FLOAT FISH FARM,
LAND BETWEEN MILK AND WATER DROVE
AND OAKLEY DIKE,
FARCET, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION
(TRIAL TRENCHING)

FLOAT FISH FARM,
LAND BETWEEN MILK & WATER DROVE AND OAKLEY DIKE
FARCET, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION (TRIAL TRENCHING)

Authors: Gray Brogan, Walter McCann, Leo O'Brien, Sophie Ungar	
NGR: TL 2280 9468	Report No. 3027
District: Farcet	Site Code: AS1117
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No. P2441
Signed:	Date: Jan 07

Archaeological Solutions Ltd, 98-100 Fore Street, Hertford, SG14 1AB.
Tel: 01992 558170 Fax: 01992 553359 E-mail: info@ascontracts.co.uk Web: www.archaeologicalsolutions.co.uk
Registered Number: 4702122

CONTENTS

OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details				
Project name	*Float Fish Farm, Farcet, Peterborough, Cambs. Archaeological investigation (trial trench evaluation)*			
Project description (250 words) *In February 2005 Archaeological Solutions Limited conducted an archaeological desk-based assessment on land at the Float Fish Farm, Farcet, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 2280 9468). Preparatory to an archaeological investigation (trial trenching), the desk based assessment was updated in October 2007 to consider recent fieldwork. The archaeological investigations were conducted in response to a proposal to extend an area previously approved for a fish farm development.* *The archaeological investigation established a sequence through the fen and pre-fen landscape. A palaeosol (L1003) formed over the alluvial sediments (L1004). This buried soil horizon contained horizontally bedded leaves of Phragmites, Typha or Iris, suggestive of at least a periodically wet landscape. The formation of this layer varied across the site from a maximum depth of 0.25m in Trench 3 to only 0.03m in Trench 7. In Trenches 5 and 8 there was a very thin layer of tufa rich silt (L1024) between layers L1004 and L1003, and this may represent a period of open fresh water pools.* *There were no archaeological features present to further refine the dating of the formation of the fen west of Ramsey Road, the suggested fen edge by the Fenland Survey. Only one piece of Bronze Age pottery was located and this was unstratified. Thick deposits of peat had formed over the old land surface L1003.*				
Project dates (fieldwork)	-			
Previous work (Y/N/?)	*DBA*	Future work (Y/N/?)	*N*	
P. number	2441	Site code	*AS1117*	
Type of project	*Archaeological investigation (trial trenching)*			
Site status	*Fish farm development*			
Current land use	*Agricultural*			
Planned development	*Fish farm*			
Main features (+dates)	*Sequence through fen and pre-fen landscape*			
Significant finds (+dates)	*Bronze Age sherd*			
Project location				
County/ District/ Parish	*Cambs*			*Farcet*
HER/ SMR for area	-			
Post code (if known)				
Area of site				
NGR	*TL 2275 9475*			
Height AOD (max/ min)	*2-3m AOD*			
Project creators				
Brief issued by				
Project supervisor/s (PO)	*Iain Williamson, Gary Brogan, Walter McCann*			
Funded by	*Mick George (Haulage) Ltd*			
Full title	*Float Fish Farm, Farcet, Peterborough, Cambs. An Archaeological Investigation (Trial Trench).*			
Authors	*Brogan, G., McCann, W., O'Brien, L, Ungar, S.*			
Report no.	*3027*			
Date (of report)	*Feb 2008*			

FLOAT FISH FARM, LAND BETWEEN MILK & WATER DROVE AND OAKLEY DIKE, FARCET, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION (TRIAL TRENCHING)

SUMMARY

In February 2005 Archaeological Solutions Limited conducted an archaeological desk-based assessment on land at the Float Fish Farm, Farcet, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 2280 9468). Preparatory to an archaeological investigation (trial trenching), the desk based assessment was updated in October 2007 to consider recent fieldwork. The archaeological investigations were conducted in response to a proposal to extend an area previously approved for a fish farm development.

Throughout prehistory the site probably lay within the fen. To the west was a fen 'island' with two Bronze Age barrows and a pot-boiler site. To the east was a peninsula leading up to the Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement site at Bradley Fen/King's Dyke. Roman burials and crop marks relating to structures have been found at Horsley Toll, 500 metres north of the site, and it is possible a Roman settlement was located here (HER 02811 & HER 02957).

Given its fen location, the depositional sequence of this site was judged to be of interest. It was suggested that the archaeological investigation may determine the lines of the boundaries between the fen and the higher island and peninsula of the Bronze Age, and there was also a potential for Bronze Age settlement or burial/ votive activity. Roman remains were thought likely, and evidence to date Oakley Dyke might be recovered.

In the event the archaeological investigation established a sequence through the fen and pre-fen landscape

An open quarry face to the west of the site revealed a full sequence of deposits overlying the natural Pleistocene gravel terrace. Over the gravel was a uniform layer of grey silty clay (L1004) with gravel and flint inclusions derived from the underlying gravels, although this alluvial sediment was a firmer blue grey clay, probably formed locally under standing water.

A palaeosol (L1003) formed over the alluvial sediments (L1004). This buried soil horizon contained horizontally bedded leaves of Phragmites, Typha or Iris, suggestive of at least a periodically wet landscape. The formation of this layer varied across the site from a maximum depth of 0.25m in Trench 3 to only 0.03m in Trench 7. In Trenches 5 and 8 there

was a very thin layer of tufa rich silt (L1024) between layers L1004 and L1003, and this may represent a period of open fresh water pools.

There were no archaeological features present to further refine the dating of the formation of the fen west of Ramsey Road, the suggested fen edge by the Fenland Survey (see 4.2.1 below). Only one piece of Bronze Age pottery was located and this was unstratified. Thick deposits of peat had formed over the old land surface L1003. Three differing types of peat were noted. These were relatively common across the site, being predominately black or dark brown, oxidised detrital, structureless and non-minerogenic peat. In Trenches 1, 6, 7 and 8 a red peat, derived from horizontally bedded laminations of wood, had formed between the lower dark brown peat L1002 and the uppermost black peat layer L1001).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In February 2005 Archaeological Solutions Limited conducted an archaeological desk-based assessment on land at the Float Fish Farm, Farcet, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 2280 9468) (Figs. 1 – 2). Preparatory to an archaeological investigation (trial trenching) the desk based assessment was updated in October 2007 to consider recent fieldwork. The archaeological investigations were conducted in response to a proposal to extend an area previously approved for a fish farm development.

1.2 The archaeological investigation was conducted in accordance with a brief issued by Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning & Countryside Advice (CA CPA dated 07/09/06) and a specification compiled by AS (dated 18/09/06). The project followed the procedures outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' (IFA) *Code of Conduct,* and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (revised 1999). It also adhered to the relevant sections of *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England,* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14 (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The aim of the investigation was to determine the location, extent, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains likely to be threatened by the proposed development.

1.4 The primary objective was to preserve the archaeological evidence contained within the site by record and to attempt a reconstruction of the history and use of the site.

1.5 Research priorities were centred on consideration of

- Fen-edge activity, land use and seasonality
- Later prehistoric to Roman ritual, death and burial practices

Planning policy context

1.6 The relevant planning policies which apply to the effect of development with regard to cultural heritage are Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (PPG15) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 'Archaeology and Planning' (PPG16) (Department of the Environment).

1.7 PPG16 (1990) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to archaeology. It states that there should always be a presumption in favour of preserving nationally important archaeological remains in situ. However, when there is no overriding case for preservation, developers are required to fund opportunities for the recording and, where necessary, the excavation of the site. This condition is widely applied by local authorities.

1.8 PPG15 (1994) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to the conservation of the historic environment by protecting the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and protecting listed buildings (of architectural or historical interest) from demolition and unsympathetic change and safeguarding their settings as far as is possible. This condition is also widely applied by local authorities.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site is located in a rural setting approximately 2km to the west of the village of Farcet. The town of Yaxley lies *c.*4 km to the south-west, Whittlesey lies *c.* 5km to the north-east and the city of Peterborough is *c.* 5km to the north-west. The area is situated approximately 300m to the south of King's Delph Gate Farm on the eastern side of Ramsey Road. The modern, channelled, River Nene flows *c.* 1km to the north of the site, but its former course (which still carries water) passes closer to the site (*c.* 600m to the north west). The site lies at between 2 and 3m AOD.

2.2 The overall site comprises four fields, the two larger ones to the north-east being separated from the two to the south-east by a track called King's Delph Highway. The north-eastern part of the site is bounded by the Oakley Dike drain to its north-east with its sides demarcated by field boundary drains running between the King's Delph Highway and the Oakley Dike. The south-western portion of the site is bounded at its south-western end by the Milk and Water Drove which is a part of the Ramsey Road. The southern side of this part of the side is bounded by a field drain running between Ramsey Road and King's Delph Highway while the northern part is bounded by the Ramsey Road which curves to meet the "Highway". Where the two roads meet is King's Delph Gate Farm.

3 TOPOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY

3.1 Farcet Fen mostly consists primarily of Glacial Till (boulder clay), although there are areas where gravels are exposed along with intermediate mixed gravelly clay deposits.

By the end of the Neolithic period all of the lower parts of the region supported a peat fen and during the early Bronze Age a soft blue-coloured material ('fen clay') was laid down to the south of Clapgate Farm (Hall 1992, 19).

3.2 Soils within the area are Glaciofluvial Drift (Ireton Association), described as permeable humose coarse and fine loamy soils, associated with humose calcareous coarse loamy over sandy soils, suitable for growing cereals, sugar beet and potatoes and with groundwater controlled by ditches and pumps. To the north and west, below the Farcet ridge, soils are River Alluvium over peat (Midelney Association), stoneless clayey soils mostly overlying peat, variably affected by groundwater. The land rises towards Farcet and Yaxley, where soils are Chalky Till (Hanslope Association), slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils. Immediately east of the site, soils are Fen Peat (Adventurer's 1 Association), deep peat soils on flat land. Beyond these, to the south east, is the Bedford Level, a vast expanse of Marina Alluvium and Fen Peat (Downholland 1 Association), deep humose stoneless clayey soils with a peaty or humose surface horizon (SSEW 1983).

3.3 The Fenland Survey indicates that site probably lay beneath the wet peat fen during the Neolithic and Bronze Age (Fig.10). However, immediately to the south of Ramsey Road was a fen 'island', and a peninsula leading south of Bradley Fen lay to the north east (Hall 1992). The Fenland Survey (Hall 1992, 19) notes that, "in plan the island has a complex indented shape with a large depression towards the west-centre that is probably a modified pingo or thermokarst feature. A narrow peninsula approaches from Whittlesey to the north. There is a gap separating it from the main island, but the curious way that the peninsula makes for one of the island's indents suggests that once the two did link." The Fenland Survey indicates that east of the peninsula, and south of Whittlesey was the fen delta of the old River Nene, a meandering system of streams, with the dendritic tributaries of the old river still visible on aerial photographs.

3.4 Today, the wider area is large fen 'island', which rises to over 3m in places (Fig. 11), a relatively high area in comparison with the Bedford Level to the south east, where much land lies below sea level.

3.5 The natural resources available in the area, and the consequent human exploitation of them, have varied widely over time. This is due to the low-lying terrain, vulnerable to marine flooding or runoff from higher ground to the west. This fluctuating fenland environment has influenced the nature and location of settlement and agricultural activity in the area. Episodes of flooding, silting and peat formation have masked and protected earlier deposits which have been revealed in increasing quantities over the past 20 years in the course of fen drainage.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND Figs. 3-6

4.1 Early prehistoric

During the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, activity was concentrated on higher land on the fen edge. The heavy soils of Farcet were probably not attractive to early settlers, although Palaeolithic and Mesolithic flints are recorded from the area. The exact location of these findspots is not known and these finds probably reflect ephemeral activity, such as flint knapping on a hunting expedition, rather than longer term human occupation sites.

About 1.6km to the south-east, on the 'peninsula' leading to modern Whittlesey was a probable settlement site, represented by a flint scatter. The majority of the flintwork is dated to the Neolithic, although a small Mesolithic blade and a Bronze Age scraper were also recovered (FHER 10871; Site 1; Hall 1992, 19; fig. 10; see below). Palaeoenvironmental research suggests that the site may have been dry land at this time (French & Pryor 1993, fig. 70), although numerous canoes or logboats have been recovered from the fen in this area, indicating the extensive use of waterways and inlets. The Peterborough HER notes that sparse Neolithic flint implements have been found widely scattered in the area to the north west of the site, near Horsey Bridge, which was on dry land at this time (PHER 1953), with further Neolithic and Bronze Age flint recovered during fieldwalking at Stanground (PHER 51229; 51230).

4.2 Later Neolithic and Bronze Age

4.2.1 Environment

During the early Bronze Age, rising water levels resulted in marine flooding, reducing land available for settlement and agriculture. The Fenland Survey suggests that the site lay just within the peat fen in the later Bronze Age, with the edge of a fen island immediately to the west, running along the southwestern side of Ramsey Road (Hall 1992, fig. 10). To the east, the fen edge probably ran along the line of Oakley Dyke (Hall 1987, fig. 38; Hall 1992, fig. 10). However, it is important to note that the areas of projected fen, skirtland and dryland in the immediate vicinity of King's Delph are hypothetical and have yet to be tested by fieldwork (Fig. 10).

