

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

RAF Lakenheath, Tanker Access Road ERL 133

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF TRIAL PITS FOR A PROPOSED TANKER ACCESS ROAD AROUND CAUDLE HEAD MERE.

Planning Application No.: Pre Tanker Road
NGR: TL 72937 80828
Oasis Ref. Suffolkc1-9025

Funded by: MOD Defence Estates (USF)

SCCAS Report no. 2005/95

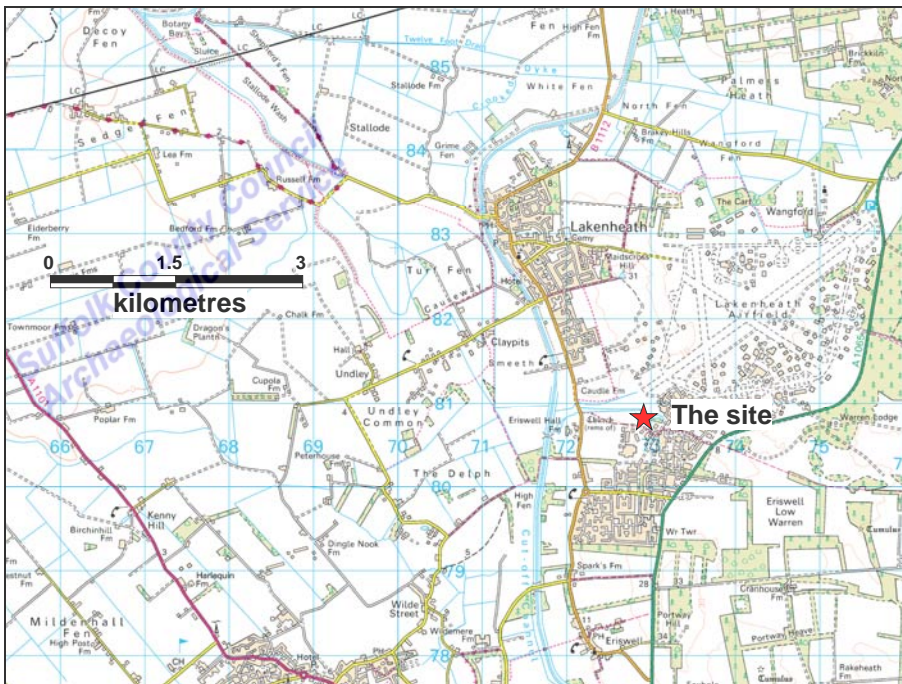
Summary

Monitoring for trial pits for a proposed new Tanker Access Road revealed a build-up of wet sands and peat in one hole and two parallel north-south aligned ditches in the other. Roman finds were found in the ditch fill. It is understood that the proposal for the road has been abandoned.

Introduction

Archaeological monitoring was carried out on two soil investigation pits for a proposed new Tanker Access Road to run around the east, north and west side of the sewage works at RAF Lakenheath. The pits were located just outside the northern boundary of the sewage works, within 100m of the westward flowing stream out of Caudle Head Mere (Fig. 1). Roman and Saxon settlement has been found on the north side of Caudle Head Mere and the Roman has been found continuing south of Caudle Head through the investigated area.

The two pits were c.1m wide x 2.5m long and up to 1.6m deep (Fig. 2). These were both monitored during excavation. Sections were drawn of both and a plan of pit 2 (where archaeological features were identified) at 1:20. Photographs were taken and all finds collected. Context numbers were recorded under a new SMR number ERL 133, and the results lodged with the OASIS web-site.



