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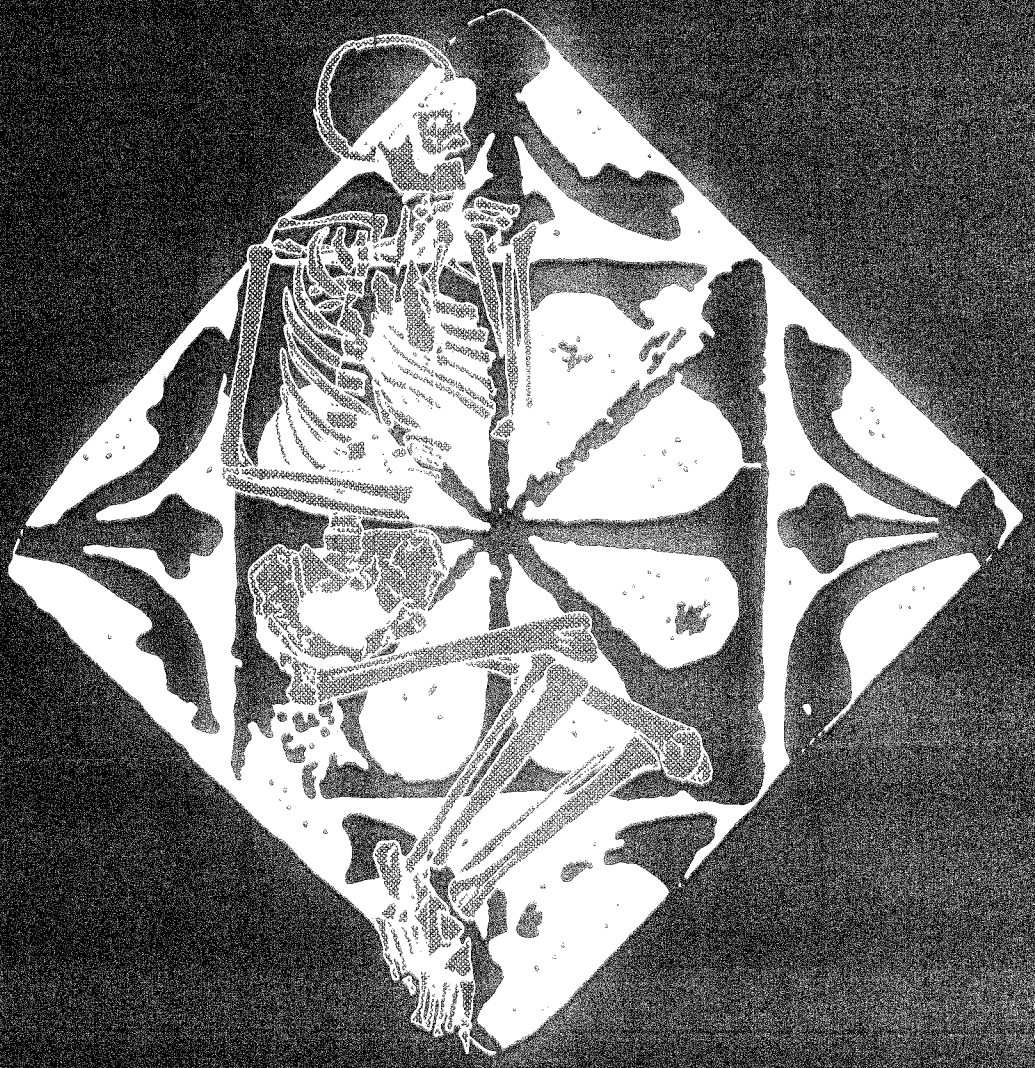

Hillside Meadow, Fordham, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Investigations

1998

Post-Excavation Assessment and Research Design

B.U.F.A.U.

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1.0 Summary

Archaeological excavations undertaken at Hillside Meadow, Fordham, Cambridgeshire, identified four phases of activity. The earliest, Phase 1, dated to the Early-Middle Saxon period when ditches and gullies representing five small enclosures were cut within the western half of the site. The interiors of the enclosures were characterised by pits and the presence of sunken-floored buildings. Two of the enclosures continued in use to Phase 2, which was dated to the Middle-Late Saxon period, and an additional one was cut within the eastern half of the site. No Phase 2 structures were recorded. Phase 3 activity, dated to the Late Saxon period, was concentrated within the eastern half of the site and was represented by the continued use of three enclosures and the addition of a further four – one of which contained a sunken-floored building. This phase saw the division of land become more extensive and formalised as it neared the site of a later Norman church. Phase 4 was post-medieval in date. A small, but important, collection of pottery was complemented by a group of chronologically-diagnostic small finds, and by a well-preserved animal bone assemblage and informative environmental evidence.

2.0 Introduction (Figure 1)

2.1 Background to the project

The site (centred on NGR TL 632 706) comprised a *c.*1 hectare field under rough pasture within the village of Fordham, Cambridgeshire.

A planning application for the development of the site for housing led to a staged archaeological response. An initial site evaluation, undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit on behalf of Barratt Associates Limited in 1996, comprised the excavation of nine trenches. A preliminary report described cut features which included ditches, gullies, pits, post-holes and ground-beam slots of Middle-Late Saxon and early-Medieval date. Residual pottery of Roman date, thought to have been 'quarried' from nearby Roman sites, was also recovered. The site was divided into four zones for ease of description. The western zone contained ditches, pits, and possible timber beam-slots and post-holes which were sealed by varying depths of colluvium. The central zone contained ditches, whilst the eastern zone contained ditches, and evidence of undated quarrying. Evidence of possible timber-framed structures was found within the southeastern corner of the site. Significant quantities of pottery were found, notably in the western zone. Animal bone was also well-preserved. No waterlogged deposits were identified (Robinson and Kenney 1996).

The results of the evaluation warranted further excavation of the whole site, and this was undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit in November and December 1998 on behalf of CgMs Archaeological and Environmental Consultants, sponsored by Wilcon Homes.

The excavation was carried out in accordance with the guidelines set down in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (Department of the Environment 1990).

2.2 Aims

The aims of the excavation were to:

- preserve the Saxon and Medieval features *by record*.
- contribute towards an understanding of the early development of the village of Fordham.
- define the morphology of the settlement remains, and to determine their development and chronology.
- determine the settlement economy, principally by examination of the faunal remains (selective dry sieving), and by examination of the charred plant remains (selective wet sieving), in particular the relationship of the settlement with the adjoining fen landscape.
- examine the pottery chronology.
- contribute to the understanding of Saxon and early-Medieval Cambridgeshire, with particular reference to other sites of similar date recently investigated within the county.

2.3 Method

The excavation was carried out in two stages due to the limited space available for temporary storage of spoil. The removal of overburden over the eastern two-thirds of the site by 360° excavator, with a toothless bucket, was undertaken first and was monitored by an archaeologist. Colluvium requiring removal to permit definition of archaeological features at their uppermost horizons was removed as part of the same operation. The subsoil surface, or the uppermost horizon of archaeological features and deposits revealed by machining, was hand-cleaned and a base plan of features was prepared using a FastMAP FM700 Data Logger, utilising PenMAP software. Sampling by hand excavation comprised not less than 50% of discrete features. A higher percentage of discrete features was excavated where more information was required to achieve a full understanding of the date, character and function of an individual feature, or group of features. Features of probable industrial function were fully excavated, whilst linear features not associated with settlement were sampled to determine their form, function, date, and to determine the stratigraphic sequence. Excavation of linear features associated with settlement comprised a minimum of 25%. All datable features were sampled for environmental analysis, principally for charred plant remains, and for smaller faunal remains. The same process was carried out for the remaining western one-third of the site.

Recording was by means of pre-printed pro-formas for contexts and features, supplemented by plans (at 1:20 and 1:50), sections (at 1:10 and 1:20), monochrome print and colour slide photography. Subject to the permission of the landowner, it is intended to deposit the paper and finds archive in an archive store approved by the Archaeological Advisor to the Local Planning Authority.

3.0 Results (Figure 2)

3.1 Phasing

The results of excavation can be placed into four phases of activity on the basis of the date of the pottery and the principles of archaeological stratigraphy.

