THE APPROPRIATION OF PREHISTORIC MONUMENTS IN EARLY TO MIDDLE ANGLO-SAXON SETTLEMENTS

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Introduction

Archaeologists studying the Anglo-Saxon period in England are familiar with the idea that communities appropriated ancient monuments when burying their dead. Extensive studies of this phenomenon have been carried out by Howard Williams (1997; 1998; 2006) and Sarah Semple (1998; 2003), amongst others. It has also been shown that earlier monuments were reused as meeting places in this era (Meaney 1995; Pantos 2004; Semple 1998; 2004; Williams 2004), as the locations for minsters and other churches (Blair 1992; 2005; Semple 2003), and as pre-Christian shrine sites (Blair 1995). Little research, however, has been carried out into the role of these monuments in Anglo-Saxon settlements. This paper is a response to that scholarly lacuna, focussing on the reuse of prehistoric monuments in early and middle Anglo-Saxon rural settlements of the English midlands between c. AD 450–850.[2]

Such a dearth exists in our understanding of the relationships between ancient monuments and Anglo-Saxon settlements that in 2003, Audrey Meaney was able to write that 'early Anglo-Saxons belonging to the pagan or conversion periods dug graves into prehistoric mounds for their own dead, but seem to have avoided living near them' (Meaney 2003: 231). On the contrary, the following discussion will demonstrate that the settlement evidence proves that this was simply not the case. This paper will begin with a brief discussion of the methods used to identify settlements with reuse, and will then present some examples from a number of published and unpublished sites. This will be followed by a discussion highlighting several patterns which are emerging from the data.

Methods

The area defined as the English midlands in this instance consists of the counties between the Thames and the Humber, with Staffordshire and Warwickshire to the west, North Lincolnshire to the north, and Hertfordshire to the south. Understanding of this area generally benefits from extensive ceramic sequences, which have been well-studied, and which assist interpretation and phasing of sites (e.g. the East Midlands Pottery Project, Vince and Young 1992).

Within this region, a provisional forty-nine early (c. AD 450–650) to middle (c. AD 650–850) Anglo-Saxon settlements with evidence for reuse of earlier monuments have so far been identified. These include Bronze Age round barrows, Neolithic long barrows, Iron Age hillforts and various prehistoric enclosure complexes and boundaries. At each site excavation has taken place and

revealed structural evidence. Furthermore, at all the sites there is a strong likelihood that the prehistoric monuments were still visible in the Anglo-Saxon period. These excavated sites form the focus of the present discussion, although further sites have been identified which reveal apparent Anglo-Saxon occupation activity, but lack excavated evidence of buildings. Examples include cropmarks showing buildings situated on top of older features, such as at Clanfield (Oxon; SP 278 006) (Benson and Miles 1974: 34) and pottery scatters demonstrating an Anglo-Saxon presence over older features, such as Iron Age enclosures, as seen at Frisby on the Wreake (Leics; SK 680 170) (Thompson 2000: 238). Monument reuse has been divided into two categories in this study: 'associative' and 'direct' reuse. In cases of associative reuse, buildings and other settlement features lie in close proximity to a monument (up to c. 100m away), or a monument is encompassed by a settlement, with buildings situated around it. In these cases, those buildings may well be aligned on the monument. Direct reuse is applied to sites where settlement features are placed on top of older monuments, directly referencing and modifying those monuments. A similar distinction was made by Semple (2008: 410–11) in her study of the burial landscape of the South Saxon kingdom in the fifth to eighth centuries, in which she categorised funerary monument reuse as 'associative' or 'intrusive'.

Reuse of Romano-British remains

Monument reuse is not restricted to prehistoric remains; the appropriation of Romano-British buildings and enclosures has been highlighted too, for example in ecclesiastical (Blair 1992; 2005; Bell 1998) and burial contexts (Williams 1997; 1998; 2006). Sites such as Barton Court Farm (Oxon) (Miles 1986) demonstrate that this form of appropriation was practiced in some settlements too. However, these Romano-British remains are not considered here for several reasons. Firstly, when Anglo-Saxon settlements occupy Romano-British sites it is not always easy to differentiate between continuity of occupation between the two periods and *re*-occupation, the latter forming the focus of this particular study.

Secondly, one of the aims of this research is to create a data set of settlements with reuse which can be compared to the burial record. Whilst Williams (1997; 1998) did consider Romano-British remains in his study of funerary monument reuse, it is the use of prehistoric remains which has provoked most discussion of his work. Likewise, much of the research into the location of pre-Christian and Christian religious sites (Blair 1992; 1995; 2005; Semple 1998; 2003) and assembly places (Meaney 1995; Pantos 2004; Semple 2004) in the landscape has concentrated on their relationships with *prehistoric* monuments, as opposed to Romano-British ones; thus, a similar focus is reflected here.

