
HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST
REPORT NO. 774

LAND SOUTH OF FINGRINGHOE BALLAST QUARRY, COLCHESTER, ESSEX

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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NGR: *TM 0310 1980*
PARISH: *Fingringhoe*
DISTRICT: *Colchester*
SITE CODE: FIBQ.00

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COLCHESTER, ESSEX
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
(FIELDWALKING)

SUMMARY

Fieldwalking on the site of a proposed new mineral extraction area on land south of Fingringhoe Ballast Quarry revealed a light scatter of prehistoric flints in the centre of the main southern area of proposed extraction. The flints include a number of tool types of the early Neolithic to Bronze Age.

No evidence of the adjacent Saxon cemetery was discovered, though a single undiagnostic pottery sherd from the western periphery of the main southern land parcel may date from the Saxon period.

Much post-mediaeval tile was recovered from the site, evenly distributed and probably derived from manuring of the site, rather than clusters suggestive of the presence of substantial structures such as barns.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 During early October 2000, Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust (HAT) carried out an archaeological fieldwalking survey of land south of Fingringhoe Ballast Quarry, Colchester, Essex (central NGR TM 0310 1980) (Fig.1). The investigation was commissioned by Thames & Colne Valley River Aggregates Limited. It is proposed to extract ballast from the site. A planning application was submitted in June 2000 to Essex County Council (COL/0022/00/ESS). The Heritage Advice, Management and Promotion Group of Essex County Council (ECC HAMP) recommended that a ground survey (fieldwalking) be undertaken to assess the extent of any archaeological deposits on the site.

1.2 The work was undertaken according to a brief for archaeological evaluation issued by ECC HAMP (dated 8/8/00) and a specification prepared by HAT and approved by ECC HAMP. The evaluation also complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (revised 1999).

1.3 The aims of the evaluation were to establish the extent of the archaeological deposits in the area of proposed development, by using fieldwalking to assess the extent and probable date of any archaeological concentrations within the proposed new quarry areas (Section 3 of the brief). The particular aims of the project were to establish whether evidence associated with prehistoric cropmarks, an Anglo-Saxon site and a possible Roman road bounding the site to the south was present (see below).

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE (Figs.1 & 2)

2.1 The site lies to the south of Fingringhoe village, comprising two separate arable fields separated by Furneaux Lane (some 14.6 hectares in total and comprising a smaller area to the north of the lane and a large area to the south). The main southern area of proposed extraction is bounded to the west by a bridleway and to the south by another bridleway that has been suggested marks the course of a Roman road.

2.2 The site lies on the gravel terrace of the river Colne (1.8 km to the east). To the south lies an area characterised by marshland and creeks, as land leads towards Mersea Island and the Blackwater. The area of proposed mineral extraction is mainly flat, at an average height of 25 m AOD.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The archaeological potential of the site is noted in the ECC HAMP brief. Aerial photography has revealed a number of probable archaeological features to be present immediately adjacent to the site, though none have been identified within the site itself. These features include an enclosure, possible ring ditches and linear features (EHCR 2270-2 & 2601). The form of these is suggestive of a prehistoric date, but it will be important to characterise whether or not they continue into the site and to establish a firm date for them. Brown & Murphy (in Brown & Glazebrook, 2000) suggest that the central problem for the region during the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods is the continuing need to address the development of farming and the attendant development and integration of monuments, fields and settlements. The authors also affirm that north-east Essex has '.....an extraordinary array of cropmark monuments'.

The road which forms the southern boundary of the site has been suggested by its form to be of Roman origin, though this has not been confirmed by excavation. For the Roman period, Going (in Glazebrook, 1997) notes that even the main Roman trunk road network has had little work undertaken recently and that the smaller secondary or local routes are almost wholly unexplored.

A Saxon settlement or funerary site lies close by to the south of the application area, identified from a scatter of iron objects (such as brooches, a coin and pin) though no excavation has taken place to define its character (EHCR 17585, 17633, 17635/7 & 17640). As Wade (in Glazebrook, 1997) notes, the most important evidence of population distribution throughout the region in the last 20 years has come from the many objects identified from metal detecting.

4 FIELDWALKING METHODOLOGY (Figs. 3-5)

4.1 The area of the proposed mineral extraction was subject to an archaeological fieldwalking survey. The field walking was based on a line walking system with transects at 20-m intervals. It adhered to the methodology devised by Essex County Council Archaeological Advisory Group (now ECC HAMP), to enable comparison

with data from other regional surveys. The field walking was conducted in accordance with the scheme described by Medlycott (Medlycott, M, 1994, *Archaeological Fieldwalking in Essex: A Brief Description of Methodology*).

4.3 The site was divided into kilometre squares, hectares and 20 m blocks within which 2 m wide transects were scanned for finds. The kilometres were each assigned letters. Each kilometre was sub-divided into hectare blocks, numbered from 1-100, beginning with 1 at the south western corner of each kilometre. Each hectare is then sub-divided into 20 m blocks, each of which is assigned a letter, starting with 'A' in the north west corner. When walking each transect, a width of 2 metres was studied, thus allowing for a 10% sample of the area walked.