4.2.2 Settlement sites

Two possible Bronze Age settlement sites are noted at Farcet and Whittlesey in the Fenland Survey (Fig. 10). The first is a principally Neolithic flint scatter with some Bronze Age material, 'on the gravelly peninsula extending from Whittlesey' … 'with potential for waterlogged contemporary remains being preserved under the marine clay that lies a few metres from it', located c. 1.6km south east of the site (Site 1; Hall 1992, 19; fig. 10). An area of burnt flint at Redshank Farm on the former 'island' was interpreted as a pot boiler or cooking site, c. 1.8km to the south west (FHER 10873; Site U1; Hall 1992, 22; fig. 10). A poorly-provenanced stray find of an Iron Age vessel is recorded from near Park House

Farm, also on the former 'island', *c.* 1km to the south (NMR_NATINV-871296), and a food vessel is recorded from Whittlesey Road, to the north west (PHER 7832).

The extensive Bronze Age ritual platform and post alignment at Flag Fen lies c. 4.5km to the north of the site, with the field systems of Fengate to its west (Pryor 2001). This area was a shallow, open fen basin, which was sufficiently dry to permit the construction of the Flag Fen settlement, although the repeated re-building and artificial raising of this settlement may reflect rising water levels. The site was finally abandoned at the end of the Bronze Age.

During the South West Fen Dyke Survey, archaeological observation of Mustdyke (Dyke 10), between Flag Fen and the channelled river Nene, noted a buried soil cut by features, some containing charcoal or Bronze Age flints. Elements of the Flag Fen timber platform were noted, as was the Fen Causeway (French & Pryor 1993, 92-7, 100; EHNMR 082732). Study of Dyke 9, parallel to the Nene near Northey Island, suggested that the area was an occupied island of dry ground during the Neolithic and Bronze Age (*ibid*, 91-100; EHNMR 1082729). Finds from excavations at Northey suggest that salt production was undertaken in the vicinity in the Bronze Age (Gurney 1980; EHNMR 1083034).

To the south of Flag Fen, on a fen island embayment, excavations at Funtham's Lane, Bradley Fen, Whittlesey (1962) by Peterborough Museum Society Archaeology Field Section, found Iron Age settlement remains and Roman settlement and burial (EHNMR-642854). Further recent investigations at Bradley Fen have found Neolithic metalled surfaces with flint scatters and animal remains, probably related to watering holes, as well as pits, wells, postholes and 'troughs', which yielded well preserved wooden artefacts including log ladders and a piece of a log boat. Another Neolithic log boat was discovered near Whittlesey to the east (NMR_NATINV-367061), and a further possible logboat site is recorded to the north of the site, near Horsey Toll Farm in 1828 (PHER 2955). At Bradley Fen, a series of Bronze Age burnt mounds were found, as well as single 'pristine' spears between the burnt mounds, a hoard of 20 damaged weapons (c. 1200BC), metalworking evidence and human remains. The field system at Bradley Fen was probably established before the late Bronze Age-early Iron Age roundhouse settlement (Lewis 2002, 147; Edwards & Gdaniec 1997; Knight 2000a).

Excavations at King's Dyke West, located immediately east of Bradley Fen, recorded a Neolithic henge monument, an Early Bronze Age monument complex and several Late Bronze Age round houses (Mortimer 1995; Mortimer 1996; Alexander 1997; Lucas 1997; Edwards nd; Knight 1999; Knight 2000b; Gibson & Knight 2002). A Bronze Age burial has also been recorded in this area (NMR_NATINV-367068).

4.2.3 Barrows

The area between Farcet and Whittlesey is relatively rich in barrows. Bowl barrows are the most frequent form of round barrow and date from the Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age (*c*. 2400 to 1500 BC). They can occur in isolation or in groups; some 10 000 are known nationally although there are regional variations (Taylor 1981). Barrows are of national

importance not only for potentially contributing to understanding of prehistoric burial practices and ideology, but also because buried soil beneath the mound will retain valuable information on land use with organic deposits showing environmental conditions of the time (Watkins 2003). For example, at Etton, well developed brown forest soils were found on the higher parts of the terrace, which had rarely been ploughed before deforestation and barrow construction (French 1988, French & Pryor forthcoming).

A bowl barrow (HER 07727) lies less than 500m from the north-east corner of the site (approximately 500m south of Buntings Farm). This is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 33393). The barrow is reduced by ploughing but survives as a gravel rise 0.2m high and 23m in diameter. The surrounding 5m-wide ditch is now in-filled but is discernible as a buried cropmark feature seen on aerial photographs. The barrow is located on the fen edge on a gravel peninsula adjacent to the prehistoric course of the river Nene (Hall 1987, fig. 38).

The plough-damaged remains of two further barrows are located south east of the site, near Park House Farm (Fenland Survey Sites 2 (FHER 10872) and U1 (FHER 10873; Hall 1992, 19-21; fig. 10). They have been 'reduced to low mounds 14m in diameter and about 30cm high ... neither is likely to have wet remains, since both now lie on a 'hill' top' (Hall 1992, 19-21).

To the west of the site are the cropmark remains of a cluster of four ring ditches, south of Milby Farm and *c.* 150m west of the site (HER 06814). These ring ditches may be the remains of ditches around barrow mounds, or may represent another category of buried feature (see Taylor 1981, 108).

A round barrow cemetery lies 1.2km south-east of the Farcet barrow at Suet Hills (1.6km from the site). This site includes eight round barrows in two groups. The westernmost group comprises a cluster of five barrows with the remaining three lying a short distance to the east. Five barrow mounds survive as earthworks, measuring between 0.3 and 1 metre high, while the three easternmost mounds have been reduced by ploughing and are no longer visible above ground (EH NMR NATINV-367149).

Further afield, geophysical survey and trial trenching at Stanground North (Flag Fen) in 1999 revealed a Bronze Age timber trackway and post alignment as well as a Bronze Age round barrow raised over the site of a contemporary round house (EHNMR-1306733).

Barrow/probable barrow site	Height (m AOD)	Description	Distance from centre of site
Fenland Survey site U1 (FHER 10873) (Hall 1992, fig. 10)	2.1	Fenland survey Site U1 (Hall 1992). BA ploughed-out barrow (14m diameter, 0.3m high) at 2.1m AOD	1.2km south west
Fenland Survey site 2 (FHER 10872) (Hall 1992, fig. 10)	2.1	Fenland survey Site 2 (Hall 1992). BA ploughed-out barrow (14m diameter, 0.3m high) at 2.1m AOD	1.5km south west
SAM3393 (HER 7727)	2	Bowl barrow surviving as a gravel rise; 23m diameter, 0.2m high	0.8km east north east
?Barrow (FHER 8156)	2	AP of ring ditch of round barrow ? same as SAM3393	0.8km east north east
Suet Hills barrow field (NMR-NI 367149)	2	Barrow field	c. 2.0km east
Ring ditches at Milby Farm (HHER 6804)	2	Crop mark of four ring ditches	0.45km west

Table 1 Barrow sites in the vicinity of the excavation area

4.2.4 Metalwork recovered from the area of the Bronze Age fen

A large fragment of late Bronze Age spearhead was discovered near Wakes Farm, *c.* 700m south of the site (HHER 2922) and a socketed axe and a flint knife were found south of Straight Drove, between Farcet Bridge and Slacker Ground Farm (Fenland survey Gazetteer; Hall 1992 microfiche). Both findspots lie in areas that were probably fen in the Bronze Age, but quite close to the hypothetical fen edge (Hall 1992, fig. 10).

Numerous Bronze Age implements have been found in the course of the Nene and its banks near Horsey, including a socketed axe and two palstaves are in Peterborough Museum (Bodger Collection) (PHER 2950). A late Bronze Age leaf-shaped sword was found at Stanground, near Horsey Toll (PHER 2937). To the north, at Bradley Fen, recent excavations found a hoard of weapons; earlier excavations in the same area found a Bronze Age rapier and sword (NMR_NATINV-367139); the fen edge location of these finds at Bradley Fen is topographically comparable to those of the spearhead fragment and socketed axe and flint knife found closer to the current site.

The weapons hoard from Flag Fen is one of a small number of such deposits found in this area of the fens, but a deposit of a type which occurs frequently further south on the fen edges of southern Cambridgeshire, as well as elsewhere in middle to late Bronze Age Britain, notably in the Thames Valley (Downes 1993, 25-26). The occurrence of hoards in these areas has been variously interpreted as a religious phenomenon (Pryor 1991, 118) perhaps indicating focal points for a new 'water based' religion arising at this time (Burgess 1974, 179), and as evidence of prosperity, due to the availability of natural resources and good water route communications, with the area becoming a new centre of power

(Rowlands 1980, 34-5). Another interpretation with an economic aspect is that the deposition of metal items in the fen took it out of circulation and so kept its price high, thus maintaining its status as a prestige material affordable only by the wealthy and/ or powerful; the destruction of such valuable items on the flat land of the fens would have been a very public act and may have brought prestige to the depositor (Pryor 1991, 120). However, there has also been debate as to whether hoards represent single depositional events or multiple depositions over time (Barrett and Gourlay 1984, 349). If the latter interpretation is accepted then single bronze tools, like those noted above as having been recovered from the area of the Bronze Age fen in the area of the site (see Fig 10), can be interpreted as variants of the same pattern rather than a separate phenomenon (Bradley 1982, 110; Downes 1993, 26).

It has been noted above that the bowl barrows of this region date to the Neolithic and early Bronze Age. This is in keeping with the widespread trend away from individual burials and toward undifferentiated cremation cemeteries; an example of such a cemetery having been identified at Fengate (Downes 1993, 26). The coincidence of this change in burial practice with the beginnings of deposition of tools and weapons into the fen has led to the hypothesis that the latter form of deposition replaced the grave goods of the earlier Bronze Age (Bradley 1982, 113, 1984, 112), being a symbolic way of 'burying' important individuals in the waters of the fen (Pryor 1991, 120). It would, however, be inaccurate to imply that his interpretation could be applied to all bronze artefacts recovered from the fen, and chance loss is likely to have occurred in these areas as well as on dry land (e.g. Pryor 1991, 120) (though with less frequency owing to the patterning of activity).

4.3 Iron Age and Roman

4.3.1 Environment

The late Bronze Age and Iron Age were wet periods, during which peat formed, covering the Farcet (and wider) area, with the exception of the highest points of the Farcet island (Hall 1992, 22). The scarcity of Iron Age sites in the area is a reflection of the wet conditions of the period, but sites of this date are not absent from the region (see 4.2.3.2). This indicates that there were some areas where the land was dry enough for occupation, or more sporadic activity; these included two (FHER 1719 and FHER 7726) within *c*. 600m to the east and north east of the site. Even when covered by peat, the area would have had value in its wetland resources.

By the time of the Roman conquest, the fens were beginning to become drier, presumably due to climatic change, as there is no evidence for drainage (Potter, 1981, 81; though this may be due to post medieval wastage of the relevant peat deposits). The emergent fen island at Stonea Camp, near March, was a focal point for Iceni resistance to Roman rule, its fen surroundings making it a good defensive position (Salway 1993, 77; Pottery and Jackson 1998; Malim 2005); it is possible that other fen islands also became points of resistance to the spread of Roman rule.

During the Roman period, there appears to have been major investment in communications

and drainage works, although no private villa estates or towns have been found. These rich pasturelands and salt tidal streams may have been exploited as part of a large, imperial estate (Jackson & Potter 1996; Salway 1981, 127). During the 3rd century AD, widespread freshwater flooding in the southern Fenland, when alluvium was washed inland and deposited, may have caused populations to move to higher ground (Mackreth 1996, 235). During the late and post-Roman periods, poor maintenance of drainage works may have led to further flooding. Silty organic clays derived from eroded topsoils were deposited in the later Roman and early medieval periods. Although the growth of the peat and silt had been temporarily arrested during the Roman period, the fens would continue to expand until the advent of large-scale drainage schemes from the 18th century onwards.

The distribution of Roman remains suggests that the peninsula to the north east was still dry land, and settlements were located on dry land (possibly bordering the fen) at Horsley Toll, near Bradley Fen, Stanground south and west of Whittlesey. Burials have been found near Whittlesey, possibly close to the route of the Fen Causeway. Further burials are known from Horsley Toll and the 'peninsula' to the north of the site, near Bunting's Farm.

4.3.2 Settlement sites

On the 'peninsula' to the east of the site is a possible Iron Age pot boiler site noted in the Fenland Survey, a dark area with burnt stone, bone, pottery sherds and artefacts (FHER 7726).

Surface finds of Roman building stone, flue tile and 1st to 3rd century pottery have been found near Horsey Toll Farm during various field-walking trips, by the Peterborough Museum Field Section, as well as an excavation (PHER 1364; Phillips 1970, 188). There may have been inhumations here too (*ibid*.) Roman coins are also recorded from this area (NMR_NATINV-367135), as well as stray finds of pottery (PHER 1369). Pottery sherds spanning the Roman period have also been found *c.* 250m north-west of the site (HER 2957a), and near Black House Farm, east of Horsey Toll (PHER 2939).

