

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Report No. 1027

**An Interim Report on an Archaeological Evaluation
at A11 Fiveways to Thetford
Road Improvements Scheme**

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December 2004

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Contents

Summary

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Geology and Topography
- 3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background
- 4.0 Methodology
- 5.0 Results
- 6.0 The FindsFieldwalking Results
- 7.0 Conclusions

Acknowledgements

Bibliography

Appendix 1: Fieldwalking Results

Appendix 2: Geophysical Results

Appendix 3: Trench Summary

Figures

- Fig.1 Site location
- Fig.2 Zone A1, trench location
- Fig.3 Zone Z1, trench location
- Fig.4 Zone Z2, trench location
- Fig.5 Zone A2, trench location
- Fig.6 Zone A2, trench location
- Fig.7 Zone Z3, trench location
- Fig.8 Zone A3, trench location
- Fig.9 Zone A4, trench location
- Fig.10 Zone Z4, trench location
- Fig.11 Zone A5, trench location
- Fig.12 Zone Z5, trench location

Local Authority No. 100019340

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Location: Barton Mills, Suffolk. Thetford, Norfolk
District: Breckland
SMR and HER: ELV 053, ELV 054, ELV 055, ELV 056, ELV 057, ELV 058, ELV 059, ELV 060, ELV 061, ELV 062, ELV 063, ELV 064, ERL 137, ERL 138, IKL 144, IKL 145, IKL 146, IKL 147, IKL 148, IKL 149, IKL 150 and IKL 151, 40876 THD
Grid Ref: TL 728 742 (Suffolk) to TL 851 819 (Norfolk)
Date of fieldwork: 27th September to 4th November 2004

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out along the proposed 14km easement for the A11 Fiveways to Thetford Road Improvement Scheme. One hundred and sixty nine trial trenches were excavated, fifty-five of which contained archaeological evidence.

The earliest phases of activity recorded consisted of prehistoric pits and linear ditches, from which Neolithic pottery (3600-3000BC) and worked flint were recovered.

A substantial mid-to-late Romano-British farmstead/settlement was located. Twenty-two evaluation trenches were placed within the possible nucleus of the settlement which revealed linear ditches, domestic and quarry pits, possible structural evidence and occupational deposits overlain by aeolian drift sands.

Truncation by intensive farming was evident throughout the evaluation easement and being most severe within the subsoil horizons.

1.0 Introduction

(Fig. 1)

In December 2003 the Norfolk Archaeological Unit (NAU) was invited by the Highways Agency to tender for a programme of archaeological field evaluation in connection with the proposed A11 Fiveways to Thetford Road Improvements Scheme. The proposed scheme of road improvement, junction works and associated landscaping involved the dualling of the existing A11, north of Elveden in Suffolk.

The Scheme's Environmental Co-ordinators, David Huskisson Associates, appointed Oxford Archaeology to act as archaeological consultants on behalf of the Highways Agency.

A Stage 2 DMRB Environmental Assessment report on the cultural heritage was produced by Oxford Archaeology. This Assessment reviewed all available data on archaeological sites and finds within a 1km corridor centred on the line of the existing A11 (Oxford Archaeology 2003a). The findings of three desk-based assessments (John Samuels Archaeological Consultants 1994; Oxford Archaeological Unit 2000a; 2000b) were incorporated into the Assessment. The results of a walkover survey (Oxford Archaeological Unit 2000c) and an archaeological watching brief carried out during geotechnical test pitting (Oxford Archaeology 2002; 2003b) were also included. This produced a comprehensive synthesis of the archaeology found within the study corridor and the likely impact of the Road Improvements Scheme upon them.

Oxford Archaeology prepared a Specification of Works for a phased programme of archaeological field evaluation designed to characterise the nature of the archaeological resource that will be affected by the Scheme (Oxford Archaeology 2003c).

The first two phases of work consisted of non-invasive survey were undertaken by NAU (Whitmore 2004) to establish the fullest understanding of the local topography and archaeology before the number and location of the evaluation trenches was finally decided.

NAU undertook an archaeological evaluation (Project Design: 1695/01/04/WAB) which resulted in the excavation of one hundred and sixty nine trial trenches, fifty-five of which contained archaeological evidence. The interim results of which are presented within this report.

2.0 Geology and Topography

The solid geology is predominantly of Cretaceous Middle Chalk with a small area of Lower Chalk at its south-western end. This is overlain by a series of deposits of Pleistocene age composed of chalky till, glaciofluvial and aeolian drift. Soils for the area comprises typical brown calcareous and argillic sands, brown calcareous earths and sandy brown rendzinas of the Methwold, Worlington, Swaffham Prior, Newmarket 1 and Newport 4 associations (Hodge *et al* 1984).

The topography for the corridor was characterised by gentle or moderate slopes and flat to undulating landscapes. Surface elevations rose from c. 10m AOD at the south-western end to c. 40m AOD at its north-eastern end.