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Monument reuse in settlements

Barrows

Prehistoric barrows are the most frequently reused monument; thirty-two settlements appropriate barrows, both associatively and directly. At Frieston Road near Hough-on-the-Hill (Lincs; SK 933 468), a continuous Bronze Age ring ditch, c. 13m diameter, was excavated in a pipe trench in 2000 (Copp and Toop 2006: 78; 83) (Fig. 1). It had been bisected by a pit alignment in the middle Iron Age, and a sunken-featured building (SFB) had then been built across the south-west quadrant (ibid.: 88–9). The building contained late sixth- to seventh-century pottery, and the upper layer of the prehistoric ring ditch contained similar sherds (ibid.: 91). The monument appears to have been visible in the late sixth or seventh century, perhaps as a low mound surrounded by a shallow ditch. It was directly reused by the SFB, which may have been part of a larger settlement, as geophysical survey in the vicinity of the pipe trench located further ring ditches and buildings to the north and south-west of the excavated area (ibid.: 93).

Direct reuse was also seen at Manor Farm, Harston (Cambs; TL 418 498), where a Bronze Age ring ditch, 19m in diameter, enclosed what appeared to be two phases of an SFB (Malim 1993: 26; 34). Ceramics from the site suggested early Anglo-Saxon occupation, in the fifth or sixth century (ibid.: 50). Meanwhile, *associative* placing of settlement features near to barrows is seen at Village Farm, Elstow (Beds; TL 051 470), where two early Anglo-Saxon SFBs were located 15–25m north of two late Neolithic or early Bronze Age ring ditches (BCAS 1995: 22) (Fig. 2). Similarly, at West Halton (N Lincs; SE 905 209) post-built structures, provisionally dated to the early Anglo-Saxon period were located
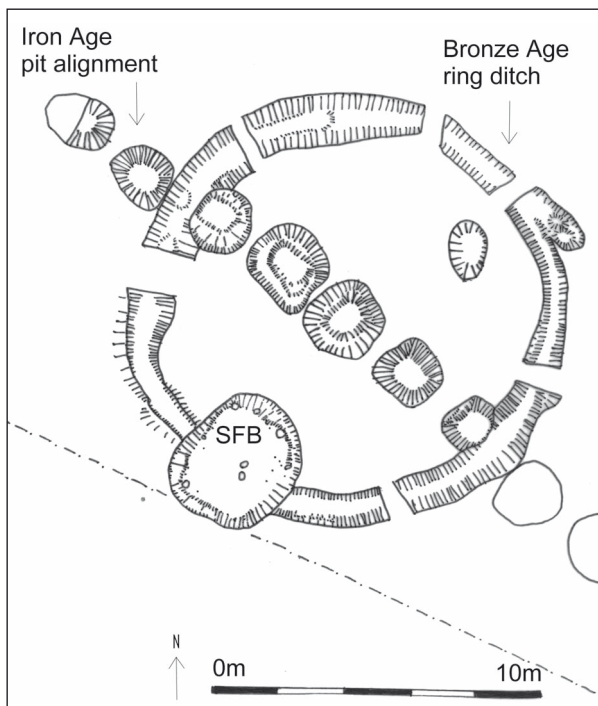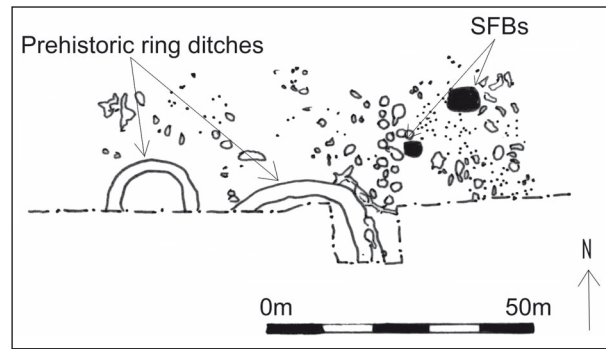

Figure 2   Sunken-featured buildings in close proximity to two prehistoric ring ditches at Village Farm, Elstow (after BCAS 1995: Fig. 10).

around two Bronze Age barrows, one still visible as a significant feature in the landscape today (D.M. Hadley, pers. comm.).

