
Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society

(incorporating the Cambs and Hunts Archaeological Society)

Volume XCIX
for 2010

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- John Pickles, Peter Gathercole, and Alison Taylor: *Mary Desborough Cra'ster, 1928–2008*
Leo Webley and Jonathan Hiller: *A fen island in the Neolithic and Bronze Age: excavations at North Fen, Sutton, Cambridgeshire*
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Scott Kenney: *A reappraisal of the evidence for the 'northern arm' of the Fleam Dyke at Fen Ditton*
Laura Piper and Andrew Norton: *An excavation at Station Quarry, Steeple Morden, Cambridgeshire*
Duncan Mackay: *Excavations at Scotland Road/Union Lane, Chesterton*
Aileen Connor: *A curious object from Firs Farm, Caxton*
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Chris Jakes: *Recent Accessions to the Cambridgeshire Collection*

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Cambridge Antiquarian Society**

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**Volume XCIX
for 2010**

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Cambridge Antiquarian Society

Report for the Year 2009

Membership: there are now 382 members, 49 Affiliated Societies and 67 subscribing institutions.

Meetings: There were 4 Council meetings and 9 Ordinary meetings, at which the following lectures were given:

Gabriel Moshenska	<i>The School Air Raid Shelter: History, Archaeology and Memory</i>
Prof. Stephen Oakley	<i>How Latin Texts Survived from Antiquity to the Age of Printing</i> (In association with the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies)
Richard Buckley	<i>A Tale of Two Towns: recent discoveries from Roman and Medieval Leicester</i>
Prof. Ronald Hutton	<i>The History of Prehistory: Megaliths and the Modern Imagination</i>
Dr Catherine Hills	<i>Skeletons in the Garden – Romans and Anglo Saxons at Newnham College</i>
Ben Robinson	<i>Revealing Peterborough – New Explorations in an Ancient Cathedral City</i>
Dr Stephen Alford	<i>Finding Nicholas Berden: the career of an Elizabethan spy</i>
Prof. Simon Keynes	<i>John Mitchell Kemble (1807–57): Apostle, Revolutionary, and Anglo-Saxonist</i>
Richard Mortimer & Alex Pickstone	<i>Further Excavations at the War Ditches, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge</i> (In association with the Prehistoric Society)

In addition the following two conferences were held:

21st November 2009	<i>Recent archaeological work in Cambridgeshire</i>
17th April 2010	<i>Past Relations: different approaches to the dead over time</i>

Excursions: The Programme for 2010 consisted of the following visits:

Chatham Historic Dockyard, Saturday 15 May:

One of the country's foremost naval dockyards for 300 years, Chatham has been in the care of the Historic Dockyard Trust since 1985. As well as three historic vessels – HMS Gannet (1878), HMS Cavalier (1944) and HM Submarine Ocelot (1962) – it has a spectacular Victorian Ropery and a galaxy of other permanent and temporary exhibitions and displays, including 'The Wooden Walls' (a recreation of the dockyard in 1758) and the RNLI Lifeboat Collection. It also has the largest single concentration of listed buildings (military, civil and religious) in the UK.

Cherry Hinton, Saturday 26 June.

A morning was spent exploring the historical and archaeological landscape of Cherry Hinton Hall and its surroundings, under the guidance of Ms Michelle Bullivant. Outwardly Victorian, the park nonetheless has many features that bear witness to former land uses and industrial activity. Also investigated was the Lime Kiln Hill area and the newly-open to the public East Pit.

Spalding, Lincolnshire, Wednesday 14 July.

The highlight of this excursion was a visit to the Spalding Gentlemen's Society, founded in 1710 and one of the oldest learned societies in the country. The Society has the UK's second oldest museum collection, containing many rare items of both local and national interest, and a fine library.

The medieval riverside at Ely, Wednesday 15 September.

The riverside was a centre of activity in the Middle Ages attracting trades dependent on the river, and those requiring water such as brewing. The area was developed after the diversion of the river to its present course, probably in the twelfth century, thereby incorporating Ely into the fenland river network.

This walk, led by Mrs Anne Holton-Krayenbuhl, explored the area between the river and Broad Street, bounded by Waterside to the north, looking at sites of former watercourses, hithes, and buildings. The tour also included two medieval houses in Broad Street.

Moggerhanger Park, Bedfordshire, Wednesday 6 October.

Relatively little-known, perhaps due to its long period of use as a local authority TB sanatorium and then orthopaedic hospital (from 1919 to 1987), Moggerhanger was designed by Sir John Soane for Sir Godfrey Thornton, a director of the Bank of England, and built between 1790 and 1816. Listed Grade 1, it is regarded as perhaps the best complete surviving example of Soane's work, and epitomises many of his architectural ideas. The grounds were laid out by Humphry Repton. Now in the care of a Trust, which stepped in to avert the threatened demolition of the house and construction of a housing estate on the site, this excursion enabled members to see the current state of an ongoing and ambitious programme of restoration.

Cambridge Antiquarian Society Accounts for the Year Ended 31/12/2009

Registered Charity 299211 • Founded 1840

PAYMENTS		2008	2009
	Lectures: Publishing Programme	332.53	310.00
	Expenses	255.44	401.07
	Vol XCVI Delivery	1418.33	
	Proceedings Vol XCVII Publication	6399.28	
	Proceedings Vol XCVII Delivery	911.14	(b)
	Proceedings Vol XCVIII Publication		7692.41
	Proceedings Vol XCVIII Delivery		1083.29
	Conduit	1050.36 (a)	1005.00 (a)
	Conference: March	944.69 (a)	898.35 (b, c)
	: November	437.67 (a)	300.00
	Excursions	2147.09 (a)	285.03 (b)
	Mailings: Delivery Charges	504.65	156.56 (b, c)
	Subscriptions (CBA, Rescue, CRSoc)	102.00	104.00
	Haddon Library: Conservation	100.00	100.00
	Office Expenses, Web Site, Misc	376.17	347.75
	Emolument: Registrar	250.00	250.00
	Publicity		532.65
	Insurance	221.60	241.05
	From capital: new web site	894.83 (b)	1121.25 (h)
	Small Grants Scheme	<u>500.00</u>	<u>100.00</u>
	Sub-Total	16895.78	14928.41
	Purchase of Investments	6000.00	
	Total Payments	<u>22895.78</u>	<u>14928.41</u>
RECEIPTS		2008	2009
	Subscriptions: Members & Societies	7110.00	6908.50
	Tax Reclaimed	720.71	779.65
	C.U. Archaeology Dept.	800.00	800.00
	Proceedings Vol XCVI: Grants	2369.00	
	VolXCVII: Grants	3370.00	
	VolXCVIII: Grants		2090.00
	Conduit	486.96	162.60
	Conference: March	1197.10	1813.00
	: November	386.00	505.00
	Excursions	1924.25	312.00
	Sales of Publications	173.48	135.90
	Royalties, Misc	416.00	208.05
	Investment Income (gross)	997.59	1174.05
	Interest: NSB (gross)	<u>812.02</u>	<u>67.41</u>
	Total Receipts	<u>20763.11</u>	<u>14956.16</u>
	less Payments (excluding Investment of capital adjusted below)	<u>22895.78</u>	<u>14928.41</u>
	Cash Surplus/Deficit (-)	-2132.67	27.75 (d)
	Fixed Interest Treasury Stock:		
	Capital investment	6000.00	
	less excess cost on purchase/re-investment over maturity values	-997.06	-571.32
	Surplus/Deficit (-) Income over Expenditure	<u>2870.27</u>	<u>-543.57</u>
STATEMENT OF ASSETS			
	Cash Funds: Current A/C	2611.26	2571.60
	: Deposit A/C	23265.03	23332.44 (e)
	Treasury Stock at maturity values	<u>18363.84</u>	<u>17792.52</u>
		<u>44240.13</u>	<u>43696.56 (g)</u>
	Accumulated Fund		
	At beginning of year	41369.86	44240.13
	Surplus/Deficit (-) Income over Expenditure for the Year	<u>2870.27</u>	<u>-543.57</u>
	At end of year	<u>44240.13</u>	<u>43696.56</u>
	Planned Future Expenditure		9840.00 (f)