Excavations west of Whittlesey (1958-9) found a 1st to 4th century settlement, with a sequence of field systems; a burial was also found (NMR_NATINV-367069). Excavations at Itter Farm, Whittlesey, near King's Dyke (1958-59), found a Roman ditch (EHNMR-642855; Phillips 1970, 188). Excavations nearby at Funtham Lane (1962) found a Roman pit and ditch (EHNMR-1090134; Phillips 1970, 188). Recent investigations at Bradley Fen, Whittlesey found a possible alternative route for the line of the Fen Causeway, c. 2.5km north of the site (Knight 2000).

4.3.3 Burials

No new Iron Age or Roman remains were discovered at Farcet during the Fenland Survey but approximately 500m to the west, Roman burials and 1st to 4th century pottery have previously been found at Palmers Barn (HER 02957a) on the highest part of the Fen, possibly related to the Roman sites at Whittlesey or Stanground. Here, a burial was found

in 1906 under a stone slab (HHER 02811) while a skull was also ploughed out near an area of crop marks indicating a potential occupation area (HHER 2957).

Excavations at Horsey Toll in 1955 found a Roman ditch and burial (EH NMR 642852; see also PHER 4018), and possibly Roman skeletons were ploughed up and Roman pottery was found – however, the exact findspots and origins of the material are rather confused (Hall 1992, 17). During construction work at Park Farm, Stanground, west of Horsey Toll, builders found an inhumation (PHER 3129), building stone, flue tiles, and 1st to 3rd century pottery (PHER 4015). Four 3rd century kilns have been excavated at Park Farm, Stanground (PHER 3128).

Excavations on the 'peninsula' near Bunting's Farm, east of Horsey Hill and c. 800m north east of the site in the 1950s, found five Romano-British burials dating to the mid 2nd century (FHER 999), as well as 2nd to 4th century ditches, baked clay debris possibly reflecting an industrial site (FHER 994), worked bone (FHER 999a), jet and bronze items (FHER 999b), coins and Roman pottery (FHER 995). Fieldwalking during the Fenland Survey noted a small dark area with tile and sherds in the vicinity (FHER 7734).

Excavations near Bradley Fen to the north, in 1961, found eight 2nd century burials, pottery and a wicker-lined pit containing 3rd to 4th century Roman pottery (NMR_NATINV-367138). Excavations nearby in 1962 found pits and ditches with 2nd to 4th century pottery and a Roman sword (NMR_NATINV-367139). A Romano-British cremation was found west of Whittlesey (NMR_NATINV-367137).

4.4 Anglo-Saxon, Norman and medieval

4.4.1 Farcet and archaeology in the vicinity of the site

Between *c*.650 and 950 AD place-names in the area show multiple estates to exist, composed of small settlements administered from an estate centre. The name Farcet is first recorded in the 10th century as *Faresheued* meaning 'Bull's headland or hill' and indicates the presence of a substantial farm specialising in rearing stock (Kirby & Oosthuizen 2000; Mills 1991, 127). Farcet is not mentioned in the 1086 Domesday Survey but was one of the earliest endowments of Thorney Abbey, given in the 10th century. There were shared rights between Ramsey and Thorney Abbeys in Ramsey Marsh and in 1224 Yaxley and Farcet was passed, free of claim, to Thorney Abbey (Page 1936, 167). During medieval times, much of the Nene water passed between Farcet and the Fen and much of the northern part of the fen would become covered by flood water in wet seasons (Darby 1940). The fen-island would have provided good grazing during summer, as the peat covering was only slight (Hall 1992, 22).

Ridge and furrow earthworks have been noted on higher ground at Stanground to the northwest (PHER 51234; 50653). Here, a geophysical survey was carried out, noting traces of ridge and furrow along with possible pits and linear features. Two areas produced anomalies that may indicate ancient settlement and boundary features (PHER51234).

4.4.2 Oakley Dyke and Kings Dyke

The north east boundary of the site is formed by a drain marked on the 1999 OS map as Oakley Dike. This water channel was first documented in 1285, when it was referred to as *Suthende de Kinggesdelfe*; *Northende de Kinggesdelfe* was recorded at the same time, referring to (modern) King's Dike, which passes *c*. 1.1km north of the site. The name 'King's Delph', which originally referred to these dikes survives in the names of this area of the fens and several features (including the farm to the north of the site and the trackway which passes though it) in it. An earlier (*c*. 1250) source refers to the northern dike as *Swerdesdelf*. By the early 17th century, the names *Sword Dyke* had been transferred to the northern dike, which was also known as *Whittlesey Dyke*, and by the late part of that century, both were being called *Canutus/ Knutus* or *Kings Dyke*. The name *Oakley Dyke* was first recorded in 1821. (Reaney 1943, 208).

The origin of these dikes remains unknown, though clearly it predates the mid/ late 13th century; Roman (cf. Reaney 1943, 260) and post Roman (cf. Hall 1987, 66) are both plausible; the Victoria County History states only that they are of 'considerable antiquity'. The Roman finds listed in the Historic Environment Record show no patterning indicative of a spatial relationship with Oakley Dike (see Fig 3). The late 17th century name for the dykes results from their reputedly having been made by King Cnut (Reaney 1943, 260). The Victoria County History notes the recovery of a late Anglo Saxon (10th or 11th century) spearhead and sword (both now lost) from the junction of King's Dike and the River Nene (Salzman 1967, I, 325, 326) but it is not clear whether these came from the bed or the banks of the watercourse.

4.5 Post-medieval

In the mid 17th century a civil war pentagonal fort with bastions, a large gun emplacement or sconce, was built at Horsey Grange Farm 1.3km to the north, on the east bank of the old course of the River Nene (PHER 1996). This guarded the toll road from Peterborough and Stangate to Whittlesey, where it crosses the River Nene. However, the area was strongly controlled by Parliament and the fort is unlikely to have been involved in any significant campaign or military action. It was during the 17th century that Farcet Fen was drained and entirely inclosed. At this time, traces of a fen island were found in the gravel. The drainage of Whittlesey Mere was authorised by an Act of Parliament in 1762 (Page 1936, 166).

4.6 Modern

Horsey Toll Airfield, northwest of the site, was a Second World War airbase used for repairing Hawker Hurricane aeroplanes (PHER 50570, 50571, 50572, 50573, 50574 & 50575).

The site was agricultural land and undeveloped in the modern period (Figs.4-6)

5 RECENT FIELDWORK IN THE VICINITY OF THE SITE

5.1 Archaeological investigations carried out since 2005 at Must Farm (*c.* 2.25km north-east of the site) revealed significant prehistoric remains (Evans & Knight 2005, 66). The finds include a timber alignment which was radiocarbon dated, at least partially, to the late Bronze Age/ early Iron Age (Evans & Knight 2005, 14). As the site is very close to Flag Fen, connections between the two sites have been suggested

5.2 A second phase of work revealed an intact Neolithic oval barrow, which had a large circuit ditch and a mound consisting of upcast material. A moderate quantity of Peterborough ware was found in association (Evans & Brudenell 2005, 66). A round barrow was also found, but with a smaller ditch and capped with gravels (Evans & Brudenell 2005, 66). The round barrow was located directly upon the projected axis of the oval barrow, indicating that the oval barrow was constructed earlier; it was suggested that *c.*500-1000 years elapsed between their construction (Evans & Brudenell 2005, 68). There are thought to have been two prehistoric settlement sites within the Must Farm area. The first (Site 1) was located beside the south-west terrace-edge and revealed evidence of late Neolithic and early Bronze Age settlement, thought to have been seasonal or temporary. The second settlement site (Site 4), again dated to the later Neolithic/early Bronze Age, was dispersed, suggesting settlement, again possibly seasonal (Evans & Brudenell 2005, 68). Within this site was the southern part of a rodden (former river channel), aligned south-east to north-west (Evans & Brudenell 2005, fig. 15/1/18). This particular rodden does not infringe on Float Fish Farm, but does suggest there may be further roddens in the area due to the nature of the fen land.

5.3 Fieldwork at Stanground South (*c.* 1.5km north-west of the site) was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology between September and December 2005 (Taylor & Aaronson 2005, 42). The archaeological investigation recovered 19 middle Bronze Age cremation burials, three of which were excavated but poorly-preserved (Taylor & Aaronson 2005, 42). Field boundaries dating to earlier than the Iron Age were discovered, as was a probable Iron Age ditch system (Taylor & Aaronson 2005, 42). Geophysics and subsequent trial trenching were able to confirm the presence of three late Iron Age roundhouses, thought to be one primary house with two smaller outbuildings (Taylor & Aaronson 2005, 42). Occupation was thought to continue into the early Roman period with abandonment occurring in the 2nd or 3rd century (Taylor & Aaronson 2005, 43). Fieldwalking produced a wealth of Roman pottery and tile and trial trenching revealed a pottery kiln on the settlement (Taylor & Aaronson 2005, 43). Other pottery kilns manufacturing similar wares have been found at other excavations close by (Taylor & Aaronson 2005, 43). Ridge and furrow was encountered, which could date to either the medieval or post-medieval period, confirming the results from the Aerial Photographic Assessment (Taylor & Aaronson 2005, 43).

5.4 Recent excavations at Farcet Road and Horsey Hill (*c.* 1.5km north-west and *c.* 1km north of the site) have produced multi-period evidence (Kenney 2007). The Farcet Road

excavations showed Iron Age and Roman settlement (Areas 1, 2 and 3). Horsey Hill produced evidence of prehistoric, Roman and Anglo-Saxon occupation (Areas 4, 5 and 6) (Kenney 2007).

6 METHOD OF WORK (TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION)

6.1 The evaluation adhered to the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* and *Standards for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (revised 1999). Eight trial trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket (Fig.2). The measurements and orientation of each trench are tabulated below.

Trench No.	Length	Width	Orientation
1	40.0m	4.00m	N to S
2	78.5m	2.00m	E to W
3	98.0m	2.00m	N to S
4	47.0m	2.00m	E to W
5	93.0m	2.00m	N to S
6	54.0m	2.00m	NE to SW
7	100.0m	2.00m	E to W
8	38.0m	4.00m	N to S

6.2 The trench location adhered to those proposed by CA PCA.

6.3 Undifferentiated overburden was mechanically excavated; thereafter all investigation was undertaken by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned as appropriate and examined for archaeological features and finds. Deposits were recorded using *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale, and photographed. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the trenches were scanned by a metal detector.

6.4 Initially each trench was machine excavated to the top of a buried soil horizon / old land surface (L1003) and this layer was sampled by hand excavating 1m by 1m test pits at the ends of each trench, and the centres of Trenches 2, 3 and 7. Layer 1003 was then carefully machine excavated to the top of natural clay layer L1004. Due to flooding Trenches 1 and 8 were later re-cut immediately adjacent to the existing trenches, widening them to 4m, in order to assist in recording of the stratigraphy and for hand excavating the test pits.

7 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Individual trench descriptions are presented below.

7.1 Trench 1

Sample section: South End, East Facing 0.00m = 0.05m AOD		
0.00m – 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown, gleyed silty alluvium with occasional rounded stones and organic material (wood, roots etc.).
0.30m – 0.50m	L1001	Black peat layer. Humified, structureless and desiccated humic peat with silt content and occasional rootlet, gravel and wood. It contains moderate brownish orange mottling caused by iron staining.
0.50m – 0.85m	L1006	Red peat layer. Humified and desiccated peat with silt matrix and visible laminations of wood. Mid reddish brown. Present also in Trenches 6, 7, and 8.
0.85m – 0.97m	L1002	Dark brown peat layer. Fairly compact, moist humified, structureless peat level with less silt content (sedge peat) and occasional round wood.
0.97m – 1.05m	L1003	Buried soil horizon. Organic brownish grey peaty silt containing horizontally bedded leaves of Phragmites.
1.05m+	L1025	Natural. Blue grey clay layer. Alluvial deposit of clay. Found only in Trench 1.

Description: Trench 1 was orientated north to south, and extended northwards from the southern boundary of the excavation area. Given the general slope of the site, Trench 1 occupied the lowest point on the site. The majority of the subsurface strata carried on below the water table leaving the trench completely submerged during the initial period of investigation (December 2007). It was eventually pumped out (January 2008) and its stratigraphy recorded.

A common stratigraphy was recorded across the trench comprising topsoil overlying three layers of peat. This stratigraphy was visible also in Trenches 6, 7, and 8

No archaeological features or finds were present in Trench 1

7.2 Trench 2 Fig.7

Sample section: West End, South Facing 0.00m = 0.44m AOD		
0.00m – 0.21m	L1000	Topsoil. As above (Tr. 1).
0.21m – 0.31m	L1001	Black peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.31m – 0.53m	L1002	Dark brown peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.53m – 0.62m	L1003	Buried soil horizon. As above (Tr. 1).
0.62m+	L1004	Alluvium. Compact greyish white silty clay, with occasional pebbles and gravel.

Description Trench 2 was located just to the north of Trench 1, and was broadly parallel to the bund separating Trenches 1 and 2 from the remainder of the site. Like Trench 1, Trench 2 was initially partially flooded in the centre.

A common stratigraphy was recorded across the trench comprising topsoil overlying two layers of peat. This stratigraphic model was witnessed also in central Trenches 3, 4, and 5.

No archaeological features were present in Trench 2.