At Hatton Rock (Warwicks; SP 237 577) settlement features, potentially early to middle Anglo-Saxon in date, as well as a ring ditch, were noted on aerial photographs and a magnetometer survey during the 1960s, on land which documentary evidence suggests was part of a large seventh- or eighth-century royal estate (Rahtz 1970: 139). A pipe trench dug across the site in 1970 traversed this area of occupation, revealing a possible hearth, a 1.5m-deep posthole and potential timber slots of a similar depth, as well as the base of an SFB (ibid.: 142). Other features plotted from aerial photographs include L-shaped ditches and large rectangular timber buildings, alongside further SFBs (ibid.: 141).

The ring ditch, although undated, seems to have been incorporated into the settlement, and was respected by the buildings and ditches, hinting that the monument may have survived as a visible barrow which attracted this apparently high-status occupation. The site is reminiscent of the 'palace' site of Yeavering (Northumberland; NT 933 294), where buildings were oriented with reference to a number of extant prehistoric features (Hope-Taylor 1977; Bradley 1987).

More extensive settlement features, dated by ceramics to between the fifth and seventh centuries, were located amongst, and in some cases on top of, prehistoric barrows at the site of Barrow Hills (Oxon; SU 514 982) (Chambers and McAdam 2007: 229). An area of post-built structures and SFBs was delineated to the south-east by seven prehistoric ring ditches of various types and sizes, at least three of which were relatively large, 19m to 23m in diameter (Barclay and Halpin 1999: 97; 111; 141; Chambers and McAdam 2007: 3). Five SFBs abutted these barrows (Chambers and McAdam 2007: 121; 130; 145; 147; 152), whilst to the north-west of the settlement an SFB had been constructed in the centre of a Neolithic oval barrow (ibid: 111). The excavators judged that at least the three largest barrows were still substantial earthworks during the Anglo-Saxon occupation (ibid.: 303). Given their size and visibility in the Anglo-Saxon period, and the positioning of buildings on or adjacent to them, it seems highly likely that the barrows influenced the layout of Barrow Hills, and perhaps even determined the settlement location.

Figure 1   Sunken-featured building located over a Bronze Age ring ditch at Frieston Road (after Copp and Toop 2006: Fig. 3).

Enclosures and boundary ditches

Linear features (comprising single, discrete boundary ditches, as well groups of ditches such as farmstead enclosures) are the second most frequently appropriated prehistoric landscape feature, being reused at twenty-six of the forty-nine settlements. In the majority of cases, Anglo-Saxon buildings and other occupation features followed the layouts of Iron Age boundaries, such as at Glebe Farm, Brough (Notts; SK 484 358), where up to ten posthole buildings and eight SFBs, of probable sixth-century date, perpetuated the west–east orientation of the late Iron Age field boundaries they lay amongst (Jones 2001: 148; Anon n.d.).

The sixth- to eighth-century settlement at Foxholes Farm (Herts; TL 344 213) consisted of six SFBs and nine post-built structures located inside two late Iron Age rectilinear enclosures (Partridge 1989: 25–29; 56) (Fig. 3). Only one of the post-built structures was a 'typical' sub-rectangular hall-type structure; the rest were what the excavators termed 'ridge-spine' buildings, possibly representing short-term tent-like structures (ibid.: 19–20). Nevertheless, the buildings were situated within the earlier enclosures, and the majority echoed the east–west alignment of the Iron Age boundaries (ibid.: Figs. 4 and 5).

At Catholme (Staffs; SK 197 163), a multi-phase boundary feature was excavated, its first phase being represented by a pit alignment, which was assigned a general 'later prehistoric' date (Losco-Bradley and Kinsley 2002: 15; 20). The boundary had been subsequently redefined at intervals with posts, as well as sections of bank and ditch, during the same period (ibid.: 18–20). The boundary was once again redefined as a ditch between the early seventh and late ninth centuries, when a human and a cow were interred within it (ibid.: 20).

Immediately west of the boundary were two prehistoric monuments, a large penannular ring ditch and smaller segmented ring ditch (ibid.: 15). One of the settlement's occupation zones (Zone VII), a long-lived farmstead comprising a number of structures enclosed by boundary ditches, was situated just 10m west of the monuments, with the rest of the excavated settlement zones extending to the north, west and south (ibid.: 116–7). The prehistoric monuments were effectively annexed by the Anglo-Saxon settlement, being positioned between the redefined boundary ditch and the rest of the settlement. Despite being incorporated into the settlement, the lack of occupation evidence in the area of the ring ditches is distinct and striking; this, and the presence of burials in that area, suggests that this part of the site may have held ideological significance which prohibited the performance of everyday occupation activities.