Notes

The presentation of the accounts conforms to guidance provided by the Charity Commission. Comment on some of the entries is given in the following notes:

- a. The cost of mailing details to members has been attributed to the event.
- b. A credit of £894.83 with Mailing Distributor arose in 2008 and was used in 2009.
- c. Adding the attributable postage credit makes the 2009 figures comparable to earlier years.
- d. This figure is influenced by a credit with the mailing distributor (b) and the exceptional expenditure on redesigning the Web site (h); excluding these amounts the surplus from the normal activities of the Society in the year 2009 is £254.17.
- e. In 2005 the Council reviewed the policy for the reserves held by the Society and concluded that the cash funds less liabilities (f) should be maintained in the range £10,000 to £20,000; on 31 December 2009 the reserves were £16,064
- f. Planned expenditure; PCAS Vol XCIX £8000, Ladd's Bequest (g) £840, Small Grants £500 and a grant of £500 to Cambridgeshire Archives towards the cost of purchasing the Fen Drainage Papers; total £9,840.
- g. Includes Ladd's bequest earmarked for events associated with Huntingdon; with interest the sum is now £840.
- h. Exceptional expenditure on the design of a new Web site.

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Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval settlement at Stow Longa and Tilbrook (Huntingdonshire)

Rob Atkins

with Paul Blinkhorn, Peter Boardman, Nina Crummy, Chris Faine, Rachel Fosberry, Alice Lyons and Paul Spoerry. Illustrations by Crane Begg and Gillian Greer

Investigations along a pipeline running from Stow Longa to Tilbrook found important new evidence for occupation spanning the Roman to Anglo-Saxon periods. The discovery of a previously unknown settlement between the two surviving villages is of particular significance since it indicates the presence of long-lived activity from the sixth to ninth centuries. Overall, the findings permit a revised understanding of the history of each settlement, including processes of planning, nucleation, decline and abandonment.

Introduction

The small villages of Stow Longa and Tilbrook lie on the western border of Cambridgeshire within the District of Huntingdonshire (Fig. 1). Oxford Archaeology East (formerly Cambridgeshire County Council's Archaeological Field Unit, CAM ARC) conducted a series of archaeological works during 2007 and 2008 within and between the two settlements prior to an Anglian Water project to lay a new sewer pipe and to construct three pumping stations and a treatment works.

Preparatory work had highlighted the archaeological potential within both settlements, as well as identifying an area of cropmarks between the two villages (Fig. 1; Atkins and Palmer 2007). Subsequent trial trenching took place over an area from just south-west of Stow Longa village to just north-east of the settlement at Tilbrook, and consisted of fourteen evaluation trenches with a total length of 700m (Figs 1 and 2). In addition, the pumping stations and treatment works were subject to trial trench evaluation. Two of these locations, at Church Lane and Spaldwick Road in Stow Longa, were subsequently excavated (Fig. 3). Investigations within Tilbrook village comprised seven trenches, of which Trenches 1 to 5 were test pits, while Trenches 6 and 7 lay within the proposed pumping station area and within part of the pipe trench area directly to the east (Fig. 4).

The site archive is currently held by OA East under the site code MULSTL07 and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

Geology and Topography

The underlying geology comprises River Terrace deposits of sand and gravel in the area around the River Til in Tilbrook. This changes to glacial till deposits on the rising ground outside Tilbrook and to Oxford Clays on the high ground along which most of the pipeline now runs (British Geological Survey 1946). The pipeline commences at Stow Longa which is situated on the northern edge of a high ridge at between 68m and 71m OD (Fig. 2; TL 1100 7100). It then runs for c. 4.2km to the south-west to Tilbrook (TL 0800 6900), in the middle of a valley bottom, at c. 33m OD.

Archaeological and Historical Background

Stow Longa

Stow Longa lies within the Leightonstone hundred of Huntingdonshire. The medieval village was split between two parishes. The eastern part (containing St Botolph's Church and the present village) was called Estou, but was also known as Long Stow or Never Stow. It once lay within the soke of Spaldwick but is now within the parish of Stow Longa (Fig. 2b). The western part – Overstow or Upper Stow – was considerably smaller and is recorded as being in the parish of Kimbolton in all surviving documents, forming a parcel of the manor of that parish (Page *et al* 1974, 101). It is likely, however, that this land was originally part of the pre-Conquest estate of Stow (Longa), which appears to have had local pre-eminence. Upper Stow is recorded in two late sixteenth-century maps. The earlier map, which pre-dates c. 1590 (HRO SM19/126), shows both this part of the village and the immediate closes around it. The Bigram's estate map of 1591 (HRO PM3/6B) also includes the surrounding open fields (Figs. 2 and 3). A number of routeways can be seen to run parallel with or perpendicular to the natural ridge with the main track, Filman Waye, running roughly along its centre. This routeway survived into

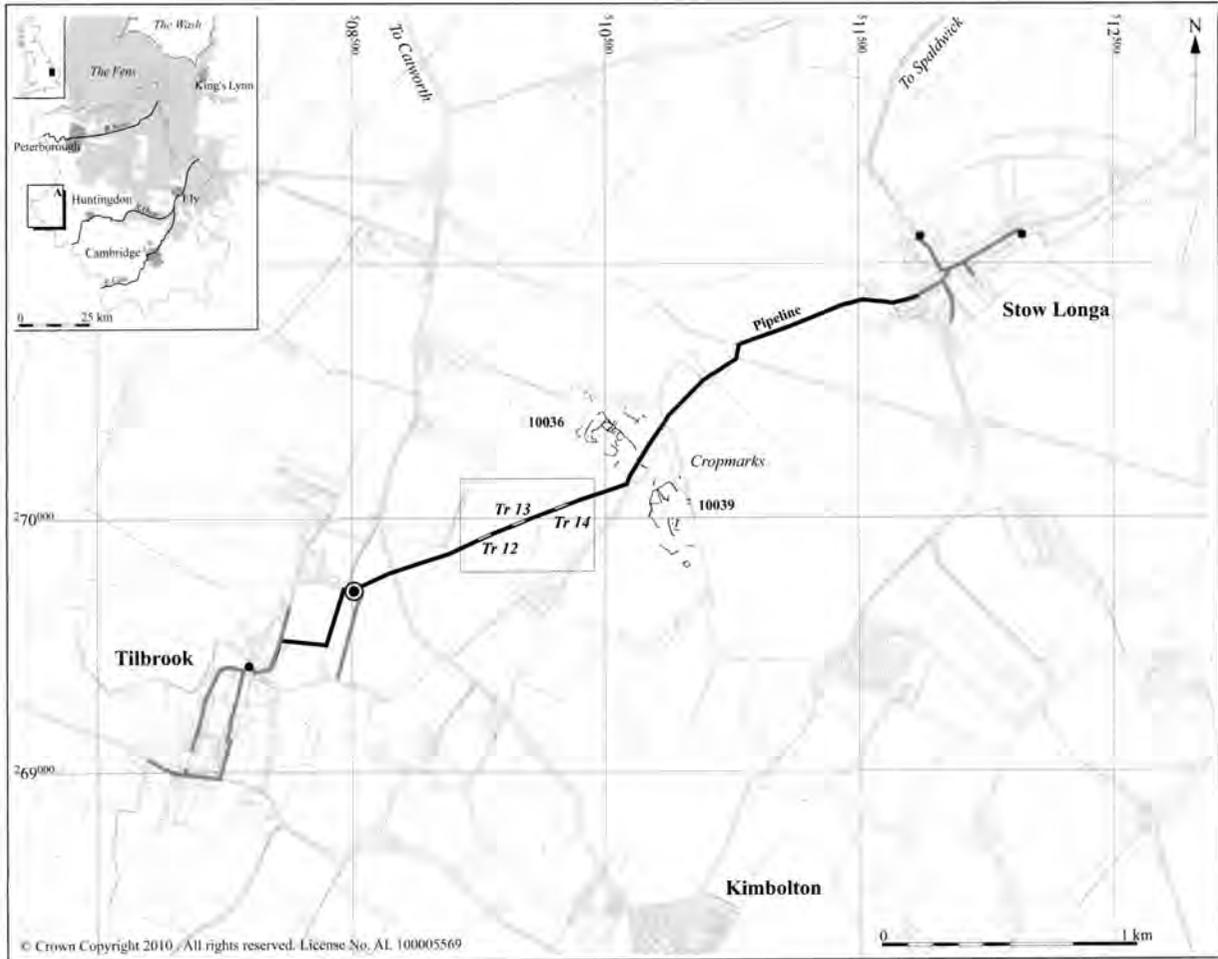


Figure 1. Location of the Anglian Water pipeline, showing cropmarks adjacent to the route.

modern times and was recorded by the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885 as Bigram's Lane.