The landuse along the length of the A11 Fiveways to Thetford Road Improvement scheme comprised of arable, woodland and rough grazing on heathland. The corridor ran through the Weather and Horn Heaths and Breckland Farmland Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

3.0 Archaeological Background

A total of 155 archaeological sites and/or findspots and twelve listed buildings were located within the study area (Oxford Archaeology 2003a). These included the scheduled How Hill Tumulus and a Grade II Listed war memorial adjacent to the existing A11 carriageway. An impact assessment carried out as part of the review identified that the scheme would have a direct impact on twenty-five known sites. These sites include six concentrations of Neolithic/Bronze Age worked flint, possible medieval ridge and furrow remains, cropmarks, numerous earthworks and boundary features and Second World anti-glider ditches. The remaining six sites comprised four linear features or pits and two features of periglacial origin recorded during geo-technical test pitting by the watching brief. Nine of these sites were identified by the assessment to be of local or district importance with the importance of the remaining sixteen sites categorised as uncertain and in need of further clarification.

Phase 1; the fieldwalking and cultural topographic survey (NAU report 940) was undertaken between the months of March-to-July 2004. The fieldwalking results are briefly discussed in (Appendix 1) with an overview to the evaluation results. Due to field conditions, standing crops and set-aside, fieldwalking was restricted to four fields. Parsons Slip, Gibson North, 40 Acres and Deal. In total, c. nine hundred and fifty-seven pieces of worked flint were recovered from these fields and indicate

extensive settlement of the area from the Mesolithic/early Neolithic-to-the Early-Middle Bronze Age.

The cultural topographical survey was carried out within the outline corridor through Mildenhall Woods and identified a number of earthwork features. Representing, probable woodland boundary enclosures and a possible prehistoric barrow. The putative barrow was investigated as part of the trial trenching phase of the evaluation.

Phase 2; the Geophysical Survey Areas 1, 2, 3, and 5 (GS1, GS2, GS3 and GS5) was undertaken in May 2004 and divided into seven adjoining fields predominately on the south side of the existing A11. Running east-to-west these include (GS 1 & 2) Gibson South, 40 Acres, Deal, an unnamed field (No-Name), King Carlos, Crossroads and north of the A11 at Mill Sall. (GS3) located to the central part of the survey and comprised of Weather and Horn Heath (SSSI). Geophysical Survey Area 5 (GS5) located to the eastern part of the survey at Milestone Elveden.

4.0 Methodology

The objective of this evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence or absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

The Specification of Works prepared by Oxford Archaeology (2003c, Phase 3 Evaluation Trenching) required that a total of two hundred and eighteen trenches, 30m by 1.80m, were excavated to provide a 5% sample for areas of known archaeological sites or archaeological potential. A 2% sample for areas of uncertain or low archaeological potential. However, due to established trees thirteen trenches were unable to be excavated. A contingency for an additional forty-four trenches was summarised in the Specification of Works. On approval of the Oxford Archaeology consultant an additional three trenches and five trench extensions was implemented for further investigations.

The trenches were located using a Trimble 3605 DR total station and a number of temporary surveying stations placed along the proposed route of the A11 carriageway. The temporary surveying stations were linked to the Ordnance Survey national grid.

Machine excavation was carried out with a wheeled and a tracked hydraulic 360° excavator using a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NAU *pro forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits. Photographs were taken pre-and-post machining of trenches and after the reinstatement.

In total, eighteen environmental samples were taken.

Site conditions were good with reasonable access. The weather conditions were variable throughout the survey ranging from torrential downpours to clear autumnal sunny days.

5.0 Results

Summaries of the fieldwalking survey (Appendix 1), geophysical survey (Appendix 2) and the trenches excavated (Appendix 3) are presented at the back of this report.

Zone A1 40876 THD

(Fig. 2)

Topsoil	Dark greyish brown sandy silt loam c. 0.10m-to-0.30m in depth.
Subsoil	Mid orange brown silty sand loam c. 0.20m-to-0.30m in depth with frequent root disturbance.
Natural	Mainly yellow-to-orange sand with areas of pale yellow chalky till frequently disturbed by modern tree-throws.

This site consisted of ten trenches (1 to 7, 9, 10, 12 and 13), which measured 30m x 1.8m. Trench 2 was not excavated due to being positioned within established trees and Trench 4 was moved to avoid crossing a trackway. The trenches were located within an area of recently planted conifer trees ranging in height from c. 0.30m to 1m. The area was recently de-stumped, therefore, ground disturbances were evident in the topsoil and subsoil horizons. No archaeological features or deposit were encountered.

Zone A1 Milestone ELV 053

(Fig. 2)

Topsoil	Mid greyish brown sandy silt c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.
Subsoil	The subsoil horizon was partially removed by deep ploughing. Occasional, patches of subsoil survive to the east of the site and consists of a mid orange-to-mid brown silty sand c. 0.10m to 0.15m in depth.
Natural	Light brownish orange sandy clay till with areas of pale yellow chalky till. There were frequent modern plough marks and occasional tree-throws along the northern side of the site.

