

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

## RAF Lakenheath, Jogging Track Lighting, Phases 1 and 2 ERL 162

### A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF LIGHTING AROUND JOGGING TRACKS AT RAF LAKENHEATH

Planning Application No.: None  
NGR: TL7262 8084 and TL 7304 8085  
Oasis Ref. Suffolkc1-20915

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### Summary

Archaeological monitoring during the erection of lighting bollards around the jogging tracks near Caudle Head at RAF Lakenheath demonstrated the presence of waterlogged and water sorted deposits and identified some undated features.



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Figure 1. Site location

## Introduction

Archaeological monitoring was carried out during the erection of lighting bollards around the jogging track at RAF Lakenheath (Fig. 1). The work was carried out in two phases, in January and August 2006, at grid refs. TL7262 8084 and TL 7304 8085 (Fig. 2); a third proposed phase north of Caudle Head was abandoned. The fieldwork was carried out by Jo Caruth and Andrew Tester, Senior Project Officers with Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team. The site lies in an area southwest of the extensive Late Iron Age and Roman settlement site and Roman and Saxon finds have been recovered from the field immediately north of Caudle Head. Visits were made throughout the excavations for the electric cable, but Phase 2 was monitored more intensively than Phase 1, as the potential for disturbance to archaeological remains was higher. The trenches were c.0.3m wide and 0.5-0.7m deep.

### Phase 1

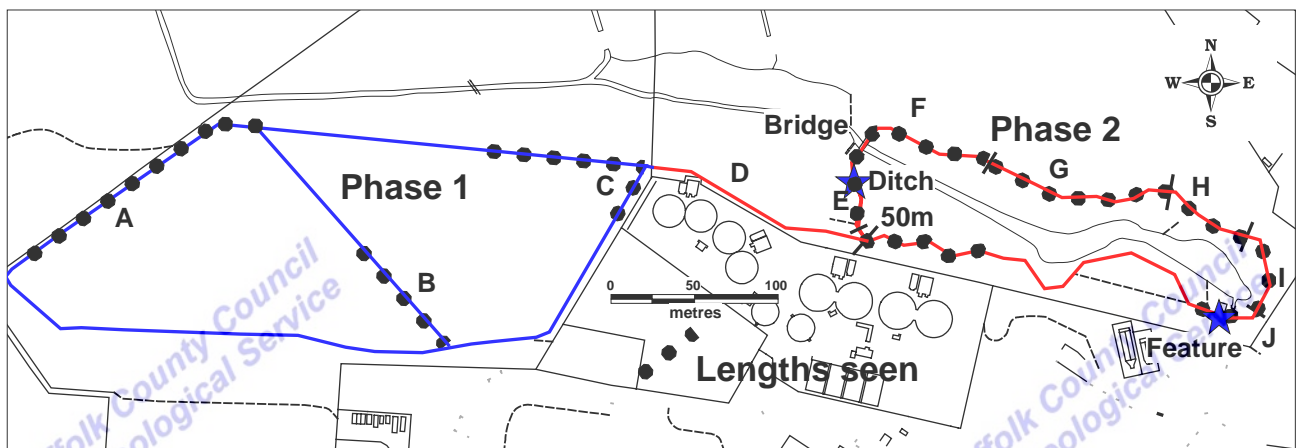
Three visits were made during this work and lengths of trench up to 100m were seen alongside the western perimeter fence, through the centre of the site and the northern and eastern lengths closest to Caudle Head (Fig. 2). The remaining lengths were walked over after backfilling.

### Length A

This lay near the perimeter fence in the north-west of the site and showed a soil profile of pale yellow natural sand at 0.6m overlain by grey-brown slightly peaty sand under a thin, c.0.1m sandy topsoil. No finds were recovered.

### Lengths B and C

These both showed brown sand through the full depth, c.0.7m, of the trench in the eastern c.20m. Further west yellow sand could be seen at the base of the trench and c.122m from the eastern end, a c.0.15m thick layer of white sand was visible between the brown sand and the natural; the location of this corresponded to a visible NE-SW aligned ridge which was a maximum of 0.2m higher than the surrounding ground level. This may be the remnants of an ancient sand dune. No finds were seen.



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Figure 2. Plan of monitored lengths

## Phase 2

Approximately 60% of the trenching in Phase 2 was seen during five visits (Fig. 2).

### Length D

This was backfilled at the time of the visit, but the surface soil was all dark grey sand with no sign of disturbed natural yellow sand.

### Length E

This ran southwards and eastwards from the bridge at the west end of Caudle Head Mere. The following descriptions are measured from the edge of the bridge. The trench started 9m from the bridge. Trenches were between 0.6 and 0.7m deep.

