

**A fieldwalking and
trial-trenching evaluation at
Abbotts Hall Farm,
Great Wigborough, Essex**

October 2001

**on behalf of
the Essex Wildlife Trust**

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1 Summary

- 1.1 A fieldwalking evaluation was carried out in October 2001 at Abbots Hall Farm, Great Wigborough, Essex of a 24 hectare area. This identified four significant clusters of finds: one concentration of Roman pottery (Roman site 1), and one of both Roman and medieval pottery (Roman site 2/medieval site 1). Two other clusters of Roman pottery, tile and briquetage were so closely grouped that they are probably parts of a single large archaeological site covering approximately 1 hectare (Roman site 3).
- 1.2 Following the fieldwalking, the clusters were tested by trial-trenching in October 2001. Red earth was found in most of the trenches in Roman site 3. This helped to define the position of two red hills, one corresponding to a previously known red hill at TL 970 137, and a second, previously unknown red hill. Internal details in the red hills included clay-lined tanks, which are presumably examples of 'settling tanks' found on other red hill sites.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 This is the report on an evaluation by fieldwalking and trial-trenching at Abbots Hall Farm, Great Wigborough, Essex commissioned by the Essex Wildlife Trust and carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) from 9th to 16th October 2001. Post-excavation work was carried out from 17th to 31st October 2001.
- 2.2 This is the fourth phase of archaeological work on this farm, the previous three being:
Phase 1: fieldwalking of proposed saltwater lake (October 2000: CAT Report 105).
Phase 2: trial-trenching of a site at TL 971 140 (November 2000: CAT Report 111).
Phase 3: a watching brief on the lake and the counter trench (report forthcoming).
- 2.3 Current land use is arable, but the land will soon be flooded after the breach of the sea wall in a managed retreat scheme to create a nature reserve.
- 2.4 All work was carried out according to specifications agreed with Colchester Borough Council Archaeology Officer (CBCAO). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in Colchester Borough Council's *Guidelines for the standards and practice of archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester* (1996).
- 2.5 The project was monitored by Colchester Borough Council's Archaeology Officer.

3 Archaeological background

There have been several archaeological discoveries in the vicinity of the development area. Both south and east of the development area, Roman pottery and late Iron Age and Roman red hills (salt-working sites) are recorded (ESMR 11512, 16702, 17068). These are discussed in Fawn *et al* 1990 and Sealey 1995.

4 The fieldwalking survey

4.1 Aim

The aim of the fieldwalking survey was to collect and plot surface finds in order to establish whether there were any significant clusters of surface finds which might highlight the position of previously unknown archaeological sites.

4.2 Method

The survey followed standard Essex methodology, ie a 10% surface collection achieved by collecting finds in 2m-wide corridors over a 20m grid (Medlycott & Germany 1994). Base grid-points were established by GPS, and the boxes marked out with tapes from those points using bamboo canes which were appropriately marked. The survey area coincided with four separate kilometre squares numbered A-D. Thus a typical hectare was numbered A97 or B9. Within the hectare boxes, the 20m boxes were numbered alphabetically (for example A97C or B9F).

4.3 The study area (Fig 1)

The study area was defined as all land below the 4m contour (the projected limit of flood water after the breaching of the sea wall). The study area included parts of 56 separate hectares, but its irregular shape means that only 598 20m boxes were to be walked, giving an equivalent study area of a little under 24 hectares.

5 Results

5.0.1 The following types of finds were collected: prehistoric flints, burnt flints, prehistoric pottery, Roman pottery, Roman brick/tile, briquetage, medieval pottery, post-medieval pottery, modern pottery, clay tobacco-pipe fragments, peg-tile, post-medieval and modern brick, post-medieval and modern glass, and sundry iron objects. The first nine of those finds groups are discussed below, and statistical analysis is given in section 12 below. The other finds groups are listed in the site archive, but are not discussed below. The following finds have not been retained: peg-tile.

5.0.2 Using the spreadsheet facility in Microsoft Works, each finds type has been calculated in such a way that the period plans (Figs 2-10 here) show groups of finds in below average (-average) above average (+average), above 1 standard deviation over the mean (+1 sd) and above 2 sd's over the mean (+2 sd). By common convention in the Essex fieldwalking system, a single box with finds of +2 sd is not a significant cluster, but two such adjacent boxes are a significant cluster and represent a previously unknown archaeological site.

5.1 Prehistoric finds (Figs 2-4)

Two classes of prehistoric material were collected - struck flints and burnt flints.

5.1.1 Pottery (Fig 3)

total collected: 1 (25g)
average weight per 20m box: 0.042g
County average: 0.245g

A single sherd of prehistoric pottery was collected. Its fabric and also its proximity to a large group of Roman pottery, tiles and briquetage on one of the red hill sites suggests it is late Iron Age in date.

5.1.2 Struck flints (Figs 2-4)

total collected: 31 (469g)
average weight per 20m box: 0.784g
County average: 0.245g

The fieldwalking team collected 31 struck flints. Although there was a thin spread of them in the eastern side of the survey area (Fig 4), they are at low weights and do not form significant concentrations. Flints are not found in association with any other finds type.

5.1.3 Burnt flints (Figs 2-4)

total collected: 13 (321g)
average weight per 20m box: 0.537g
County average: 2.439g

Thirteen burnt flints were collected (total weight 321g), well below the county average¹. They were thinly spread, and there are no significant clusters.

5.2 Roman finds (Figs 5-7)

Three classes of Roman material were collected: pottery and brick/tile, and briquetage.

5.2.1 Pottery (Figs 5-7)

total collected: 125 sherds (900g)
average weight per 20m box: 1.505g
County average: 0.842g

The fieldwalking team collected 125 sherds of Roman pottery, at an average weight well above the county figure. Technically, there are actually only two groups of +2 sd boxes (A78G and A78L (Fig 5) and C8T, C8U and C8Z (Fig 6)), but both are within

¹ as given in Medlycott & Germany 1994

much larger spreads of Roman pottery at lower weights. There is also another area of finds centred on B6G, B6K and B6M, with several diagonally adjacent +2 sd boxes. The sensible interpretation of these three groups is that they are at the centre of three Roman sites, as follows:

Roman site 1:

NGR centre TL 9570 1380 covering approximately 1 ha and including +2 sd boxes at A78G and A78L.

Roman site 2:

NGR centre TL 9604 1352 covering approximately 0.4 ha and including +2 sd boxes B5J and B6G, B6K and B6M.

Roman site 3:

NGR centre TL 9705 1382 covering approximately 3 ha and including +2 sd boxes C8T, C8U and C8Z.

5.2.2 Roman brick/tile (Figs 5-7)

total collected: 47 pieces (2976g)
 average weight per 20m box: 4.977g
 County average: 4.524g²

The weight of Roman brick/tile is more or less at the county average. There is only one significant group, at boxes D72L and D72M (Fig 7). However, this is the product of two individual and heavy pieces of tile and may be insignificant. What appears to be much more significant is the large spread of material coinciding with Roman site 3 (above section 5.2.1, and Fig 6). Again, there are no adjacent +2 sd boxes here (so technically no 'sites'). Perhaps this material should be viewed not as a separate site defined by Roman tile, but as a scatter of tile which complements the Roman pottery spread.

5.2.3 Briquetage (Figs 5-7)

total collected: 92 pieces (1885g)
 average weight per 20m box: 3.102g
 County average: -

Briquetage is the debris from salt manufacture on 'red hill' sites. Red hills are believed to have functioned from the middle Iron Age to the middle of the Roman period, most actively for the 50 years on either side of the Roman invasion of AD 43³. The Great Wigborough material is more likely to be Roman in date because it is associated with large quantities of Roman brick/tile and pottery, but only a single prehistoric potsherd.

Briquetage only occurred within one hectare box close to the coast (C8). There are two adjacent +2 sd boxes at C8D and C8E, and lesser weights in C8S and C8X. This material is all associated with the spread of Roman tile and pottery of Roman site 3 (above section 5.2.1, and Fig 6).

Discussion

The material collected is reported on briefly here. The fieldwalking team collected 92 pieces totalling 1885g. Some of the pieces were quite large, and have presumably only recently been ploughed up. The fabric of the briquetage is quite bright orange – close to the colour of Roman tiles from the same site – and it is soft enough to be cut by a fingernail. There is vegetable matter in the fabric, and in one instance seed impressions on the surface.

The recognisable fragments included approximately half of a firebar (Fig 11) similar to published examples⁴, and a possible piece of a pinch prop. The remainder of the group consists of either undifferentiated scraps or the fragments of the walls of briquetage vessels. In the major study of this material⁵, the vessel fragments are only grouped into thin vessels with walls up to 15mm thick and thick vessels with walls thicker than 15mm. However, this group had three distinct wall thicknesses:

² tile weight only

³ Fawn *et al* 1990, p 39, table 4; Sealey 1995, p 65 defines a *floruit* for red hills in the 1st century AD

⁴ Fawn *et al* 1990, fig 12, p 13

⁵ *ibid*

9-12mm, approximately 15mm, and 20-25mm. The thinnest walls correspond to 'type A' briquetage found commonly on Canvey Island, and the thicker examples to 'type B' briquetage found in north-east Essex⁶.

It is not necessary to discuss the finer details of briquetage here, except to make one obvious point. Those vessels with 9-12mm thick walls have the look and feel of vessels which could (in theory) be transported whole from the salt-making site, whereas those with 15mm- and especially 20mm-thick walls would clearly be far too heavy to lift (especially when full of salt). The one measurable thin-walled vessel here has an external diameter of approximately 25cm. The thickness of the vessel wall presumably relates to its function, with the thick vessels being static and the thinner ones portable.

Table of briquetage weights, with comments.

