to obtain a date from the skeletons using Carbon 14.

The exposure of a substantial Roman wall (140) to the north of the Roman perimeter wall dated by coin evidence to the late 3rd to mid 4th century does suggest that other Roman buildings await investigation within the probable Roman sacred enclosure or *temenos*.

*\*There is considerable evidence for the ritual use of dogs in the Romano-British period. Jenkins has shown that the dog was an attribute of the goddess Nehallenia who had a temple on the Domburg in Holland. (Jenkins 1957 192-200) and in a wider study he concluded that the dog appears as a companion to a number of deities and could represent several different ideas – death, healing, fertility. (Jenkins 1957, 60-76).*

*A dog is seen associated with Orpheus on 4th century mosaics, but only in Britain, and could be reference to Orpheus descent to the underworld. The funeral significance of dogs has been discussed by McDonald in connection with Grave 400 in the Lankhills cemetery at Winchester. (McDonald JL, 1979, 414-23).*

*The finding of deliberate deposits of votive objects within pits adjacent to the perimeter ditch conforms to known Iron Age and Roman activity (Woodward and Leach 1993) and has been re-appraised by Wait (1985) who has refined the definitive characteristics of such sites initially isolated by Ross (1968).*

### **Trench 1. Area E(1). (Fig. 82)**

An area about 2.50m east-west and about 2.75m north-south. Topsoil (030) was about 0.26m deep, a loose brown -grey sandy silty loam with a number of residual medieval and Roman building ceramics fragments which overlaid a stiff dark brown grey sandy silty loam subsoil (074) with numerous inclusions of well-abraded RBC, flint fragments and chalk nodules about 0.30m thick.

Below the subsoil (074) the stratum (109) was about 0.12m thick, and was light brown to mid brown sandy silt, quite stiff, with some chalk inclusions from marling, some RBC fairly fresh fragments, and medieval roof tile fragments.

With the removal of context (109) the most obvious feature exposed was the remains of the Roman perimeter wall (040) some 0.70m wide and robbed out (137) on the east side of Area E(1).

The robbed out length of wall trench was infilled with a matrix of broken lumps of lime mortar, and small pieces of broken flint nodules. No further investigation of the wall trench was undertaken.

To the north of the Roman perimeter wall, and inside the probable sacred precinct, the excavated area, about 0.68m below ground level (161) was trowled back to the same level (16.78m O.D.) as the external mortar floor spread (062) revealed in Area A(1) and exposed a demolition layer (095) comprising mortar lumps, medieval tile fragments and some well-abraded sherds of Roman pottery (AD270-400) at 16.78m O.D.

### **Discussion**

*Investigation of Area E(1) exposed the Roman perimeter wall still surviving on the west side but robbed out on the east. The stratification exposed is in keeping with what was discovered in Area A(1) immediately to the east of Area E(1).*



**Trench 1. Area F(1). (Fig. 83)**

An area about 3.00m east-west and about 2.25m north-south. Topsoil (030) was about 0.26m deep, a stiff brown-grey sandy silty loam with a number of residual modern, medieval and Roman building ceramics fragments which overlaid a stiff dark brown grey sandy silty loam subsoil (074) with numerous inclusions of well-abraded RBC, flint fragments and chalk nodules about 0.30m thick.

Below the subsoil (074) the stratum (109) was well mixed with the horizon of (074) and was about 0.11m thick, light brown to mid brown sandy silt, quite stiff, some RBC fairly fresh fragments, and fresh medieval roof tile fragments.. With the removal of context (109) a human skeleton (**Fig. 57**) in a chalky brown black loam matrix (133) of a young women\* was exposed laying on her back face up with arms crossed over the chest in a north-west, south-east orientation with the head to the north-east at 17.21m OD about 0.78m below the topsoil. Damage to the skull had been caused presumably by cemetery digging, or deep ploughing and the decision was taken once a license under Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857 (License No. A5936) had been obtained to lift the skeleton for forensic examination. No grave goods were retrieved, the axis of the grave was 327 degrees (magnetic 2005), the grave cut sub-rectangular/oval 1.90m x 1.05m and 0.37m deep. Shallow sides and a flat base to the grave cut, and infilled with a chalky brown black loam (133) which contained no small finds. The partially disturbed skeleton was slightly crouched, on her left side, legs and arms bent, although femur and pelvis were destroyed or missing. The head was facing east. No further investigation of this area took place and the slot was backfilled.



**Fig. 57** A human female skeleton being investigated in Trench 1. Stuart and Sara both members of the Kent Archaeological Field School. The skeleton was later lifted and subsequently cleaned and recorded by students in a weekend course on osteo-archaeology led by a tutor from MoLSS and held at the Field School.

**Discussion**

*An area of disturbed ground, probably the result of 19th or 20th century archaeological investigations. Grave context (133) is a burial probably associated with the medieval grave yard attached to the Christian chapel.*

*\* The human skeleton was examined by students and tutors from MoLSS in a weekend course on osteoarchaeology at the KAFS, and identified as a skeleton of a young women who probably died from natural causes. A full investigation and C-14 dating of the skeleton is being prepared.*

**Trench 1. Area G(1). (Fig. 84)**

An area about 3.60m east-west and about 2.25m north-south. Topsoil (030) was about 0.26m deep, a stiff brown -grey sandy silty loam with a number of residual modern, medieval and Roman building ceramics fragments including late Roman handmade grog-tempered ware dating to about AD400, Roman window glass (AD200-400) and Anglo-Saxon handmade black fabric jar dating to about 850-1050. The topsoil (030) overlaid a stiff mid-brown grey sandy silty loam subsoil (034) on the west



**Fig. 58** Trench 1, Area G. Once the trench infill had been removed the mortar of the foundation to the Roman perimeter wall was exposed and lying on this mortar in the area of the robbed out wall was a fresh single sherd of a medieval bowl dated to about AD1150-1350. It was seen that the spread of mortar (above and right) was not on the same alignment to the Roman perimeter wall running east/west and may suggest that at some stage the Roman wall had been re-built on a slightly different parallel alignment, or reused foundations of an earlier Roman structure.

side of Area G, and about 0.30m thick with numerous inclusions of fresh RBC, flint fragments, Greenstone and Kentish Ragstone pieces, charcoal flecks and chalk nodules about 0.30m thick. At the area of interface between contexts (030) and (034) a large collection of fresh medieval pottery sherds (232gm) was retrieved dating from AD1150-1550. Pottery retrieved from the context (034) included six sherds (18gm) of grey Thameside ware cooking pot dated to about AD270-400 and two fresh sherds (3gm) Grey Upchurch fineware dated to AD43-250.

The eastern area of context (034) exposed a large dump of very fresh RBC including *tegulae*, *imbrices* and box flue tiles. On the east area of this dump of RBC a new context number was issued (033), again the strata was about 0.11m thick and the same matrix as (034) but including a lot more RBC and one sherd (17gm) of a Oxfordshire Parchment ware bowl dated to about AD240-400.

With the removal of contexts (034, 033) a demolition layer (035) was exposed some 0.06 to 0.12m thick comprising a large amount of broken RBC, Kentish Ragstone blocks and large chalk nodules. The pottery retrieved included two fresh Roman sherds (4gm) of BB2 dated to about AD170-270 and one medieval sherd (3gm) dated to about AD1150-1350.

With the removal of context (035) the Roman perimeter wall (140) was exposed- still surviving on the east side of Area G but robbed out to the west. The robbed out wall trench (050) was infilled with a loose light-brown granular mix of mortar, sand, fragments of mortar, flint pieces and medieval cooking pot sherds, seven fresh pieces (29gm) dated to about AD1150-1250 and a residual sherd in the uppermost fill dated to about AD1450-1550.

Once the infill (050) had been removed the Roman mortar of the foundation to the perimeter wall was exposed and lying on this mortar in the area of the robbed out wall was a fresh large single sherd (24gm) of a medieval bowl dated to about AD1150-1350.

Adjacent to the spread of Roman mortar on the north side (141) was one sherd of a jar (2gm) dated to about AD370-400+.

It was noted that the spread of mortar was not on the same alignment to the Roman perimeter wall running to the east and may suggest that at some stage the Roman perimeter wall in Area G had been re-built on a slightly different parallel alignment, or reused foundations of an earlier structure, also this mode of construction had not been met with in the exposed Roman wall and foundations in the adjacent Area C or in any other exposure of the Roman perimeter walling (**Fig. 58**).

To the north and on the same level as the mortar foundation raft a strata of sandy silty yellow-brown (057) was encountered and thought to be the natural geology or deposited silt. It was reduced by trowling to about 0.07m to a depth of 0.56m below ground level at 17.70m O.D.

No further investigation was undertaken.

The Roman wall to the east of (050) was of a different build (140) than other areas of the perimeter wall and comprised chalk lumps (24x43cm), fresh RBC, flint nodules and large lumps of *opus signinum*, but much of this wall had been robbed out.

Immediately to the south of the wall seven fresh sherds (227gm) of medieval cooking pots were retrieved under the tumble of the demolished and robbed Roman wall (165) dating from AD1150-1525.

### **Discussion**

*To the north of the wall and inside the sacred area, and close to the southern edge of the Roman building (B) found by Meates was a mass of Roman building ceramics (033) which probably came from this demolished building.*

*The corpus of material does give us an indication that Meates building (B) was of high-status with painted wall plaster, a tiled roof with walls of Kentish ragstone and flint, with glazed windows, opus signinum floors and a hypocaust hot-air heating system utilising box-flue tiles.*

*The bulk of the Roman pottery is late, from the late 4th to early 5th centuries with Anglo-Saxon pottery from AD?850-1050.*

*The Roman perimeter wall (140) itself may have utilised an earlier Roman foundation but itself was re-built using Roman demolition material probably in the late Roman period and part of it robbed out in AD1150-1350. When the remainder of the wall was demolished pottery found under the demolition debris (165) dates this event to about AD1150-1525.*

### **Trench 1. Area H(1). Test Pit 5**

The opportunity was taken to cut a narrow slot (0.50m by 0.60m) outside of the excavation area to ascertain whether, following a geophysical survey, it would be possible to locate the south-east corner of the Roman building (B) found by Meates in 1977.

At 0.92m below ground level at 16.96m O.D. Roman window glass, dark red and yellow ochre painted plaster (**Fig. 59**), Roman building ceramics including hypocaust box flue tiles were retrieved, and the corner of the Roman building



**Fig. 59** A piece of Roman painted plaster from the demolished Roman building located by Meates in 1977 (Building B). No decoration was seen on the pieces, and all were coloured 'Pompeii Red'. Some pieces carried the negative impression of stone nodules which does suggest the building was built of stone.

exposed, it comprised a flint mortared wall with numerous fragments of pink *opus signinum* to the west of the wall on the interior of the building. Two fresh sherds of a Roman black burnished ware dish (9gm) were retrieved from this demolition context and are dated to about AD110-370. Of particular interest is the fact that the 'Roman' building (A) cill step is 17.06m OD whilst the south-east corner of Meates Roman building 'B' is at 16.96m OD.

#### **Trench 1. Area I(1). (Fig. 85)**

An area about 4.00m east-west and about 3.00m north-south. Topsoil (030) was about 0.28m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a number of residual modern, medieval and Roman building ceramics fragments which overlaid a stiff dark brown grey sandy silty loam subsoil (074) with numerous inclusions of well-abraded RBC, flint fragments and chalk nodules about 0.25-32m thick.

Below the subsoil (074) the stratum (109) was about 0.13m thick, and was dark brown to black organic sandy silt, quite stiff, some fresh medieval roof tile fragments.

With the removal of context (109) a continuous level area of cobbles was exposed (039) about 0.69m below the ground surface set in a matrix of dark yellow sandy silty clay (142). The cobbled surface was littered with sherds of medieval pottery (133gm) dated to about AD1150-1550 with one sherd of earthenware more closely dated to AD1450-1550.

Damage to the cobbled surface on the north east side of Area I was investigated and the cut (065), a shallow spade-cut depression through the surface of the cobbles was found to be infilled (143) with a grey brown black organic mix with numerous sherds of mostly c.AD1600-1800 china, earthenware, tobacco pipes and modern glass (36gm). The depression was fully excavated and the opportunity taken to sample the underlying matrix under the cobbled surface. Two fresh sherds (4gm) of Roman Thameside Greyware were retrieved in the underlying matrix of the cobbled surface (142) and dated to about AD150-300 and AD300-400.

#### **Discussion**

*Excavation of Area I exposed an extensive area of well-laid cobbling in use during the 12th to 14th centuries. The medieval pottery sherds found on the surface of the cobbling were in some instances found to be from the same pot and could be re-fitted. However, investigation into the underlying matrix (142) indicates that the cobbled surface may have been laid during the 2nd century AD and either continued in use into the medieval period or was re-used during that time.*

#### **Trench 1. Area J(1). (Fig. 86)**

An area about 6.50m east-west and about 1.75m north-south. Topsoil (030) was about 0.22m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a number of residual modern, medieval and Roman building ceramics fragments which overlaid a stiff dark brown grey sandy silty loam subsoil (074) with numerous inclusions of well-abraded RBC, flint fragments and chalk nodules about 0.30m thick.

Below the subsoil (074) the stratum (109) was about 0.13m thick, and was dark brown to black organic sandy silt, quite stiff, with numerous intrusive sherds of 17th and 18th century china and stoneware.

With the removal of context (109) a continuous level area of mortar flooring was exposed (087) about 0.61m below the ground surface. The mortared surface in (076) was strewn with numerous sherds of Roman pottery including Thameside Greyware, Oxfordshire Red Colour-coated mortarium, Lower Nene Valley Colour-coated jug and Dressel 20 amphorae (47gm) sherds. The dates range from AD170-230 and AD270-370.

Built onto this mortar flooring (087) was the remains of a flint wall (088), about 1.20m wide and



running north/south with one course of flint nodules set in mortar still surviving. Sixteen conjoined fresh pottery sherds (42gms) retrieved from the demolition levels of the wall were from a glazed medieval cooking pot dated to about AD1150-1350.

In the east side of Area J(1) the level area of lime mortar flooring was damaged and two sherds of Late Iron-Age coarse Belgic grog tempered ware were retrieved from the matrix (144) below the mortar floor.

### **Discussion**

*Excavation of Area J(1) exposed an extensive area of well-laid lime mortar flooring probably in use from the late 2nd century to the late 4th century. At some time a substantial flint mortared wall (Fig. 86) some 1.20m wide was built on top of this floor and medieval pottery dating from AD1150-1350 was retrieved from the demolition levels of the wall. Pottery found in the matrix of the mortar flooring dates from the 1st century AD and may suggest the build of this floor surface dates from this period.*

### **Trench 1. Area K(1). (Fig. 87)**

An area about 11.00m east-west and 1.75m north-south. Topsoil (030) was about 0.38m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a number of residual modern, medieval and Roman building ceramics fragments which overlaid a stiff dark brown grey sandy silty loam subsoil (074) with numerous inclusions of well-abraded RBC, flint fragments and small chalk nodules about 0.25-35m thick.

Below the subsoil (074) the stratum (109) was about 0.13m thick, and was dark brown to black organic sandy silt, quite stiff, with numerous inclusions of well-abraded medieval pottery dating from about AD1150-1350.

With the removal of context (109) a continuous level area of cobbles (079) was exposed covering the entire surface area about 0.74m below the ground surface at 17.02m OD, and set in a matrix of dark yellow sandy silty clay (142). The cobbled surface was littered with bone fragments and sherds of medieval pottery (142gm) dated to about AD1150-1550. Also found on the surface of the cobbles was a Roman brooch (SF 241). No further investigation was undertaken.

### **Trench 1. Area L(1).**

An area about 1.50m east-west and 1.75m north-south. Topsoil (030) was about 0.28m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a number of residual modern, medieval and Roman building ceramics fragments which overlaid a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam and small chalk nodules about 0.25-35m thick. Below the subsoil (074) the stratum (109) was about 0.13m thick, and was dark brown to black organic sandy silt, quite stiff, with numerous inclusions of well-abraded medieval pottery dating from about AD1150-1350. With the removal of the strata (109) the remains of a almost circular pit (145) was investigated. The fill (037) was a loose dark brown/black organic charcoal infill with numerous bone fragments and the remains of a medieval cooking pot dating from AD1150-1250. No further investigation was undertaken.



**Fig. 60** The view looking north-east from Trench 1 Area I(1) across Area C towards the remains of Stone Chapel. The 'Roman' portion of the building is just to the right of the yellow post and can be identified by the horizontal bands of Roman bricks.

In the foreground of Area C can be seen the Roman foundations of the perimeter wall which enclosed the probable sacred area of the Romano-Celtic temple complex.

## Trench 2. (Fig. 61)

Evaluation Trench 2, situated to the south of Trench 1, and running west to east, the total excavated area measured about 10m by 1.50m (Fig. 88). The level at the top (ground level) of the east end of the evaluation area was 17.60m O.D. At the west end 17.67m O.D.

Topsoil (030) was about 0.29m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few well-abraded RBC fragments and subsoil (146) about 0.31m deep, a firmer brown-grey sandy silty loam with few RBC and medieval inclusions>

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed the natural geology (148), a sandy, silty, brown grey sand with numerous inclusions of well rounded gravel pebbles. A single well-abraded sherd (6gm) of a LIA-AD60 pot was recovered.

An archaeological feature about 3.62m wide with a west-east camber of about 0.14m was revealed and interpreted as a Roman road leading to the Roman buildings situated to the north of Trench 2.

The surface and matrix of the roadway was constructed of large well-rounded cobbles (8-11cm to 12-14cm) set in a grainy sand mixed with pea gravel and the occasional well-abraded fragment of RBC set into the cambered surface. The cambered surface is about 0.50m below ground surface at 17.17m OD. Roman pottery retrieved from the surface of the road included a single sherd (7gm) of a mortarium dated to the Late Roman period.



**Fig. 61** The site plan shows the location of all trenches evaluated in the 2005 season. The (grey) road to the south is Watling Street (A2). This is probably the most important Roman road in Britain and built about AD50.

A single Roman coin was pinpointed and retrieved by the use of a metal detector. It was set well into the matrix of the road and has been identified by Richard Abdy of the British Museum as a Valentinianic SECVRITAS REIPUBLICAE dating from AD364-78. (No. 37 in catalogue).

### **Discussion**

*The discovery of a Roman road leading to the Roman buildings and possibly beyond is of some interest. The late Roman pottery and late 4th century coin found in the latest make-up of the road does suggest the Romano-Celtic temple site was still in use during the late 4th, early 5th centuries.*

### **Trench 3.**

Evaluation Trench 3, situated to the north of the Scheduled Area, and running north to south, the excavated area measured about 5m by 1.50m (**Fig. 61**). The level at the top (ground level) of the north end of the evaluation area was 19.15m O.D. At the south end 19.10m O.D.

Topsoil (030) was about 0.27m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a numerous well-rounded flint cobbles and subsoil (146) about 0.28m deep, a firmer brown-grey sandy silty loam with more numerous well-rounded flint cobbles set in a gravel matrix as the subsoil gave way to the natural at 0.55m below ground surface

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed the natural geology of a yellow-brown sandy silty gravel with large well-rounded flint pebbles. No archaeology was revealed.

### **Discussion**

*It was hoped that Trench 3 would pick up the Roman perimeter wall on the north side of the Roman sacred enclosure. Unfortunately it seems that the area to the north of the sacred enclosure has been subject to either gravel extraction or a complete change to the contouring of the field through truncation, colluvial creep or other natural or unknown causes.*

### **Trench 4.**

Evaluation Trench 4, situated to the south of and adjoining Trench 13, and running west to east. The total excavated area measured about 7m by 1.50m (**Fig. 61**). The level at the top (ground level) of the west end of the evaluation area was 13.25m O.D. At the east end 13.20m O.D.

Topsoil (119) was about 0.31m deep, a loose brown sandy silty loam with a few well-abraded RBC fragments and inclusions of chalk, flint and charcoal. Subsoil (120) about 0.34m deep, a firmer brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few RBC and chalk fragment inclusions>

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed a very dark-brown sandy silt (098) full of charcoal fragments, pieces of daub burnt a bright orange, large quantities of Roman pottery sherds and a Roman coin.

Cut into this and running east to west was a modern cut for a redundant gas pipeline about 0.75m wide. Work stopped immediately in this area and Trench 4 was backfilled.

Roman pottery found in this area include fresh sherds (144gm) of a BB2 beaded and flanged cooking pot dated to about AD150-300 and sherds (34gm) of Thameside greyware dated to about AD150-300. Fresh Thameside greyware beaker sherds (92gm) from two flagons dated to about AD190-270. A Roman coin found in situ on (098) some 0.74m below ground level at 12.51m OD has been identified as Claudius II dated to AD268-270.

### **Discussion**

*Trench 4 was cut to test the prognosis that Roman remains were to be found alongside Watling Street at this point (Philp 1968) and (Hawley 1926).*

*The dark layer (098), dating from about the second half of the 3rd century was found by both earlier excavators. The gas pipeline trench was watched and investigated by Philp in 1968.*

### Trench 5. (Fig. 89)

Evaluation Trench 5, situated just to the east of the Scheduled Area, and running west to east, the total excavated area measured about 15m by 1.50m (Fig. 62). The level at the top (ground level) of the west end of the evaluation area was 17.20m O.D. At the east end 17.21m O.D.

Topsoil (030) was about 0.25m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few well-abraded RBC fragments and subsoil (074) about 0.21m deep, a firmer brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few RBC and medieval inclusions.

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed the Roman perimeter wall running north-south. The wall exposed in Trench 5 will be discussed in Trench 9, 10.

