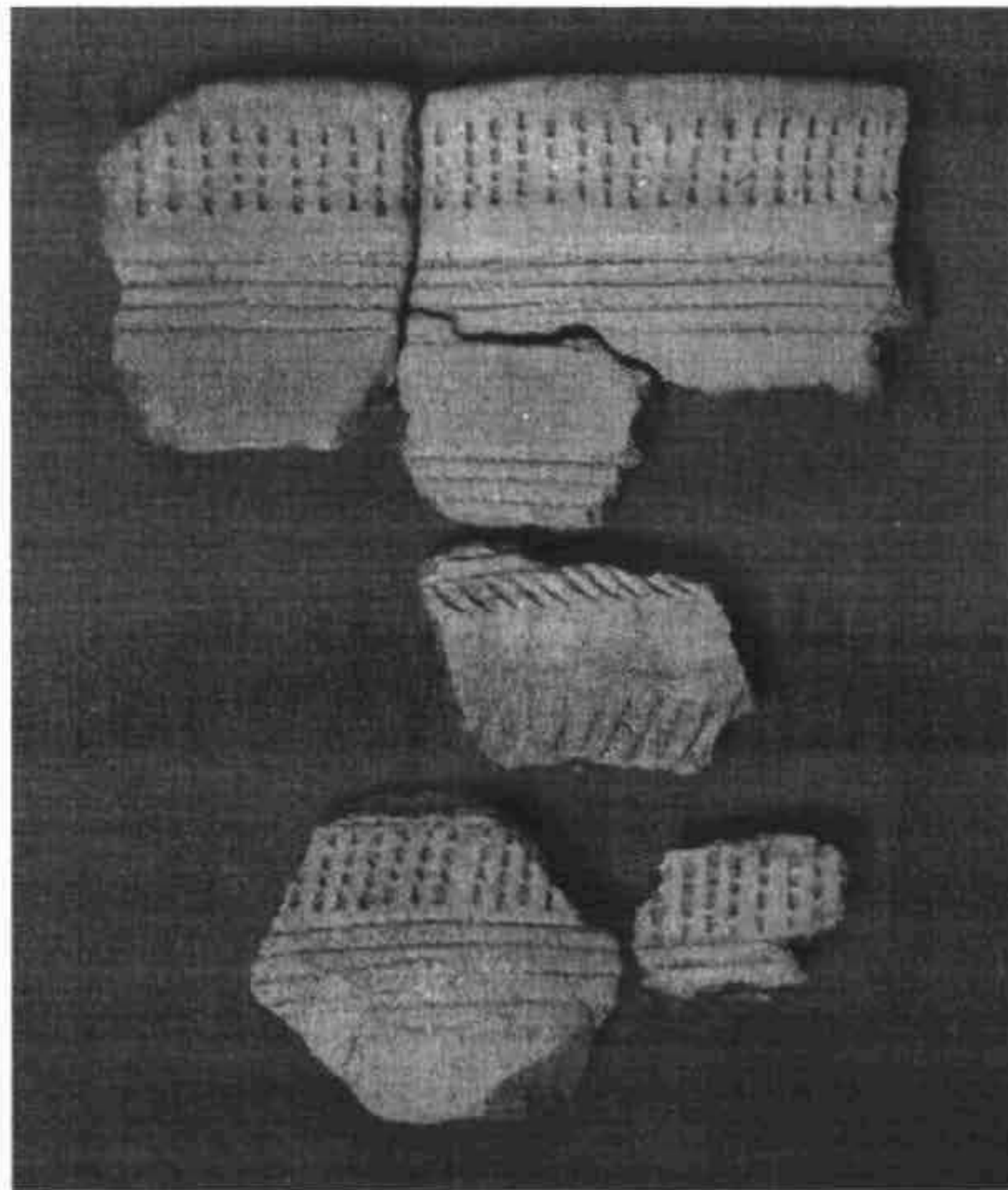


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Parish file ✓

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

30 ACRE FIELD, ADJACENT TO BUILDING 163 MNL 532

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2003
(Planning app. no. F/2003/232)



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Field Team
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

© May 2003

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The evaluation was carried out by Andrew Tester, John Duffy, John Craven and Jonathan Van Jennians all from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team. The project was directed by Andrew Tester, and managed by John Newman, who also provided advice during the production of the report. Finds processing was carried out by Kelly Powell and Cathy Tester both of whom contributed to the specialist finds reports. The drawings were prepared by John Duffy and Kelly Powell, and photographs of the finds by Sue Anderson.

Summary

An evaluation was carried out on 30 Acre Field at RAF Mildenhall. The site is adjacent to an earlier excavation, MNL 479, which showed complex Iron Age and Roman stratigraphy. A series of fourteen trenches was excavated and these showed a continuation of the archaeology into the southern part of the evaluation. Two hollows containing dried peat were also identified. Finds recovered from the surface of the site dated between the Early Bronze Age and Roman periods.

SMR information

Planning application no.	F/2003/232
Date of fieldwork:	April 2003
Grid Reference:	TL 677 772
Funding body:	Defence Estates

Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at the south-western end of 30 Acre Field on RAF Mildenhall airfield (TL 677 772, Fig.1). The proposed works involve the removal of existing forestry and the construction of two baseball pitches. The aim of the evaluation was to provide sufficient information about the archaeology of the site in order that a strategy for mitigation could be established by the local planning authority. A limited evaluation of the eastern end of the field was initially planned but this was extended to cover an area of c.2ha in order to preempt the first phase of a planning condition on application F/2003/232. Prior to the evaluation the forestry had already been felled and de-stumping carried out. The work was commissioned by Defence Estates.

Interest in the area is primarily related to the extensive complex of Iron Age and Roman archaeology to the south-west of the field (MNL 142). This includes evidence for a Roman villa complex and the area in which the Mildenhall Treasure was found. An area of very complex archaeology, including some highly unusual circular enclosures, was excavated in a narrow strip immediately to the east of the site (MNL 479, Caruth 1996, Fig.1). An Iron Age/Roman site was also excavated to the south of the water works on the edge of the airfield which included three Iron Age and one Roman burials (MNL 491, Gill 2000). The extent of the archaeological remains within the airbase is not known but further sites exist to the north and east of the current development.