Both the place name and its relationship with other parishes and manors in the immediate area suggest that a large pre-Conquest estate may have been centred on Stow Longa, before it was transferred to Spaldwick in 991 (Taylor 1989, 74). This estate had belonged to Brithnoth, Ealdorman of Essex who died at the Battle of Maldon in 991 and who left two estates to the Abbey of Ely – Somersham and Spaldwick (Hart 1966, no. 25). Stow Longa was the mother church of this estate which consisted of Stow Longa, Spaldwick, Easton, Little Catworth, Barham and Upthorpe, thereby forming a compact block of land on either side of the Ellington Brook (Taylor 1989, 72). It seems reasonable to include 'Upper Stow' in this list and to postulate that it became detached, to be included with Kimbolton with the rise of the latter and the decline of Stow itself, perhaps in the late eleventh or early twelfth century.

In 1109 the Spaldwick estate (including Stow Longa) was transferred from Ely to the Bishopric of Lincoln as part of the compensation given to the Bishops when the new diocese of Ely was created. Stow Longa's relative importance continued as, al-

though the manor of Spaldwick was the head of the Soke for civil purposes, Stow Longa remained the ecclesiastical head, with Spaldwick forming a separate village and Easton and Barham being dependent chapelries (Page *et al* 1974, 104).

Stow Longa was confirmed as a prebend by the Pope on sixth February 1146, and again on 5th January 1163 (Richardson 2007, 14). Its manor comprised the rectory estate and advowson. The prebendal church was valued at more than £40 in 1291 (Page and Proby 1974, 359), this wealth and importance being reflected in the fact that it attracted noteworthy individuals such as Thomas Wolsey who was prebendary of Stow Longa in 1509–14. The estate remained the property of Lincoln until 1547 when it was exchanged for other properties and passed into lay hands in the form of the Earls (later Dukes) of Godmanchester (Page *et al* 1974, 98). The present manor house lies at the east end of the village off Spaldwick Road (Fig. 3). It was built in 1904 on the site of an earlier manor house dating to 1622 (Page *et al* 1974, 101).

Elements within St Botolph's Church indicate the existence of a pre-Conquest and a twelfth-century structure, although the earliest work remaining *in situ* is of mid thirteenth-century date (RCHME 1926,

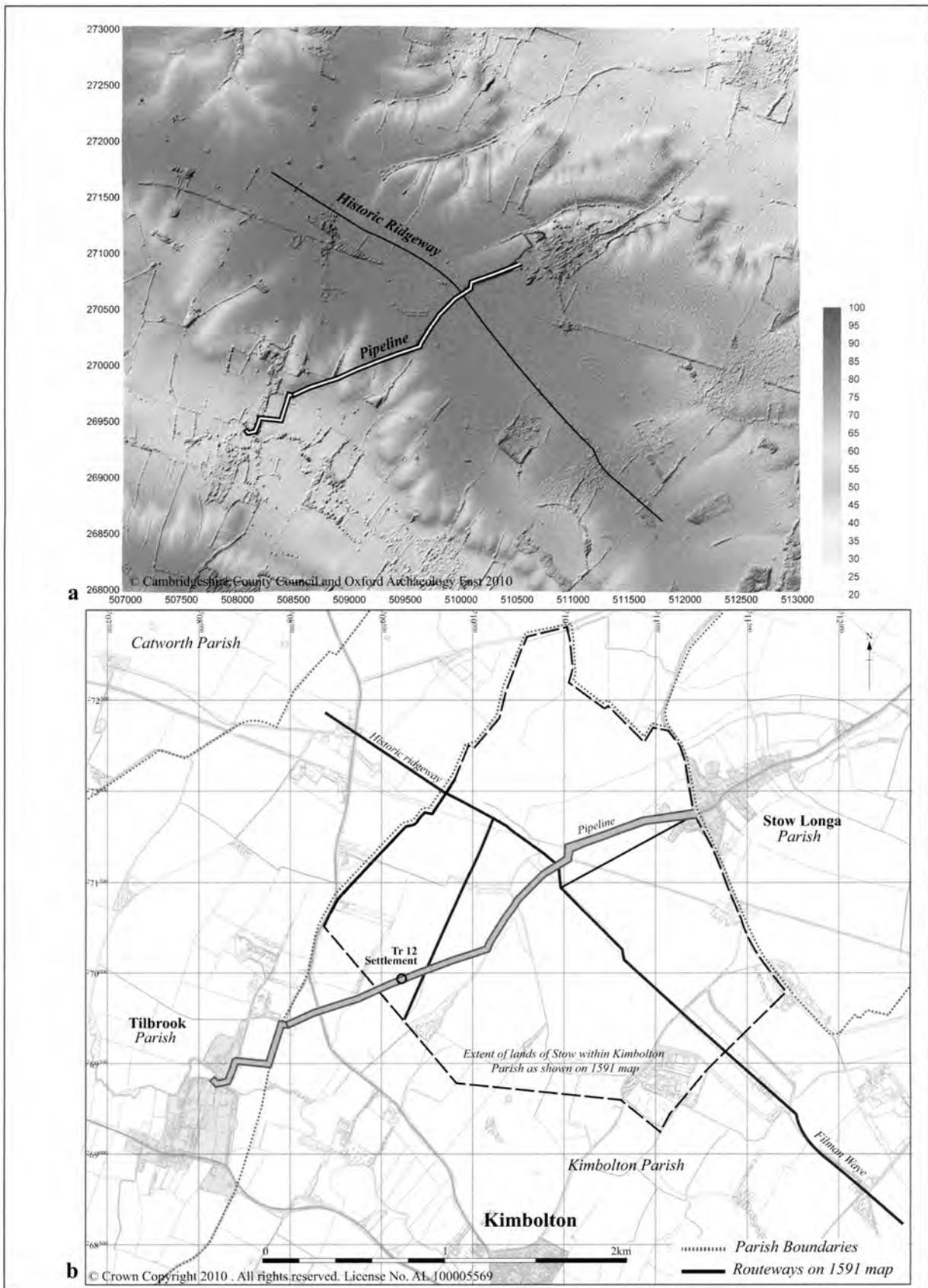


Figure 2. a) Surface model showing the main pipeline route, with the historic ridgeway.
 b) Relevant parish boundaries and historic routes, showing details from the 1591 Bigrams estate map (HRO PM3/6B).

