

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

CAC 036

**1 Pinbush Road, South Lowestoft Industrial Estate,
Gisleham**

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AND
MONITORING, 2006
(Planning app. no. W/8554/18)

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All Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service.

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Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Harrod UK Ltd and was monitored by Dr Jess Tipper (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team (SCCASCT)).

Project assistants Roy Damant, Tim Browne and Kevin Wooldridge, all from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team, carried out the excavation.

Clare Good directed the project which was managed by John Newman, who also provided advice during the production of the report.

Finds processing was carried out by Anna West and Cathy Tester, both of whom contributed to the specialist finds report.

Thanks are due to Paul Bales of P.J. Spilling Builders, the site manager and liaison between the archaeologists and the builders during the monitoring phase.

Summary

Gisleham, 1 Pinbush Road, South Lowestoft Industrial Estate, Gisleham. (TM 5273 8956, CAC 036)

An archaeological evaluation and subsequent monitoring was undertaken in advance of an extension to the Harrod factory at Pinbush Road, Gisleham, in order to characterise the nature of any surviving archaeological deposits. An early Iron Age site was recently discovered just to the south of this site (CAC 035) and scattered Prehistoric finds are recorded on the county Sites and Monuments Record in the area. The site is also just to the east of Bloodmoor Hill, an area with abundant archaeology including an Anglo-Saxon settlement and cemetery site. Five trenches were excavated over the development area, and were stripped to the level of the natural subsoil. Four of the five trenches produced no archaeological evidence. Trench 4 however, had a buried soil horizon with scattered flints of Mesolithic to Bronze Age date, as well as some probable Iron Age pottery found in association with a small burnt area, a possible domestic hearth, within this soil horizon. Occasional flint flakes were also found in the top and subsoil within this trench. This evidence is of a similar age to that found at the adjacent CAC 035 and suggests a small area of prehistoric activity. Subsequent monitoring of the area surrounding trenches 4 and 5, during the excavation of the building footings, revealed no further archaeology.

(C. Good, for SCCAS and Harrod UK Ltd.; 2006/102)

SMR information

Planning application no.	W/8554/18
Date of fieldwork:	Evaluation 24/04/2006 – 27/04/2006, Monitoring 01/11/06 – 03/11/06
Grid Reference:	TM 5273 8956
Funding body:	Harrod UK Ltd.

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Introduction

An application has been made to extend the current premises of Harrod UK Ltd, a sports equipment manufacturing factory at 1 Pinbush Road, South Lowestoft Industrial Estate, Gisleham. Planning consent was conditional on an archaeological evaluation being undertaken. The site consists of two separate plots, the western one centred on TM 5267 8956 and the eastern at TM 5278 8954 (Fig. 2). Both are currently undeveloped grassland.

The total area of development covers an area of c. 4100 square metres and lies at approximately 14m OD. The two plots are flat with an underlying drift geology of both heavy clay, and gravely sand. They are surrounded by industrial units with the exception of the easterly plot, which has a plot of land currently under development and also recently subject to an archaeological condition (CAC 035. Good, report forthcoming) to the south.

This development is in reasonably close proximity to areas of known archaeology recorded on the county Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) (Fig. 2). Bloodmoor Hill in particular, is a site that lies just to the west of the development where extensive archaeological evidence from prehistoric to medieval has been recorded, in particular an Anglo-Saxon settlement and cemetery site (CAC 016). Scattered prehistoric finds including a Neolithic axehead were also found on the industrial estate itself. The site just to the south of this development, CAC 035, also produced fairly extensive evidence of prehistoric activity, mainly centred on the early Iron Age period. A small round house with associated enclosure was discovered, along with a series of probable clay quarry pits, also thought to date from roughly this period.

It is also worth noting that many of the buildings in the industrial estate were built before the PPG16 condition and so would not have been subject to archaeological survey during construction.

Considering the location of the site in relation to Bloodmoor Hill and due to the recent discoveries at CAC 035, it was deemed necessary to evaluate these plots in the first instance. A Brief and Specification for the archaeological work (Appendix I) was produced by Jess Tipper of Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service (SCCAS) Conservation Team and the work was carried out by Clare Good of the SCCAS Field Team, funded by Harrod UK Ltd.