Methodology

A series of fourteen trenches was excavated using a wheeled excavator with a flat-bladed bucket under archaeological supervision (Fig. 2). The trenches were set out in a pattern which reflected the known archaeology on the neighbouring site and the topography of the field, which showed some of the undulating pattern of hummocks and hollows typical of the fen edge.

Following the removal of topsoil exposed surfaces were hand-cleaned where the surface was unclear. A decision was taken to carry out only limited excavation in order to leave undisturbed the complex archaeology for which sufficient information about their date-range already existed from the adjacent site MNL 479 (Caruth 1996). Some peripheral features were sampled by shovel where the dating evidence was less certain. Sample sections were drawn of each trench at a scale of 1:20. The site was planned electronically using a TST and levels were taken from the surface alongside the trenches. Finds were recovered from the surface of the site as they appeared but no sampling strategy was used. A metal detector was employed as the trenches were to be left unattended overnight, and therefore vulnerable. Finds from the site are held at Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS), Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

Results

Fourteen trenches were excavated (Fig. 2), giving a total length of 758m. The trenches are described below in trench order accompanied by the context list for each trench. The spotdate column on the tables includes a *suggested date* based on the appearance of the feature and the fill type unless stated otherwise. Three sample sections of the soil profile were recorded from each trench and appear in Figures 4-6.

Trench 1

This trench was 105m long. Levels taken alongside it provide a range of 0.8m with the highest point of the site at the south-western end at 4.98m OD, a low point at c.75m of 4.20m OD rising to 4.53m at the north-east end. Archaeological deposits consist predominantly of ditches with occasional pits and postholes. From the south-western end of the trench a zone of features extends almost continuously for c.40m. Deposits tentatively suggested to be natural between