4.4 Each finds type was plotted at 1:2500, according to its standard deviation from the mean. Usually a 'significant' scatter or variation from the norm is taken to be two or more collection units with more than two standard deviations from the mean. For the purposes of adding to the fieldwalking statistics being compiled for Essex and Hertfordshire, the following statistical information for each type of find and each type of period is presented (Figs. 3-5).

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{n} - \mu^2}$$

The finds type by weight:

n = The number of 20 m transects walked

$\sum x$ = The sum of the finds type

$\sum x^2$ = The sum of the finds type individually squared

μ = The mean average of the finds type per 20 m collection unit

σ = The standard deviation for the finds type

4.5 Amalgamated plots of all the finds types for each period are presented. The distribution of finds will reflect quantity ('amalgamated'); quality ('finds types'); and period.

5 RESULTS (Figs. 3-5)

5.1 Large quantities of tile were recorded from the site, predominantly roof tile of post-medieval date (Fig.5).

5.2 Sparse pottery sherds were recovered (Fig.3). Other than a few post-mediaeval sherds, a single mediaeval sherd from the northern land parcel and an undiagnostic Iron Age/Saxon sherd from close to the western boundary of the main southern application area.

5.3 Small quantities of struck and burnt flint were recorded from the site (Fig.4), a significant proportion of the struck flints exhibiting retouch. Tool types are recognisable (two retouched blades are early Neolithic, whilst other flints are characteristic of the later Neolithic, Bronze Age and Beaker periods). While the flints appear to be slightly concentrated in the central part of the main southern application area, it should also be noted that they are not necessarily contemporary.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 No evidence to support the presence of a nearby Saxon cemetery or Roman road was suggested by the fieldwalking. Only a single undiagnostic pottery sherd from the western periphery of the main southern site may be of Saxon date.

6.2 The flint assemblage is small but contains identifiable tool types. Periods represented include the early Neolithic, later Neolithic/Bronze Age and the Beaker period, perhaps suggesting that the site, or vicinity, attracted a number of early settlers of different periods.

6.3 The presence of a large quantity of post-mediaeval tile is suggestive of manuring (it may derive from midden heaps). No definite locations of former buildings are suggested by the pattern of tile distribution across the site.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Trust is grateful to Thames & Colne River Aggregates Limited for their co-operation and funding of the evaluation (in particular Messrs John Birkin and Kevin Moye for their assistance), and to their agents Matthews & Son for their assistance and for arranging access (in particular Mr David Thaddeus).

The Trust would also like to acknowledge the input of ECC HAMP, in particular Messrs Richard Havis and Pat Connell.

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Struck and Burnt Flint
Tom McDonald MIFA

Table: 1 Struck Flint

10 F	Flake (2g), secondary, light dark grey with off white mottling, fairly sharp.
17 B	Point on a thick flake displaying invasive shallow scale retouch along its lower right side, and hollow retouch forming a notch along its upper right bulbar face (5g), secondary, dark brown, not sharp, narrow platform.
17 J	Retouched flake utilised as an end scraper with invasive shallow scale retouch along its right side and hollow retouch along its left side forming a notch (2g), secondary, dark brown, not sharp, perceptible bulb on a narrow platform (some scarring), light patination (grey blue).
18 L	Small flake (>1g), secondary, light dark brown with off white mottling, not sharp.
18 H	Retouched flake utilised as an end scraper displaying invasive parallel retouch along its platform edge (8g), tertiary, grey, not sharp, perceptible bulb on a wide platform.
19 C	Possible retouch on a small blade (>1g), tertiary, grey, dark grey brown with off white mottling, not sharp.
19 G	Spurred point on a short broad flake with invasive shallow scale retouch along its upper and right side (6g), secondary, mottled light/dark brown, not sharp, wide platform.
19 L	Retouched flake utilised as an end scraper displaying invasive shallow scale retouch along its platform edge (6g), secondary, honey brown, not sharp, perceptible bulb, wide platform.
19 M	Small flake (2g), tertiary, grey brown, not sharp, pronounced bulb, light patination (grey blue).
21 F	Convex end scraper (horseshoe) on a thick broad flake displaying shallow scale retouch, (20g), tertiary, grey/dark grey with off white mottling, not sharp, perceptible bulb on a narrow platform, possible prepared base.
27 I	Flint chip (<1g), reddish brown chert, not sharp.
29 I	Possible retouch on a snapped blade (<1g), tertiary, grey, with off white mottling, not sharp.

Table: 2 Burnt Flint

10 H	Burnt single platform flake core (29g)
19 F	Burnt lump (40g)
19 G	Burnt lump (19g)
19 R	Burnt lump (6g)

A small quantity of struck and burnt flint (11 flints, 1 flint chip and 4 burnt lumps (94g)) was collected. A single platform flake core was identified within the burnt flint. All but four of the struck flints are retouched. The retouched flakes display shallow, and/or parallel, scale retouch. Recognisable tool types include a convex end scraper and a spurred point. Two retouched blades may be assigned to an earlier Neolithic industry. The flakes may be later Neolithic/early Bronze Age. The horseshoe-style scraper and the occurrence of shallow scale retouch on other flakes are characteristic of the Beaker period.