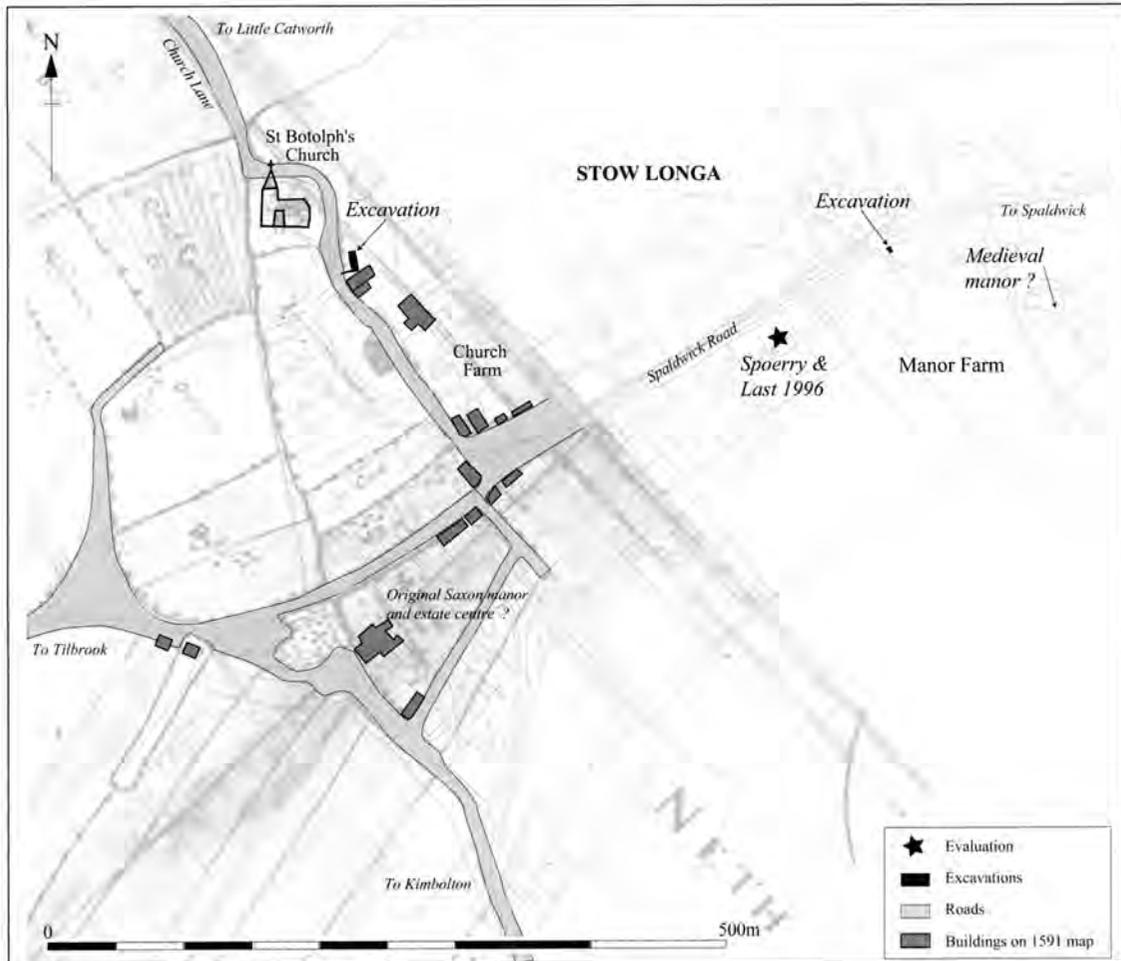


Figure 3. Stow Longa, showing evidence from the Bigrams estate map (1591, HRO PM3/6B) overlain on the modern street plan.

260). Amongst the early remains is a pre-Conquest stone decorated with interlaced work (Page *et al* 1974, 103).

Both of the sixteenth-century maps indicate a medium-sized green (forming a sub-rectangular enclosure, measuring c. 260m by 200m) with streets projecting off it in four directions. The position of St Botolph's Church on its northern side was mirrored by a large building to the south of the green that might represent the location of an early estate or manorial centre. This village layout has largely survived into the modern period.

The two small excavations were located adjacent to two of the roads leading off the green (Fig. 3). Investigations on the east side of Church Lane were situated where the 1591 map showed a building, although by the time of the 1839 Apportionment Map this had disappeared to be replaced by an open area (HRO 2196/39). The second excavation area lay some distance to the east, just south of Spaldwick Road within an empty parcel of land.

Tilbrook

Tilbrook is first mentioned in the Domesday Book where it is recorded as *Tilbrok* meaning 'Til(l)a's stream' (Mawer and Stenton 1969, 248). In 1086 it belonged to William de Warenne, a major landholder at this time who also controlled, for example, the manor of Kimbolton (Page *et al* 1974, 79; Page 1972, 171). The VCH records that 'documentary evidence is wanting concerning the early history of Tilbrook, but as William de Warenne also held the manor of Kimbolton ... it is probable that their early history is identical, and that by 1199 Tilbrook, like Kimbolton, was in the hands of Geoffrey Fitz Piers Earl of Essex, the husband of the heiress of the Mandevilles' (Page 1972, 171). Tilbrook was later owned by the de Bohun family, after which it was divided into three manors. The main manorial site (Cambridge Historic Environment Record (CHER) 399728/9) appears to have been located to the north of the River Til from at least the early seventeenth century although whether it was moved from elsewhere is unclear.

The origins of the village's second manor – Hardwick – can be traced to the 8 virgates held (as

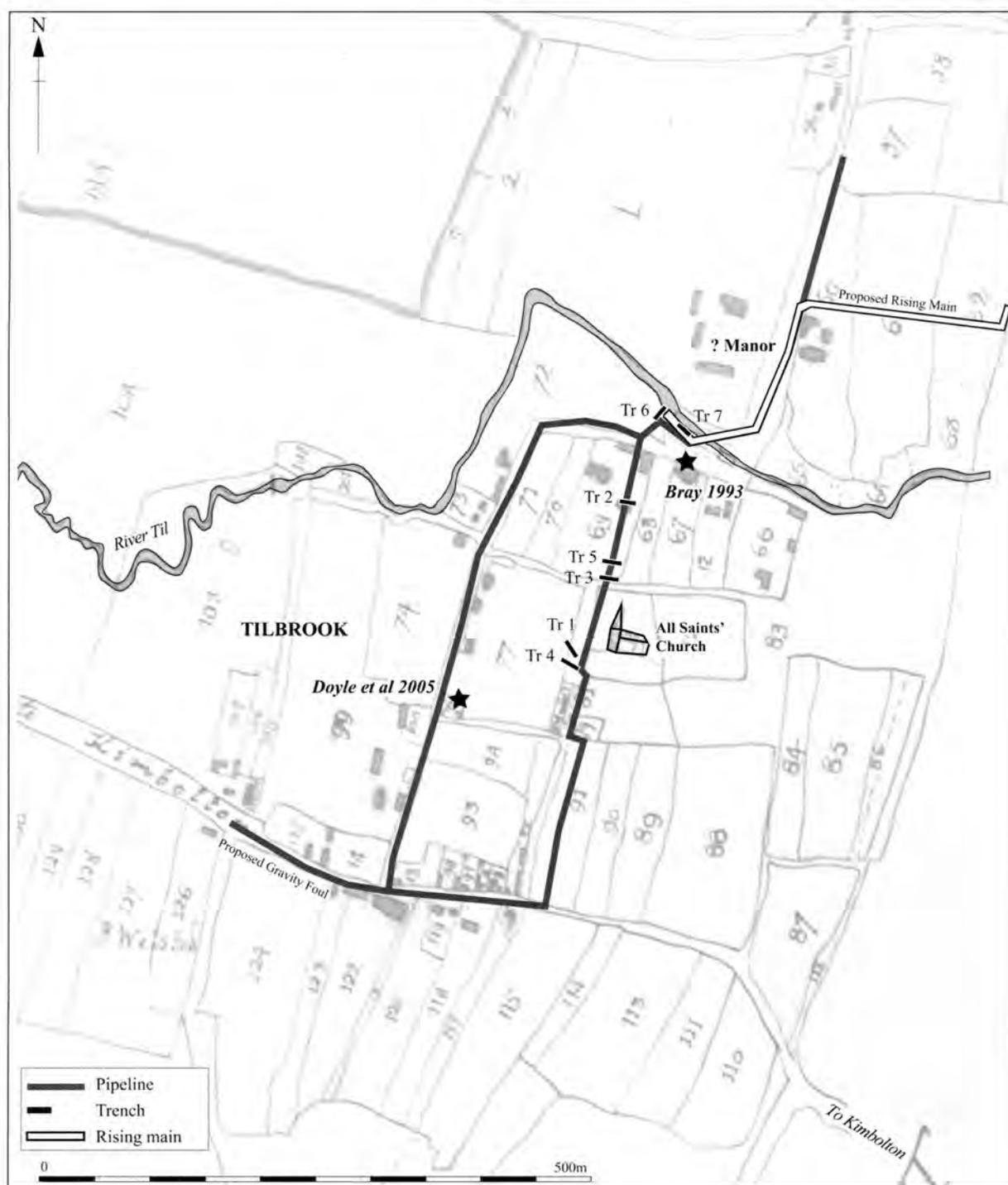


Figure 4. Tilbrook, showing the position of the evaluation trenches in relation to the 1820 post-enclosure map (HRO 2110/15/38).

a sixth part of a knight's fee) by Peter de Lekeburn of the honour of Kimbolton in at least 1302. The latter part of its history is the same as that of the main Tilbrook manor (Page 1972, 172). A third manor of 2.5 virgates of land was known as Porter's Fee; it was quit-claimed by Rhoses de Tilbrook to Simon Porter in 1203/4 for 10 marks of silver. The property was held of the honour of Kimbolton as a quarter of a

knight's fee (Page 1972, 172). From the seventeenth century this manor was also owned by the village's main manor.