Phase 1: Early-Middle Saxon (500-700/750)
Phase 2: Middle-Late Saxon (700/750-850)
Phase 3: Late Saxon (*c.*850/900-*c.*1100)
Phase 4: Post-Medieval

3.2 Phase 1 (Early-Middle Saxon)

A total of five enclosures (1, 2, 3, 6 and 10, represented by 22 features) was cut in Phase 1. They were all aligned on a north-south axis, but varied in size and character – the relatively shallow ditches and gullies of Enclosures 1 (F251 and F263) and 6 (F141.01, F157, F163 and F211.02) contrasting with the depth and width of the ditches which defined Enclosure 3 (F304 and F317) and the northern boundary of Enclosure 10 (F123). With the exception of Enclosure 10, activity was concentrated within the western two-thirds of the site.

Three sunken-floored buildings (F203, F257 and F283) were recorded. Two of these (F257 and F283) were located towards the western boundary of the site. The earliest (F283) was a relatively shallow feature, containing few artefacts, which was cut by the more substantial, and artefactually richer, F257 (see Sections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 below). The third sunken-floored building (F203) was located *c.*46m further east. This structure contained a minimum of 35 loomweights (see Section 4.2.3 below). Unlike the structures to the west which had a ditch (F281), pit (F266) and post-hole (F267) cut close by, this one had no associated features.

The interiors of the enclosures were characterised by pits (F271 in Enclosure 1 and F212 in Enclosure 6) which may have been used for storage (see Section 4.2.6 below). Activity outside the enclosures also comprised pit-cutting (F218 and F165). In addition, two east-west-aligned ditches (F142 and F227) were recorded, along with two post-holes (F192 and F199) outside the western boundary of Enclosure 6.

3.3 Phase 2 (Middle-Late Saxon)

Phase 2 activity was less intensive than that seen in Phase 1. The boundaries of Enclosures 1 and 6 were extended (F262 Enclosure 1) and adapted (F139, F163 and F204 Enclosure 6) whilst a new enclosure (Enclosure 5) was created (F278, F280 and F147). The western end of the large east-west-aligned Phase 1 ditch (F123) was recut and extended (F289 and F292) in this phase, but the layout of a new enclosure here

was not completed until Phase 3 (see Section 3.4 below).

No structures were identified within the site. The remaining activity was spatially quite disparate, with an east-west-aligned ditch (F226) extending between Enclosures 1 and 2, another ditch (F250) cutting the earlier Phase 1 structure (F283) and a third one (F295), aligned north-south, being located immediately to the west of Enclosure 5. A pit (F101) was located to the east of Enclosure 6.

The most interesting activity of this phase was the burial of four 10-15 year olds in ditches belonging to Enclosure 6 (F202, F210 and F235, see Section 4.2.4 below).

3.4 Phase 3 (Late Saxon)

Phase 3 activity was predominantly located within the eastern half of the site. Three enclosures continued in use during this phase (Enclosure 2 F236, Enclosure 5 F146 and Enclosure 6 F131, F159 and F162). An earlier Phase 1 enclosure was reused (Enclosure 10) and a further four were cut within the eastern half of the site (Enclosures 4, 7, 8 and 9). These later enclosures followed the north-south alignment of Phases 1 and 2, but were smaller in size and more formally laid-out. Their boundaries were all represented by substantial ditches (Enclosure 4 F288, F289 and F296, Enclosures 7 and 8 F103, Enclosure 9 F146, F129 and F150). A large east-west aligned ditch (F123), which had been cut in Phase 1, was reused during this phase to form a northern or southern boundary of the new enclosures.

A sunken-floored building (F294) was located within Enclosure 4. This structure was much smaller than the earlier Phase 1 buildings and artefacts were also scarcer.

The interior of Enclosure 5 was characterised by a large pit (F221) and an elongated oval feature (F255), whilst three clusters of post-holes were located within Enclosure 7. Although only one (F107) was dated to this phase, it is possible that the remaining ones represent contemporary structures. The only Phase 3 features located within the western half of the site were two east-west-aligned gullies (F224 and F251 - a recut of an earlier Phase 1 gully).

3.5 Phase Four (Post-Medieval)

A quarry pit (F234) - 12m in diameter and 3.50m deep - was recorded within the western third of the site. It had been backfilled with a sandy-silt deposit containing machine bricks and other building debris, along with some ash and animal bone.

3.6 Unphased

A total of fifty features cannot be securely dated. However, further study of the stratigraphic record will clarify stratigraphic relationships and will facilitate the phasing of the presently undated ditches, gullies, pits and post-holes on the basis of similarity of character and form. Features as yet unphased include the post-holes to the east of the two intercutting Phase 1 structures, those to the north of Enclosure 2, the gullies to the north of Enclosure 3 and within Enclosure 9, and the structural remains within Enclosure 10.

3.7 Discussion

The site comprised an area of rough pasture which, although recorded as having been used for small-scale cultivation in the 20th century, had a thick layer of colluvium extending over the majority of the site. This appeared to have protected the archaeological deposits which were well-preserved.

No prehistoric features were identified, although a small number of worked flints were found within the fills of later Saxon features. Similarly, a small number of Roman artefacts were recovered from Saxon contexts, but no contemporary features were identified.

An unbroken sequence of occupation from the Early-Saxon Period through to the Late-Saxon period was recorded at Hillside Meadow, Fordham. The excavated evidence suggests that settlement within Fordham was well-established in the Early-Middle Saxon period, with specialist crafts being practised. The settlement may have been relocated in the Middle-Late Saxon period - no buildings dating to this period were found at Hillside Meadow- with re-establishment of structures in the Late Saxon period within the eastern half of the site. This transition eastwards appears to continue during the Norman period when the settlement shifted further along Church Street, leaving Hillside Meadow unoccupied.

Excavation suggests that the eastern and western limits of the Saxon settlement were defined. However, the spatial distribution of the sunken-floored buildings and the continuation of a number of the enclosure gullies and ditches beyond the northern and southern limits of excavation, suggest that the settlement may continue in both of these directions.

Post-medieval use of the site appears to have been for quarrying (F234) and small-scale cultivation.

4.0 Assessment

4.1 Stratigraphic data

As described above, the features and deposits on site can be dated to the Early-Late Saxon period. Approximately half of the sealed deposits and features did not contain datable pottery, which poses some problems for the phasing of the site. However, these features mainly comprise post-hole clusters and small gullies representing sub-divisions of existing enclosures. Further analysis and definition of the stratigraphic sequence would contribute to the research aims stated in Section 2.2 above and revised in 5.2 below.

4.2 Artefactual data

4.2.1 Prehistoric Flint *by Lynne Bevan*

A total of 34 humanly-worked flint flakes was recovered singly or in small groups of up to four items from post-prehistoric features. The raw material used was a good quality dark grey pebble flint from a secondary source, probably local river gravels, which had been obtained by simply smashing the pebbles, often lengthways, in order to strike off flakes for use as needed. No chronologically-diagnostic tools were

identified and only one flake had been retouched. The general shape of the flakes and the rudimentary technique used suggest a later, rather than earlier, prehistoric date, probably during the later-Neolithic or Bronze Age. Contemporaneity cannot be assumed for this small collection, which attests to flintworking in the vicinity of the site at some time during prehistory but does not denote settlement or activity of any duration. As such, no further study of this material is recommended.

4.2.2 Saxon Pottery *by Stephanie Ratkai*

The pottery was examined macroscopically and divided into broad groups with a general title, such as grass-tempered ware, coarse sandy ware or a known generic name, such as Thetford ware. The pottery was quantified by sherd count and rim count and other details such as decoration, burnishing and sooting were recorded.

A total of 389 sherds, representing a minimum of 44 vessels, was recovered from stratified deposits - the majority of these being post-Roman and pre-Conquest. The pottery was in good condition with many large, unabraded, sherds and a good number of reconstructable forms.