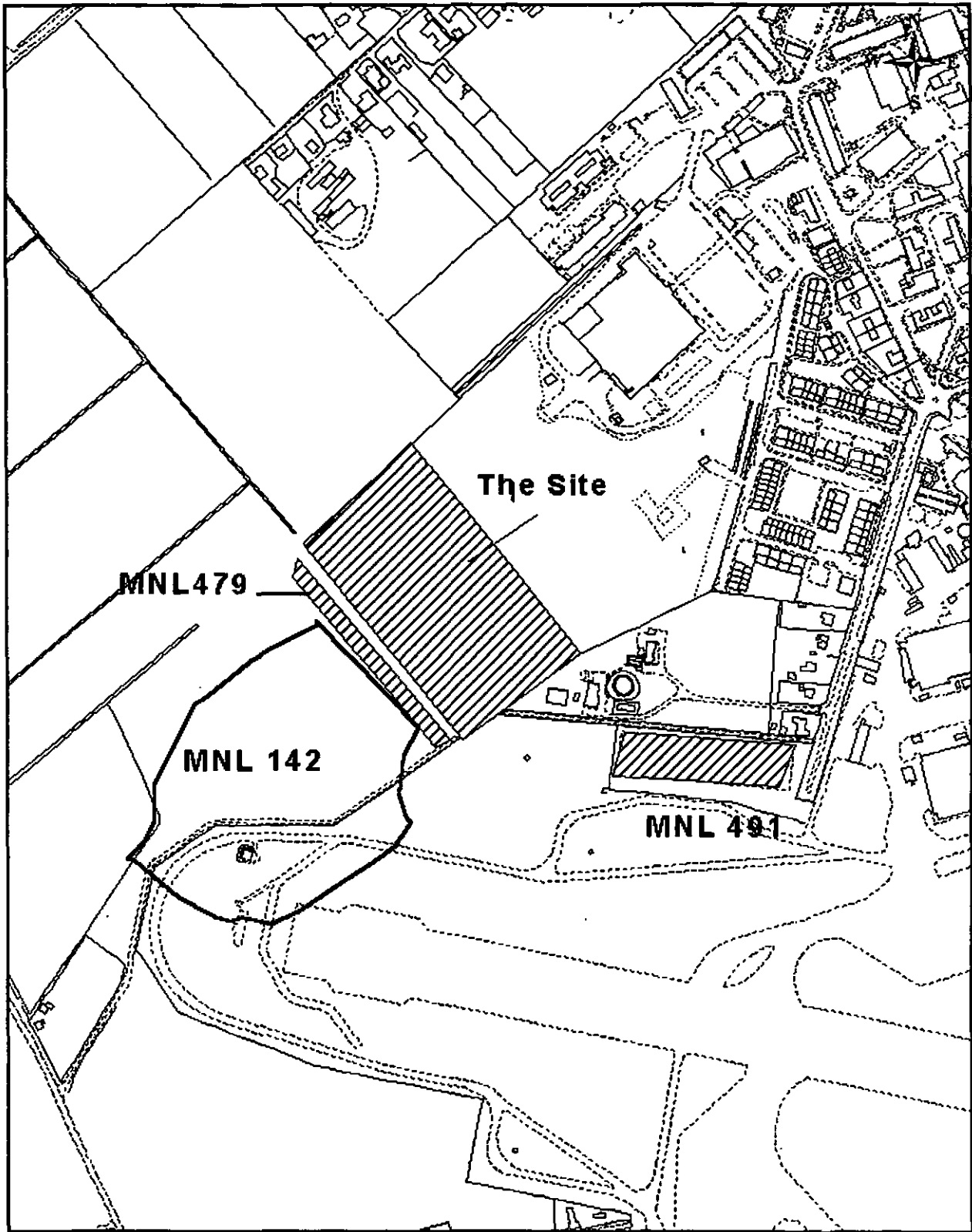


Figure 1 Site location plan



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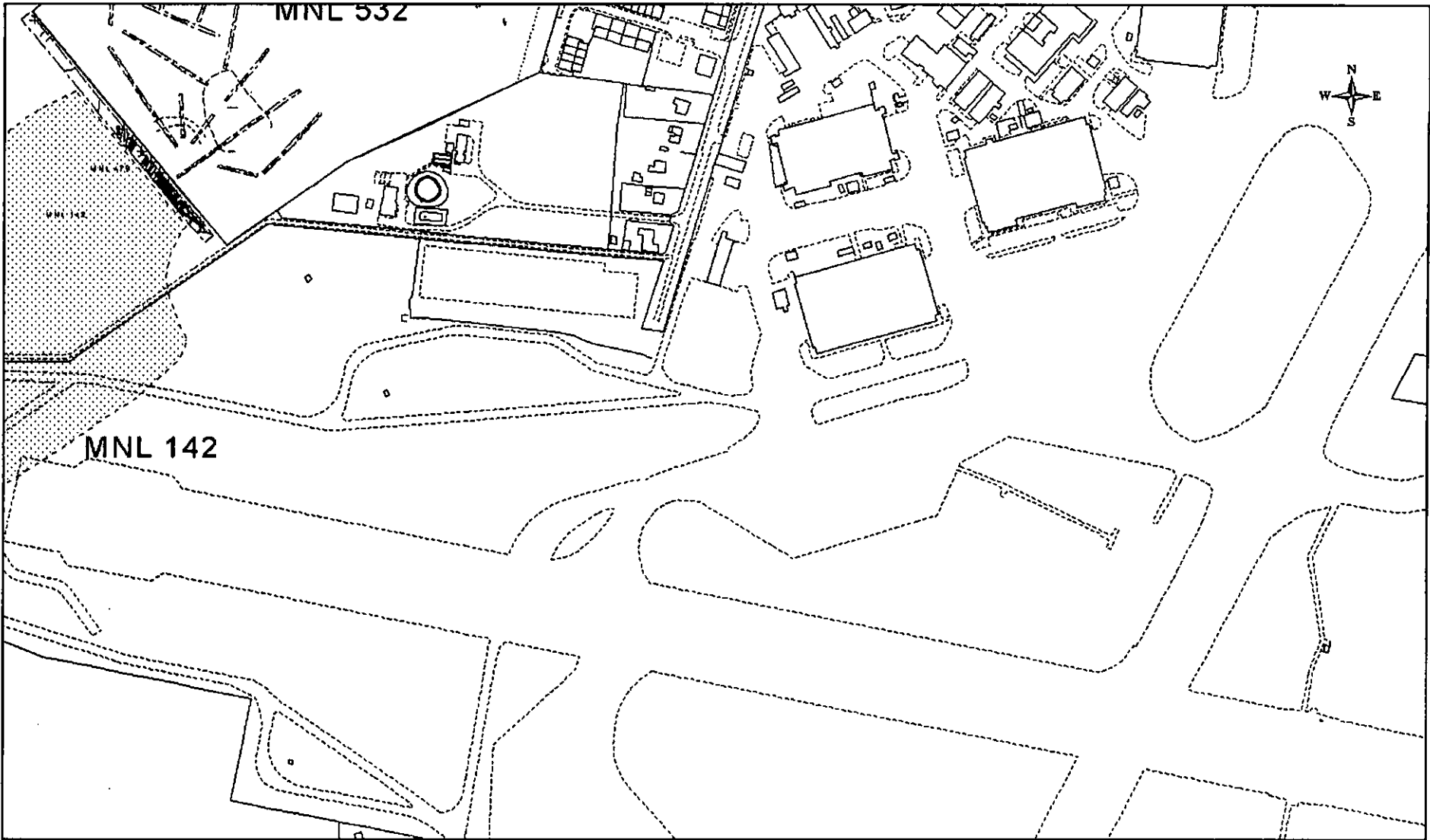
features include chalk and yellow/orange sand. A further 30m of the trench contain features which appear in a less dense concentration, however, there was a masking deposit of dark sand which may also conceal features. No features were observed in the last c.30m of this trench.

OP	Identifier	Description	spotdate
0002	Ditch	Unexcavated ditch running across Trench 1. Dark brown sand fill. Tree root disturbance. Contains small finds 1000 and 1001.	Late 3 rd /4 th c.
0003	Pit	Unexcavated small rounded pit. Dark grey/brown sand fill. Tree root disturbance.	IA/Rom
0004	Ditch	Unexcavated narrow ditch running across Trench 1. Tree root disturbance. Grey/brown sand fill.	Roman?
0005	Ditch	Unexcavated ditch running across Trench 1. Dark brown sand fill. Severe tree root disturbance.	Roman?
0006	Ditch	Unexcavated ditch running across Trench 1. Mixed mid brown/orange-yellow sand fill. Bad tree root disturbance.	Roman?
0007	Ditch	Narrow unexcavated ditch running across Trench 1. Mid to dark grey sand fill. Disturbed by tree roots.	Roman?
0008	Ditch	Unexcavated possible ditch across Trench 1. Mid to dark brown sandy loam fill. Some tree root disturbance.	ERom
0009	Ditch	Ditch across Trench 1. Unexcavated. Mid to dark brown sandy loam fill. Some tree root disturbance.	IA/Rom
0010	Pit	Unexcavated small pit in Trench 1. Rounded shape. Dark brown sand fill. Some tree root disturbance.	Iron Age
0011	Ditch	Unexcavated ditch running across Trench 1. Dark brown sandy loam fill. Some tree root disturbance.	Iron Age
0012	Layer	Mixed yellow/grey sand. Uncertain edges. Possible feature/layer. Some tree root disturbance.	E/M 1 st c.
0014	Pit	Large pit (or butt end). SF1002 found in edge of cutting modern feature. Brown sand fill. Possibly modern.	69-118 AD (coin)
0015	Posthole?	Feature cuts ditch 0008. Contains SF1003 though may have come from 0008, ditch, instead.	undated
0023	Pit?	Possible pit at south end of Trench 1. Mainly under trench edge. Mid brown/grey sand fill.	Roman?
0024	Pit	Possible rounded pit in Trench 1. Mainly under trench edge. Severely disturbed by tree roots. Dark brown sand fill.	Roman?
0025	Ditch	Ditch running across Trench 1. Dark brown sandy loam fill.	Roman?
0026	Ditch	Ditch running across Trench 1. Possibly cutting ditch 0011. Dark brown sandy loam fill.	Roman?
0027	Ditch	Ditch. Parallel to ditch 0028. Dark Brown sandy loam fill. Possibly modern.	Mod
0028	Ditch	Ditch. Parallel to ditch 0027. Dark Brown sandy loam fill. Possibly modern.	Mod
0029	Ditch	Ditch running across Trench 1. Dark grey sand fill.	Roman?
0030	Ditch	Ditch. Dark grey sand fill. Possibly cuts ditch 0031.	Roman?
0031	Ditch	Ditch. Dark grey sand fill. Possibly cut by ditch 0030.	Roman?
0032	Ditch	Ditch. Dark grey sand fill. Possibly cut by ditch 0033.	Roman?
0033	Ditch	Ditch. Dark grey sand fill. Possibly cuts ditch 0032.	Roman?
0034	Posthole	Round posthole located to the south of pit 0014 in Trench 1.	Roman?