7.3 Trench 3 Fig.7

Sample Section: North End, East Facing 0.00m = 1.02m AOD		
0.00m – 0.29m	L1000	Topsoil. As above (Tr. 1).
0.29m – 0.37m	L1001	Black peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.37m – 0.46m	L1002	Dark brown peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.46m – 0.51m	L1019	Brownish grey silty clay layer with tufa. Localised silty clay level with flint gravel, wood, and tufa. Occasional brownish orange mottling due to iron staining.
	L1020	Pale beige/white clay layer. Thin strip of course sandy clay, slightly silty, with tufa flecking. Overlaps L1021 slightly but does not extend to the end of the section.
0.51m – 0.56m	L1021	Dark brown black sedge peat layer. Thin layer of humified sedge peat with 10% silt matrix.
0.56m – 0.57m	L1022	Pale greyish white tufa layer. Thin lens of tufa rich silt separating peat levels.
0.57m – 0.67m	L1023	Dark brown black sedge peat with grey brown mottling. Thin layer of humified sedge peat with occasional silt.
0.67m+	L1004	Alluvium. Grey and orange silty clay. As above (Tr. 2).

Sample Section: South End, East Facing 0.00m = 0.44m AOD		
0.00m – 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. As above (Tr. 1).
0.30m – 0.35m	L1001	Black peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.35m – 0.57m	L1002	Dark brown peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.57m – 0.82m	L1003	Buried soil horizon. As above (Tr. 1).
0.82m+	L1004	Alluvium. Compact greyish white silty clay, with occasional pebbles and gravel.

Description: Trench 3 ran north to south along the western boundary of the excavation area just north of the bund separating Trenches 1 and 2 from the remainder of the site. Trenches 3, 4, 5, and 6 formed a line running along the northern edge of this bund.

The stratigraphy of Trench 3 generally followed the pattern established in Trench 2 with a few exceptions. At the north end, the organic buried soil layer (L1003) disappeared and was replaced by a localised sequence of thin soils.

No archaeological features or finds were present in Trench 1

7.4 Trench 4 Fig.7

Sample section: West End, South Facing 0.00m = 0.69m AOD		
0.00m – 0.29m	L1000	Topsoil. As above (Tr. 1).
0.29m – 0.45m	L1001	Black peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.45m – 0.52m	L1002	Dark brown peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.51m – 0.58m	L1003	Buried soil horizon. As above (Tr. 2).
0.58m – 0.70+m	L1004	Alluvium. As above (Tr. 2).

Description: Trench 4 was located to the east of Trench 3 and ran east to west, broadly parallel to and just north of the bund separating Trenches 1 and 2 from the remainder of the site.

The stratigraphy of Trench 4 closely followed that of Trench 2

No archaeological features were present in Trench 4. One small and abraded sherd of Beaker type pottery (1g) was located in the spoil heap.

7.5 Trench 5 Fig.8

Sample section: North End, East Facing 0.00m = 0.69m AOD		
0.00m – 0.31m	L1000	Topsoil. As above (Tr. 1).
0.31m – 0.51m	L1001	Black peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.51m – 0.57m	L1002	Dark brown peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.57m – 0.64m	L1003	Buried soil horizon. As above (Tr. 2).
0.64m – 0.65m	L1024	Creamy white silt layer. Thin lens of course tufa rich silt.
0.65m – 0.71m+	L1004	Alluvium. As above (Tr. 2).

Description: Trench 5 ran north to south and was located to the east of Trench 4. It straddled the dry ditch and bank that divided the site into two halves.

The stratigraphy in both halves of Trench 5 closely followed that of Trench 2 with the addition of a thin layer of tufa rich silt (L1024) between L1003 and L1004.

Trench 5 contained four features: Tree Hollow F1011 and Root Hollows F1013, F1015, and F1017. Each of these natural features was located on the surface of the silty clay alluvium layer L1004.

Tree Hollow F1011 (dimensions: 2.60m long x 2.00m+ wide x 0.13m deep) was probably ovoid in shape, although its perimeter extended beyond the sides of the trench. The visible sides of F1011 were mostly regular and the feature was shallow. The base was irregular but generally flat. The fill material L1012 was very dark brown and consisted of loose, damp organic soil with semi-preserved wood remains. No finds were present.

Root Hollow F1013 was irregular (dimensions: 1.36m long x 1.35m wide x 0.13m deep). The sides were irregular. The fill material L1014, like that of the Tree Hollow F1011, consisted of decomposed wood mixed with loose, very dark brown soil. No finds were present.

Root Hollows F1015 and F1017 were physically connected. More specifically, F1015 projected westward out of the northern end of F1017.

Hollow F1015 (dimensions: 0.24m long x 0.21m wide x 0.15m deep) was ovoid with irregular sides. The base was also irregular and slightly concave. The fill material L1016 was very dark brown and consisted of loose and damp soil and decomposed wood.

Hollow F1017 (dimensions: 1.80m+ long x 0.25m wide x 0.09m deep) was an irregular linear parallel to the eastern edge of Trench 7. Its plan and profile were irregular. Its base was also irregular and slightly concave. The fill L1018 was mid brown grey and consisted of firm silty clay with occasional flint gravel, wood, tufa, and black organic inclusions. It did not contain any finds.

7.6 Trench 6 Fig.8

Sample section: North East End, South East Facing 0.00m = 1.53m AOD		
0.00m – 0.28m	L1000	Topsoil. As above (Tr. 1).
0.28m – 0.36m	L1006	Red peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.36m – 0.52m	L1002	Dark brown peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.52m – 0.60m	L1003	Buried soil horizon. As above (Tr. 2).
0.60m – 0.72m+	L1004	Alluvium. As above (Tr. 2).

Description: Trench 6 was located to the east of Trench 5 and ran northeast to southwest, generally parallel to and north of the bund separating Trenches 1 and 2 from the remainder of the site.

The stratigraphy of Trench 6 was similar to that of Trench 1 in that it contained red peat level L1006. The buried soil layer L1003 and alluvium L1004 below the peat levels were more characteristic of Trench 2. Absent was black peat level L1001.

No archaeological features or finds were present in Trench 6.

7.7 Trench 7 Fig.8

Sample section: North East End, South East Facing 0.00m = 1.53m AOD		
0.00m – 0.32m	L1000	Topsoil. As above (Tr. 1).
0.32m – 0.44m	L1001	Black peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.44m – 0.51m	L1006	Red peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.51m – 0.57m	L1002	Dark brown peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.57m – 0.60m	L1003	Buried soil horizon. As above (Tr. 2).
0.60m+	L1004	Alluvium. As above (Tr. 2)

Description: Trenches 7 and 8 were located at the northern edge of the site. Trench 7 ran east to west and was just north of and parallel to Trench 4.

The stratigraphy of Trench 7 generally closely followed that of Trench 6 with the addition of black peat level L1001.

Two tree hollows F1007 and F1009 were revealed Trench 7. These were located on the surface of alluvium layer L1004.

Tree Hollow F1007 (dimensions: 1.42m long x 1.12m wide x 0.15m deep) was irregular in shape. Its base was irregular and undulating. The fill material L1008 was dark blackish brown and consisted primarily of loose and friable decayed wood. No finds were present.

Tree Hollow F1009 (dimensions: 2.48m long x 0.64m wide x 0.10m deep) was located in the middle of the western end of Trench 7. It took the form of an irregular linear. Its fill material L1010 was dark greyish brown and consisted of loose and friable decayed wood and organic matter. It contained to finds.

7.8 Trench 8

Sample section: South End, East Facing 0.00m = 1.54m AOD		
0.00m – 0.35m	L1000	Topsoil. As above (Tr. 1).
0.35m – 0.38m	L1001	Black peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.38m – 0.65m	L1006	Red peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.65m – 0.81m	L1002	Dark brown peat layer. As above (Tr. 1).
0.81m – 0.91m	L1003	Buried soil horizon. As above (Tr. 2).
0.91m – 0.92m	L1024	Creamy white silt layer. As above (Tr. 5). Limited to the southern profile of the trench.
0.92m – 0.98m	L1004	Alluvium. As above (Tr. 2).

Description: Trench 8 ran perpendicular to and extended northward from the eastern end of Trench 7.

The stratigraphy of Trench 8 closely followed that of Trench 7 with the addition of an extra tufa rich silt layer L1024.

No archaeological features or finds were present in Trench 8.

8 CONFIDENCE RATING

8.1 It is not felt that any factors restricted the identification of archaeological features or the recovery of artefacts or ecofacts during the investigation.

9 DEPOSIT MODEL

Generally, two stratigraphic patterns emerged from the eight trial trenches. More specifically, the internal trenches varied slightly from those at the edges of the site.

9.1 Trenches 2 - 5

9.1.1 The first stratigraphic pattern consisted of a layer of topsoil L1000 over two layers of peat, L1001 and L1002. The uppermost peat level was dark black and featured a brownish orange staining suggesting water logging over time followed by drainage for agriculture. The lower peat level was dark brown and resembled sedge peat, which formed under the open fen conditions of the site.

9.1.2 These sealed an old land surface of brownish grey organic peaty silt (L1003) that contained horizontally bedded leaves of Phragmites. It was undulating and often pierced the peat layer above. Below L1003 was pale grey, with patches of orange, alluvial silty clay

(L1004) with some fluvial sand lenses. This sealed the Pleistocene gravels (L1005) as observed in the open quarry adjacent to the site.

9.1.3 Trench 3 was unusual in that is contained a sequence of thin tufa rich silt and clay levels alternating with equally slight sedge peat layers (L1019 – L1023). These replaced the buried soil horizon L1003 at the north end of the trench. L1019, however, may contain re-deposited clay from L1003. Overall, these five levels slope upward towards the north end of the trench and may represent deposits on the edge of an erosion gully or a tree bole.

9.1.4 Trench 5 featured a thin lens of tufa rich silt L1024 between L1003 and L1004. This deposit was possibly formed in an open fresh water pool or fen containing tufa. L1024 is visible also in Trench 8.

9.2 Trenches 1, 6 - 8

9.2.1 A second stratigraphic sequence may be observed in the periphery trenches. This refers to a noticeable difference in the formation of fen peats; there was an intermediate peat level L1006 between the upper and lower peat levels, L1001 and L1002. This middle peat level was bright reddish brown and contained distinct laminations of wood. Below the peat was the buried soil horizon L1003 observed in all of the trenches and the alluvial silty clay L1004. Trench 7 followed the same model. Trench 8 also adhered to the same stratigraphic model but contained the thin tufa rich silt layer that appears also in Trench 5.

9.2.2 Trench 1 followed this model for the most part. Below the buried soil horizon L1003, however, was an alluvial deposit of blue/green clay L1025 that varies somewhat from the brownish grey alluvial silty clay L1004 that appears in all of the other trenches.

10 DISCUSSION

10.1 A sequence through the fen and pre-fen landscape has been established. For a detailed description of the sequence see Appendix 3.

10.2 An open quarry face to the west of the site revealed a full sequence of deposits overlying the natural Pleistocene gravel terrace. Over the gravel was a uniform layer of grey silty clay (L1004) with gravel and flint inclusions derived from the underlying gravels, although this alluvial sediment was a firmer blue grey clay, probably formed locally under standing water.

10.3 A palaeosol (L1003) formed over the alluvial sediments (L1004). This buried soil horizon contained horizontally bedded leaves of Phragmites, *Typha* or *Iris*, suggestive of at least a periodically wet landscape. The formation of this layer varied across the site from a maximum depth of 0.25m in Trench 3 to only 0.03m in Trench 7. In Trenches 5 and 8 there was a very thin layer of tufa rich silt (L1024) between layers L1004 and L1003, and this may represent a period of open fresh water pools.

10.4 There were no archaeological features present to further refine the dating of the formation of the fen west of Ramsey Road, the suggested fen edge by the Fenland Survey (see 4.2.1 above), and only one piece of Bronze Age pottery was located and this was unstratified. Thick deposits of peat had formed over the old land surface L1003. Three differing types of peat were noted. These were relatively common across the site, being predominately black or dark brown, oxidised detrital, structureless and non-minerogenic peat. In Trenches 1, 6, 7 and 8 a red peat, derived from horizontally bedded laminations of wood, had formed between the lower dark brown peat L1002 and the uppermost black peat layer L1001).

11 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

11.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with the finds from the site, at County Museum Store. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. In addition to the overall site summary, it will be necessary to produce a summary of the artefactual and ecofactual data.

12 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank David L Walker Associates commissioning this investigation. As is also pleased to acknowledge Mick George (Haulage) Ltd for their co-operation and funding of the project

AS also acknowledges the advice and input of Kasia Gdaniec, Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning & Countryside Advice

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexander, M 1997 *1997 Excavations at King's Dyke (Area A, Topsoil 95), Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire.* CAU report 204

Barrett, J.C. and Gourlay, R. 1984 ‘Dail na Caraidh’ *Current Archaeology* 94, 347-349.

Bradley. R.J. 1982 ‘The destruction of wealth in later British prehistory’ *Man* 17, 108-22.

Brown, N & Murphy, P 2000 ‘Neolithic and Bronze Age’, Brown, N & Glazebrook, J (eds) ‘Research and Archaeology: a framework for the eastern counties. 2 research agenda and strategy’, *East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers* 8, 9-13

Burgess, C. 1974 ‘The Bronze Age’ in Renfrew, C. (ed) *British Prehistory* (London), 165-222.

