

**HABITAT CREATION SCHEME**

**DEVEREUX FARM**

**KIRBY-LE-SOKEN**

**ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING**



**Essex County Council  
Field Archaeology Unit**

**JULY 2011**

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## HABITAT CREATION SCHEME

### DEVEREUX FARM

### KIRBY-LE-SOKEN

### ESSEX

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

Client: Environment Agency

NGR: TM 23463 22736

Site Code: FWDF 10

Planning Ref: 08/01501/FUL

Oasis No.: 86153

Dates of Fieldwork: 14th July 2010 to 28 March 2011

### SUMMARY

*Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out on construction and landscaping works associated with a habitat creation scheme at Devereux Farm, Kirby-le-Soken, Essex.*

*Although archaeological remains of prehistoric and Roman date are known from immediately outside the area of the habitat creation scheme no remains of this date were identified within the monitored areas. Monitoring did, however, identify remains dating to the early medieval, medieval and post-medieval periods.*

*A localised concentration of early medieval remains were identified beneath the northern part of a new road. Features included two parallel gullies, a series of post-holes possibly forming a small rectangular structure, a large pond or water channel and a Y-shaped ditch. Three phases of activity were identified taking place broadly between the 10th to the 12th centuries. The recovery of fragments of ceramic mould or crucible and hammerscale suggest that both metal working and smithing were taking place in the vicinity, whilst the presence of burnt grain may indicate crop processing.*

*Three roughly parallel field boundary ditches were identified in the southern part of the new road footprint. Medieval pottery recovered from two of the ditches suggests that they date to the 12th or 13th century. At Rigdons breach in the east of the habitat scheme area the lowering of the 1950s sea wall embankment revealed the buried remains of an earlier bank dating to the late 18th or 19th century.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This report describes the results of archaeological monitoring and recording carried out on land at Devereux Farm, Kirby-le-Soken, Essex, during groundworks associated with a programme of managed re-alignment and habitat creation. The groundworks consisted of the construction of a new access road, the excavation of two ponds (borrow pits), the construction of a new closure bank, the enlargement of another, and the creation of two breaches in the existing sea wall. As the site is located within an area of some archaeological potential, a condition was placed on planning consent (08/01501/FUL) requiring that a programme of archaeological works be undertaken in advance of and during development, following advice given by the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team (ECC HEM), based on guidance contained in Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (now replaced by PPS 5: Planning for the Historic Environment).

The archaeological work was undertaken by the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) on behalf of the Environment Agency in accordance with an archaeological Design Brief issued by ECC HEM (2010) and a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by the ECC FAU (2010).

Copies of this report will be supplied to the Environment Agency, ECC HEM and the Essex Historic Environment Record. A digital version of this report will be submitted, along with a project summary, to the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>). The site archive and copies of the report will be deposited at Colchester and Ipswich Museum.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Topography and Geology (Fig. 1)**

The site is located to the north-east of the village of Kirby-le-Soken and immediately south of an area of coastal marshland and braided channels known as The Wade (NGR: TM 23463 22736 – see Fig. 1). Situated on the edge of the Tendring Plain, the underlying geology of which broadly consist of London Clay overlain by remnants of the Kesgrave Sand and Gravel Formation and light loams, the development area is thought to consist primarily of reclaimed marshland. Island Lane which runs through the centre of the site is, for the most part, bordered by thick hedgerows and there are a few patches of woodland in the south of the area. The fields immediately either side of Island Lane are under arable cultivation while the remaining parcels of land consisted of pasture and scrubby grassland which is exposed to periodic inundation. The area is also crossed by a number of drainage

ditches and channels. In recent times the dryer parts of the site have been used as an occasional large scale camping ground for youth organisations (Brownies, Scouts etc.).

## **2.2 Historical and Archaeological Background (Fig. 1)**

This historical and archaeological background is based on information held in the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) at County Hall, Chelmsford.

The Tendring Plain is rich in sites of archaeological interest, although of particular relevance to the development area is its coastal location and the discovery of salt producing sites (salterns) in the general vicinity, including examples at Kirby Quay (EHER 3542) and on nearby Horsey Island (EHER 3533). These sites are generally known as 'red hills' from the colour of the briquetage debris found on them and generally thought to be Roman in date, although it is likely that both Bronze Age and Iron Age examples survive. In addition to salt, the marsh also provided an important source of grazing throughout the Roman, Saxon and Medieval periods, while the coastal location afforded local communities easy access to sea-based trade routes and the exploitation of marine resources.

To the immediate west of the development area, at Kirby Quay, both prehistoric worked flint (EHER 17623) and medieval pottery (EHER 17619) have been recovered from the saltings, whilst within the development area, at the north end of Island Lane overlooking The Wade, is a WWII concrete hexagonal pillbox (EHER 10626). A sea wall protecting a rectangular piece of land in the north-west of the area is depicted on the 1777 Chapman and Andre map of Essex and is therefore 18th century or earlier in origin. However, no sea wall is shown defending the eastern coastal fringe of the site until the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of c. 1867. The current sea wall was constructed in the 1950s.

## **2.3 Previous Archaeological Investigations**

A programme of geophysical survey was undertaken which targeted the location of the new access road and ponds. The survey detected two anomalies in the footprint of the road, which were investigated during a subsequent trench-based evaluation, as well as the line of the water pipe to Horsey Island. Beyond this the survey results were blank with the exception of a number of discrete ferrous anomalies, which are believed to relate to the use of parts of the site as a camp site (i.e. discarded/ lost tent pegs, ring-pulls etc).

Following on from the geophysical survey a trench-based evaluation was undertaken in August 2008 (Blowers 2008). Nine evaluation trenches were excavated (Figs 1 and 2) within the area of the proposed works. All trenches revealed clean, orange/brown clay at an

average depth of 0.60m with the exception of trench 9, in which alluvial deposits were present at 1.20m.

Three trenches contained isolated archaeological remains in the form of a 13th century pit (7) in Trench 7, a curvilinear gully (11) of unknown date in Trench 2 and possible prehistoric deposits in Trench 3. Also investigated was a small pit (5) containing animal remains of probable recent date in Trench 6 and a linear feature, either a natural channel or man-made drainage ditch, in Trench 9.

### **3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 Aims**

The general aim of the archaeological monitoring was to identify and record any remains that were likely to be damaged or disturbed by the construction/ landscaping works.

#### **3.2 Objectives**

In the event that significant discoveries were made the report would seek to identify appropriate research objectives for any future work, in line with those laid out in *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000). As relatively few archaeological remains were encountered the results have little potential to contribute to any of the research objectives.

### **4.0 METHOD**

The design brief (ECC HEM 2010) required that detailed archaeological monitoring and recording would be undertaken for the following elements of the development:

- Construction of the new closure bank
- Construction of the new access road
- Breaching of the sea wall
- Construction of new freshwater ponds

Specific archaeological works undertaken for each element are detailed below.

