

7.0 TEST PIT EXCAVATION

A series of 112 hand-excavated trenches (1m x 1m, Intervention 6) was undertaken in Zones A, B, D and E (Figure 34). These were designed to investigate possible flint scatters identified during the fieldwalking programme in other zones, as well a potential vertical distribution of that material within the ploughsoil. More particularly, these test pits were positioned within the footprint of evaluation trenches prior to their machine-excavation to test for the presence of meaningful lithic distributions in advance of disturbance of large areas of ploughsoil.

As well as the test pits, a series of nine hand-excavated evaluation trenches (3m x 3m) were excavated within Zone C and allocated Interventions 14 to 22. These evaluation trenches were designed to investigate a relative density of lithic material recovered during fieldwalking within Zone C, which was also detected by the VMNLP in 1996 (Field 21). Once ploughsoil had been excavated, the natural subsoil surface in the base of both the hand-excavated test pits and evaluation trenches was cleaned by hand to identify any underlying archaeological features, which may have been the source of the lithic material. The first phase of test pit excavation and the hand-excavated evaluation trenches were undertaken during March 2004, and the second phase of test pits between August and October 2004.

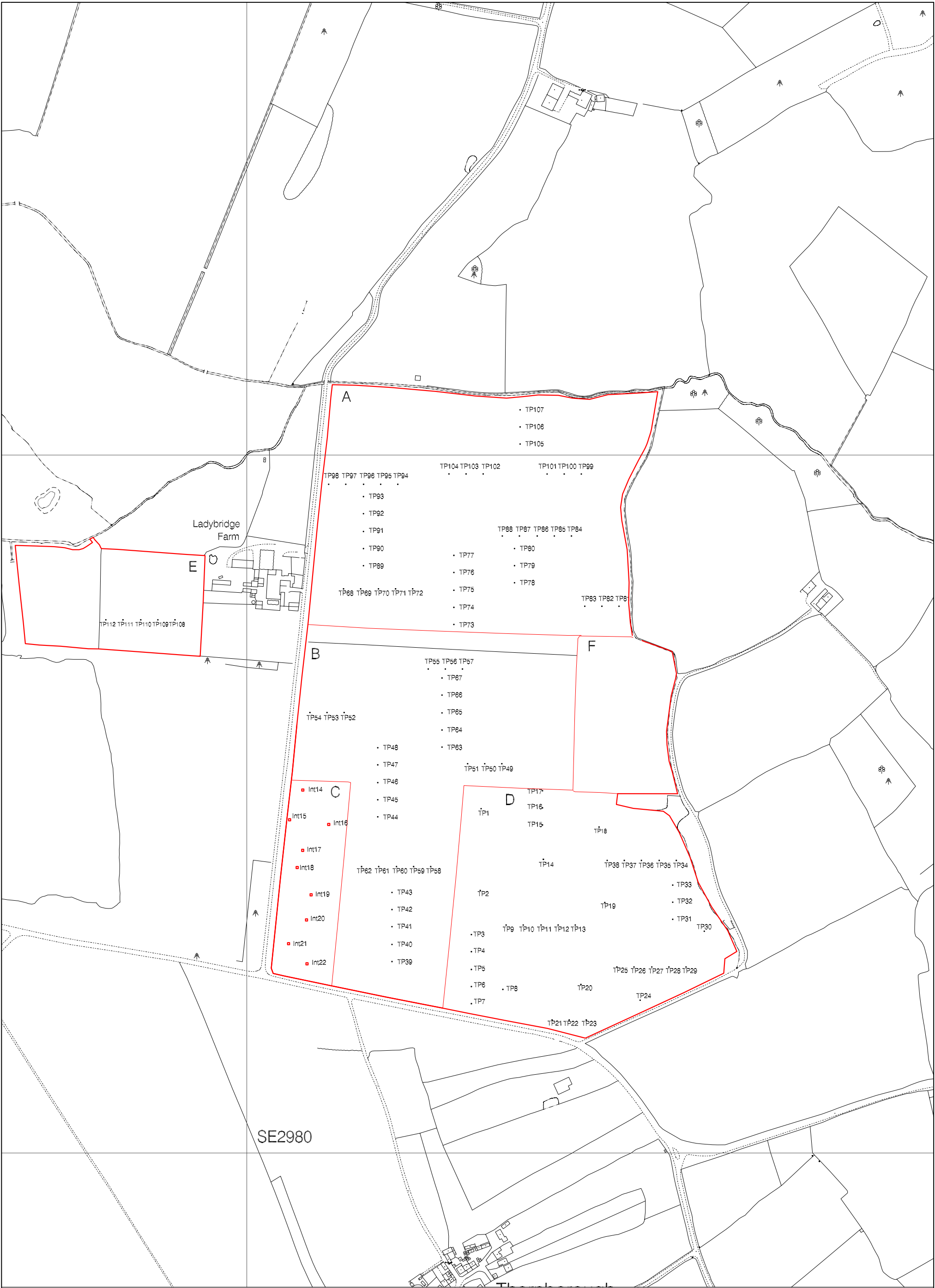
7.1 FIELDWORK PROCEDURE

The location of each test pit was positioned and marked out using a total station theodolite. Ploughsoil was then excavated in 0.10m spits and each spit allocated a context number. The excavated material was dry sieved through a table sieve fitted with a 10mm mesh (Plate 4). A 10% sample of the excavated material was then passed through a finer hand-held sieve with a 5mm mesh. As it was often difficult to sieve material through the finer mesh, on occasions it was necessary to carefully hand sort the sample. All finds were retained and bagged by context.



Plate 4 Test pit excavation and sieving

Each hand-excavated evaluation trench measured 3.0m x 3.0m and was set-out using a total station theodolite. Each trench was then divided into nine 1.0m squares numbered A to I (I was omitted because of its similarity



Location of test pits

Scale 1:5000



Figure 34

to the number 1). The northwestern square, Square 'A', and the southeastern square, Square 'J', of each intervention were then hand-excavated in 0.10m spits. The excavated material was then sieved using the same methodology as that adopted for the test pits spits in order to detect concentrations and vertical distributions of lithic material. If Squares A and J produced lithic material, the central square of each intervention Square E was also hand-excavated in spits. All hand-excavation thereafter was not sieved, but lithic material was hand collected and located by metre square.

7.2 FIELDWORK RESULTS