This site consisted of nineteen trenches (8,10, 11, 14 to 29) which measured 30m x 1.80m. Trench 21 was not excavated due to waterlogged conditions. Truncation by modern ploughing has possibly removed sub-surface archaeological evidence.

Archaeological Evidence

Trench 20 contained an undated shallow north-to-south linear ditch.

Zone Z1 Milestone ELV 054

(Fig. 3)

Topsoil	Mid grey-to-mid brown sandy silt c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.
Subsoil	A layer of mid orange-to-mid brown silty sand exists across the entire site. c. 0.15m-to-0.25m in depth.
Natural	Light brown-to-orange sandy clay with occasional areas of flint nodules.

This site consisted of seven trenches (30 to 36) which measured 30m x 1.80m, four of which contained archaeological features.

Archaeological Evidence

- Trench 30 contained an undated shallow east-to-west ditch.
- Trench 31 contained four undated archaeological features and two natural features; three excavated pits, a post-hole and two excavated natural tree-throw features.
- Trench 34 contained two archaeological features; a linear ditch and a prehistoric burnt pit.
- Trench 36 contained an undated (possibly prehistoric) burnt pit.

Zone Z1 ELV 055

(Fig. 3)

- Topsoil Dark brown silty sand loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.
Subsoil There was no apparent subsoil in this area.
Natural Mid orange-to-mid brown sand with occasional modern plough scars.

This site consisted of ten trenches (37 to 46) which measured (30m x 1.80m). Trenches 37, 38, 39, 40 and 41 were not excavated due to their location within a plantation of conifer trees. Trench 46 was not excavated because of a large pile of manure. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

Zone Z1 Parsons Slip ELV 056

(Fig. 3)

- Topsoil Homogeneous mid grey-to-dark brown sandy silt loam c. 0.30m-to-0.35m deep.
Subsoil No subsoil horizon have been noted for this area. Except, for an area of reddish brown sand which was located in the southern end of Trench 53. This may be a patch of surviving subsoil or wind deposited sand.
Natural Mid orange brown sand with patches of pale yellow chalky till towards the south west.

This site consisted of seven trenches (47 to 53) which measured 30m x 1.80m. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

Zone Z2 Brandon Road North ELV 057

(Fig. 4)

- Topsoil Mid greyish brown sandy silt loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.
Subsoil There was no evidence of surviving subsoil in the area.
Natural Mid orange brown sand with patches of pale yellow chalky till.

This site consisted of five trenches (54 to 58), which measured 30m x 1.80m. Five trenches contained archaeological features and deposits.

Archaeological Evidence

- Trench 54 contained a post-hole, or truncated burnt pit, from which an undiagnostic flint flake was recovered.
- Trench 55 contained five undated post holes.
- Trench 56 contained a northwest-to-southeast linear ditch, interpreted as a modern military-style slit-trench.
- Trench 57 contained two pits and a post-hole, both undated.
- Trench 58 contained two linear ditches, a post-hole and a pit/post pit.

Zone Z2 Brandon Road North ELV 058

(Fig. 4)

- Topsoil Mid greyish dark brown sandy silt loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.
- Subsoil In general, no subsoil deposits survive, except for Trench 63.
- Natural Mid orange-to-mid brown sand with areas of pale yellow chalky till.

This site consisted of five trenches (59 to 63), which measured 30m x 1.80m. One trench contained archaeological evidence.

Archaeological Evidence

- Trench 63 A post-hole and two parallel west-to-east linear ditches were recorded within this trench. The ditches were located beneath a reddish brown subsoil c. 0.10m-to-0.20m in depth. All of these features were undated.

Zone A2 Landing ground ELV 059

(Fig. 5)

- Topsoil Mid greyish brown sandy silt c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.
- Subsoil Most subsoil removed by deep ploughing. Areas of mid orange brown silty sand c. 0.10m-to-0.30m occur across the site, particularly towards the north-east and south-west. This may be evidence of disturbed natural caused by earlier ploughing. Areas of reddish brown sand were also found and these may be patches of surviving subsoil or wind deposited sand.
- Natural Mid orange-to-light brown sands and gravels mixed with pale yellow chalky till.

This site consisted of twenty-two (64 to 85) trenches, which measured 30m x 1.80m. All of these trenches contained archaeological features.

Archaeological Evidence

- Trench 64 a small clay-lined pit that produced a probable Iron Age sherd, a pit that contained three struck flints and one unexcavated ditch, were recorded within this trench.