#### **4.1 Construction of the new closure bank (Fig. 1)**

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken on topsoil stripping in advance of the construction of the new Rigdons closure bank at the eastern edge of the habitat creation scheme area.

Monitoring was not undertaken on the enlargement of the existing modern closure bank at the western edge of the area.

#### **4.2 Construction of the new access road (Fig. 2)**

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken on topsoil stripping along the c. 450m length of the new access road. Most of the footprint was monitored, with the exception of approximately 30m at the southern end, near the main site entrance, where the topsoil was heavily rutted, and a c.10m wide break beneath a temporary track leading to Island Lane. Observation of the stripped surface on either side of this temporary track was hampered by waterlogged ground conditions and areas of standing water.

#### **4.3 Breaching of the sea wall (Fig. 1)**

Monitoring was undertaken on the lowered, modern sea wall at Rigdons breach, to the east of the area. The proposed Decoy breach in the sea wall to the north-west of the area, in the vicinity of the 18th century or earlier sea wall, did not take place, and is scheduled for a future date.

#### **4.4 Construction of new freshwater ponds (Figs 1 and 2)**

The ponds were initially to be dug as borrow pits to provide material to be used in on-site construction operations, principally the capping of the new embankments and road. The proposed locations of the two ponds are shown hachured purple on Figure 1. Monitoring was undertaken during topsoil stripping in advance of the excavation of the new pond to the east of Island Lane. The excavated pond was located adjacent to the existing drainage ditch and was half its proposed size (Fig. 2). The proposed excavation of the pond to the west of Island Lane was cancelled prior to any groundworks taking place.

#### **4.5 General methodology**

Potential archaeological features were cleaned and hand excavated where practical. Standard ECC FAU excavation, artefact collection and recording methodologies were employed throughout. ECC FAU is a Registered Archaeological Organisation with the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) and all work was carried out in accordance with IfA by-laws and guidelines (IfA 1997; 2008) and complied with Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003).



## 5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS (Fig. 1)

Monitoring was undertaken on topsoil stripping in advance of the construction of a new pond to the east of Island Lane and for a new closure bank (Rigdons) at the south eastern edge of the habitat creation scheme area. Monitoring was also undertaken on the lowered sea wall at Rigdons breach. Archaeological remains mainly dating to the early medieval period were encountered beneath the new access road.

The removed topsoil consisted of dark brownish grey clay silt that varied in depth from 0.20m to 0.60m. Archaeological features as well as recent agricultural disturbances (mole and field drains) were cut into underlying natural deposits of mottled clay silt that varied in colour from creamy buff to light orange/brown and often contained flecks of iron pan. Exposed beneath the silt in the sides and bases of the larger features were firmer deposits of bright orange clay. Detailed context information is presented in Appendix 1.

### 5.1 Pond (east) (Fig. 2)

Monitoring was undertaken during the stripping of the footprint of the new pond to the east of Island Lane. The pond was located immediately adjacent to an existing north-east/south-west aligned drainage ditch (Fig. 2). The northern part of the pond footprint was crossed by two ceramic field drains (not illustrated) and a disturbed area, consisting of chalk-flecked grey silt containing broken modern ceramic drain pipes, was partly exposed close to its southern edge. It is possible that the disturbed area indicated the position of an in-filled feeder ditch.

### 5.2 New road north (Figs 2 and 3)

Initial monitoring of the northernmost part of the new road strip (Fig. 2) failed to identify any archaeological remains, however after approximately 100m a small number of potential archaeological features were identified in an area close to the position of former Evaluation Trench 8. An area 22m long by 14m wide was cordoned off to allow more detailed investigation. Definition in the centre of the site was particularly poor and only after repeated cleaning between torrential downpours did the large linear features (ditches 39, 41/51 and gullies 52/77, 29/55) become anyway apparent. Topsoil in the 20 metres or so to the immediate south of the excavation area was not removed down to the archaeological horizon and consequently any features in this area are likely to be preserved *in situ*.

*Excavation area (Fig. 3)*

In the north of the excavation area was an east/west aligned ditch (40) with a large adjacent post-hole/pit (89). The ditch was some 4m long by 0.57m deep with a distinct variation in fill from east to west. The base of the ditch was filled with light grey clayey silt (67) with more mottled light grey and brown silty clay (66) above. In the top of the ditch were two distinctive orange brown to reddish brown fills (64 and 65) both containing fairly frequent flecks of baked clay/daub and occasional flecks of charcoal. In addition, two thin seams of grey silt were noted separating fill 66 from the fills above (65) and below (67) (Fig. 5, Section 4; Plate 1).

The two upper fills (64 and 65) extended approximately half way along the excavated ditch and were not visible in the western section. Here the ditch was shallower, 0.43m deep, and only contained fill 67 overlain by a slightly thicker and cleaner version of fill 66. To the east of the excavated segment the upper fills (64 and 65) became less distinct in plan, particularly to the east of the line of the modern drain where they appeared to protrude northwards. It is possible that there was further modern disturbance along the eastern side of this protruding arm and the edge of a later ditch 51. Post-hole/pit (89) was sub-circular in plan, 0.70m long by 0.46m deep, and located on the northern side of ditch 40. It was filled with light grey clay silt (88) that was not overtly distinguishable from the western fills of the ditch and may have accumulated at the same time.

South of ditch 40 was a group of three small rounded post-holes (91, 95, and 97) and a shallow, elongated, mole-drain distorted pit (99). All of the post-holes had steep sides and a flat bottom (Fig. 5, Sections 2 & 3) and ranged in depth from 0.13m to 0.20m. Posthole 95 had a well-defined post-pipe (Fig. 5, Section 3) containing dark grey silt with flecks of charcoal and baked clay (Plate 2). To the south of these features were four vague and very shallow patches of grey silt and charcoal flecks that were little more than a collection of crumbs. The patches were clearly heavily truncated but might formerly have indicated the position of additional pits or post-holes.

Further south were two better-defined features, beam slot 27 and post-hole 31. The slot had near-vertical sides and a flat bottom (Fig. 5, Section 1) and was filled with speckled mid-dark grey clay silt (26) containing occasional flecks of charcoal and baked clay. It was 3m long and appeared to terminate adjacent to ditch 41/51. The post-hole had steep sides and a flat base and contained two fills (30 and 68). The upper fill (30) comprised dark grey silt with occasional baked clay flecks and more common flecks of charcoal, whilst the lower fill (68),

which was disturbed by two parallel mole drains, comprised mixed grey and orange silt with occasional flecks of charcoal and baked clay.

