

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

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## **Electric Trench between buildings 1106 and 1108 LKH 247**

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2005

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Field Team  
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

© September 2005

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# Contents

List of Figures  
List of Tables  
List of Contributors  
Acknowledgements  
Summary  
SMR information

1. Introduction
2. Results
3. Finds and environmental evidence
4. Conclusion

References

## List of Figures

1. Location plan
2. Trench location
3. Lengths 1-3
4. Lengths 4 and 5
5. Length 6

## List of Tables

1. Context list
2. Finds quantities

## List of Contributors

All Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service unless otherwise stated.

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## Acknowledgements

This project was funded by MOD Defence Estates (USF) and was carried out following notification of the work by Alan Cunningham 48CES/CEV, to whom grateful thanks are due. The fieldwork was carried out by Jo Caruth from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team, with the co-operation of the electrical contractors, T. Clarke. Finds processing was carried out by Gemma Adams and the specialist finds report produced by Cathy Tester.

## Summary

Monitoring of the excavation of a trench for a new electric trench within the Roman and Saxon settlement area at RAF Lakenheath recovered Roman and Saxon finds and identified features and soil layers.

## SMR information

Planning application no. None  
Date of fieldwork: June 2005  
Grid Reference: TL 7323 8093  
Funding body: MOD Defence Estates (USF)  
Oasis reference. Suffolkc1-10072

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# 1. Introduction

An archaeological monitoring was carried out during the insertion of an electric trench between Buildings 1106 and 1108 at RAF Lakenheath (Fig. 1). The trench ran between TL 73203 80950 and TL 73266 80893 and lies within the area of the known Roman and Early Saxon settlement on the north side of Caudle Head Mere (Fig. 2). The trench ran alongside one area that had been previously excavated (LKH 191) and was known to contain settlement evidence and burials, but otherwise was inserted into areas that had not been seen before (Fig. 2).

The monitoring was carried out at short notice after notification from Alan Cunningham, 48CES/CEV, that this emergency repair work had been halted due to the archaeologically sensitive nature of this part of the Base. The trench excavation was continuously observed over a period of three days, finds were collected and recorded under numbers for specific lengths of trench, soil and feature profiles were drawn at 1:20 and the trench and feature location plotted at 1:500. Context numbers 0001-0008 were issued and the site recorded under the new Sites and Monuments Code LKH 247.