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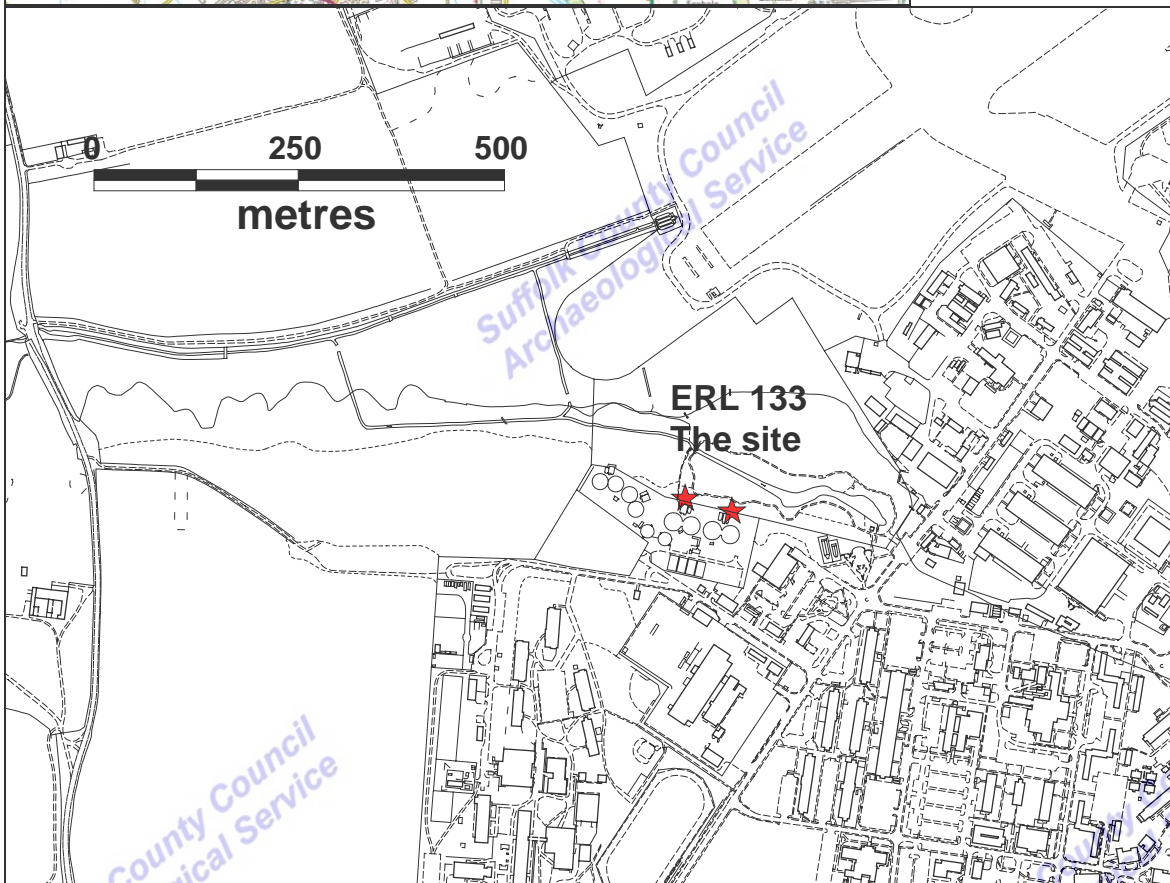
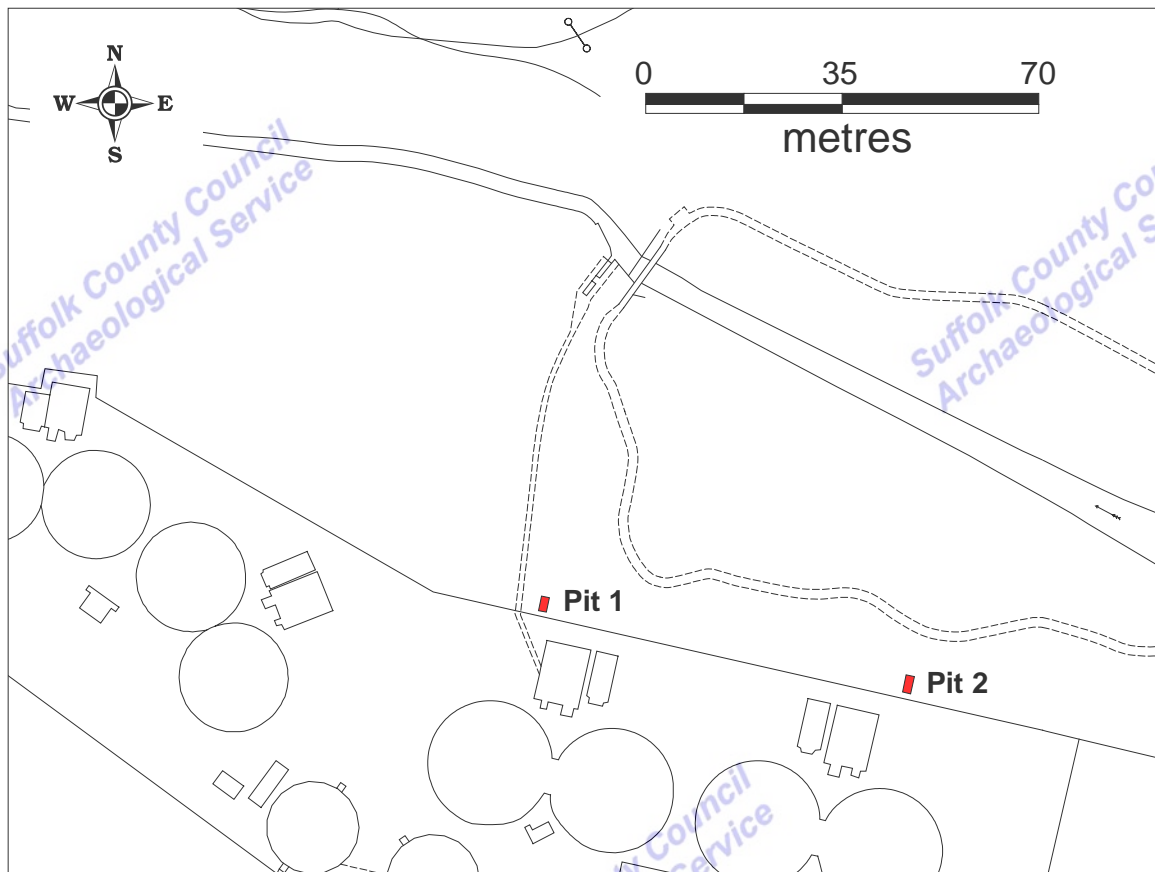


Figure 1 Site location

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Figure 2 Precise location of pits

Results

Pit 1 did not reveal any archaeological features, but showed varied sand and peat deposits to 1.5m (Figs. 2 and 3). These deposits were clean with no finds or flecks of occupation material.