The pottery fell into nine broad fabric groups:

- EMS1 - Grass- (or chaff-) tempered ware, some burnishing
- EMS2 - Sand and organic-tempered
- EMS3 - Fine sandy ware, usually burnished
- EMS4 - Coarse sandy ware, usually burnished
- EMS5 - Coarse sandy ware with mica, usually burnished
- EMS6 - Coarse shelly-limestone-tempered ware

- ?MS1 - ?Ipswich ware

- LS1 - Thetford/ Thetford -type ware
- LS2 - St. Neots/ St. Neots-type ware

In addition, there were five Roman sherds, four from a Phase 1 structure (F257) and one from a ditch defining the limit of Enclosure 5 (F279). Two post-Conquest sherds in a fabric similar to Bourne B came from a gully belonging to Enclosure 6 (F130) and a Phase 1 structure (F283). A post-medieval glazed red earthenware sherd (fabric GRE) was found in ditch F220 and a modern glazed ware sherd was found in ditch F226.

Early-Middle Saxon vessel forms were simple with plain upright or slightly flaring everted rims, with fairly baggy bodies. The majority of the vessels were burnished, often internally and externally, and nearly all were heavily sooted, with a few vessels showing traces of internal limescale. There were five decorated sherds, representing a total of four vessels.

The largest vessel (two sherds) came from a Phase 1 structure (F257). Approximately two-thirds of the profile from a biconical form survives, including the rim. The vessel is decorated from the shoulder to the widest part of the girth with wheel and 'S' stamps. The same motifs appear to have been used on the lower half of the vessel, although little of this part survives. The other decorated sherds consisted of triangles

and incised ?pendant triangles (F257), incised horizontal lines (F257), and dots and incised horizontal lines (F140).

The Middle-Late Saxon pottery consisted of St. Neots/St. Neots-type wares and grey sandy wares. The latter group were made up of Thetford/Thetford-type wares, some of which were decorated with triangular rouletting. However, since the pottery was only examined macroscopically it is likely that some of these wares may also be Ipswich/Ipswich-type wares. The grey sandy wares far outnumbered the St. Neots ware which was poorly represented.

The quantity of sherds from each enclosure varied. Just under half the total assemblage came from Enclosure 2, where there was a large concentration of pottery from the Phase 1 structure F257. This group was particularly interesting. It contained many large sherds and several rims but only one base sherd. There were only two examples of joining sherds, two within the fill 1258 and a cross-join between fills 1258 and 1259. Enclosure 6, which included the burials (see Section 4.2.4 below), produced 52 sherds, whilst Enclosure 4, which included the Phase 2 structure F294, produced 35 sherds. Enclosure 5 produced 23 sherds. The remainder of the site was characterised by small pottery scatters.

Discussion

The Roman sherds within this assemblage need represent nothing other than a background 'manuring scatter' - the sherds were certainly small and abraded. The post-Conquest sherds appear to be intrusive and certainly do not suggest occupation of this site after the Norman Conquest. The main occupation of the settlement therefore falls after the Roman period and before the Norman Conquest.

The quantity of pottery recovered from the site, even allowing for the fact that ditch fills were only sampled, suggests that pottery usage was not great.

It was noticeable that there was a concentration of Early-Middle-Saxon pottery within the western half of the site. This suggests a shifting settlement pattern, particularly as the eastern half of the site contains predominantly more Late-Saxon pottery and is characterised by smaller, more regularly laid-out plots.

The assemblage is in very good condition, with several complete or near-complete profiles. This is an important collection of pottery which has the potential for spatial analysis and which will provide a great deal of information for a period for which there is little published material regionally.

4.2.3 Small Finds *by Lynne Bevan*

The Small Finds assemblage comprises approximately 77 items, of bone (6), fired clay (c.35), copper alloy (10), iron (9), lead (15), and stone (2) and - based upon the preliminary pottery dating for Phase 1 to the Early-Middle Saxon period - includes a high incidence of chronologically-diagnostic material. Most of the objects relate to textile production, and were centred on a Phase 1 sunken-floored building (F203) where the remains of at least 35 ceramic loomweights were found *in situ* on the sunken floor. Other diagnostically-female objects, including a whetstone, two combs and a girdle hanger, were recovered from a second sunken-floored building (F257).

The finds categories and their research potential are summarised and discussed by material in the sections below. Small finds which were located with the aid of a metal detector are prefixed with 'MD'.

Worked Bone

Items of worked bone comprised: a decorated bone pin with three perforations (F294.02, SF 51), a needle (F257, SF 49), two pin beaters (F203, SF 20 and F214), and two composite combs (F257, SF 48 and F262.01, SF 45). The bone collection is in a very stable condition and, with the exception of the combs which are very fragmentary, has been successfully cleaned. All of the bone objects will require full illustration. The combs will require careful cleaning on the BUFAU premises before any research (including illustration) is conducted. All of the bone objects should be the subject of further research, including comparison with published parallels from Pennyland, Milton Keynes (Williams 1993) where combs, needles, and pin beaters have been recovered (Riddler and Waller 1993). Worked antler was also recovered from F257 (see Section 4.2.5 below) and will need to be reported on as part of the small finds assemblage.

Fired Clay Loomweights

Seven complete loomweights, one of which was decorated by a series of fingernail impressions (SF 38), and a total of 217 fragments representing the remains of at least 28 other loomweights, were recovered from the same context (1156) in F203. Some reconstruction of loomweight fragments is required in order to obtain an accurate quantification. Further research with reference to Hurst's type series (in Dunning *et al.* 1959, 24-25), full cataloguing and the illustration of all complete weights, and of any reconstructed weights of additional forms, will be required.

Stone

Two stone items were recovered: a spindle whorl with obvious wear traces around a central perforation (F257, SF 46) and a large ovoid stone with a reddish coloration - possibly caused by burning - which might have been used as a rubbing stone (F207.02). In addition, approximately 23 small fragments of grey vesicular lava were identified - some of which had shaped edges - from the following features: F123.05 x 2, F128 x c. 15 fragments, F129.02, F207, F224, F251, F252 x 2, F294. This material is probably of Mayen origin and might be debris from broken querns since lava querns, were imported from the continent during the Roman, Saxon and Medieval periods (e.g. Peacock 1980, Smith and Margeson 1993, Adkins and Adkins 1998). Full geological identification for the lava and other two stone items will be required, together with further research (including illustration) for the latter.

Copper Alloy

Five copper alloy objects were recovered, including a girdle hanger which had been broken across the shaft (F257, SF 52). Other objects consisted of ; a small looped pin, possibly from a brooch (F130.02, SF 2), a twisted copper alloy ring, possibly an earring (MD2), a looped fastener (MD20), and a stud (MD16). In addition, one fragment of strip (F128), seven fragments of plate (F136, F251.02, unstratified, MD7, MD17, MD19, MD21) and two amorphous lumps were recovered (unstratified, MD6).

The girdle hanger is a distinctive Anglo-Saxon object, for which there are a number of artefactual parallels. It is, however, in a vulnerable condition and any decoration is obscured by the adhering soil and corrosion products. Full cleaning and conservation will be required prior to further research (including illustration) being conducted. Cataloguing and further research is also recommended upon the other copper alloy small finds but no further action will be required for the fragments of strip, plate and the amorphous lumps, beyond an x-ray of one object and a summary listing of the others.

Iron

Iron small finds consisted of: two small knives, or possibly blades from shears (F150 and F257), a possible tool (F264), part of a possible fire pan (F114), a nail (F257), a fragment of strip (MD20), a fragment of plate with an *in situ* nail (MD 14), a piece of wire (MD10) and an unidentified fragment (F252). Further research (including x-ray and selective illustration) will be required for some of the more obvious iron items, and a summary listing by context for the remainder of the collection.

In addition, some small fragments of smithing slag were recovered from the following features: F125.2, F146.02, F162, F193, F262.02. No further action will be required for this material.

Lead

Lead finds consisted of : one strip of lead with a crenelated appearance (MD1), one fragment of strip (MD20), one fragment of sheet (MD12), one fragment of folded sheet (MD 15), ten fragments of 'molten' lead (MD3, MD4, MD5, MD11, MD13, MD20 x 5), and a circular ball of lead shot (MD 18). In view of the lack of stratification among the lead finds and the absence of any chronologically-diagnostic items, no further action is recommended for any of this material.