Box no	Quantity	Size	Weight	Comments
C8D	1	22mm+ thick	29	Pinch prop fragment? - one flat edge and two prominent finger-impressions on one surface; orange surface, grey core
C8D	7	15mm thick	162	Vessel-wall fragments
C8D	2	20-25mm thick	62	Thick vessel-wall fragments
C8D	12	-	58	Scraps
C8E	10	-	43	Scraps
C8E	6	15mm thick	169	Vessel-wall fragments - 2 have stripes on exterior surface, presumably finger-marks
C8E	2	21-23mm thick	187	Wall fragments from a thick vessel - one piece has finger-impressions at one edge indicating it is close to its junction with the base (Fig 11.3)
C8E	2	9-12mm thick	73	Thin vessel-wall fragments - one has vertical grooves too thin for finger-marks (Fig 11.2); the other has a flat-topped rim
C8J	1	110x58x24	131	Approximately half of one firebar closely matching published examples (Fawn <i>et al</i> , Fig 11.1)
C8J	3	15mm thick	81	Vessel-wall fragments
C8J	8	-	39	Scraps
C8S	9	15mm thick	121	Vessel-wall fragments including one rounded rim
C8S	16	-	74	Scraps
C8W	2	-	13	Scraps
C8X	3	15mm thick	42	Vessel-wall fragments
C8X	3	-	22	Scraps including flat rim fragment

5.3 Medieval finds (Figs 8-10)

Only one class of medieval find was collected, ie pottery.

5.3.1 Pottery (Figs 8-10)

total collected: 271 sherds (1994g)

average weight per 20m box: 3.334g

County average: 1.447g

There were quite large quantities of medieval pottery from this survey, at well above the county average. By far the largest group (and the majority of the collected weight) came from a significant scatter in boxes B5 and B6 (Fig 8).

Medieval site 1/Roman site 2

NGR centre TL 9604 1352 covering approximately 0.4 ha and including +2 sd boxes B5J and B6F, B6G, B6K and B6L.

Apart from this scatter, which coincided with a Roman concentration (Roman site 2), there are two other areas worthy of comment. The first is a thin spread of medieval pottery over A68-A69 and A78-A79 (coinciding with Roman site 1), and the second is

⁶ *ibid*

the almost complete absence of medieval pottery from anywhere on the east side of the project (ie Fig 10).

5.4 Post-medieval and modern finds

5.4.1 Post-medieval pottery (not plotted)

total collected: 83 sherds (1421g)
average weight per 20m box: 2.376g
County average: 4.363g (post-medieval and modern)
Post-medieval pottery was collected, at a rate of approximately half the county figure. The material is spread over most of the survey area. There are no significant concentrations. The only area worthy of comment is hectare B6, where two non-adjacent +2 sd boxes and one +1 sd box coincide with Roman site 2 (above section 5.2.1) and medieval site 1 (above section 5.3.1).

It is conventional wisdom to interpret this post-medieval pottery as 'manure scatter' material (brought out with the farmyard manure and spread onto the fields by accident), rather than as being derived from below-ground archaeological sites. There is no reason to dispute this idea here.

5.4.2 Modern pottery (not plotted)

total collected: 385
average weight per 20m box: 4.736g
County average: 4.363g (post-medieval and modern)
A large group of modern pottery was collected, at approximately the county figure. The material is evenly spread over most of the survey area. There is a significant concentration in each of hectares B77 and B87.

There is no reason to dispute the idea that this is 'manure scatter'.

5.4.2 Peg-tile

total collected: 632 pieces (12,045g)
average weight per 20m box: 20.142g
County average: 61.381g
Although it may seem pointless to collect peg-tile, it is picked up in case it should turn out to be Roman brick or tile. The total collected is quite small, and at about one-third of the county average. The peg-tile is distributed fairly evenly across the survey area. There is no other evidence of post-medieval house sites along this coastal stretch (common sense would dictate against building houses along the coastline, anyway), so the tile is probably derived from a manure scatter.

6 Fieldwalking conclusions

The post-medieval and modern material gathered in this survey (pottery and peg-tile) is almost certainly the result of manuring operations over the last three or four centuries, and has no other significance.

However, the Roman material is concentrated in three areas which contain significant clusters of material. These are the Roman sites 1-3 described above. Two of these (Roman sites 2, 3) are close to known or suspected red hills, and it may prove that the debris collected on the surface is mainly derived from these red-hill sites. The briquetage is definitely derived from salt-making activity. To what extent the pottery and especially the Roman tile is also red hill material remains to be proven.

Medieval pottery also occurs in one significant cluster (medieval site 1) which coincides with one of the Roman sites (Roman site 2).

7 The trial-trenching

7.1 Following the evaluation of the fieldwalking results, a number of 1.4m-wide trial-trenches were cut into the significant concentrations, as follows:

Roman site 1: Trenches Q, R.
Roman site 2/medieval site 1: Trench P.
Roman site 3: Trenches A-O.

The trench positions are shown on Figures 12-13.

7.2 Trench A/C/E (Figs 13-14)

This trench was originally positioned over the site of suspected red hill ESMR 17068 at TL 970 137. It was cut in four directions: N-S (Trenches A, B), and E-W (Trench E-J). Red earth (as typically found on red-hill sites) was revealed in all parts of the trench, indicating that a large red hill covered this area. For the purposes of this report, this will be called RH1. The western, northern and eastern extents of RH1 were defined by the absence of red earth in Trenches D, B, and J respectively (see below).

A large feature (Feature or F1) was revealed in this trench. It was 3.6m wide N-S and 3.0m wide E-W, and it cut into the red earth visible in the bottom of the trench. It consisted of unfired brown clay, with a band of red earth between the two broad, brown clay edges. There was no sign of burning on the edges of the feature, which was presumably a clay-lined tank of the kind found elsewhere on red hills. The interior of the feature was not excavated.

7.3 Trench B

Natural ground only exposed. The absence of red earth here defines the north edge of the RH1 in Trench A/C/E above.

7.4 Trench D

Natural ground only exposed. The absence of red earth here defines the west edge of the RH1 in Trench A/C/E above.

7.5 Trench F

Red earth exposed in this trench is part of RH1.

7.6 Trench G

Red earth exposed in this trench is part of RH1.

7.7 Trench H

Red earth exposed in this trench is part of RH1.

7.8 Trench I

Red earth exposed in this trench is the easternmost extent of RH1.

7.9 Trench J

Natural ground only in this trench, which defines the eastern extent of RH1. The presence of a separate area of red hill in Trenches K and M defines a second red hill here (RH2) which doesn't join RH1.

7.10 Trench K

Red earth exposed in this trench is part of RH2.

7.11 Trench L

Natural ground only in this trench. This was somewhat surprising given the amount of surface debris.

7.12 Trench M (Figs 13-14)

Five archaeological features were exposed in this trench, F2-F4 and F9-F10. They were all cut into the red earth, and had similar fills – either red earth, or a charcoal- and daub-flecked greyish material. The main point of interest is that they were all clay-lined. This presumably indicates that they were tanks, like F1 in Trench A/C/E.

7.13 Trench N

No red earth or archaeological features.

7.14 Trench O

There was no red earth here (this is beyond the spread of RH1), but one archaeological feature was exposed in this trench – F5, which was packed with oystershell. This was probably a midden or rubbish-pit. There was no independent evidence of its date, so presumably it is either Roman or medieval.

7.15 Trench P

Cut into Roman site 2/medieval site 1. Only modern land-drains, no archaeological features.

7.16 Trench Q

Two pits (F6-F7) and one linear feature (F8) were found in this trench. Pit F6 had a fill which included charcoal and oystershell flecks, but it was not clay-lined like the features in Trench M. The fill of F7 included stones and oystershells. F8 was a ditch-like feature with a similar fill to F6. there was no dating evidence from the surface of any of these features.

7.17 Trench R

No archaeological features.

7.18 Trial-trenching discussion

The trial-trenching exercise shows the value of trenching into fieldwalking scatters - much more precise results are available. The trenches will be discussed by the three fieldwalking sites discussed above.

Roman site 1 (Trenches Q-R)

Trench R, despite being cut into the western side of a spread of Roman finds and specifically through a group of +1 sd boxes, revealed no subsoil features. Trench Q, which was cut as close as was feasible through the centre of a +2 sd group, revealed three features of unknown date (but presumed to be Roman because of the surface finds). There is some comfort in this result, because it is generally assumed in the Essex system of fieldwalking that +2 sd clusters are significant and that lower weights are not. The nature of the features in Trench Q can be interpreted perhaps as 'domestic' in a broad sense, but we cannot really go any further than that. It would also appear from Trench Q that surface finds of Roman pottery and tile occur over a wider area than the subsoil features.

Roman site 2/medieval site 1 (Trench P)

The absence of subsoil features in an area of seven adjacent +2 sd boxes of Roman and medieval pottery is a surprise. The discovery of Roman pottery might have indicated a red hill site, but the absence of red earth in this trench rules out that explanation. Why is this material here? One explanation may be that the material is redeposited, having perhaps been thrown here during construction of the sea wall from an adjacent Roman/medieval site. The second is that it is a medieval reuse of a Roman site which was not a red hill, but was attractive in some other way. Red hill sites were sometimes reused by medieval shepherds who saw the hills as safe refuge above wet ground and also good pasture for their animals, but medieval sites of this type do not always coincide with mounds of red earth⁷.

Roman site 3 (Trenches A-O)

Trenches A-J were originally cut to trace the extent of a red hill suspected at TL 970 137 (RH1). The presence of red earth in Trenches A/C/E, F-I (and its absence in Trenches B, D, J) defines the extent of this red hill as an area approximately 80m in diameter, and slightly eroded by the present sea wall. Some of the briquetage was found over the northern edge of RH1. The presence of red earth in Trench M and Trench K (and its absence in Trench J and Trench L) defines another red hill of a less certain size (RH2), but probably approximately the same as RH1 (an

⁷ Fawn *et al* 1990, 49

appreciably bigger red hill at RH2 would have merged with RH1). This red hill is associated with surface Roman pottery rather than briquetage.

Trenches N and L demonstrated the same effect as Trench Q and Trench R, ie surface finds without subsoil features. However, Trench O had a single feature which was probably a midden or rubbish-pit.