At the west end of Trench 5 a gravel area was exposed (054) some 2.30m wide with a camber of about 0.09m. The gravel surface was made up of large (120mm to 70mm) well-rounded flint nodules set in a yellow-brown sandy clay matrix.

No finds were found which could date this surface, however in the surface to the east, a yellow sandy clay gravel surface about 0.45m below ground level at 16.75m OD two sherds (5gm) of a Roman pie dish were recovered dating to about AD170-250.

### Trench 6. (Fig. 90 & 90a)

Evaluation Trench 6, situated to the south-east of the Scheduled Area, the total excavated area measured about 5m by 8m (Fig. 63). The level at the top (ground level) of the west end of the evaluation area was 17.96m O.D. At the east end 18.05m O.D.

Topsoil (030) was about 0.36m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few well-abraded RBC fragments and subsoil (072) about 0.21m deep, a firmer brown-grey sandy silty loam with few RBC and medieval inclusions>

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed a dark brown sandy silt (055), covering the entire area of the trench, and about 0.18m thick with some chalk fragments, oyster shell pieces, small nodules of flint and Roman pottery sherds. In all some 25 sherds (353gm) were retrieved with a date range AD250/370 and up to AD400+. These included a necked jar fresh sherds dating about AD370-400, storage jars AD280-400 and mortarium sherds dated to about AD240-400.



**Fig. 62** Investigation on the east side of Stone Chapel in Trenches 5, 6, 9, 10, and 11 revealed over 40 metres of Roman perimeter walling still in situ. The view above is from the angled return in Trenches 10 11 looking towards the south west.



A Roman coin found securely in context (055) was a Theodosian [Sa]LVSR[EIPVBLICAE] dated to AD388-402. Other coins include Constans minted in Trier AD347-348.

With the removal of context (055) by trowling a slightly darker brown to black sandy silt was exposed (056), covering the south and south-east area of the trench, and about 0.16m thick. Inclusions included small fragments of chalk, flint, bone, oyster shell, coins and pottery.

The Roman pottery, some 257 sherds fresh to very fresh (2274gm) had a date range from AD270-300. These included Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware with the white paint decor still fresh, Baetican Dressel 20 amphora fabric, oxidised Hoo St Werburgh fineware, Oxfordshire Red Colour-coated ware,

Roman coins retrieved from this secure context (056) include a Constans FEL TEMP REPARATIO/TRS dated to AD348-350. Other coins are BN(FTR) dated to the AD350's.

Roman coins retrieved by metal detecting of the spoil from context (056) include three BN(FTR) dated to the AD350's, a Constantinian GLORIA ROMANORUM from AD364-378, and a illegible coin dated to AD383-402.

To the north-west of context (056) an area of black to dark brown sandy silt (058) about 0.19m thick and about 0.84m below ground level at 16.57m OD was removed by trowling and 16 fresh sherds (87gm) of Roman pottery, Roman coins, bone and RBC were retrieved.



**Fig. 63** Trench 6 and 12 with the Roman cobbled surfaces exposed. Roman pottery and coins date this surface to the late 4th, early 5th centuries. The ditch showing prior to investigation in the foreground of Trench 6 can be dated to the Iron-Age and may suggest earlier sacred activity on the site other than the Romano-Celtic temple complex.

The view is to the north-west and the Roman perimeter wall is arrowed in red.

Beyond is the ruined Stone Chapel with the 'Roman' building (A) showing with its courses of Roman brick and tile.

The Roman pottery included Grey Upchurch fineware dated to AD300-400, Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware dated to AD250-370 and fine Alice Holt/Farnham ware dated to AD270-400.

Adjacent to context (058) in the north-west corner of Trench 6 a mid-dark brown sandy silty clay layer (059), again about 0.19m thick, was removed by trowling and 195 sherds of fresh Roman pottery (1533gm) was retrieved with a date range of AD270-400.

A Roman coin found in context (059) was of Helena PAX PVBLICA minted in Trier in AD337-340.

Once the contexts 056, 058, 059 had been removed a cobbled surface (071) of well-rounded flint cobbles (8x3cm, 10x6cm) set in a matrix of brown orange sandy silty clay with some inclusions of RBC and charcoal was cleaned and pottery and cins retrieved. The cobbled surface sloped gently to the east, at the west end the height is about 1.60m below ground level at 16.36m OD, and 16.27m OD at the east end, about 1.64m below ground level.

On the east side of the trench the cobbled surface had collapsed slightly into a ditch (157) which ran about north/south and was parallel to the Roman perimeter wall about 7m to the west. 57 fresh sherds (490gm) of Roman pottery were retrieved from context (071). It included a possible sub-Roman sherd and a *mortarium* dated to AD270-400.

Two Roman coins were retrieved from context (071). They were a Lucilla VENVS S C dated to AD164-169 and a Barbarous radiate (Tetricus II type) dated to the AD270's.

Two slots (A& B) were excavated in the north-east area of Trench 6 of about 2.30m by 0.80m and 1.50m by 1m to enable a profile to be drawn of the ditch (157) running north/south. The cobbled surface (071) was about 0.12m thick and whilst being removed a single fresh sherd (18gm) of a BB2 everted rim jar was retrieved from the matrix of the cobbled layer. It can be dated to AD170-250.

The context below the cobbled surface was a thin lense of infill(157) sealing a orange-brown sandy silt (076) with a small amount of RBC inclusions, charcoal pieces and flecks. It had no pottery but a Roman coin was retrieved from this secure context.

It is a Constantinian SOLI INVICTO COMITI (smaller module) dated to AD313-317.

Below context (076) the upper fill of the ditch was exposed, a yellow-brown sandy silty clay (081) about 0.18m thick, with inclusions of charcoal flecks and pieces of burnt bright orange daub.

Two fresh sherds (38gm) of Central Gaulish Samian (DR18/31) were retrieved from this context (081) dating to AD120-150.

Below context (081) the bottom fill (209) of the ditch was a wet orange-brown sandy silt with numerous charcoal flecks and pieces of burnt bright orange daub.

The bottom cut of the ditch [428] was about 2.64m below ground level at 15.38m OD.

Four abraded sherds (22gm) of Middle to Late Iron Age pottery jars were retrieved from the base of Context 209 dating the earliest fill of the ditch to the Iron Age.

### **Discussion**

*Evaluation Trench 6, situated to the south-east of the Scheduled Area and about 2.00m from the Roman perimeter wall exposed many distinct layers of Iron Age and Roman occupation.*

*The Iron Age ditch (157), about 0.70m wide and 0.40m deep and located in the south-east area of the*

*trench has probably been truncated. Its alignment is almost parallel to the later Roman perimeter wall and could suggest that the Roman sacred area as defined by the Roman perimeter wall followed the footprint of an earlier Iron Age sanctuary.*

*The Iron Age ditch may indicate the site was enclosed during the Iron Age and if so, it belongs to a group of ritual centres which have been defined in Britain and on the continent. Ditches are known to exist beneath the Roman temenos at Harlow and Colchester (Lewis 1966 figs 111 & 113). Both are curvilinear although substantially disparate in size.*

*The best parallels for the probable Iron Age enclosure at Stone Chapel are to be found in Europe at Aulnay-aux-Planches (Piggott 1965. 232,234) and Libenia (Piggott 1965. 190).*

*By coin evidence the ditch seems to have gone out of use by the mid-2nd century AD and the dumped material (157, 076, 081) to level off the area above the ditch can probably be dated to the early 4th century by the retrieval of a Roman coin dating to AD313-317.*

*On top of this dumped material a cobbled surface (071) was expertly laid probably at about the same time as the dumped material although the range of dates from pottery and coins retrieved from the surface of the cobbles do suggest a late 3rd century date rather than a early 4th century date.*

*Occupation layers (056, 058, 059) above the cobbled surface had been divided by colour and texture by the excavators into three adjoining but level areas of activity.*

*Roman pottery sherds suggest a mid 4th century date and this is confirmed by the Roman coins which date from AD348-383.*

*Above these layers of activity another occupation level (055) was noted with Roman pottery sherds dating the layer to the late 4th, early 5th centuries. This is confirmed by the Roman coins which suggest a date no earlier than AD388-402.*

*Context layer (055) was about 1.67m below modern ground level at 16.70m OD and no later surfaces, either Late Antique, Anglo-Saxon or medieval had ever been above the late 4th, early 5th century occupation levels. However, it is worth noting that the foundation level of the Roman perimeter wall just to the west of Trench 6 is 0.26m above the surface level of the latest Roman occupation layer (055) which does suggest the area in the Roman period may have been terraced or indeed the cobbled surfaces are floors of a Roman building built into the sloping hillside and under the Roman perimeter wall.*

### **Trench 12 (Fig. 98).**

Evaluation Trench 12, situated to the east of the Scheduled Area, the total excavated area measured about 4.50m by 8.00m (**Fig. 95**). The level at the top (ground level) of the west end of the evaluation area was 18.02m O.D. At the east end 18.12m O.D.

Topsoil (030) was about 0.36m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few well-abraded RBC fragments and subsoil (072) about 0.23m thick, a firmer brown-grey sandy silty loam with few RBC and medieval tile inclusions>

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed a dark brown, almost black, sandy silt (073), covering the entire area of the trench, and about 0.17m thick with some chalk fragments, oyster shell pieces, small nodules of flint, Roman coins and pottery sherds.

The 53 pottery sherds (354gm) found in this strata (073) include jars dating about AD350-400+ and beakers dating to about AD270-400. Fragments of medieval cooking pots dated from AD1100-1200

were also retrieved from this strata but were found deposited in truncated medieval rubbish pits [170, 171, 172].

Roman coins found in situ in this strata (073) include Tetricus AD271-274, Postumus AD260-269, Constantinian or Valentinianic AD318-383, Claudius II AD268-270, Constantinopolis AD330's, Valens AD364-367, Magnentian AD350's.

Roman coins found on the spoil heap by metal detecting from this strata (073) include a coin dating from AD260-388, Julian AD360-363, Constans AD337-340, and Constantinian AD347-348

With the removal by trowling of strata (073) a flint cobbled surface (153) very similar to the cobbled surface in the adjacent Trench 6 was revealed.

A slot (A/12) running west-east was excavated alongside the south baulk dividing the Trenches 6 and 12.

Immediately underneath context (073) excavation revealed another area of well-rounded flint cobbles set in a matrix of dark brown sandy silty clay (129) about 0.17m thick. Cut into this surface were three pits [170, 171, 172] which were not excavated.

Four sherds (307gm) of Roman pottery were retrieved from (129) include fragments of Baetican Dressel 20 and Oxfordshire White-slipped mortarium dating to about AD240-400. Other Roman sherds can be more closely dated to about AD170-230.

No Roman coins were retrieved from this context (129).

With the removal of context (129) a robbed-out wall foundation (085) about 0.80m wide, and running almost east-west was revealed cut into what seems to be the natural clay at about 1.37m below ground level at 16.09m OD.

This 'natural' clay, a yellow brown sandy silty clay (086) was revealed either side of the robbed-out wall foundation which was infilled with a dark brown, almost black infill of sandy silty clay (085) with mortar fragments, nodules of flint, lumps of charcoal and 25 abraded sherds of Roman pottery (152gm) dating from about AD270-400, with a fresh sherd also from the same date range.

No Roman coins were retrieved from these contexts (085,086).

Another slot (B/12) was cut north-south at the west end of Trench 12. Immediately below the cobbles (153), a cambered cobbled surface (151) was revealed about 1.30m wide running almost parallel to the Roman perimeter wall. A cill-beam slot (116) infilled with a dark brown almost black sandy silt, and about 0.30m wide abutted and ran parallel to the cobbled surface on the east side. It was excavated, and at about 0.11m deep it exposed another, finer, cobbled surface (152) at about 1.72m below the ground level at 16.30m OD.

17 Roman abraded pottery sherds (146gm) from the cill-beam slot (116) can be dated to about AD300-400 and include late Roman handmade grog-tempered ware, storage jars and beakers.

No Roman coins were retrieved from this context (116).

It was decided to extend slot (B/12) in the north-west corner of Trench 12 to understand the stratification between the Roman perimeter wall to the west which enclosed the sacred area, and the Roman timber buildings on the east side.

The Roman wall (060) was exposed (**Fig. 64**) and found to have been constructed of large nodules of flint (200x90mm, 60x110mm, 200x210mm) set in a off-white, slightly yellow-cream gritty sandy lime mortar with no shell inclusions. Some of the flint nodules on both of the vertical faces had been knapped. The Roman wall was about 0.62m wide and was built of six regular layers of flint nodules, and about 0.54m high at about 0.39m below ground level at 16.63m OD.



Below the structure of the wall was about 0.21m of well-packed Roman demolition material (128) mostly large flints and RBC, Kentish ragstone, *opus signinum*, but also including 18 sherds (177gm) of abraded Roman pottery dating from about AD270-400. Some of the sherds are Native Coarse ware, Late Roman handmade grog-tempered ware with both camouflaged and siltstone grog filler and Moselkeramik ware.

The well-packed Roman demolition material (128) sat adjacent to the cobbled surface (153) which covered the full extent of Trench 12,

### **Discussion**

*Evaluation Trench 12, situated to the east of the Scheduled Area, adjacent to Trench 6, and about 2.50m from the Roman perimeter wall exposed many distinct layers of Roman occupation dating from the 3rd to early 5th centuries AD.*

*The earliest Roman activity in Trench 12 was a robbed-out wall foundation (085) running almost east-west which can be dated by Roman pottery sherds to the early 3rd century.*

*Above this, an area of well-rounded flint cobbles (129) had been laid, again the matrix included Roman pottery fragments that can be dated to about AD170-230.*

*Above this flint cobbled surface was another well-laid flint cobbled surface (153) which was overlaid by a dark brown, almost black, sandy silt (073) which covered the entire area of the trench.*

*Dating evidence included 53 Roman pottery sherds which gave a date of about AD350-400+ and 12 Roman coins which gave a terminus ante quem date of AD364.*

*Slot (B/12) was cut north-south at the north-west end of the trench and revealed a cambered cobbled surface (151) about 1.30m wide and running almost parallel to the Roman perimeter wall. On the east side of this feature and abutting it was a cill beam slot (116) some 0.30m wide which can be dated by*



**Figs. 64, 65** Slot B in Trench 12 exposed a section of the Roman perimeter wall (above) built onto well-packed Roman demolition material which sat adjacent to a layer of Roman cobbles dated to the late 4th, early 5th centuries.

Sally (right) in the process of investigating Slot B. The Roman wall continues to the north for another 25 metres before turning to the north-west. As can be seen in the photograph the Roman wall structure is just below the ploughzone and is at risk from modern farming.



*Roman pottery sherds found in context to AD300-400.*

*Slot (B/12) was extended to the west in the north-west corner of Trench 12 to understand the stratification between the Roman perimeter wall to the west which enclosed the sacred area, and the Roman timber buildings to the east.*

*The Roman wall was fully exposed sitting on Roman demolition levels (128) which included abraded Roman pottery sherds which can be dated to the late 4th and early 5th centuries AD.*

### **Trench 7.**

Evaluation Trench 7, situated to the west of the Scheduled Area, the total excavated area measured about 12m by 1.5m (**Fig. 61**). The level at the top (ground level) of the west end of the evaluation area was 18.72m O.D. At the east end 18.64m O.D.

Topsoil (030) was about 0.22m deep, a loose brown sandy silty loam with a few well-abraded RBC and medieval tile fragments and subsoil (072) about 0.23m thick, a firmer mid-brown sandy silty flinty clay with few RBC and medieval inclusions.

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed the robbed-out remains of the Roman perimeter wall about 0.46m below ground level at 18.24m OD. The Roman wall turns to the north-west 5.40m west of the (medieval?) stone churchyard wall.

The robbed-out wall slot was about 0.61m-0.63m wide and included lumps of creamy white lime mortar, small nodules of flint, a copper-alloy strap (SF 135) and a single sherd of Roman pottery (8gm) dating from AD170-300. In the bottom of the robbed-out wall slot a large sherd (19gm) of fresh medieval pottery dated to AD1475-1525 was retrieved.

Further to the west hand-cleaning revealed no significant archaeological remains.

### **Trench 8. (Fig. 91)**

Evaluation Trench 8, is situated to the south-east of the Scheduled Area and adjacent to Watling Street (the A2). The total excavated area measured about 11.80m by 2.50m (**Fig. 61**). The level at the top (ground level) of the north end of the evaluation trench was 13.09m O.D. At the south end 13.12m O.D.

Topsoil (030) was about 0.32m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few well-abraded RBC fragments and subsoil (066) about 0.06m thick, a firmer dark brown sandy silty loam with a few chalk and charcoal flecks and inclusions.

The next strata (067) was about 0.16m thick, and ranged from light to dark brown sandy silt with charcoal flecks and bright orange burnt daub inclusions.

Underneath (067) a strata of mid to dark brown sandy silt (068) about 0.82m thick was removed. Inclusions were charcoal flecks, chalk pieces, and flecks of burnt daub. Roman pottery retrieved from (068) were too abraded to diagnose.

Under (068) a strata of dark brown to black sandy silty clay (069) some 0.16m thick.

Inclusions in (069) were chalk granules, burnt daub, charcoal flecks and a Roman pottery sherd (10gm) of a Coarse-sanded rough Thameside greyware with a quartz filler dated to about AD270-400. Below

(069) a strata of very dark brown to black silty clay (070) about 0.18m thick with charcoal and chalk flecks was sitting on a well-made flint cobbled surface set in a orange-brown stiff clay matrix with chalk and burnt daub inclusions.

Total depth to the cobbled surface from ground level was about 1.80m at 11.30m OD (**Fig. 91**).

### **Discussion**

*Trench 8 was dug by machine to clarify the stratification in the far south-east of Stone Chapel Field. It is apparent from the results of this investigation that the Roman cobbled areas of habitation stretch to the eastern boundary of Stone Chapel Field and were ranged alongside the Roman Watling Street (A2).*

*Also of interest is the depth of overburden encountered, some 1.80m of deposition of material above the Roman cobbled surface whereas to the north-west and uphill the Roman remains are just below the ploughzone. It is apparent that the contouring of Stone Chapel Field has changed dramatically in the last 1600 years.*



**Fig. 66** Trench 8 was dug by machine to investigate the geology at the lowest level of Stone Chapel Field. At about 1.80m Roman occupation levels were encountered just above Roman a cobbled surface. Pottery found in situ date this archaeological activity to about the late 3rd, early 4th centuries.

### **Trench 9. Fig. 92.**

Evaluation Trench 9, situated to the east of the Scheduled Area was cut to expose the Roman perimeter wall initially located in Trench 5. The total excavated area measured about 27m by 2.00m (**Fig. 61**). The level at the top (ground level) of the north end of the evaluation area was 17.22m O.D. At the south end 18.17m O.D.

Topsoil (030) was about 0.26m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few well-abraded RBC fragments and subsoil (074) about 0.25m thick, a firm brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few RBC and medieval tile inclusions. Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed a number of archaeological features.

The most apparent and of some importance was the remains of a stone wall running from south to north for about 27m (**Fig. 92**). The wall is about 0.61m wide, and is built of nodules of flint, the largest about 280x190mm, the smallest 80x110mm.

The wall is constructed of layers of flint set in a creamy-yellow lime mortar with no seashell or RBC inclusions. The surviving top of the wall is about 0.46m below the present ground level.

Substantial lengths of the wall have collapsed and these areas are shown in detail in **Fig. 92**.

Other lengths of the wall have been robbed out, and again these areas are shown in detail in **Fig. 98**.

The Roman perimeter wall turns to the west in the south area of Trench 9 (**Fig. 92**). At this point of

turn the wall has been robbed of its stone leaving a mortar core (136) of creamy-white mortar with large to medium nodules of flint with some abraded Roman pottery inclusions.

The two sherds (35gm) found in the matrix of the Roman perimeter wall are Roman Thameside Greyware storage jars that can be dated to about AD270-400.

To the south of (136) trowling revealed a surface of small to medium cobbled flints (094) at about 0.71m below the ground level at 16.77m OD. This surface abutted the remains of the Roman perimeter wall on the south side.

The surface of (094) was littered with oyster shells, animal bone debris, and 21 sherds (121gm) of Roman pottery dating from about AD200-300+.

To the west of, but adjacent to (094) and at the same level, context (080) was a dump of oyster shells and animal bones sitting on the cobbled surface which in this area was crushed and burnt (080). Some 41 sherds (207gm) of Roman pottery storage jars, flasks, and flagons were retrieved and dated to about AD200-300+.

Two Roman coins found by metal detecting on the spoil heap but from these contexts include a copy of a Domitian coin probably made in the late 2nd or 3rd centuries and a coin of Theodora minted in Trier and dating from AD337-340.

A slot was cut (079) to the north of the turn of the Roman perimeter wall and taken down to about 0.67m below ground level at 16.73m OD. Numerous oyster shells in a fill of mid-brown sandy silty clay, with broken flint fragments, small lumps of creamy-white mortar, and lumps of burnt bright-orange daub with 33 sherds (168gm) of Roman pottery, mostly fresh, and dating to about AD200-300.

A Roman coin found in this context (079) is a Barbarous minim dating to the AD270's - 350's.

From the turn of the Roman perimeter wall to about 2m north the wall had been robbed (Fig. 67). Beyond this point the wall still survived and an area (Slot A/9) was cleaned off to reveal the collapsed walling either side



**Fig. 67** A view of Trench 9 looking towards the north. The substantial stone mortared Roman perimeter wall can be seen running the entire length of Trench 9 before turning to the west.



of the perimeter wall. Pottery found in context (060) was residual abraded Roman and two fresh sherds (9,7gm) of medieval and post-medieval pottery was retrieved dating to about AD1250-1700.