Other Fired Clay

Large quantities of fired clay in the form of amorphous lumps came from F257 (4kg) and F142 (3kg). The fired clay from F142 was of a light, cream-grey, 'mortar'-type colour in contrast to the rest of the fired clay from F257 (and the other features listed below) which was reddish-pink in colour. None of the clay was burnt, which suggests that it was building material originating from wattle and daub structures rather than kilns.

Small quantities of fired clay, weighing between 27 grammes and 440 grammes, came from the following features: F123.01, F124.01, F128, F131.01, F134, F139.01, F140.01, F141.01, F163.01, F165, F200, F218, F221, F224, F234, F252, F258, F262.02, F266, F271, F281. No further action will be necessary for this material.

Brick and Tile

Two fragments of brick were recovered, one each from F125.01 and F131 respectively, and 54 fragments of tile, the majority of which - 43 fragments - came from F257. The remainder came from the following features: F123.3 (1), F125.2 (2), F128 (2), F210 (1), F220 (3), F251 (1), F304 (1). Although the collection was not chronologically-diagnostic, four small fragments of Roman tile, two from box flue and two from *regulae*, were identified among the tile from F257, suggesting that this, and the other tile, might have originated from a Roman building in the area. The

small size of the Roman fragments and the incidental nature of their presence on the site do not warrant further study or illustration in this instance.

Shell
A total of ten oyster shell fragments (*ostrea edulis*) was recovered from the following features: F125.01, F138.2, F199, F257 x 3, F279 x 2, F294 x 2. Three mussel shells (*Mytilus edulis*) were also recovered: F279, F294.01, F299. No further action is considered necessary on this material.

Statement of Potential
This large and chronologically-diagnostic small finds assemblage provides an opportunity to study the material culture of a group of weavers centred upon a sunken-floored building where the remains of at least 35 ceramic loomweights were found *in situ* together with other well-preserved items of weaving equipment.

The unusually large collection of typically Early-Saxon annular loomweights with a circular or rounded 'D'- shaped section (Dunning *et al.* 1959, 23-24), one of which was decorated with a series of thumbnail impressions (SF 38), is interesting for several reasons, not least in view of its spatial integrity, which is comparable with that of the loomweight assemblages from Upton (Jackson *et al.* 1969, 210) and West Stow (West 1985, 138). These have been interpreted as the remains of a collapsed loom or a collection of weights stacked in storage.

Further research (including selective illustration) is essential on this collection, which is important on a local, regional and national level. Research should also focus upon spatial analysis of the weights and other equipment in order to investigate the position of the loom(s) and the spatial arrangement of textile production within the sunken-floored building. Comparative data are available from other sites such as Flixborough and Coppergate (Walton Rogers 1997), Upton (Jackson *et al.* 1969), West Stow (West 1985) and Pennyland (Williams 1993), although a more general search of existing comparanda, including cemetery data, will be conducted with regard to the girdle hanger and bone and stone objects.

One of the most interesting aspects of the assemblage is that almost all of the objects, including the spindle whorl, combs and girdle hanger found in a second sunken-floored building, are associated with women or could be construed as being functionally gender-neutral. The presence of women in archaeological contexts, particularly in terms of their economic and social roles, has often been overlooked in past studies in view of the paucity of sexually-diagnostic artefacts outside burial contexts. In terms of archaeological theory, beyond its more practical application in the reconstruction of the spatial organisation of weaving and textile production, this important assemblage can be used to reconstruct gendered space and provide the kind of 'visibility' for the women of Anglo-Saxon Fordham that has often eluded researchers in the past (Moore and Scott 1997).

4.2.4 Human Bone *by Megan Brickley*
A brief examination of the human bone material showed that four individuals in the age category of 10-15 years are present.

The skeletons of three of the individuals (HB1, 2 and 4) are relatively complete >75%. The skeleton of the fourth is very partial <25%, but bone recorded separately (F229, 1192) may belong to this individual. In all cases the bone was very well preserved.

Initial examination for pathological conditions showed that two of the individuals had unusual congenital conditions of the spine. However, these would not have been significant conditions. In addition, *cribra orbitalia*, which may be linked to dietary stress or ill health, was recorded in two individuals. Some of the dentition examined showed evidence for poor dental health.

The location (in a ditch of Phase 2) and the position of the skeletons within the ground for individuals in this age category are unusual for the Middle-Late Saxon period. Discussion with Dr Sally Crawford (University of Birmingham) and a brief examination of other published sites of this date has demonstrated that there are no direct parallels for the burials at Fordham. There are documented cases of isolated groups of burials in which skeletons are peripheral to a site and not careful orientated, for example at Sutton Hoo (Carver 1992) and Shakenoak (Brodribb 1968). However, in these cases the human bone was from adults and mostly from males. Such burials, which are characterised by traces of injury and mutilation, have been referred to as *cnihtas* burials. *Cnihtas* may have had a similar meaning to the colloquial English 'lads' (Blair 1994).

Although a sample of four is not significant in itself, it is recommended that the human bone material is fully recorded and key information published as there is at present no parallel for this material.

4.2.5 Animal Bone *by Umberto Albarella*

A total of eight boxes of animal bone was recovered, with the total weight of the assemblage being 33.73kg. Cattle, pig (including one articulated skeleton from F250), sheep, horse, dog, hare, chicken, goose and fish were recognised during a scan of the material. Amphibian, small mammal and sheep bones were present in the flots. With the exception of a small number of worked antler horn cores which were recovered from F257, large game was absent from the assemblage. This is typical of contemporary sites within the locality.

Assessment Method

All of the animal bones which were recovered from datable and sealed contexts were scanned, representing 80% of the total assemblage. Animal bone recovered from the flots, but not from the flotation residues, was also examined. The flotation residues were not available at the time of this assessment.

Recovery

The large majority of bones was collected by hand. In addition, a total of 28 samples ranging in size from 10-40 litres was taken from the site. No coarse sieving was undertaken on-site, but a programme of flotation produced 24 samples.

Residuality and Contamination
Information about residuality is only preliminary, as this is based on spot-dating from the pottery assemblage. However, the excavation director and pottery specialist do not anticipate that either residuality or contamination will be problematical for full post-excavation analysis.

Context
The animal bone assemblage derives from sealed and datable contexts of pits, ditches, gullies and sunken-floored buildings.

Preservation
The preservation of the bone surface was, on average, good and the density of the bones was high. There were no noticeable differences between the three phases of activity. The level of fragmentation was high and reflected butchery and kitchen refuse. Gnawing marks were noted, which suggests that some of the bones were not found in the same place where they were first discarded.

Potential and Recommendations
Despite being small, this assemblage is a particularly valuable one, as it includes material from the whole Early-Late-Saxon sequence. It will also provide a useful comparison with other contemporary assemblages sites such as those from West Stow (Crabtree 1989, West 1985) and Ipswich (Crabtree 1994). To date, this is a rare opportunity, especially for the Early and Middle Saxon periods. The assemblage is likely to provide useful information on economic activities, including crafts and industrial activities.

The assemblage is worthy of full investigation, but this should not occur until final information regarding residuality can be provided. Final phasing will be essential to undertake the analysis of the data. It is recommended that the flotation residues are examined to assess to what extent the animal bone assemblage is affected by a recovery bias.

4.2.6 Charred Plant Remains *by Wendy Smith*
In total, twenty-five samples from pits, ditches, gullies, post-holes and structures were selected by the archaeologists for assessment in order to determine if charred plant remains:

- were present.
- could provide information on human activity at the site, in particular cultivation or other agricultural activities.
- could provide information on the wider environment.

Method
Samples were taken from sealed deposits at the excavator's discretion. In most cases, those samples which had spot-dating from pottery evidence were selected for assessment. The samples were processed by the BUFAU environmental officer, using water flotation. The flots (the material which floats on the water's surface) were sieved to 500 μm. At the time of the assessment the heavy residues (the material

which does not float) for these samples were not available and have not been examined for this assessment. The results presented here are, therefore, based on the flots.

The flots were scanned using a low-powered binocular microscope at magnifications between x6 and x25. The assessment was done through rapid scanning of samples and, therefore, the results presented below are provisional. Preliminary identifications were made without consulting a reference collection and the speed of assessment may mean that some seeds, especially smaller-sized seeds, may have been overlooked. All of the flots contained modern roots, sometimes in large quantities. Land snails, charcoal and bone were also observed in many of the samples and this information is listed in Table 1.