To the east of ditch 41/51 were two poorly defined features (45 and 47) whose fills (46 and 48) both contained a few flecks of baked clay. Feature 45 was a small length of gully, on a similar alignment to beam slot 27 and possibly contemporary with it. Adjacent feature 47 was a possible shallow post-hole of probable later date as it contained the only sherd of 12th century pottery recovered from the excavation area. In the south of the area, sherds of Early Medieval Ware pottery were recovered from a poorly-defined gully or shallow spread (49) and a small pit (60), both of which appeared to be truncated by later ditch 39/41/51.

In the eastern half of the excavation area were two parallel, north/south aligned gullies (29/55 and 52/77) (Plate 3). The eastern most gully (29/55) was approximately 11m long by up to 0.85m wide and 0.30m deep and contained two greyish brown clay silt fills (56 and 57) in the south (Fig. 5, Section 5) and a single more mixed fill (28/85) in the north. In plan this gully narrowed and appeared to come to a rounded end some 2.30m north of Section 6. The western gully (52/77) was approximately 9m long by up to 1m wide and 0.42m deep and appeared to be truncated by ditch 41/51 to the north (Fig. 5, Section 6). The southern segment (52) contained two greyish brown clay silt fills (53 and 54), whilst in the north similar coloured material (62) overlay lighter speckled grey & orange clay silt (76).

Several post-holes were noted within the excavated northern segments of both gullies (Plate 4) and a shallow irregular shaped pit or post-hole (82) and two vague, possible stake-hole impressions (unexcavated) were noted to its east. Two post-holes (87 and 80) were also present within gully 29. Post-hole 87 was oval in plan and had a near vertical western side and an eastern side which was near vertical at the bottom but which widened and became more gradual (c. 50°) with height (Fig. 5, Section 7). It was 0.36m deep and filled with mid grey clay silt (86) containing occasional flecks of charcoal and baked clay. Post-hole 80 was wider with more gradual sides and a concave base (Fig. 5, Section 6). It contained a mid to dark greyish brown (79) central fill, that possibly indicated the position of a post-pipe, and a main fill (78) of mottled greyish brown and light brown clay silt. Two post-holes (84 and 110) were also present in gully 77. Post-hole 84 was 0.70m wide by 0.33m deep and continued northwards beyond the section (Fig. 5, Section 7). It contained a single greyish brown clay silt fill (83) with occasional flecks of charcoal and a few of baked clay. Post-hole 110 was only recognised in plan cutting the base of gully 77 and had a fill (109) similar to 83. The post-hole was rectangular in plan with near vertical sides and a flat bottom and extended 0.20m below the base of the gully.

At the western edge of the excavation area was a large curving feature (32). This initially appeared in plan as a short gully and for much of the excavation time-window was obscured by a large puddle and by a spoil tip which occupied the north-west corner of the site. Once the puddle receded it was possible to excavate a segment through the southern part of the feature (Fig. 5, Section 8). Revealed in section was a sequence of six silty clay fills (33 to 38) that varied in colour from dark grey to light bluish grey with most containing an element of re-deposited yellow clay (Plate 5). Bluish grey clay (fills 33 and 34) of probable water-lain origin was found in the lower part of the feature and continued beyond the depth of excavation. The feature appeared too broad to be a regular ditch and was more likely a pond or some form of wider water channel.

Stratigraphically later than the parallel gullies were two lengths of large ditch, one roughly orientated east-south-east/west-north-west (39) and the other orientated north-north-east/south-south-west (41/51), that merged together at a Y-junction. Ditch 39 was 9m long by 2.8m wide by 0.95m deep (Fig. 5, Section 9) and contained four fills (61, 72, 73 and 74). The top fill of the ditch (61) consisted of mottled orange & mid grey clay silt that was hard to distinguish from the surrounding natural but which did produce one sherd of Early Medieval Ware pottery. The lower fills (72, 73 and 74) contained no finds but were better defined, all comprising silty clay of a mid to dark grey or greyish brown colour (Plate 6). Ditch 41/51 was over 16m in length and was excavated in two places. The southern section (41) was 0.80m deep and contained three clay-silt fills (42, 43 and 44). The top fill (42), a mixed mid grey and orange clay silt, contained two sherds of Early Medieval Ware pottery. The lower fills were darker and greyer in colour with the top of the middle fill (43) being particularly dark and almost defining into a separate band. This ditch could not be fully excavated due to the presence of a modern field drain in the western half of the excavated segment. The northern section (51) was also 0.80m deep and contained four fills (58, 69, 70 and 71) (Fig. 5, Section 10). The fills were similar to those of ditch 41 in that the upper fill (58) consisted of mottled grey and orange clay silt. The lower fills (70 and 71) were again greyer in colour and were separated from the top fill by a distinct dark grey silty band (69).

After merging at the Y-junction the ditch continued for a further 3-4m in a west-south-westerly direction beyond the edge of the site. To the immediate west of the junction was a thin, truncated, patch of dark grey silt (108) that appeared to continue down into the side of the merged ditch beneath its mixed orange upper fill and might represent a remnant of former topsoil contemporary with the open ditch.

### **5.3 New road south (Fig. 2)**

Three small ditches (101, 103 and 107) and a pit (105) were excavated to the south of the east/west access track (Fig. 2). The northernmost two ditches (103 and 101) were roughly aligned north-west/south-east and both contained single sherds of medieval coarse ware pottery (12th to 14th century). Ditch 103 was 0.76m wide by 0.18m deep (Fig. 5, Section 11) and ditch 101 was 1.22m wide by 0.10m deep (Plate 7). Although ditch 103 was the deeper of the two ditches, it was less well defined and could only be traced on the ground for a length of some 3.8m before seemingly petering out to the west.

Located c. 45m to the south-west of ditch 101 was a small oval pit (105), 0.70m long and 0.15m deep. The pit was filled with speckled mid grey with brown clay silt (104) but contained no dating evidence. The third ditch (107), located towards the southern end of the stripped new road area, also contained no dating evidence. This ditch was nearer east/west in alignment and was the deepest of the four features identified to the south of the east/west access track, with a depth of 0.30m (Fig. 5, Section 12).

### **5.4 Rigdons Closure Bank (Fig. 1)**

Topsoil stripping undertaken prior to the construction of Rigdons Closure Bank was monitored (Plate 8). The topsoil was generally quite shallow (c. 0.20m deep) and may have been previously removed or truncated, possibly during the construction of the present sea wall. The footprint of the new bank passed through an area of planted woodland and consequently numerous root disturbances were noted. No archaeological features were observed.