**9-19m** The entire soil profile was peat and tree roots.

**19m** This showed 0.25m of topsoil over 0.12m of white sand over 0.15m of grey sand onto natural yellow sand.

**20-21m** A probable east-west aligned ditch, 0002, was visible, 0.7m wide x 0.23m deep (Fig. 3), filled with streaky grey sand, 0003, and which underlay the white sand and just cut the yellow sand natural.

**22m** The natural yellow sand rose to 0.45m below ground level and underlay streaky white and grey sand.

**29m** The natural dropped away to below the base of the trench and was overlain by a layer of pale yellow sand and the white sand layer seen above.

**36m** The soil was all grey sand and tree roots.

**39m** The soil profile showed the white sand layer at 0.35m below the ground level but it was becoming patchier and by 46m it had gone.

**39-49m** A peaty orange-brown iron panned layer was visible in the top of the soil profile (over the white sand where present).

**49m-90m** Dark grey sand throughout the soil profile.

**90-110m** Natural sand just visible at the base of the trench (0.5m).

**110-114m.** Brown sand throughout the soil profile.

**114-131m** Natural pale yellow sand visible at between 0.4 and 0.45m below ground level overlain by brown sand.

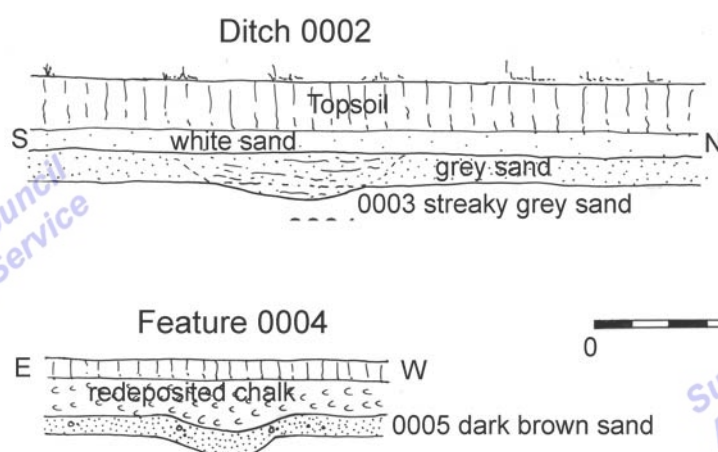


Figure 3. Feature sections

### Length F

This ran from the bridge northwards and eastwards, measurements are from the bridge and the trench started at 4m.



**4-7m** Pale sand under 0.4m peat.

**7-42m** Peat and dark brown sand throughout the soil profile, with some patches of pale sand within it.

**42-45m** Pale sand under 0.45m of peat.

**45-75m** Well preserved peat with defined organic matter clearly visible.

### **Length G**

This was all grey sand throughout the depth, with occasional fragmentary animal bones seen to in the western end.

### **Length H**

This was similar to above but peat could be seen in the bottom 0.1m of the trench (0.4m from the surface).

### **Length I**

This showed 0.4m of dark brown sand over 0.1m of white sand and gravel.

### **Length J**

This ran from the eastern edge of the entrance gate south-westwards.

**0-12m** All disturbed.

**13-18m** Mixed yellow brown sand, probably also disturbed.

**18-19m** Break for path.

**20m** The soil profile showed 0.15m topsoil over 0.25m redeposited chalk over 0.1m of dark brown soil, similar in appearance to the Roman buried soil layer, over peat in the bottom of the trench.

**23m** The soil profile showed 0.1m of topsoil over 0.2m of redeposited chalk over 0.1m of brown, possibly Roman buried soil, over natural yellow sand.

**27m** A possible feature, 0004, 0.6m wide filled with slumped, redeposited chalk and brown sand, 0005, (Fig. 3) was seen in the base of the trench. It wasn't possible to tell what this feature might be.

**27-37m** This showed 0.1m of topsoil over 0.2-0.3m of redeposited chalk over 0.1-2m of dark soil. No natural was visible.

**37m** The redeposited chalk stops suddenly at 37m. Topsoil overlies brown sand.

## *Discussion*

This monitoring recorded evidence of changes in topography and landscape around Caudle Head and in the area west of it. Around Caudle Head all the deposits showed some evidence of water sorting and water logging, but the deposits north of Caudle Head were generally deeper and wetter than those to the south. At the south-east end of the site a brown soil layer, 0005, similar to the Roman buried soil seen on the Roman sites was recorded, but no finds were recovered with which to confirm the interpretation. 0005 was overlain by redeposited chalk which was probably relatively modern. Two features were seen, an east-west aligned ditch, 0002, at the north end of the Phase 2 site, where soil deposits seem to suggest slightly drier ground and an ill defined feature, 0004, in the southeast corner. Some animal bone fragments were seen in the dark sand but as the context was not datable these were not collected.

Jo Caruth

November 2006