Brick & Tile
By Berni Sudds

Four hundred and one fragments of brick and tile, weighing 7668g, was collected from across the area fieldwalked. The brick fragments are mostly small and abraded. The bulk of the finds comprise fragments of roof tile and, like the brick, they are all small and variously abraded. A few display a grey core, the majority are of a hard paste. A few have peg holes. The fragmentary nature of the building material allows little comment. The roof tile is post-medieval.

FIBQ.00

- 07B: English Stoneware, 13g (18th – 19th C)
- 07E: Black glazed earthenware, 4g (17th – 18th C)
- 08A: Organic and flint tempered ware, 1g (Iron Age, ?Saxon)
- 08W: Unglazed red earthenware, 5g (18th – 19th C)
- 09Q: Transfer Printed Ware, 2g (19th C)
- 09U: English Stoneware, 9g (18th – 19th C)
- 09Z: Late Medieval Oxidised glazed ware, 6g (15th – e.16th C)
- 18T: Late Medieval Oxidised glazed ware, 3g (15th – e. 16th C)
- 28L: English Stoneware, 10g (18th – 19th C)
- 31D: High Medieval fine quartz based ware. White firing clay, iron stained quartz, clear / green glazed, 14g (13th – 14th C)

Concordance of finds by grid square

Grid Sq.	Spot Date	Pottery	Building material	Struck flint	Other
01D			2 frags tile (27g)		
01E			3 frags tile (49g)		
01G			2 frags tile (49g)		
01Q			1 frag tile (9g)		
07B	18 th - 19 th C	1 sherd (13g)	1 frag tile (3g)		
07C			2 frags tile (28g)		
07D			1 frag tile (17g)		
07E	17 th - 18 th C	1 sherd (4g)	2 frags tile (49g)		
07F			1 frag tile (22g)		
07J			3 frags tile (38g)		
07K			4 frags tile (52g)		
07L			3 frags tile (28g)		
07U			2 frags tile (22g)		
07V			1 frag tile (26g)		
07X			1 frag tile (8g)		
07Y			1 frag tile (40g)		
08A	Iron Age/ Saxon	1 sherd (5g)	1 frag tile (26g)		
08B			2 frags tile (37g)		
08E			1 frag tile (11g)		
08F			1 frag tile (20g)		
08H			1 frag tile (47g)		
08I			3 frags tile (123g)		
08J			2 frags tile (36g)		
08K			1 frag tile (15g)		
08L			1 frag tile (26g)		
08M			2 frags tile (22g)		
08N			1 frag tile (10g)		
08Q			4 frags tile (31g)		
08R			1 frag tile (24g)		
08S			2 frags tile (35g)		
08T			1 frag tile (28g)		
08U			1 frag tile (3g)		
08V			1 frag tile (21g)		
08W	18 th - 19 th C	1 sherd (5g)			
08X			3 frags tile (29g)		
08Y			2 frags tile (42g)		
09B			1 frag tile (6g)		
09C			1 frag tile (22g)		
09D			1 frag tile (10g)		
09E			1 frag tile (8g)		
09H			2 frags tile (48g)		
09I			1 frag tile (6g)		
09J			1 frag tile (29g)		
09K			3 frags tile (42g)		
09L			1 frag tile (9g)		

Grid Sq.	Spot Date	Pottery	Building material	Struck flint	Other
09M			1 frag tile (24g)		
09N			3 frags tile (21g)		
09P			2 frags tile (43g)		
09Q	19 th C	1 sherd (2g)	1 frag tile (7g)		
09S			1 frag tile (2g)		2 frags cinder (2g)
09T			1 frag tile (48g)		
09U	18 th - 19 th C	1 sherd (9g)	1 frag tile (22g)		
09W			2 frags tile (69g)		
09X			3 frags tile (57g)		
09Y			3 frags tile (62g)		
09Z	15 th . e.16 th C	1 sherd (6g)	2 frags tile (14g)		
10B			2 frags tile (36g)		
10F			2 frags tile (26g)	1 flake (2g)	
10G			4 frags tile (51g)		
10H					1 burnt single platform flint core (29g)
10I			1 frag tile (6g)		
10J			1 frag tile (9g)		
10K			4 frags tile (110g)		
10L			4 frags tile (84g)		
10M			7 frags tile (95g)		
10P			1 frag tile (23g)		
10R			4 frags tile (123g)		
10T			3 frags tile (79g)		
10U			3 frags tile (69g)		
10X			3 frags tile (49g)		
10Y			2 frags tile (63g)		
11A			1 frag tile (18g)		
11B			1 frag tile (11g)		
11H			2 frags tile (7g)		
11K			3 frags tile (86g)		
11L			1 frag tile (32g)		
11P			1 frag tile (32g)		
11S			1 frag tile (14g)		
11T			1 frag tile (29g)		
11U			1 frag tile (24g)		
11V			1 frag tile (17g)		
11W			1 frag tile (6g)		
11Y			1 frag tile (20g)		
11Z			1 frag tile (17g)		
17A			1 frag tile (11g)		
17B				1 thick flake (5g)	
17D			1 frag tile (15g)		
17H			2 frags tile (43g)		
17I			2 frags tile (65g)		
17J			2 frags tile (35g)	1 retouched flake (2g)	
17K			1 frag tile (28g)		
17M			2 frags tile (32g)		
17S			1 frag tile (3g)		
17T			1 frag tile (7g)		