Table 1. Context list - Trench 1

Trench 2

This trench was 30m long. The trench was 4.73m OD at the western end and 4.66m OD at the eastern end. This trench contained a concentration of features at the western end (c.15m) with two features at the eastern end with natural sand and a post-medieval disturbance between the two groups.



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Figure 3 Plan of trenches adjoining excavated area MNL497

Scale 1:750

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OP	Identifier	Description	spotdate
0013	Feature?	Pottery spread in pale yellow sand.	M/LIA
0035	Feature	Feature at western end of Trench 2. Dark grey/brown sand becoming chalky to the north.	Roman?
0036	Ditch	Ditch. Dark grey/brown sand fill. Parallel to ditches 0037 and 0039.	Roman?
0037	Ditch	Ditch. Dark grey/brown sand fill. Cuts through a layer of reddish sand. Parallel to ditches 0036 and 0039.	Roman?
0038	Ditch	Ditch. Mottled brown sand fill. Cut by ditch 0039 and possibly by ditch 0037.	Roman?
0039	Ditch	Ditch. Dark brown sand fill. Cuts ditch 0038. Parallel to ditches 0036 and 0037.	Roman?
0040	Ditch	Ditch. Brown sand fill.	Roman?
0041	Ditch	Ditch. Brown sand fill.	Roman?

Table 2. Context list - Trench 2

Trench 3

This trench was 60m long. Levels taken alongside it reveal a gradual increase in height from 4.49m OD in the south-west to 4.79m OD at the north-east. There are concentrations of features at either end of this trench with a gap of c.10m between them. The trench was disturbed at the north-western end by a recent disturbance filled with organic debris (between context 0016 and 0057). The features in the south-eastern half included two pits or postholes, 0050 and 0051. Although feature concentrations were fairly high, natural sand was visible between most of the features.

OP	Identifier	Description	spotdate
0016	Ditch	NE-SW ditch. Very dark brown sandy loam fill.	LIA
0042	Ditch	Ditch located at the SW end of Trench 3. Cut by ditch 0043. Dark grey sand fill.	Roman?
0043	Ditch	Ditch cutting ditch 0042 at SW end of Trench 3. Dark brown sandy loam fill.	Roman?
0044	Ditch	Ditch running across Trench 3. Dark brown sand fill. Unclear relationship with ditch 0045.	Roman?
0045	Ditch	Ditch. Dark brown sand fill. Unclear relationship with ditch 0044.	Roman?
0046	Ditch	Southernmost of a group of three ditches running across Trench 3. Relationship with 0047 to the north is unclear on the surface. Dark brown sandy loam fill.	Roman?
0047	Ditch	Middle ditch of a group of three. Relationship to the other ditches (0046 and 0048) is unclear. Dark brown sandy loam fill.	Roman?
0048	Ditch	Northernmost ditch of a group of three ditches. Relationship with 0047 unclear. Dark brown sandy loam.	Roman?
0049	Ditch	Ditch filled by dark brown sand running across Trench 3.	Roman?
0050	Pit	Rounded pit. Dark brown sand fill.	Roman?
0051	Pit	Oval pit. Dark brown sand fill.	Roman?
0052	Ditch	Ditch. Dark brown sand fill. Parallel to ditch 0053.	Roman?
0053	Ditch	Narrow ditch to the north of and parallel to ditch 0052. Dark brown sand fill.	Roman?
0054	Ditch	Large linear ditch. One of a group of three. Unclear relationship with other two ditches (0055 and 0056). Dark brown sandy loam fill.	Roman?
0055	Ditch	One of a group of three ditches (with 0054 and 0056). No clear relationships. Dark brown sandy loam.	Roman?
0056	Ditch	One of a group of three ditches (with 0054 and 0055). Cuts ditch 0016. Dark brown sandy loam.	Roman?
0057	Ditch	Narrow ditch near NE end of Trench 3. Dark brown sand fill.	Roman?
0058	Ditch	Possible ditch at NE end of Trench 3. Dark brown sand fill.	Roman?

Table 3. Context List - Trench 3

Trench 4

This trench was 85m long. Levels taken alongside it provide a range of 0.6m varying from 4.41m OD to 3.82m OD. The variation is accounted for by a hollow running across the trench which runs alongside the high ground at the south-east end. From the hollow the site rises slightly towards the north-west.

The higher south-east end of the trench had been badly disturbed during the recent deforestation although several ditches were visible. A layer of dried peat was not removed from the hollow

which may mask pre-Roman archaeological deposits. A less dense distribution of features was visible beyond the hollow and there were several recent disturbances.