Darby, HC 1940 *The Medieval Fenland.* Cambridge University Press (reprinted by David and Charles, Newton Abbot 1974)

Downes, J. 1993 'Distribution and significance of Bronze Age metalwork in the North Level' in French, C.A.I. and Pryor, F.M.M. *The south west fen dyke survey project 1982-6*. East Anglian Archaeology report 59, 21-30.

Edwards, D *Further Excavations at King's Dyke (Area A, Topsoil 95), Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire.* CAU report 166

Edwards, D & K Gdaniec 1997. *Whittlesey Pits - The Bradley Fen and Must Farm Sites: An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment.* CAU report 225

Evans, C & Brudenell, 2005, *Must Farm Archaeological and Palae-Environmental Investigations,* Must Farm Application 2005, CAU: Cambridge.

Evans, C & Knight, M, 2005, *Must Farm Pit Timber Alignment: Preliminary Investigations 2005,* CAU: Cambridge.

French, CAI 1988 'Aspects of buried prehistoric soils in the lower Wetland valley and fen margin north of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire.' In W Groenman-Van Waateringe & M Robinson (eds) *Man-made Soils.* BAR International Series 410, 115-128

French, CAI & Pryor, FMM 1993 *The South West Fen Dyke Survey Project 1982-86. .* East Anglian Archaeology Report 59

French, CAI & Pryor, FMM forthcoming *Archaeology and Environment of the Etton Landscape*. Fenland Archaeological Trust Monograph

Gibson, D & M Knight 2002. *Prehistoric and Roman Archaeology at Stonald field King's Dyke West, Whittlesey.* CAU report 498

Gurney, DA 1980 Evidence of Bronze Age salt production at Northey, Peterborough. *Northamptonshire Archaeology* 15, 1-11

Gurney, D 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*

Hall, D 1987 'Whittlesey.' In *The Fenland Project, Number 2; The South-Western Cambridgeshire Fenlands.* East Anglian Archaeology report 35, 55-59

Hall, D 1992 'Farcet and Yaxley.' In *The Fenland Project, Number 6: The South-Western Cambridgeshire Fenlands.* East Anglian Archaeology report 56, 19-25

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1999 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments*. IFA, Reading

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1999 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluationss*. IFA, Reading

Jackson, RPJ & Potter, TW 1996 *Excavations at Stonea, Cambridgeshire, 1980-85*. British Museum Press

Kenney, S. 2007 *Iron Age and Roman Settlement at Farcet Road: Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon Occupation at Horsey Hill, Peterborough: Post Excavation Report and UPD.* CAU unpublished report

Kirby, T & Oosthuizen, S 2000 *An Atlas of Cambridge and Huntingdonshire History*. Centre for Regional Studies, Anglia Polytechnic University

Knight, M 1999 *Prehistoric Excavations at King's Dyke West, Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire - A Terminal Bronze Age Settlement Near Morton's Leam.* CAU report 301

Knight, M 2000a *Whittlesey Brick Pits - The Bradley Fen Site: An Archaeological Evaluation.* CAU report 389

Knight, M 2000b *The Prehistoric and Roman Archaeology of Stonald Field, King's Dyke West, Whittlesey: Monuments and Settlements.* CAU report 393

Lewis, H 2002 Whittlesey, Bradley Fen. Fieldwork in Cambridgeshire 2001. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 91, 147

Lucas, G 1997 *Archaeological Investigations at Star Pit, King's Dyke (Area C), Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire.* CAU report 207

Mackreth, DF 1996 *Orton Hall Farm: A Roman and Early Anglo-Saxon Farmstead*. East Anglian Archaeology 76

Mills, AD 1991 *Popular Dictionary of English Place Names.* Oxford University Press

Mortimer, R 1995 *Archaeological Investigations at King's Dyke Pit, Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire.* CAU report 122

Mortimer, R 1996 *An Archaeological Assessment at King's Dyke, Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire.* CAU report 162

Page, W *et al.* 1936 'Farcet.' In *Victoria County History*. University of London/IHR

Phillips, CW (ed) 1970 *The Fenland in Roman times: studies of a major area of peasant colonization with a gazetteer covering all known sites and finds.* Royal Geographical Society, Research Series No. 5, London. 188

Potter, TW 1981 The Roman occupation of the central Fenland. *Britannia* 12, 79-134

Potter, TW 1989 'The Roman Fenland: a review of recent work.' In M Todd (ed) *Research on Roman Britain 1960-89*, 147-74

Potter, T W & Jackson, R (eds.) 1996 *Excavations at Stonea, Cambridgeshire, 1980-85*. British Museum Press

Pryor, F 2001 *Archaeology and Environment of the Flag Fen Basin*. English Heritage Archaeological Report, London

RCHM 1926 *Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments in England: an inventory of the historical monuments in Huntingdonshire*. HMSO, London

Reaney, P.H. 1943 *The place names of Cambridgeshire and the isle of Ely*. English place name society volume XIX. Cambridge University press.

Rowlands. M.J. 1980 'Kinship alliance and exchange in the European Bronze Age' in Barrett, J.C. and Bradley, R.J. (eds) *settlement and society in the British later Bronze Age*. BAR 53 (Oxford).

Salway. P 1981 *Roman Britain*. Oxford University Press.

Salzman, L.F. 1967 *The Victoria county history of the counties of England: Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely*. Dawsons of Pall Mall, London.

Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983 *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales*. Harpenden

Taylor, A 1981 'The barrows of Cambridgeshire.' In AJ Lawson, EA Martin & D Priddy, *The Barrows of East Anglia*. East Anglian Archaeology report 12, 108-149

Taylor, E. and Aaronson, J. 2005 *Trial Trench Evaluation at Stanground South, Peterborough, September-December 2005*. Northampton Archaeology unpublished report

Watkins, J 2003 *The Scheduling of Farcet Bowl Barrow*. English Heritage 999

Appendix 1
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Historic Environment Record Information

Key -

PHER=Peterborough Historic Environment Record
FHER=Fenland Historic Environment Record
HHER=Huntingdonshire (Cambridgeshire) Historic Environment Record

HER No.	NGR TL	Type	Description
Geological			
FHER 3196 – MCB3959	233 954	Bone	Ichthyosaur bone, possibly 1.6 million years old.
Prehistoric -			
PHER 51229	210- 957-	Flint scatter and later artefacts	A fieldwalking survey was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology 2002/2003. 'Light' scatters of artefacts were recovered over the entire area, including flint, pottery and tile, spanning the prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods. Four greater concentrations of artefacts were also identified, including a scatter of worked flint, a scatter of Roman pottery, a scatter of Roman pottery and tile, and a concentration of post-medieval pottery. These are described individually under PHER 51230, 51231, 51232 & 51233
Neolithic 4300-2100 BC			
PHER 2955	222- 962-	Log boat	In 1828 a complete dug-out canoe was discovered at Horsey near Peterborough "in the bog which forms the bank of the old river with the junction of the Nen". It was 30 ft long and 2 ft 8in wide (at the widest point). Near it was found a second canoe formed of two logs pinned together. Neither Trollope nor Artis mention a lifting and one is left with the impression that they were possibly left in situ. See PHER 2951 for objects found with the canoes.
FHER 10165	2440 9439	Flint	Flint blade tool with slight patination, retouched, noted in Fenland Survey
PHER 2953	21-- 96--	Flint scatter	Neolithic implements, widely scattered, but scarce. One chipped chisel. Majority found at Horsey Bridge. Peterborough Museum have on display many implements from this area. The museum collection also has over 7000 flint implements simply labelled as from 'The North Hunts Gravels'.

FHER 51230	2090 9560	Flint scatter	A fieldwalking survey was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology during the winter of 2002/2003. A widely dispersed concentration of worked flint was recovered from the central part of the survey area, centred roughly on the grid references given above (named 'Field 5') by the survey. It contained Neolithic and Bronze Age material, but not of sufficient quantities or concentrations to make any firm conclusions about specific site activities. It is possible that the recorded distribution is associated with buried features defined by geophysical survey. See also PHER 51229, 51231, 51232 & 51233.
FHER 10871	2349 9328	Flint scatter	Wide range of flints recovered in Fenland Survey (Hall 1992). As well as Neolithic, a small Mesolithic blade, 2 large patinated flints and a Bronze Age scraper (unpatinated) occurred in the assemblage
Bronze Age 2,300 – 700 BC			
FHER 07727 – MCB 9336 NMR NI-1381585	2345 9474	Barrow	SAM 3393. Bowl barrow surviving as a gravel rise; 23m diameter, 0.2m high
FHER 8156	234- 958-	?Barrow	Ring ditch noted on aerial photographs. ? same as barrow SAM 3393
Fenland survey U1 FHER 10873	2303 9341	Barrow	Fenland survey Site U1 (Hall 1992). BA ploughed-out barrow (14m diameter, 0.3m high) at 2.1m AOD
Fenland survey 2 FHER 10872	2339 9326	Barrow	Fenland survey Site 2 (Hall 1992). BA ploughed-out barrow (14m diameter, 0.3m high) at 2.1m AOD
NMR-NI 367149	2450 9415	Barrow fields	Barrow field at Suet Farm
HHER 6804 – MCB 8208	221 948	Ring ditches	Ring ditches shown by crop marks
Fenland survey U2	2135 9332	Burnt mound	Fenland survey Site U2 (Hall 1992). Prehistoric burnt mound site with burnt pebbles and charcoal
Fenland survey 1	2339 9326	Flint scatter	Fenland survey Site 1 (Hall 1992). Neolithic and BA flint scatter at 0.9m AOD
PHER 7832	21- 96-	Ceramic vessel	Food vessel. Found in gravel pit, in 1896. 4,1in high. Diam of rim 4,5in, diam of base 3in.
HHER 02922 – MCB 3683	2286 9397	Spear	Two thirds of a Bronze Age spear head found near Wakes Farm, reported in 1954
PHER 2937	222-964-	Sword	O1, Late BA leaf shaped sword found at Horsey Toll Farm during ploughing. On loan to Peterborough Museum. (R1)O2, The sword

			is on display in Peterborough Museum.
Fenland survey Gazetteer	209 943	Socketed axe	BA socketed axe and a flint discoidal knife, both without exact findspots. Accessioned with Peterborough Museum in 1976 (L1251)
PHER 2950	222- 960-	Flint handaxe, palstave	Many BA implements found in the course of the Nene and its banks near Horsey. A socketed axe and two palstaves are in Peterborough Museum (Bodger Collection). No history of the collection is known other than that the major portion came from the Horsey / Whittlesey areas.
Iron Age 700 BC – AD 43			
FHER 1719	233- 954-	Ceramics	Sherds of grey ware found at Horsey Toll, possibly in same area as Roman pottery finds (FHER 7734)
FHER 7726	2365 9467	Pot boiler site	Fenland Survey Site 1. Dark area with burnt stone, bone, sherds. 24 artefacts
Roman AD 43 – 410			
FHER 7734 – MCB 9344	2333 9528	Ceramics	Small dark area with tile and sherds found in Fenland Survey near Bunting's Farm
Fenland survey Gazetteer	195 943	Ceramics	Roman pottery recovered from brick clay pits (Page 1926, 255)
HHER 2811, Fenland survey U3	2194 9438	Burial	Discovered in 1906 near Palmer's Barn; skull and Romano-British pottery covered by a stone slab 1.8m by 0.7m. Skull ploughed out in 1944, Fenland Survey Site U3 (Hall 1992)
HHER 2957 – MCB 3673	220 943	Occupation	Crop marks indicate a Roman settlement near Palmer's Barn, a skull was uncovered during ploughing but no other finds.
HHER 2957a MCB 3674	221- 949-	Ceramics	Scatter of C1 - C4 potsherds found by fieldwalking in "Hill Field" (the field centred TL/221-/949-) north of Palmer's Barn in November 1950. For settlement site and cropmarks centred at TL/220-/943- see HHER 02957.
HHER 6810	216- 937-	Occupation	Cropmarks indicate a Roman site, probably associated with HHER 02957 (Ro cropmark settlement site); no surface remains.
PHER 1364	233- 954-	Occupation ?Inhumations	Stray finds and excavation at Horsey Toll Farm in the 1950s recovered 1st to 3rd century pottery, red tile, burnt pebbles, and a ditch; inhumations may have been found too.
PHER 2939	233- 963-	Ditch, pottery	Stray finds of pottery. Finds scatter at Black House Farm
FHER 994	233- 954-	Industrial site, inhumation, kiln waste,	Baked clay debris, probable industrial site. Finds are described in Museum Records as coming from Horsey Toll - an adjacent site in Stanground. The finds are dated 1955 - 1957.