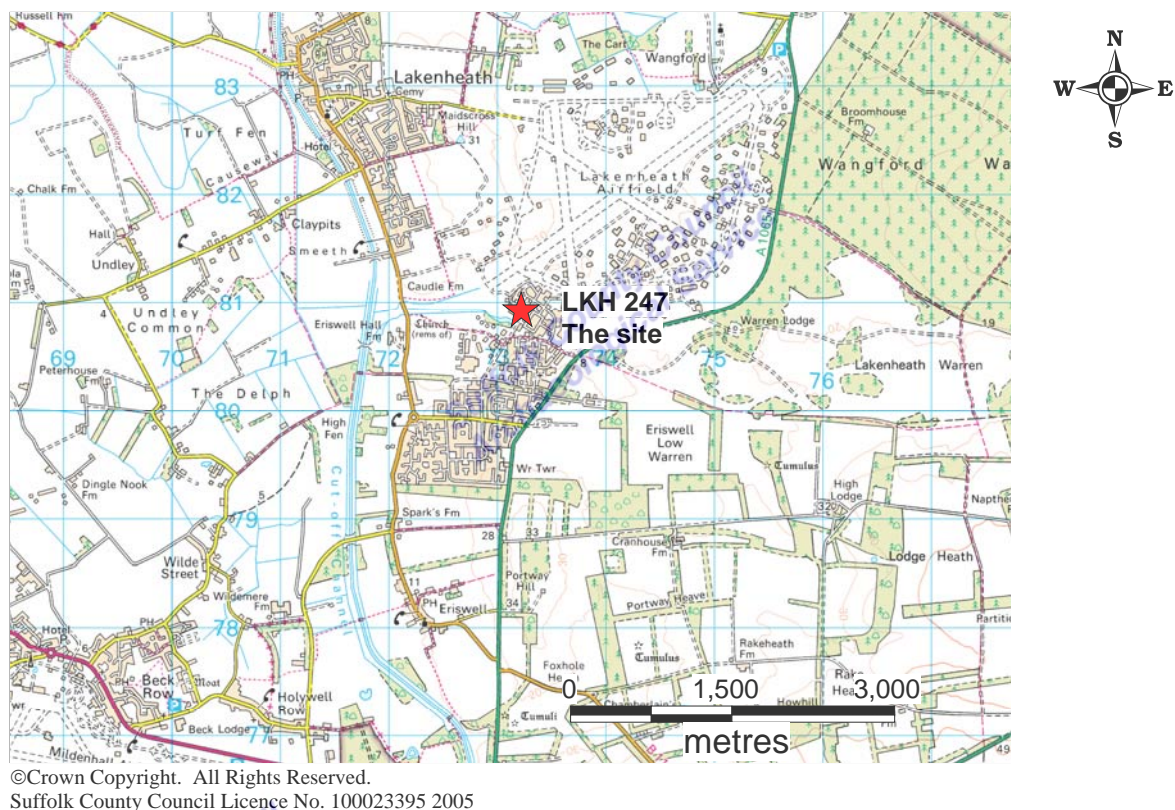


Figure 1. Site location

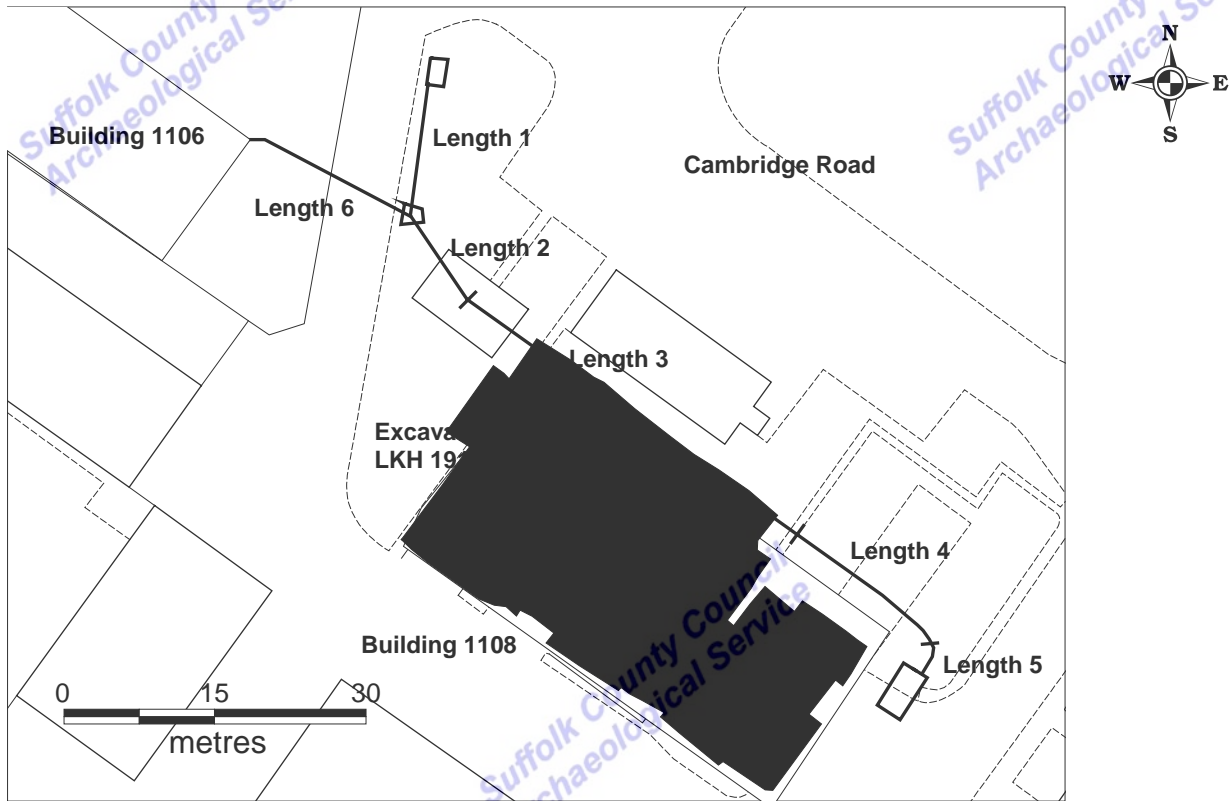
# 2. Results

The trench was generally c. 0.3m wide and 0.5m deep and has been divided into six lengths for descriptive purposes (Fig 2).