The most interesting aspect of these red-hill sites is the discovery of six clay-lined settling tanks (plans in Fig 14). These all cut the red earth of the red hills, and were therefore late in the sequence of red-hill activity. One tank had a red earth fill (presumably washed into the feature by tidal action after the red hill had gone out of use). Fawn *et al* 1990 give the range of diameters of settling tanks at between 1m and 2m⁸. In that case, two are smaller and three are in the normal range, but one (F1 in Trench A) is much bigger at 3 x 3.6m. All these tanks are sited between the 3m and 4m contours.

8 Acknowledgements

Thanks to the Essex Wildlife Trust (especially Mr Duncan Bridges) for commissioning the work. Site work was undertaken by David Sims, Simon Rulton and Laura Pooley, assisted by members of the Nayland Historical Society. The project was monitored by Martin Winter for Colchester Borough Council. Original site plans were drawn by Ben Holloway and Laura Pooley. Finds were drawn by Yana Morozova and Simon Rulton.

9 References

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10 Glossary

briquetage	debris from salt manufacture
Iron Age	7th century BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
medieval	from AD 1066 to Henry VIII
modern	19th and 20th centuries
NGR	National Grid Reference
post-medieval	after Henry VIII and up to Victorian
red hill	Iron Age and Roman coastal salt-making site
Roman	period from AD 43 to around AD 430

11 Archive deposition

The finds and paper archive are held at the Colchester Archaeological Trust, 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3NF, but both will be permanently deposited at Colchester Museum under accession code 2001.178.

⁸ Fawn *et al* 1990, 8

12 Statistical information

Key:

n	= number of 20m boxes walked
Ex	= total weight of individual finds type (ie Roman potsherds)
Ex2	= sum of weight of individual finds individually squared
μ	= average weight of finds type per 20m box
σ	= standard deviation
+1 σ	= +1 sd weight
+2 σ	= +2 sd weight

Struck flint

n	598
Ex	469
Ex2	28885
μ	0.784
σ	27.694
+1 σ	28.479
+2 σ	56.173

Burnt flint

n	598
Ex	321
Ex2	24855
μ	0.57
σ	36.820
+1 σ	37.356
+2 σ	74.176

Prehistoric pottery

n	598
Ex	25
Ex2	625
μ	0.042
σ	0.000
+1 σ	0.042
+2 σ	0.042

Roman pottery

n	598
Ex	900
Ex2	23202
μ	1.505
σ	12.787
+1 σ	14.292
+2 σ	27.079

Briquetage

n	598
Ex	1885
Ex2	859925
μ	3.102
σ	218.488
+1 σ	221.590
+2 σ	440.077

Roman brick/tile

n	598
Ex	2796
Ex2	434918
μ	4.977
σ	66.829
+1 σ	71.806
+2 σ	138.635

Medieval pottery

n	598
Ex	1994
Ex2	216210
μ	3.334
σ	49.527
+1 σ	52.861
+2 σ	102.388

Post-medieval pottery

n	598
Ex	1421
Ex2	84727
μ	2.376
σ	29.546
+1 σ	31.922
+2 σ	61.468

Modern pottery

n	598
Ex	2782
Ex2	87946
μ	4.736
σ	15.503
+1 σ	20.239
+2 σ	35.742

Peg-tile (medieval and post-medieval)

n	598
Ex	12045
Ex2	1,166,051
μ	20.142
σ	48.201
+1 σ	68.343
+2 σ	116.545

Howard Brooks, November 2001

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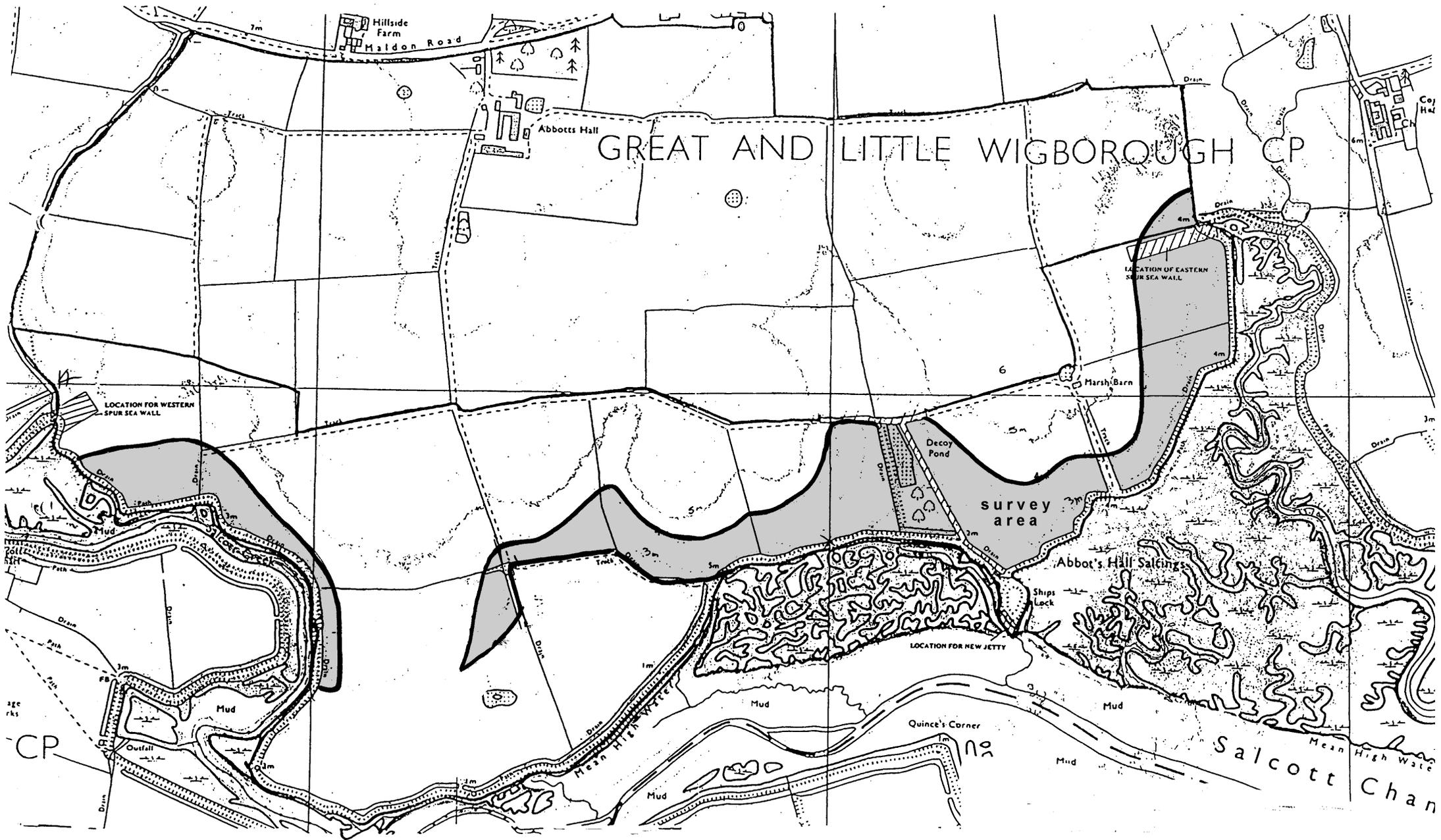


Fig 1 Location of survey area.

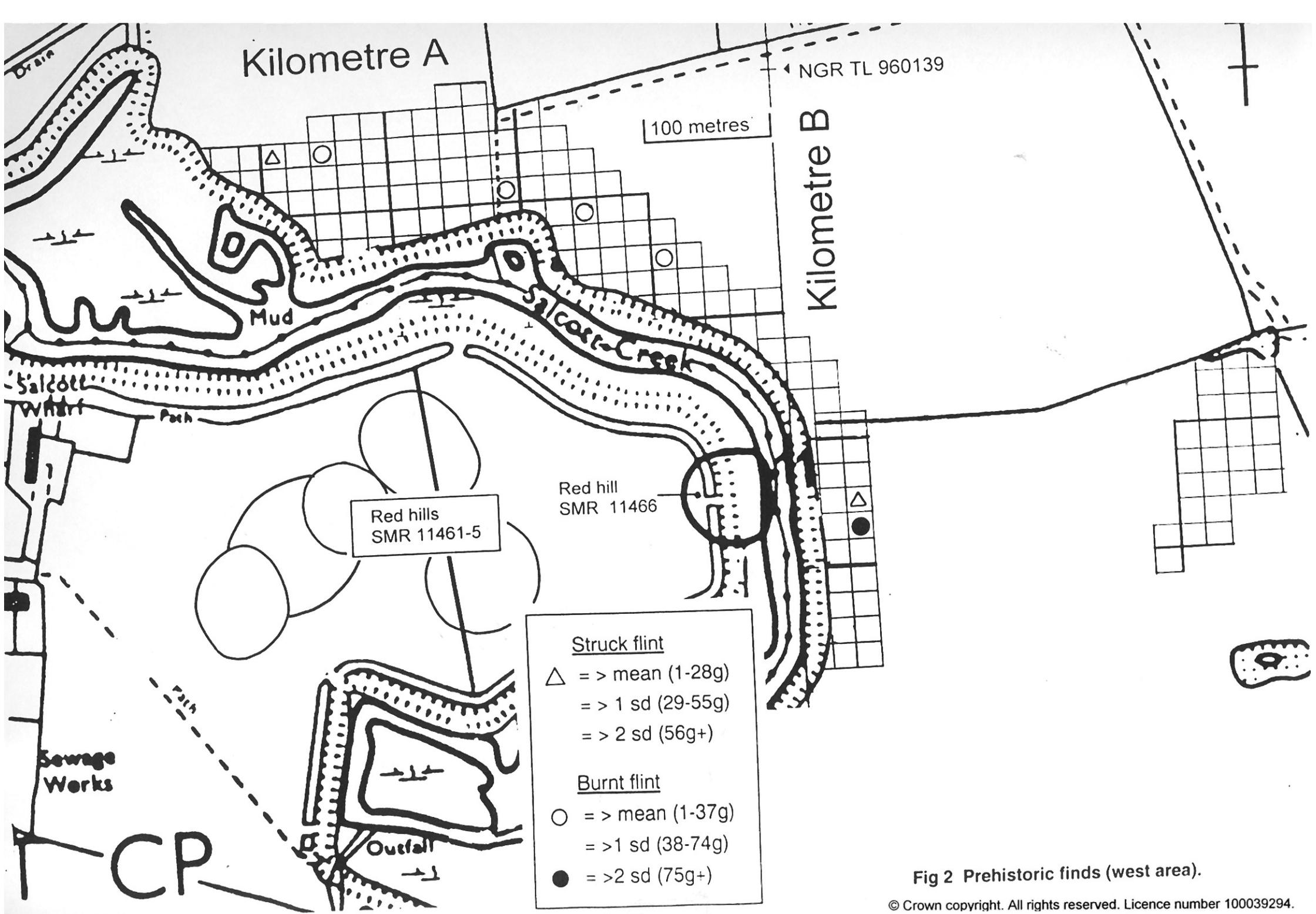


Fig 2 Prehistoric finds (west area).