Other features

Evidence for reuse of other types of prehistoric monument in the study area is more eclectic and infrequent. Only eight settlements appropriate
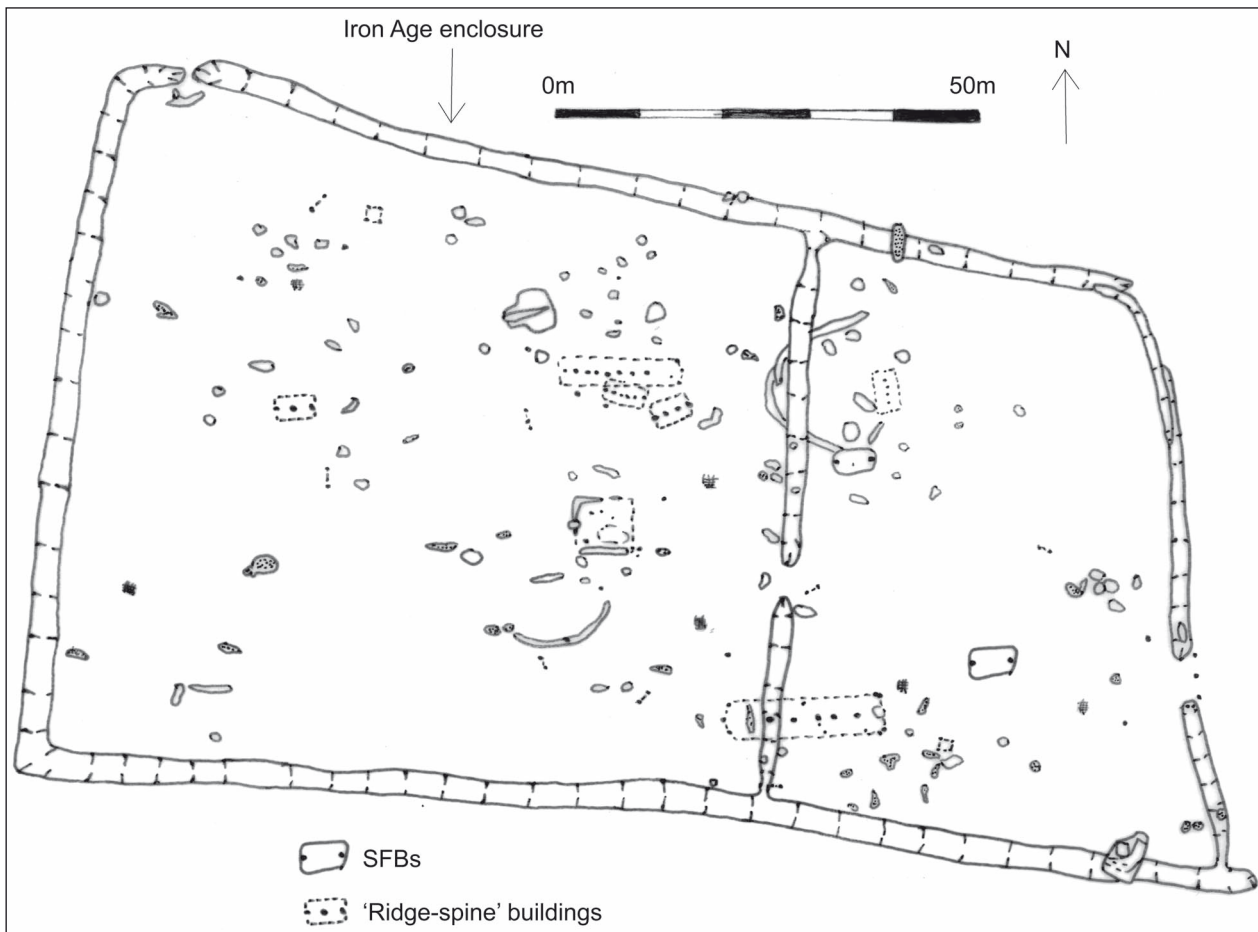

Figure 3   Anglo-Saxon buildings inside an Iron Age enclosure in Area 1 at Foxholes Farm (after Partridge 1989: Fig. 4).