Results

Table 2 summarises the assessment results. Those samples which are recommended for further analysis also are indicated in this table.

Charred Plant Remains

All of the samples examined contained charred plant remains. However, only those samples from five contexts (F140.02 1066, F169 1118, F221 1183, F218 1177, and F257 1258) contained sufficiently-abundant carbonised plant remains to merit further research. In general, these samples comprised mixtures of carbonised cereal grains and rarely contained weed/wild seeds. Although dominated by cereal grain remains, the precise proportion and/or presence of the various cereal crops (barley, free-threshing wheat, oat, and rye) does vary in these samples. In addition, small amounts of cereal chaff (rachis internodes of barley and rye) were also observed in some of these samples.

Charcoal

Almost all of the samples contained charcoal. However, in most cases charcoal was only present in small quantities (*c.* 30 ml or less) and was usually less than 1cm^2 in size. It is advised that the heavy residues are assessed for charcoal and recommended that a charcoal specialist be consulted on the merits of studying charcoal from these flots.

Molluscs

All of the samples contained land snails and, in most cases, these occurred in very high numbers. The fauna itself was quite limited. It primarily consisted of *Vallonia excentrica*, *Trichia* sp./*Oxychilus* sp., *Ceciloides acicula* (dominant in most cases), and *Cochlicopa* sp. *Ceciloides acicula* can burrow to depths of up to 3m. As a result of this and the abundance of modern root, seed and insects observed in these samples, it seems likely that most, if not all, of this fauna is modern. Therefore, it is recommended that the molluscs from these flots are not analysed.

Statement of Potential

Three research objectives for the full analysis of the Hillside Meadow, Fordham samples are immediately apparent.

- Those samples recommended for full analysis which are already dated cover Early to Middle-Saxon and Late-Saxon periods of occupation at the site and, in particular, may provide information on changes in the agricultural economy of this site over time.

- The charred plant remains recovered can provide information on the crop husbandry of cereals at Hillside Meadow, Fordham. Although only small quantities of weed/wild plants were observed in these samples during assessment, this limited weed flora might also provide some indication of soil conditions and possibly harvesting methods.

- The contents of the gully (F140.02 1066 and F169 1118) and pits (F221 1183 and F218 1177) may also help to determine whether the pits on site were used for storage or dumping purposes.

Table 1. List of biological remains other than charred plant remains recovered in the Hillside Meadow, Fordham, Cambridgeshire samples

Feature Number	Context	Sample Number	Bone* + = 0 - 10 items ++ = 10 - 20 +++ = 20+	Charcoal + = 0 - 10 ml ++ = 10-30 ml +++ = 30+ ml	Land Snails + = 0 - 50 items ++ = 50 - 100 +++ = 100+
F123.03	1028	1	++	+	+++
F128.02	1035	2	+	+	+++
F236	1036	3	+	+	+++
F129.01	1040	4	+	+	+++
F129.02	1055	6	+	+	++
F124.01	1031	7	+	++	++
F130.01	1058	8		+	++
F140.02	1066	9	+	++	+++
F146.02	1073	10	+	+	+++
F124.02	1079	11	+	+	+++
F169	1118	15	+	+	+++
F203	1156	16	+	+	+++
F172	1114	17	+	+	+++
F203	1156	18	+	+	++
F221	1183	19	+	+	+++
F218	1177	20	+	++	+++
F257	1258	21	+	++	+++
F257	1259	22	+	+	++
F262.01	1262	23	+	++	+++
F251.02	1273	24	+	+	++
F293	1305	25	+	+	++
F289	1300	26	+	+	++
F290	1301	27	+	++	++
F271	1302	28	+	+	++
F266	1270	29†	++	+++	+++

** Bone observed during assessment of archaeobotanical flots was collected.*

† This was originally numbered sample 25, however this is a separate sample from F293 1305, therefore, it was assigned a new sample number.

Table 2. Archaeobotanical assessment results for Hillside Meadow, Fordham, Cambridgeshire

Feature Number	Context	Context Type	Sample Number	Provisional Date (based on pottery)	Sample Volume	Flot Volume	Further analysis needed	Comments
F123.03	1028	Ditch	1	Early-Middle Saxon	20 L	30 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, bone, and charcoal observed. Flot contained barley, wheat, cf. rye grain. No weed seeds observed. Assessed as POOR to GOOD.
F128.02	1035	Ditch	2	Late Saxon	20 L	175 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, bone and charcoal observed. Sample contained barley and cf. wheat grains. No weed seeds observed. Assessed as POOR to GOOD.
F236	1036	Ditch	3	Late Saxon	20 L	150 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, charcoal and bone observed. Flot contained barley grain and free-threshing wheat grain , as well as *Vicia/Lathyrus/Pisum* pulse. Assessed as POOR to GOOD.
F129.01	1040	Ditch	4	Late Saxon	20 L	15 ml	no	Modern root, bone, charcoal and molluscs observed. Flot appears to only contain small amounts of charred barley grain. Assessed as POOR.
F129.02	1055	Ditch	6	Late Saxon	20 L	30 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, bone and charcoal observed. Flot appears to only contain small numbers of charred barley grain and unidentified *Vicia/Lathryus/Pisum* type pulse. Assessed as POOR.
F124.01	1031	Gully	7	*not yet dated*	10 L	50 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, bone and charcoal observed. Flot contained barley, wheat (most likely free-threshing) and rye grains. Assessed as POOR.
F130.01	1058	Gully	8	*not yet dated*	10 L	15 ml	no	Molluscs and charcoal observed. Flot contained the following charred plant remains: barley grain, free-threshing wheat grain, rye grain, pulses (Vicia/Lathryus/Pisum type), and hazel nut shell. Assessed as POOR to GOOD.
F140.02	1066	Gully	9	*not yet dated*	10 L	250 ml	yes	Modern root, bone, charcoal and molluscs observed. Flot primarily contained cereal grain (barley, rye, oat and free-threshing wheat). Possibly ancient (*Fumaria* sp. and *Rumex* sp.) also were noted. Assessed as RICH.
F146.02	1073	Gully	10	Late Saxon	20 L	75 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, bone and charcoal observed. Flot contained cereal grain (rye and free-threshing wheat), hazel nut shell and *Silene* sp. Assessed as POOR to GOOD.
F124.02	1079	Ditch	11	Late Saxon	20 L	50 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, charcoal and bone observed. Flot contained rye grain, free-threshing wheat grain and unidentified pulse (*Vicia/Lathyrus* type). Assessed as POOR to GOOD.
F169	1118	Gully	15	*not yet dated*	10 L	100 ml	yes	Modern root, charcoal, bone and molluscs observed. Flot contained abundant charred remains of cereal grain (barley, rye and free-threshing wheat), unidentified pulses (Vicia/Lathyrus type), and weed seeds (*Lithospermum arvense* and *Plantago* sp.). Assessed as GOOD to RICH.
F203	1156	Structure	16	Early to Middle Saxon	40 L	150 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, bone and charcoal observed. Flot contained small amounts of charred barley and unidentified cereal grain. Assessed as POOR to GOOD.