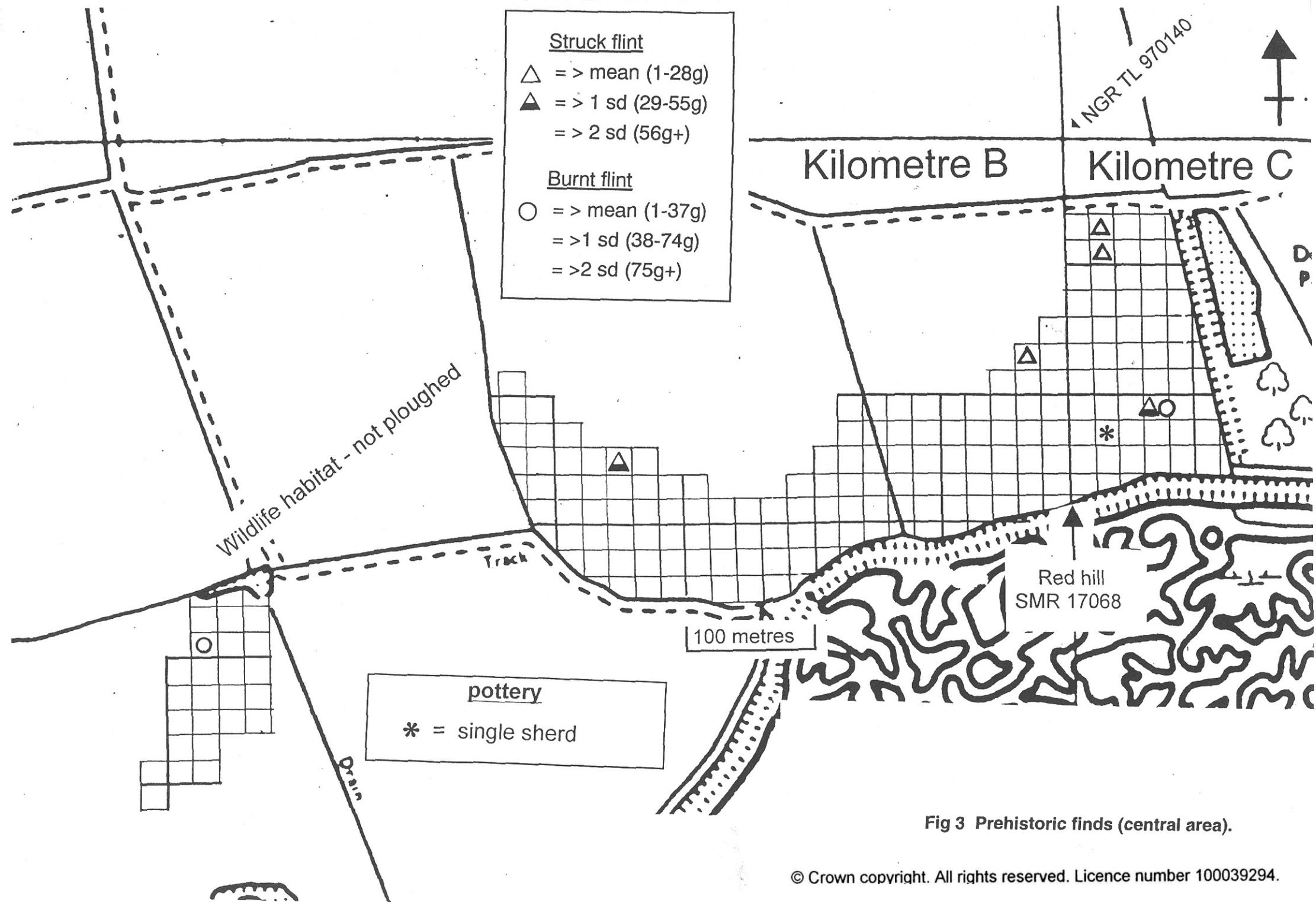
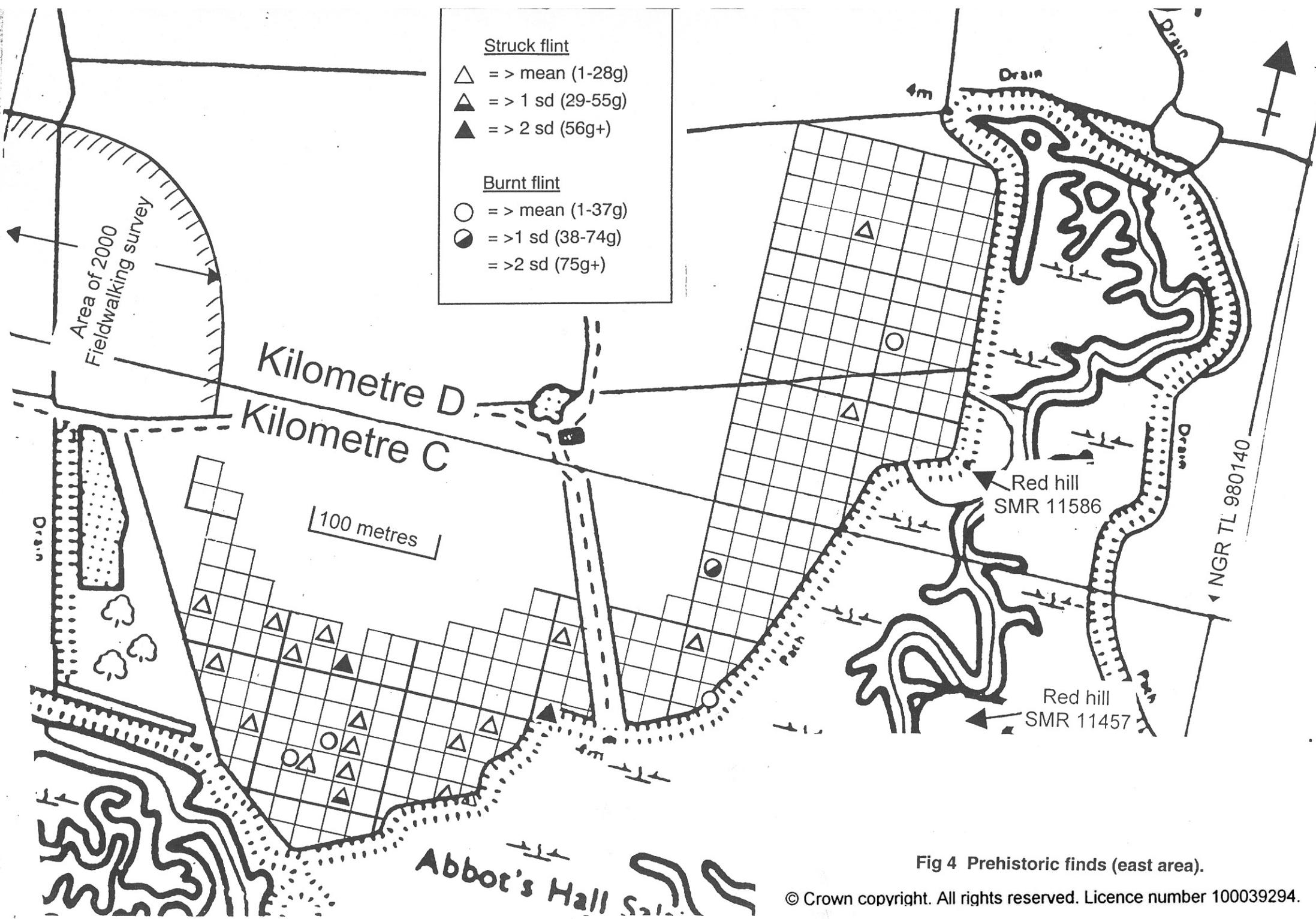


Fig 3 Prehistoric finds (central area).



Struck flint
 △ => mean (1-28g)
 ▲ => 1 sd (29-55g)
 ▲ => 2 sd (56g+)

Burnt flint
 ○ => mean (1-37g)
 ● => 1 sd (38-74g)
 ● => 2 sd (75g+)

Area of 2000
Fieldwalking survey

Kilometre D
Kilometre C

100 metres

Red hill
SMR 11586

Red hill
SMR 11457

NGR TL 980140

Abbot's Hall

Fig 4 Prehistoric finds (east area).