### **5.5 Rigdons Breach (Fig. 4)**

At Rigdons Breach the existing sea wall embankment, constructed in the 1950s, was significantly reduced in height to allow water to flood the area west of the wall at exceptionally high tides. The entire area of groundworks extended for a length of c. 64m and consisted of two sloping sides and a central flat area approximately 42m long (Fig. 4). Revealed in the base of the reduced area were the remains of an earlier narrower bank underlying the modern sea wall. The earlier bank was approximately 7m wide and was composed of mixed grey and dark brown clays (Plate 9). The western edge was partly defined by a line of dark greyish brown organic silt containing traces of the original turf covering. Similar organic material was also present, though to a lesser extent, along the eastern edge. The tops of numerous heavily decayed wooden stakes were noted in a line close to the eastern edge of the earlier bank (Plate 10) having presumably been inserted to strengthen the seaward side. The largest decayed example measured 0.12m by 0.06m and

was of unknown length. The later embankment, above and to both sides of the earlier bank was distinguished by the use of lighter orangey brown clay and gravel in its construction.

## **6.0 FINDS** by Helen Walker

Finds were recovered from eighteen contexts and have revealed evidence of a metal working site dating to the Late Saxon/early medieval period. All of the material has been recorded by count and weight, by context. Full quantification details can be found in Appendix 1. The finds are described by category below.

### **6.1 Pottery**

A total of nineteen sherds weighing 108g was recovered from twelve contexts (Appendix 3) and has been recorded onto Essex County Council's EFASYS database. The most interesting find comprises two sherds of Thetford-type Ware from gully 29 showing the remains of a spout and thumbed applied strip, which are most likely from a spouted jar dating from the 10th to 11th centuries (cf. Rogerson and Dallas 1984, fig.163.208). Thetford-type Ware is uncommon inland but not unusual at sites on or near the coast, indicating it was traded by sea. Small abraded sherds of Early Medieval Ware make up the bulk of the remaining material, featured examples comprising three thickened everted rims most likely from cooking-pots which are probably of the same date as the Thetford-type Ware. Sherds from the same Early Medieval Ware vessel occur in the fills of gullies 49 and 52 indicating that these features were open at the same time.

Post-hole 47 produced a single sherd of Medieval Coarse Ware, which may be a little later than the rest of the pottery, dating to the 12th to 13th centuries. Two further sherds of Medieval Coarse Ware were excavated from ditches 101 and 103; these features were some distance away from main site and hint at slightly later activity. Accretions of iron are present on one of the Early Medieval Ware sherds and the example of Medieval Coarse Ware from post-hole 47. These could be natural bog-iron deposits, especially as the iron accretion on one of the sherds is on the break, but as there is definite evidence of metalworking on site (see below), these sherds may well be associated with industrial activity. One other sherd, in pit 60, appears to have been burnt.

### **6.2 Daub/ misc. ceramics**

Fired clay or daub is relatively common at this site with a total of thirty-eight pieces weighing 231g, from thirteen contexts. Most of the pieces are small, oxidised and featureless, but there are some examples of more interest. A number of pieces of fired clay with grog

inclusions, all belonging to the same object, occurred in unstratified context 25. They have a shaped internal surface resembling the base of a vessel and the fragments are a very dark grey colour but with oxidised red-brown external surfaces. These pieces appear to be part of a mould or crucible. There is a second possible mould, this time in a sandy fabric, from ditch 75. It is sub-rectangular in section and shows a groove along one surface about 2cm wide. Again, the fabric is very dark grey with one red-brown oxidised surface. Very fragmented examples of possible mould or crucible also occur in gully 29 and ditch 51. None show any sign of residue, but are likely to be associated with metal or glass-working. One unfeatured piece of miscellaneous ceramic (from gully 52) is iron-stained.

### **6.3 Other finds**

Small numbers of other finds were recovered. These comprise four pieces of fire-cracked flint from ditch 40, accompanied by a small piece of carbonised wood or charcoal. A second example of carbonised wood occurred in ditch 32, and gully 29 produced a small piece of clinker. Further quantities of charcoal and clinker were recovered from an environmental sample taken from pit 31 (sample 1; see environmental report below). All these finds are associated with fire and heating. Hammerscale was also recovered from Sample 1, indicating that iron smithing was indeed taking place. Burnt grain from Sample 1 shows evidence of agricultural activity.

### **6.4 Environmental Report** by Alan J. Jacobs

#### *Introduction*

A single soil sample was collected from context 30, the upper fill of post-hole 31, dating to the medieval period. This was primarily taken to investigate the industrial nature of the site, and comprised entirely of a single bulk sample. This sample was selected for processing on the basis of the lack of finds within it and the high levels of charcoal visible. The processed sample is summarised below (Table 1).

#### *Method*

The selected bulk soil sample was processed by wet sieving with flotation using a 0.5mm mesh and collecting the flotation fraction (flot) on a 0.5mm sieve. The residue was then dried and separated using 2mm and 4mm sieves. All the material larger than 2mm (the coarse fraction) was assessed by eye. The flot has been dried, examined by eye and assessed, the results are summarised below.

## Results

Table 1 Sample quantification

Sample No.	Context	Context type	Weight/Litres	Residue Grams	Flot Grams	Notes
1	30	Fill of post-hole 31	12kg/14	468	6	Mainly modern roots, large amounts of charcoal as well as burnt grain, clinker and hammerscale.

The environmental sample floated well, all organic material was recovered. The residue consisted of many small fragments of burnt material with smaller amounts of charcoal and clinker type material. Hammerscale was also recovered through the use of a magnet, indicating the industrial nature of this site. The flot contained small amounts of modern root fibres, indicating the possibility of some contamination. Most of the flot consisted of wood charcoal with small amounts of burnt grain, and no mollusc shells were definable within this material. No further work is required on any of the samples, all materials can be discarded.

### 6.5 Comments on the assemblage

The evidence from the pottery would indicate activity from the 10th to 12th centuries. The evidence of ceramic moulds and/or crucibles, fire-cracked flints, the burnt pottery sherd, carbonised wood and clinker indicate industrial activity. More specifically, the presence of hammerscale shows that iron smithing was taking place. The pottery could have been associated with the industrial activity, especially that showing iron accretions, but if people lived here, albeit on a temporary basis, some of the pottery may have been for domestic purposes. The moulds (for casting) and the crucibles were probably associated with metal working, although it is possible that glass-making was also taking place. All the finds have been retained (apart from the environmental sample) and occupy less than one box.

An earlier evaluation at Devereux Farm in 2008 produced small amounts of baked clay, burnt flint and medieval cooking-pots, but no ceramic moulds/crucibles. Thetford-type Ware was absent and the pottery from the 2008 excavation was assigned an early 13th century date, i.e. the pottery appears to be later than that from the 2010 excavation. One of the cooking-pots had a heavy external encrustation of iron compounds and there was evidence of a fragment of cooking-pot undergoing some kind of secondary use. This would seem indicate the pottery was used for industrial rather than domestic activity and again shows that metal working is the most likely candidate.