Methodology

Five trenches were excavated to the level of the natural subsoil in March 2006 using a wheeled JCB machine fitted with a 1.5m wide toothless ditching bucket. They were located only in the areas to be developed and/or disturbed. That is, where buildings were to be erected and also the area of carparking. These locations were agreed by SCCAS Conservation Team (Fig. 3). A total of 91.1m in length was excavated representing a sample of approximately 2.5% of the total area, under constant supervision from the observing archaeologist. Subsequent monitoring of the excavation of the footing trenches surrounding trenches 4 and 5 was also undertaken; the machine and footings were constantly monitored from the side of the trenches during digging in this area.

Both the excavated topsoil and the exposed surface of the trenches were examined visually for finds and features. Where features were revealed, they were cleaned manually for definition and each allocated 'observed phenomena' (OP) numbers within a unique continuous numbering system under the SMR code CAC 036 then partially excavated in order to recover dating evidence as well as to observe their form and possibly determine any function. The surface of the trench and the excavated topsoil were subjected to a thorough metal detector search by a competent operative. Where deemed necessary, features were sampled for environmental analysis by a specialist. They were drawn on site at a scale of 1:20, levelled in relation to Ordnance Datum and recorded photographically using a digital and black and white camera. The trenches were planned at a scale of 1:50 and their locations within the

development area determined manually using measuring tapes. The site archive will be deposited in the County SMR at Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

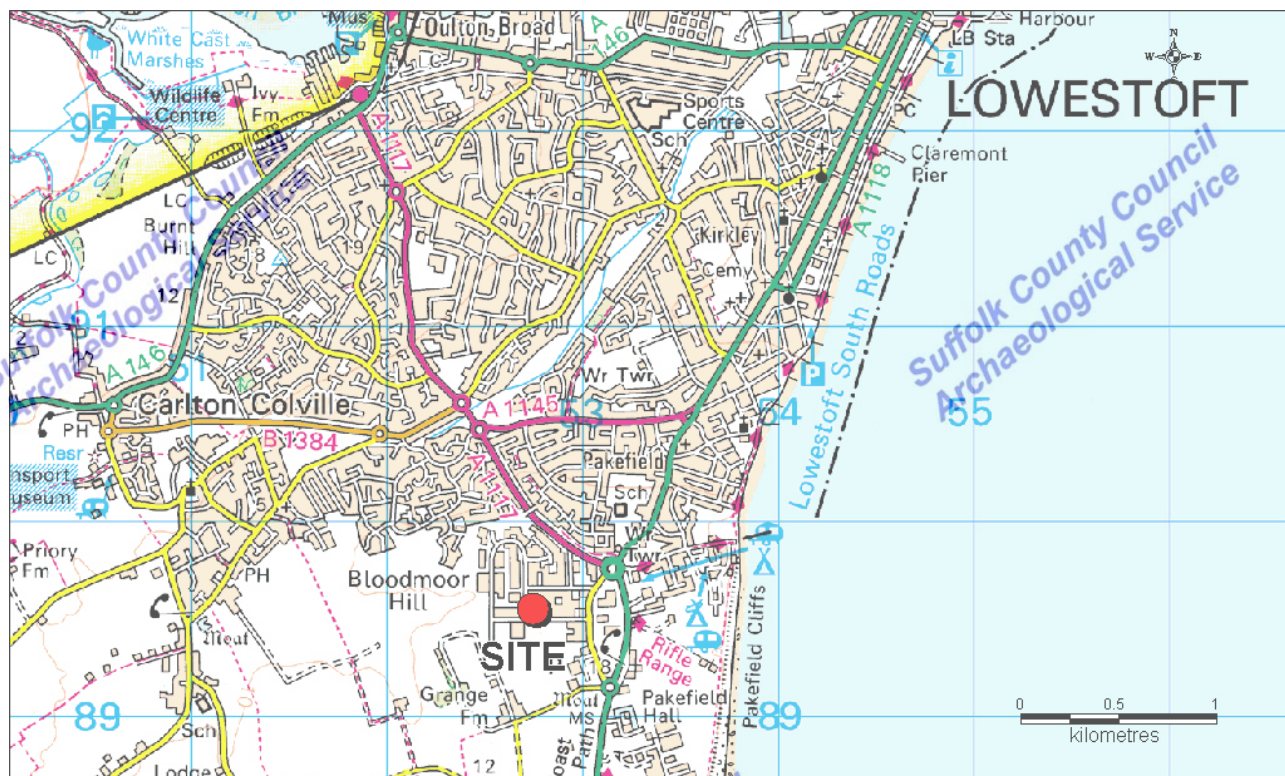
All finds were washed and marked before being quantified, identified and dated by the finds staff of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (see section 4. The Finds). Harrod UK Ltd. funded all archaeological work.