A Roman coin found in this context (060) was a VRBS ROMA (Wolf and Twins) minted at Trier in AD330-335.

To the north of Slot A(9) the subsoil was carefully removed to reveal the full extent of the Roman perimeter wall which ran in the direction of north for 26.80m on the outside face corner to corner.

The wall was about 0.63m wide and found to have been constructed of large nodules of flint (200x90mm, 60x110mm, 200x210mm) set in a off white, slightly yellow-cream gritty sandy lime mortar with no shell inclusions. Some of the flint nodules on both of the vertical faces had been knapped (**Fig. 68**).

Investigation in a slot west of Trench 12 has shown the Roman wall was about 0.62m wide and was built of six regular layers of flint nodules, and about 0.54m high at about 0.39m below ground level.

Another slot was excavated across the Roman perimeter wall (Slot C/9) and the construction found to be the same as exposed in the slot cut in Trench 12 (**Fig. 92**).

However, in Slot C(9) it was found that the six regular layers about 0.54m thick of mortared flint nodules were not sitting on late Roman demolition material but the natural geology of stiff orange-brown clay with flints (125, 126). At 6.20m to the north Trench 9 abutted Trench 5 and 10.

### **Trench 10.**

Evaluation Trench 10, situated to the north-east of the Scheduled Area was a continuation of Trench 9 and was cut to expose the Roman perimeter wall initially located in Trench 5. The total excavated area measured about 14m by 1.50m (**Fig. 93**). The level at the top (ground level) of the north west end of the evaluation area was 17.06m O.D. At the south west end 17.20m O.D.

Topsoil (030) was about 0.22m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few well-abraded RBC fragments and subsoil (082) about 0.23m thick, a firm brown-grey sandy silty loam with numerous chalk granules, flint and RBC inclusions. The flint nodules get more frequent as the depth increases. Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed a number of archaeological features.

The most apparent and of some importance was the substantial remains of the Roman stone perimeter wall running from south to north (**Fig. 98**). The wall is about 0.61m wide, and is built of nodules of flint, the largest about 270x190mm, the smallest 80x120mm. The wall is constructed of layers of flint set in a creamy-yellow lime mortar with no seashell or RBC inclusions.

The surviving top of the wall is about 0.45m below the present ground level at 16.61m OD.

The wall turns to the north-west (**Fig. 98**) and continues for another 11.40m in Trench 11.

Substantial lengths of the wall have collapsed and these areas are shown in detail in **Fig. 93**.

Other lengths of the wall have been robbed out, and again these areas are shown in detail in **Fig. 98**.

The Roman wall (051) was about 0.61-0.63m wide at about 0.45m below ground level (16.61m OD) and excavation of Slot D(5), about 0.60m wide, revealed four layers of flint nodule courses set in a cream mortar, the nodules on the outside of the wall measured about 150x90mm, 90x80mm with some flint knapping on both the interior and exterior vertical surfaces of the wall. The wall had no apparent foundations but was constructed on the natural strata of

a very firm orange-brown clay with flints at about 16.19m OD.

To the west of the Roman perimeter wall and inside the probable sacred area excavation revealed a large dump of disarticulated human bones (090) adjacent to the Roman wall and the debris included a Roman coin of Flavius Victor minted at Arles in AD387-388 and one sherd (5gm) of a Roman pottery jar dated to about AD270-400.

Two slots (Slot E (10), 0.40m wide and Slot F(10), 0.77m wide) were cut through the layer to ascertain the characteristics of the deposit. The human bones were dumped in a layer (090) of about 0.71m thick of stiff yellow-brown sandy silt which overlaid a strata of well-rounded flint nodules and gravel in a yellow-brown sandy silt at about 1.34m below ground surface at 15.90m OD.



**Fig. 68** Slot D (5). revealed in some detail the construction of the Roman wall sitting on the natural strata of clay with flints.

At 2.20m to the north of the north-west corner of the Roman perimeter wall another slot (Slot G/10.), 3.00m wide was cut through the subsoil and revealed a well-constructed cobbled surface at about 0.33m below ground level at 16.73m OD.

The machine cut of Trench 10 continued to the north for another 6.00m but no further work was done in this area.

### **Trench 11.**

Evaluation Trench 11, situated to the north-east of the Scheduled Area was a continuation of Trench 10 and was cut at an angle to expose the Roman perimeter wall initially located in Trench 5 and exposed for its entire eastern length in Trenches 9, 10. The total excavated area measured about 11.45m by 1.50m (**Fig. 94**). The level at the top (ground level) of the west end of the evaluation area was 18.32m O.D. At the east end 17.06m O.D.

Topsoil (030) was about 0.21m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few well-abraded RBC fragments and subsoil (082) about 0.36m thick, a firm brown-grey sandy silty loam with numerous chalk granules, flint and RBC inclusions.

The flint nodules get more frequent as the depth increases. Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed a number of archaeological features.

The most apparent and of some importance was the substantial remains of the Roman perimeter stone wall running from east to west for 10.80m (**Fig. 98**). The wall is about 0.61m wide, and is built of nodules of flint, the largest about 270x190mm, the smallest 80x120mm. The wall is constructed of layers of flint set in a creamy-yellow lime mortar with no seashell or RBC inclusions.

The surviving top of the wall is about 0.37m below the present ground level at 17.96m OD.

Areas of the wall had been damaged by ploughing and pottery found in the damaged area (063) of the wall were six sherds (161gm) of 19th century pottery.

Three fresh sherds (46gm) of Roman pottery found in the matrix of the damaged wall (064) were dated to about AD200-400 whilst an additional fresh sherd of Roman pottery from context (156), again from the damaged matrix of the wall can be dated to AD350-400+.

### Trench 13.

Evaluation Trench 13, situated to the south-east of the Scheduled Area, the total excavated area measured about 5m by 8m (**Fig. 96**). The level at the top (ground level) of the south end of the evaluation area was 13.22m O.D. At the north end 13.23m O.D.

Topsoil (119) was about 0.31m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a few well-abraded RBC fragments.

The subsoil (120) about 0.34m deep, a firmer brown-grey sandy silty loam with few RBC and medieval inclusions. The 12 Roman pottery sherds (203gm) retrieved from this context (120) are mostly jars and cooking pots dating to about AD250-370.

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed a very dark-brown sandy silt which feels organic (098), full of charcoal fragments, pieces of daub burnt bright orange, large quantities of Roman pottery sherds and numerous Roman coins. It covers the entire area of the trench, and is about 0.12m thick. In all some 447 mostly fresh sherds (4078gm) were retrieved with a date range AD250/270 and up to AD400+ although a average date is about AD300-400.

Roman coins retrieved from context (098) include Constans AD347-348, Constantine II AD330's, Constantius II AD353-360, Tetricus AD271-274, Constans AD335-340, Barbarous FTR AD350's, Severus Alexander AD227, Constantinian AD318-383, Constantinopolis AD330's, and twenty other Roman coins all with an average date of the middle of the 4th century.

An area of context (098) was removed by trowling and a much darker, almost black dark-brown sandy silt (117) with oyster shells and large fragments of burnt daub was encountered sitting above a surface (121) of well-laid flint cobbles (13x10cm, 8x12cm) set in a yellow-brown clay and chalk matrix.

Some 218 Roman pottery fresh sherds (1604gm) were retrieved from this small excavated area (3.60x1.60m) of context (117) dating to about AD300-350. Pottery types included jars, beakers, bowls, miscellaneous *mortaria* and *amphorae* fabrics, Central Gaulish Samian, East Gaulish Samian, Oxfordshire Parchment ware, Hadham Oxidised ware, and German Marbled Ware.

Roman coins retrieved include Constans minted in Trier, AD347-348.

A slot (3.00m by 0.50m) running north-south was cut alongside the east side of Trench 13 to offer an opportunity to investigate the stratification and to allow an opportunity to record a section through the various strata's. The cobbles (121) were removed and seen to be set in yellow-brown clay matrix which overlaid a very dark brown, almost black charcoal-filled sandy silty soil with almost 50% of burnt, bright orange daub pieces with numerous large (8x10cm) lumps of chalk fragments. This strata (118) was about 0.17m thick at 1.01m below ground level at 12.21m OD.

A Roman coin retrieved from a fissure of the cobbles (context 121) is of Victorinus INVICTUS dated to AD269-271 and a Roman coin retrieved from the matrix of the cobbles (158) is of Trajan dated to

AD114-117.

Some 24 Roman pottery fresh sherds (277gm) were retrieved from this context (118) and date from AD170-300 and include Baetican Dressel 20 *amphorae* fragments and *mortaria* fragments. Finewares include fragments of Central Gaulish Samian dated to AD120-200 and Grey Upchurch fineware jar fragments dated to AD150-250.

Underneath Context (118) are more archaeological layers which were not investigated.

Part of the central area of Trench 13 was removed by trowling and immediately below context (098) a strata of very dark brown, almost black charcoal soil with about 50% inclusions of burnt, bright orange daub with chalk fragments (10%) some 0.17m thick was revealed (Context 117).

Some 61 fresh fragments of Roman pottery (542gm) were retrieved from (117) dating to about AD170-270/300.

Finewares include fragments of a Grey Upchurch fineware beaker dated to about AD200-270 and Baetican Dressel 20 *amphorae* fragments.

In the centre of Context (117) a slightly raised hearth of burnt sandy silty clay, dark orange and black mixed with large lumps (8-10cm) of chalk and flint fragments with large lumps of bright orange burnt



**Fig. 69** Trench 13 looking south towards Watling Street (A2). The excavators are removing context (098) by trowling and a much darker, almost black dark-brown sandy silt (097) with oyster shells and large fragments of burnt daub was encountered sitting above a surface (121) of well-laid flint cobbles set in a yellow-brown clay and chalk matrix. About 29 Roman coins were recovered all with an average date of the middle of the 4th century.



daub (Context 122) was revealed.

Ten fresh fragments (41gm) of Roman pottery were retrieved from the matrix of the hearth (122) dated to about AD190-270/300.

Closer to the centre of the hearth the burnt sandy clay was more red (166) and in the centre a hearth pit was sectioned, the cut [167] was infilled with a mixture of soot, charcoal, and burnt bones (168) of which a 100% sample was taken.

At this point no further investigation of Trench 13 took place.

### **Discussion**

*Trench 13, like Trench 8, was dug initially by machine to clarify the stratification in the south-east of Stone Chapel Field. It is apparent from the results of the investigation of both trenches that the Roman cobbled areas of habitation stretched to the eastern boundary of Stone Chapel Field and were probably ranged alongside the Roman Watling Street to the west.*

*The discovery of a hearth reflects what other investigators have found alongside Watling Street (Philp 1965? Col. Hawley 1922).*

*With three hearths (one found by Philp and the other by Hawley) and areas of cobbled surfaces it is likely that these Roman buildings are part of the ribbon development of the Roman town of Durolevum ranged alongside Roman Watling Street.*

*The first archaeological strata revealed, a 'dark earth' (098) contained large pieces of burnt daub- the mud which was used by Roman builders to 'plaster' the wattle panels of the timber framed buildings alongside Watling Street.*

*Large amounts of Roman pottery sherds dating from about AD300-400 were retrieved and about 30 Roman coins with an average date of the middle of the 4th century were also recovered dating the last Roman activity on this part of the site to about the middle of the 4th century and the beginning of the 5th century AD.*

*Under the 'dark earth' a surface of well-laid flint cobbles was revealed with over 200 fresh Roman pottery sherds sitting on the cobbled surface. The date of the Roman pottery is about AD300-350, and a Roman coin found in the same context dates from AD347-348.*

*Further investigation into the cobbles found a Roman coin stuck in one of the fissures of the cobbled surface and dated to AD269-271, whilst a coin found in the make-up just under the cobbled floor is dated to AD114-117.*

*Underneath the cobbles another strata contained Roman pottery dating from AD120-200 and AD150-250.*



**Fig. 70** Trench 13 looking towards the south and Watling Street (A2). Andy the on-site metal detectorist is scanning the area of the hearth (122) to plot the distribution of Roman coins and other metal small finds prior to excavation.

*Part of the 4th century surface (098) was removed in the centre of Trench 13 and a hearth was revealed dating to about AD200-270.*

*Investigation stopped at this point but it was apparent there were deeper, earlier Roman floors and surfaces still to be investigated.*

#### **Trench 14.**

Evaluation Trench 14, situated to the north of the Scheduled Area, and running north east to south west, the excavated area measured about 12m by 1.50m (**Fig. 61**). The level at the top (ground level) of the north east end of the evaluation area was 19.10m O.D. At the south west end 18.96m O.D. Topsoil (030) was about 0.25m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a numerous well-rounded flint cobbles and subsoil (146) about 0.29m deep, a firmer brown-grey sandy silty loam with more numerous well-rounded flint cobbles set in a gravel matrix as the subsoil gave way to the natural at 0.54m below ground surface

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed the natural geology of a yellow-brown sandy silty gravel with large well-rounded flint pebbles. No archaeology was revealed.

#### **Discussion**

*It was hoped that Trench 14, like the adjacent Trench 3, would pick up the Roman perimeter wall on the north side of the Roman sacred enclosure. Unfortunately it seems that the area to the north of the sacred enclosure has been subject to either gravel extraction or a complete change to the contouring of the field through truncation, colluvial creep or other natural or unknown causes.*

#### **Trench 15. Fig.97**

Evaluation Trench 15, situated to the south of the Scheduled Area, the total excavated area measured about 20m by 1.5m (**Fig. 61**). The level at the top (ground level) of the north end of the evaluation area was 14.20m O.D. At the south end 14.18m O.D.

Topsoil (119) was about 0.28m deep, a loose brown sandy silty loam with a few well-abraded RBC and medieval tile fragments and subsoil (102) about 0.22m thick, a firmer dark brown sandy silty flinty clay with a few RBC and medieval inclusions.

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed a number of features.

The most obvious were three large pits located in the central part of the trench, and the remains of a linear feature running diagonally west to east across the trench at the north end.

A section some 3.50m wide was excavated at the north end of the trench to evaluate the linear feature. Immediately below (102) a dark brown-black sandy silty clay (101) and about 0.05m thick was removed revealing the truncated remains of a flint wall. Four abraded sherds (9gm) of Roman pottery was found adjacent to the wall in (101) but also a single fresh sherd (10gm) of a Saxon cooking pot dated to about AD750-950.

The flint wall, about 0.67m wide, was built of flint nodules ranging from 12x9cm to 6x7cm set in a matrix of dark-orange sandy silty clay with some RBC fragment inclusions. The truncated remains of the wall were about 0.51m below ground level at 13.69m OD.

The wall was cut by a pit (Context 111) with a black sandy silt infill on the east side of the trench but not investigated.

Three further pits: Contexts 159 (112), 160 (104), 161 (105) were located in the central area of the

trench. (Fig. 97).

Pit 159 was sectioned and found to be infilled (112) with a very dark brown-black silt with about 20% charcoal granules, small nodules of burnt flint and 23 abraded sherds (114gm) of Roman pottery dated to about AD350-400.

One Roman coin was retrieved from this context (112) and is of Constans dated to AD347-348. The pit was about 0.33m deep and bottomed out at 0.84m below ground level at 13.36m OD.

Pit 160 was sectioned and found to be infilled (104) with a dark brown-black sandy silt, with charcoal flecks, burnt bright orange daub flecks, and 40% of burnt nodules of flint.

11 abraded Roman pottery sherds (85gm) were retrieved from this infill (104) and date to about AD270-400.

The pit was about 0.47 deep and bottomed out at 0.98m below ground level at 13.22m OD.

Pit 161 was sectioned and found to be infilled (105) with a dark brown-black silty sand with charcoal flecks and a single sherd (13gm) of Roman pottery dated to about AD270-400.

The pit was about 0.41m deep and bottomed out at 0.92m below ground level at 13.28m OD.

With the apparent absence of features in the south end of the trench a slot some 1.40m wide and running west to east was cut through (102). Below (102) a strata of dark brown-black sandy silt was revealed (107). Inclusions included a large number of flint nodules about 10x8cm to 6x7cm, charcoal fragments and ten abraded sherds of pottery including a large sherd of Baetican Dressel 20 *amphorae*. Medieval pottery included cooking pot sherds dating to about AD1150-1350 and a fragment of a medieval encaustic tile.

Two Roman coins were retrieved by metal detecting from this context (107), one of Valens dated to AD364-378 and another dated to the AD270's.

Excavation continued to a depth of 0.57m below ground level at 13.63m OD. without a change of archaeological context.

At the north end of the trench another slot some 0.32m wide and running west to east was cut through (101) which was about 0.05m thick. Under (101) a black sandy silt was revealed (108) with charcoal and burnt daub inclusions. A single abraded sherd (13gm) of Roman pottery was retrieved dating to about AD270-400.

Excavation continued for 0.21m below (101) at about 0.77m below ground level at 13.43m OD. with no change of archaeological context.

### **Discussion**

*Evaluation Trench 15 was located in the centre of the site and about midway between the archaeological activity around the Roman buildings and medieval Stone Chapel and the Roman buildings alongside Watling Street.*

*The purpose of placing a evaluation trench here was to investigate the possibility that the Roman urban development was more extensive than had been suggested by earlier investigators, Brian Philp keeping a brief watch on a gas pipeline in 1965 had found an unmortared flint wall (Philp 1965; 62) some 525ft east of the footpath leading to the church (although on page 63 of the report the same wall is described as 'mortared'). Philp writes "In order to resolve this problem a series of seven test-holes was dug rapidly across the field by a mechanical excavator under archaeological control... Nothing at all was found" (Philp 1965: 62-4).*

*The three large pits revealed in Trench 15 indicate a plethora of Roman domestic activity including animal bones and pottery dating from AD350-400.*

*Of particular interest is the finding of a fresh sherd of a Saxon cooking pot dated to about AD750-950 adjacent to the truncated unmortared flint wall.*

*Interestingly, the depth of the wall as found by the KAFS in 2005 was 0.51m below ground level. Philp reported in 1965 "the wall was located at a depth of 1 ft. 8 inches" - exactly the same.*

*The wall that Philp saw was running north/south whilst the wall in Trench 15 was aligned east/west. It is likely it could be part of the same wall, the width at 0.67m is about the same as Philps wall but the distance between the two sightings is about 45 metres.*

*Investigation at Trench 15 found layer upon layer of Roman archaeological activity including a flint wall and numerous Roman rubbish pits including Saxon pottery in the later levels.*

### **Trench 16.**

Evaluation Trench 16, situated to the east of the Scheduled Area, and running east to west, the excavated area measured about 10m by 1.50m (**Fig. 61**). The level at the top (ground level) of the east end of the evaluation area was 18.91m O.D. At the west end 19.09m O.D.

Topsoil (030) was about 0.25m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a numerous well-rounded flint cobbles and subsoil (146) about 0.28m deep, a firmer brown-grey sandy silty loam with more numerous well-rounded flint cobbles set in a gravel matrix as the subsoil gave way to the natural at 0.54m below ground surface

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil exposed the natural geology of a yellow-brown sandy silty gravel with large well-rounded flint pebbles for most of the trench but hand-cleaning of the area at the west end of the trench revealed the probable robbed-out remains of the Roman perimeter wall about 0.45m below ground level at 18.46m OD.

The wall seems to be running north-south 9.30m west of the (medieval?) stone churchyard wall.

The robbed-out wall slot was about 0.60m-0.62m wide and included lumps of creamy white lime mortar, and small nodules of flint with mortar still attached.

Further to the east hand-cleaning revealed no significant archaeological remains.

### **Trench 17.**

Evaluation Trench 17, situated to the north west of the Scheduled Area, and running east to west, the excavated area measured about 10m by 1.50m (**Fig. 61**). The level at the top (ground level) of the north east end of the evaluation area was 18.85m O.D. At the south west end 19.12m O.D.

Topsoil (030) was about 0.25m deep, a loose brown-grey sandy silty loam with a numerous well-rounded flint cobbles and subsoil (146) about 0.29m deep, a firmer brown-grey sandy silty loam with more numerous well-rounded flint cobbles set in a gravel matrix as the subsoil gave way to the natural at 0.54m below ground surface

Hand-cleaning of the area after the removal of the subsoil revealed the natural geology of a yellow-brown sandy silty gravel with large well-rounded flint pebbles. No archaeology was revealed.

### **Discussion**

*It was hoped that Trench 17, like the adjacent Trench 3 and 14, would pick up the Roman perimeter wall on the north side of the Roman sacred enclosure. Unfortunately it seems that the area to the north of the sacred enclosure has been subject to either gravel extraction or a complete change to the contouring of the field through truncation, colluvial creep or other natural or unknown causes.*





**Fig. 71** The archaeological team on the last day of the investigation at Stone Chapel Field. August 2005.-

## 13. Conclusion

**The archaeological investigation by KAFS** revealed a late Roman perimeter stone wall surrounding a *temenos* or sacred precinct with two known Roman buildings within the precinct, one of which has probably been mis-interpreted by Fletcher and Meates in 1969, and is more likely to be the remains of a Romano-Celtic temple, albeit much rebuilt and altered (**Fig. 2**). The function of the Scheduled Monument is not as perceived, but is of a Romano-Celtic temple complex probably rebuilt in the sixth century on the earlier Roman foundations as a Christian church and as such is unique in Britain.

The layout of the upstanding 'Roman' building (Building A) as it survives at Stone Chapel is not the usual layout of a Romano-Celtic temple. The west doorway is on the wrong side for a pagan religious building but on the more usual side for a Christian religious building.