## **7.0 DISCUSSION**

Although archaeological remains of both prehistoric and Roman date are known from around the periphery of the habitat creation scheme no features of this date were positively identified within the specifically monitored areas. However, three phases of later activity were identified, dating to the early medieval, medieval and post-medieval periods, and are discussed below.

### **7.1 Early medieval**

The earliest dated features belong to the early medieval period and indicate activity, probably of an agricultural and industrial nature, taking place over a broad period of time between the 10th to 12th centuries. The remains investigated consist of several linear features, a pond or water channel and a number of post-holes that may have formed a small structure. Pottery was recovered from most of the linear features but in relatively small quantities and without any particularly diagnostic forms.

It is possible that the early medieval activity can be sub-divided into three phases. The earliest phase consists of north/south aligned parallel gullies 29/55 and 52/77 which are clearly truncated by the Y-shaped ditch and also by a number of post-holes. These features may date to the 10th or 11th century given that two sherds of Thetford-type Ware dating to this period were recovered from gully 29. Sherds of Early Medieval Ware were also recovered but these are more broadly dated to the 10th to early 13th century. Pottery from the same vessel was found in gully 52 and in a near-by stretch of east/west gully (49) implying that these features were open at the same time. The second phase consists of a series of post-holes that may form a small structure, perhaps a temporary building or a stock enclosure. The western side of this structure was formed by post-holes 91, 95, 99, 97 and the eastern side by post-holes 80, 82, 84, 87, 110. This latter group were initially thought to be associated with gullies 29/55 and 52/77 but as at least two of these post-holes (80 and 84) appear to cut the gullies and two (87 and 101) had an uncertain relationship it seems more likely that they are part of this wider structure. An unexcavated protrusion on the west side of gully 29/55 and to the north of post-hole 80 might indicate the position of an additional post-hole. To the south-west, slots 27 and 45 may also have had a structural purpose along with adjacent pit 31 and perhaps post-hole 47. This latter feature contained a single sherd of Medieval Coarse Ware which tentatively suggests a 12th century date for this activity, however the post-hole was poorly defined and could just as easily be associated with the third phase of activity represented by Y-shaped ditch 39/41/51. This ditch clearly truncated several features and appeared to be broadly contemporary with adjacent layer

108. It was not clear which phase pond/channel 32 belonged to, nor that of ditch 40 and pit 89 in the west of the area. Similarities in fill suggest that at one time ditch 40 may have drained into pond/channel 32 with the larger feature perhaps taking longer to become infilled once it had gone out of use. Pond/channel 32 and ditch 39/41/51 both continued to the southeast of the excavated area and possibly met beyond the limit of the new road corridor.

Evidence for industrial activity in the early medieval period was provided most directly by the recovery of fragments of ceramic mould or crucible and the presence of hammerscale in the environmental sample. The evidence would suggest that both metal working and smithing were taking place. There was no evidence of any hearths or kilns associated with this activity but production may have taken place beyond the area of excavation. However, it is possible that the structure formed by post-holes 91/95/97 etc. was used as a workshop. Flecks and fragments of baked clay/daub were present in a few features but most intensely in the eastern upper fills of ditch 40. There was no evidence of any in-situ burning associated with this material which, in the case of ditch 40, appeared to have been deliberately deposited and conceivably could formerly have been part of the possible workshop formed by post-holes 91/95/97 etc. Evidence of burning was evident in the fill of post-hole 95. Burnt grain identified in the environmental sample from post-hole 31 indicates that crop processing may have been taking place in the vicinity.

## **7.2 Medieval**

Three roughly parallel field boundary ditches were identified in the southern part of the new road strip. Two of the ditches (101 and 103) produced sherds of pottery dating from the 12th or 13th century whilst the third ditch (107), situated farther south, remained undated but was probably also contemporary. Both of the dated ditches were located close to evaluation trench 7, which contained a single large pit of probable early 13th century date. Some of the pottery sherds from the pit had unusual residues adhering to them whilst a large fragment had fire blackening on its edges that had occurred after the vessel had been broken. The evidence suggested that some form of industrial activity was taking place in the vicinity.

## **7.3 Post-medieval**

The sea wall embankment at Rigdons breach was constructed in the 1950s, most probably in response to the serious flooding of 1953. The earlier bank revealed in the lowering of the embankment is not shown on the 1777 Chapman and Andre Map of Essex but is depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of c.1867 thus implying that it was constructed somewhere within this 90 year window. In this period (i.e. the late 18th and 19th century)

good prices for crops and improved drainage methods led many Essex farmers to reclaim marshland from the sea (Grieve 1959).

## **8.0 ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS**

The monitoring of the construction/landscaping works has successfully preserved by record a number of features that otherwise would have been destroyed by the development. Remains of early medieval, medieval and post-medieval date were recorded, although there was no evidence of Iron Age or Roman activity.

The excavated early medieval remains appear to be part of a localised area of industrial activity that clearly continues west and south-west of the footprint of the new road corridor. No obvious remains were identified to the north of the excavation area or to the east in evaluation Trench 8, although on plan it appears likely that Y-shaped ditch 39/41/51 may have continued in part through both of these areas but was not recognised due to the nature of its orange, natural-looking upper fill.

Evidence for metal working in Essex is relatively rare in the early medieval period with few sites recorded on the Historic Environment Record. A 12th-century monastic forge with evidence of bronze, iron and lead working was excavated at Waltham Abbey (Huggins 1973) and evidence of Saxon metal working was recorded at two sites in advance of gravel quarrying on the north side of the Blackwater Estuary (Wallis and Waughman 1998). The coastal positions of the latter sites and that at Kirby may be significant in that these positions would afford the possibility of the movement of goods and raw materials by sea.

The presence of finds and structures of medieval date also indicates that this central part of the habitat scheme area was dry enough to be habitable/workable at this time. It may be no coincidence that the remains are located close to Island Lane which as a route way of some antiquity (Pre 1777) is always likely to have been situated on the slightly higher and firmer parts of the generally low lying ground.

Overall feature density across the monitored areas was light and reflected the results of the trial trenching evaluation. Feature definition in general was satisfactory, although it was poorer within the excavation area where the darker and redder fills were apparent on initial inspection whilst the paler more-subtle fills only appeared after repeated cleaning. Feature visibility was further hampered by repeated heavy downpours which obscured the previously cleaned surfaces.

The survival of the late 18th/19th century sea wall beneath Rigdons breach suggests that the early sea wall in the west of the habitat scheme area depicted on the 1777 Chapman and Andre Map may also survive beneath the 1950s sea defence improvements and that monitoring of the postponed breaching works in the future is likely to be informative.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ECC FAU would like to thank the Environment Agency for commissioning the work. The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken by Trevor Ennis, Preston Boyles John Hewitt, Andrew Lewsey and Adrian Scruby of the ECC Field Archaeology Unit. Finds were analysed by Joyce Compton and Helen Walker. The report was prepared by Trevor Ennis with illustrations by Andrew Lewsey. The project was managed by Adrian Scruby and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Adrian Gascoyne of ECC HEM.