- Trench 65 three linear ditches (two excavated and one unexcavated) and three pits (two excavated and one unexcavated) were found within this trench.
- Trench 66 two parallel linear ditches, a pit and an unexcavated amorphous spread (probably representing inter-cutting pits) were seen in this trench, all undated.
- Trench 67 one post-hole (or pit) and three parallel linear ditches, were found within this trench. One of the ditches and post-hole/pit produced a flint flake and pottery with a date range of 1st-to-4th century AD.
- Trench 68 two parallel linear ditches and a post-hole or small pit were found, both undated.
- Trench 69 contained six linear ditches (five unexcavated), the excavated linear produced six struck flints and 2nd-to-3rd century AD pottery. One pit, six post-holes (two excavated) and three linear gullies (unexcavated) were also found.
- Trench 70 contained five archaeological features; two parallel linear ditches, and three pits. One ditch and a pit produced pottery dating to the 1st-to-2nd century AD.
- Trench 71 contained c. thirty-three archaeological features: two unexcavated linear ditches, two pits (one of which one pit produced 2nd-to-3rd century AD pottery), three gullies (one of which produced a 2nd-to-3rd century AD coin), sixteen post-holes (five excavated) and c. ten (unexcavated) lateral features.
- Trench 72 a pit and linear ditch (that produced 2nd-to-3rd century AD pottery) were recorded in this trench.
- Trench 73 contained one pit that produced a flint flake and 2nd-to-3rd century AD pottery and two unexcavated pits. A linear ditch produced 1st-to-mid 2nd century AD pottery.
- Trench 74 contained two groups of inter-cutting linear ditches, possibly representing an rectilinear enclosure and a large rectangular pit, all of which were sealed by the subsoil. The ditches produced worked flint, fragments of burnt flint and late 2nd-to-3rd century AD pottery.
- Trench 75 contained six inter-cutting pits and six undated linear ditches (one unexcavated). One of the pits produced a sherd of a 2nd to early 3rd century AD samian ware.
- Trench 76 three pits, two of which produced 2nd-to-3rd century AD pottery, three undated post-holes, two undated linear ditches and an undated ditch terminus were recorded within this trench.
- Trench 77 contained c. thirty-five archaeological features and two lateral deposits. This constituted c. twenty three post-holes (eight unexcavated), five

linear ditches (one unexcavated), with one linear producing 2nd-to-3rd century AD pottery. Also four undated pits (two unexcavated), a linear beam slot/gully, a curvilinear ditch and ditch terminus, which produced 2nd-to-3rd century AD pottery. The amorphous features are possibly inter-cutting pits.

- Trench 78 contained c. six post-holes, three pits with one pit producing late 2nd-to-early 3rd century AD pottery, two undated linear ditches, a ditch terminus and an undated curvilinear ditch.
- Trench 79 five pits (three unexcavated) with one pit producing struck flint, three linear ditches (two unexcavated) and one post-hole were recorded within this trench.
- Trench 80 contained two undated archaeological features; one pit and a linear ditch.
- Trench 81 three inter-cutting ditches (with one ditch containing late 1st-to-3rd century AD pottery and another a multi-platform flint core), a ditch/gully terminus and a pit (that produced a struck flint and 2nd-to-3rd century AD pottery) were recorded within this trench.
- Trench 82 contained three linear ditches, a ditch terminus, two post-holes (with one producing a flint flake), four pits (one of which produced two flint flakes and another contained 4th century AD pottery, while another held a copper-alloy coin and an iron dagger).
- Trench 83 contained eleven archaeological features and two lateral deposits. These constituted seven linear ditches (three unexcavated with one ditch producing 2nd-to-4th century AD pottery), three pits (one pit produced a worked antler) and a post-hole. The lateral deposits were overlain by possible aeolian sands and are either occupation layers or a series of inter-cutting pits.
- Trench 84 Aeolian sands which overlay a probable occupation layer dated to the 4th century AD were recorded within this trench. Also recovered from this deposit were fourteen struck flints, which include a multi-platform core and a test-piece. The probable occupation layer was seen throughout the trench.
- Trench 85 contained two linear ditches, a ditch terminus, two linear gullies and a gully terminus (which produced four flint flakes). Majority of the features produced pottery evidence ranging from 1st-to-4th century AD, as well as ceramic building materials and a fragment of quern stone. An unstratified flint flake was recovered from the subsoil.

Zone A2 *Drier ELV 060*

(Fig. 6)

This site consists of thirty-six (30m x 1.80m) trenches (86 to 121), which measured 30m x 1.8m. None were excavated, however, due to the field being under crop.

Zone Z3 *Opposite Chalk Hall* *ELV 061*

(Fig. 7)

Topsoil	Mid greyish brown sandy silt loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m depth.
Subsoil	A layer of reddish brown sand c. 0.10m-to-0.20m depth exists across the entire site.
Natural	Mid orange-to-mid brown sand with patches of pale yellow chalky till towards the north east.

This site consisted of four trenches (122 to 125), which measured 30m x 1.80m, all of which contained archaeological features.

Archaeological Evidence

Trench 122 two linear ditches, two ditch termini and three pits, all undated, were recorded within this trench.

Trench 123 two linear ditches and three possible post-holes, all undated, were contained within this trench.

Trench 124 three pits and a post-hole, all undated, were located within this trench.