The site and subsequent results are recorded on OASIS, the online archaeological database, under the code Suffolkc1-14447.

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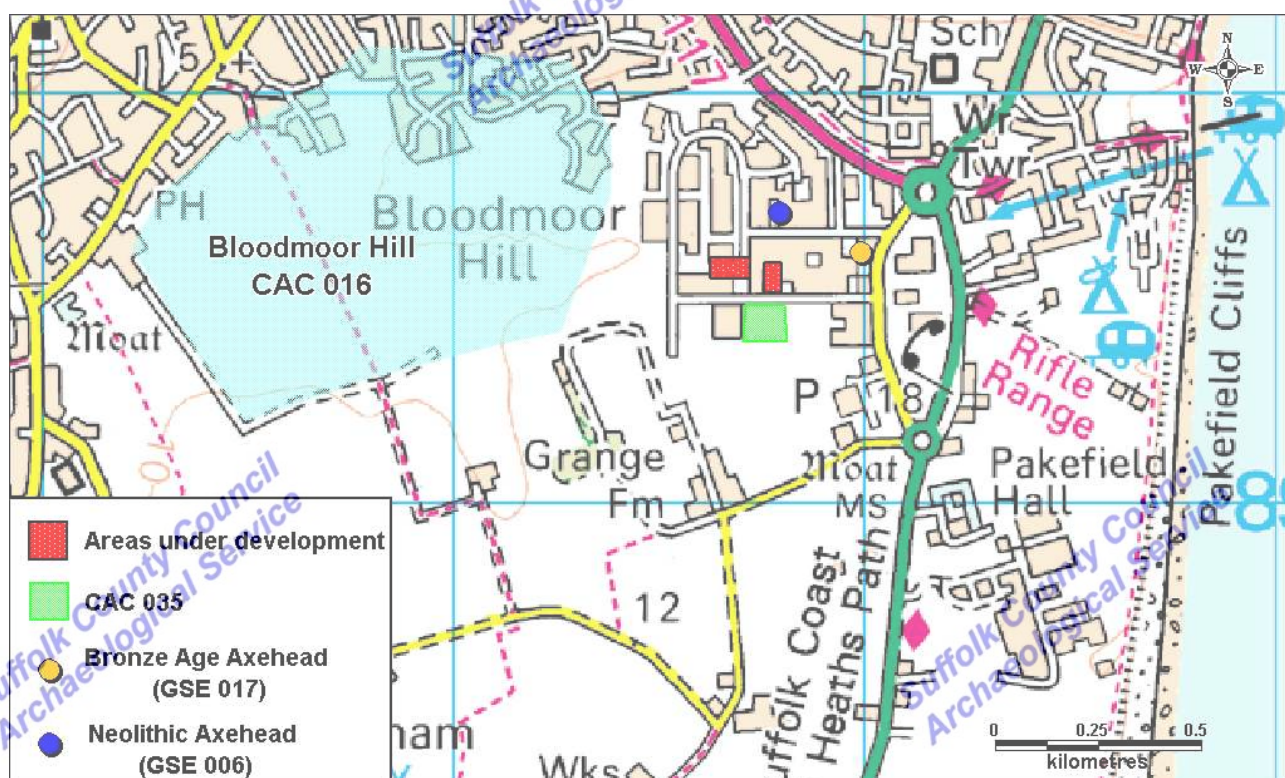
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Figure 1: Site Location