Grid Sq.	Spot Date	Pottery	Building material	Struck flint	Other
17W			4 frags tile (77g)		
18A			1 frag tile (32g)		
18B			1 frag tile (1g)		1 frag oyster shell (<1g)
18C			3 frags tile (31g)		
18E			3 frags tile (105g)		
18F			3 frags tile (50g)		
18G			1 frag tile (7g)		
18H			2 frags tile (105g)	1 retouched flake (8g)	1 frag cinder (3g)
18I			4 frags tile (45g)		
18J			1 frag tile (62g)		
18K			1 frag tile (1g)		
18L			1 frag tile (14g)	1 flake (<1g)	
18M			1 frag tile (<1g)		1 frag clay pipe (2g)
18N			3 frags tile (25g)		
18Q			5 frags tile (79g)		
18R			2 frags tile (88g)		
18S			2 frags tile (56g)		
18T	15 th - e. 16 th C	1 sherd (3g)	1 frag tile (8g)		
18V			1 frag tile (16g)		
18Z			3 frags tile (40g)		
19A			1 frag tile (12g)		
19B			3 frags tile (39g)		
19C			1 frag tile (42g)	1 blade (<1g)	
19E			1 frags tile (11g)		
19F			1 frag tile (47g)		1 frag burnt flint (40g)
19G			5 frags tile (42g)	1 spurred point flake (6g)	1 frag cinder (1g) 1 frag burnt flint (19g)
19H			3 frags tile (42g)		
19J			5 frags tile (101g)		
19K			5 frags tile (116g)		
19L				1 retouched flake (6g)	
19M				1 flake (2g)	
19N			2 frags tile (4g)		
19P			1 frag tile (3g)		
19Q			2 frags tile (107g)		
19R			1 frag tile (40g)		
19S			1 frag tile (7g)		1 frag burnt flint (6g)
19T			2 frags tile (61g)		
19U			1 frag tile (13g)		
19V			1 frag tile (15g)		
19W			1 frag tile (65g)		
19X			1 frag tile (5g)		
20C			1 frag tile (2g)		
20D			3 frags tile (48g)		
20G			1 frag tile (8g)		
20H			5 frags tile (28g)		
20I			2 frags tile (18g)		
20L			2 frags tile (36g)		
20N			2 frags tile (42g)		
20P			1 frag tile (3g)		

Grid Sq.	Spot Date	Pottery	Building material	Struck flint	Other
20Q			1 frag tile (6g)		
20R					1 frag clay pipe (2g)
20S			6 frags tile (82g)		
20T			1 frag tile (18g)		
20U			4 frags tile (25g)		
20Y			2 frags tile (68g)		
20Z			1 frag tile (41g)		
21A			1 frag tile (15g)		
21B			3 frags tile (101g)		
21D			1 frag tile (5g)		
21F			5 frags tile (222g)	1 convex end scraper (20g)	
21I			3 frags tile (37g)		
21N			3 frags tile (31g)		
21P			2 frags tile (79g)		
21S			2 frags tile (73g)		
21V			4 frags tile (20g)		
21Y			1 frag tile (39g)		
22E			1 frag tile (19g)		
22F			1 frag tile (12g)		
27K			1 frag tile (25g)		
27A			2 frags tile (37g)		
27B			2 frags tile (22g)		
27H			1 frag tile (12g)		
27I			1 frag tile (14g)	1 flint chip (<1g)	
27M			1 frag tile (12g)		1 frag slate (3g)
27S			1 frag tile (14g)		
27U			3 frags tile (95g)		
28B			2 frags tile (41g)		
28D			1 frag tile (9g)		
28E			1 frag tile (20g)		
28H			6 frags tile (130g)		
28I			2 frags tile (60g)		
28L	18 th - 19 th C	1 sherd (10g)			
28M			3 frags tile (111g)		
28N			2 frags tile (62g)		
28Q			1 frag tile (13g)		
28R			3 frags tile (59g)		
28S			2 frags tile (35g)		
29A			2 frags tile (33g)		
29C			4 frags tile (76g)		
29D			2 frags tile (57g)		
29I			5 frags tile (113g)	1 snapped blade (<1g)	
29J			2 frags tile (89g)		
29L			2 frags tile (75g)		
29M			3 frags tile (71g)		
29P			2 frags tile (26g)		
29Q			2 frags tile (21g)		
29R			2 frags tile (45g)		
29S			2 frags tile (38g)		
30A			1 frag tile (15g)		

Grid Sq.	Spot Date	Pottery	Building material	Struck flint	Other
30B			2 frags tile (61g)		
30C			2 frags tile (33g)		
30D			1 frag tile (35g)		
30E			2 frags tile (18g)		
30H			1 frag tile (6g)		
30I			1 frag tile (7g)		
30K			1 frag tile (4g)		
30M			3 frags tile (38g)		
30N			1 frag tile (18g)		
30P			2 frags tile (59g)		
31D	13 th - 14 th C	1 sherd (14g)			
31E			1 frag tile (15g)		
80K			1 frag tile (16g)		
91Y			1 frag tile (25g)		
91Z			1 frag tile (11g)		
98W			3 frags tile (34g)		
98X			1 frag tile (8g)		
98Y			1 frag tile (10g)		
98Z			1 frag tile (11g)		
99V			2 frags tile (31g)		
100V			1 frag tile (12g)		
100X			3 frags tile (78g)		