Trench 125 three pits and a post-hole, all undated, were found within this trench.

Zone Z3 *Sheep Run II* *ELV 062*

(Fig. 7)

Topsoil	Mid brown sandy silt loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.
Subsoil	An area of mid orange-to-light brown sand c. 0.10m in depth exists in the central and south-western part of the site.
Natural	Mid orange-to-mid yellow sand with patches of pale yellow chalky till towards the south west.

This site consisted of four trenches (126 to 129) with one additional trench (128b), all measured 30m x 1.80m.

Archaeological Evidence

Trench 128 contained two linear ditch termini and a pit, all undated.

Trench 128b contained two undated ditch termini.

Zone Z3 *Sheep Run II* *ELV 063*

(Fig. 7)

Topsoil	Mid brown sandy silt loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.
Subsoil	An area of mid orange-to-light brown sand exists in the central and south-western part of the site.
Natural	Pale yellow chalky till with areas of mid orange-to-mid yellow sand central part of the site.

This site consisted of four trenches (130 to 133), which measured 30m x 1.80m.

Archaeological Evidence

Trench 130 a pit which produced a bladelet, two fragments of burnt flint and an unstratified struck flake, was recorded within this trench.

Trench 131 contained an undated linear ditch.

Trench 132 contained an undated pit.

Zone Z3 Sheep Run III ELV 064

(Fig. 7)

Topsoil Mid greyish brown silty sand loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.

Subsoil An area of mid orange brown silty sand exists in the central part of the site.

Natural Mid orange-to-light brown sand.

This site consisted of three trenches (134 to 136) which measured (30m x 1.80m), however, no archaeological features or deposits were found.

Zone A3 Memorial Heath ERL 137

(Fig. 8)

Topsoil Mid greyish-to-mid brown silty sand loam c. 0.30m-to-0.50m in depth.

Subsoil Areas of mid orange-to-mid brown silty sand c. 0.10m-to-0.30m in depth exists across the entire site.

Natural Mid orange-to-light brown sand with patches of pale yellow chalky till.

This site consisted of ten trenches (137 to 146), which measured 30m x 1.80m. One of the trenches (145) was not excavated due to established trees.

Archaeological Evidence

Trench 139 contained a pit where fragments of burnt flint were recovered.

Zone A4 Gibson North and east of Gibson South ERL 138

(Fig. 9)

Topsoil Mid greyish-to-dark brown silty sand loam c. 0.30m – 0.40m in depth.

Subsoil There was no subsoil in this area.

Natural Mid orange-to-light brown sand with areas of pale yellow chalky till towards the south west.

This site consisted of eleven trenches (147 to 157), which measured 30m x 1.80m. No trenching took place east of Gibson South as several of the trenches (147, 149, 151, 153 and 155) were located within established woodland. Moreover, no archaeological features or deposits were found within the excavated trenches.

Zone A4 Gibson South IKL 144

(Fig. 9)

Topsoil Mid grey-to-mid brown silty sand c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.

- Subsoil Areas of mid orange-to-mid brown silty sand occur to the extreme north-east and south-west of the site.
- Natural Mid orange-to-light brown sand with occasional patches of pale yellow chalky till.

This site consisted of six trenches (158 to 163), which measured 30m x 1.80m.

Archaeological Evidence

Trench 158 contained what appeared to be an in-filled post-medieval marl pit.

Trench 161 contained a probable modern machined pit or ditch.

Zone A4 40 Acres (S) IKL 145

(Fig. 9)

- Topsoil Mid greyish brown silty sand loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m depth.
- Subsoil There was no evidence of surviving subsoil in the area.
- Natural Mid orange-to-light brown sand with areas of pale yellow chalky till.

This site consisted of nine trenches (164, 165, 166, 168, 169, 170, 172, 174 and 175) with one additional trench (164b), all of which measured 30m x 1.80m.

Archaeological Evidence

Trench 164 contained a post-hole and a burnt pit which contained burnt/cremated bone and burnt flint fragments, both of probable prehistoric date.

Trench 164b a ditch terminus, or pit, was recorded in this trench which contained twelve sherds of early Neolithic pottery and ten struck flints.

Trench 165 one small pit, undated, pit was recorded.

Trench 166 one undated pit was recorded in this trench.

Trench 168 contained one shallow pit.

Trench 172 contained a probable ditch terminus and a linear ditch (that produced one sherd of early Neolithic pottery).

Trench 174 a large deep modern pit which had been sealed with a layer of chalk and contained nine pieces of residual struck flint was recorded in this trench.

Trench 175 contained one small undated pit.

Zone A4 Mill Sall IKL 145

(Fig. 9)

- Topsoil Mid brown sandy silt loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m depth.
- Subsoil Areas of mid orange-to-mid brown silty sand exist to the north-east and south-west of the site.
- Natural Mid orange-to-light brown sand with areas of pale yellow chalky till.

This site consisted of three trenches (167, 171 and 173) which measured 30m x 1.80m, however, no archaeological features or deposits were found.