		pottery	Some items are dated between late C2 and up to C4. Certain finds are mentioned as originating in specific graves. See also FHER 995, 999 and 1364 for adjacent Roman sites.
FHER 995	233- 955-	coin, ditch, human remains, inhumation, pottery	From TL/233-/953- to TL/233-/957-, Ditches with coins and C1 - C4 pottery; TL/233-/955- inhumation and pottery . A collection of Samian sherds in the Norris museum is attributed to this site. See also FHER 994 and 999 for adjacent Roman sites.
FHER 999	233- 954	Inhumation, pottery	Site to the E of Horsey Hill. The pottery found came from a ditch traced for 600 yards. The late 2nd to 4th century pottery is a series of sherds from ten different vessels, all bearing the same owner's mark, an N or reversed N, incised after firing. 5 Romano British burials with mid 2nd century pottery have also been found, as well as ? Parts of a kiln. See also FHER 999a, 999b, 994 and 995.
FHER 0999a	233- 954	Awl, needle, pin, scoop, whistle	Site description is given in FHER 00994 Bone finds in St Ives Museum are as follows:- Part of ? whistle Bone scoop or scraper? Borer or awl, carved from a bone and worked to a point at one end Bone pin with swelling two thirds of the way up shaft, round head Bone pin or needle fragments. See also FHER 00999, 00999b, 00994 and 00995.
FHER 0999b	233- 954-	Bead, bracelet, toilet implement, tweezers	Site description is given in RN 00994. Bronze finds in St Ives Museum are as follows:- jet bracelet fragments penannular bronze bracelet piece of plaited bronze, presumably from bracelet pair blunt-ended bronze tweezers; 2 pieces round sectioned bronze from ligulae; half large green glass bead. See also FHER 00994, 00995, 00999 and 0099a.
PHER 1369	222- 967-	Beaker, dish, jug, vessel	Stray finds of pottery found in 1957-1959 at Horsey Toll Farm.
PHER 3128	2153 9669	Kiln, kiln waste, pottery	Two 3rd century Roman pottery kilns excavated at Stanground Park Farm by B R Hartley and G B Dannell in 1965. Two further kilns found 50 ft to the NE in 1967, with an associated gully containing a kiln load of wasters, mostly samian ware with black colour coat on a grey paste. A watching brief was carried out in 1993 and the remains of a rectilinear beam-slot structure were identified, ditches with large amounts of pottery, many pieces of kiln debris and ash (possibly resulting from the kiln fires. Beyond the ditch line on

			the SE side of the site only isolated features were visible. See PHER 03127 - further Ro finds from this area, 03129 - Ro pottery, skeleton, 03130 - earlier Ro finds from the area, 10090 - Ro inhumations from nearby.
PHER 3129	214- 965-	Inhumation, pottery	Park Farm housing estate: 3rd century Roman pottery found with human skeleton in 1964. or 1966, See also PHER 03127 - Ro finds, RN 03128 - " , RN 03130 - " , RN 03131 - ".
PHER 50561	2178 9632	Pottery	Sparse Roman pottery noted in 1994 excavation at Park Farm, Stanground
PHER 51232	21709 95585	Building, settlement	A fieldwalking survey was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology during the winter of 2002/2003. A concentration of Roman pottery and tile, centred at the given grid reference, was recorded within the field named 'Field 8' for the purpose of this survey. The recovered pottery included Nene Valley Wares colour coated vessels (post 250 AD) and greywares. The pottery is not heavily abraded, suggesting recent plough disturbance of buried deposits. The presence of tile fragments suggests buried building remains survive here. See record numbers 51229, 51230, 51231, 51233, for other fieldwalking survey finds.
PHER 4015	224- 962-	Architectural fragment, pottery, settlement, tile	Horsey Toll Road. Building stone, flue tiles, etc, pottery C1 - C3. TL/2242/9608 lot of red tile and limestone rubble: building stone sherds etc, noted in 1983
PHER 4016	221- 961-	Coin	Roman coins, Horsey Bridge
PHER 4018	2243 9573	Burial	A "burial site" is marked on the "Map of Roman Sites" in the VCH to the south of Horsey Hill Fort, but no mention of it is made in the text. See also RN 04017 - Ro pottery.
Medieval AD 410 -1500			
PHER51234	20973 95647	Agriculture	A geophysical survey, comprising magnetic gradiometer scanning followed by detailed gradiometer survey, was carried out over a prospective development area of 95 hectares during 2002 (R1). Detailed survey areas amounting to 10 hectares were allocated across the area according to archaeological potential indicated by the scan results. Traces of ridge and furrow were identified across most of the prospective development area, along with possible pits and linear features. Two areas produced anomalies that may indicate ancient

			settlement and boundary features. See PHER 51235 & 51236.
PHER 51215	2250 9630	Agricultural	An aerial photographic assessment was undertaken and a couple of archaeological features emerged, including medieval fields of ridge and furrow and a linear ditch.
PHER 50561	2178 9632	Ridge and furrow	Ridge and furrow earthworks noted in aerial photographic survey of land at Stanground
Post-medieval AD 1500-1900			
PHER1996	2331 9598	Fort	Civil War Fort
Modern AD 1900+			
PHER 50570	2245 9645	Airfield	Site of former aircraft maintenance base used during the second world war for repairing Hawker Hurricane fighter planes. Runway was grass and has now been turned into arable fields. The accompanying buildings have been converted for use as warehousing and offices. Part of the landing light array was possibly sited at TL/2277/9693 but the local farmer has removed it to the side ditch at TL/2271/9705. See also PHER 0571, 50572, 50573, 50574 & 50575.
PHER 50571	2229 9639	Building	Former bowser garage used during second world war at maintenance airfield. To east of building is two fuel stand pipes and location of possible subterranean fuel tank. See also PHER 50570, 50572, 50573, 50574 & 50575.
PHER 50572	2231 9639	Building	Possible volatile materials store used during second world war at the maintenance airfield. See also PHER 50570, 50571, 50573, 50574 & 50575.
PHER 50573	2233 9635	Building	Hangar. Belonging to former maintenance airfield. See also PHER 50570, 50571, 50572, 50574 & 50575.
PHER 50574	2234 9630	Building	Hangar. Belonging to former maintenance airfield. Possibly of Type A1 standard. See also PHER 50570, 50571, 50572, 50573 & 50575.
PHER 50575	2230 9630	Building	Possible former engine repair and test shed belonging to former aircraft maintenance base. See also PHER 50570, 50571, 50572, 50573 & 50574.
Undated			
PHER 51236	21182 95504	Ditch, boundary ditch	Magnetic gradiometer survey at Stanground centred on the given grid reference produced anomalies suggestive of former field divisions. See record numbers 51234, 51235 for entire survey.

FHER 6776	243- 946-	Enclosure	Aerial photography at Suets Hill Farm. Enclosures - some uncertain, stray geological background. Square and rectilinear enclosures among geological cracks and splodges.
PHER 50653	2105 9545	? Enclosure	A desk top study in advance of possible housing allocation considered land between Stanground and the old course of the River Nene.Fragmentary cropmarks suggestive of ditched enclosures were located in two areas (see RN 8155 and at TL/2169/9546). Soilmark remains of ploughed down ridge and furrow and headlands were identified across the site. Earthwork ridge and furrow is preserved in pasture in one area (see RN 51156). One third of the site was field-walked as part of the Fenland Survey, but no significant archaeological finds were recorded here.
PHER 8155	213-959-	Enclosure	Cropmarks of enclosures.

APPENDIX 2 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

APPENDIX 3 SPECIALIST REPORTS

The Pottery
by Peter Thompson

An unstratified sherd weighing 1g of Beaker type pottery came from Trench 4. It has a dark grey fabric in sand and grog temper with a buff-brown outer surface. This has a tight 'criss-cross' or grid decoration probably made by applying cord. It is dated c.2,400-1,700 BC

Float Fish Farm, Farcet Cambs: An examination of the stratigraphy

This site was visited on January 14th 2008 to examine the overall stratigraphy and potential for palaeoenvironmental analysis of any sediments associated with archaeological/artefactual material. Six excavated trenches and the profiles exposed in the face of the adjacent gravel quarry were examined. Although some differences in the stratigraphy across the site caused by variations in the local depositional environment (primarily degree of wetness), were observed, typical profiles were found and described in Trench 3.

Trench 3 Northern End

Depth cm.

0 - 30 Barroway Drove, alluvial sediments. Grey and oxidised (gleyed) silts.
30 – 53 Fen peat. Black, oxidised detrital, structureless, non-minerogenic peat.
53 – 75 L1003 Old land surface with upper (cf Ah) thick organic peaty silt containing horizontally bedded leaves of Phragmites, *Typha* or *Iris*. nb *Iris pseudacorus* seed was also found in proximity. Developed in,and above underlying grey alluvial silt/clay
75 – ca. 90 L1004 Pale grey and orange silty clay with rounded and sub-angular flint inclusions derived from underlying gravels.
Basal Pleistocene gravels. Not seen in this section.

Trench 3 Southern End

Depth cm

0 - 30 Barroway Drove Beds. Grey, gleyed brown silty alluvium.
30 – 58 Black, detrital, oxidised, structureless peat.
58 – 81 L1003 Upper humic cf. Ah of buried soil/old land surface. Developed in grey silts with orange mottles (oxidised). As in section 1.
81 – 111 L1004 Alluvial sediments. Grey silt/clay with horizontally bedded reed leaves (cf. *Phragmites*).
Basal Pleistocene gravels not seen in this section.

Both of the profiles described are replicated in the long section exposed in the face of the adjacent quarry where there the transition from the lower grey, Flandrian alluvial silts into the underlying Pleistocene fluvio-glacial outwash gravels is seen. It is clear from all of the sections examined that there was a phase of riverine, alluvial sedimentation which secreted (with erosion) over the underlying, Pleistocen gravels. It is likely that these alluvial sediments were laid down as over-bank sediments

deposited on a river floodplain. This is evidenced by the plant macrofossil remains of fen /reed swamp vegetation. A reduction in ground water table and/or continued sedimentation occurred which caused the floodplain to become more stabilised resulting in the formation of a soil (palaeosol) and old land surface. This land surface is observed in nearby Must Fen and Bradley Fen. This will, however, have developed asynchronously according to changes in the broader Fenland system (inundation and peat development). However, it is this horizon (old land surface and developed palaeosol) which is of paramount archaeological importance. A small fragment of beaker pottery was located on-site and indeed, appeared to come from the grey peaty silts of this palaeo-soil (although it was unstratifed). Subsequently, this soil started to become wetter probably due to regionally rising ground water tables caused by rising (positive) sea level changes in the Fenland Basin. The result was development of a notably thick humic (?Ah horizon) on the old land surface prior to the onset of a much wetter, and true fen peat forming environment. The latter is, of-course, evidenced over much of this region of the Fens but is, at this site, rather thin and is badly degraded (wasted) due to drainage. Overlying the peat, where it has not been ploughed out, are the Barroway Drove Beds. These are alluvial silts and clays which represent a major, widespread phase of late-prehistoric/early historic alluviation which sealed the late-prehistoric upper peat.

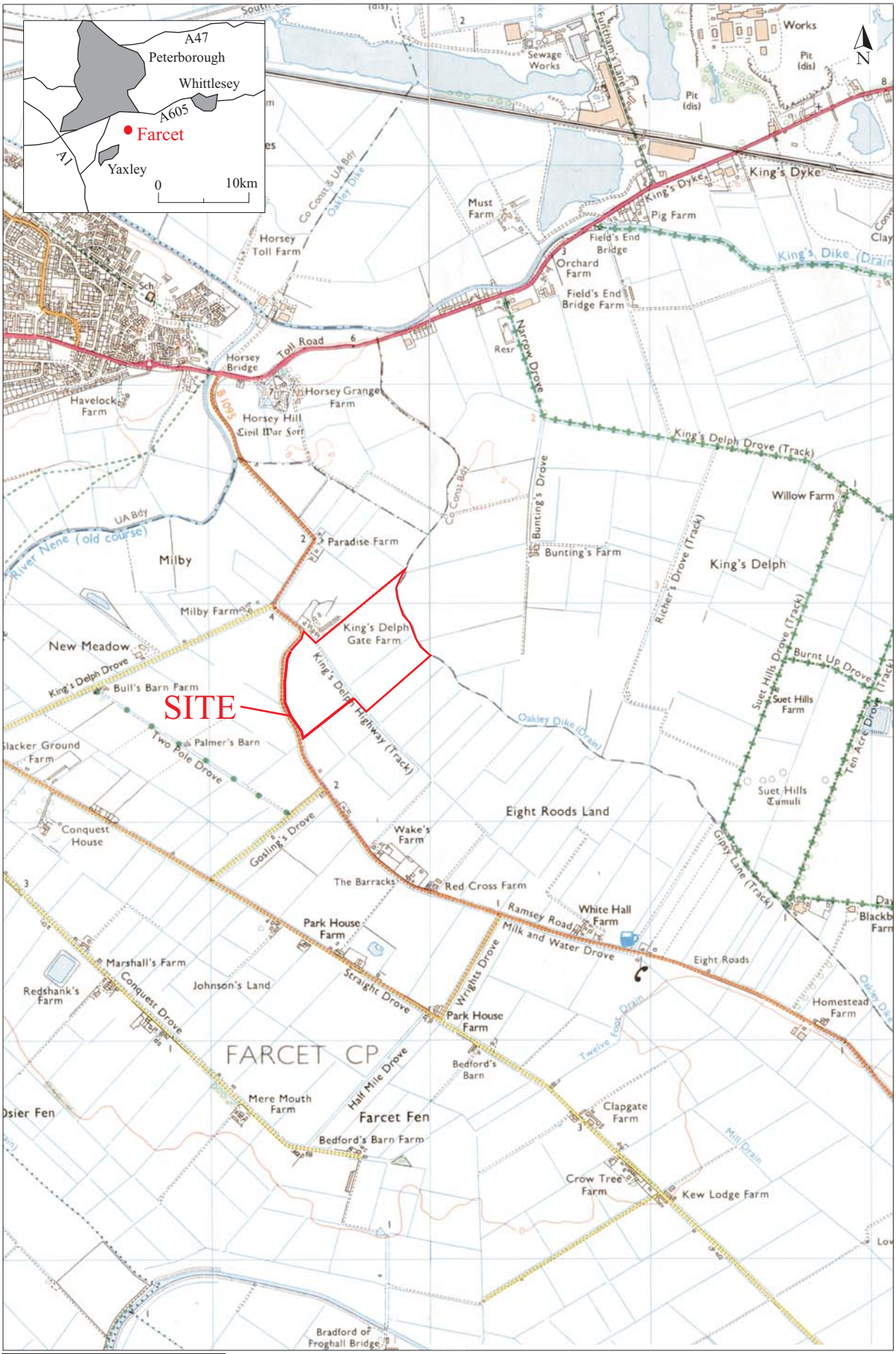
Relationship to archaeology: Although the site of nearby Flag Fen and others local sites have produced timber platform structures within the upper fen peat, any such structures would have been visible in the test pits at this site due to the relatively shallow thickness of peat present. Although no massive structures were seen, there remains the possibility that smaller, corduroy and hurdle type trackways may be present which run across the site. However nothing was located in the excavated trenches.