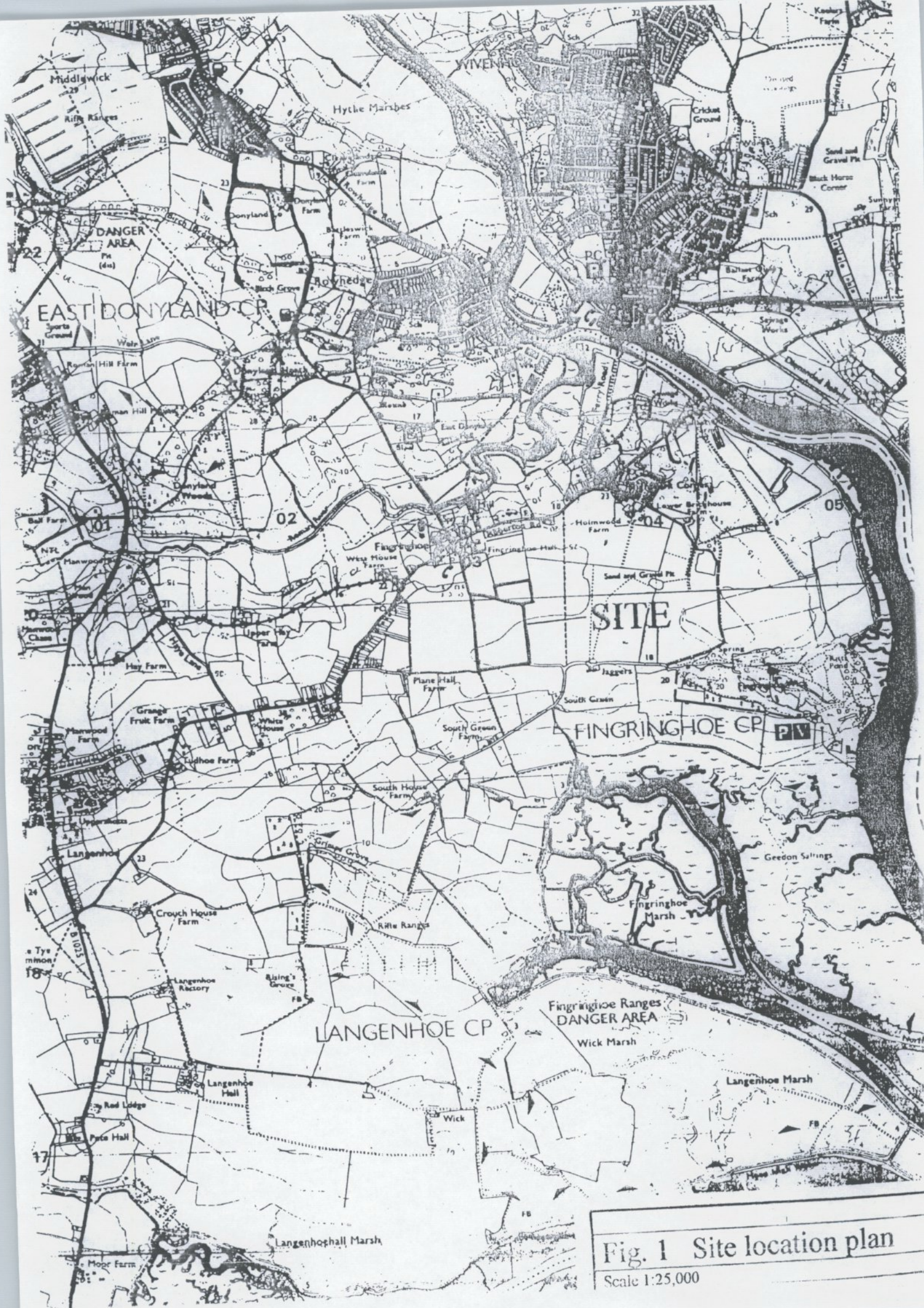


Fig. 1 Site location plan
Scale 1:25,000