Zone Z4 Deal (N) IKL 146

(Fig. 10)

Topsoil Mid greyish brown silty sand loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m depth.
Subsoil Areas of mid orange-to-mid brown silty sand exist to the north-east and south-west of the site.
Natural Mid orange-to-light brown sand with large areas of pale yellow chalky till towards the south west.

This site consisted of four trenches (176, 179, 181 and 183) north of the A11, which measured 30m x 1.80m.

Archaeological Evidence

Trench 183 contained a possible undated post-hole.

Zone Z4 Deal (S) IKL 146

(Fig. 10)

Topsoil Mid greyish-to-dark brown silty sand c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.
Subsoil There was no evidence of surviving subsoil in the area.
Natural Mid orange-to-light brown sand with large areas of pale yellow chalky till towards the south west.

This site consisted of six trenches (177, 178, 180, 182, 184 and 185) south of the A11, all of which measured 30m x 1.80m.

Archaeological Evidence

Trench 185 contained five undated post-holes.

Zone Z4 (N) IKL 147

(Fig. 10)

Topsoil Mid greyish-to-dark brown silty sand loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.
Subsoil Areas of mid orange-to-mid brown silty sand exist across the entire site.
Natural Mid orange-to-light brown sand with patches of pale yellow chalky till.

This site consisted of two trenches (186 and 189) north of the A11, which measured 30m x 1.80m.

Archaeological Evidence

Trench 186 contained an undated post-hole.

Zone Z4 (S) IKL 147

(Fig. 10)

Topsoil Mid greyish brown sandy silt c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.

Subsoil There was no evidence of surviving subsoil in the area.
Natural Mid orange-to-light brown sand with patches of pale yellow chalky till.

This site consisted of three trenches (187, 188 and 190) south of the A11, which measured 30m x 1.8m. Trench 187 was extended for further investigations.

Archaeological Evidence

Trench 187 contained a shallow undated curvilinear ditch/gully.

Zone A5 King Carlos IKL 148

(Fig. 11)

Topsoil Mid greyish brown sandy silt loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.
Subsoil There was no evidence of surviving subsoil in the area.
Natural Pale yellow chalky till with patches of mid orange-to-light brown sand.

This site consisted of eight (191 to 198) trenches and one additional negative trench (164b), all of which measured 30m x 1.80m.

Archaeological Evidence

Trench 192 contained a small pit and a post-hole, both undated.

Trench 196 a pit cut by a possible post-hole, that contained twenty-one struck flints and thirty-nine sherds of flint tempered early Neolithic pottery, was recorded in this trench. The probable post-hole produced three struck flints.

Trench 197 two undated post holes were recorded in this trench.

Trench 198 contained several irregular shaped features initially considered as quarry pits but later re-interpreted as natural features within the chalk strata, one struck flint was recovered.

Zone Z5 Crossroads IKL 149

(Fig. 12)

Topsoil Mid greyish brown sandy silty loam c. 0.30m-to-0.40m in depth.
Subsoil There was no evidence of surviving subsoil in the area.
Natural Chalk with cyroturbation features.

This site consisted of eleven trenches (199 to 209), which measured 30m x 1.80m, however, no archaeological features or deposits were recorded within them.

Zone Z5 Pit Field and Boundary Field IKL150

(Fig. 12)

Topsoil Mid greyish brown sandy silty loam c. 0.30m-to-0.45m in depth.
Subsoil Mid orange brown silty sand c. 0.15m-to-0.25m in depth.
Natural Chalk with cyroturbation features.

This site consisted of six trenches (210 to 215) which measured (30m x 1.80m), however, no archaeological features or deposits were recorded.

Zone Z5 Boundary Field and Durham Heath IKL 151

(Fig. 12)

- Topsoil Dark brown sandy silty loam c. 0.15m-to-0.25m in depth.
Subsoil Mid brown silty sand c. 0.15m-to-0.25m in depth.
Colluvial (a) Mid yellowish brown silty sand with occasional small rounded-to-sub-rounded flint c. 0.30m in depth.
Colluvial (b) Mid brownish yellow silty sand with occasional patches of brown silty sand. This deposit appears to be slightly mixed with disturbed natural c. 0.15m in depth.

This site consisted three trenches (216 to 218), which measured 30m x 1.80m. No archaeological features or deposits were found, however, two colluvial deposits (a and b) were recorded in Trenches 217 and 218. The topographic location of the trenches south of the A11, lie at the bottom of a hill. Therefore, the presence of colluvial deposits possibly represents hill-wash from the upper north-facing slopes.

Possible Barrow

During the Cultural Topographical Survey in (*Phase 1, Zone 2*); there was a partially surviving ring ditch enclosing a mound c. 8-to-9m in diameter. This was initially interpreted as a possible Bronze Age barrow (Site 546). However, subsequent excavations has proven that this feature was not a Bronze Age barrow, but either, sand and gravel upcast from a possible woodland boundary bank or a natural sand and gravel knoll. The final excavation results shall be incorporated in the full evaluation report.