The internal altar is out of place for a pagan temple but probably correct for a Christian church.

The topographic layout of the complex, the perimeter wall, the buildings not aligned to each other are the norm for a Romano-Celtic temple layout as seen on hundreds of sites across northern Europe.

The field in which the Roman buildings stands is not as previously thought sterile but has archaeological features from Prehistoric, Iron Age, Roman, Anglo-Saxon and up to and beyond the Medieval period.

Analytical work by on the upstanding 'Roman' structure (Building A) suggests that the 'Roman' monument as Scheduled is not Roman but post-dates the Roman period and is likely to have been rebuilt, albeit on Roman foundations, by St Augustine in the sixth century as a Christian church, again of a type not unknown in Kent and continental Europe.

The excavation trenches of the 2005 campaign by the KAFS revealed a substantial Roman perimeter wall built of flints bedded in mortar on the east, west, north-west and south sides of the ruined buildings.

The overall plan revealed by investigation and excavation is in keeping with similar precinct configurations surrounding Romano-Celtic temple sites found throughout northern Europe.

The Roman perimeter flint wall material was utilised by medieval builders to build the chancel and nave which may have been attached to the surviving 'Roman' building (Building A) which itself is not part of the original Roman build, and may date from post-Roman Britain.

The Roman building (Building B) re-discovered by Meates in 1977 (Fletcher and Meates 1969, 273-290, and Fletcher and Meates 1977, 67-72) to the west of Building A (**Fig. 2**) has been examined in Test Pit (5) on the south side and its alignment, which is arbitrary to the surviving 'Roman' building confirmed. Roman window glass, dark red and yellow ochre painted plaster, Roman building ceramics including hypocaust box flue tiles, and Roman pottery (BB2) from Test Pit 5 (Area H) date the use of this building to about AD110-370.

More Roman stone buildings to the east were located outside of the Roman perimeter wall and set in terraced cobbled surfaces dating from AD270-400. The remains were exposed in Trenches 6 and 12, with even earlier Roman buildings dating from AD120-180 found under the still surviving Roman cobbled surfaces of the later buildings (Trench 12).

A ditch running diagonally under the Roman cobbled surface in Trench 6 can be dated by pottery retrieved from its lower levels to the Middle to Late Iron-Age infilled in about AD120-150 (dated by

a fresh sherd of Samain ware- Dr 18/31).

This ditch seems to follow the alignment of the Roman perimeter wall and could suggest an earlier Iron-Age sacred area as noted at other Romano-Celtic temple sites (Rodwell: 1980).

Evidence of more buildings, probably timber, both Roman, Saxon and Medieval were found south of the Roman perimeter wall in Trench 1. These buildings have a date range from AD 270-400, AD 450-650, and AD 1150-1350.

The Roman perimeter wall exposed in Trench 1 is a substantial structure built of large nodules of knapped flint set in creamy-white lime mortar. Roman pottery sherds found in the matrix of the Roman perimeter wall in Trenches 1 and 9 suggest it was built in AD370-400 although a coin found in a secure context laying on the interior Roman surface abutting the wall dates from AD387-8.

The wall was allowed to deteriorate to a point it started to tumble, at this point or later it seems to have been utilised by medieval builders for the construction, and/or extension of the Christian church attached to the west and east side of 'Roman' Building A.

Medieval pottery retrieved from the robber trench of the Roman perimeter wall in Trench 1 date this event to about AD1150-1350.

Evaluation trenches further to the south exposed intensive Roman activity with the cobbled surface of a Roman road, running north/south found in Trench 2. A Roman coin of Valentinian retrieved from the matrix of the road surface dates the use of the road to AD364-378 and later.

In Trench 15 (**Fig. 97**), about midway between the Scheduled Area and Watling Street numerous rubbish pits were exposed, the majority date from AD270-400+ but some of the pits are Saxon dating from AD750-950.

Two trenches alongside Watling Street (**Fig. 96**) exposed numerous Roman features and cobbled internal floor surfaces with a hearth being exposed in Trench 13. The vast quantity of Roman pottery retrieved is late, dating from AD300-400+.

The hand trowling and sieving of exposed features in Trench 13 enabled large quantities of coins, pottery, bone, and burnt daub to be retrieved, but the paucity of Roman building ceramics suggest these Roman buildings fronting onto Watling Street, are probably a continuation of the Roman town of *Durolevum*, and were of low-status, timber built, with thatched roofs, daub walls, and of domestic and industrial usage.

The success of this campaign was due to the generosity and kindness of the landowner, *History Today* magazine, Friends of the British Museum and the students from the Kent Archaeological Field School (KAFS), directed by Dr Paul Wilkinson MIFA. FRSA. MSIA

Interim report written by Dr Paul Wilkinson, May 2007.

## 14. Bibliography

- Archaeologia Cantiana IX  
 Arch Cant XXXIV  
 Arch Cant XCVI (1980)  
 Arch Cant XXXII (1847)  
 Arch Cant. LXX (1957)  
 Aston, M.A. and Gerrard, C.M. 1988-99 The Shapwick Project, Somerset. Bristol  
 Ammerman A.J. and Feldman, M. W. 1987 Replicated collection of site surfaces. *American Antiquity* 43
- Barker, G. and Lloyd, J. (eds) 1991 *Roman Landscapes: Archaeological Survey in the Mediterranean Basin*, Archaeological Monograph, British School at Rome  
 Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Penguin Books, 1990  
 Bell, T. 2005 *The Religious Reuse of Roman Structures in Early Medieval England* Bar Series 390  
 Blair, J. 2005 *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*. Oxford.  
 Blair, J. 1996 *Churches in the Early English Landscape: Social and Cultural Contexts in-*  
 Blair, J. & Pyrah C., (eds) *Church Archaeology* CBA Research Report 104: 1996  
 Breat, J. 'Account of the Society's Researches in the Saxon Cemetery at Sarre', *Archaeologia Cantiana* V, 1862-3, 305-322  
 Brow, G.B. 1925 – *The arts in early England, 2: Anglo-Saxon architecture*. 2nd ed., London: Brunns C. G.  
 1909 *Twelve Tables Fontest luris Romani*
- Catullus XXXIV  
 C.I.L. 1888 *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* Vol. XII Berlin  
 Clark, R.H. and Schofield, A.J. (eds) 1991 *Interpreting artefact scatters, contributions to ploughzone archaeology*. Oxbow Monograph 4  
 Cumont, F. 1922 *The after life in Roman Paganism*  
 Cuppers, H. 1965 *Das Graberfeld von Matthias in Reusch*, W (eds) *Fruhchristliche Zeugnisse*  
 Cuppers, H. and Neyses, A. 1971 *Der romerzeitliche Gutshof mit Grabbezirk und Tempel bei Newel Trier*  
 Curry, D. 1965 *The Palaeogene Beds of South-East England*. *Proc. Geol. Assoc.*, Vol 76  
 Cherry, J.F. and Davis, J.L. 1991 *Landscape Archaeology as long-term history*
- Dark, K. 2000 *Britain and the end of the Roman Empire*  
 Dangerfield, J. 1973 'Analysis of brickearths and associated sediments from Kent', *Institute of Geological Sciences Sedimentary Analysis Laboratory Internal Report* 47  
 Darvill, T. 1994 *Prehistoric Britain*, London  
 Dines, H.G., Holmes, S.C.A. and Robbie, J.A. 1971 *Geology of the country around Chatham* (2nd edition). *Mem. Geol. Surv. G.B*
- Evans, J. G. 1976 *The Environment of Early Man in the British Isles*  
*East Kent News* – May 22nd 1926, Hawley and Livett
- Fauduet, I. 1993 *Atlas des Sanctuaires Romano-Celtiques*  
*Faversham Gazette and Times* 29th July 1976  
 Ferguson, J. 1970 *The Religions of the Roman Empire*  
 France, N.E. & Gobel B.M. 1985 *The Romano-British temple at Harlow, Essex*  
 Frere, S. 1967 *Britannia*. London  
 Frere, S.S. 1975. *The Silchester Church: The Excavation by Sir Ian Richmond in 1961*. *Archaeologia* 105  
 Fletcher, E and Meates, G.W. 1969 – *The ruined church of Stone-by-Faversham*, *Antique. J.*, 49  
 Fletcher, E and Meates, G.W. 1977 – *The ruined church of Stone-by-Faversham*, 2nd report, *Antique.J.*, 57  
 Gaffney, V.L. Bintliff, J. and Slapsak, B. 1991 *Site formation processes and the Hvar Survey Project*  
 Gardner, J.S. 1883 *On the Lower Eocene section between Reculver and Herne Bay* . *Q.J.*. *Geol. Soc.* London, Vol 39



Geological Survey of Great Britain 1981; *Geology of the Country around Faversham*. (ed) S.C.A. Holmes, London

Gerrard, C.M. 1990 Fieldwalking results, methodological experiments and future strategy. In Aston, M.A. (ed) *The Shapwick Project 2nd Report*

Grenier, A. 1960 *Manuel d'archeologie gallo-romaine IV Les Monuments des Eaux*

Green, C.J.S. 1977 CBA No.22 *Burial in the Roman World*. (ed) Reece

Green, C.J.S. 1979 *Poundbury. A summary of Recent Excavations at Poundbury, Dorchester*

Green, M.J. 1976 *The Religions of Civilian Roman Britain*, BAR 24

Grabar, A. 1946. *Martyrium. Rechurches sur le culte des reliques*

Hasted, E. 1782 *A History of Kent Vol VI*

Hasted, E. *The Historical and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, Vol. X, 1800*

Hawley, 1931 *Research report on the Excavation of the Roman Cemetery at Ospringe, Kent*. Society of Antiquaries of London No VIII.

Housely, R. A., Gable, C. S., Street, M. and Pettitt, P. 1997 'Radiocarbon evidence for the Lateglacial Human Recolonisation of Northern Europe', *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 63, 25-54

Holmes, S.C.A. 1981 *Geology of the country around Faversham*. Mem. Geol. Surv. G.B. Sheet 273

*Human Recolonisation of Northern Europe*', *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 63.

Howarth, H. H. 1913 *St Augustine of Canterbury*

Irvine, J.T. 1875 *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* No 31

Jackson, J. B. 1984 *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*. London

James, H. 1992 *Early medieval cemeteries in Wales*

Jenkins, F. 1965, *St Martins Church at Canterbury; a survey of the earliest structural features*, *Medieval Archaeology* No 9

Keller, D.R. and Rump, D.W. (eds) 1983 *Archaeological Survey in the Mediterranean* BAR Int. 155

Latomus, T. 1957 *The role of the Dog in Romano-Gaulish Religion*

Lewis, M.J.J. 1966 *Temples in Roman Britain*. Oxford

Lewis, S. 1831 *A Topographical Dictionary of England*. Vol 4 London

Linder, E. 1940 *Red Hill mounds of Canvey Island, in relation to subsidence in the Thames Estuary*. *Proc.Ged.Assoc.* Vol 51

Macready, S. and Thompson, F.H. (eds) 1985 *Archaeological Field Survey in Britain and Abroad*. Society of Antiquaries of London, Occasional Paper VI

Muckelroy, K. W. 1976 *Enclosed Ambulatories in Romano-Celtic in Britain* *Britannia* 7

McRae, S.G and Burnham, C.P. 1973 *The rural landscape of Kent*. Wye College Canterbury

Meates, G.W. 1955. *Lullingstone Roman Villa*.

Meates G.W. 1979 *The Lullingstone Villa Vol 1 The Site*.

Meates G. W. 1968. *Faversham Magazine* Vol 1 No 4. "Stone-next-Faversham"

Millet, M. 1991 *Pottery, population or supply patterns? The Ager Tarraconensis approach*, in Barker, G. & Lloyd, J. (eds) *Roman Landscapes, archaeological survey in the Mediterranean region*

Osborne-White, H. J. *Memoir of the Geological Survey: Explanation of Sheets 274 and 290, 1928*,

Payne, G. 1893 *Collecta Cantiana*.

Painter, K.S. 1969. *The Lullingstone Wall-Plaster: An aspect of Christianity in Roman Britain*; *British Museum Quarterly*, 33.

Preece, R. C. and Bridgland, D. R. 1998 (eds.), *Late Quaternary Environmental Change in North-west Europe*, Chapman and Hall

Prestwick, J. 1852 *On the structure of the strata between the London clay and the Chalk in the London and Hampshire Tertiary Systems*. Part III – *The Thanet Sands*. *Q.J. Geol. Soc. London*, Vol 8

Piggott, S. 1965 *Ancient Europe from the beginnings of agriculture to classical antiquity*. Edinburgh

Philp, B. Kent Archaeological Review (KAR) Spring 1983 20-22

Reece, R. 1977 Burial in the Roman World – CBA Research Report No 22

Reynolds, P.J. 1982 The Ploughzone in Festschrift zum. Numberg

Rodwell, W.J. (ed) 1982 Temples, churches and religion: Recent research in Roman Britain with a Gazetteer of Romano-Celtic temples in continental Europe BAR Brit. Ser 77

Roach Smith, C. 1891 Collecta Antiqua Vol VII.

Rodwell, W.J. 1980 Temple archaeology: Problems of the present and portents for the future, in W

Rodwell, W. J. (ed) 1980b Temples, Churches and Religion: Recent research in Roman Britain

Rodwell, W. J. 1987 Wells Cathedral: Excavations and Discoveries, 3rd edition. Wells

Rose, H.J. 1948 Ancient Roman Religion

Ross, A. 1968 Shafts, pits, well – sanctuaries of the Belgic Britons? In Coles JM and Simpson (eds) Studies in ancient Europe Leicester

Ross, A. 1970 Everyday Life of the Pagan Celts

Ross, A. 1967 Pagan Celtic Britain. London

Saville, A. 1980 On the Measurement of Struck Flakes and Flake Tools. Lithics 1

Smart, J.G.O., Bisson, G. and Worssam, B.C., 1966 Geology of the country around Canterbury and Folkestone. Mem. Geol. Surv. G.B.

Smith, Thorpe 1995 The Shapwick Project 6th Report

Schiffer, M. 1987 Formation processes of the archaeological record

Speed, J. Topographic Kent 1873

Tatton-Brown, T. 1980 St Martins Church in the 6th and 7th centuries; in Hobbs & Sparks (eds) The Parish of St Martin and St Paul, Canterbury

Taylor, H.M. and Yonge, D.D. 1981 The Ruined Church at Stone-by-Faversham: a re-assessment – Archaeological Journal 138

Taylor, H.M. and Taylor, J. 1965. Anglo-Saxon Architecture (2 vols)

Tacitus, *Germania*

Toynbee, J.C.M. 1953 Christianity in Roman Britain, Journal British Archaeological Association no 16

Toynbee, J.C.M. 1971 Death and Burial in the Roman World. London

Twelve Tables 1909 Bruns, C.G. *Fontes Iuris Romani* (eds)

Watts, D. 1998 Religion in Late Roman Britain

Wait, G.A. 1985 Ritual and religion in Iron Age Britain, Brit Archaeol Rep Brit Ser 149 Oxford

Whiting, W., Hawley, W. and May, T. 1931 – Report on the excavation of the Roman Cemetery at Ospringe, Kent. Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London, Report 8. Oxford: University Press, 1931.

Whitaker, W. 1872 The Geology of the London Basin. Mem. Geol. Survey G.B.

White, H.J.O. 1928 The Geology of the Country near Ramsgate and Dover. Mem. Geol. Survey G.B.

Wilkinson, P. 2003 Pompeii, the last day. BBC Books

Wilson, D. R. 1967 Discussion of Lewis (1966), J. Roman Studies 57 238-42.

Wilson, D. R. 1975 'Romano-Celtic temple architecture. J. British Archaeol. Ass. (3rd Series) 38.

Woodward A. & Leach P. 1993 The Uley Shrines English Heritage

Wolstencroft, C. The Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Stone Chapel, Swale, Kent Leicester University Dissertation, 2004. Ref. No. 049016347.

White, H.J.O. 1928 The Geology of the Country near Ramsgate and Dover. Mem. Geol. Survey G.B.

Wrigley, A. 1949 The Thanet Sands. South-eastern Naturalist, Vol 54

## 15. Appendices

### Appendix I.

Report of the excavations of Hawley at Stone Chapel published in the East Kent News on:

#### **Saturday 22nd May 1926 Stone Chapel Church Recent Investigations Described Opinion that original building was Saxon.**

The investigations at the ruins of Stone Church which were undertaken some months ago by Colonel Hawley, FSA and in which Canon G M Livett FSA has also been greatly interested, have now been concluded. Very careful excavation work has been done, the result of which has been that more definite data has been obtained than was revealed by the work undertaken in 1872 by Mr Irvine.

Mr C R Peers FSA the Chief Inspector of Ancient monuments in HM Office of Works who recently inspected the excavations and gave his conclusions in an address at the Lecture Hall, expressed the view that the original building belonged to the second half of the 11th Century. Canon Livett, however, as a result of his examinations inclines to the view that it was Saxon, built in the 8th and possibly the 7th century. He gave his reasons for this view to an assembly of local antiquarians and others which gathered at the site last Friday afternoon, when a paper on the results of his work was also read by Colonel Hawley. The company spent a most interesting couple of hours.

Canon Livett, in introducing Colonel Hawley, mentioned that he was a most remarkable excavator of Roman and pre-Roman remains and alluded to the excavations he had been engaged upon at Stonehenge for some years. In regard to the work in this neighbourhood, he remarked that Mr William Whiting in the first place made his name famous by his excavations and discoveries. Since then the Society of Antiquaries had taken over the task which had been pursued by Colonel Hawley as their representative. With respect to this present work at Stone Church he (Canon Livett) simply regarded himself as a sort of assistant.

Colonel Hawley first gave an account of a small investigation he made in January near to the Church ruins before the Church excavations were begun. When he opened up the site, he said he came upon hard gravelly matter which suggested a habitation. Relics found were very few. They included pieces of a glass flagon of the 15th or 16th century, which had probably held communion wine. One small Roman coin was found, but nothing more of that age, which was singular considering that Roman remains were abundant within a hundred yards.

Passing to deal with the Church, or Chapel he mentioned that Mr Peers gave it as his opinion that the original Chapel was early Norman, Much of the material used for building was apparently of Roman origin, derived doubtless from Roman habitations near at hand of which traces had been recently found. It was perhaps the existence of this material which suggested the building of the Chapel where it was this part of the Church was early Norman (as mentioned above,

Mr Peers dated it in the second half of the 11th century) Canon Livett said he respectfully differed from Mr Peers in that view. Mr Peers, he believed, came to his conclusion because he thought he saw what were called "clasping buttresses". But the buttresses were not of that kind – (the Canon went into this at some length) – and another point was that the walls, if Norman, would be of uniform thickness, whereas in this case they were not, the east and west walls being 2ft 6in and the side walls 3ft. That was very un-Norman. Moreover, in regard to the structure of this building, he had never seen anything of this kind in Norman masonry.

It was also out of the question that the building was of Roman date. Wherever he had investigated Roman work he had found quantities of roman relics. But nothing roman had been found in these ruins although the whole district was covered with Roman remains.

When the excavation of the interior was carried out the remains of three floors could be clearly seen, indicating successive alterations. Colonel Hawley described in detail these floors. Alluding to some black earth that was found, he said it might seem to suggest a conflagration, but he did not think that was the case as the walls would also show some signs of fire and there were none. Possibly a layer of rushes on the floor caught fire.

On digging for the wall foundations a quantity of other black matter was observed. This was found to consist of a mixture of ordinary charcoal dust and ordinary coal, also hair and pieces of decayed wood, evidently birch. It was impossible to account for this layer of dark matter.

There had been several interments both in the chapel and the nave but everyone of them had been molested at some time or other, probably when alterations were made. Stonework tombs had also been utilised in the newer part of the building. One tombstone had been used as a doorstep; others had apparently been removed. There had been an interment close to the north side of the chapel wall where it could be seen that a tomb of some sort had rested against the wall. In this case the body had been buried very close to the surface, and in the soil could be seen the recess for the head and another for the feet. Appearances of other interments showed that orientation was not considered but that burial close to the wall was of more moment. On the north side of the Chapel there had been two burials and the last had been buried across the lower extremities of the first! Other interments were met with at the west corners of the nave and there were evidently more along the sides, which, however, it had not been thought worth while to investigate.

A considerable number of fragments of window glass were found, several of which still showed marks of figure painting, while one had letters of Gothic design. There constituted all the finds that had been met with and they were disappointingly few, but there was an enclosure which might be examined at another time and which it was hoped might reveal some fragments of worked stone.

Canon Livett then dealt with the architectural features of the Church, the company following him round the ruins and so being able to appreciate all the points mentioned. Incidentally he referred to some valuable historical research in connection with a number of old Churches, including this one at Stone, which had been compiled by Mr Charles Drake, and which the Canon said, he hoped would one day be published.

Calling attention to a large part of the south wall of the nave which fell over in May 1913, probably due to the growth of trees, Canon Livett pointed out a large piece of a tombstone which had been utilised in the building. The other portion of the stone was found elsewhere, the two pieces being found to correspond exactly. This part of the Church therefore was later than the tombstone. He did not know how long a time they would have thought fitting in those days should elapse before decorating a tomb.

Canon Livett devoted much time to dealing with the fabric of the original building with its double courses of brick alternating with courses of stone, in which latter courses tufa and Kentish rag block were also used alternately. As these two stones were of different tints an effect in both colour and pattern.....