It is likely that the original manor of Hardwick survives as a medieval moated homestead known as Hardwicks, which is situated on high ground approximately 1km to the south-west of Tilbrook (RCHME 1926, 275; Page 1972, 171). The location of the third

manor is unknown.

The Late Saxon and medieval layout of the village is uncertain since virtually no archaeological work has been done here. The earliest maps all date from just before and after the enclosures of c. 1800–1802 (HRO SM20/134, HRO PM 5/2 and HRO 2110/15/38). All three maps show that the centre of the village consisted of a large sub-rectangular space (of c. 450m by 300m) with the twelfth-century church of All Saints roughly in the centre (Fig. 4). Within this rectangular space was a gridded road network comprising four routes aligned east to west, placed approximately 150m apart, and perhaps three north to south aligned roads, unequally positioned.

Previous archaeological work

Only three very small archaeological works have previously been carried out within 1km of the pipeline route. A single evaluation took place at Manor Farm, Stow Longa on land directly to the south of Spaldwick Road (Fig. 3; CHER MCB15839; Spoerry and Last 1996). This revealed a probable house platform adjacent to the road frontage, which was associated with finds of late medieval date. Tilbrook's fifteenth-century cross was investigated (Fig. 4; CHER 05221; Bray 1993), while a small evaluation at Chestnut Cottage, Station Road found a small gully perpendicular to the road, which may relate to a post-medieval plot boundary (Fig. 4; CHER MCB 16876; Doyle *et al* 2005).

Aerial photographs show that the pipeline route ran across an area of pre-medieval cropmarks on the west side of a former airfield. It was originally thought that these remains might represent two different field systems, although a reappraisal of the evidence identified two possible linear features linking the two (Fig. 1; CHER 10036 and 10039; Atkins and Palmer 2007).

Excavation results

Stow Longa

Church Lane (Fig. 5)

Investigations at Church Lane found five phases of Anglo-Saxon to medieval activity, the earliest of which (Phase 1) may pre-date the Middle Saxon period. A bank (3017) running parallel with and to the east of the lane remains visible as an earthwork c. 100m to the south of the site and continues to the north, apparently increasing in height as the road drops down the steep ridge. This initial impression is misleading since the road survives as a hollow way and appears to have cut into the natural subsoil by more than a metre, with the bank itself proving to be only c. 0.66m high, but more than 5m wide. The bank was found to consist of a very compact mottled grey yellow clayey silt.

In the Middle Saxon period (Phase 2) the bank was cut by a ditch (3016) running north to south, seemingly parallel to and respecting the road. This was

probably an eastern roadside ditch for Church Lane. It was 1.6m wide and 0.96m deep and contained five sherds of Middle Saxon Maxey ware.

During the twelfth to fourteenth centuries (Phase 3) the bank and ditch appear to have remained in use. Adjacent excavation found an extensive clay floor, respecting the position of the bank to the west. A few sherds of pottery were recovered including Lyvedon A ware (c. AD 1150–1250). A shallow ditch/slot (3020) may represent an associated beam setting while further north, a ditch aligned east to west (3004/3022) may have served as a plot boundary.

A single medieval ditch (attributed to Phase 4; 3013) up to 1m wide and 0.42m deep cut into the earlier floor. It ran on a slightly different alignment to earlier features and terminated to the west before reaching the bank. Residual pottery was recovered from its backfill, with the contemporary pottery again dating to AD 1150–1250. Part of a large knife with holes in the tang for iron rivets that would have attached an organic (wood, bone or antler) handle was recovered.

The vestigial remains of further structures dated to the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries (Phase 5). A single posthole (3007) and postpad (3009) cut into an earlier ditch, to the north of which lay a cobbled surface (3001). The cobbles were reasonably well laid and contained pebbles, chalk, flint and other stone as well as a few roof tile fragments. A Mesolithic hand axe recovered during the cleaning of this surface may have come from the brook/stream a few hundred metres to the north. The axe was fashioned from a worn elongated alluvial cobble and was abraded and recorticated.

Spaldwick Road

Directly to the south of Spaldwick Road on the north-eastern edge of the village, a small excavation revealed a thin subsoil layer, perhaps the medieval ground surface. This was overlain by a cobbled road surface and associated roadside ditch which were roughly parallel with the present road, lying 5m to the south of it. Finds from the road surface included a knife which has a bolster stop between the blade and tang; the form of the blade shows it to be a table knife of a type which did not develop until the sixteenth century. A post-medieval horseshoe dated the road's demise in this area.

Land between Stow Longa and Tilbrook

Of the fourteen evaluation trenches, each 50m long, which were examined over a distance of c. 2km between the two villages, notable archaeological features were found in Trenches 12–14 (Figs 6 and 7). These trenches revealed a previously unknown Roman settlement, probably a farmstead, which was partly overlain by an Early to Late Saxon settlement (also previously unknown). The three trenches were placed on the highest part of three natural undulations (Fig. 6) and lay at between 61.17m OD at the south-western end of Trench 12 and 67.17m OD at the