6.0 The Finds

Pottery

The Prehistoric Pottery

Site IKL 148

Thirty-nine sherds of flint tempered pottery, weighing 0.83kg, were recovered from a single deposit (pit fill [19]). The abundant, coarse, burnt flint inclusions and smoothed surfaces suggest that the sherds are of earlier Neolithic date 3600-3000BC. The sherds appear to be from a single vessel, an undecorated round-based bowl. No rim sherds were found. The condition of the sherds is mixed some being large and fresh others smaller and burnt or abraded. One sherd has a spall or flaw from misfiring during production.

Site IKL 145

Thirteen sherds of earlier Neolithic pottery, weighing 0.122kg, were recovered from two contexts ([22] and [24]). The sherds are from at least two undecorated bowls with round bases and rounded or out-turned rims. All the sherds are heavily tempered with crushed burnt flint.

Site ELV 059

An amount of prehistoric pottery (which will be quantified for the final evaluation report) consisting of handmade flint or sand-tempered sherds was found alongside Romano British pottery, suggesting that they may have been residual within these later contexts.

Fired Clay

Site ELV059

Sixty-four pieces of fired clay, weighing 0.655kg, were recovered from sixteen contexts, of which only [528], [529] and [663] produced significant assemblages. The fired clay pieces from these contexts have one smoothed surface, occasionally with deep thumb or fingertip impressions, and one irregular surface. One example, ([528]), has a twig impression on the rough face suggesting clay lining, which had been pressed onto a wattle superstructure.

Non local Stone

Site IKL148

A large quartzite cobble, weighing 1.584kg, was found ([19]). The sub-rounded cobble showed signs of having been burnt on part of one surface and was probably derived from local glacio fluvial deposits.

Site ELV059

Non local stone was found in two contexts. Context [553] contained a single heat fractured quartzite pebble possibly collected from glacial sand and gravel. Context [735] produced two pieces from an iron rich sandstone pebble and a small block of micaceous sandstone. Both the pieces had been burnt. The origin of these pieces is uncertain but they are probably collected from the glacial tills rather than river borne deposits.

Worked Flint

Site ELV057

A single small fragment of an undiagnostic flake came from this site ([21]).

Site ELV059

A total of forty-three struck flints and twenty-eight fragments of burnt flint (0.366kg) were recovered from this site.

A multi platform flake core is present and a cortical piece with one flake struck from it may have been tested as a core, both are from context [983]. A fairly large lump of flint may also be a core but is heavily burnt and its surfaces patinated and partially shattered [547].

Most of the flint consists of unmodified flakes, many of them small. There are some thinner neater flakes which probably came from formal cores, but irregular and thicker flakes which are more randomly struck, often by hard hammer, predominate and there is only one blade-like flake. Many of the pieces are quite sharp although there is some degree of edge damage on others.

Two retouched flakes and a utilised flake are present.

The flint is not closely datable, although it is likely to be of Late Neolithic or Bronze Age date.

Site ELV062

Two pieces of worked flint. One piece is a blade-like flake and the other is an irregular flake with substantial edge damage.

Site ELV063

A tiny, incomplete, bladelet and two fragments of burnt flint were recovered from this site.

Site IKL145

A total of twenty-one struck flints and three fragments of burnt flint (0.073kg) were recovered from this site.

The assemblage includes fourteen flakes, including two quite neat thin pieces. There is also a neat blade-like flake from a blade core. Four other pieces are classified as blades, although the largest of these ([1]) has a strange dry texture to its dorsal surface and traces of what may be mortar adhering to it – possibly it is not of prehistoric date.

A quite thick ovate flake has neat retouch around its distal end forming an end scraper [24].

The neat blade-like nature of some of the material from this site suggests that a Neolithic date may be likely for it, although the assemblage as a whole may include later material as well.

Site IKL148

A total of twenty-one pieces of struck flint came from this site. A small multi platform flake core is present ([19]). There are also eight flakes, six blade-like flakes, three blades and three spalls. Most of the flints are quite small in size and most are quite sharp. They are all from the same context and the similar nature and condition of the material suggest that it is probably contemporary – most likely of Late Neolithic or Bronze Age date.

HER	Type	Number
ELV057	flint	1
ELV059	flint	71
ELV062	flint	2
ELV063	flint	14
IKL145	flint	26
IKL148	flint	25

Quantified flint by site

The Roman pottery

Site ELV 059

The pottery largely consists of mid to late utilitarian Roman coarse wares (micaceous and sandy grey and oxidised wares) of local production (Wattisfield; Tomber and

Dore 1998, 184). Also found was a small percentage of fine (samian, Nene Valley, Pakenham, Hadham and Oxfordshire colour coats) wares and some specialist wares (amphorae and mortarium) imported from regional and international production centres (Tomber and Dore 1998).