Referring to Mr Peers' opinion that there was the question, then, as to whether the building was not of Saxon origin. In Kent they had several 7th century Saxon churches and they all had apses. This one, had no apse, but it was like later Saxon churches in respect of it having a square end. Almost all later Saxon churches had these square ends. There were exceptions, but the point was that there was nothing in the square end that prevented this Church being Saxon. The method of construction here, too, was similar to that at Reculver, the same meticulous care being shown in regard to pattern, and we knew the date of Reculver to be 670. Everything therefore pointed to this being a Saxon Church, though possibly 50 or 100 years later than Reculver.

He would put it down to be a Church of the 8th century and possibly the 7th.

Canon Livett pointed out a fragment of the altar step, to which was attached some of the coloured plaster, and he mentioned that a burial was found under the altar. He dwelt particularly on the fact that at a later period a new wall was built close against the original west-wall and also across its doorway and that this new wall was built upon some older foundations. This, he remarked seemed to show that the original building had been allowed to get into a state of ruin and that it ceased to be used, the western extension being then used as the Church. He thought the Church was dedicated to St Peter, and spoke of two altars – one probably to the Holy Sacrament and the other to the Image of St Peter.

Alluding again to Mr Drake's notes he mentioned that in the 16th century certain inhabitants of Stone were "presented" for not frequenting their parish church. That referred to Luddenham Church the Rector of which had then acquired spiritual oversight of Stone, showing that Stone Church was in ruins and given up at that date. Asked if any human remains had been found, Canon Livett said they had found bones innumerable. There were two skeletons pretty nearly complete. But, as Col. Hawley had said, all the interments had been disturbed. It appeared that there had been no burial there later than 1548.

The Rev R U Potter, Rector of Kingston, expressed the company's thanks to Col Hawley and Canon Livett for their interesting descriptions.

Canon Livett stated that the investigations being now completed, the excavated parts must be filled in again as to leave them exposed would owing to the effect of frosts, result in a few years in the total destruction of the ruins. Possibly antiquarians of a future generations would open them up again, distrusting the reports of Col. Hawley and himself (laughter).



## 9. Field-walking at Syndale

**In technical terms** field-walking may be defined as the recording of artifacts exposed on the surface of cultivated soil horizons. In any large-scale field survey the results of field-walking programmes have an important input into our academic understanding of landscape archaeology beyond the limits of individual sites and, moreover, can provide the basis of strategic decisions about the management and protection of buried archaeological monuments (Gerrard 1990: 9-15).

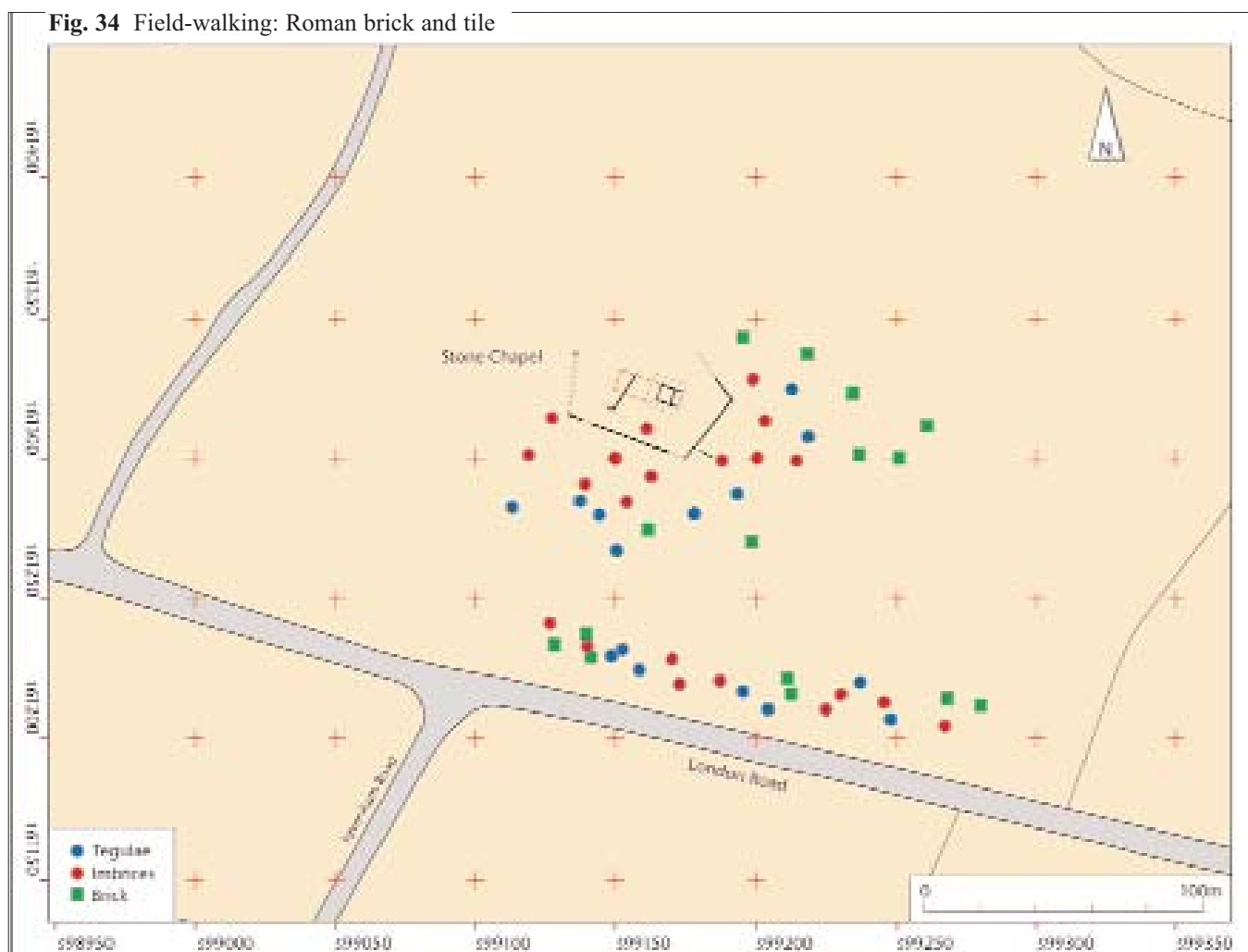
Field-walking lies at the heart of any field survey (**Fig. 34**), as indeed it does with so much British archaeology aimed at landscape investigation. One recent commentator called this approach 'quintessentially British' (Jones, 1985, in Gerrard 1990). But many of the methodological advances in surveying have been made around the Mediterranean Basin (Keller and Rump, 1983, Barker and Lloyd, 1991), often in multi-national projects of impressive scale (MacReady and Thompson 1985). Here and elsewhere sophisticated numerical texts and sampling strategies have been introduced to guide research design and improve analytical techniques and presentations.

Increasing awareness of site formation processes at work in the landscape has also drawn our attention to the effects of ploughing, alluvial and colluvial activity upon artifact scatters (Schiffer, 1987; Gaffney et al, 1991).

### The aim of field-walking

The aim of field-walking is threefold. The first is to locate areas of possible archaeological activity, to calculate the size of area and artifact density and to characterise the assemblage composition.

The second is to examine differential manuring patterns and changing land use in conjunction with



cartographic and documentary sources.

The third is to develop and refine collection strategies and our understanding of the data produced.

### **Line-walking**

Systematic field-walking is based on either line-walking or grid walking.

The normal collection procedure of line-walking is that walkers collect all cultural material from the ground surface whilst walking down 1.5 metre (5ft) 'runs' 25 metres (27yds) apart. This will amount to about a 6% sample of any given field area.

All material that is considered alien to the field is collected and deposited at collection points for finds every 25 metres. All finds of all periods are collected; this enables voluntary labour of varying expertise to be used and ensures that a range of material from all periods is represented. Any field in any given study area must be field-walked in a standard fashion if we are to have comparable data. Only then can the density data of any given artifact be assessed in the same way as those for all the other artifacts.

This initial type of field-walking is occasionally called 'traverse and stint' but more properly it is 'systematic sampling', falling under the banner of 'probabilistic sampling'. The intention is to collect reliable, comprehensive statistical data, and not simply to follow our instincts as to where sites may be located.

To do this a number of collection strategies could have been utilised: by dividing the study area into topographic blocks, say on the basis of known or modern land utilisation, and then walking a representative number of strips 'stratified random sampling' or we might have mixed our systematic sampling system with random sampling 'stratified systematic unaligned sampling'.

It is sometimes said that ploughed fields, preferably after some days of rain, are the only areas that can be field-walked. If followed this practice would mean that a large part of any study area would be removed from the data collection matrix, and so other types of field-walking and data-collection have been utilised for the Syndale Survey of which the Stone Chapel Field survey is part.

### **Grid-walking**

Grid-walking is based on a 10-metre (33ft) square unit with a number of people collecting for 20 minutes. This strategy was used because of field tests early on in the history of the Shapwick Project in Somerset (Aston and Gerrard, 1988-99). At Shapwick results showed this technique far outweighed others for a greater collection of artifacts, and during the Syndale Survey grid-walking is the preferred method of artifact collection from ploughed fields.

Standard line-walking will give about a 6% sample of any given field area, whilst grid-walking will give about 90%. It must also be remembered that only about 3% of artifacts residing in the plough-soil zone are visible at any one time. Surveys elsewhere (Gerrard, 1990; Barker, 1991) have shown that the amount of material and the types of material collected on the same site year after year show enormous variations but that the shape and size and chronological range of material remain constant (Ammerman and Feldman 1987).

The major processes affecting artifact collection are post-depositional, that is, the dynamics of ploughsoil artifacts. Controlled experiments have shown that artifacts can be displaced from 20cm to 10 metres (7.2 in to 33ft) by ploughing and the most recent studies indicate that the level of displacement will be specific to soil types and different land uses (Clark and Schofield 1991).

Unfortunately, movement of the artifacts is not the only problem. What is on the surface of the top-soil- again figures can be as low as 3% (Clark and Schofield 1991) and up to 16-17% (Reynolds, 1982)- may not represent what is under it and being disturbed by the plough. The material found on the surface is also not a reliable guide to the location of buried deposits.

It may be that Roman and Medieval artifacts were introduced by manuring or may be dumped archaeological material from sites cleared by the landowner. Most of the ceramic material collected from field-walking has been ploughed in and not ploughed out. The reasons for this are numerous-artifacts accidentally lost, dumps of post-medieval material near gates or crossings, agricultural activities such as herding, firewood collection; discrete concentrations of artifacts smeared by agricultural machinery and erosion across the landscape, and finally household rubbish incorporated with animal and human excrement and used as a fertiliser on the fields. (Cherry et al, 1991

### Field-walking results

The collection of artifacts from the ploughsoil inevitably creates a distorted impression of the range of materials present on any site, whether it be prehistoric, Roman or Medieval. For late prehistoric and historic times, pottery is fortunately a very useful indicator of date. Flint is prevalent until the later Bronze Age but is less susceptible to close dating. Objects of other materials are much rarer, but do occur from time to time mingled with dense concentrations of pottery on 'sites'.

Other factors to take into consideration include the differential destruction of material through the interaction of cultivation and weather conditions. Roman and medieval pottery is durable, but pre-Iron Age ceramic is much more fragile and exposure on the surface of the ground coupled with frost can fragment a prehistoric potsherd beyond recognition in a year to two years. Similarly briquetage from salt manufacture is also rapidly degraded and, without plentiful fragments, Roman salterns may go unrecognised.

For the Stone Chapel Field all material was collected which was considered alien to the field. This included all stone, flints of unusual shape and/or worked, all pottery, all iron, all brick and tile. In spite of statements to the contrary in archaeological literature (Cherry et al, 1991), this did not slow down the rate of coverage; rather than going down the route of pick-up, inspect, and keep or discard, all material was kept to be processed by field-work specialists. This avoided the possibility that Saxon pottery had been mistaken for coal, Roman brick and tile for Victorian, Roman Samian ware for modern, Iron Age pottery for burnt Victorian flower pots.

The information thus recorded was entered on to dedicated A4 sheets with an annotated hand-drawn map of the area of Stone Chapel Field walked. Special features were noted, and find spots highlighted and marked with an O.S. eight digit locator.

The finds were processed at regular intervals by Canterbury Archaeological Trust and latterly by Malcolm Lyne. The detailed analysis of the groups of material, including a breakdown of pottery types, their weight and number, has not been included in this interim report, but can be consulted in the Project Archive which will be deposited with the Kent Archaeological Field School at Faversham after future research. The artifact class is by necessity divided by the dates or periods of the material collected, and this analysis by date and density is the core of understanding how the landscape functioned through the prehistoric and historic periods.

Densities range from 204 finds (for Roman pottery) per 100 metres (109yds) walked at Stone Chapel Field (**Fig. 34**) to four finds (Roman pottery) per 100 metres walked at Syndale Motel site. However, before the landscape analysis can be complete consideration must be given to geological and climatic changes which have, in some areas, dramatically changed the landscape and hidden from field-workers archaeological features, sites, and buried monuments under many metres of deposited soil or mud.

Whilst it is possible to identify a Roman site, such as at Stone Chapel Field, from the Roman material found in the top-ridge ploughsoil, it will not be possible to locate buried features such as the postulated quays and landing places in the valley below without resorting to excavation.

### Conclusions

What activities are represented by the patterns we have identified? There are a number of important points which need to be made. Initially the Research Design was for a 'rapid walk-over survey.

Certainly, initially, line-walking was the norm, whilst in the final year focused grid-walking on chosen areas of the field offered greater potential for collection and interpretation. Both these factors are so varied that they will be dealt with in their particular chapters.

Preliminary interpretation indicates that many Roman sites have now been located by 'haloes' of material around these buried monuments. Also it has been possible to gauge the extent and status of such buried monuments by the amount of Roman building ceramics found in their close locality. However, it is suspected, many other, lower status Roman buildings still await discovery by focused field-work.

By various criteria it has also been possible to define the function and status of a particular building and by date analysis of pottery sherds some indication of the life of that particular site.

Field-walking has also enabled us to give an educated guess to the extent of the possible Roman settlement, and through pottery collection and analysis, what part of the field had been manured and therefore were at some stage arable in the Roman period. Distribution of arable in the medieval period may possibly also be assessed. For the post-medieval period land use pedigrees could be compared profitably against map and documentary evidence. The overall densities provide a useful means of calibrating how much material can be expected from any field walked in the future.

However, we have resisted using rigid quantitative criteria to define any given 'site'. It has been necessary to employ a range of methods such as shoveltesting, geophysical data, aerial survey to carry our investigation forward. It must be remembered that variations in the supply and use of pottery at different periods would mean that different threshold densities, indicating possible 'sites', would have to be calculated for each period. (Millett 1991).

### Shoveltesting and metal-detecting

Shoveltesting was the technique used in the Stone Chapel Field to define and confirm the extent of potential sites. Shoveltesting is in some ways similar to test pitting, which involves the excavation of a number of small trenches.

However, shoveltesting is the controlled examination of topsoil and does not attempt to investigate layers below that. A standard sample of soil is sieved from each location to be tested. Two buckets full of soil are sieved, the volume of each bucket being 15 litres. In each 10 metre (33ft) square five tests are carried out and thus 150 litres of soil are sieved.

If one assumes that the soil has been disturbed by ploughing to about 20 cm (7.8in), a 150 litre sample is about a 0.15% sample of a 10 metre square.

The aims of shoveltesting are three fold, and have been formulated by Professor M.A. Aston at the Shapwick Project in Somerset (Aston and Gerrard, 1995).

The first is to assess its effectiveness in locating concentrations of artifacts, second, to test areas which could not be field-walked, for example, because they were under woodland or pasture. And third to test the



Fig. 35 Metal detector survey of Stone Chapel Field



reliability of field-walking results, given the problems and biases of field-walking.

Shoveltesting was pioneered in the northeast of the United States by Kayt Smith and by Nick Thorpe at Shapwick, Somerset.

Academic literature shows that shoveltesting consistently locates large sites with dense concentrations of artifacts. The tests also prove that shoveltesting finds a large percentage of smaller, less dense sites and activity areas. More importantly, the tests, when made over a large area, give a consistent and quantifiable sample of the distribution of small sites and other activity areas critical to a settlement pattern (Smith and Thorpe 1995).

The results show it to be the preferred method of locating sites, both large and small and indicate it is a more controlled, more cost-effective and more productive approach than digging large trenches with a JCB and watching for what can be damaged archaeological features.

### **Metal detector survey**

A number of controlled metal detector surveys were carried out at Stone Chapel Field by Andy Stephney *et al* (**Fig. 35**) both before, during and after the 2005 investigations. Concerns had been expressed in the archaeological community that illicit detecting was happening at Stone Chapel Field.

This is a major concern for archaeologists since illegally recovered finds are not recorded and once removed are permanently lost from their archaeological context. The material recovered by the controlled use of metal detectors in a planned survey at Stone Chapel Field will be available for future study and research. Further, it was possible that any finds recovered from the survey may represent evidence for underlying archaeological features currently subject to damage by ploughing. It was also deemed appropriate to recover portable finds from the plough-soil where they were deteriorating due to natural corrosion processes and modern farming techniques.

### **The survey**

The metal detecting search of the survey area was restricted to the 10 metre gridded areas set up for field-walking and both surveys were run in tandem. All metal detector finds were evaluated on site, recorded by triangulation from the alpha-numeric grids, labelled, bagged and recorded with a small finds number. Some 183 significant finds were located and these will be listed in the Final Report CD Appendix where a detailed description and photographic record of each of the single finds is provided. Post-1700 finds, after evaluation, were returned to the field in the exact area they were initially detected. The recording strategy used at Stone Chapel Field means that any significant metal detectorist find is located to within 5cm anywhere on the site.

The survey recovered mostly Roman coins and other artefacts and these were found in close proximity to Stone Chapel and in a strip alongside Watling Street (A2). This material alongside Watling Street may be the result of gas main laying in the strip alongside Watling Street with the subsequent exposure of material from the trenching.

The controlled search methods used at Stone Chapel Field were different from the usual methods employed by detectorists who profess to a 'feel' for a site and are able to focus in to hot-spots in a field in a very short time and then concentrate upon these areas of potential.

At Stone Chapel Field it was shown that detectorists can work in smaller, more controlled zones, and this should become the norm in future fieldwork.

It is important to develop systematic search and recording patterns in metal detecting in order to allow for a better appreciation of the spatial distribution of finds.

In the pre-excavation survey of Stone Chapel Field and the subsequent searches through the spoil heaps the contribution of 'Andy the detectorist' was immense and has added profoundly to our understanding and knowledge of this unique site.

## 10. Geophysical survey

**Geophysical survey** should be considered as one of the main techniques of site evaluation and interpretation. Its potential contribution to field survey must always be considered.

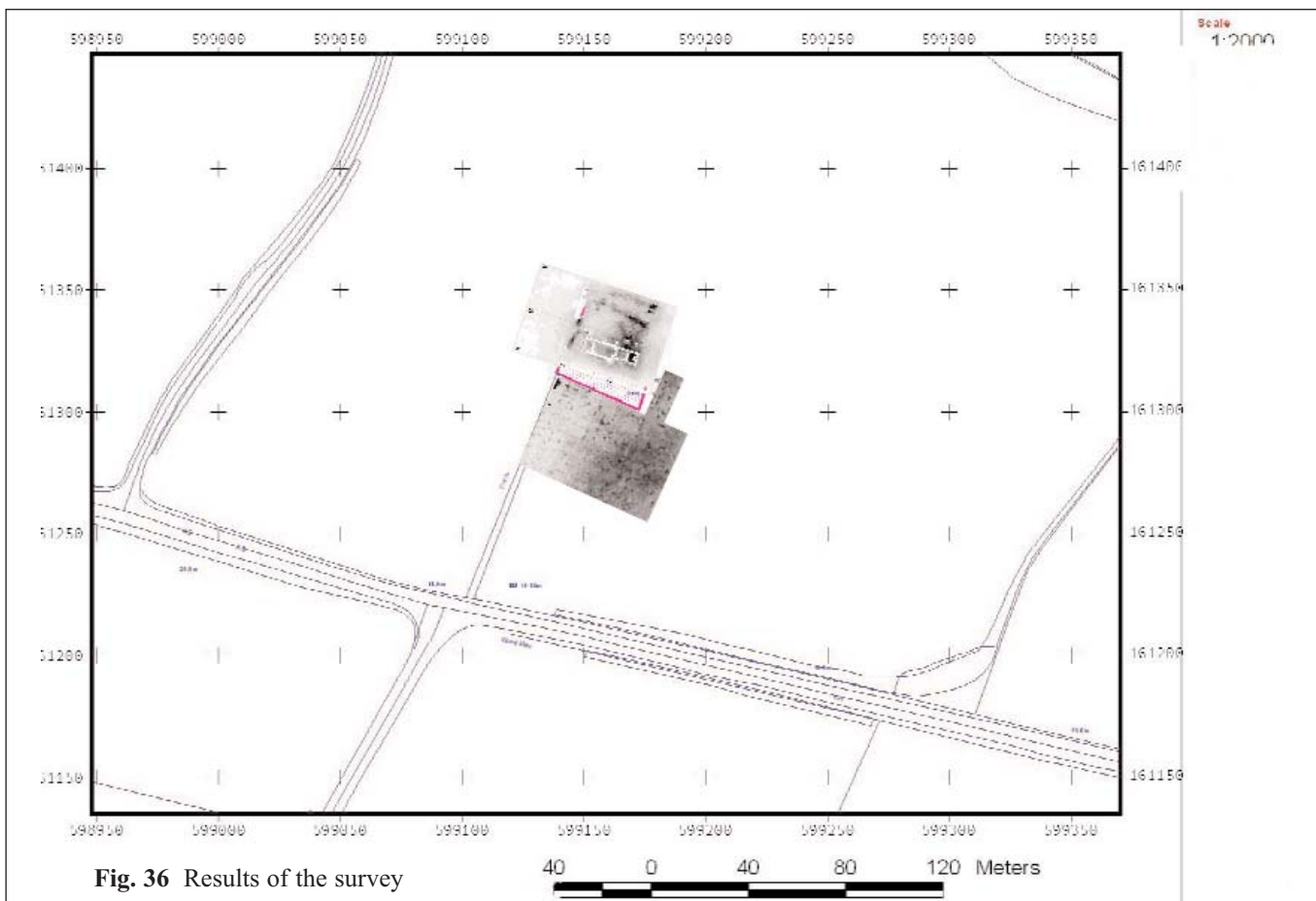
The most important geophysical survey technique for amateur archaeologists is resistivity, followed closely by magnetometry. Geophysical specialists favour magnetometry above resistivity. The reasons are that it is the fastest method of rapidly covering very large areas to evaluate their archaeological content quickly.