OP	Identifier	Description	spotdate
0017	Ditch	Ditch. Very dark grey/brown sand fill.	Preh.
0059	Ditch	Ditch partly visible in SE end of Trench 4. Filled by a dark brown sand. Parallel to ditch 0060.	Roman?
0060	Ditch	Narrow ditch running parallel to ditch 0059. Dark grey sand fill. Very badly disturbed.	Roman?
0061	Ditch	Badly disturbed ditch. Dark brown sand fill.	Roman?
0062	Layer?	Possible layer of very dark brown/grey sand. Cut by ditches 0017 and 0063.	Roman?
0063	Ditch	Very dark grey/brown sand filled ditch. Cuts layer 0062.	Roman?
0064	Pit?	Possible pit. Mainly under trench edge. Very dark grey/brown sand fill.	Roman?
0065	Ditch	Ditch running across Trench 4. Very dark grey/brown sand fill.	Roman?
0066	Pit	Pit mainly beyond trench edge. Dark brown sand fill.	Roman?
0067	Pit	Rounded possible pit. Dark brown sand fill.	Roman?
0068	Pit	Large pit. Mainly beyond trench edge. Dark brown sand and chalk fill.	Roman?
0069	Ditch	Ditch filled by a patchy mid brown and grey sand. No clear relationship visible with ditch 0070.	Roman?
0070	Ditch	Ditch filled by a patchy mid brown and grey sand. No clear relationship visible with ditch 0069.	Roman?
0071	Ditch	Possible ditch. Unclear edges. Mid grey sand fill.	Roman?
0072	Ditch	Narrow ditch at NW end of Trench 4. Dark brown sandy loam fill.	Roman?

Table 4. Context List - Trench 4

Trench 5

This trench was 43m long. Levels taken alongside it show a rise in level from south to north, 3.76m OD to 4.04m OD. A small pit at the southern end may have been an ancient tree bole. A ditch 0074, which crosses the trench and appears in Trench 14, is thought to be an infilled watercourse marked on an 1842 plan of the fens (Caruth 1996).

OP	Identifier	Description	spotdate
0073	Pit	Circular pit. Partly visible in Trench 5. Extends beyond trench edge. Mid grey/brown sand fill.	Undated
0074	Ditch	Ditch running across Trench 5. Mid/dark brown sandy loam fill.	Post M
0075	Ditch	Ditch at north end of Trench 5. Dark brown/grey fill.	Undated

Table 5. Context List - Trench 5

Trench 6

This Trench was 70m long. Levels taken alongside it show a slight rise in level from 3.91m OD at the north-western end to 4.16m OD in the middle falling away to 3.72m OD at the south-eastern end, which is on the edge of a hollow containing dried peat. This trench contained a thin spread of features; those thought to be Roman or earlier are listed below. Other features on plan are thought to be post medieval.

OP	Identifier	Description	spotdate
0076	Pit	Possible oval pit at east end of Trench 6. Mid/dark grey sand fill.	Roman?
0077	Ditch	Ditch. Dark grey sand fill.	Roman?
0078	Ditch	Ditch. Dark brown/grey sand fill.	Roman?
0079	Pit	Rounded pit. Mainly under trench edge. Dark brown sandy loam fill.	Roman?
0080	Ditch	Narrow ditch. Filled by a mid grey/brown sand.	Roman?

Table 6. Context List - Trench 6

Trench 7

This trench was 32m long. Levels taken alongside it show a drop from south to north of 0.22m from 4.28m OD to 4.06m OD. This is misleading in terms of the ancient soil profile however, as a dried peat hollow ran through the middle of this trench. Features at the south end of this

trench, identified as ditches, appear to be more complex with irregular shapes recorded on the surface which suggests several features are intercutting. Features may also be concealed within the peat hollow. Natural yellow sand was visible at either end of the trench.

OP	Identifier	Description	spotdate
0022	Layer	SE end of Trench 7. Natural slope dips down to NW and is filled with a layer of dark grey/brown sandy loam. Sealed under a thin band of chalk and dark orange wood material? Old ground surface. Above this is topsoil.	IA/ERom
0081	Ditch	Ditch located at southern end of Trench 7. Dark brown sand fill.	Roman?
0082	Ditch	Ditch. Dark grey sand fill.	Roman?
0083	Ditch	Narrow ditch/gully. Cuts ditch 0084. Mid brown sand fill.	Roman?
0084	Ditch	Probable ditch at north end of Trench 7. Unclear on surface as extends beyond trench edge and is badly disturbed by tree roots. Also cut by 0083. Mid grey sand fill.	Roman?

Table 7. Context List - Trench 7

Trench 8

This trench was 26m long with levels descending from south-west to north-east from 4.42m OD to 3.77m OD. This trench ran from the ridge across a peat hollow and into a second much wider hollow. Ditches were visible at the south-western end of the trench. Features may be concealed within the peat hollows.

OP	Identifier	Description	spotdate
0085	Feature	Possible feature in south end of Trench 8. Unclear in plan as largely under trench edge. Dark brown/grey sand fill.	Roman?
0086	Ditch	Badly disturbed ditch. Cut by 0092. Mid -grey sand fill.	Roman?
0087	Ditch	Large ditch cutting ditch 0091. Mid grey/brown sand fill.	Roman?

Table 8. Context list - Trench 8

Trench 9

This trench was 48m long. The trench gradually rose from 3.87m OD at the south-west end to 4.14m OD at the north-eastern end. The south-west end of the trench was partially concealed by grey sand and peat and there was a large spread, 0088, on the edge of the peat. In the remainder of the trench two features are thought to be of interest including a pit, 0090. This trench was quite disturbed by more modern ditches.

OP	Identifier	Description	spotdate
0088	Feature	Large feature on northern edge of peat hollow in Trench 9. Badly disturbed and indistinct in plan. Mid grey sand fill.	Roman?
0089	Ditch	Ditch filled by a mid -grey sand.	Roman?
0090	Pit	Possible pit near north end of Trench 9. Mainly under trench edge. Light grey sand fill.	Roman?

Table 9. Context list - Trench 9

Trenches 10 -14

Trench 10 was 45 long and varied in height between 3.75m OD and 4.29m OD rising from the edge of a peat hollow at the south end of the trench. Several post-medieval ditches (Fig. 2) crossed the site. Finds were recovered from context 0020 at the edge of the peat hollow.

Trench 11 was 70m long and varied in height from 3.92m OD to 4.11m OD. The features recorded in this trench are all thought to be post-medieval.

Trench 12 was 33m long and there was no noticeable change in the height which stood at c. 4.00m OD. The features recorded in this trench are all thought to be post-medieval.

Trench 13 was 53m long and varied in height from between 3.80m OD at the south end, 3.90m OD at the north end and 3.65m OD in the middle. The features recorded in this trench are all thought to be post-medieval.