Iron Age hillfort ditches
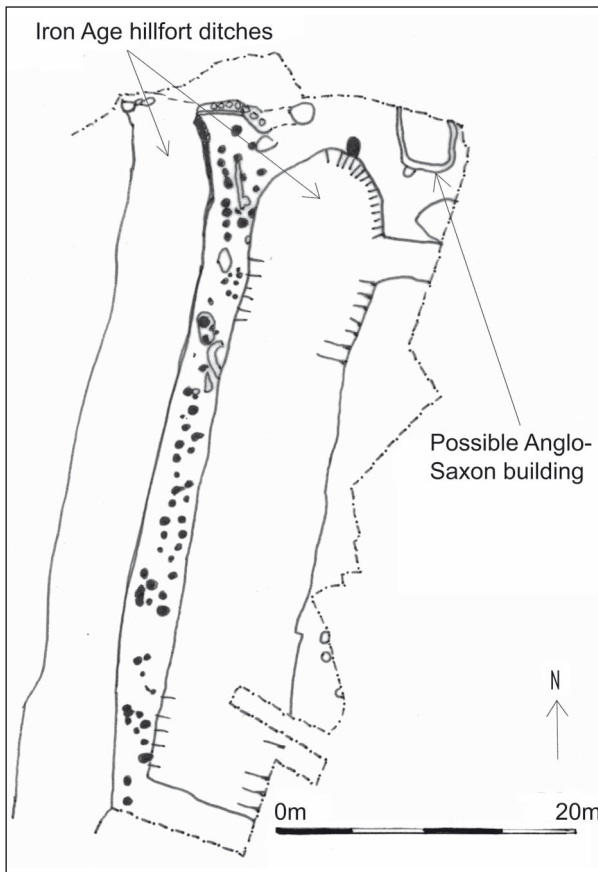
Possible Anglo-Saxon building

0m   20m

N

Figure 4   Possible Anglo-Saxon building adjacent to an Iron Age ditch at Taplow hillfort (after Allen, Hayden and Lamdin-Whymark 2007: Fig. 2.1).

monuments which are not barrows or linear boundary features. At Taplow (Bucks; SU 907 824) late sixth- or early seventh-century occupation debris was recovered from the ditches of a Bronze and Iron Age hillfort (Allen, Hayden and Lamdin-Whymark 2007: 1). This was roughly contemporary with the well-known Taplow burial mound, which also lay within the area enclosed by the hillfort ditches (Allen and Lamdin-Whymark 2001: 287). One of the two Iron Age hillfort ditches was up to 2m deep, and the other over 2m deep, at the start of Anglo-Saxon occupation, whilst the hillfort ramparts might also have been visible still (ibid.: 104). Despite little Anglo-Saxon *reconstruction* of the hillfort, debris in the ditches suggests occupation within the remains of the fort (ibid.). Potential structural evidence was present in the form of a foundation trench adjacent to one of the Iron Age ditches; although no dating evidence came from the feature, the excavators suggested that it resembled an Anglo-Saxon timber building trench (ibid.: 105) (Fig. 4).

At Briar Hill (Northants; SP 736 592) three, possibly four, seventh-century SFBs were located on the eastern side of a Neolithic causewayed enclosure, c. 150m in diameter (Bamford 1985: 55–6). The feature had attracted activity in other periods too; two groups of Iron Age rectilinear enclosures and a Romano-British pit complex were excavated, but were located some distance away from the buildings and do not seem to have influenced the nature of the Anglo-Saxon settlement

(ibid.: 7). Although it is difficult to ascertain the degree of survival of the Neolithic enclosure's banks (ibid: 37–8), it is striking that the SFBs were located immediately adjacent to a part of the monument with strong evidence for the presence of a bank, and it is therefore possible that these buildings were attracted by the remains of that feature; indeed, one of the buildings would have lain directly on top of the bank postulated by the excavator (ibid.).

Discussion

Approaches to monument reuse
Before discussing some patterns emerging from the settlement evidence, the differences in approaches to monument reuse in settlement and burial contexts should be highlighted. Excavators uncovering Anglo-Saxon *graves* inserted into and around prehistoric monuments frequently assume that those monuments were visible in the Anglo-Saxon period, and that reuse was a deliberate and significant act. Meanwhile, monuments in settlements are more likely to be explained away, as being no longer visible, or of little continuing importance. Indeed, the Barrow Hills (Oxon) excavation report described the appropriation of barrows in the settlement as 'monument *abuse*' (Chambers and McAdam 2007: 303, emphasis added). Such an approach perpetuates the idea that settlements were purely the location of functional and economic activities, whilst mortuary sites provided the arena for ritual and ideological action.

This was not, however, necessarily the case. For example, Hamerow (2006) demonstrated that 'placed' deposits of items such as human and animal burials occurred in early-middle Anglo-Saxon settlements, revealing that there were opportunities for ideological expression through votive practices in seemingly 'mundane' occupation areas. The potential for the meaningful and deliberate reuse of monuments in settlements of this period should not, therefore, be overlooked.