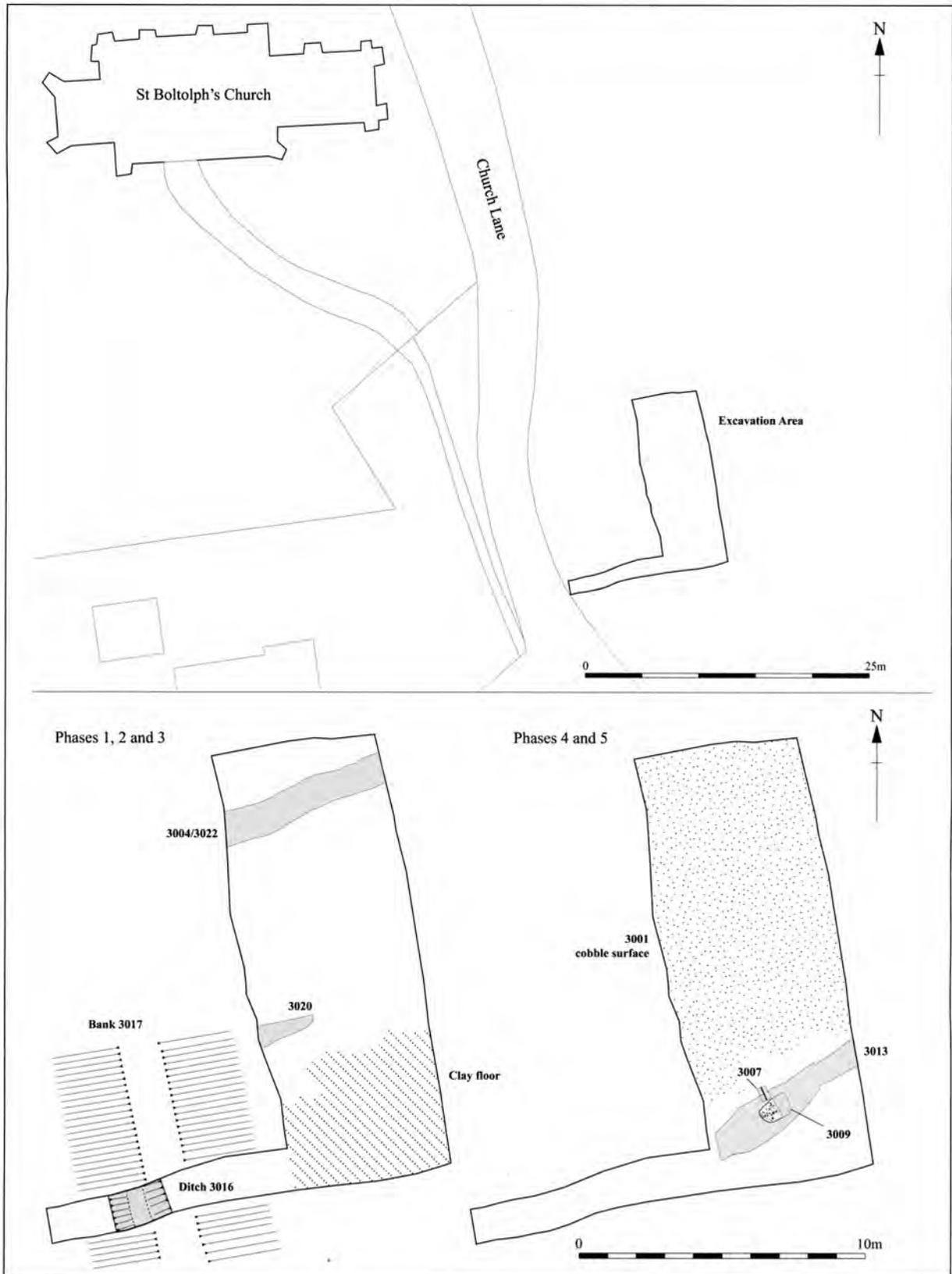


Figure 5. Excavation at Church Lane, Stow Longa.



Figure 6. View of Trench 12 from the north-east, showing the elevated position of the previously unknown settlement, showing Tilbrook in the valley bottom in the distance.

north-eastern end of Trench 14. Trench 15, positioned further to the east revealed only two shallow pits or treebowls. Trench 18 was positioned to investigate the settlement(s) recorded as cropmarks (Fig. 1; CHER 10036 and 10039) directly to the north and south of this trench but revealed only treebowls and modern intrusions.

Trench 12 exposed numerous features including a sequence of thirteen ditches which varied in depth, to a maximum of 0.94m deep (Fig. 7). These could be attributed to the Roman and Early, Middle and Late Saxon periods, with the most substantial examples being Roman and Late Saxon. The ditch alignments appear to have remained fairly static over time, running north-east to south-west, or perpendicular to this in a north-westerly to south-easterly direction. An Early Saxon ditch (1225) was of particular interest as it contained several sherds of sixth-century pottery.

The twenty postholes (up to 0.19m deep) were largely found to the north-east and several clear linear posthole alignments were apparent. Their dating is uncertain since only one example contained a sherd of Roman pottery. Two other examples cut into a Roman ditch. At least four pits (possibly five) lay within the trench, two of which were dated by pottery to the Early/Middle Saxon and Middle Saxon periods respectively. They were all of sub-rounded form, medium-sized at just under 1m in diameter (except one which was *c.* 2m), and up to 0.63m deep.

Further east, Trench 13 revealed eight possible Roman features (a possible posthole and ditches), although only two sherds of contemporary pottery

were recovered. A substantial Roman ditch was found in Trench 14 (measuring 2.5m wide and 1.15m deep): this contained Roman pottery, animal bone and a little fired clay.

The Roman pottery recovered from these trenches consists of 116 sherds, weighing 1.7kg, dating to the second and third centuries AD. Nearly half the Roman pottery recovered from Trench 12 was found residually in Anglo-Saxon features. The range of fabrics and forms recovered is limited as the assemblage consists entirely of locally produced utilitarian grey or black (reduced) and white (oxidised) vessels. The most common fabric is a gritty oxidised ware, found in the form of a jar and a flagon. This utilitarian fabric is commonly found in the western Fen basin during the Roman period (Lyons forthcoming) and is similar to (and may well be) a product of the Verulamium (St Albans) industry (Tyers 1996, 199–201) but identical fabrics are also known to have been produced in other Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire kiln sites (Martin and Wallis 2006, 3.7.1, iii and iv; Perrin 1996, 154; Cameron 1996, 449). Also common were oxidised and reduced sandy coarse wares, along with shell tempered wares. These fabrics are typical of west Cambridgeshire and are similar to pottery produced in the Lower Nene Valley (Perrin 1996, 114–188; Cameron 1996, 440–477), although other unsourced kilns must have existed in the vicinity.

The post-Roman pottery assemblage comprises 52 sherds with a total weight of 1,096g: virtually all of this was recovered from Trench 12. It includes a range of Early, Middle and Late Saxon wares which suggests that there may have been continuous occupation

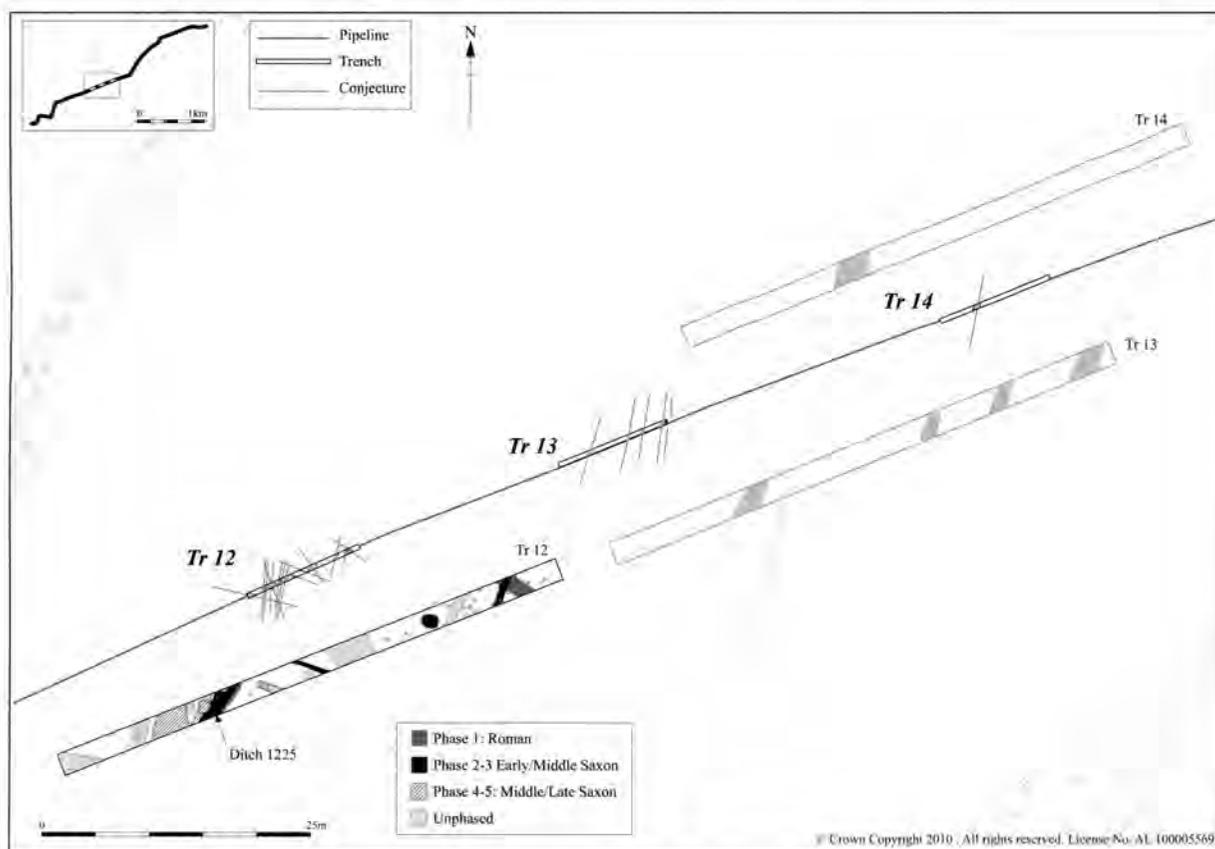


Figure 7. Settlement remains found between Stow Longa and Tilbrook, showing the ditches found in Trenches 12–14.

here from the sixth to ninth centuries – this is highly significant as such long-lived Anglo-Saxon activity is very rare in the region. Most of the sherds are large and in good condition. The group of pottery from one Early Saxon ditch (1225) is not only quite large, but also represents a small number of vessels. One of the vessels, comprising seven sherds, exhibits decoration in the form of cruciform stamps arranged in triangular groups, incised lines and fingernail impressions (Fig. 8). The decorative scheme is very typical of East Anglian pottery of the sixth century (Myres 1977).