Trench 14 was 58m long with little variation in the height which was c. 3.9m OD. Two features were identified, 0019 and 0021. The former is recorded as a pit although there was very little slope to the sides (Fig.6). It was totally excavated within the trench being only 0.015m deep producing Early Bronze Age pottery. Context 0021 had irregular sides and appeared to be more of a surface spread than a cut feature.

OP	Trench	Identifier	Description	spotdate
0020	T10	Finds	Finds from dark grey sand patch at the southern end of Trench 10.	IA?
0018	T12	Finds	Tile fragment from Trench 12.	Roman
0019	T14	Feature	Truncated oval feature at northern end of Trench 14. Eastern edge under trench side. Dark brown/black sand fill.	EBA
0021	T14	Finds	Finds from mid grey sand spread in Trench 14.	undated

Table 10. Context list - Trenches 10-14

The Finds

Cathy Tester

Introduction

Finds were collected from seventeen contexts in eight of the evaluation trenches. Table 11 summarises the quantities of finds by context. The greatest proportion of the recorded finds came from Trench 1.

OP	Trench	Pottery		Animal bone		Miscellaneous	Spotdate
		No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
0001	1			2	323		
0002	1	4	111			SF 1000 1001	LC3/4
0003	1	2	36				Rom, IA
0008	1	18	105	1	17		E Rom
0009	1	1	89			Stone (1-172g)	Rom, LIA
0010	1	1	12				IA
0011	1	1	10				IA
0012	1	1	15			SF 1004	E/MC1
0013	2	6	197				Mid-late IA
0014	1					SF 1002	69-118AD
0016	3	10	220			Flint (1-7g)	Later IA
0017	4	1	13				Preh
0018	12					CBM (1-79g)	Roman
0019	14	10	75	1	5		EBA
0020	10	1	35			Burnt flint (1-92g)	IA?
0021	14			4	168	Slag (1-20g)	
0022	7	4	40	20	277		E Rom, IA
Total		60	958	28	790		

Table 11. Finds quantities

Pottery

The evaluation produced 60 sherds of pottery weighing 958g. Pottery was found in thirteen contexts in seven trenches but almost half of it (46% sherds, 40% weight) came from Trench 1. The material ranged in date from the Early Bronze Age to the Late Roman periods. The fabric quantities by period are summarised in Table 12 and the full list by context is shown in Table 13.

Fabric	Code	No.	% No.	Wt/g	% Wt.
Handmade sand and grog tempered	HMSG	10	16.7	75	7.8
Handmade flint tempered	HMF	8	13.3	211	22.0
Handmade flint and sand tempered	HMFS	1	1.7	13	1.4
Handmade sand tempered	HMS	10	16.7	220	23.0
Handmade sand and organic tempered	HMSO	6	10.0	198	20.7
<i>Total hand-made prehistoric wares</i>		35	58.3	717	74.8
Black-surfaced wares	BSW	19	31.7	120	12.5
Grey micaceous wares (black-surfaced)	GMB	1	1.7	5	0.5
Miscellaneous sandy grey wares	GX	1	1.7	5	0.5
Hadham red wares	HAX	2	3.3	79	8.2
Nene Valley colour-coated wares	NVC	2	3.3	32	3.3
<i>Total LIA/Roman wares</i>		25	41.7	241	25.2
Total pottery		60	100.0	958	100.0

Table 12. Pottery quantities by period

Prehistoric pottery

A total of 35 sherds of handmade prehistoric pottery (717g) was collected from nine contexts in seven trenches and represented the majority (75%) of the assemblage weight. The earliest piece identified is a substantial proportion of an Early Bronze Age beaker, which is sand and grog tempered (HMSG) with a light grey-buff surface. The vessel is decorated in a zonal style that consists of bands of comb-impressed and incised lines which are horizontal, vertical and diagonal alternating with undecorated bands and was found in Trench 14 Feature 0019 (cover photo).

The rest of the handmade pottery is probably Iron Age and includes both flint and sand tempered wares. Two flint tempered wares were identified. The first which is predominantly flint tempered (HMF) includes a fragment of a slack-shouldered jar (Trench 2, spread 0013). The other is flint and sand tempered (HMFS) but the sherd is non-diagnostic. Two sand tempered wares were identified — one that is mainly sand tempered (HMS) and another that also contains organic material (HMSO). The latter includes a piece decorated with diagonal slashes on its shoulder (Trench 1 Pit 10). The increased use of sand as the main tempering agent is regarded as a trend of the later Iron Age.

Roman pottery

The evaluation produced 25 sherds of Late Iron Age and Roman pottery (717g) which represented 42% of the sherd count and 25% of the total assemblage weight. Five fabric groups were identified, which included local and regional coarsewares and provincially-traded specialist wares.

Local and regional coarsewares include black-surfaced wares (BSW) which are early Roman, grey micaceous wares in the black-surfaced variant (GMB) which are also probably early, and sandy grey wares (GX). All are represented by uncertain jar forms.

Late specialist wares which are characteristic of the late and latest Roman periods include Hadham red wares (HAX) represented by an uncertain flagon form and Nene Valley colour-coated wares (NVC) which include a jar and a beaker. Both wares were found in Trench 1 Ditch 0002 and are dated to the late 3rd or 4th centuries.

Pottery by context

The pottery by context is listed in Table 13.