## Length 1

This was 15.35m long and ran N-S from a junction box near a junction at Cambridge Road. The soil profile showed 0.3m of topsoil over 0.1m of hogging, which overlay a dark homogeneous soil layer which continued beyond the base of the trench (Fig. 3). At the north end of the trench a connection hole c.1m x 1.5m square was excavated to a depth of 0.93m. The soil profile here

showed that the base of the dark brown soil layer was at 0.63m and that it overlay a mixed dark and bright grey sandy loam which contained charcoal and chalk flecks and stones. This was not bottomed at the base of the trench, and although no edges were seen, this could be feature fill. A modern pipe ran along one side of the southern half of the length.

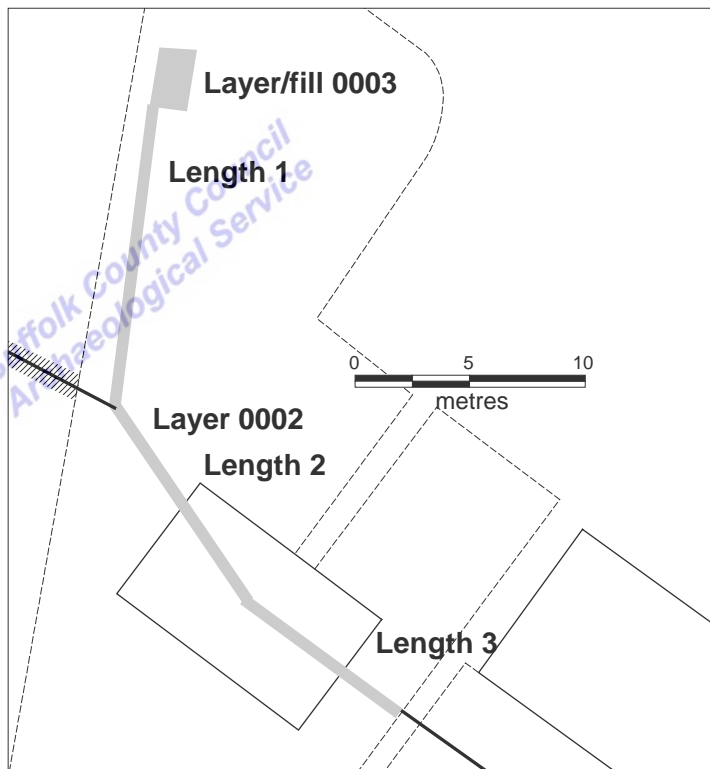


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Figure 2. Trench location

## Length 2

This was 10.2m long, NW-SE aligned, from the end of length 1 (Fig. 2). This showed a similar soil profile to length 1, with modern material in the top 0.3m, although the hogging was replaced with a band of chalky brown sand, and the brown loam layer was more mixed and sterile looking. This length lies under the position of a small building shown on the OS map (Fig. 3). A modern pipe ran through the western c.5m of the length.



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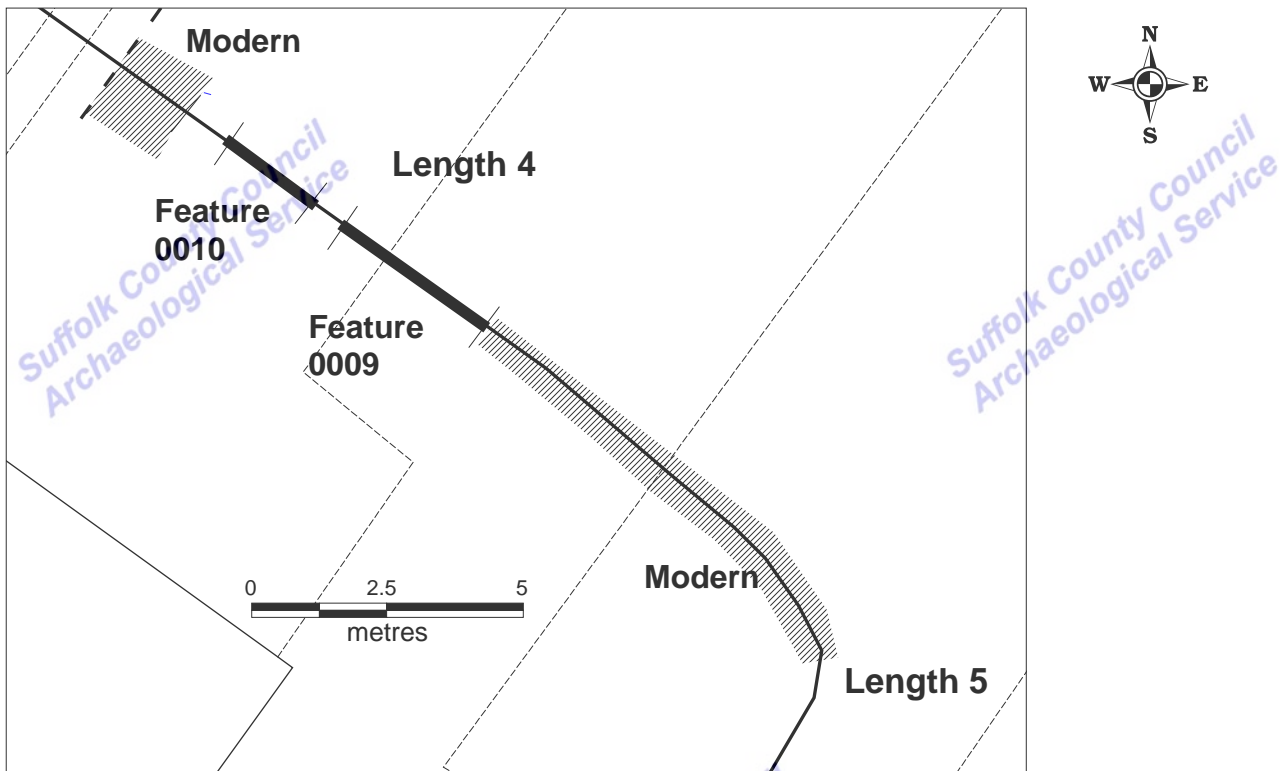
Figure 3. Lengths 1-3

