

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

## Excavation of 'Hot Gun Pit' RAF Lakenheath. LKH 308

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF GROUNDWORKS  
Pre-Planning  
NGR: TL 740 823  
OASIS Ref. Suffolke1-30705

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### Summary

An archaeological monitoring was carried out during the excavation of a 'Hot Gun Pit' at Lakenheath airbase. No archaeological features were uncovered.

### Introduction

The excavation of a 'Hot Gun Pit' on RAF Lakenheath air base was monitored following a pre-application condition agreed between the planning authority and Defence Estates USF. Primary interest in the area is based upon the extensive evidence for settlement on the airbase from the Iron Age to the Middle Saxon periods. Although only a small hole was excavated it was an opportunity to examine an area of the airfield of which little is known archaeologically. The work was funded by Defence Estates USAF.

### Methodology and Results

The work was carried out in one visit on the 14th December 2006 and consisted of a 3m square hole excavated to a depth of 1m into a grass area next to a taxiway on the airfield (Fig. 1). The hole was excavated using a JCB with a flat bucket under archaeological control. The section showed 680mm of recently disturbed soil that breaks down into topsoil 8mm, mixed sandy soil 400mm, and darker sandy loam 200mm (Fig 2). These layers overlay a thin, but very distinct, dark soil 5mm thick, which overlay a sandy grey layer that gradually turned yellow. It is suggested that the upper 650mm of section comprised layers laid down when the military airfield was constructed during the 20th century. No archaeological features were exposed within the pit or finds recovered.

### Discussion

No archaeological features or finds were uncovered from this excavation. From the soil profile it is suggested that the trench may have occupied a natural hollow in the Breckland landscape which was characterised by humps and hollows. It may be, however, that the ground level was raised during airfield construction to avoid low, potentially unstable, ground. The profile of the buried soil suggests it was a well-drained acid soil before the airfield was built. The lack of features cannot be taken as an indicator of the potential of the area as the hole was relatively small; it does suggest however that the soil profile is intact and therefore any archaeological levels would be well preserved.

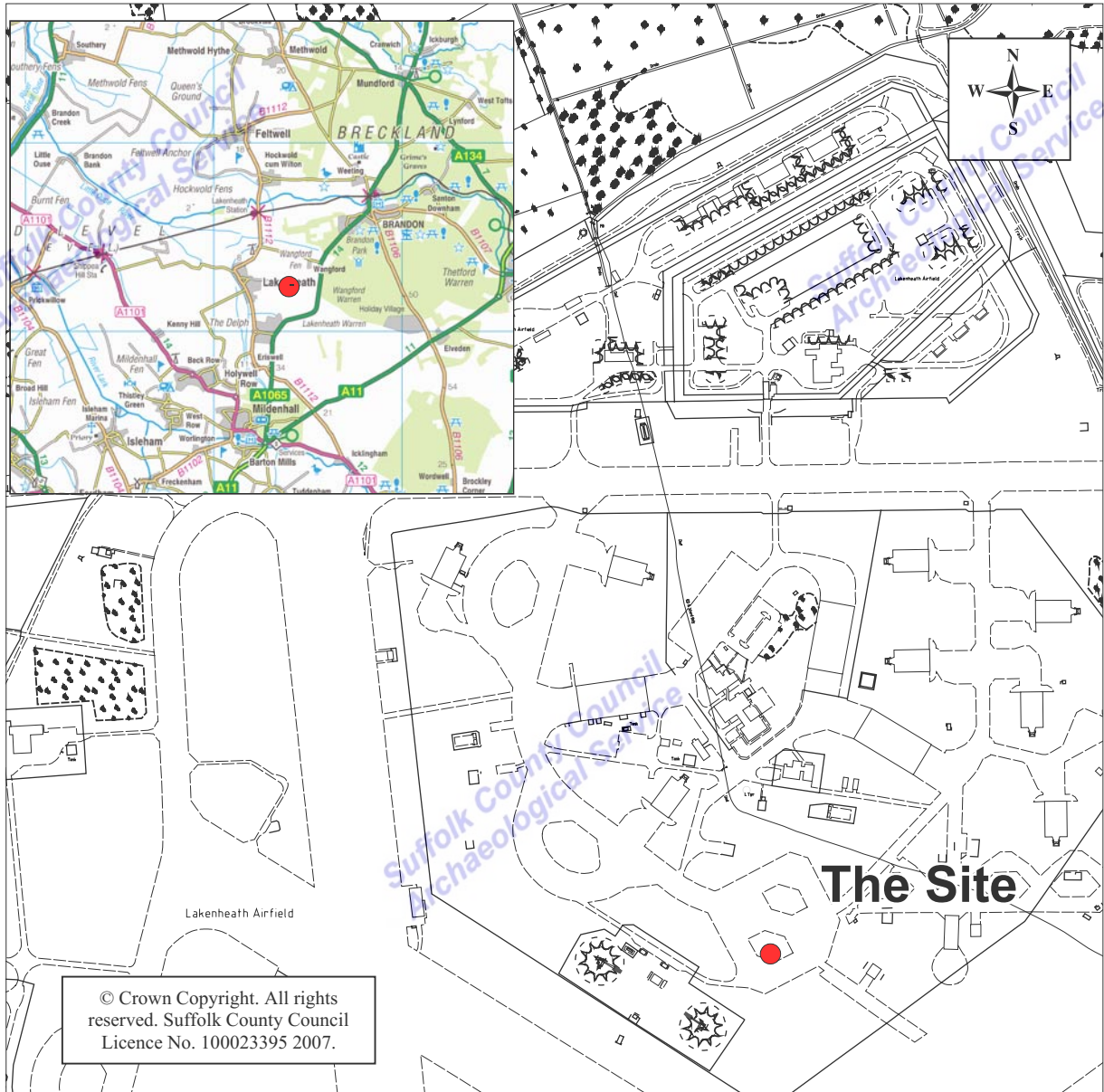


Figure 1. Site location plan

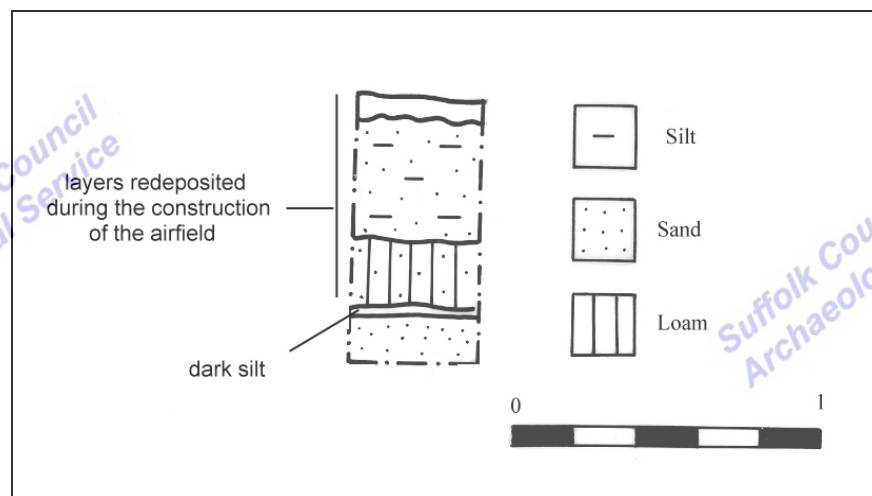


Figure 2 Section of excavated hole