Sunken-featured buildings and barrows
One pattern emerging from the settlement data relates to the *types* of structures which directly reuse monuments, particularly barrows. In every instance of direct reuse of a barrow, it is SFBs which are involved. This pattern might simply result from construction techniques; achieving a level floor surface in a post-built 'hall' would have required a large, flat area on which to build, whilst SFBs, by their very nature, enable the levelling of a ground surface through the digging of sunken pits. Another possibility, however, is that there was an association or function which made SFBs appropriate structures to place on top of barrows.

Jess Tipper's (2004) re-evaluation of the Anglo-Saxon SFB discussed the functions of these structures, concluding that they may have had a number of uses – including weaving and food storage – but that they were not generally used as dwellings (ibid.: 184–5). Without a firm idea of their functions, it is difficult to postulate links between uses of these buildings and their location in relation to older monuments. Furthermore, their ubiquity in early-middle Anglo-Saxon settlements in general,

including those *without* any evidence for monument reuse, makes it difficult to suggest that straightforward relationships existed between SFBs and older monuments. However, there *may* have been links between the roles of those particular structures which were situated on or adjacent to monuments, and their position in relation to those monuments.

Analysis of finds from the fills of buildings which reuse monuments could reveal objects which mark them out as different to other buildings which were *not* situated on monuments. However, Tipper concluded that fills of SFBs were likely to have resulted from tertiary rubbish disposal; once the buildings fell out of use rubbish from dumps elsewhere on the settlement was used to fill the sunken pits and recreate a level ground surface (ibid: 185). Whilst Tipper is right to warn that fills of SFBs need not relate to their function, this does not mean that deliberate deposition could not have accompanied more mundane rubbish disposal.

It is thus possible that some artefacts found in the fills of such structures are related to their functions or beliefs about their role in settlements. The frequency with which 'placed' deposits occur in SFBs strongly suggests that some finds from the fills of such buildings were deposited deliberately, and may well have related to their roles in the community during their period of use (Hamerow 2006). Further, prehistoric and Romano-British artefacts, such as modified pottery sherds and coins, are also often found in SFB fills, and the potential amuletic significance of these objects has been highlighted (Eckhardt and Williams 2003; 163). These finds point towards possible deliberate deposition of items in SFBs, perhaps alongside more general rubbish disposal. Detailed analysis of finds from SFBs in several settlements is currently being undertaken by the author; this may well reveal more information about the roles of those buildings which were positioned with reference to prehistoric monuments.

In addition to the archaeological evidence, documentary evidence records inhabitation on a burial mound. Felix's mid eighth-century *Life of St Guthlac* (Colgrave 1956) describes Guthlac's search, in the late seventh or early eighth century, for an isolated place to live. He apparently settled on an island in the fens of eastern England, on which was a burial mound; chapter 28 in Felix's *Life* describes Guthlac dwelling 'in the side of a barrow which had been dug open, building a hut over it' (Colgrave 1956: 93). This sounds remarkably like an SFB, constructed over the hollow of a robber trench, as Hamerow has recognised (Hamerow 2002: 34). Even if it cannot be said for certain that this was an SFB, we do have here a literary example of an Anglo-Saxon building located on – or at least in the side of – an earlier barrow. Additionally, the *Life* (Colgrave 1956: 161, chap. LI) also records Guthlac being buried in his house, drawing intriguing links between the roles of monuments in life and in death, as well as paralleling the contemporary practice of occasionally placing burials in infilled SFBs, a characteristic feature of 'placed' deposits in early to middle Anglo-Saxon England (Hamerow 2006).

Semple (1998: 112–3; 121) discussed Guthlac's decision to dwell on a barrow, linking it to the growth of Christian influence in middle Anglo-Saxon England. She claimed that, as Guthlac is forced to drive away malevolent demons and ghosts who haunt the mound before he can live there in peace (Colgrave 1956: 95–109, chaps. 29–34), this was part of the Church's attempt to demonise the practice of monument reuse, with its unpalatable pre-Christian overtones. With this in mind, is interesting to note that all the demons who visit Guthlac on his mound approach from *outside*; they fly in from the fens and fly out again, they do not appear from within the mound (ibid.).