Of particular interest is the presence of forty-six sherds of a white ware narrow mouthed jar with red painted decoration ([645]), provisionally dated to the late Roman period (late 3rd to 4th century). This pottery is thought to be the product of a kiln recently excavated at Two Mile Bottom (Bates and Lyons 2004, 84-86, figs 54 and 55). This is the first time the products of this kiln have been recognised away from the production site.

Although the pottery is abraded, generally the condition is good with evidence of use (such as sooting and wear marks surviving), while the average sherd size also appears large. This suggests a relatively low level of residuality and little post-depositional disturbance.

The Faunal remains

Site ELV 059

A total of 10.701kg of faunal remains were recovered, the majority retrieved from ditch and pit fills, although small quantities were found in gully, linear, occupation and subsoil fills. The assemblage includes butchering evidence from skinning and hornworking, also two species of deer. Most of the remains are thought to be of a Romano-British date.

Environmental Evidence

A total, of eighteen samples were collected. The rationale for selection and methodology employed for study are based on *Environmental Archaeology* (EH 2002). The samples have not been sent for analysis until the full allocation of trenches have been completed. The results shall be incorporated in the full evaluation report.

7.0 Conclusions

The extensive scheme of evaluation trenching recorded well preserved prehistoric and Romano-British features. The presence of these features demonstrates that the survey area is located in an ancient landscape that has been settled upon for thousands of years. Moreover, the features and objects recorded during this project are relevant to local and regional research objectives (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, 9-13 and 19-22).

The prehistoric evidence

The earliest recorded archaeological features are prehistoric in date. Zone A4 (IKL 145) produced eight trenches with archaeology. A linear ditch (Trench 172) and a potential ditch terminus or pit (Trench 164b) were excavated and produced pottery dating to the earlier Neolithic period with a date range between 3600-3000BC. Four, of the eight trenches recorded burnt pits containing similar fills, which consisted of a dark greyish black silty sand with fragments of burnt flint. A pit (Trench 164) produced burnt bone and burnt flint fragments, the burnt bone is non-human and

consists of sheep/goat, cattle and distorted fragments of mammal bone. These pits are certainly of prehistoric date.

Zone A5 (IKL 148) is of particular interest because of its close proximity to a Scheduled Tumulus called How Hill, which is located c. 150m to the north. Trench 196, revealed a large pit which when sectioned revealed a probable post-pipe, therefore, this feature could be interpreted as a post-pit. In total, thirty-nine sherds of earlier Neolithic flint tempered pottery was recovered from this feature. An extension of the trench revealed the full extent of the pit.

Functional interpretations of pits like those previously mentioned usually facilitate storage or rubbish disposal, are now received with caution as a ritual explanation involving the 'structured deposition' of artefacts within features is thought more likely (Trimble in prep).

Small groups of charcoal rich pits have previously been excavated in Norfolk. Excavations at Wood Farm, Gorleston (Timms and Ashwin 1999), Harford Park and Ride, Norwich (Trimble in prep) and The Oaks, Norwich (Trimble forthcoming) have produced charcoal rich pits, from which early-to-middle Bronze Age pottery and worked flint has been recovered. Moreover, numerous charcoal rich pits were excavated at Cringleford Park and Ride (Ames in prep) and Bowthorpe, 3 Scores (Green 2004) which did not produce datable evidence, although, these two sites (both near Norwich) had associated Iron Age settlement evidence.

In many ways, the fieldwalking and evaluation has provided further evidence to aid with understanding the development of prehistoric activity in north-west Suffolk.

The Romano-British evidence

The Romano-British settlement in Landing Ground Field (Zone A2 ELV 059) has proven very productive in the amount of pottery, faunal remains, coins and other metal objects recovered from within the twenty-two trenches. It certainly appears that the trenches were positioned within the nucleus of the settlement. The pottery and coin evidence give a date towards the 2nd to 3rd century AD for the main phase of occupation.

It has been suggested that Romano-British settlements on the Fen-edge were positioned to exploit a number of geological and environmental zones, with access to both the Fenland and Upland resources (Gurney 1986, 147). The economy of the Fen-edge settlements probably incorporated cereal cultivation on the uplands and a wide range of activities in the Fens. The location of the settlement at Elveden is in close proximity to Romano-British settlements in north-west Suffolk, with Mildenhall, Icklingham, and Ixworth/Pakenham lying in a arc about 15km south of Thetford. The Icknield Way may also have provided an impetus for settlement location. These are large sprawling sites, with Icklingham and Pakenham being considered as small 'towns' (Mudd 2002, 3). No chronological period phasing has taken place on Landing Ground, to date, and it should be anticipated that prehistoric features and deposits will be evident during the analysis of the site.

The trenches north of Landing Ground at Zone Z2 (ELV 058), show that the settlement did not extend in a northwards direction. Although, archaeological features were recorded in the field, north of Landing Ground they were undated and in no-way at the same density as that recorded for Landing Ground. It is probable that the features recorded in Zone Z2 represents Romano-British or medieval field systems.