Table 2. Archaeobotanical assessment results for Hillside Meadow, Fordham, Cambridgeshire continued…

Feature Number	Context	Context Type	Sample Number	Provisional Date (based on pottery)	Sample Volume	Flot Volume	Further analysis needed	Comments
F172	1114	Post hole	17	*not yet dated*	20 L	100 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, bone and charcoal observed. Flot contained free-threshing wheat grain, rye grain, *Vicia/Lathyrus/Pisum* type pulse, and hazel nut shell. Assessed as POOR to GOOD.
F203	1156	Structure	18	Early to Middle Saxon	10 L	30 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, bone and charcoal observed. Small amounts of barley grain and cf. free-threshing wheat grain. Assessed as POOR.
F221	1183	Pit	19	Late Saxon	20 L	150 ml	yes	Modern root, charcoal, molluscs, and bone observed. Sample contained large quantities of charred cereal grain (rye, barley and free-threshing wheat, as well as oat, were all observed). Also noted - charred hazel nut shell, unidentified large grass caryopses, and *Vicia/Lathyrus/Pisum* pulse. Assessed as RICH.
F218	1177	Pit	20	Early to Middle Saxon	20 L	200 ml	yes	Modern root, charcoal, molluscs and bone observed. Sample contained abundant charred cereal grain (rye and barley). Charred rye rachis also observed. Assessed as GOOD to RICH.
F257	1258	Structure	21	Early to Middle Saxon	20 L	200 ml	yes	Modern root, charcoal, molluscs, and bone observed. Flot contains abundant charred cereal grain (mainly free-threshing wheat and barley grain). *Vicia/Lathyrus* type pulses also observed. Assessed as GOOD to RICH.
F257	1259	Structure	22	Early to Middle Saxon	20 L	175 ml	no	Modern root, charcoal, molluscs and bone observed. Only barley grain present in flot. Assessed as POOR to GOOD.
F262.01	1262	Gully	23	*not yet dated*	10 L	30 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, charcoal and bone observed. Sample contained charred barley grain, free-threshing wheat grain and *Galium* sp. seed. Assessed as POOR.
F251.02	1273	Gully	24	Early to Middle Saxon	10L	30 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, charcoal and bone observed. Small amounts of charred grain (barley, oat and free-threshing wheat). Assessed as POOR.
F293	1305	Ditch	25	*not yet dated*	20 L	200 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, charcoal and bone observed. Flot contained charred barley grain, free-threshing wheat grain, *Vicia/Lathyrus* type pulse, and *Silene* sp. Assessed as POOR to GOOD.
F289	1300	Ditch	26	Middle to Late Saxon	20 L	75 ml	no	Modern root, charcoal, molluscs, and bone observed. Small amounts of charred grain (barley and cf. rye) seen. Assessed as POOR.
F290	1301	Ditch	27	*not yet dated*	20 L	100 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, charcoal, and bone observed. Flot contains small amounts of charred grain (barley, cf. oat, and free-threshing wheat). Assessed as POOR to GOOD.
F271	1302	Pit	28	*not yet dated*	20 L	50 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, charcoal and bone observed. Flot contained small amounts of charred grain (barley and free-threshing wheat grain). Assessed as POOR.
F266	1270	Pit	29	Early to Middle Saxon	not known	275 ml	no	Modern root, molluscs, bone and charcoal observed. Flot contained charred barley grain, rye grain and hazel nut shell. Assessed as POOR.

4.2.7 Soil Assessment *by Charles French*

A site inspection in December 1998 revealed a largely denuded hillside with some colluvial accumulation at the western boundary of the site.

The western boundary of the site, which acted as the eastern boundary of the houses on Mill Lane, revealed the following section profile: *c.*30cm of modern topsoil (Ah) composed of a dark brown silty clay loam, over a B horizon composed of *c.*30-50cm of pale brown silt loam, developed on mixed 'head' deposits of sands, gravels and chalk as the subsoil. The soil profile upslope was thin and comprised only *c.*20-35cm of topsoil.

The B horizon is a very localised deposit of hillwash or colluvium, probably accumulating against a former boundary at the western limit of the site, perhaps a hedgeline or plough-turning headland. The hillwash would have derived from a combination of rainsplash erosion and soil creep of bare and exposed topsoils immediately upslope. This must be viewed as a localised, small-scale and seasonal phenomenon associated with plough disturbance, rainfall and bare soil surfaces. Given that Late-Saxon cut features are defined beneath this colluvial deposit in the western half of the site, this erosion is probably associated with medieval and later land-use immediately on the edge of the village. Indeed, at the Landwade Road site just to the southwest of Fordham, excavated by the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit, a considerable accumulation of post-Iron Age hillwash was observed, in this case associated with soil and palaeosoil development (French and Kousoulakou 1997).

As there is no buried soil survival and the whole profile is derived and/or well-mixed by post-depositional processes, there is no necessity for further work.

5.0 Updated Project Design

5.1 Introduction

The excavated evidence has demonstrated the survival of a complete and unbroken sequence of occupation at Fordham from the Early-Late Saxon period, illustrating the transition of the settlement focus from the western limits towards the east, where the Norman church was later built.

5.2 Updated Research Aims

This site offers a rare opportunity to study an unbroken occupation sequence from the Early-Saxon period through to the Late-Saxon period and contrasts with the model of short-lived isolated hamlets and discontinuity of settlement put forward by Taylor in the 1980s (Taylor 1983). The presence of Middle Saxon evidence, and specifically of Ipswich ware, is particularly valuable as, up to the early-1990s, few sites or assemblages had been excavated and studied (Wade 1997). The emergence of a settlement hierarchy in the Middle Saxon period has been defined as a research objective within East Anglia (Wade 1997) and the site at Hillside Meadow, Fordham has the potential to contribute to this. It should also be possible - by means of comparison with published and unpublished sites within the immediate locality and within the broader regional sphere - to place the site within its overall geographical, archaeological, historical, economical and political context (Connor and Robinson

1998, Dickens 1995, Hill and Robinson 1996, Mortimer 1998, Spoerry 1996 and Roberts 1998). The quality of the data is such that it should also allow a contribution to be made to the ongoing reinterpretation of earlier archaeological data (Parker-Pearson *et al.* 1993 and Scull 1992) and the refinement of research designs for both the period and region.

It is possible to restate, enhance and refocus the research aims as being to:

- complete the characterisation of the site dating and function.
- relate the site data to possible models of the early development of the village at Fordham.
- define the morphology of the settlement remains, and to determine their development and chronology.
- carry out spatial analysis and identify activity zones and types of activity within the site.
- determine the settlement economy and relate it to the adjoining fen landscape.
- examine the pottery chronology and compare the assemblage with those from other similarly-dated but unpublished sites in Cambridgeshire
- contribute to the understanding of Saxon and early-Medieval Cambridgeshire, with particular reference to other sites of similar date, recently investigated within the county.

6.0 Publication Synopsis

It is proposed that the report will be published as a volume in the British Archaeological Reports (British Series), Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit Monograph Series, entitled Archaeological Excavations at Hillside Meadow, Fordham, Cambridgeshire 1998. British Archaeological Reports have agreed, in principle, to publish the report. The provisional lengths of the individual contributions are given below.

Archaeological Excavations at Hillside Meadow, Fordham, Cambridgeshire 1998

by Catharine Mould
with contributions by Umberto Albarella, Lynne Bevan, Megan Brickley, Charles French, Stephanie Ratkai and Wendy Smith
illustrations by Nigel Dodds

Text
Summary (250 words).
Introduction by Catharine Mould (1000 words). 1 figure.
Aims and Method. The site and its context. 1 plate.
Results by Catharine Mould (3,000 - 4,000 words). 5 figures, 1 table.
Description and interpretation of the evidence by phase.
Finds.
Saxon Pottery by Stephanie Ratkai (3,000 - 4,000 words). 2 figures, 1 table.
Small Finds by Lynne Bevan (3,000 - 4,000 words). 2 figures.
Human Bone by Megan Brickley (1,500 - 2,000 words).

Environmental Material.

Animal Bone by Umberto Albarella (3,000 - 4,000 words). 1 table.

Charred Plant Remains by Wendy Smith (2,000 - 3,000 words). 1 table.

Soil Assessment by Charles French (250 words).

Discussion and conclusions by Catharine Mould (5,000 - 6,000 words).

Figures

1 Location plan
2 Plan of all excavated features
3 Phase 1 plan
4 Phase 2 plan
5 Phase 3 plan
6 Feature profiles
7 Pottery
8 Pottery
9 Small Finds
10 Small Finds

TOTAL 21,750 - 28,250 words; 4 tables; 10 figures, 1 plate.

7.0 Task List

The task numbers below give the names of the individuals responsible for the completion of the task, and the number of days allocated.

1) Stratigraphic Analysis

The site records will be analysed to refine and revise the sequence of activity on the site.