Magnetometry also responds to a wider range of archaeological features, so it is a very good general-purpose detection method. However, if the purpose of the geophysical survey is specifically to target the continuation underground of the partially exposed walls of a monastic or castle site then resistivity would be the first choice, but for general purpose site exploration magnetometry would be the preferred method. Other techniques that can be used are ground-penetrating radar, acoustic reflection, thermal sensing, dowsing and probing.

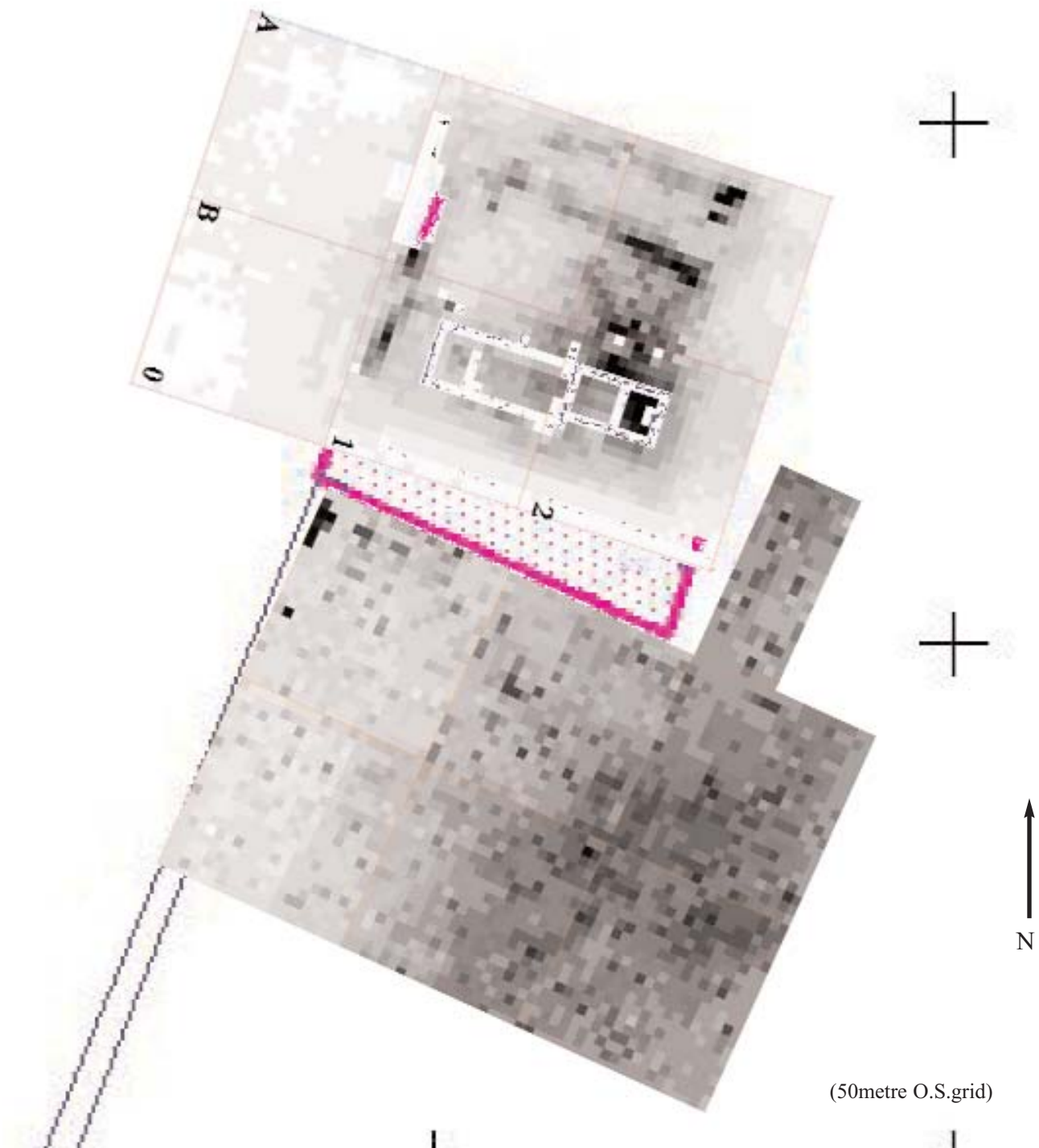
Resistivity works on the principle that soils which contain water conduct electricity more effectively than natural rocks like granite, ragstone and chalk. As you pass a small electrical current through the ground, these rocks will resist more than the damp soil.

This pattern of variable resistivity can be measured and recorded with a purpose-built meter. Amateur groups usually use resistivity because the equipment is somewhat cheaper.

The purpose of the geophysical survey at Stone Chapel Field conducted by David and Karen with students of the Kent Archaeological Field School (KAFS) was to attempt to trace unexcavated archaeological features extending beyond the Scheduled Area and also to look for postulated features relating to the temple complex, such as a *temenos* wall and ditch.



**Fig. 37** The geophysical survey of Stone Chapel Field highlighted some interesting areas of investigation. To the north of the Roman building high resistance may suggest an additional building inside the Scheduled Area whilst other areas of high readings south of the Chapel could suggest a 'cloud' of plough damaged building material with the Roman buildings still surviving underneath.



In addition the survey was designed to look further afield for any other indications of buried remains which might add to the understanding of the archaeological context of the site under evaluation. Resistivity surveys were undertaken following the establishment of a 10m grid across the field locked into the 50m OS grid.

### **Summary of findings:**

A0 and B0 contain values that are generally lower than the site average (**Figs. 36, 37**). Towards the eastern edge of these squares there is an area where the resistance is around site average.

Z1 and Z2 (half squares) are also below site average although there is a trend towards slightly higher values towards the west of Z2

A1 Here it was not possible to survey most of the western edge due to the density of trees and undergrowth. However, at the southern edge of this square the higher than average readings indicate a continuation of the linear feature which can be seen to the western edge of square B1. This is in the vicinity of the visible wall but on a different alignment.

There are two bands running approximately east west showing higher than average readings for the site. These features also appear to continue in a westerly direction into square A2.

A2 contains some of the highest readings taken in the survey. Some of these form the continuation of the linear features in square A1 as mentioned above. Towards the south western corner of the square there is an area of higher than average readings which just crosses into square A1.

The eastern third of the square contains readings which are at site average and below and mark the transition from grass area to plough land as the edge of this square is not within the Monument Site. B1 and B2 contain the Chapel ruins which can be seen as an area where readings could not be taken.

To the western edge of square B1 there is a linear feature running approximately north south parallel to the western edge of the monument but not aligned with the visible, detached, wall.

Most of the remaining area of these two squares contain readings of site average or above apart from the strip to the southern edge, which is off the Monument Site proper, where readings are below site average.

In square B2, to the north of the Chapel, there is an area of higher than average readings which appear to relate to the readings in the south western corner of square A2. The two isolated white blocks indicate trees which prevented readings being taken. The high readings within the Chapel are most likely due to the proximity of the visible stone.

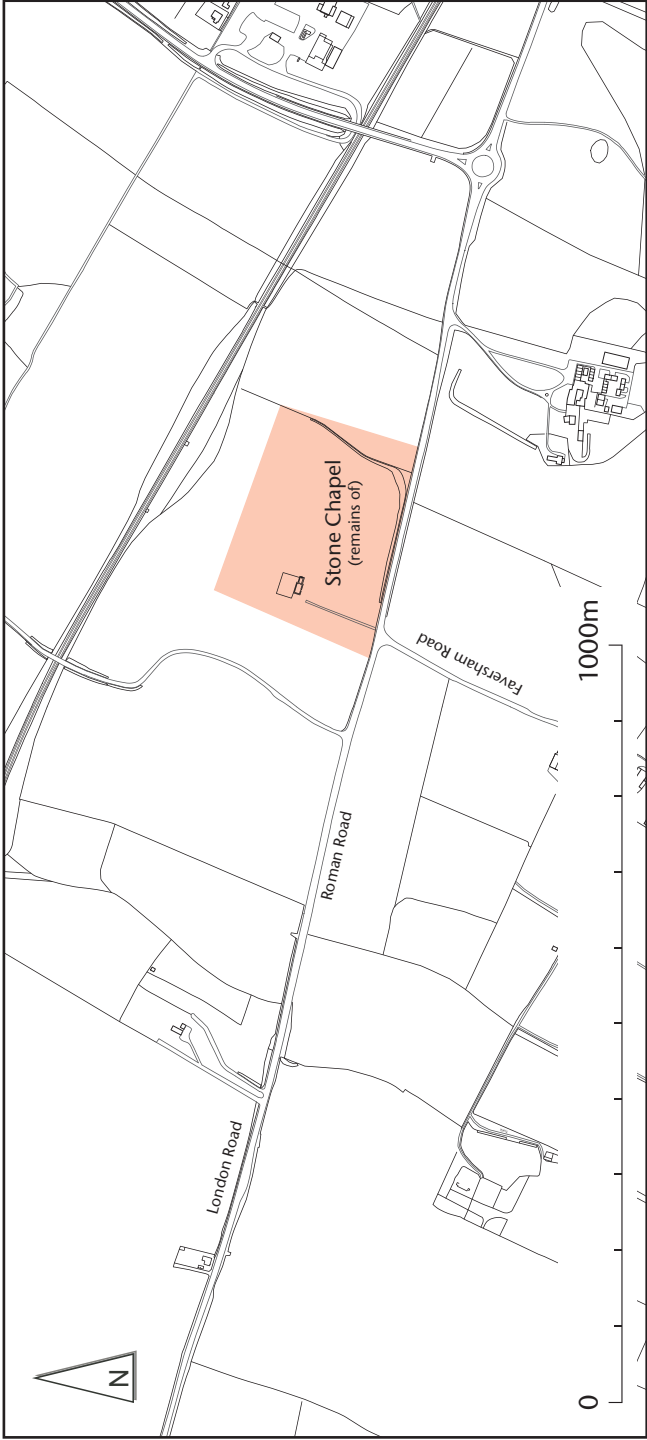
### **Summary of training day at Stone Chapel Field, site background**

The squares to the south of the monument were surveyed as part of a training day in the summer of 2005. A team of students were supervised using the resistivity equipment to produce a survey complementing the squares on the monument site. They completed 6.5 squares within the time available. The site was very overgrown with weeds, many over one metre high and these were trampled down to facilitate survey.

### **Summary of findings:**

The squares surveyed are bounded by a path to their west. This can be seen in the north-west corner of the plot – the small area of high resistance coincides with the end of the path approaching the monument. There are a number of high resistance targets running along the northern most 8 – 10m of the plot. The more general area of high resistance may be due to the landscape which dips down to a hollow at this point.