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## APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DATA

All dimensions given in metres

Context	Type	Description	Period
25	U/S	Unstratified ceramic fragments from east of new road corridor	Early medieval?
26	Fill of 27	Speckled mid-dark grey clay silt	Early medieval
27	Slot	3m x 0.31m x 0.14m deep, E/W aligned	Early medieval
28	Fill of 29	Mixed mid greyish brown clay silt	Early medieval
29	Gully	3m+ x 0.80m x 0.30m deep	Early medieval
30	Fill of 31	Dark grey clay silt, 0.22m thick	Early medieval?
31	Post-hole?	Oval, 0.7m x 0.56m x 0.22m deep	Early medieval?
32	Pond/channel	12m+ x 4m+ x 0.7m+ deep	Early medieval?
33	Fill of 32	Light bluish grey silty clay, 0.10m+ thick	Early medieval?
34	Fill of 32	Dark bluish grey silty clay with lenses of yellow, 0.20m thick	Early medieval?
35	Fill of 32	Mixed dark grey & yellow sandy clay, 0.20m thick	Early medieval?
36	Fill of 32	Dark grey silty clay with dark yellow patches, 0.25m thick	Early medieval?
37	Fill of 32	Light blue grey silty clay, 0.08m thick	Early medieval?
38	Fill of 32	Light yellow grey silty clay, 0.05m thick	Early medieval?
39	Ditch	9m+ x 2.8m x 0.95m deep, E/W aligned	Early medieval
40	Ditch	c. 4m x 1.3m x 0.57m deep, E/W aligned	Early medieval
41	Ditch	1m+ x 1.9m x 0.80m deep, NE/SW aligned	Early medieval
42	Fill of 41	Mid grey & orange clay silt, 0.30m thick	Early medieval
43	Fill of 41	Dark grey to greyish brown clay silt, 0.25m thick	Early medieval
44	Fill of 41	Mid greyish brown clay silt, 0.25m thick	Early medieval
45	Gully	0.60m+ x 0.25m x 0.15m deep, E/W aligned	Early medieval?
46	Fill of 45	Mid grey with orange flecks clay silt	Early medieval?
47	Post-hole	0.30m x 0.22m x 0.13m deep	Medieval
48	Fill of 47	Mid grey with orange flecks clay silt	Medieval
49	Gully?	1m+ x 0.80m x 0.10m deep, E/W aligned	Early medieval
50	Fill of 49	Mixed grey with orange clay silt	Early medieval
51	Ditch	1m+ x 2.0m x 0.80m deep, NE/SW aligned	Early medieval
52	Gully	3m+ x 1m x 0.42m deep, N/S aligned	Early medieval
53	Fill of 52	Mid greyish brown clay silt, 0.29m thick	Early medieval
54	Fill of 52	Mid to dark greyish brown clay silt, 0.14m thick	Early medieval
55	Gully	3m+ x 0.85m x 0.24m deep, N/S aligned	Early medieval
56	Fill of 55	Mid to light greyish brown clay silt, 0.15m thick	Early medieval
57	Fill of 55	Light to mid greyish brown clay silt, 0.10m thick	Early medieval
58	Fill of 51	Mottled mid grey and orange clay silt, 0.25m thick	Early medieval
59	Fill of 60	Mid to dark grey clay silt	Early medieval
60	Pit	0.6m+ x 0.85m x 0.21m deep	Early medieval

Context	Type	Description	Period
61	Fill of 39	Mottled orange & mid grey clay silt, 0.40m thick	Early medieval
62	Fill of 77	Mid to light greyish brown clay silt, 0.22m thick	Early medieval
63	Fill of 75	Greyish brown to light brown clay silt, 0.20m+ thick	Early medieval
64	Fill of 40	Mottled orange brown silty clay, 0.14m thick	Early medieval
65	Fill of 40	Reddish brown (baked) clay, 0.15m thick	Early medieval
66	Fill of 40	Mottled light grey and brown silty clay, 0.20m thick	Early medieval
67	Fill of 40	Light grey clay silt, 0.18m thick	Early medieval
68	Fill of 31	Mixed orange with darker grey silt, 0.10m thick	Early medieval?
69	Fill of 51	Dark grey clay silt, 0.06m thick	Early medieval
70	Fill of 51	Dark grey to greyish brown silty clay, 0.33m thick	Early medieval
71	Fill of 51	Mid grey sandy silty clay, 0.14m thick	Early medieval
72	Fill of 39	Mid grey silty clay, 0.06m thick	Early medieval
73	Fill of 39	Mid to dark grey with orange brown silty clay, 0.34m thick	Early medieval
74	Fill of 39	Mid greyish brown silty clay, 0.15m thick	Early medieval
75	Ditch	Part excavated, 0.20m+ deep. Same as 41 & 51	Early medieval
76	Fill of 77	Speckled light grey & orange clay silt, 0.15m thick	Early medieval
77	Gully	0.8m+ x 0.50m+ x 0.38m deep, N/S aligned	Early medieval
78	Fill of 80	Mid greyish brown clay silt, light brown mottles, 0.25m thick	Early medieval?
79	Fill of 80	Mid to dark greyish brown clay silt, 0.33m thick	Early medieval?
80	Post-hole?	0.40m+ x 0.78m x 0.33m deep	Early medieval?
81	Fill of 82	Mottled grey & light grey/orange clay silt	Early medieval?
82	Pit	Irregular, 0.42m x 0.32m x 0.09m deep	Early medieval?
83	Fill of 84	Mid greyish brown clay silt	Early medieval?
84	Post-hole	0.20m+ x 0.70m x 0.33m deep	Early medieval?
85	Fill of 29	Mid-light greyish brown clay silt, 0.15m thick	Early medieval
86	Fill of 87	Mid grey clay silt, 0.36m thick	Early medieval?
87	Post-hole	c. 0.40m x 0.50m x 0.36m deep	Early medieval?
88	Fill of 89	Light grey clay silt	Early medieval?
89	Post-hole/pit	Sub-circular, 0.7m x 0.60m+ x 0.46m deep	Early medieval?
90	Fill of 91	Mottled orange and grey clay silt	Early medieval?
91	Post-hole	Circular, 0.31m x 0.30m x 0.13m deep	Early medieval?
92	Fill of 93	Dark grey clay silt	Early medieval?
93	Post-pipe	0.18m wide x 0.15m deep	Early medieval?
94	Fill of 95	Light grey to light brownish grey clay silt	Early medieval?
95	Post-hole	Oval, 0.39m x 0.30m x 0.18m deep	Early medieval?
96	Fill of 97	Mid grey clay silt	Early medieval?
97	Post-hole	Sub-circular, 0.25m diam. x 0.20m deep	Early medieval?
98	Fill of 99	Mixed grey clay silt	Early medieval?
99	Pit	Pear-shaped, 0.60m x 0.40m x 0.10m deep	Early medieval?