(C. Mould: 5 days)

2) Saxon Pottery

The assemblage will be examined to:

- examine the fabrics under x20 magnification and to see how much, if any, Ipswich ware is present in the assemblage.
- produce full fabric descriptions for each fabric type, where the fabric type has not been previously published.
- produce a petrological description of the Early-Middle-Saxon pottery fabrics (excluding the grass-tempered ware).
- produce a full form/fabric series for the Early-Middle-Saxon pottery.
- compare the decorated pottery with that from the national corpus of stamped and decorated ware.
- examine the development of vessel form through time and to examine the relationship between vessel form and spatial distribution.
- examine the sources of pottery supply through time.
- compare the pottery with that from other similarly-dated, but unpublished, sites in Cambridgeshire.

Task	Number of days
Create fabric/form type series and record pottery (quantification by sherd count, sherd weight, rim percentage and minimum number of rims)	5
Input data	1
Analysis of data	2
Research for parallels/comparanda	3
Write report	3
Check illustrations	0.5
Edit	1
Admin	0.5
Total	16

(Stephanie Ratkai)

Outside specialists

Paul Spoerry - information on unpublished material from Cambridgeshire	1
Paul Blinkhorn - advice on Ipswich ware	0.5
Catherine Knowles (Petrology, University of Southampton)	1

3) Small Finds

Task	Number of days
Full cleaning and stabilising of girdle hanger and x-rays of one copper alloy object and five iron objects (Salisbury Conservation Lab.)	1
Cleaning of bone combs and reconstruction of fragmentary loomweights	2
Geological identification of stone items and report (R. Ixer)	1
Cataloguing of Saxon material	2
Research on Saxon material	4
Investigation of spatial arrangement of weaving material	1
Write report	4
Selection of items for illustration, check illustrations	1
Total	16

(Lynne Bevan)

4) Human Bone

During analysis, particular attention would be paid to examination for any possible indication of trauma and mutilation, in particular in the region of the head and neck.

Examination and recording of the material would result in an archive, consisting of full skeletal recording sheets and a short report summarising the main findings obtained from the analyses. However, it should be noted that determination of sex will not be possible due to the age at death of these individuals. The final report will result in the documentation of an unusual type of burial and analysis of possible trauma may provide links to *cnihtas* burials.

In addition, it should be noted that Dr Sally Crawford intends to make an application to English Heritage for funding as part of the national research project for Saxon burials, to enable a radiocarbon date to be obtained from the skeletal material. If this application is successful, it is recommended that a sample be taken from HB3 as this skeleton is very partial. Obtaining a radiocarbon date would enable clearer comparisons to be made between this material and possible future finds.

Task	Number of days
Full recording of skeletal material	1.5
Preparation of report (500 words)	1
Total	2.5

(Megan Brickley)

5) Animal Bone

The following estimate of task length is based on the assumption that it will be possible to date and phase the remaining 20% of the assemblage stratigraphically, that residuality will prove unproblematical and that the flotation residues will require analysis. The schedule below, therefore, represents a maximum.

Task	Number of days
Bone Recording	6
Data processing and analysis	4
Write report	2
Edit	1
Total	13

(Umberto Albarella)

6) Charred Plant Remains

It is recommended that five samples (F140.02 1066, F168 1118, F221 1183, F218 1177, and F257 1258) are fully analysed for charred plant remains (see Table 2 above). In addition, the heavy residues should be scanned for charred plant remains, as well as other bio-archaeological remains (bone, molluscs and charcoal). The schedule provided below represents the maximum amount of time needed for full analysis and report writing.

Task	Number of days
Sorting heavy residues	2
Reporting heavy residues	0.5
Sort samples, identify material	4
Analysis/write report	2
Consultation of reference material and identifications	0.5
Total	9

(Wendy Smith and Lisa Moffett)

7) Preparation of drawing roughs (C. Mould 2 days)

8) Preparation of illustrations (N. Dodds 24 days)

9) Preparation of first draft of introduction and results (C. Mould 4 days)

MONITORING POINT (1) February 2000
Preparation of results text and first draft of specialist reports (C. Mould 1 day)

10) Editing/correction to specialist reports (C. Mould 1 day).

11) Preparation of first draft of discussion. (C. Mould 5.5 days).

12) Editing of first draft (BUFAU) (I. Ferris 1 day).

13) Corrections to first draft (C. Mould 1.5 days).

14) Corrections to illustrations (N. Dodds 2 days).

MONITORING POINT (2) August 2000
Completion of first draft (edited by BUFAU)

15) Submission of text for external refereeing (I. Ferris 1 day).

16) Preparation of excavation and research archives (C. Mould 1 day).

17) Final corrections to text/illustrations (C. Mould 1 day).

18) Submission of text to BAR (I. Ferris 0.5 day).

19) Corrections to text/proofs (C. Mould 1 day).

20) Deposition of archive (C. Mould 1 day).

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9.0 Acknowledgements

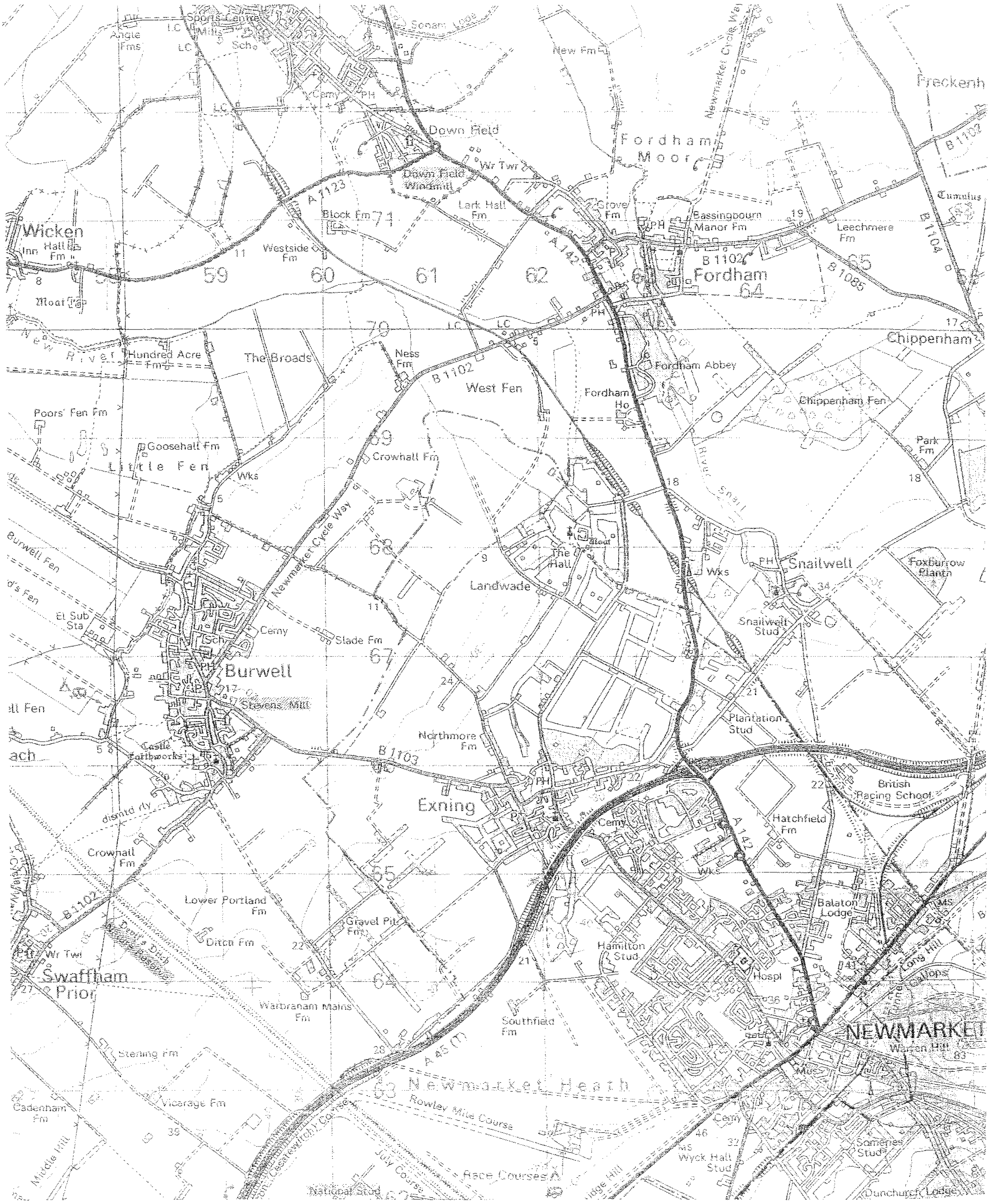
The excavation was sponsored by CgMs Archaeological and Environmental Consultants on behalf of Wilcon Homes. The excavation was directed by Catharine Mould, with the assistance of Julie Candy, Rachel Heaton, John Hovey, Leslie Mather, Edward Newton, Peter Noble, Jon Sterenberg and Christine Winter. The project was monitored by Jim Hunter for CgMs, and by Dr Simon Kaner, Tim Reynolds and Andy Thomas for Cambridgeshire County Council. This report was edited by Iain Ferris and the illustrations were prepared by Julie Candy and Catharine Mould.