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Figure 2: Location of site and records held on county SMR

Results

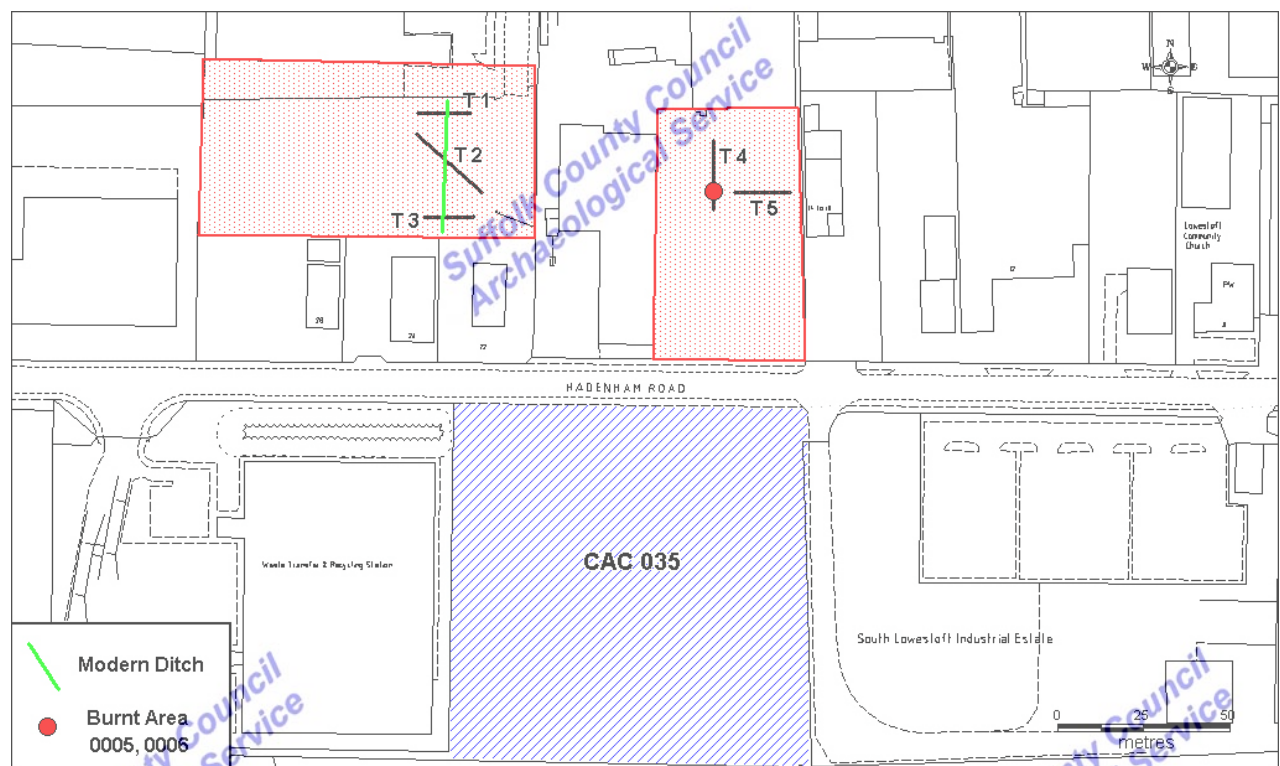
Evaluation

Trenches 1, 2 and 3 were in the westerly plot of development. Trenches 4 and 5 were in the easterly plot of land (Fig. 3). Trench 5 was deliberately placed in light of results in trench 4, at right angles to where the burnt area was discovered.

Topsoil 0001 was similar over the whole site and comprised a mid/dark brown loamy sand clay with frequent roots, stones and chalk lenses. It was, on average, c.0.45m deep throughout. Two probable Bronze Age flint flakes were found within this topsoil, within Trench 4.

Subsoil 0002 was also similar over the whole site and consisted of a mid/light brown silty sand with occasional flint fragments. This was also, on average, c.0.45m deep throughout. Three sherds of probable Iron Age pottery were found within this layer within Trench 4, as well as 2 probable Bronze Age flint flakes.