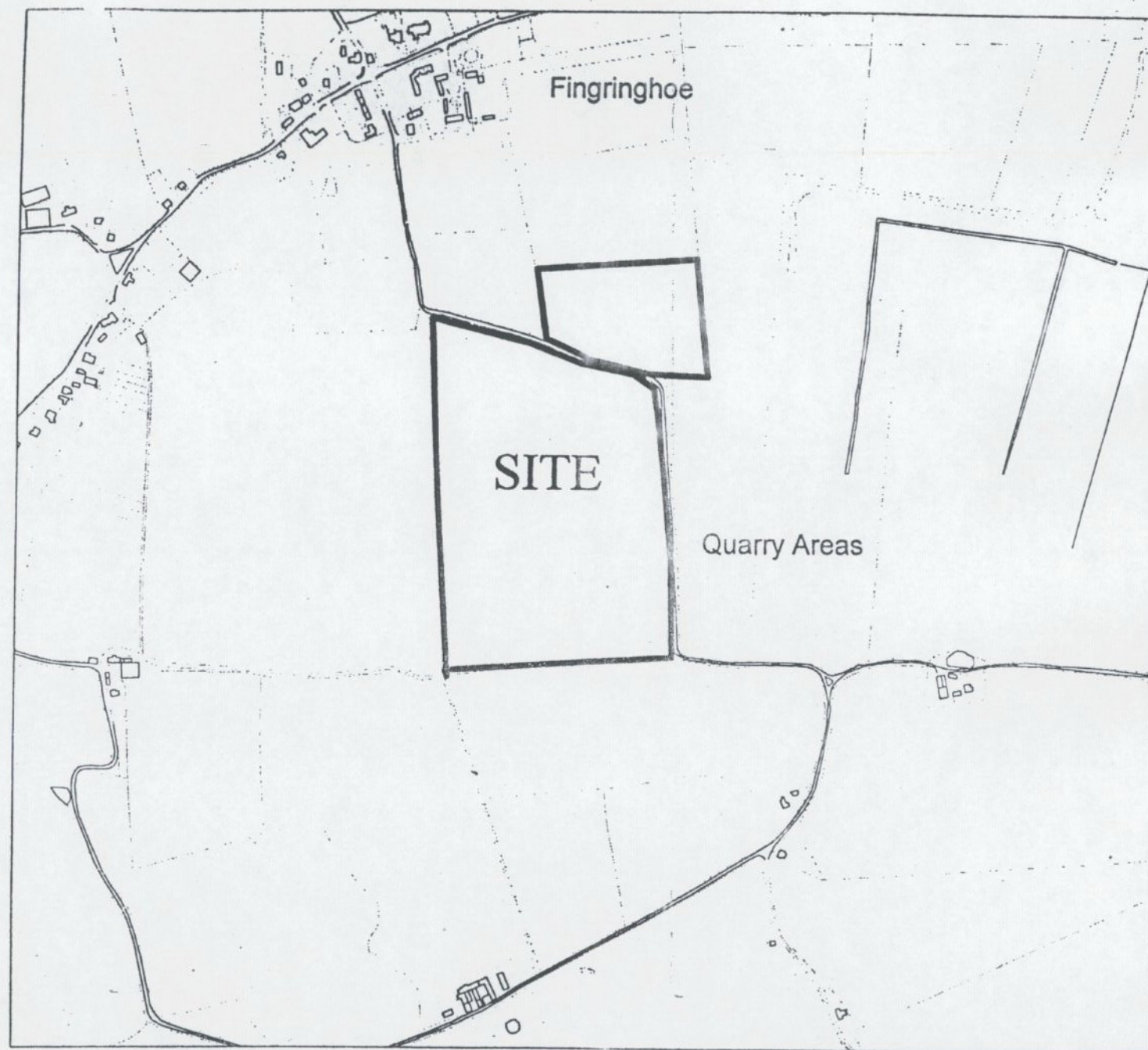
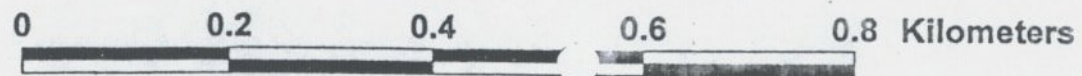
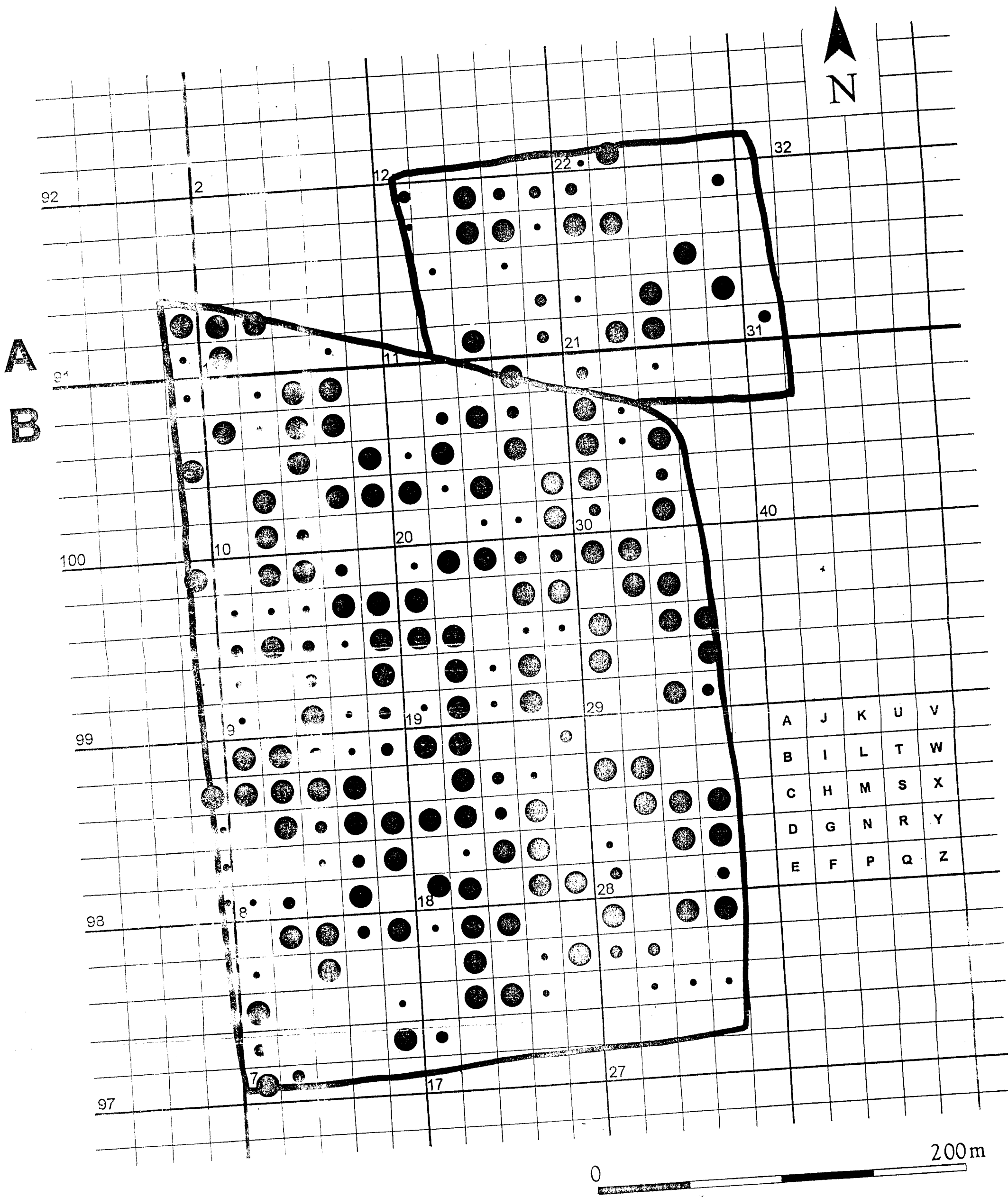


Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan

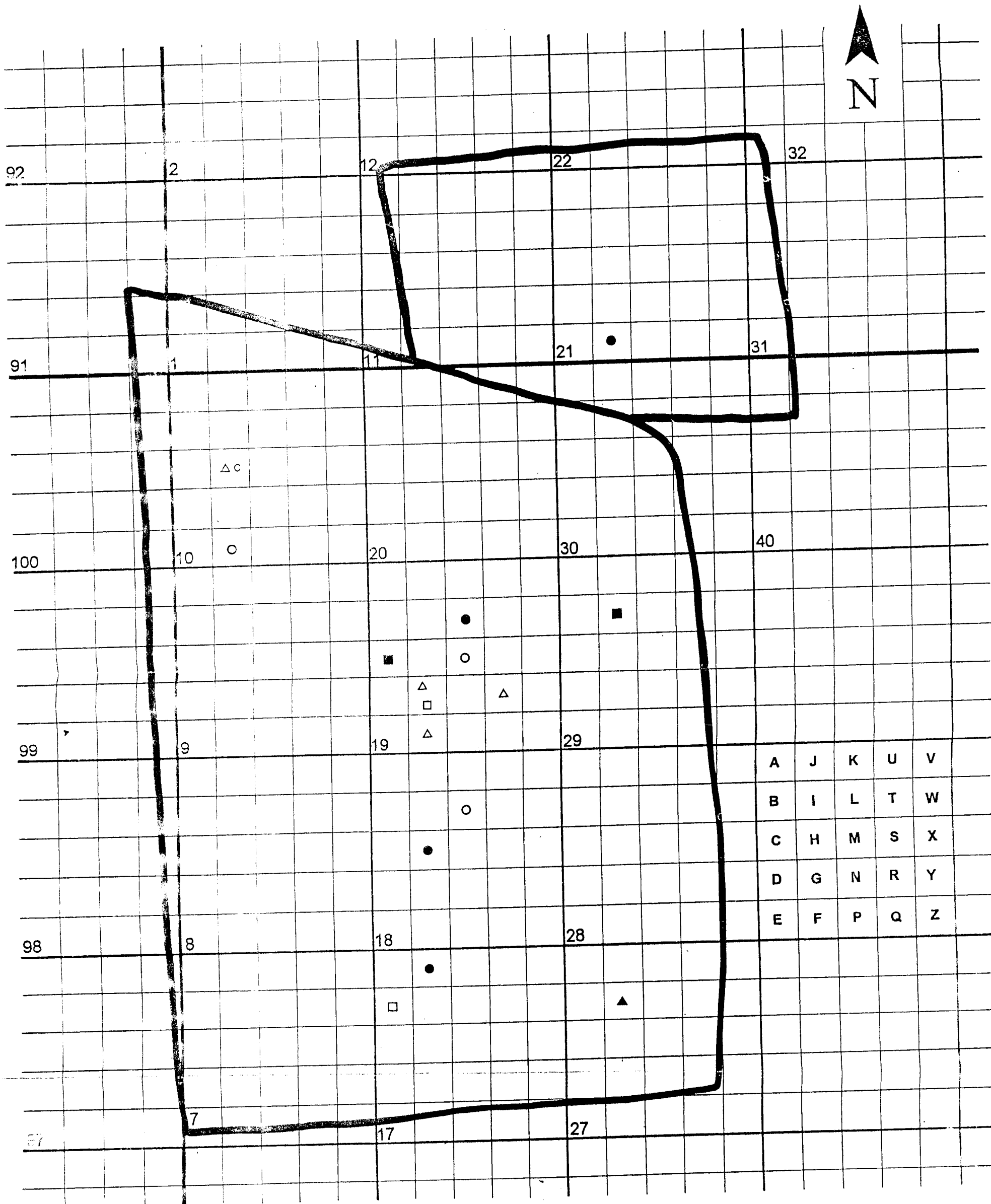




- Mean 1.00 - 12.01
- 1St.Dev. 12.02 - 24.03
- 2St.Dev. 24.04+

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 Fig. 5 Tile distribution plan

A
B

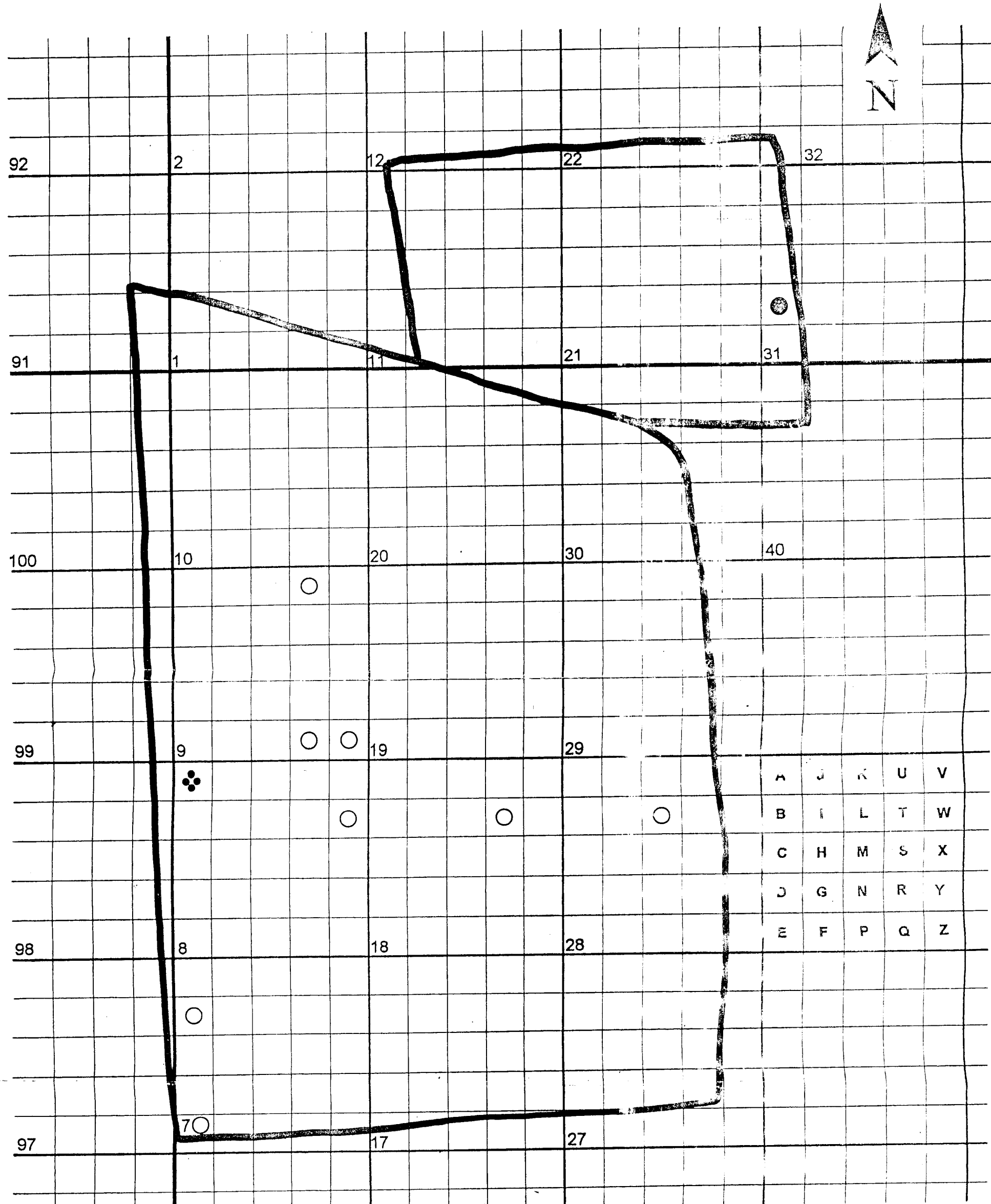


- End scraper △ Burnt flint (C = core)
- Flake
- Blade
- Point
- ▲ Chip

0 200m

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Fig. 4 Flint distribution plan
Scale 1:2000

A
B



- ✱ IA/Saxon
- Medieval
- Post-Medieval

0 200m

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Fig. 3 Pottery distribution plan

Scale 1:2000