### Length 3

This was 39m long, running slightly more NW-SE than length 2 (Fig. 2) and showed the same soil profile as length 2 for the western 9.2m (Fig. 3), beyond which the trench cut through backfill of the excavation area. As the trench travelled eastwards the level of the geological natural could be seen to be rising to a minimum, in places, of 0.35m below the current ground level, although this was undulating.

### Length 4

This was 16.5m long and continues on from length 3 from a path to the SE end (Fig. 2) of the trench. Some yellow sand natural could be seen in the trench section, in places, as little as 0.2m below the surface, but there were two areas of brown sand cutting natural indicating the location of archaeological features (Fig. 4), however the small size of the trench did not allow interpretation of these. There was a significant length, c.8m of modern disturbance at the SE end of the length (Fig. 4) but otherwise, where features were not present the soil profile generally showed 0.15m of topsoil over 0.05m of brown sand over yellow sand natural.



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Figure 4. Lengths 4 and 5

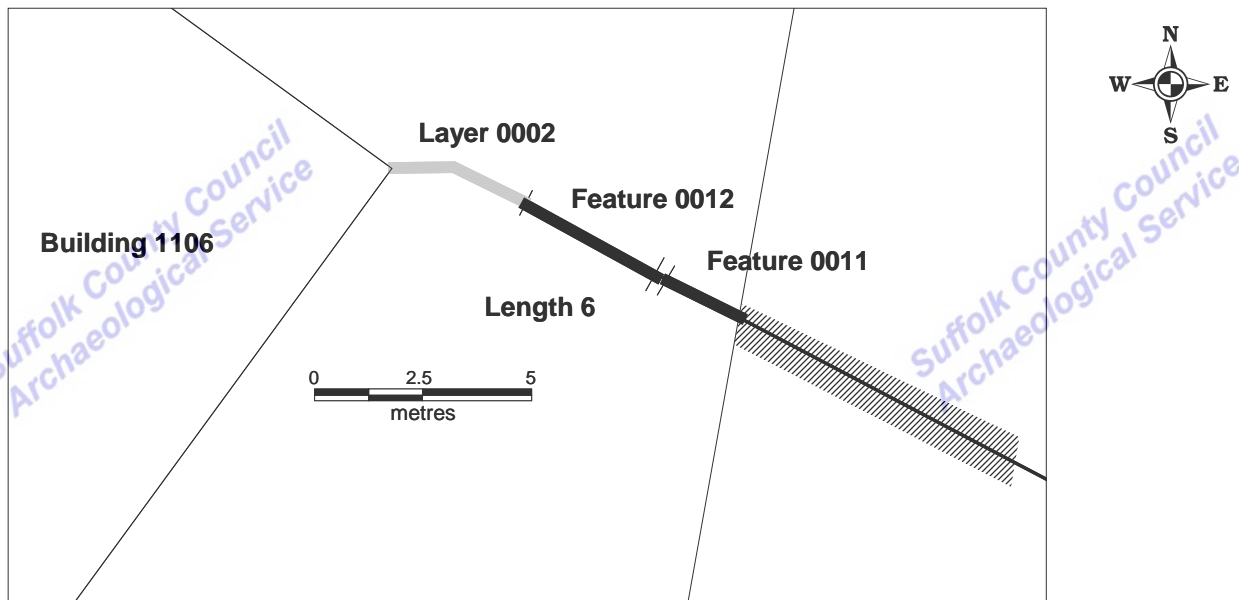
### Length 5

This was 8m long, NE-SW aligned and finished in a large connection hole. The connection hole accounted for the majority of the trench length, c.5m long x 1.2m wide and was completely disturbed with a number of modern cables and pipes being contained within it. The 3m of trench showed 0.25m of modern material overlying brown sand, which continued beyond the base of the trench.

### Length 6

This was roughly E-W aligned and cut across the road from building 1106 (Fig. 5). This trench was 0.65m deep and the soil profile showed 0.13m of concrete over 0.13m of sub-base, over 0.24m of almost stoneless brown sand over yellow chalky sand natural at the western 1.9m. East of this were two possible features filled with brown sand which continued beyond the base of the trench (Fig. 5). The probable feature division was shown by the presence of a vertical band of pink sand up to 0.2m across. Where the length crossed the road it followed the line of an old duct and no intact soil profile was seen.





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Figure 5. Length 6

Context	Feature	Identifier	Description
0001		Finds	Unstratified finds from whole site
0002	0002	Layer	Layer of homogeneous, well worked dark brown sand. Occasional stones were seen in trench length 1 at the west end of the site. However although the nature of the soil layer changes across the site, previous evidence suggests that it is all the same deposit - a Roman/Saxon worked soil. Overlies 0003.
0003	0003	Layer	Mixed bright and dark grey sand. Less mixed than 0002 with frequent chalk and charcoal flecks and stones. This could be a feature fill. Under 0002.