Visibility in all the trenches was reasonably good throughout the evaluation.



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Figure 3: Trench and feature location

Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned E-W and was 15.5m long. It was excavated to a depth of c.0.8m, down to natural gravely sand.

A modern ditch was seen 6.7m from the eastern end, and was 1m wide. Pieces of modern wire and waste were protruding from its surface. No other finds or features were seen in this trench.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned NW-SE and was 25.4m long. It was excavated to an average depth of c.1m, down to natural gravely sand.

The same modern ditch seen in Trench 1 also went through this trench in addition to a modern dyke cutting its south-eastern end. No other finds or features were seen in this trench.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned W-E and was 14.2m long. It was excavated to an average depth of c.0.8m, down to natural gravely sand.

The same modern ditch seen in Trench 1 also went through this trench also but no other finds or features were noted.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned N-S and was 20m long. It was excavated to an average depth of c.1.1m, down to gravely natural sand at the northern end, and to a buried soil horizon (0003) at the southern end.

At c.13m from the northern end, a burnt patch of sand (0005, 0006) was seen in the buried soil horizon (0003). Layer 0003 began c.6m from the northern end of the trench and consisted of mid/dark brown coarse grained sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks and occasional worked flint throughout it. This worked flint varied in date from possible Mesolithic to Bronze Age and consisted of four flakes and two blades. Six sherds of pottery were also recovered, representing two Bronze Age vessels. This horizon was c.0.2m thick and was at a metre below the current surface, lying on top of natural sand. It continued through the end of the trench for an unknown distance, due to modern disturbance at this point.

The area of burning (0005, 0006) appeared to represent scorching in the soil horizon 0003, probably a form of domestic hearth activity. 0006 was a scorched grey fine grained sand surrounding 0005, a scorched pink sandy clay with occasional small burnt clay lenses. There were no finds from this feature itself but it was closely associated with 0003, from which finds have been made. The area is approximately 0.9m in diameter, and roughly circular in shape (Figure 4).

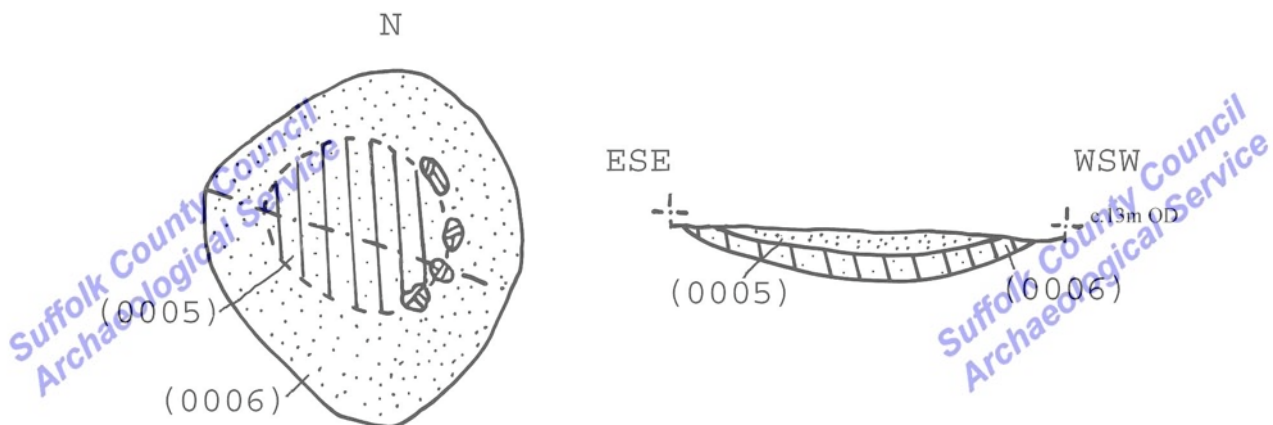


Figure 4: Feature (0005), (0006). Plan before excavation and section (both 1:20)

Trench 5

Trench 5 was aligned E-W and was 16m long. It was excavated to an average depth of c.1m, down to natural gravely sand.