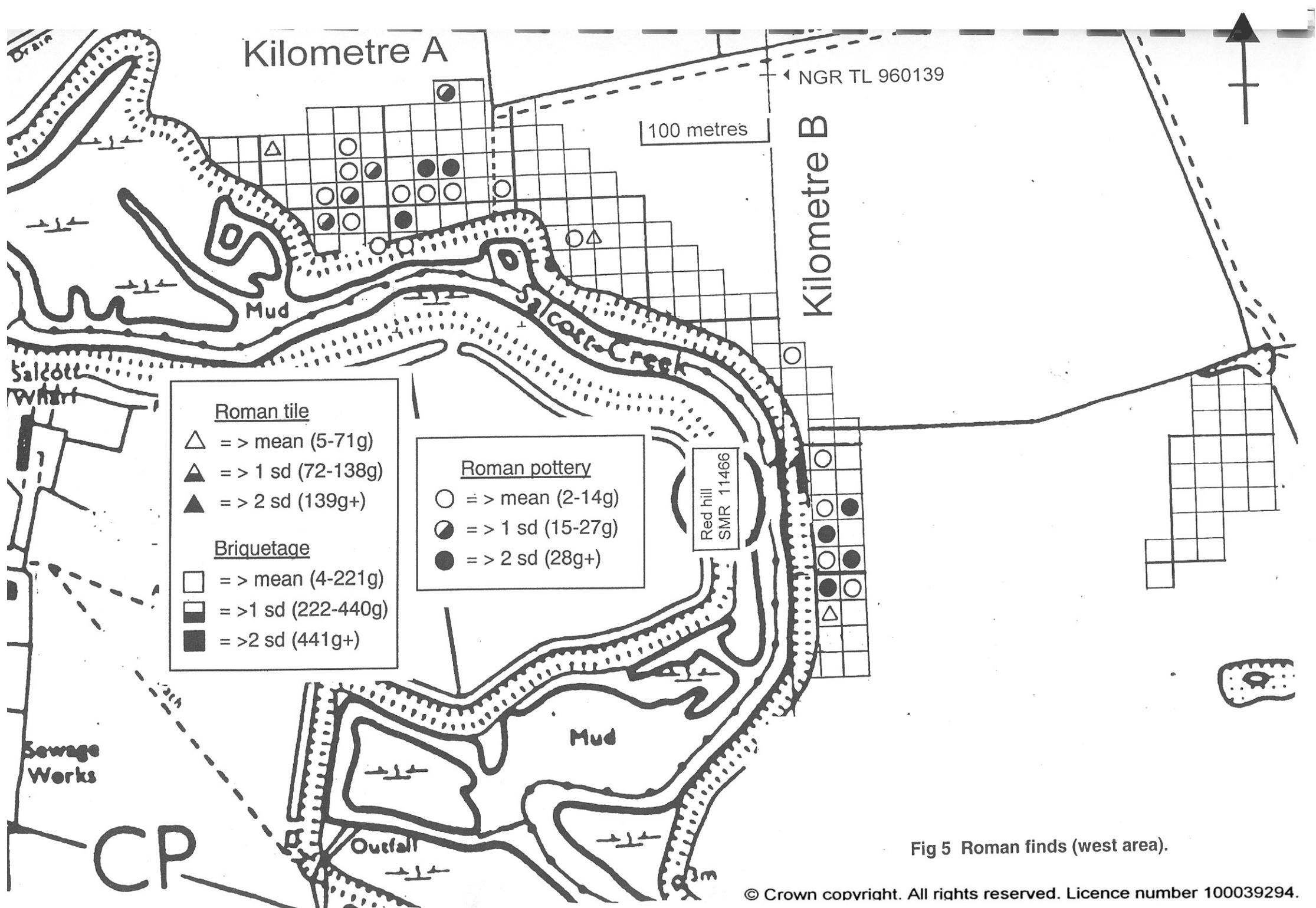


Fig 5 Roman finds (west area).

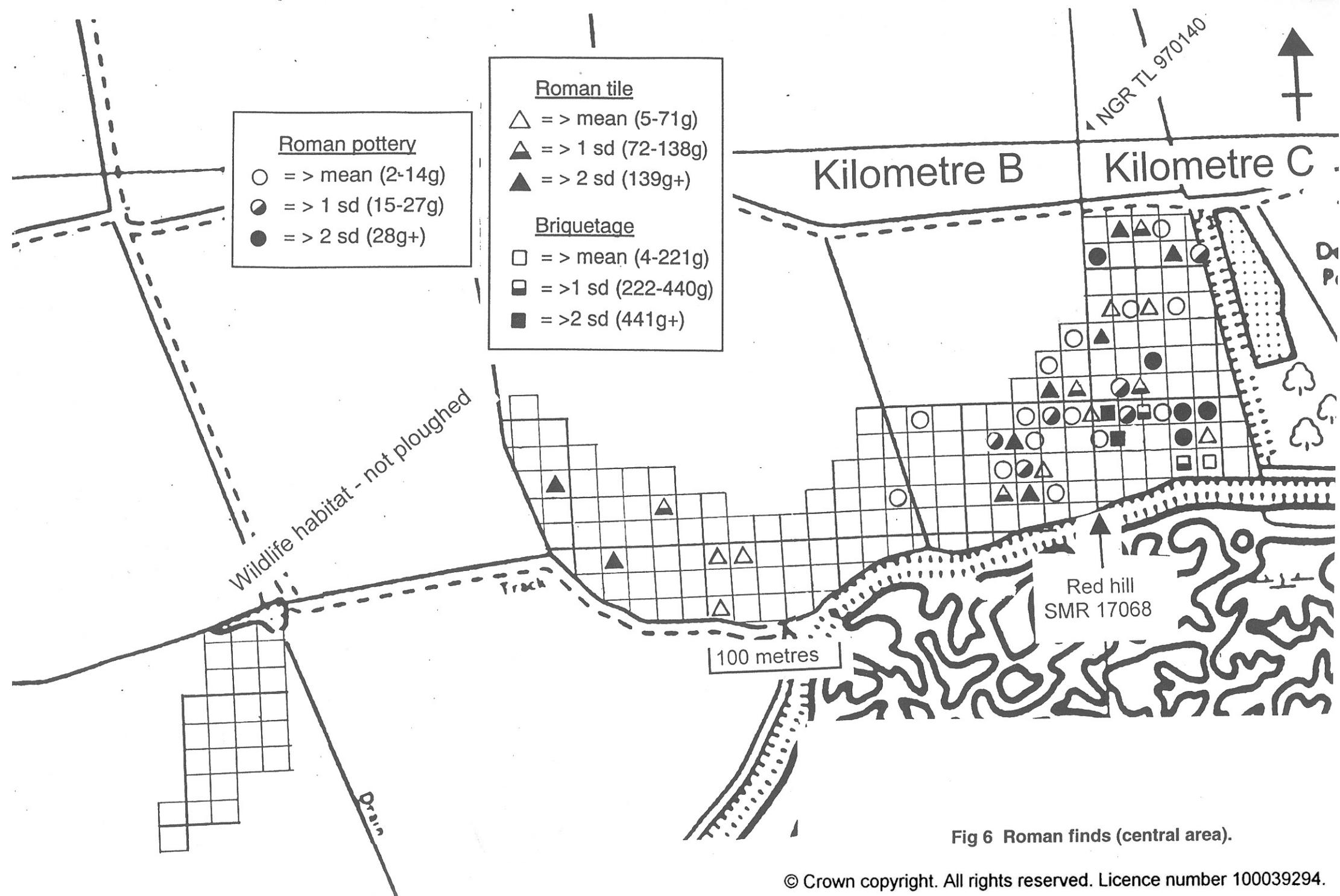


Fig 6 Roman finds (central area).

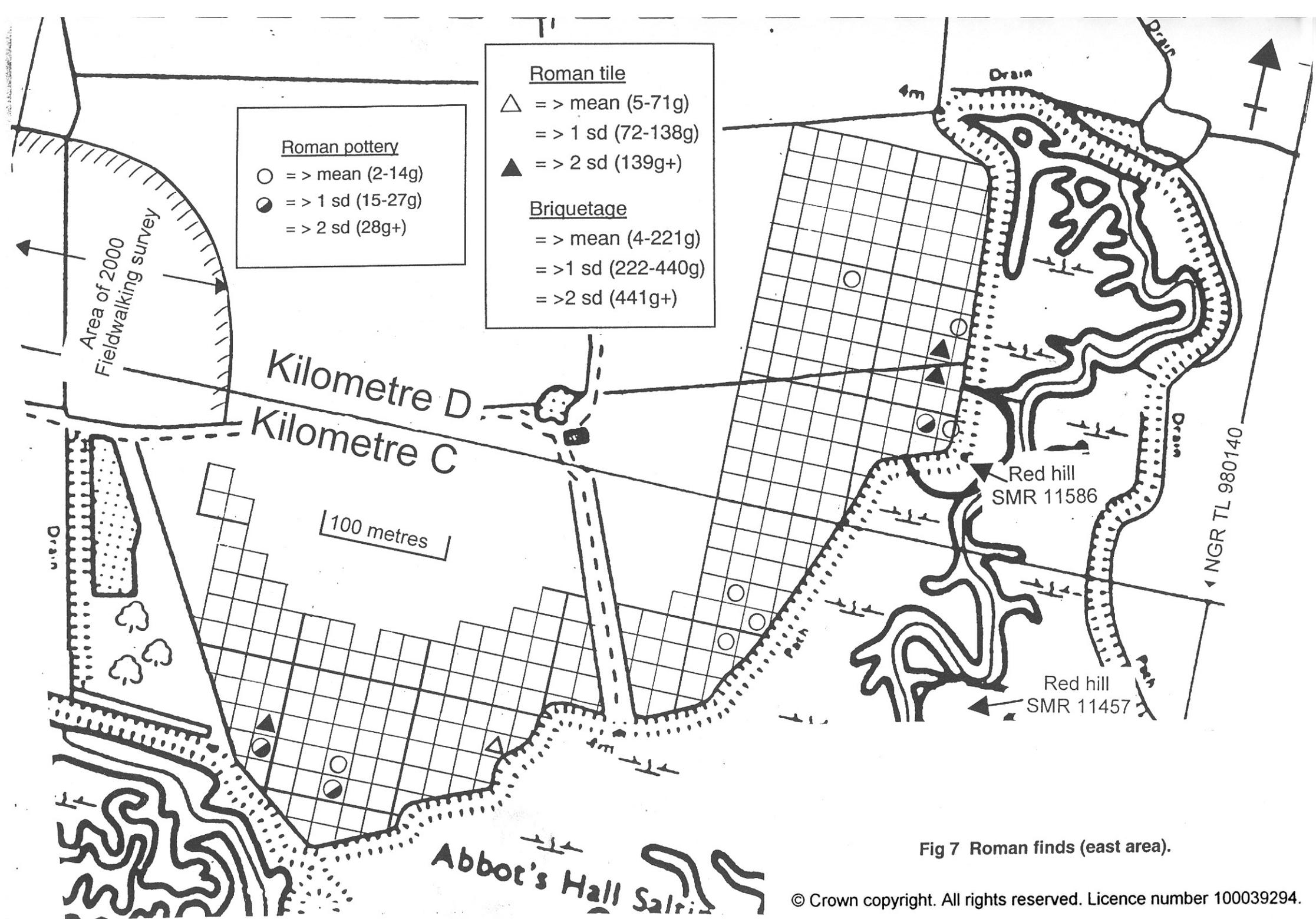


Fig 7 Roman finds (east area).