It is possible that the negative connotations associated with Guthlac's dwelling were the result of the lonely and desolate fenland in which the barrow was located, and not the barrow itself. His hut's precise location may have in fact been incidental, a detail which reflected the actions of other communities and members of the population at that time, and not a piece of dissuasive Church rhetoric at all. Indeed, if Guthlac's story was intended as a way of marginalising the practice of settling on or near barrows, a more extreme conclusion to the story might be expected, in which, for example, the barrow continued to be haunted by evil forces, rendering it uninhabitable. It should be noted here, however, that Felix's *Life* follows a conventional hagiographical format, inspired by stories of early Christian anchorites such as the Egyptian hermit Antony, who had himself shut in a tomb (Meaney 2003: 231). The extent to which it reflects the reality of Guthlac's life and dwelling is therefore open to question; nonetheless, as a documentary record of inhabitation on an ancient monument the source is pertinent in the context of this study.

Monument reuse: a widespread practice
This second aspect of monument reuse to be discussed involves the widespread and consistent nature of reuse in settlements. Within the study area there appears to have been a high degree of shared practice – and perhaps shared meaning – governing reuse in settlements. There are no distinct regional patterns; the most frequently reused monuments, barrows and linear features, are appropriated in settlements across the midlands, perhaps as a result of their general ubiquity in this area during the prehistoric period. The settlements discussed above come from different parts of the study area, yet at each site the form which monument reuse takes is echoed at settlements elsewhere in that area (and indeed further afield; the appropriation of monuments in settlements is certainly not restricted to the region under consideration here). For example, buildings at settlements in Oxfordshire – such as Barrow Hills – reference monuments in remarkably similar ways to buildings in North Lincolnshire – at Frieston Road for example.

The consistent and widespread nature of monument reuse in settlements across fifth- to ninth-century England is perhaps not surprising given the remarkable similarities in other aspects of settlement at this time; regular building forms and settlement layouts are also geographically dispersed (James *et al* 1984; Powlesland 1997: 104; 110; Hamerow 2002: 51; 94; Tipper 2004: 1). Further, it has been shown that monument reuse in other contexts, such as burial, was equally popular, and similar in form, across much of Anglo-Saxon England (Williams 1997: 19; 1998: 95). So, monument reuse in settlements appears to be widely distributed, with consistent attributes in the positioning and form of appropriation. It seems to have taken place in some – although certainly

not all – settlements across the midland counties of England. Thus, we might expect reuse to have had similar impetuses and meanings across this area, perhaps with accompanying localised variations. These meanings are as yet unknown, but further research will greatly increase our understanding of both monument reuse in settlements and the practice as a whole.

Monuments and status
In light of the broad geographical extent of monument reuse, it is interesting to note that changes take place in this practice in the late sixth and seventh centuries, once again in a widespread and consistent fashion. Around this time, high-status so-called 'palace' sites began developing across England (Scull 1992: 21; 1999: 17; Härke 1997: 147; Hamerow 2002: 97). A number of these early high status sites have been identified, including Cowdery's Down (Hants; SU 661 532) (Millett and James 1983), Yeavering (Northumberland) (Hope-Taylor 1977; Bradley 1987), Drayton/Sutton Courtenay (Oxon, but Berkshire pre-1974; SU 486 937) (Blair 1994: 32; Hamerow *et al* 2007) as well as Hatton Rock (Warwicks) (Rahtz 1970), discussed above. Each of these settlements is marked out by the presence of fenced enclosures and unusually large timber 'halls', arranged in a perpendicular fashion (Hamerow 2002: 97). Whilst Cowdery's Down is different to the other sites as it exhibits no evidence for monument reuse, the remaining three settlements all share a distinctive style of reuse, in which the perpendicular arrangement of the their halls is aligned on one or more prehistoric barrows (in the case of Yeavering a prehistoric henge was also referenced; Bradley 1987: 125).

Simultaneously, in the burial record a similar development was taking place: wealthy, individual burials began to be interred in prehistoric monuments. It has consistently been claimed over the past thirty years that these acts of elite funerary appropriation resulted from increasing social stratification and kingdom development in this period, which resulted in the stamping of authority on the landscape through the appropriation of ancient landscape features in order to create links to previous inhabitants and rulers of that landscape (for example, Shephard 1979: 47; 77; Arnold 1988: 130; Geake 1992: 91; Scull 1992: 20; 1999: 17; 22; Härke 1997: 151; Hadley 2001: 95; Blair 2005). Indeed, many of these arguments have cited Richard Bradley's (1987) discussion of Yeavering, the only detailed consideration of monument reuse in a *settlement* context so far published, in which he stated that elites were attempting to control the past and use it to legitimate their authority by claiming descent from previous inhabitants (Bradley 1987: 123; 130).