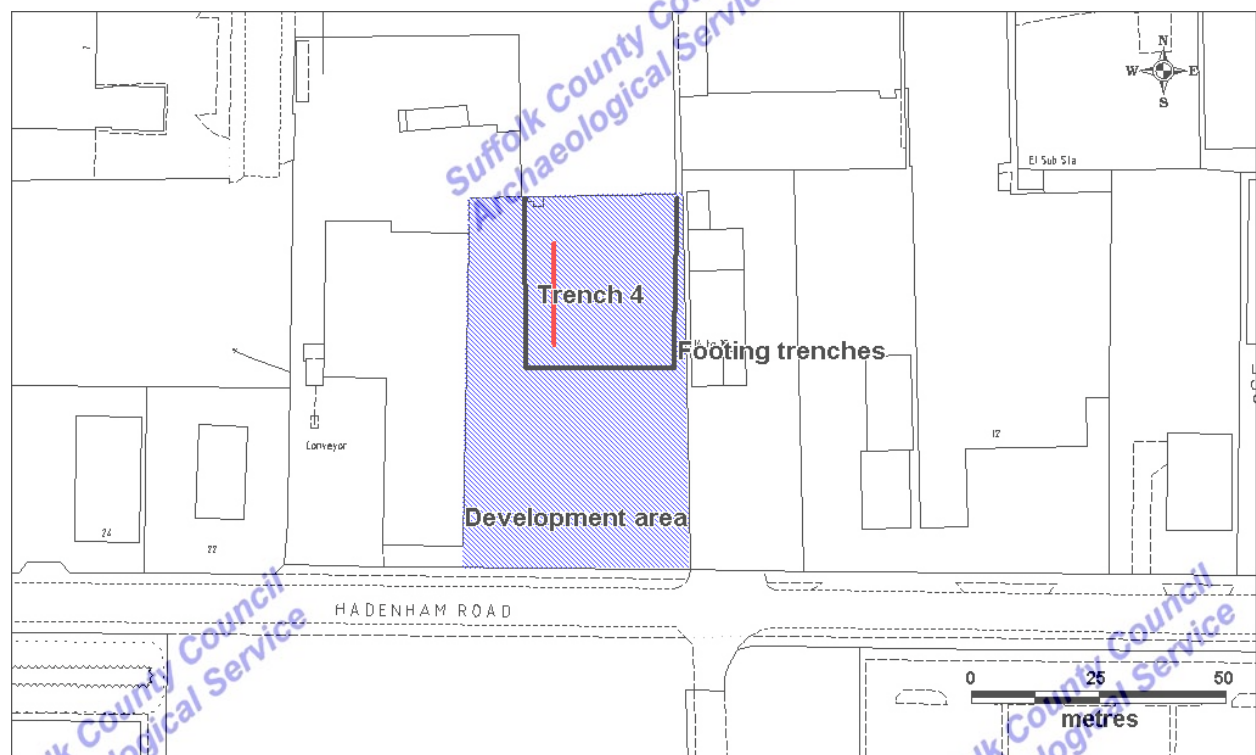
No finds or features were noted within this trench.

Monitoring

Due to the results from trench 4, monitoring of the excavation of the footing trenches was recommended surrounding this area. The c.1m of top and subsoil covering the site will protect all but the foundation trenches within the proposed building footprint from disturbances, and so no further targeted excavation was deemed necessary.

The footings were excavated to a depth of c.1.3m on average, with approximately 12 square pads dug a further c.0.4m each. They were excavated cleanly and on all occasions, the natural was revealed. This natural consisted of solid clay to the east of the plot, to fine pure sand to the west.

Despite almost continuous monitoring of the machine and the trenches, no further archaeological finds or features were revealed. Soil horizon 0003 was again noted, but no artefactual evidence was found within it.



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Figure 5: Footing trenches in relation to Trench 4

Finds evidence

Introduction

Finds were collected from three contexts in Evaluation Trench 4 and the quantities by context are shown in the table below.