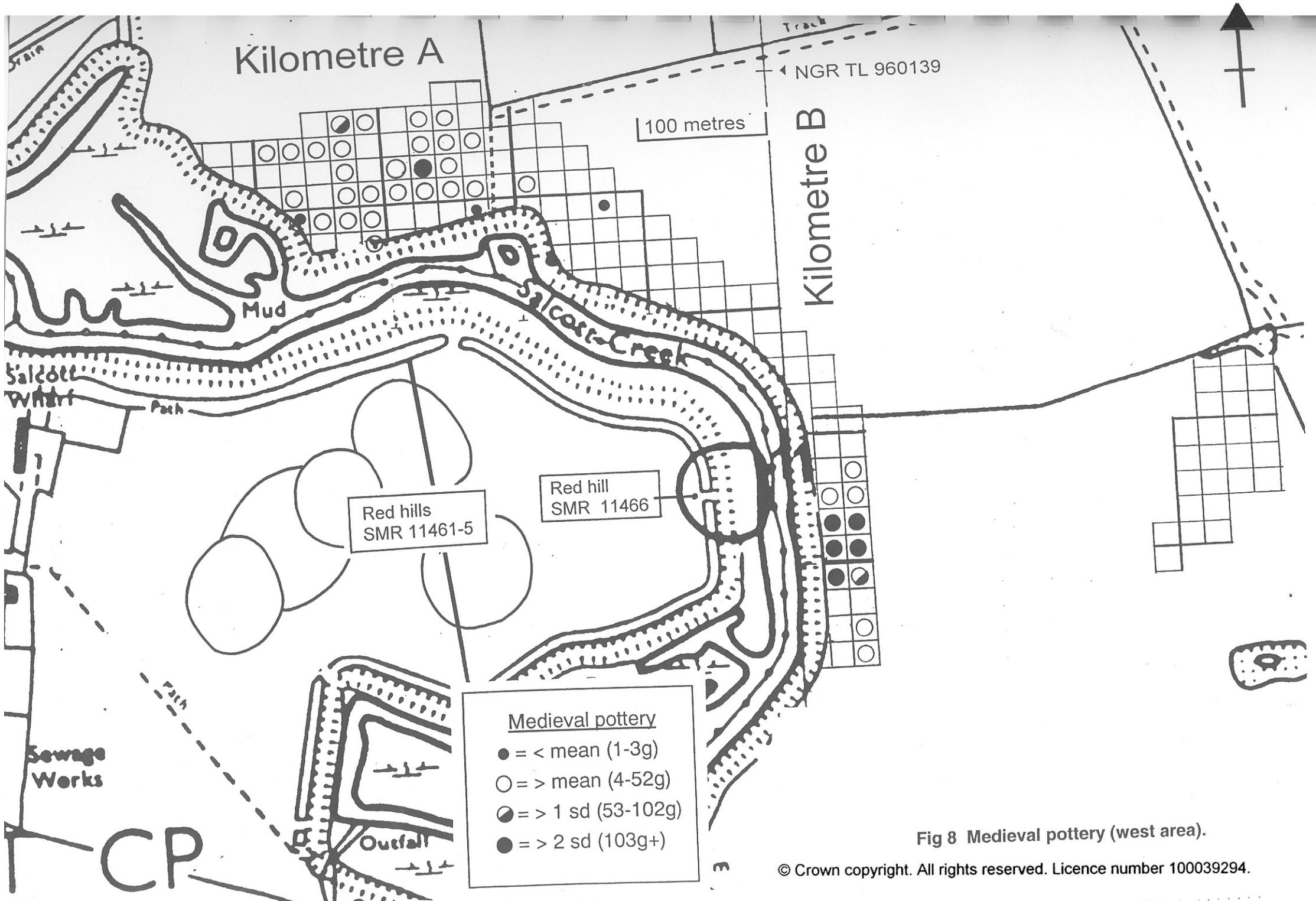


Fig 8 Medieval pottery (west area).

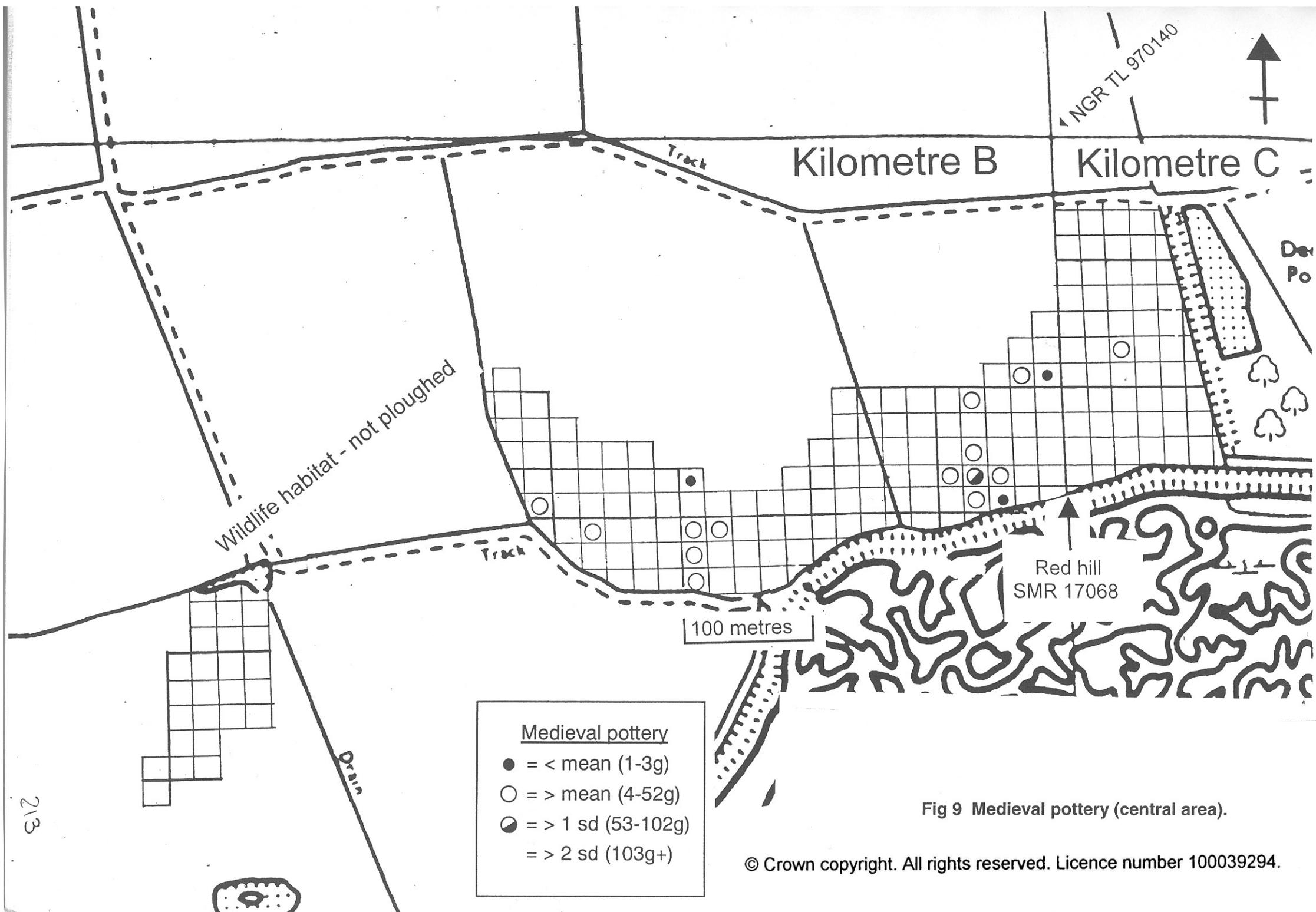


Fig 9 Medieval pottery (central area).