2.0 Introduction (Figure 1)

2.1 Background to the project

The site (centred on NGR TL 488 706) comprised a c.1 hectare field under rough pasture within the village of Fordham, Cambridgeshire.

A planning application for the development of the site for housing led to a staged archaeological response. An initial site evaluation, undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit on behalf of Barratt Associates Limited in 1996, comprised the excavation of nine trenches. A preliminary report described cut features which included ditches, gullies, pits, post-holes and ground-beam slots of Middle-Late Saxon and early-Medieval date. Residual pottery of Roman date, thought to have been 'quarried' from nearby Roman sites, was also recovered. The site was divided into four zones for ease of description. The western zone contained ditches, pits, and possible timber beam-slots and post-holes which were sealed by varying depths of colluvium. The central zone contained ditches, whilst the eastern zone contained ditches, and evidence of undated quarrying. Evidence of possible timber-framed structures was found within the southeastern corner of the site. Significant quantities of pottery were found, notably in the western zone. Animal bone was also well-preserved. No waterlogged deposits were identified (Robinson and Kenney 1996).



Sports Centre
Angle Fms
Sch
Cemy
PH
Down Field
Down Field Windmill
Wr Twr
Lark Hall Fm
Block Fm
Westside Fm
Wicken
Hall Fm
Inn
Moat Fm
New River
Hundred Acre Fm
The Broads
Ness Fm
West Fen
Poors' Fen Fm
Goosehall Fm
Little Fen
Crowhall Fm
Newmarket Cycle Way
Burwell Fen
Et Sub Sta
Cemy
Slade Fm
Burwell
Stevens Mill
Castle Earthworks
dismtd rly
Crownall Fm
Lower Portland Fm
Ditch Fm
Gravel Pit Fm
Swaffham Prior
Warbranam Mains Fm
Stening Fm
Vicarage Fm
Cadenham Fm
Middle Hill
National Stud
July Course
Race Courses
Rowley Mile Course
Newmarket Heath
New Fm
Fordham Moor
Grove Fm
Bassingbourn Manor Fm
Leechmere Fm
Fordham
Freckenham
Cumulus
Chippenham
Fordham Abbey
Fordham Ho
Chippenham Fen
Park Fm
River Snail
The Hall
Landwade
Snailwell
Foxburrow Plantn
Snailwell Stud
Plantation Stud
Northmore Fm
Exning
British Racing School
Hatchfield Fm
Balaton Lodge
Long Hill
Hamilton Stud
Hospl
Southfield Fm
NEWMARKET
Warren Hill
Mus
Wyck Hall Stud
Somerset Stud
Dunchurch Lodge
A 1123
A 142
A 45 (T)
B 1102
B 1103
B 1104
B 1085

Figure 1


Mill Lane
Church Street
St Peter/St Mary
Magdalene Church
The Site
Graveyard
Hillside Meadow
Fordham
C of E
Primary
School
Fordham
Congl
Church
The
Crown
(PH)
180 PF
63 PF

Figure 2

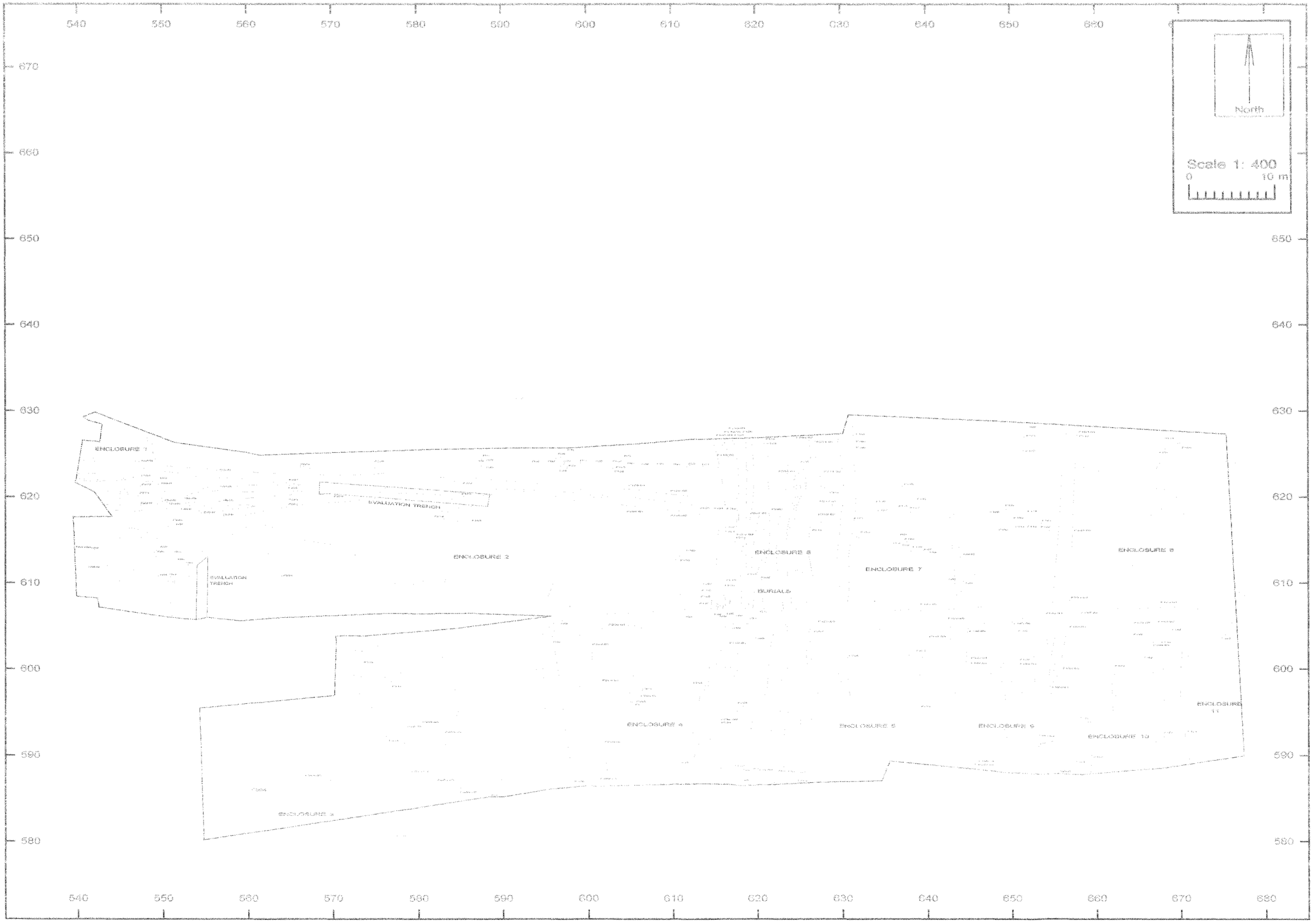

540
550
560
570
580
590
600
610
620
630
640
650
660
670
680
North
Scale 1: 400
0
10 m
670
660
650
640
630
620
610
600
590
580
ENCLOSURE 1
EVALUATION TRENCH
ENCLOSURE 2
EVALUATION TRENCH
ENCLOSURE 3
ENCLOSURE 4
ENCLOSURE 5
ENCLOSURE 6
ENCLOSURE 7
BURIALS
ENCLOSURE 8
ENCLOSURE 9
ENCLOSURE 10
ENCLOSURE 11

Figure 3