Pit 2 (Figs. 2 and 3) contained a pair of parallel north-south aligned ditch cuts, 0002 and 0004. The fill of both cuts was dark, dense, wet brown sand, 0003, from which Early Roman pottery and a fragment of infant human bone was recovered. This fill was overlain by a layer of brown sand, 0005. It is probable that both ditch cuts represent the re-cutting of a single feature and that layer 0005 is in fact an upper ditch fill. However as the ditch cuts effectively filled the entire pit, it was not possible to see enough to confirm this.

The Finds by Cathy Tester

Finds were collected from a single context (0003), the lower fill of a ditch.

Four sherds (149g) of Early Roman pottery were recovered. Three vessels are represented which include a Verulamium region whiteware 'biconical urn' and a high-shouldered greyware jar which are late 1st or early 2nd century, and an unspecified black-surfaced ware jar sherd which is probably of the same date.

Also collected were human bone (a single infant long bone fragment) and a small fragment (3g) of animal bone.

The finds have been archived in a single bag in the 'Parish Box' in the Bury store, location H / 80 / 2.

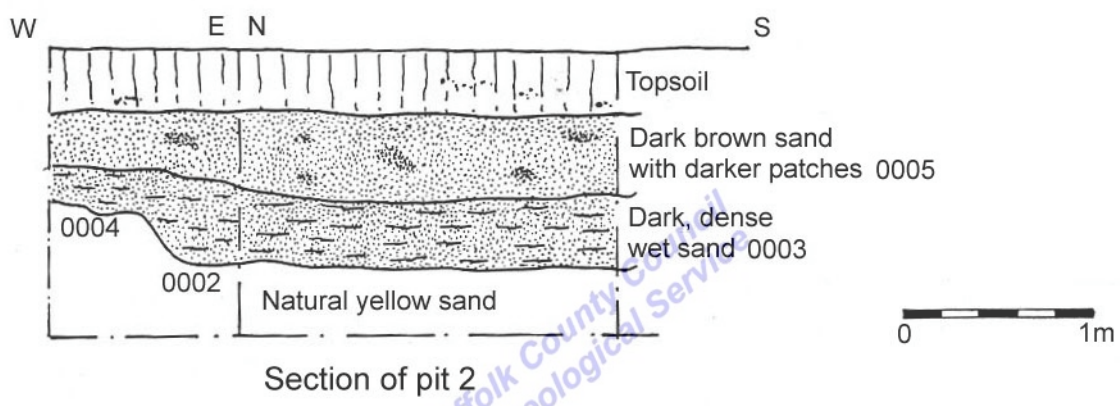
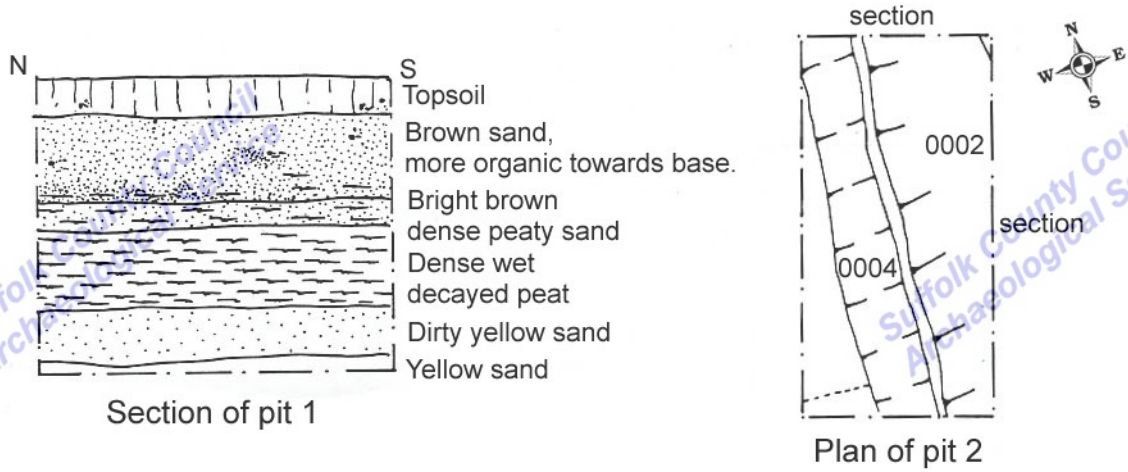


Figure 3 Plan and sections

Conclusion

The monitoring of these trial pits showed accumulated deposits of peat and wet sand in the western hole and ditches containing occupation material in the eastern hole. If the evidence from Pit 1 is representative of a wet landscape, rather than being located within a large pit, this may provide evidence for the western limits to the Roman settlement in this area. The trial pits were too small for further conclusions to be drawn.

Jo Caruth
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