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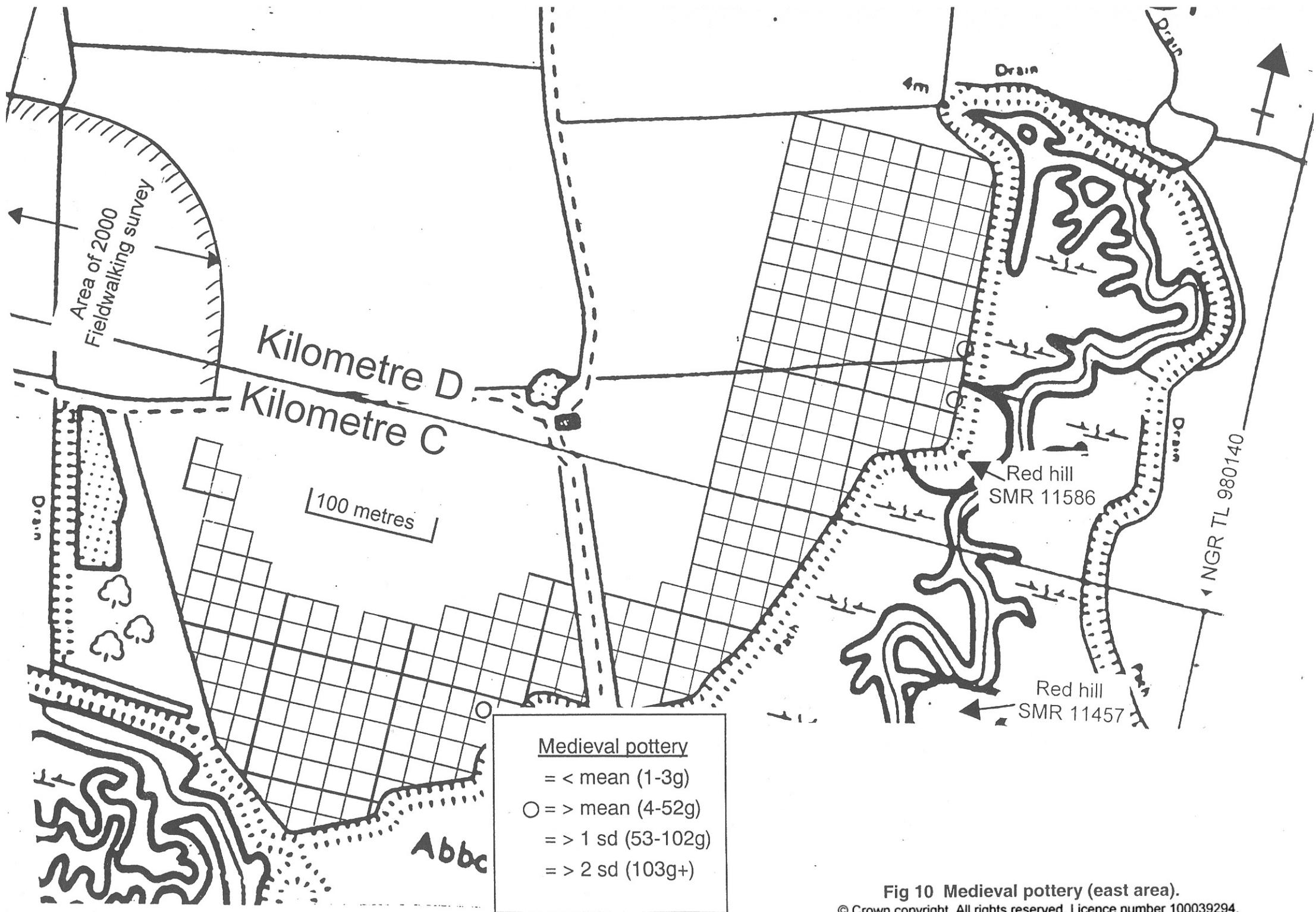


Fig 10 Medieval pottery (east area).

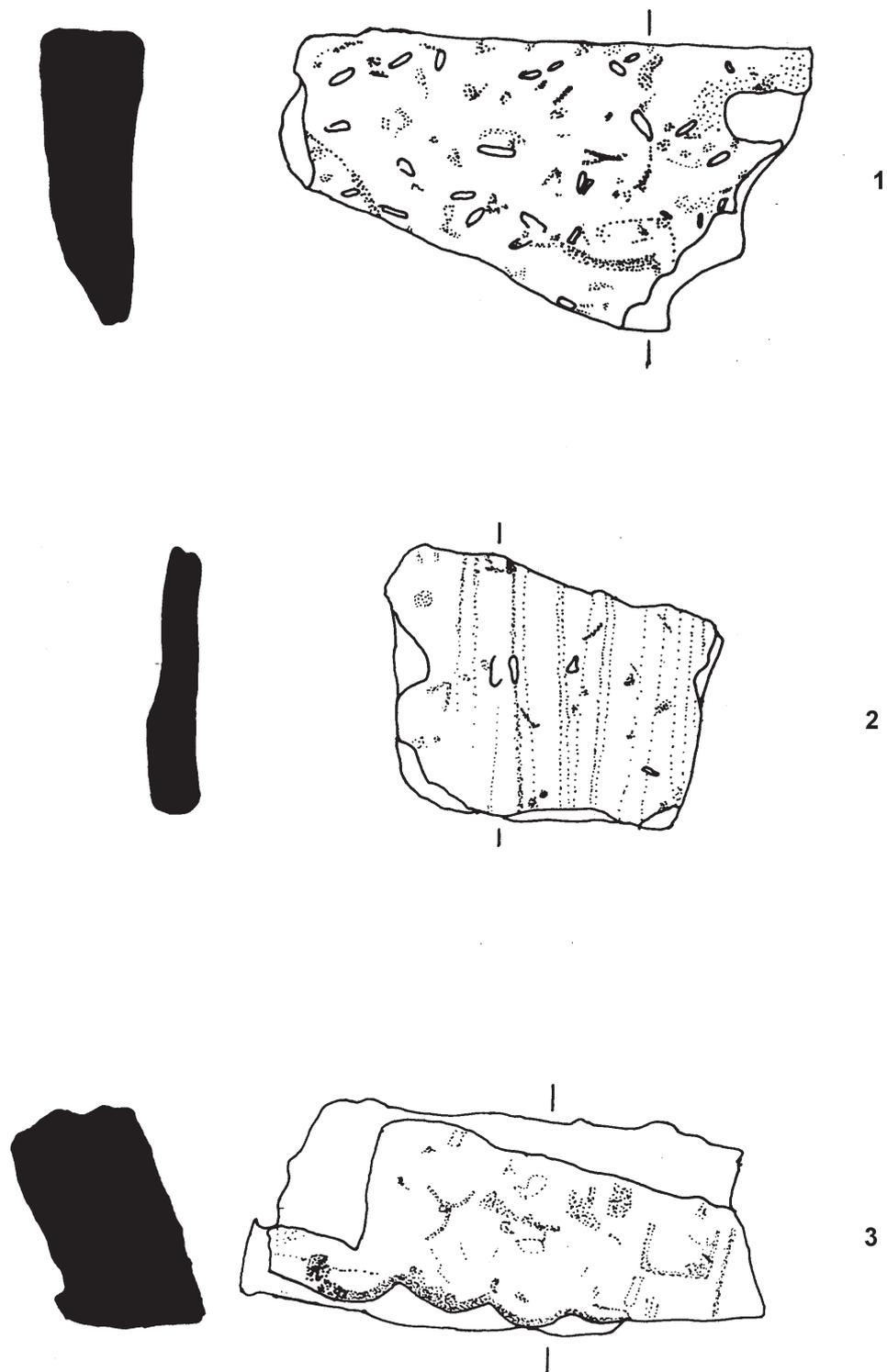


Fig 11 Briquetage: 1 firebar fragment; 2 thin vessel wall; 3 thick vessel wall. 1:2.

