

1EW03 - Enabling Works Central

AWHh-Summary Report for Trial Trench Evaluation at Paradise and Field Farm, Northamptonshire AC320

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Summary

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken between August 2020 and February 2021 on the site of Paradise Farm and Field Farm, located between Greatworth and Lower Boddington in Northamptonshire. The site (1C20PDFTT) comprises two land parcels: the first to the north-west referred to as Paradise Farm (designated C32041) and the second parcel to the south-east known as Field Farm (designated C32035).
- 1.1.2 Paradise Farm (NGR 447932 251437) consists of gently undulating land covering 65ha either side of Claydon Road. Field Farm (NGR 448889 250397) has a steep sloped landscape from south down to north, covering an area of 23ha defined by the former East and West Junction Railway to the north-west and Appletree Lane to the south-east.
- 1.1.3 At Paradise Farm the depth at which natural geology or archaeology was encountered varied across the site between 0.20m and 0.60m below ground level. The natural geology generally comprised mixed yellow-brown, orange-brown or grey-blue clay, occasionally with patches of silt or gravel. At Field Farm natural geology or archaeology was encountered at depths between 0.16m and 0.71m below ground level. Here the natural geology generally comprised mixed mid-brown or yellow-brown compacted clay and yellow/brown mudstone over patches and bands of ironstone.
- 1.1.4 Topsoil and subsoil depths varied across the site. Topsoil measured between 0.07m and 0.35m deep across the site as a whole and generally comprised mid-brown silty clay loam. Subsoil measured 0.04m to 0.50m in depth across the site and was similar in composition to the topsoil but more compact. Colluvium horizons were identified in two very localised areas; in one case these were truncated by ditches of Roman date associated with the settlement remains.
- 1.1.5 A total of 467 trenches were excavated at Field Farm and Paradise Farm, of which 128 contained archaeological features, predominantly furrows and undated ditches. The archaeology was mostly concentrated within three fields at Field Farm and one field at Paradise Farm.
- 1.1.6 Finds from the site included worked flints of a late Mesolithic and Neolithic to early Bronze Age date, Iron Age, Roman and early medieval pottery and other finds, and post-medieval pottery, in addition to ceramic building material, ferrous slag and animal bone. A single Roman cremation burial was identified which produced a significant quantity of iron nails. Other notable finds included two Roman armlets, one in shale and one in copper alloy, and an early medieval bead. An AD 4th-century coin was recovered from subsoil.
- 1.1.7 Prehistoric evidence comprised worked flint likely dating to the late Mesolithic, Neolithic to early Bronze Age periods, found largely in the topsoil or subsoil of the site, or within later features. A notable cluster of worked flints was identified at Paradise Farm.

- 1.1.8 The most significant Iron Age feature at Field Farm was a 3.5m wide compact gravel trackway, with undated curvilinear ditches also indicative of Iron Age settlement activity. A gully and two pits also yielded Iron Age pottery. An area of Iron Age settlement activity was also recorded at Paradise Farm, where a further curvilinear ditch that produced domestic material including nine sherds of Iron Age pottery from a single jar, may indicate the presence of a roundhouse; again, nearby undated curvilinear and linear ditches may be contemporary. A pit dated to the Iron Age was also recorded.
- 1.1.9 Activity of the Roman period was focused at Field Farm, with features recorded over three fields. The features consisted of two enclosures and boundary ditches; gullies, pits and post holes; a possible stone wall or post pad; quarry pits; a possible kiln and an un-urned cremation burial. The presence of a large number of nails with the cremated bone (possibly the remains of some form of structure and/or pyre goods) is of potential regional significance. A small amount of Roman structural debris was recovered, including curved roof tile (imbrex) and fired clay which hints at the possible style of some of the Roman buildings. Dating evidence suggests a broad date of late 2nd century to 4th century AD for the settlement.
- 1.1.10 Medieval to post-medieval furrows were recorded in all the fields across the site. At several locations there was evidence of two different alignments of ridge and furrows, indicating more than one phase of activity. The depth of the furrows ranged from 0.05m to 0.80m and the widths from 0.55m to 2.70m, with the majority between c 1.0 and 1.12m wide. Finds recovered from an excavated sample of furrows included pottery, ceramic building material and animal bone. One particularly notable find at Field Farm was an early medieval bead found in association with 5th–9th-century pottery.
- 1.1.1 A possible post-medieval pit was recorded at Paradise Farm: it produced one sherd of 18th-century pottery.
- 1.1.2 Medieval and post-medieval pottery was recovered from across the site. This pottery was found redeposited within the topsoil and subsoil and probably derives from manuring scatters associated with agricultural practices.
- 1.1.3 Paradise Farm in particular produced a large number of undated features, including several small clusters of activity that may date from the Iron Age/Roman period.