A Middle Saxon pit produced an end-plate from a double-sided composite antler comb – its narrow width and straight edge are features common to both Middle and Late Saxon double-sided combs. Two iron fibre-processing spikes from the same context are similar in section and length to wool-comb teeth from York, although they may derive instead from a flax heckle (Walton Rogers 1997, 1727–31). An unstratified lead spindle-whorl found during metal detecting near Trenches 12 and 13 may be Anglo-Saxon or later medieval. Fragments of daub included several pieces with wattle or twig impressions.

Of interest was a single piece of smelt base slag (0.397kg) from a probable Early/Middle Saxon pit. This had clearly been heated several times. Various impressions and clay inclusions indicate that it was removed from the hearth after several smelt uses but before it blocked the tap slag of the smelt. Evidence

for Anglo-Saxon metal working is rare and it is possible that this piece is residual Roman.

Both the Roman and Early Saxon animal bone consisted of a few fragments of butchered cattle lower limb elements indicating butchery waste. Middle Saxon material recovered from two pits comprised a few butchered cattle remains along with sheep/goat and pig. Cattle are also the most numerous species in the Late Saxon contexts along with smaller amounts of pig and sheep remains (including a ram skull). In addition a horse mandible from an animal around 7–8 years of age was recovered. The only evidence of wild taxa came from Middle Saxon deposits which contained a roe deer calcaneus and a duck femur.

Agriculture and related activity was meagrely attested by the presence of a few lava quern fragments and a few barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains which were recovered from a Middle Saxon pit.

Tilbrook

Trenches 1 and 4 lay in an allotment field, adjacent and to the west of All Saints Church (Fig. 4). Within Trench 1 was a north to south aligned ditch, 0.9m wide and 0.3m deep. This ditch did not continue into Trench 4 to the south, and must therefore have terminated or changed direction. Two north-west to south-east ditches, c. 0.8m to 1m wide and 0.30m to 0.48m



Figure 8. Stamped Early Saxon pottery from Trench 12.

deep, were found in both trenches and may represent a ditch and a later recut on its south-western side. An east to west ditch was also found in Trench 4 which was c. 1.2m wide and 0.60m deep. Pottery from the ditches comprised sherds of hand-made (grano-dioritic) and Middle Saxon Ipswich ware, with a single Late Saxon Thetford ware sherd coming from the postulated recut. This possible late ditch also contained a small tap slag fragment.

In the fields to the north, Trenches 3 and 5 each contained single examples of east to west aligned ditches (which were 0.45m and 1.2m wide and 0.22m and 0.38m deep, respectively). Pottery comprised Early/Middle Saxon hand-made sherds and Middle Saxon Maxey ware. An environmental sample from the ditch in Trench 5 found cereal grains and eggshell. Trench 2 contained three intercutting pits or layers, all possibly linked to gravel quarrying in the medieval period. No archaeological features were found within Trench 6 and Trench 7 exposed modern levelling layers. The 1802 Map of Tilbrook demonstrates that this trench was within a mill leat (Fig. 4; HRO 2110/15/38).

Discussion

Stow Longa

It is now possible to piece together the origins and layout of Stow Longa in the Anglo-Saxon and later periods using the knowledge gained from the recent archaeological work, documentary and cartographic sources and from comparison with other settlement sites. Documentary evidence indicates that St Botolph's was a minster church and thereby a Middle Saxon foundation. The dedication is to an East Anglian saint who built a monastery in c. AD 654 and died c. 680. That this dedication was often used for

churches associated with gateways and bridges may be significant as the Stow Longa church is perched on a high promontory with a steep slope downwards directly to the north-west towards a stream crossing (Fig. 3). This route may have been more important locally before Stow became a second-order settlement tied to Spaldwick to the east: the excavated evidence indicates a Middle Saxon or earlier date for the route. The occupation remains recorded here were almost certainly initiated after the demolition of Stow to the status of a hamlet (*Berewick*) of Spaldwick, which might not have occurred until the Bishop of Lincoln acquired the Spaldwick estates after 1109. Evidently, this change in status did not halt the usual processes of settlement growth and change in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries.

The late sixteenth-century maps of the western part of the village show a sub-rectangular green with streets projecting off all four sides, with the parish church lying to the north. This contrasts with Tilbrook's layout, where a twelfth-century church lay at the centre of a planned sub-rectangular gridded village. Larger (mostly sub-oval) greens dating from the Anglo-Saxon period have been suggested nearby for parishes in southern Cambridgeshire on low-lying ground (Taylor 2002; Oosthuizen 2006, 51–59). It has been argued that this may suggest centralised planning in this part of central eastern England. At Haslingfield, for example, it has been postulated that an ovoid area forming a green (of 48ha) may have been used as a very large ill-drained meadow (Oosthuizen 1996; Taylor 2002, 62). Haslingfield's eleventh-century parish church was built just within the green indicating that encroachment into it began at the time the church was constructed (Oosthuizen 2006 fig. 3.6, 54).

At Stow Longa, the 1591 map records a substantial building within a sub-rectangular area enclosed by roads, positioned on the opposite side of the green to the church. Unfortunately, the VCH and other records do not mention this structure, nor do they provide

any interpretation of the layout of Stow Longa village. Although the exact location for the original Anglo-Saxon estate centre before it moved to Spaldwick in the late tenth century is not known (Taylor 1989, 74), a position here would be likely. A manor and church set on opposite sides of the green was a common layout within villages and there was also often a close relationship between lordly centres and Saxon churches (Roberts 1982, fig. 1; Lewis *et al* 2001, 87–88). A survey of three settlements in Cambridgeshire found that in the Saxon period the manor occupied a commanding position in relation to the entrance to the common (Oosthuizen 1993, 100). The Anglo-Saxon manorial location at Stow Longa is therefore unlikely to have been where the later medieval/post-medieval manor was situated, 300m along Spaldwick road (Fig. 3), since this lay away from the centre of the village and was positioned along a route that only became important when Spaldwick rose in status at a later date.

The evidence suggests that the green, church and manor may have been created together in the Middle Saxon period. This accords with findings at other sites with major estate centres such as Higham Ferrers and Raunds in Northamptonshire, both of which had presumably coalesced and certainly experienced deliberate development before AD 850 (Hardy *et al* 2007; Audouy and Chapman 2009). In contrast, in lesser settlements within the Whittlewood part of Northamptonshire, the date tended to be after AD 850 (Jones and Page 2006, 103). The date of nucleation is probably similar in Cambridgeshire. At Cottenham, the indications are that the village became nucleated at or before the arrival of Middle Saxon Ipswich ware pottery on the site (Mortimer 2000, 21).

While the excavations at Stow Longa were too small to give an indication of overall dating for the layout, it is now clear that Church Lane dates to at least the Middle Saxon period. No evidence was found that houses fronted Church Lane in the Anglo-Saxon period, the earliest building remains here being dated to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The presence of Middle Saxon finds, however, clearly indicates settlement close by in this period. The final structure on the site shown on the 1591 map fell from use in the seventeenth century.

The Spaldwick Road site did not indicate occupation before the medieval period. The road surface examined here ran roughly parallel to the present road, at a distance of *c.* 5m to the south, indicating either that the road was once much wider or that it ran along a slightly different course in the medieval to early post-medieval period.