A total of 181 finds were recovered from test pit excavation and hand-excavated evaluation trenches. Fifty-one were ceramic, forty-five CBM, seventy-four lithic, eight glass, three metal finds and three bone. In addition, ten items were identified as natural pebbles. With the exception of the lithics and three sherds of pottery, the material can be dated to the post-medieval period and represents background noise from manuring regimes at the site and is not discussed further. The three sherds of pottery were identified as two sherds of Roman oxidised ware pottery from Test Pit 15 and Test Pit 37, and one sherd of very abraded medieval local glazed pottery from Test Pit 4.

Of the lithic material, twenty-seven pieces were recovered from twenty of the 1m x 1m test pits and forty-seven from the 3m x 3m evaluation trenches; ninety-two test pits yielded no lithic material. This material is summarised by location, vertical distribution and identity in Table 3 and by horizontal distribution in Figure 35. In Intervention 6, eleven lithic pieces were recovered from Spit 1, with eight each from Spit 2 and Spit 3. In Interventions 16 to 22, nine lithics were recovered from Spit 1, twenty-eight from Spit 2 and ten from Spit 3. Overall, the vertical distribution appeared to be weighted towards the second spit, although there is no obvious site formation process which might explain this pattern. In addition, the flint collected from the surface, i.e. part of Spit 1, in 1996, and in two fieldwalking campaigns in 2003, will have distorted the vertical distribution of lithics in Spit 1.

There were no examples of lithic concentrations which overlay archaeological features in test pits. Three of the nine hand-excavated evaluation trenches contained features, Intervention 16 to 18 inclusive being F14, F12 and F13 respectively. The distribution of lithics in each square for these interventions was plotted to detect whether the underlying feature may have been the source of the lithic material. Two squares, Square J in both Intervention 16 and Intervention 18, contained four lithic pieces and overlay features. In Intervention 16, the underlying feature also yielded a flint flake during excavation. However, none of these lithics were recovered from Spit 3, i.e. the interface between the feature and ploughsoil, and the feature in Intervention 18 is of suspected geological origin. In addition, Square A in Intervention 16 contained three lithics and did not overlie a feature. The number of lithics recovered is too low for the distribution to be interpreted confidently.

The horizontal distribution was unsurprisingly weighted towards Zone C, where many more lithics were recovered from this area, which has already established lithic concentrations and where a greater amount of ploughsoil was sieved. Nonetheless, when the numbers of lithics recovered from test pits were plotted there were more instances of single pieces being recovered in Zones B, C and D than in A (see Figure 35); no lithic material was recovered from Zone E. In addition, only Zones B, C and D had examples of two lithics recovered from a test pit; Test Pit 19 in Zone D yielded three pieces. The only dateable lithics were two early Bronze Age

thumbnail scrapers, both from Zone C.