<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Period</b>
100	Fill of 101	Light to mid grey clay silt	Medieval
101	Ditch	10m+ x 1.22m x 0.10m deep, NW/SE aligned	Medieval
102	Fill of 103	Speckled mid grey and orange brown clay silt	Medieval
103	Ditch	3.8m+ x 0.76m x 0.18m deep, NW/SE aligned	Medieval
104	Fill of 105	Speckled mid grey with brown clay silt	-
105	Pit	Oval, 0.70m x 0.48m x 0.15m deep	-
106	Fill of 107	Light to mid grey clay silt	Medieval?
107	Ditch	5m+ x 0.62m x 0.30m deep, E/W aligned	Medieval?
108	Layer	Dark grey clay silt, 0.05m thick	Early medieval
109	Fill of 110	Greyish brown clay silt	Early medieval?
110	Post-hole	Rectangular, 0.20m x 0.18m x 0.20m deep	Early medieval?

Note: Contexts 1-24 used in evaluation



## APPENDIX 2: FINDS DATA

All weights in grams

Context	Feature	Count	Weight (g)	Description	Date
25	US	10	83	Ceramic mould or crucible fragments?	-
26	27	1	2	Pottery	Early medieval
		1	4	Daub/misc. ceramic	-
28	29	2	8	Pottery	Early medieval
		2	47	Pottery	Late Saxon
		2	17	Daub, one piece showing a possible groove	-
		1	5	Clinker	-
30	31	-	474	Hammerscale, charcoal, burnt grain, clinker (from environmental sample 1, see A. Jacobs, this report)	-
35	32	1	37	Daub	-
		1	4	Piece of carbonised wood	-
42	41	2	11	Pottery	Early medieval
		6	21	Daub	-
44	41	1	4	Daub	-
48	47	1	6	Pottery	Early medieval
50	49	2	2	Pottery	Early medieval
53	52	2	3	Pottery	Early medieval
		1	3	Misc ceramic	-
		3	17	Daub	-
56	55	1	2	Pottery	Early medieval
		3	9	Daub	-
58	51	1	2	Daub	-
		1	13	Ceramic mould fragment?	-
59	60	1	3	Pottery	Early medieval
61	39	1	6	Pottery	Early medieval
		1	2	Daub	-
62	77	2	8	Daub	-
63	75	1	6	Daub	-
		2	3	Misc ceramic, sandy fabric, reduced but with oxidised external surface, could be mould fragments	-
65	40	2	8	Pottery	Early medieval
		2	2	Daub	-
		4	117	Fire-cracked flints	-
		1	1	Piece of carbonised wood	-
100	101	1	6	Pottery	Medieval
102	103	1	4	Pottery	Medieval

### APPENDIX 3: POTTERY

All weights in grams

Context	Feature	Count	Weight (g)	Description	Date
26	27	1	2	Early medieval ware, body sherd, abraded, vesicular perhaps where shell inclusions have leached out	10th to early 13th C
28	29	2	8	Early medieval ware, abraded body sherds	10th to early 13th C
		2	47	Thetford-type Ware, showing the remains of a spout and applied decoration	10th & 11th C
42	41	2	11	Early medieval ware including a thickened everted cooking-pot rim	10th to 12th C
48	47	1	6	Medieval coarse ware, very abraded with iron concretion on ?external surface, although this could be natural bog iron rather than archaeological activity	12th C
50	49	2	2	Early medieval ware, body sherds from same sherd family	10th to early 13th C
53	52	2	3	Early medieval ware, body sherds from same sherd family, same vessel in context 50	10th to early 13th C
56	55	1	2	Early medieval ware, body sherd	10th to early 13th C
59	60	1	3	Early medieval ware, body sherd, abraded, may have been burnt	10th to early 13th C
61	39	1	6	Early medieval ware thickened everted rim, most likely from a cooking-pot, v. abraded	10th to 12th C
65	40	2	8	Early medieval ware: a thickened everted rim and a base sherd showing an iron accretion on the break, both sherds are fire-blackened externally	10th to 12th C
100	101	1	6	Medieval coarse ware, abraded sherd externally fire-blackened, borderline early medieval ware	12th C
102	103	1	4	Medieval coarse ware, abraded body sherd	12th to 14th C
		<b>19</b>	<b>108</b>		

## **APPENDIX 4: CONTENTS OF ARCHIVE (ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING)**

**Site Name:** Habitat Creation Scheme, Devereux Farm, Kirby-Le-Soken

**Site Code:** FWDF 10

### **Index to Archive (Archaeological Monitoring):**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Brief
- 1.2 Written Scheme of Investigation

#### **2. Research Archive**

- 2.1 Client Report
- 2.2 Finds Reports

#### **3. Site Archive**

- 3.1 Context Record Register
- 3.2 Context Records (25 to 110)
- 3.3 Sample Register
- 3.4 Plan Register
- 3.5 Section Register
- 3.6 2 x A4 plan sheets
- 3.7 Trench location plan
- 3.8 Photographic Register
- 3.9 Site Photographic Record (1 set of B/W prints and colour contact prints + 1 set of digital images)
- 3.10 Miscellaneous notes/plans

#### **Not in File**

9 large plan/section sheets

#### **Finds**

The finds occupy less than one box.