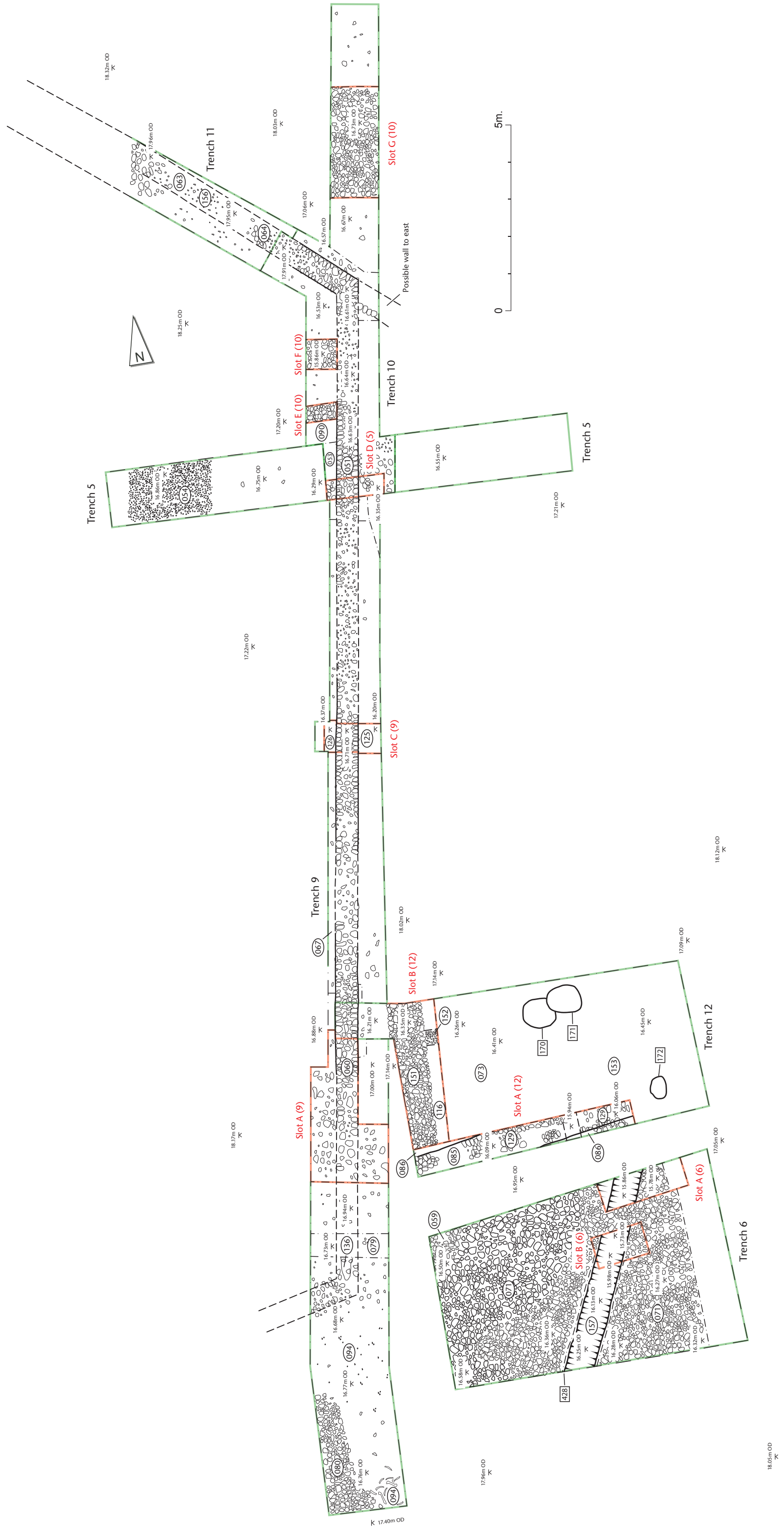


Figure. 98 Trenches 9-13, layout plan 1:100

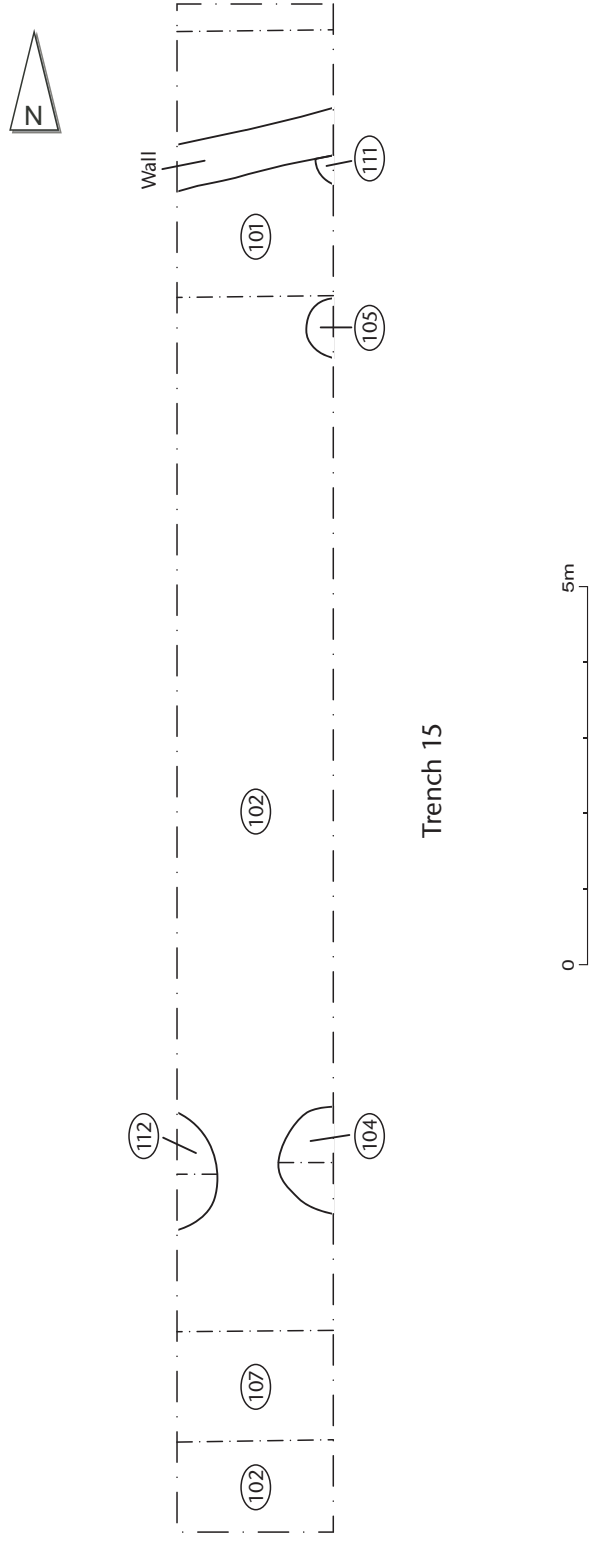


Fig.97 Trench 15. Scale 1:100

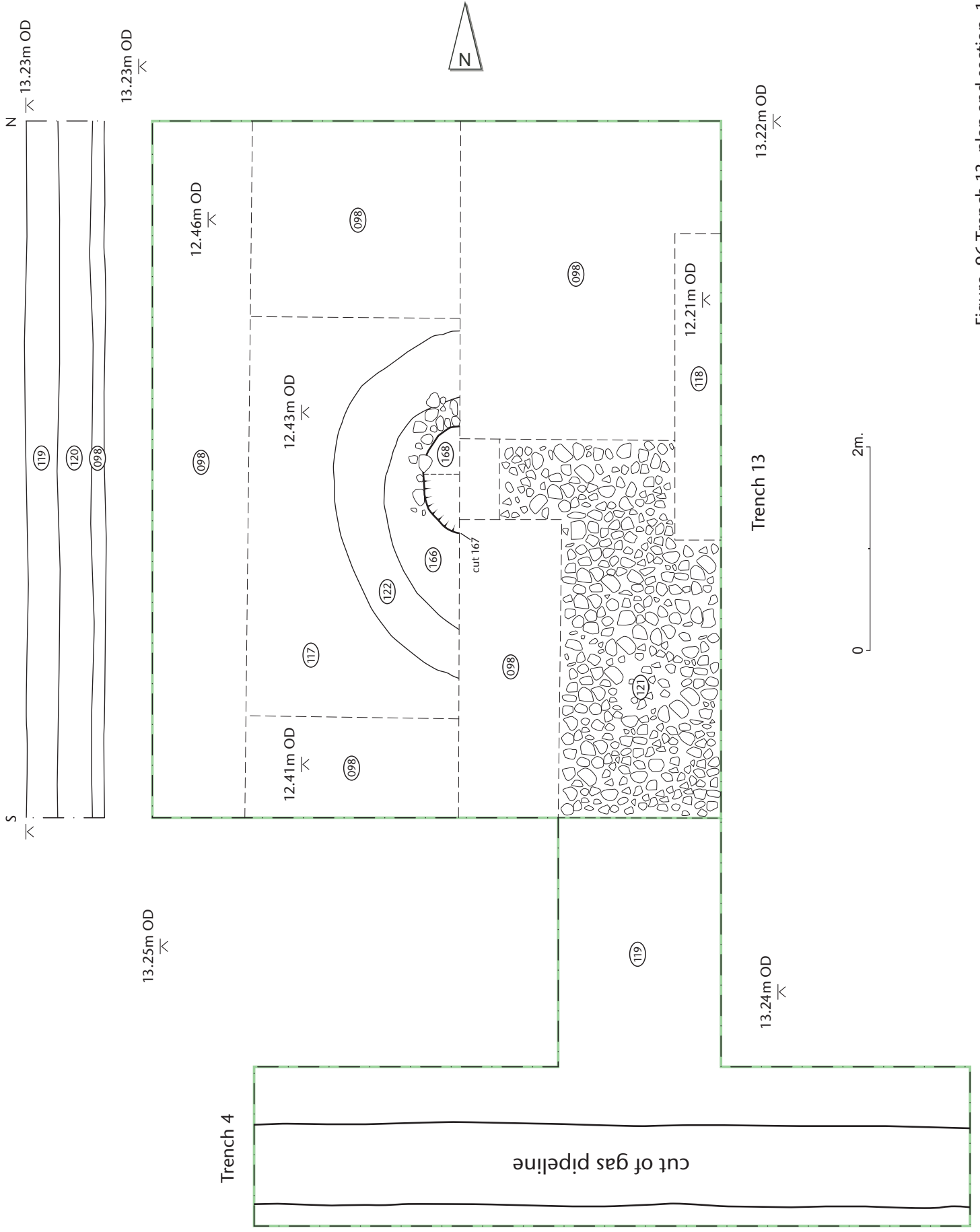


Figure. 96 Trench 13, plan and section. 1:50



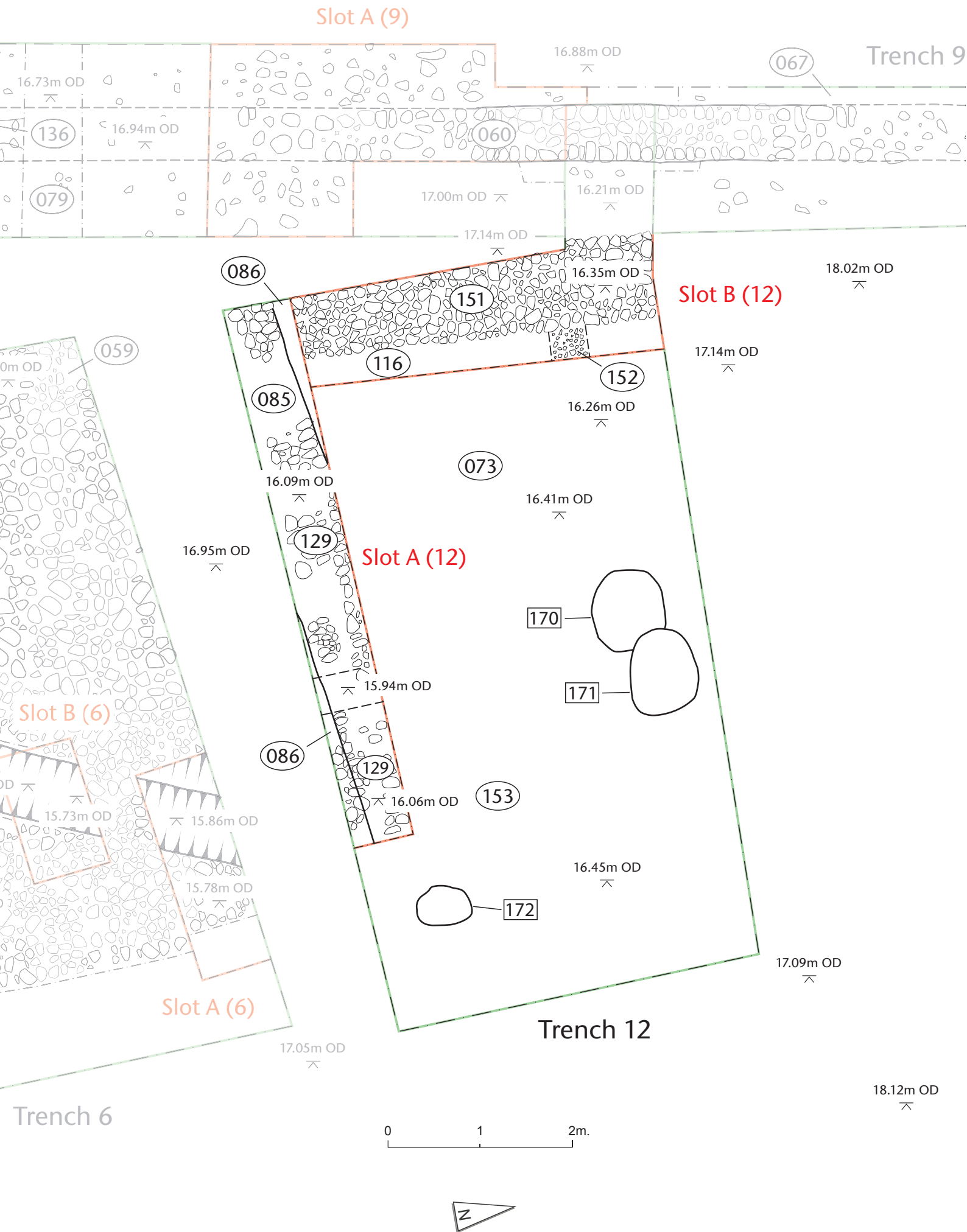


Figure. 95 Trench 12 1:50

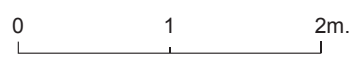
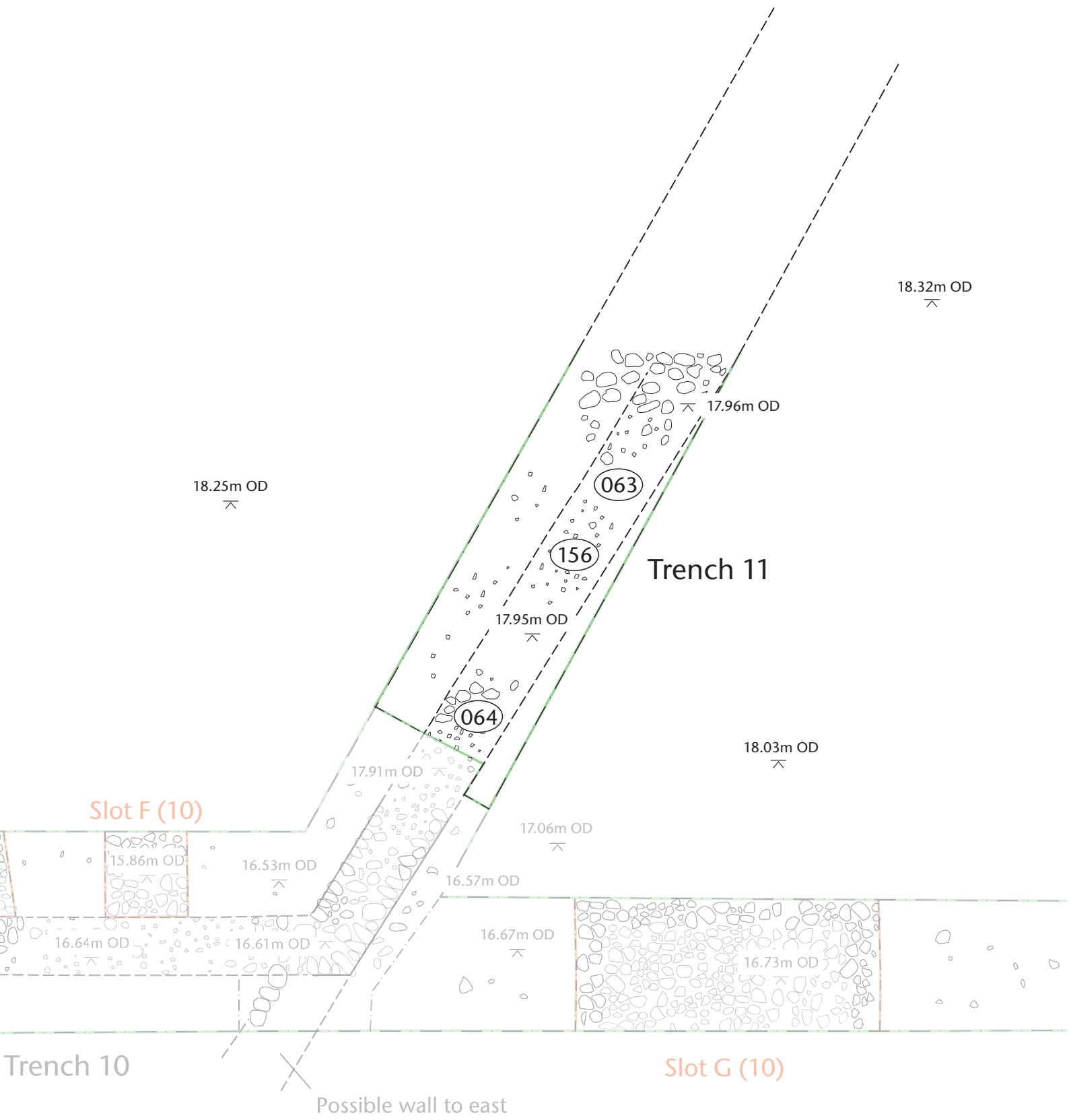


Figure. 94 Trench 11 1:50

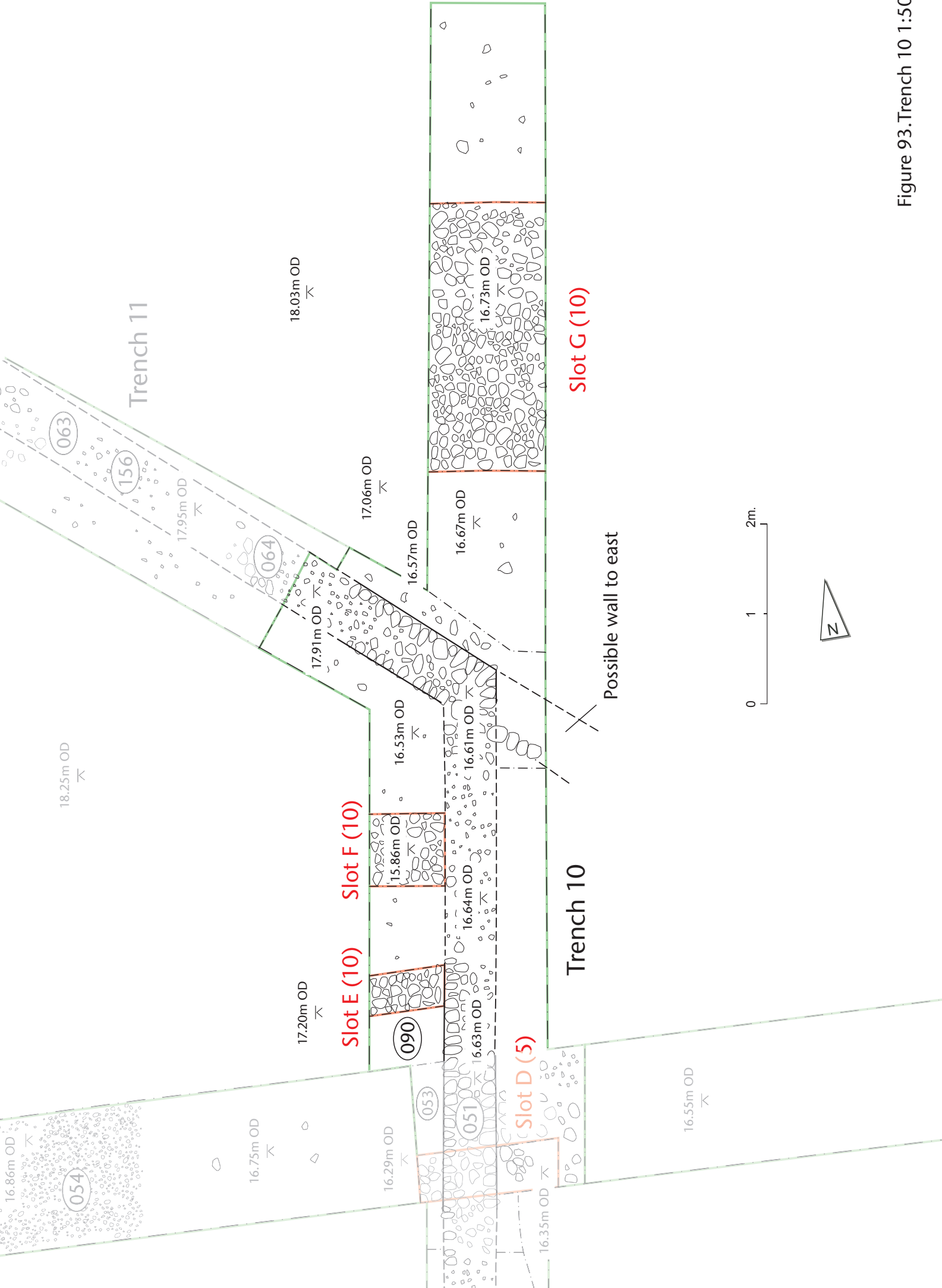


Figure 93. Trench 10 1:50

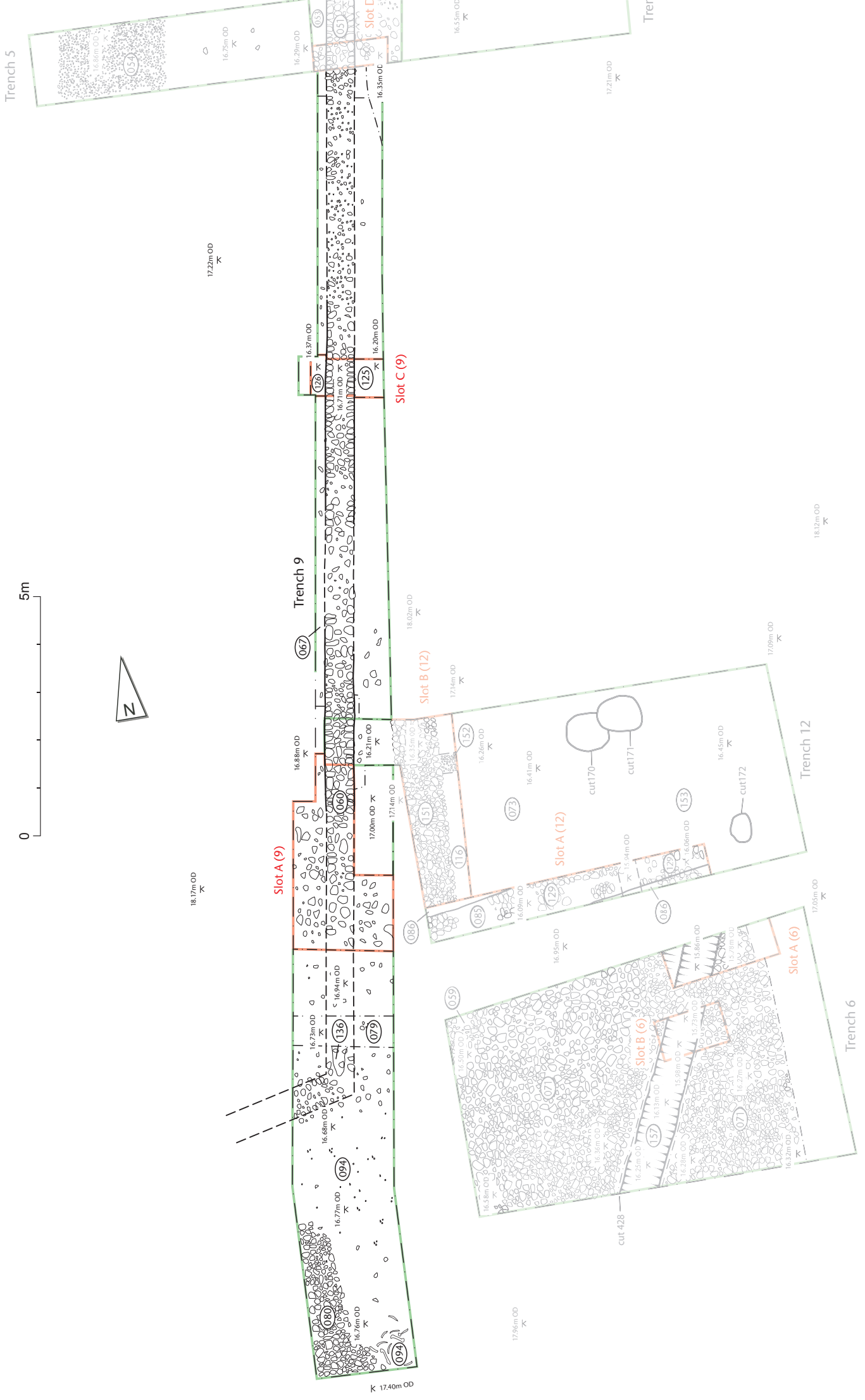
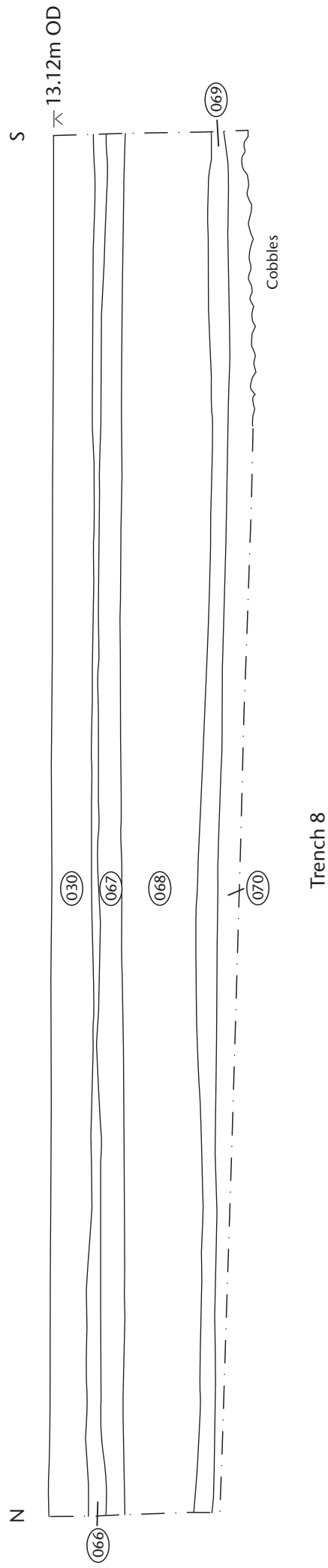


Figure. 92 Trench 9 1:100

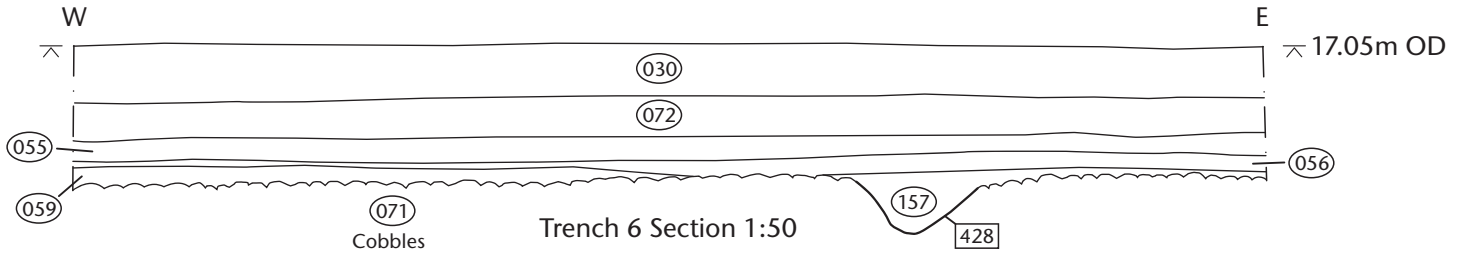




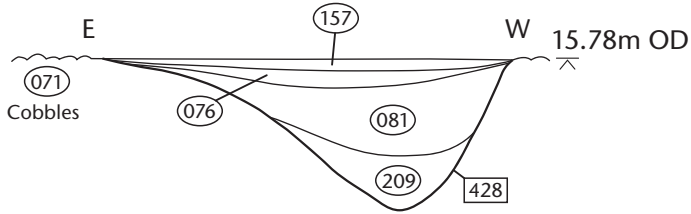
Trench 8



Fig.91 Trench 8. Scale 1:50



Slot A (6) 1:50



Slot B (6) 1:50

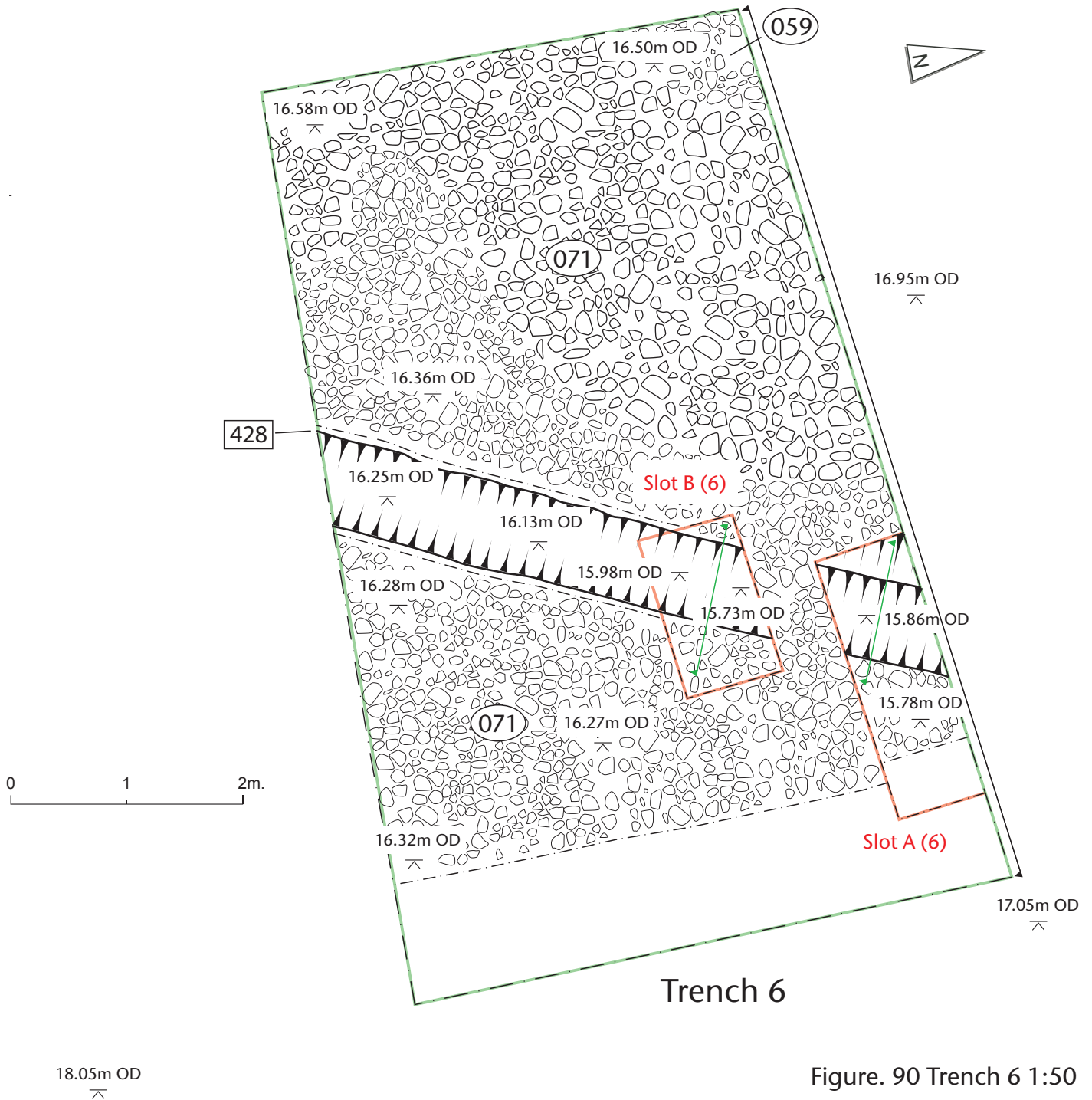
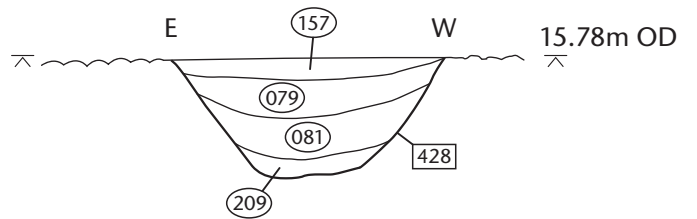