However, less attention has been paid to monument reuse in the period *before* this, in the fifth and early-middle sixth centuries. This is particularly true of settlement studies, despite the evidence gathered in this study demonstrating that monument reuse was already taking place in settlements from the fifth century. Meanwhile, in the burial record, Howard Williams's (1997; 1998; 2006) extensive studies of monument reuse have shed light on the ways in which monuments were appropriated in the early Anglo-Saxon period. His work shows that reuse for burial was already taking place in the fifth and sixth centuries, and appears to have been a communal, inclusive practice in this period, becoming more restricted in the seventh century (Williams 1997: 16–18; 1998: 94). Settlement and burial evidence both therefore demonstrate that monument reuse occurred from the beginning of the Anglo-Saxon period, and that it took on a more restricted, elite role in the late sixth and seventh centuries. Two possible explanations for this development will now be considered.

The first possibility is that elites deliberately appropriated monuments with the knowledge that this was a pre-established tradition among the communities they were claiming authority over. Such an approach would have allowed the architects of high status settlements, such as Yeavering and Hatton Rock, to take advantage of the population's familiarity with the practice of monument reuse and their understanding of its meanings. At the same time, the practice could have been manipulated in order to spread new messages about the rights of those high status members of society to claim authority over people and places. This explanation reflects Bradley's (1987) claims regarding the role of the past in constructing fictitious ancestries for elites, but might explain *why* that particular practice was chosen as an appropriate way for an elite to demonstrate their 'right to rule'.

An alternative argument is that, instead of developing *into* a signifier of elite authority in the sixth and seventh centuries, monument reuse was in fact already tied into social and political power structures in the fifth and early-mid sixth centuries. We do not really know what a high status early Anglo-Saxon settlement might have looked like, as the ostentatious markers of status seen in middle Anglo-Saxon high status settlements – such as the alignments of large halls buildings discussed above – are absent in this earlier period (Scull 1993: 72; Powlesland 1997: 115; Hamerow 2002: 97). Indeed, there is some doubt as to whether status was reflected in settlement form at all, with social and political authority in this period often visualised as moveable and kinship-based, related to specific *people* rather than specific *places* (Scull 1992: 20; 1993: 73; Härke 1997: 140).

But what if status *was* manifested in settlements, in a way which has not yet been recognised? Monument reuse might be the only signifier we have of that status, and may have been demonstrated through subtle relationships between settlement features and monuments. This might have involved particular activities taking place on or near monuments in settlements; the links between mounds and SFBs could be particularly significant here. Relationships between monuments and occupation units within settlements could be important too; the owners of buildings which referenced earlier monuments might have demonstrated their status by appropriating those features and perhaps also restricting access to them. If it *was* the case that monument reuse represented the physical manifestation of authority within early Anglo-Saxon settlements, it is perhaps no coincidence that at West Halton (N Lincs), for example, we have evidence to support early Anglo-Saxon monument reuse at a site which later became an important ecclesiastical centre and estate (D.M. Hadley, pers. comm.); the settlement's special, elevated status may well have been signalled at this early stage.

Conclusions

This paper's primary concern has been to demonstrate that monument reuse in early to middle Anglo-Saxon England was not restricted to traditionally 'ideologically significant' contexts, such as funerary and religious activities. It occurred in settlements of this period too, a fact which has, all too often, failed to be fully appreciated. Barrows are the most frequently reused prehistoric landscape features in the study area, followed by linear features, such as enclosures and boundary ditches. Other types of monument, such as hillforts, were also sometimes reused, although to a lesser extent. The appropriation of monuments was widespread, and its form consistent amongst settlements which were geographically disparate, which hints at there being, to some extent, shared meanings across the study area.

These shared meanings are demonstrated in the development of monument reuse as an elite tool in the late sixth and seventh centuries, when high status sites across England begin to reference prehistoric monuments, especially barrows, in their layouts. The evidence discussed here shows monument reuse to be part of a longer tradition, which began early in the Anglo-Saxon period, and which fits with the development of reuse in burial practices too. It shows that the architects of high status settlements, such as Yeavering, did not invent the practice of reuse, but simply continued a pre-existing tradition. Whether this represented the 'gentrification' of monument reuse or simply the perpetuation of an activity which already signalled authority is yet to be seen. This research is ongoing, and the results presented here are preliminary; further evaluation of the data will allow firmer conclusions to be drawn regarding the role of pre-existing landscape features in settlements of the fifth to ninth centuries. This will ultimately increase our understanding of monument reuse in that period, at the same time revealing more about attitudes to the past in Anglo-Saxon England.

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