

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

Fenceline at the Recycling Centre, RAF Lakenheath LKH 255

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF GROUNDWORKS ASSOCIATED WITH NEW FENCING AT THE RECYCLING CENTRE, RAF LAKENHEATH

Planning Application No. Pre planning

NGR: TL 7318 8106

OASIS Ref. Suffolkc1-12275

Funded by: MoD Defence Estates

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2006/28

Summary

An archaeological monitoring of fence footings at the Recycling Centre, RAF Lakenheath, identified the presence of archaeological deposits in the form of a buried soil horizon and miscellaneous features, assumed to be part of the Roman and Anglo-Saxon occupation seen in surrounding sites.

Introduction

Two visits were made to the site on 6th September 2005 to monitor the excavation of footing trenches for a new fence along the perimeter of the Recycling Centre compound, RAF Lakenheath. The work was requested by Judith Plouviez (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team) and was funded by the developer, MoD Defence Estates.

Interest in the site was based upon its general location (Fig. 1), to the north of Caudle Head Mere. This part of the base has seen extensive archaeological work, which has identified Roman and Anglo-Saxon occupation in a series of sites in the immediate vicinity, LKH 191, LKH 194, LKH 207 and LKH 223 (Caruth 2005), and LKH 225 and 227 (Caruth in prep).

Methodology and Results

Nine of the post footings were observed whilst open, comprising c.30% of the total. Each had been excavated by hand and some had involved the removal of previous post foundations. Each footing measured between 0.3m and 0.5m in diameter and up to 1.2m deep. They were spaced at 2m-2.5m intervals just south of the pre-existing runway perimeter fence.

Each trench showed a topsoil layer, 0.3m thick, overlying a dark grey/brown/black layer of loam/sand, which was also 0.3m thick. In the four south-western trenches these dark grey/black fills extended to a depth of up to 1m, apparently showing the presence of undefined cut features.

Beneath these deposits lay the clean natural subsoil of yellow/orange sands.

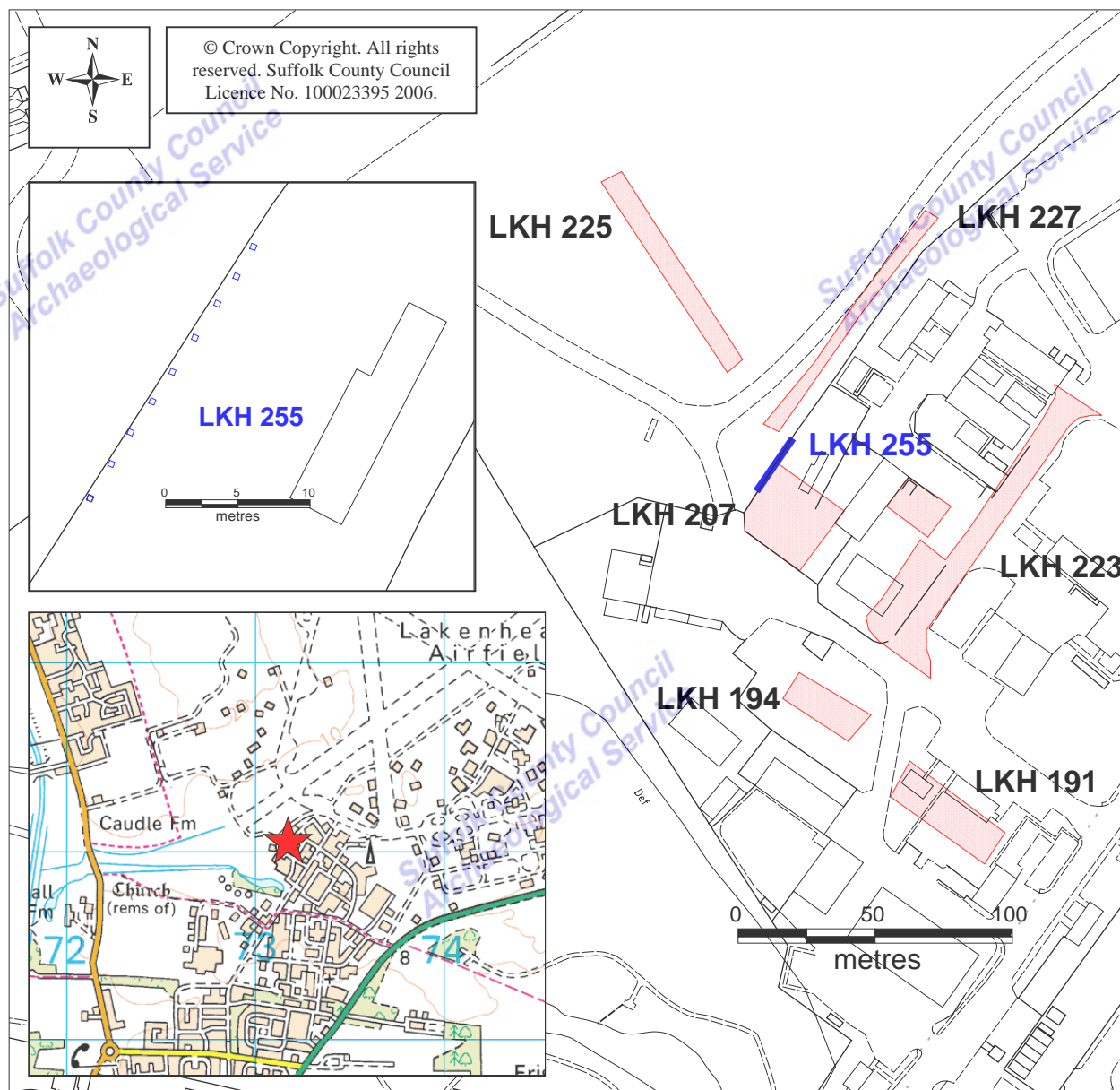


Figure 1. Site location plan

Discussion

The trenching while being very limited in size, which seriously hindered archaeological observation, clearly identified the presence of archaeological deposits. Several trenches appeared to have been excavated through features such as pits or ditches, but it was not possible to identify their size, shape or function and no finds material was recovered. These cut features were sealed beneath a former occupation layer or buried topsoil horizon, which was visible in every trench, and has also been seen on the surrounding sites.

This trenching therefore has demonstrated that archaeological deposits, relating to the wider Roman and Anglo-Saxon occupation in the vicinity, are spread continuously through the area between LKH207 and LKH227. With the occupation layer being visible at a depth of 0.3m this also shows that future development in the vicinity is highly likely to disturb the archaeological levels.

References

Caruth, J., 2005, *RAF Lakenheath, combined report on adjacent sites LKH191, LKH194, LKH207 and LKH223*. SCCAS Report No. 2005/54.

Caruth, J., In prep, *Base Water System, RAF Lakenheath, LKH225 and 227*. SCCAS.

J. A. Craven, January 2006