Context	Trench	Fabric	Sherd	Form	No.	Wt/g		Spotdate
0002	1	HAX	b/s		1	7		LC3/4
		HAX	base	Flagon	1	72	Flagon base (100%)	LC3/4
		NVC	b/s		2	32	Jar and beaker bodysherds	LC3/4
0003	1	GX	b/s		1	5	Coarse rouletting	Rom
		HMSO	base		1	31	Dark brown surf, brown-black core	IA
0008	1	BSW	b/s	Jar	18	105	Black surf. red core. 'romanising' fabric (SV)	E Rom
0009	1	HMSO	b/s	Jar	1	89	Orange-brwn surf. grey core, abundant burnt organic temper	IA
0010	1	HMSO	b/s		1	12	With diagonal slashes on shoulder. With burnt and natural flint. Patchy orange-brown surface.	IA
0011	1	HMF	b/s		1	10		IA
0012	1	BSW	rim	Jar	1	15	'Romanising'	E/MC1
0013	2	HMF	b/s	Jar	6	197	2 vessels, simple slack-shouldered jar. Brown surf, dark grey core	M/L IA
0016	3	HMS	b/s		10	220	Black surface, dark brown core. Abundant coarse quartz sand	IA (later)
0017	4	HMFS	b/s		1	13	Flint, sand, organic tempered. L. brown surf, dark grey core.	IA
0019	14	HMSG	rim+	Beaker	10	75	Zonal dec. comb impressed & incised bands. dia. 170mm. Buff surface, dark grey core. coarse sand grog & v. rare flint.	EBA
0020	10	HMSO	base		1	35	Flat base. Black surface, dark grey core. Sand/organic with very rare grog.	IA?
0022	7	GMB	rim	Jar	1	5	Necked jar. abraded	E Rom
		HMF	b/s		1	4	Dark grey.	IA
		HMSO	b/s		2	31	1 black surf 1 light brown with dark grey core.	IA

Table 13. Pottery by context

Ceramic Building Material (CBM)

A single fragment of Roman tile, 32mm thick, was collected from Trench 12 (0018).

Miscellaneous

Stone

A very burnt fragment of Millstone Grit quern was found in Trench 1 Ditch 0009. The grinding surface is smooth and the non-grinding surface is pecked. Its maximum thickness is 55mm and it is probably Roman.

Flint

A single struck flint flake, slightly patinated, was found in Trench 3, Ditch 0016. One fragment of burnt flint (92g) was collected from Trench 10 (0020).

Slag

One piece of slag (20g) was found in Trench 14, sand spread 0021.

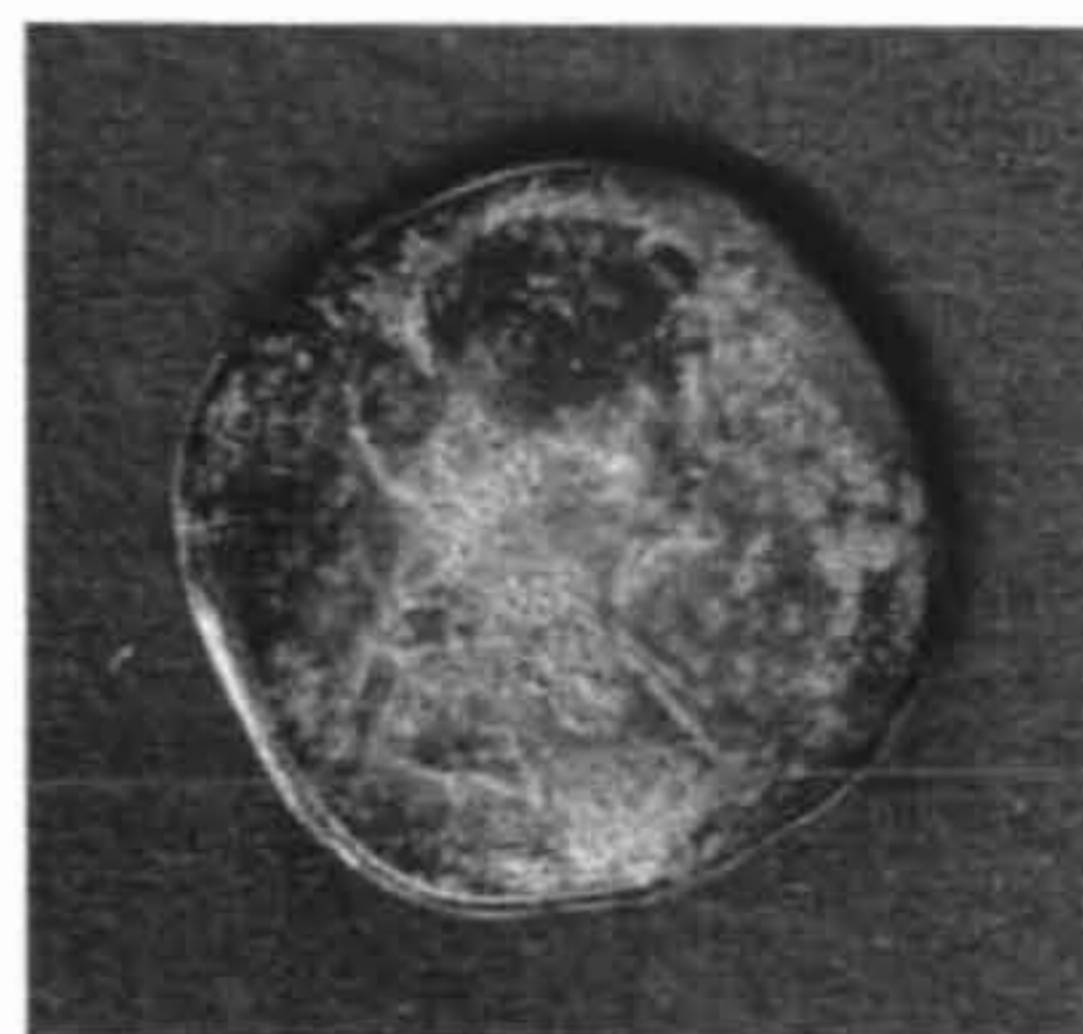


Figure 7. Coin of Lucilla

Small Finds

Jude Plouviez

- 1000 Ae coin. Sestertius, very corroded. Illegible, heavy concretion on all surfaces. 1st-2nd century AD. Trench 1, Ditch 0002.
- 1001 Ae coin. Sestertius, very worn. Obv. - - LAEAVG ---- Lucilla. Rev. standing left. 164-169AD. Trench 1, Ditch 0002. Fig. 7.
- 1002 Ae/Ag? coin. Denarius? very poor condition with a peeling surface. Probably a forged denarius, Ae core with Ag surface. Obv. ?Flavian (or Trajan). c.69-118AD. Trench 1, Pit 0014.