0004		Finds	Unstratified finds from the connection hole at the north end of trench length 1. Recovered from the upcast soil.
0005		Finds	Unstratified finds recovered from upcast soil from trench length 2.
0006		Finds	Unstratified finds recovered from upcast soil from trench length 3.
0007		Finds	Unstratified finds recovered from upcast soil from trench length 5.
0008		Finds	Unstratified finds recovered from upcast soil from the west end of trench length 6 – from the road edge to building 1120.
0009	0009	Feature	Brown sand filled feature in trench length 4.
0010	0010	Feature	Brown sand filled feature in trench length 4.
0012	0012	Feature	Brown sand filled feature in trench length 6
0013	0013	Feature	Brown sand filled feature in trench length 6

Table 1 Context List

### 3. Finds and Environmental Evidence by Cathy Tester.

Finds were collected from five contexts, all of them unstratified, in five of the six trench lengths. Their quantities are shown in Table 2.

Context	Trench length	Pottery		Animal bone		CBM		Spotdate
		No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0004	1	1	17	2	50			Rom
0005	2	2	54	1	23			MSax, Rom
0006	3	1	3	1	4	1	4	LC3/4
0007	5	1	6					Rom
0008	6			2	111			
<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	

Table 2. Finds quantities

Five sherds of pottery were collected. The earliest fragments are Roman and consist of two fragments of sandy greyware, a jar base from 0004 and a rim in 0007 and a grey micaceous ware jar base from 0005. A sherd of a Nene Valley colour-coated beaker recovered from 0006 dates to the late 3rd or 4th century. The latest fragment is Middle Saxon and consists of a single body sherd of Sandy Ipswich ware which was found in length 2 (0005).

A small unidentified fragment of CBM was collected from 0006.

Six animal bone fragments were recovered from four of the lengths. The cattle bone included a mandible (0005), a rib (0004) and a metacarpal (0008). Large mammal long bones (0004 and 0006) and a medium mammal humerus (0008) were also found.

The finds assemblage is small but indicates activity on this site or nearby during the Late Roman and Middle Saxon Periods.

#### *Archive information:*

The finds are in one bag in the parish box at H / 80 / 5.

### 4. Conclusion

This project monitored the excavation of trenches that ran through the known Roman and Early Saxon settlement area. Buried soil, probably a worked topsoil dating to the Roman and Saxon periods, was found in the western end of the site and the subsoil profile indicates a greater degree of truncation to the eastern end of the site. Features and finds were consistent with the results from the various excavations in this area although the presence of a sherd of Ipswich ware is interesting as this is the first sherd of Middle Saxon pottery to be positively identified in the Caudle Head area.

Jo Caruth  
September 2005