

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

## SKATE PARK, RAF LAKENHEATH

### ERL 145

#### A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF THE GROUNDWORKS FOR A NEW SKATE PARK AT RAF LAKENHEATH

Planning Application No.: F/2004/0465/GOV

NGR: TL 7264 8022

Oasis Ref. Suffolkc1-9024

Funded by: MOD Defence Estates (USF)

SCCAS Report no. 2005/122

## Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out during the construction of a new Skate Park at RAF Lakenheath, however archaeological levels were generally not reached during the construction works and no finds were recovered.

## Introduction

Archaeological monitoring was carried out during construction of a new Skate Park at RAF Lakenheath, as a result of a condition on the Planning Application F/2004/0465/GOV. The site lies at TL72648022 (Fig. 1) on the south facing slope of a small valley. To the east of the site archaeological monitoring during the construction of an extension to the Intermediate School (ERL 118, Caruth 2001a) revealed pits and ditches of Late Iron Age/Early Roman date. This also showed increased depths of sandy-silty deposits towards the base of the slope suggesting that the valley was partially filled. Work at the top of the slope, a chalk ridge, has not produced any archaeological finds (Caruth 2001b). On the opposite, north facing side of the slope monitoring during housing refurbishment works in Thunderbird Way (ERL 111, Caruth 2002) and car park extension (ERL 142, Craven 2005) has found Late Iron Age/Early Roman occupation. Two burials, one Iron Age (ERL 089) and one Roman (LKH 112), have been found within 200m of the site. The Suffolk Sites and Monuments Record lists one site ERL 022, Roman finds, in the area, but there is some doubt about the precise location of these finds.

## Methodology

The monitoring involved visual inspection of an electric trench to the north of the site and observation of the site strip for the park. The entire length of the electric trench and stripped area for the Skate Park were seen. Soil profiles were noted. The site was recorded under the new SMR number ERL 145 and the archive is kept at the SCCAS archive store in Bury St Edmunds. A copy of the site report has been lodged with the archaeological internet database OASIS under the reference Suffolkc1-9024.



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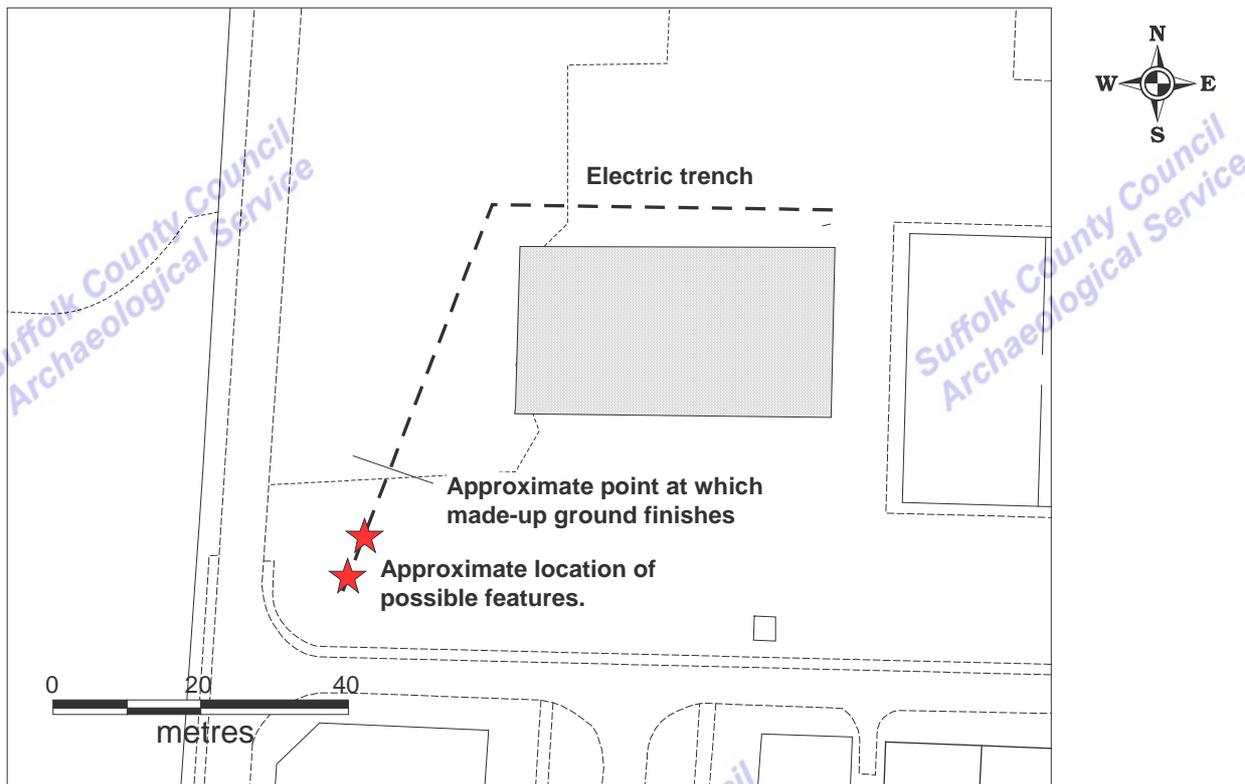
Figure 1 Site location

## Results

As the site lies on a slope the construction method for the Skate Park involved cutting into the top of the slope and building up soil at the base of the slope. It was therefore anticipated that archaeological levels would not be penetrated at the lower, south end of the development area but that where construction cut into the slope, archaeological levels would be exposed. However, made-up deposits proved to be much deeper than originally expected and at no point in the site strip were archaeological levels or natural chalk and sand uncovered.

The new electric trench was being inserted into an area north and west of the Skate Park (Fig. 2). This afforded the only opportunity to examine the nature of the built-up ground. This varied across the length of the trench, with the deepest deposits at the north-east end, c.15cm of topsoil over 50cm of redeposited mixed chalky sand over homogeneous orange-brown stony sand. At this end natural sand was not visible at 80cm below ground level. At the north-west end of the trench natural yellow sand could be seen below the orange-brown sand at c.70cm deep. Where the trench turned to a north-south alignment the depth of made-up ground reduced until natural sand could be seen c.30cm from ground level. Two possible shallow features were identified at the south end of the trench but there was some disturbance here and these could not be well defined, and may have simply been irregularities in the subsoil surface.

It was noticeable that the profile of the slope was steeper and lumpier in the north-west part of the general area and this may represent the limits of the redeposited soil. The made-up ground seems to be predominantly mixed subsoil and it is suggested that this may have been deposited during the original construction of the Intermediate School.



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Figure 2 Site plan

## Conclusion

Unexpectedly deep made-up ground deposits combined with some partial non-invasive construction methods meant that exposure of archaeological levels during this development was minimal.

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September 2005

## References

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