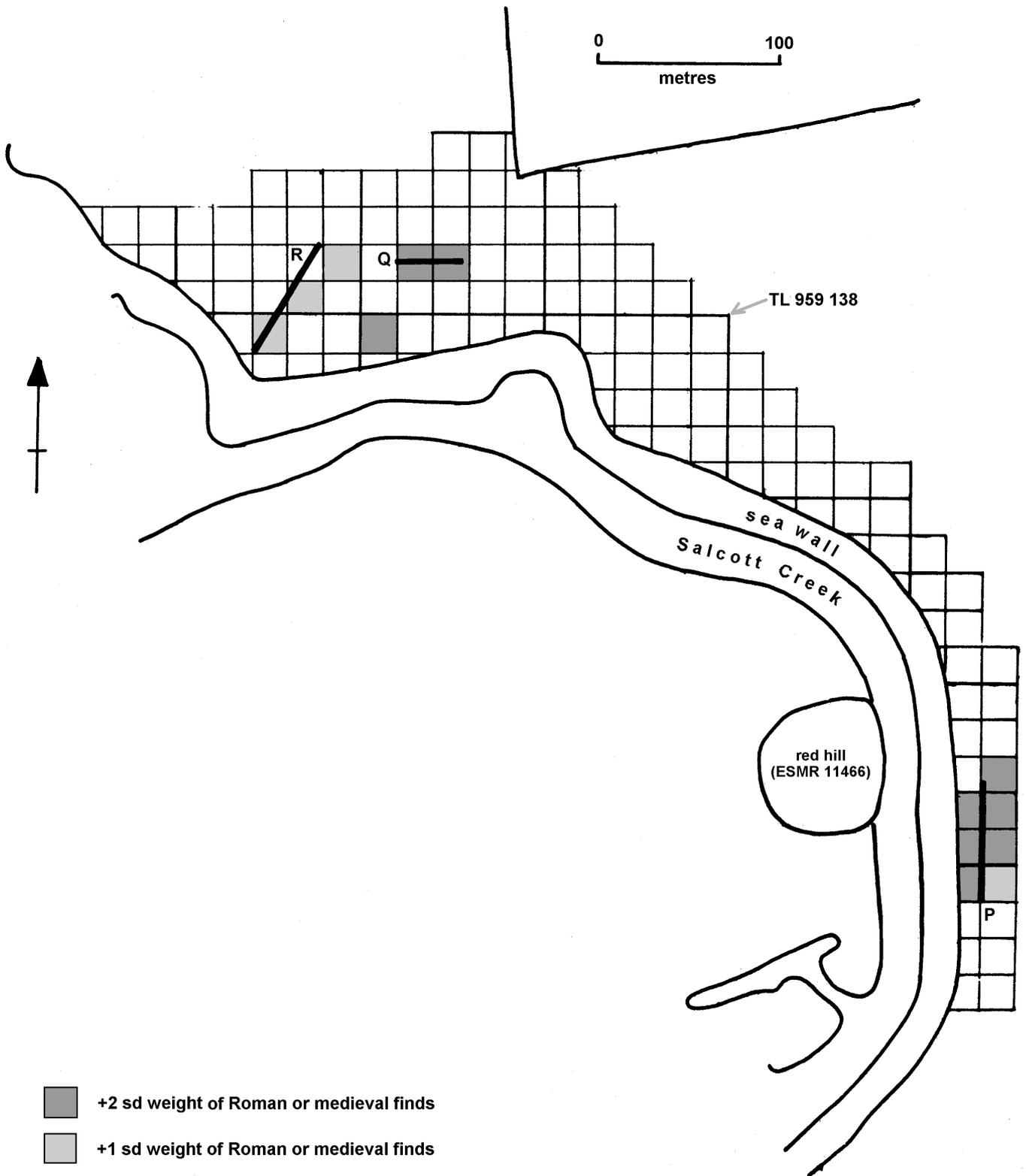
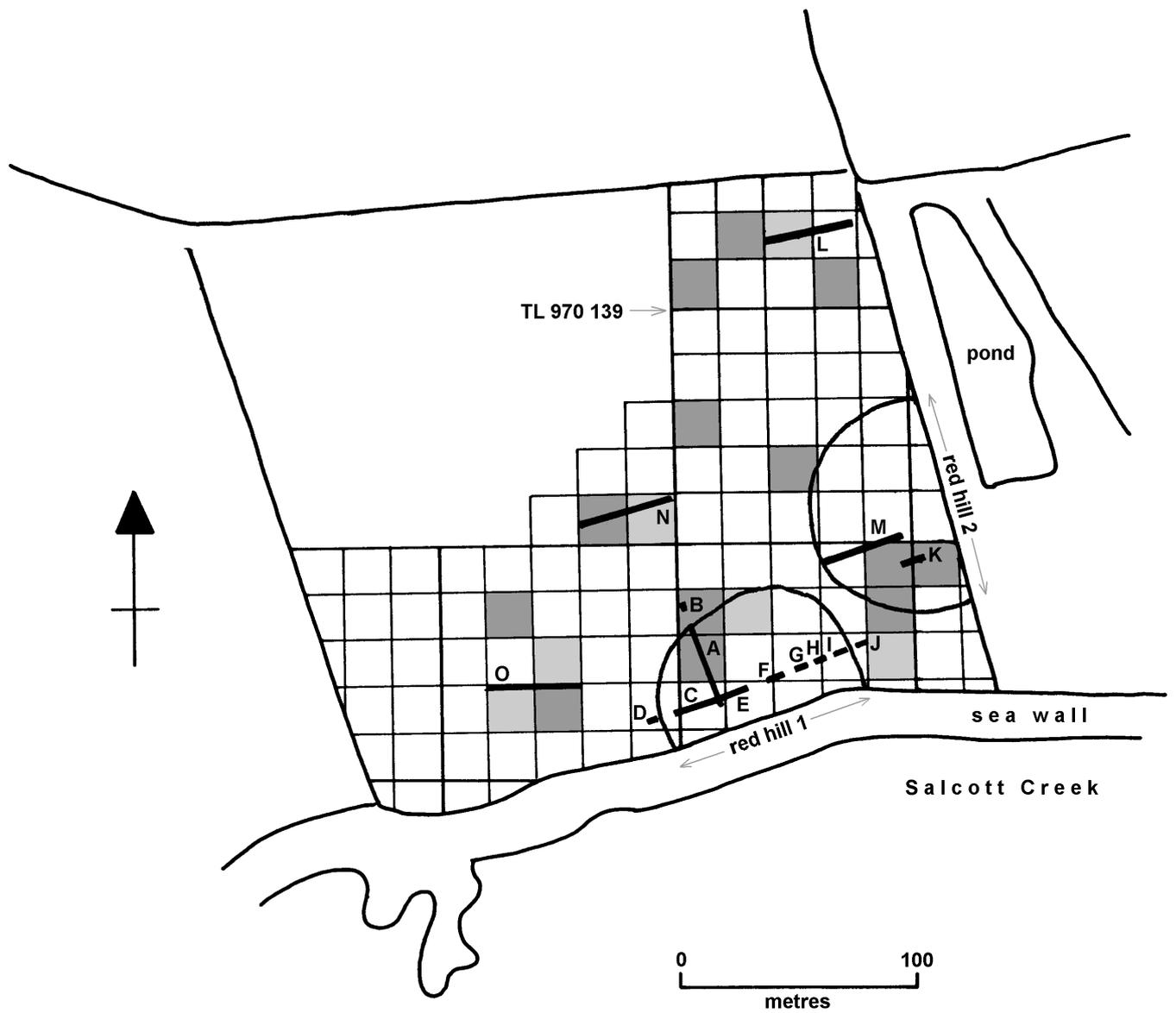


Fig 12 Location of Trenches P-R, with finds clusters.



- +2 sd weight of Roman finds
- ▒ +1 sd weight of Roman finds

Fig 13 Location of Trenches A-O, with finds scatters and extent of red hills.

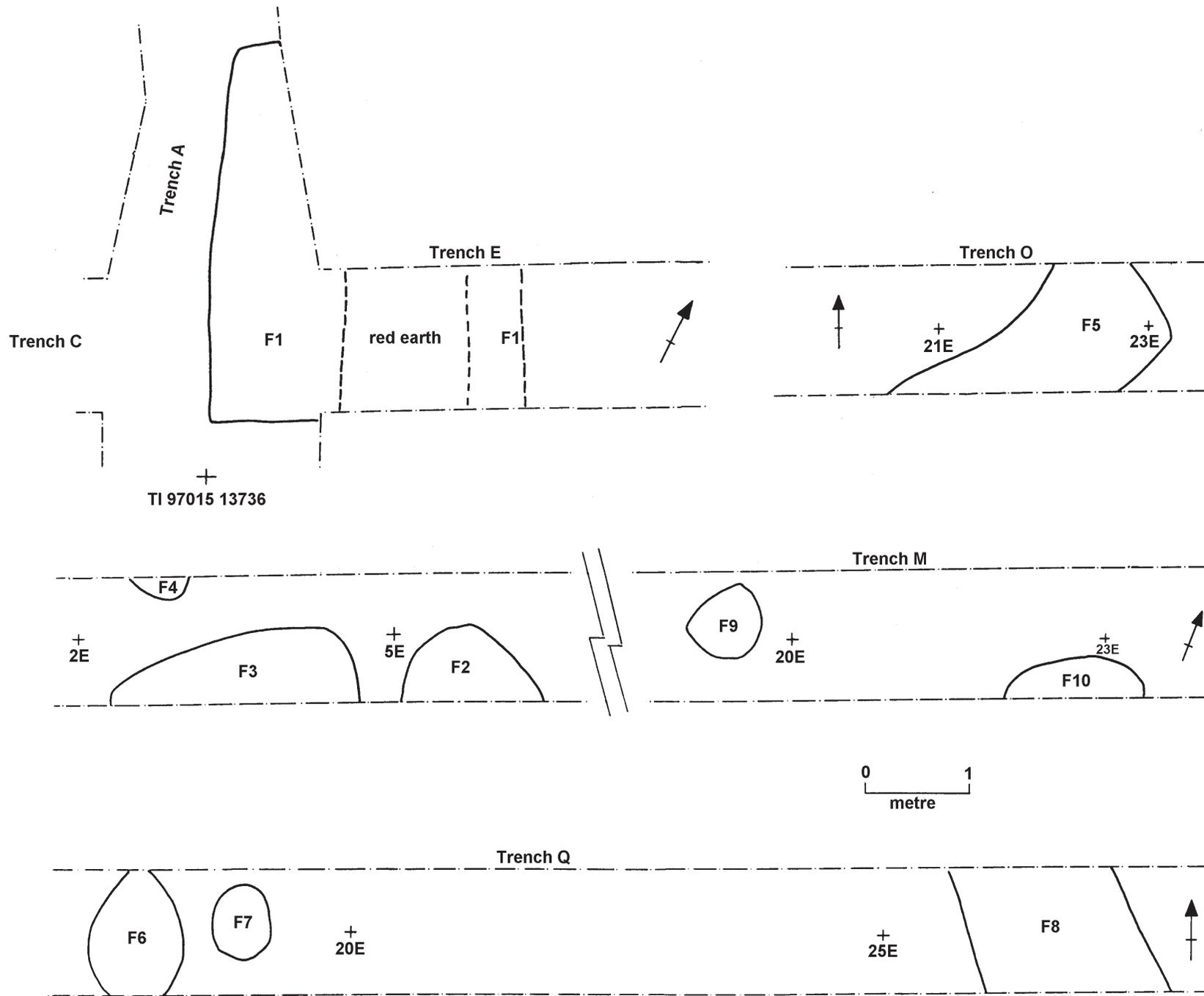


Fig 14 Detail of features in Trenches A/C/E, O, M, Q.

Essex Heritage Conservation Record
Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Site name/address: Abbots Hall Farm, Great Wigborough, Essex	
Parish: Wigborough	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 970 138 (centre)	Site code: 2001.178
Type of work: Fieldwalking and trial-trenching	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: October 2001	Size of area investigated: 24 hectares
Location of finds/curating museum: Colchester Museum	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? Possibly	Related EHCR nos: 11512, 16702, 17068
Final report: CAT Report 161 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
Periods represented: Prehistoric, Romano-British, medieval	
Summary of fieldwork results:	
<p>1.1 A fieldwalking evaluation of a 24 hectare area identified four significant clusters of finds: one concentration of Roman pottery (Roman site 1) and one of both Roman and medieval pottery (Roman site 2/medieval site 1). Two other clusters of Roman pottery, tile and briquetage were so closely grouped that they are probably parts of a single large archaeological site covering approximately 1 hectare (Roman site 3).</p> <p>1.2 Following the fieldwalking, the clusters were tested by trial-trenching in October 2001. Red earth was found in most of the trenches in Roman site 3. This helped to define the position of two red hills, one corresponding to a previously known red hill at TL 970 137, and a second, previously unknown red hill. Internal details in the red hills included clay-lined tanks, which are presumably examples of 'settling tanks' found on other red hill sites.</p>	
Previous summaries/reports: None	
Author of summary: Howard Brooks	Date of summary: November 2001