1004 Biconical lead steelyard weight with stub of an iron hook. Length 43mm, width/ diam. 43mm, weight 319g. Roman. Trench 1, Layer 0012.

Animal bone

identified by Sue Anderson

Twenty-eight fragments of animal bone were recovered from five contexts in three trenches. They were identified as follows:

Context	Trench	No.	Wt./g	Description
0001	1	2	323	Cow tibia, distal end and metacarpal
0008	1	1	17	Cow talus
0019	14	1	5	Sheep talus
0021	14	4	168	Cow metapodial (gnawed at both ends) and 3 horse teeth
0022	7	20	277	Cow femur head, tibia fragment and tooth; horn core fragments; medium mammal pelvis; dog canine.
Total		28	790	

Table 14. Animal bone by context.

The animal bone is in good condition but the group is too small for any conclusions regarding its composition to be made. Two of the main meat-producing species, cow and sheep, are represented, and horse (which may also have contributed to the food supply) and dog are also present.

Discussion of the finds evidence

The evaluation finds evidence indicates activity during the Bronze Age, the Iron Age and Roman periods. The range of finds types is limited and consists mainly of pottery. Other finds are negligible.

The earliest prehistoric pottery is a single Early Bronze Age beaker, but the majority of the handmade wares are probably Iron Age. The few diagnostic features and the presence of sand tempered fabrics suggests a middle or later Iron Age date for the material.

The Roman pottery includes both early and late wares. The fabric range is very narrow but the sample is far too small make assumptions about the pottery supply. Other Roman finds include the coins, which are 1st and 2nd century, and CBM.

Discussion

In this evaluation, the excavation of archaeological features has largely been avoided in order to minimise the damage to deposits which cannot be fully understood within the confines of narrow trenches. This is made possible because a 7m wide trench was fully excavated in the neighbouring field, Figure 3 (MNL 479) providing a generalised picture of the archaeological periods likely to be represented. That site was broken down into periods (Caruth 1996):

- Period 1 and 1a Prehistoric and Iron Age. A range of shallow features occupies the edge of the sand ridge bordering a peaty hollow at the north end of the trench. These were interpreted as possibly structural and industrial although their function could not be established.
- Period 2 Late Iron Age/Early Roman. Features from this period were complex and indicative of a sequence of enclosures and possible droveways. A possible roundhouse was identified, although this interpretation was speculative.

Period 3	Late 1 st Century AD- Late 2 nd Century AD. Within this period there was a sequence of ditches but there were no large occupation deposits, suggesting a hiatus between Periods 2 and Period 4.
Period 4	4 th Century. This was the latest period of settlement on the site and included a great density of features located exclusively on the sand ridge. Several phases were represented by ditches, a sequence of circular structures, possibly buildings, and a final ditch phase which produced a sherd of Anglo-Saxon pottery.
Period 5	Post-medieval. Two linear features were identified at the north end of the field.

The concentration of features at MNL 479 was unusual. A series of circular features from Period 4 is thought to be of particular significance and may be related to activity recorded to the south-west of the site. Little excavation has taken place, but chance surface finds indicate intense activity during the Late Roman period. The Mildenhall hoard, a collection of Late Roman silver plate, is reported to have come from a ploughed field within a kilometre of the site. This hoard contained a range of items with both pagan and Christian religious symbolism. The evidence is incomplete but it has been suggested that there was a concentration of religious activity close to the site.

It is clear from the recent trenching that the concentration of features from MNL 479 continues across into 30 Acre Field. The greatest density is on the ridge immediately adjoining the earlier site, recorded in Trenches 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 (Figures 2 and 3). The concentration continues through Trench 3 to the north-east end of the field, although it is less dense. It is likely that prehistoric and possibly early Roman features are obscured by the dark sand in the area of the hollows, which were only sampled (it may be noted that handmade pottery was visible on the surface of the field above the main peat hollow but not collected from the site). The distribution of features is less dense beyond the peat hollows although they are not entirely absent; the most interesting is probably shallow pit 0019 which is dated to the Early Bronze Age.

The levels taken alongside the trenches indicate a height range of 1.26m. The highest point was in Trench 1 at 4.98m OD, the lowest point at 3.73m OD in Trench 6. Soil depths are illustrated on Figures 4-6. Soil depths varied and had been affected by recent deforestation. In Trench 1 for example there was between 0.10m and 0.15m of soil which was in places built up with recent organic debris. In the area of the peat hollow within Trench 1 the natural sand was located c.0.45m beneath the modern ground surface. The soil profile within Trench 9 was also quite complex with 0.40m of dark grey sand topsoil overlying dried peat over a further layer of grey sand. This lower layer may be the remnants of a prehistoric soil.

During the trenching it was evident that the felling of trees, de-stumping and removal of foliage had left substantial amounts of bark, green material and rotted stumps across the site. There were also areas where material had been buried in trenches or pits and the remains of broken roots survived in the topsoil.

Conclusions

Prehistoric and Roman archaeological remains are moderately well-preserved within the evaluation area. The existing topsoil provides a minimum protective cover over most of the site although deforestation has caused damage in some areas. The site does not contain archaeological remains which are likely to require preservation *in situ*, but proposals to develop or landscape the field will require an archaeological mitigation strategy.

Any groundwork which involves topsoil stripping, and thus the exposure of archaeological deposits, would need to be under archaeological control. Threatened deposits would need to be recorded either by close monitoring or full excavation; the requirement will vary across the site,

with the greatest concentration of features at the south end being the most sensitive. It should be noted that this area is also higher than other part of the field, which would need to be taken into account if any form of landscaping was intended, either to level the site or raise the height of the field.

References

Caruth, J., 1996, *MNL 479 - Catchwater Drain*. SCCAS Report 1996/6

Gill, D., 2000, *RAF Mildenhall, New and Repaired Parking Lots*. SCCAS Report 2000/11

Disclaimer

Any opinions expressed in this report about the need for further archaeological work are those of the Field Projects Division alone. The need for further work will be determined by the Local Planning Authority and its archaeological advisors when a planning application is registered. Suffolk County Council's archaeological contracting service cannot accept responsibility for inconvenience caused to clients should the Planning Authority take a different view to that expressed in the report.