OP	Pottery		Flint		Burnt flint		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0001			2	33			BA
0002	3	33	2	12	1	15	IA, BA or NEO
0003	6	57	6	76			BA, Meso
Total	9	90	10	121	1	15	

Table 1. Finds quantities.

Pottery

Hand-made prehistoric pottery was found in two contexts. Three sherds representing three vessels were collected from subsoil layer 0002. The first is a flint tempered rim which is probably Iron Age but has some characteristics which suggest that it may be earlier, possibly Neolithic. The second piece is sand and organic tempered with a plain upright rim which has a slightly squared top. It is undecorated, with black surfaces and core, and probably Iron Age although the possibility that it is earlier cannot be ruled out completely. The third piece is a medium sand tempered bodysherd with dark grey/black surfaces and core and of probable Iron Age date.

Six sherds representing two vessels were collected from buried soil horizon 0003. Two sand and grog-tempered Bronze Age vessels were found. Both are undecorated bodysherds. The first has orange external surfaces and a black core and interior surface and is similar in appearance to the Ardleigh-type urns found at nearby CAC035 (Good, forthcoming). The second piece is grey in colour and more abraded, but also part of a large vessel.

Flint

Identified by Colin Pendleton

Ten pieces of worked flint were collected and details by context are shown in the table below. All are unpatinated unless otherwise mentioned.

OP	Type	Notes	Date
0001	flake	Irregular, hinge-fractured. Crude edge retouch. Incipient cones of percussion.	BA
	flake	Squat flake with limited edge retouch.. Beach pebble.	BA
0002	flake	Snapped, triangular section, incipient cone of percussion. Slight edge retouch/usewear	BA
	flake	Snapped with limited edge retouch. Largely cortex on dorsal face	BA
0003	flake	Snapped, irregular long flake, sub-triangular cross-section, pronounced ripples	BA
	flake	Squat flake with hinge fracture and natural striking platform	BA
	flake	Snapped, with neat steep edge retouch. Possibly part of a scraper	L Preh
	flake	Snapped. Natural striking platform, sub-triangular cross-section. Lightly patinated	Meso/Neo
	flake/blade	Long flake/ blade. Limited use-wear on one edge, other side cortex. Lightly patinated	Meso/Neo
	blade	Very small bladelet. Lightly patinated	Meso/Neo

Table 2. Worked flint

Most of the flint is Bronze Age, specifically, of mid or late Bronze Age date and has many of the characteristics such as squat and irregular shapes, hinge fractures, natural striking platforms and incipient cones of percussion which indicate the less-skilled workmanship of later prehistoric flint assemblages. Three pieces from buried soil horizon 0003, a flake, a blade and a 'bladelet,' are lightly patinated and probably earlier — Mesolithic, or more likely, Neolithic or even Early Bronze Age.

A single fragment of a fire-cracked flint 'potboiler,' undatable, but probably prehistoric, was collected from subsoil layer 0002.

Discussion

The evaluation finds assemblage is limited but indicates activity in the vicinity as early as the Mesolithic or Neolithic as well as the Bronze Age and Iron Age.

Conclusion

The lack of evidence in trenches 1, 2, 3 and 5 suggests that activity in this area is very limited. The two sites themselves are some of the few empty spaces without modern development within the industrial estate and in all probability, have not been developed at all in the past. This suggests that any archaeology should be relatively undisturbed and the lack of any evidence therefore implies that little exists here.

The only finds or possible features all occur within Trench 4, indicating that this is a small hub of activity. The finds recovered are very similar in date and style to those found at the adjacent site, CAC 035 (Good, report forthcoming), indicating middle and late prehistoric activity. The small burnt area is indicative of a domestic or small industrial hearth, of probable late prehistoric date judging by the associated finds around it. Despite monitoring of this area during the excavation of the footing trenches, no further archaeology was revealed suggesting that this was an isolated feature, a relatively common occurrence in the later prehistoric period.

Reference

Good, C., forthcoming. *A report on the Archaeological excavation at the Household Waste Recycling Site, Gisleham, CAC035*. SCCAS Report No 2006/104

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.