## APPENDIX 5: ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

<b>Site name/Address:</b> Habitat Creation Scheme, Devereux Farm, Kirby-Le-Soken	
<b>Parishes:</b> Kirby-Le-Soken	<b>District:</b> Tendring
<b>NGR:</b> TM 23463 22736	<b>Site Code:</b> FWDF 10
<b>Type of Work:</b> Archaeological Monitoring and Recording	<b>Site Director/Group:</b> T. Ennis, ECC Field Archaeology Unit
<b>Dates of Work:</b> 14th July 2010 - 28 March 2011	<b>Size of Area Investigated:</b> 8657 sq m
<b>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</b> Colchester and Ipswich	<b>Funding source:</b> Client
<b>Further Seasons Anticipated?:</b> No	<b>Related HER Nos.:</b> -
<b>Final Report:</b> EAH summary	<b>Oasis No.:</b> 86153
<b>Periods Represented:</b> Medieval, post-medieval, modern	
<b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b>	
<p>Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out on construction and landscaping works associated with a habitat creation scheme at Devereux Farm, Kirby-le-Soken, Essex.</p> <p>Although archaeological remains of prehistoric and Roman date are known from immediately outside the area of the habitat creation scheme no remains of this date were identified within the monitored areas. Monitoring did, however, identify remains dating to the early medieval, medieval and post-medieval periods.</p> <p>A localised area of early medieval features were identified beneath the northern part of the new road footprint. Features included two parallel gullies, a series of post-holes possibly forming a small rectangular structure, a large pond or water channel and a Y-shaped ditch. Three phases of activity were identified taking place somewhere between the 10th to the 12th centuries. The recovery of fragments of ceramic mould or crucible and hammerscale suggest that both metal working and smithing were taking place in the vicinity, whilst crop processing was evidenced by the recovery of burnt grain.</p> <p>Three roughly parallel field boundary ditches were identified in the southern part of the new road footprint. Medieval pottery recovered from two of the ditches suggests that they date to the 12th or 13th century. At Rigdons breach in the east of the habitat scheme area the lowering of the 1950s sea wall embankment revealed the buried remains of an earlier bank dating to the late 18th or 19th century.</p>	
<b>Previous Summaries/Reports:</b> Blowers, T. 2008, <i>Land at Devereux Farm, Kirby-Le-Soken, Essex: Archaeological Evaluation</i> ECC FAU unpublished report 1961	
<b>Author of Summary:</b> T. Ennis	<b>Date of Summary:</b> July 2011



Plate 1. Ditch 40 and post-hole 89 (1m scale)

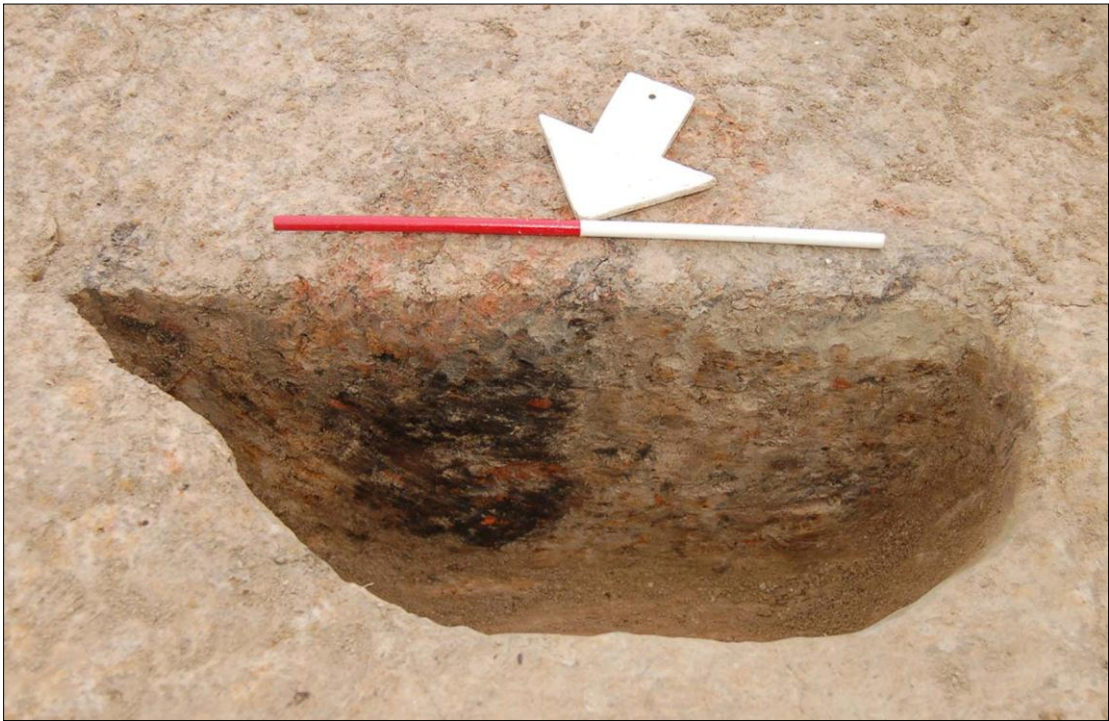


Plate 2. Post-hole 95 (0.25m scale)



Plate 3. Gullies 52 & 55 (2m scale)



Plate 4. Gullies 29 & 77 with post-holes 84, 87 & 110 (1m scale)



Plate 5. Pond/channel 32 (1m scale)



Plate 6. Ditch 39 (2m scale)



Plate 7. Ditch 101 (1m scale)



Plate 8. Topsoil stripping for Rigdons closure bank



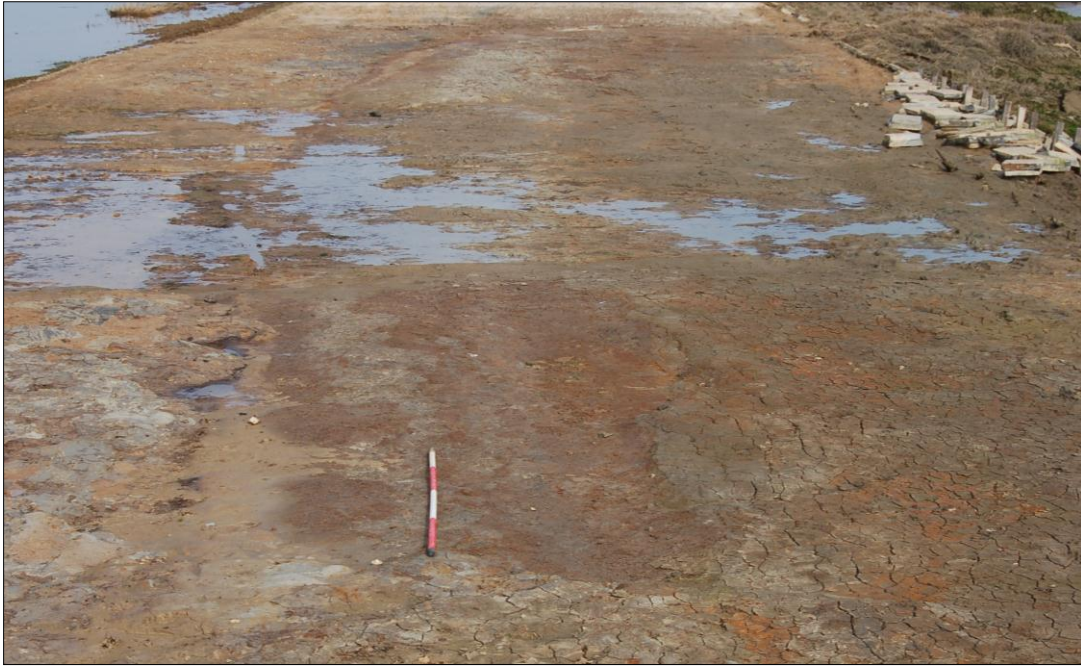


Plate 9. Rigdons breach looking NW (2m scale)



Plate 10. Detail of decayed stakes (1m scale)