Table 3 Summary of lithic material from test pits and hand-excavated evaluation trenches

Int. No.	Test Pit No.	Square	Spit	Find No.	Context No.	Identity
6	1	-	3	1582	1002	Flint flake
6	4	-	3	1583	1011	Flint debitage
6	4	-	3	1583	1011	Chert flake
6	5	-	1	1577	1012	Used flint flake
6	9	-	1	1581	1024	Used flint flake
6	10	-	2	1579	1028	Flint flake
6	12	-	1	1585	1032	Chert debitage
6	19	-	3	1587	1055	Flint blade
6	19	-	3	1588	1055	Chert debitage
6	19	-	1	1588	1053	Used flint flake
6	21	-	1	1580	1059	Burnt irregular flint
6	21	-	3	1578	1061	Possibly used flint debitage
6	40	-	2	1602	1256	Burnt irregular flint
6	40	-	2	1602	1256	Flint debitage
6	41	-	2	1609	1259	Flint debitage
6	41	-	2	1609	1259	Burnt irregular flint
6	50	-	3	1606	1287	Burnt irregular flint
6	51	-	1	1604	1288	Pressure flaked chert
6	58	-	2	1605	1310	Burnt irregular flint
6	62	-	1	1603	1321	Pressure flaked flint
6	62	-	1	1603	1321	Pressure flaked chert
6	73	-	1	1601	1354	Burnt irregular flint
6	80	-	2	1600	1376	Flint flake
6	84	-	1	1598	1387	Flint flake
6	90	-	3	1591	1407	Flint debitage
6	100	-	1	1593	1437	Flint core
6	101	-	2	1594	1441	Chert flake
14	-	A	2	1554	1126	Pressure flaked flint
14	-	A	2	1554	1126	Retouched flint debitage
14	-	F	1	1553	1131	Used flint flake
14	-	G	2	1565	1132	Flint debitage
14	-	J	3	1551	1130	Used flint flake
14	-	J	3	1551	1130	Chert debitage
14	-	J	2	1566	1129	Burnt irregular flint
15	-	A	2	1555	1134	Used flint flake
15	-	J	1	1565	1135	Chert flake
16	-	A	2	1563	1138	Flint debitage

Int. No.	Test Pit No.	Square	Spit	Find No.	Context No.	Identity
16	-	A	2	1563	1138	Retouched flint flake
16	-	A	1	1568	1137	Early Bronze Age flint thumbnail scraper
16	-	E	2	1564	1143	Irregular flint flake
16	-	J	2	1567	1141	Flint debitage
16	-	J	2	1567	1141	Flint scraper
16	-	J	2	1567	1141	Flint debitage
16	-	J	2	1567	1141	Flint flake
17	-	E	3	1552	1150	Flint flake
17	-	J	2	1549	1157	Flint blade
18	-	A	2	1584	1153	Flint debitage
18	-	J	2	1569	1156	Burnt irregular flint
18	-	J	2	1569	1156	Used flint flake
18	-	J	2	1569	1156	Burnt irregular flint
18	-	J	1	1570	1155	Flint debitage
19	-	A	2	1550	1159	Flint core
19	-	J	2	1548	1148	Early Bronze Age flint thumbnail scraper
19	-	J	1	1573	1161	Flint debitage
20	-	A	3	1575	1166	Flint debitage
20	-	D	2	1546	1170	Flint blade
20	-	E	1	1574	1171	Used flint flake
20	-	J	3	1547	1169	Flint blade
20	-	J	3	1547	1169	Flint debitage
20	-	J	3	1547	1169	Flint debitage
20	-	J	3	1547	1169	Flint debitage
20	-	J	2	1576	1168	Burnt irregular flint
21	-	A	2	1561	1173	Flint flake
21	-	A	2	1561	1173	Used chert debitage
21	-	A	1	1562	1172	Flint debitage
21	-	A	1	1562	1172	Flint flake
21	-	E	2	1557	1178	Used flint debitage
21	-	E	2	1572	1178	Used flint flake
22	-	A	2	1560	1180	Flint debitage
22	-	A	2	1560	1180	Flint debitage
22	-	J	2	1556	1183	Chert debitage
22	-	J	1	1558	1182	Flint flake
22	-	J	3	1559	1184	Flint debitage
22	-	J	3	1559	1184	Burnt irregular flint