The present anomaly of Stow Longa lying within two parishes (Kimbolton and Stow Longa itself) was probably the result of post-conquest re-organisation, either as William de Warrene expanded the honour of Kimbolton, or in 1109 when the Spaldwick estate was transferred from Ely to Lincoln. It is unlikely to have occurred earlier in 991 when Stow Longa and adjacent centres including Spaldwick were given en bloc to Ely as Stow was at that time almost certainly the primary centre in these estates. The hiving off

of Upper Stow indicates Stow Longa's decline in importance, in contrast to the rise of Kimbolton on one side and Spaldwick on the other. It should perhaps be noted that the sixteenth-century maps record land at Upper Stow at a point when it had probably been part of Kimbolton parish for over 400 years. This may suggest that even in the post-medieval period, this area was still being treated as a 'separate' entity and important in its own right.

The area between Stow Longa and Tilbrook

Roman features recorded over a distance of 400m may indicate the presence of a farmstead. Such small settlements may have existed every few hundred metres along the ridge, as is perhaps suggested by the presence of the adjacent enclosure systems recorded as cropmarks (CHER 10036 and CHER 10039; Fig. 1). Early to Late Saxon activity overlay these Roman remains on a promontory at the edge of the high ridge (Trench 12). Given that only a tiny percentage of the overall settlement has now been sampled, continuity of occupation from the Roman to Late Saxon periods is not proven but remains a possibility. Sites showing continuity from the Roman to Anglo-Saxon periods have become far more common in this region in recent years, with examples being found at, for example, Love's Farm, St Neots (Hinman forthcoming) and Boxworth (Connor 2008, 116). Clear evidence of further continuity onwards into the Middle and Late Saxon periods is, however, much less common.

The new results demonstrate that there were at least two contemporary Anglo-Saxon settlements within the former Stow Longa parish, on opposing sides of the natural ridge. The density of Anglo-Saxon features found in Trench 12 indicates domestic settlement from at least the sixth to the late ninth centuries. This site would have lain within Upper Stow's open fields where there is no cartographic evidence to indicate the presence of a former settlement. This newly identified settlement may represent a typical example of a small settlement in a dispersed landscape. Where statistics have been generated to indicate how many Middle Saxon sites may have been abandoned in the Late Saxon period, the numbers vary depending on the sub-region, and the method of analysis (Lewis *et al* 2001, 82). The abandonment of a significant proportion of Middle Saxon settlements was, however, undoubtedly a key feature of areas where nucleated villages became the characteristic later medieval settlement form.

The results of the new work reflect previous suggestions that this natural ridge was important in the establishment of early settlements, also providing a favourable position for the siting of several villages in the post-Roman period (Spoerry and Last 1996, 1). One of the routes known to have led off from Filman Way ran to a position about 100m to the east of Trench 12, perhaps forming the access way to the settlement. The Roman and Anglo-Saxon ditch alignments found within Trenches 12–14 reflect the course of both this routeway and Filman Way, indicating a possible ori-

gin before the Anglo-Saxon period. On the basis of comparison with other better known ridgeway tracks in southern England, they may even be prehistoric in date. It may be significant that the alignment of the routes on either side of this Roman and Anglo-Saxon site, Upper Stow's north-western and south-western 'parish' boundary, and the ditches within Trench 12 follow the same direction as the 'ancient alignments' recorded in a recent study of the Bourn Valley in south-west Cambridgeshire (Oosthuizen 2006, fig. 4.1).

As indicated above, the abandonment of this site and the putative nucleation at Stow Longa form part of a well-attested trend seen in the midland counties from the ninth century onwards. When an Early/Middle Saxon farmstead was abandoned, its inhabitants seem to have moved to a single larger and perhaps higher status settlement within the same territory (Jones and Page 2006, 81). The likelihood is that the open fields of this 'Upper Stow' settlement would have been integrated into the expanded settlement at Stow Longa as part of this re-organisation. These changes have been observed elsewhere leading to the prognosis that 'archaeological evidence suggests that the open fields were re-planned in the Late Saxon period ... contemporary with the replanning of their associated settlements' (Jones and Page 2006, 82). The period AD 850 to 1150 saw each vill having two or more extensive arable fields which were cultivated in common by their inhabitants (Taylor 1983, 130–131). It is tempting to see this Upper Stow area as one of these two very large fields of the former Stow Longa parish. In terms of area it is just smaller than the present Stow Longa parish adjacent to the east (Fig. 2). Alternatively, the two halves of the nucleated settlement at Stow may have cultivated separate groups of smaller open fields to the east and west of the village.

Tilbrook

Archaeological work at Tilbrook, near the twelfth-century All Saints Church, found several Middle Saxon ditches and one Late Saxon example. The ditches ran in various directions, with one example leading towards the churchyard boundary. This layout is at odds with the gridded plan recorded by the 1802 map of the village and the earlier arrangement may be similar to that identified at Cottenham where excavation found settlement starting in the seventh or eighth century within a large open enclosure (Mortimer 2000). The name Til(l)a's stream suggests Early Saxon settlement in the area and it would be normal for one of the elements in this earlier dispersed settlement landscape to retain or acquire the local territorial name and act as a pre-village nuclei, around which Middle or Late Saxon expansion, nucleation and/or planning was focused.

The recovery of a Thetford ware pottery sherd from one ditch hints that the later planned character of the village may have occurred sometime from the later ninth century onwards, but whether this

was a Late Saxon re-ordering or planning attributable to new Norman overlords in the later eleventh or twelfth century (in this case the powerful William de Warenne who also owned the honour of Kimbolton) is not clear.

Regional examples of Late Saxon settlement planning from the mid-ninth century onwards include the Burystead at Raunds (Audouy and Chapman 2009) and Isham (Lewis *et al* 2001, 105), both in Northamptonshire. In the post-conquest period many villages seem to have been deliberately planned or replanned with peasant houses laid out along a village street on house plots of uniform or near-uniform size (Faith 1997, 225). Known, or inferred, post-conquest examples of re-planning or the creation of new planned village elements are much more common, particularly in some of the larger 'market villages' of parts of Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire. A recent excavated example in a smaller settlement can be found at Botolph Bridge on the south bank of the River Nene in former Huntingdonshire, where a completely new planned layout was established in the post-conquest period on the site of the former Late Saxon settlement (Atkins with Kemp forthcoming).

Conclusions

Discovery of previously unknown Roman settlements is becoming common – indeed in Cambridgeshire alone over the last 20 or so years, the number of Roman sites has increased several fold, with the difference being particularly marked in clayland areas where previous estimates of numbers of sites, and hence population, were very low (Mills and Palmer 2007).

The recent work at Stow Longa and Tilbrook has uncovered important information concerning when and why settlements were founded and why some sites were abandoned. The location of the three Anglo-Saxon settlement sites, all dating from at least the Middle Saxon period, supports prior expectations of a dispersed landscape giving way to greater nucleation, and helpfully the date of abandonment of this newly discovered settlement can perhaps be placed after AD 850.

Tilbrook was built in the middle of a valley bottom at the junction of two roads and the River Til. The newly identified Anglo-Saxon settlement and Stow Longa were both within the former Stow Longa parish. They were also mirror images, built respectively on a promontory at the south-western and north-eastern edge of a high ridge, with both sites seemingly acting as gateways onto the ridgeway. Probably contemporary, or even a prehistoric or Roman relict, was Filman Way which the 1591 map and the 1st Edition OS map show as a routeway running down the centre of the ridge, with minor trackways leading off it to both Stow Longa and the new settlement at Upper Stow and presumably to other settlements also. The abandonment of the Upper Stow farmstead in the Late Saxon period, the decline of Stow Longa

(perhaps during control by Ely Abbey), and later its demotion in favour of Spaldwick under the Bishops of Lincoln, and wholesale replanning of Tilbrook (perhaps in the Norman period by William de Warenne), shows how all three villages were affected by the policies of both lay and secular overlords.

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Maps

Tilbrook 1800 Enclosure Map (HRO SM20/134)
Tilbrook 1800 Enclosure map (HRO PM 5/2)
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