Figure. 90 Trench 6 1:50

# Trench 5

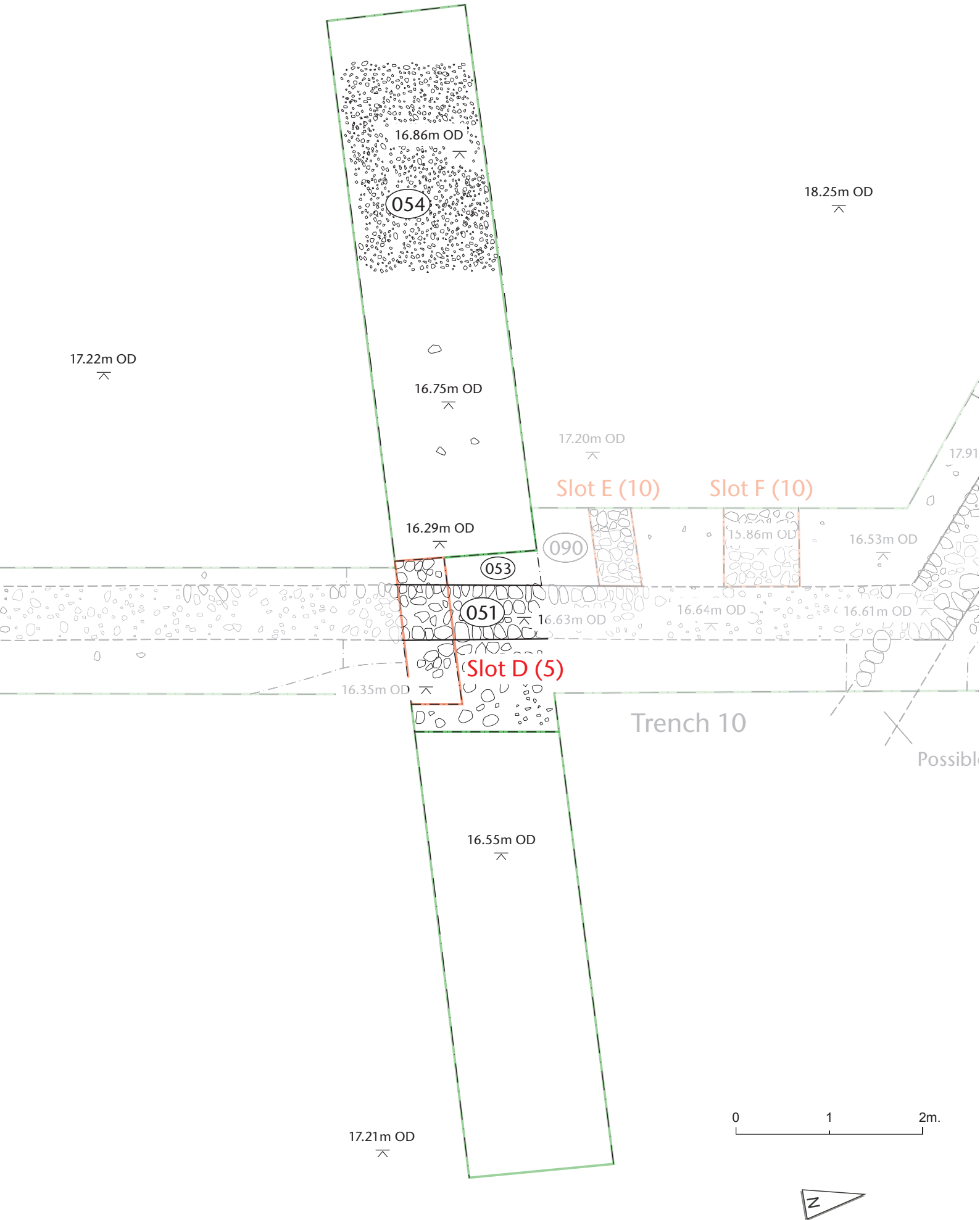


Figure. 89 Trench 5 1:50

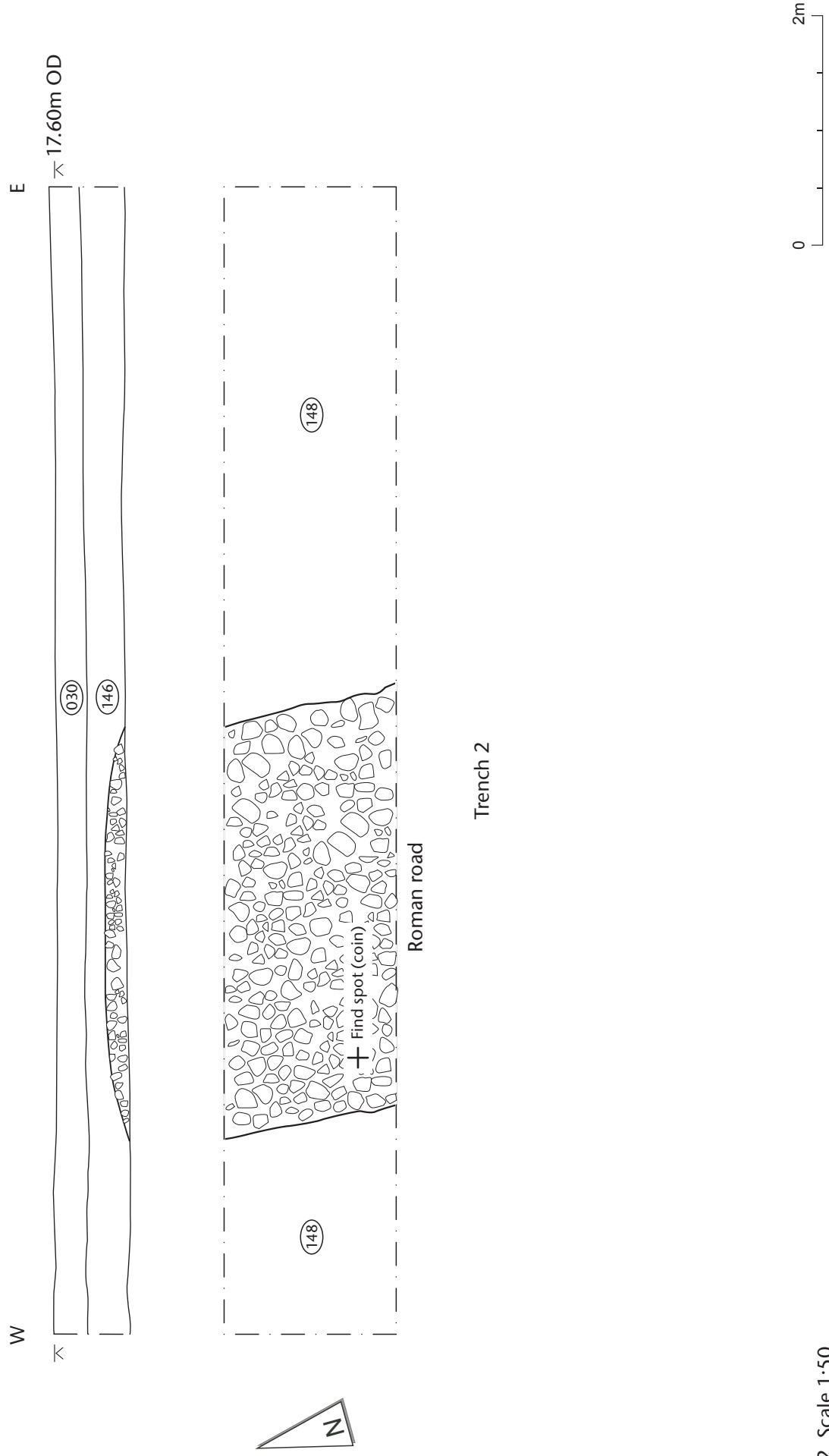


Fig.88 Trench 2. Scale 1:50



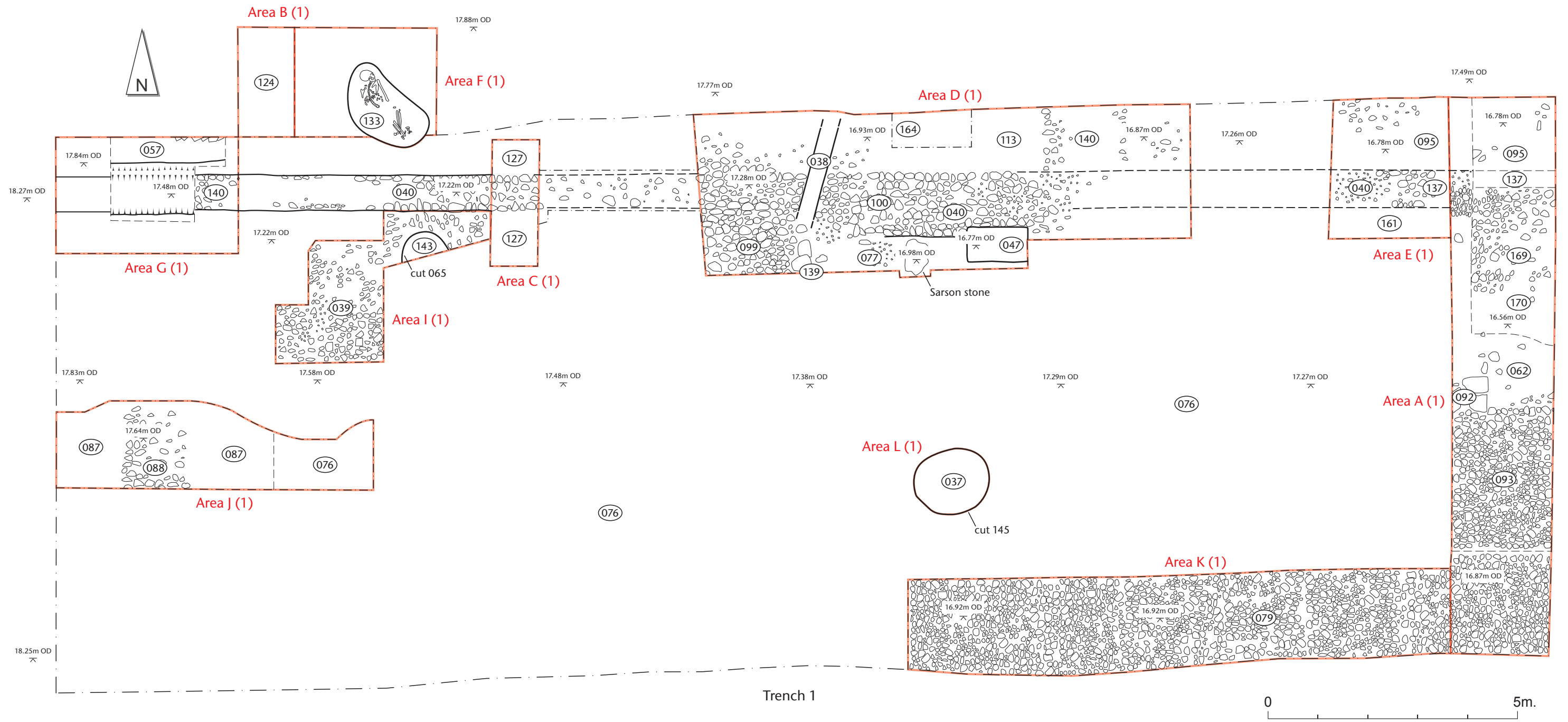


Fig.76 Trench 1. Scale 1:125

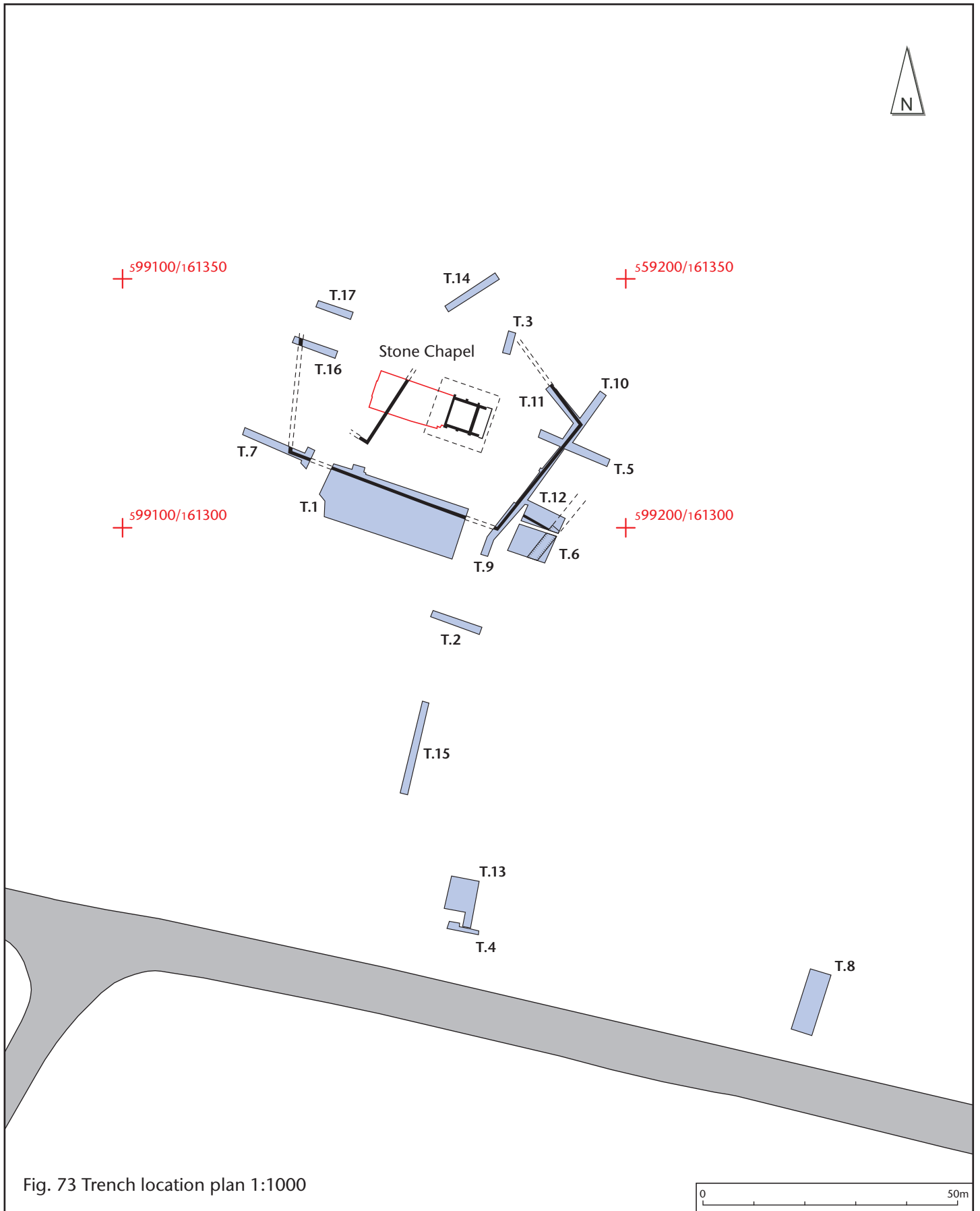
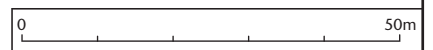


Fig. 73 Trench location plan 1:1000



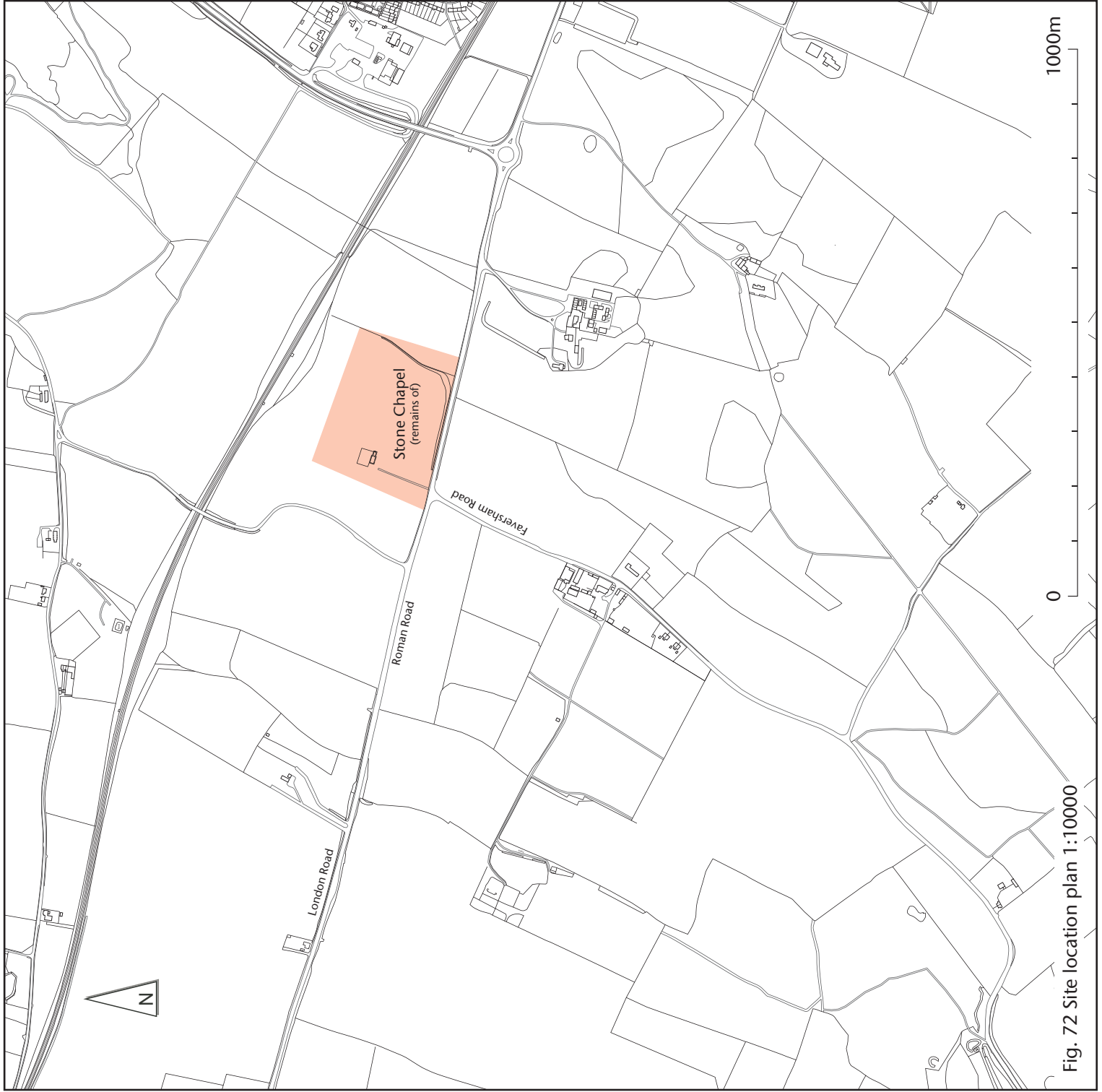


Fig. 72 Site location plan 1:10000