As noted above, the old land surface and palaeosol clearly had the greatest potential for recovery of occupational/artefactual evidence. In each trench this was examined by hand excavating test pits, followed by careful machine excavation of the layer to the top of the underlying alluvial silty soil into which features/artefacts may have become translocated. As noted, a small Beaker pottery shard was recovered probably coming from this horizon. Where, excavation had 'thrown up' this soil/sediment onto the spoil, this was scanned and apart from the single piece of beaker noted, no other artefacts were found. Thus, it seems probable that if archaeological material is found, it will be very localised.

Environmental sampling: Clearly, the very humic old land surface has potential for preservation of both pollen and plant macrofossils which could provide a more detailed history of the changing habitat and local environment. However, it would have only been reasonable to undertake this work, along with radiocarbon dating, should any archaeological have been found on this site.

Dr Rob Scaife

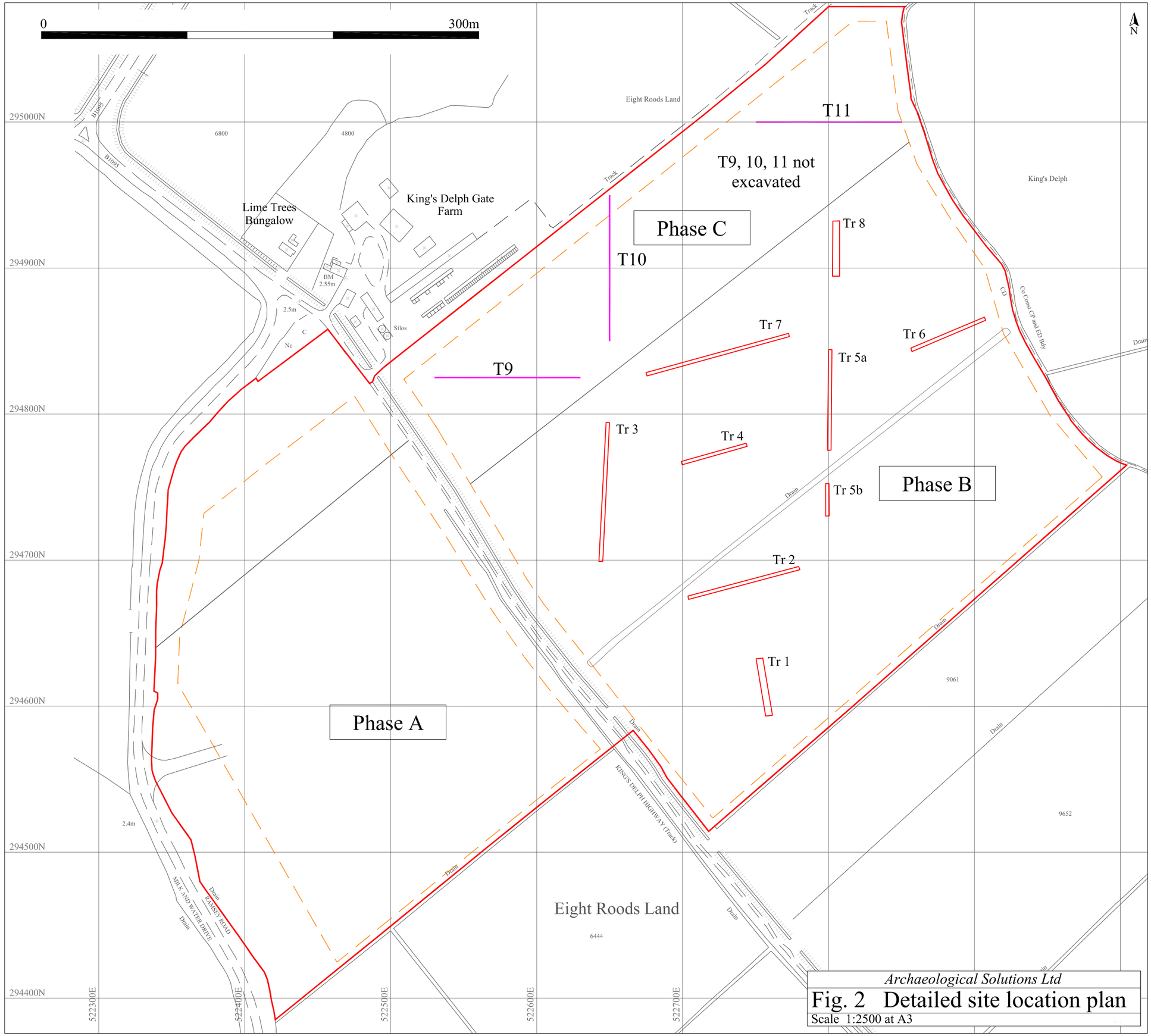
Visiting Reader in Palaeoecology
University of Southampton



Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Fig. 1 Site location plan

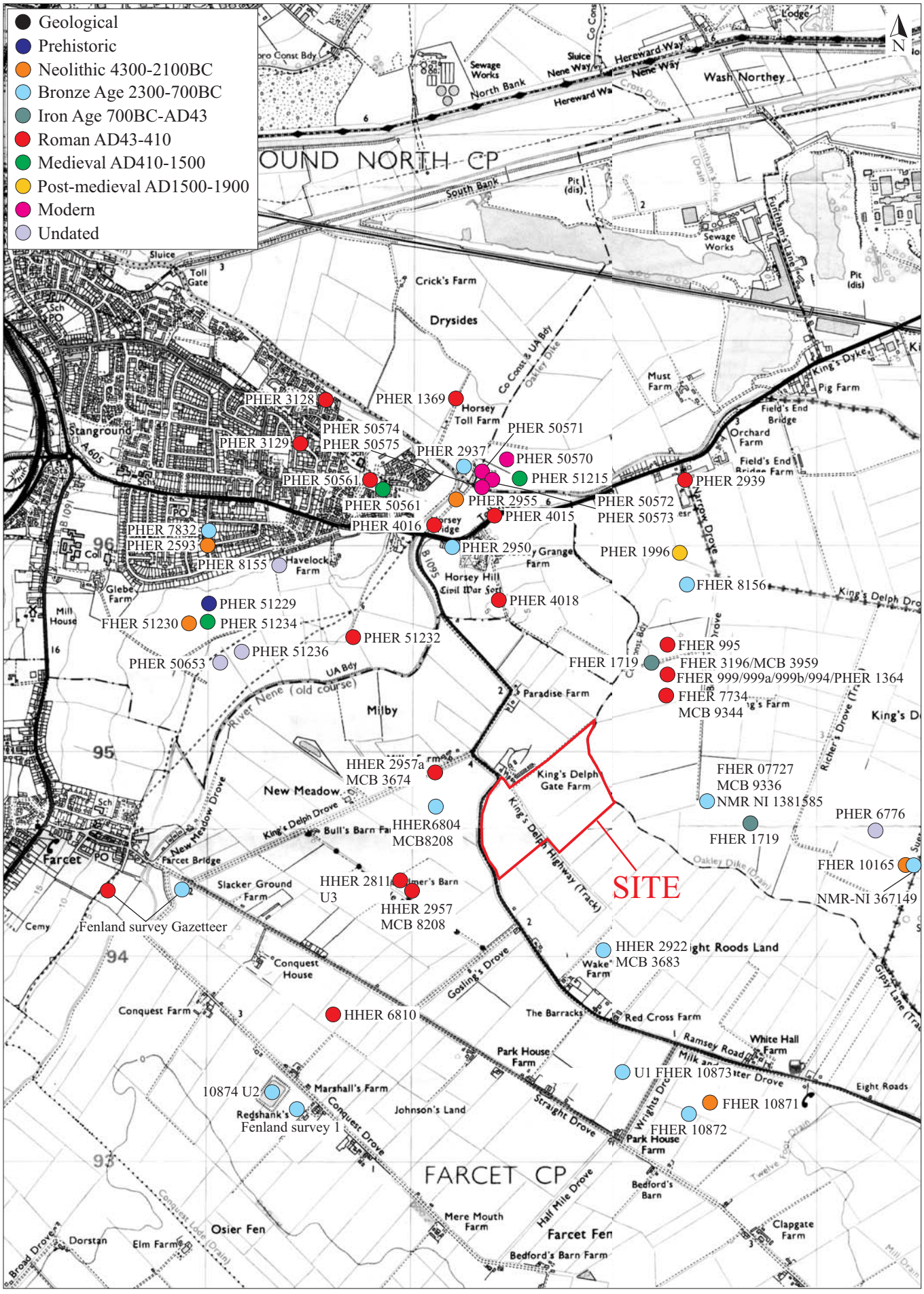
Scale 1:25,000 at A4



Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan

Scale 1:2500 at A3

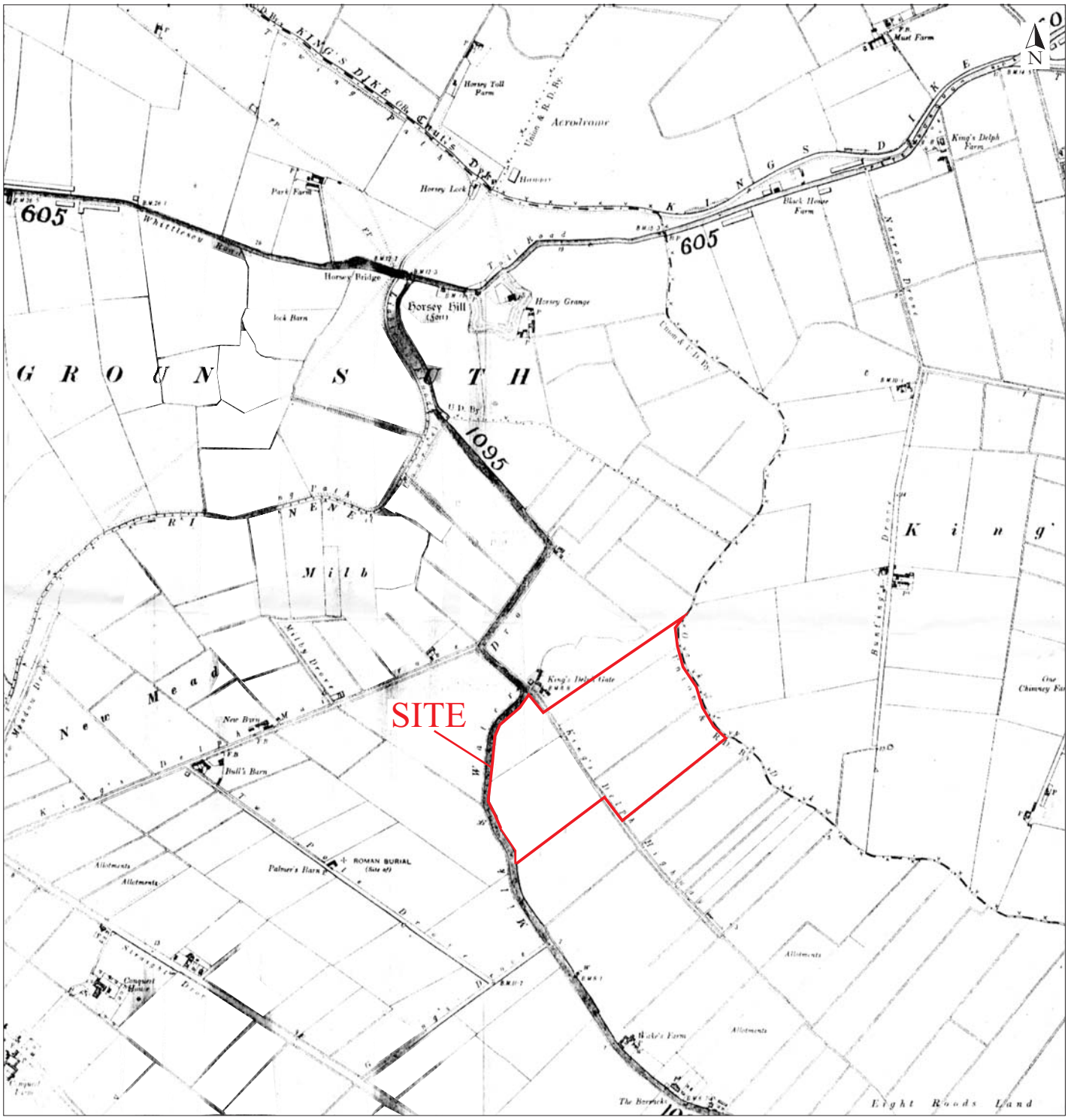


Archaeological Solutions Ltd

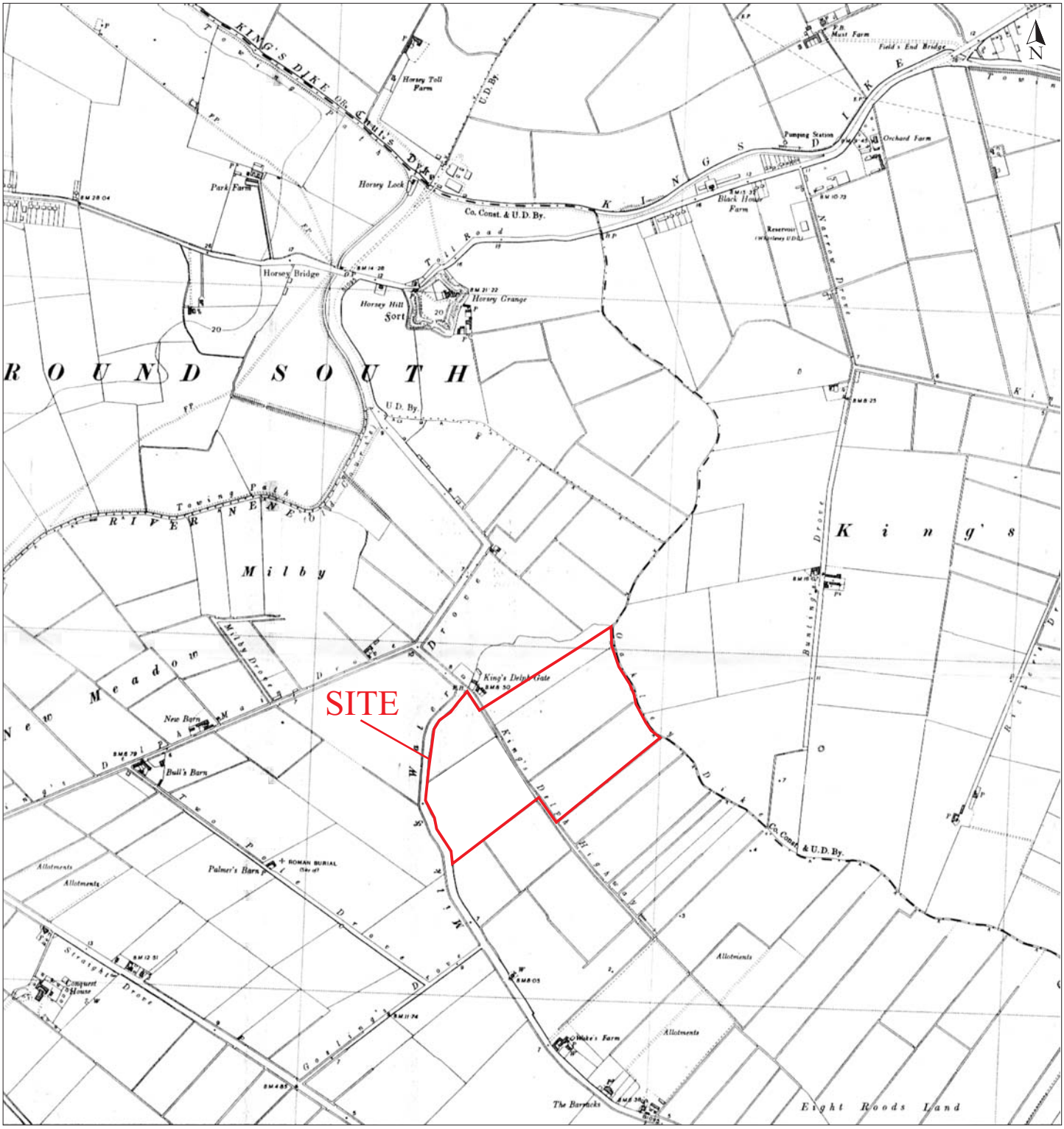
Fig. 3 SMR Data

Scale 1:25,000 at A4

Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Fig. 4 Reproduced from the 1902 OS map
Scale 6" to 1 mile at A4

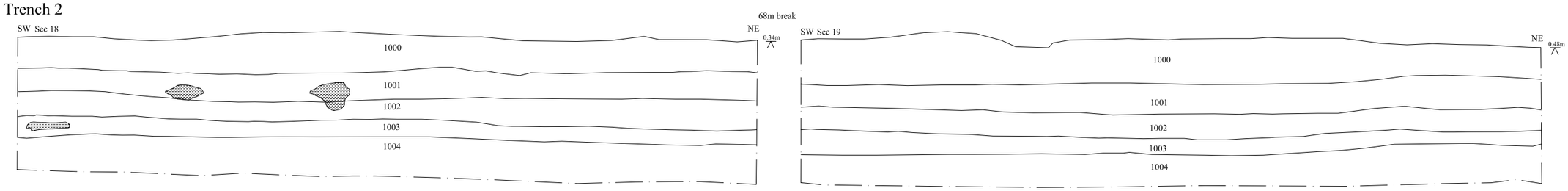


Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Fig. 5 Reproduced from the 1938 OS map
Scale 6" to 1 mile at A4

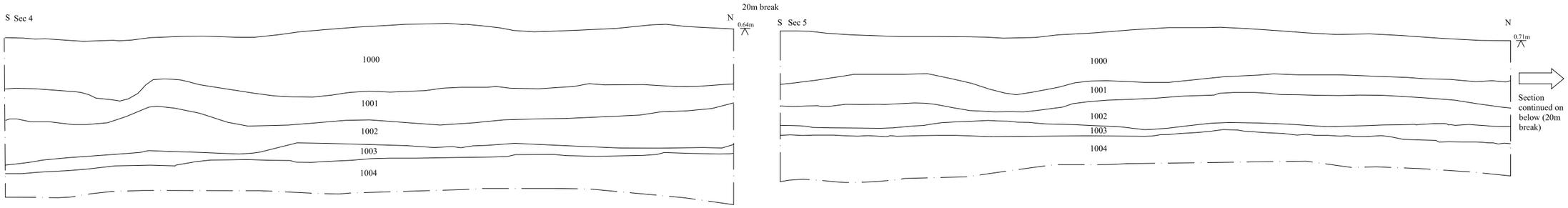


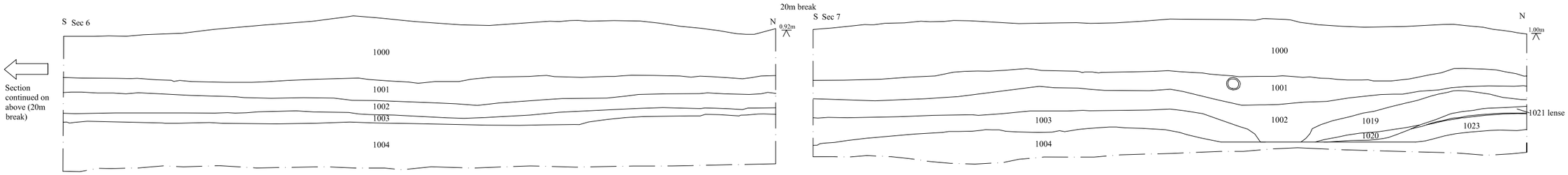
Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Fig. 6 Reproduced from the 1950 OS map
Scale 6" to 1 mile at A4

Trench 2

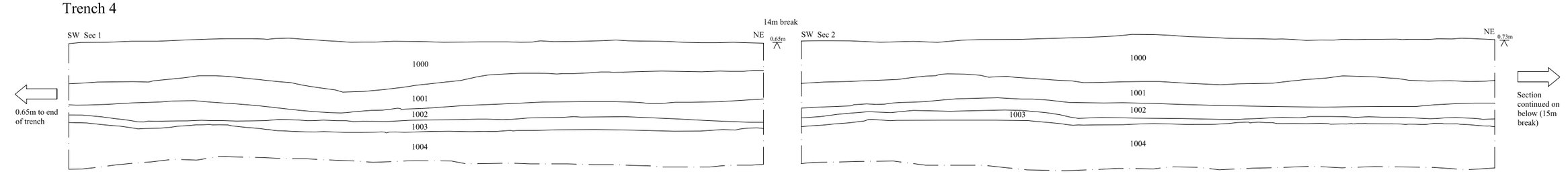


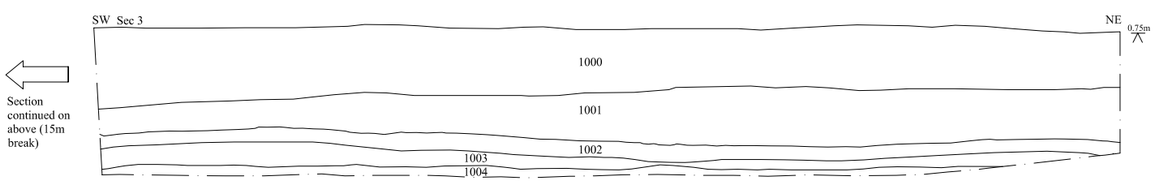
Trench 3





Trench 4





Wood

0 Sections 3m

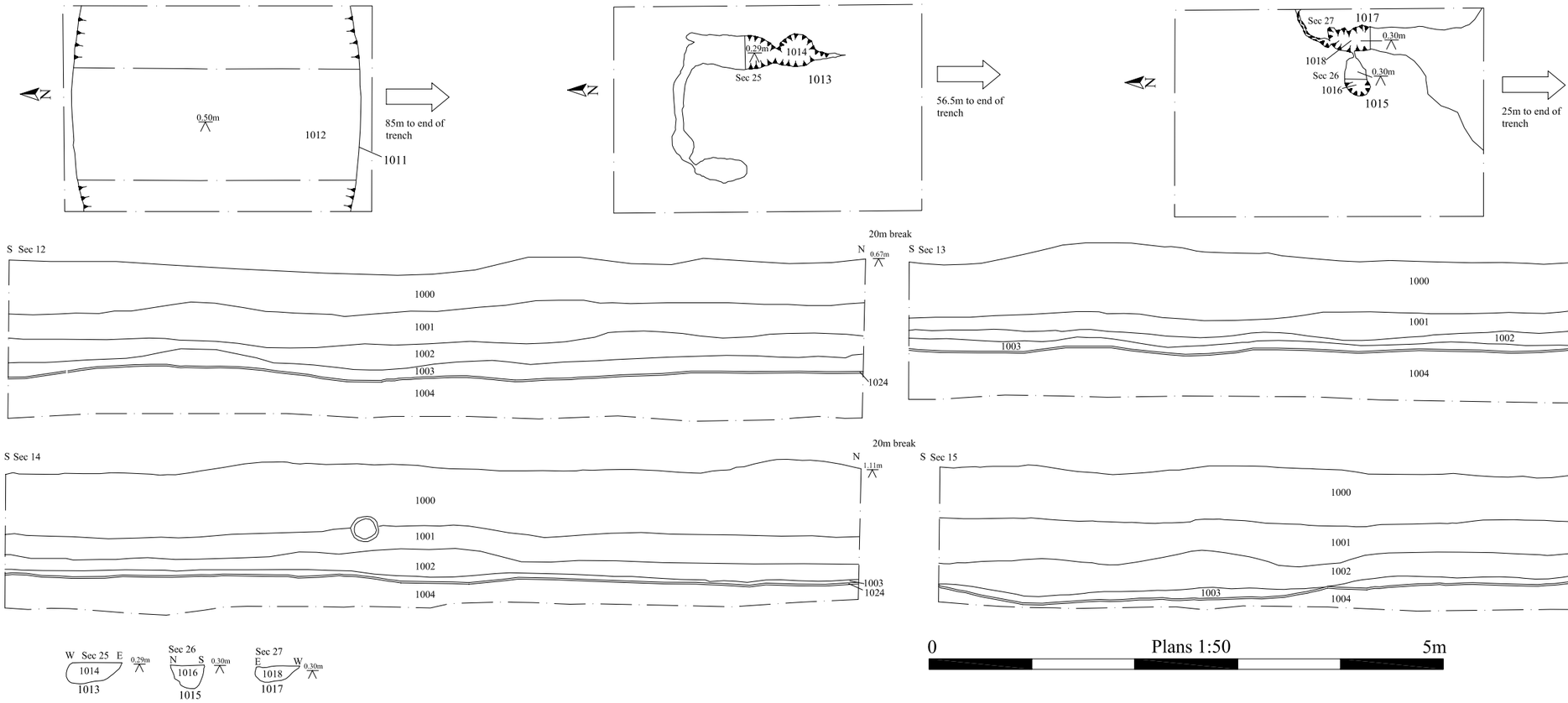
0 Plans 5m

Archaeological Solutions Ltd

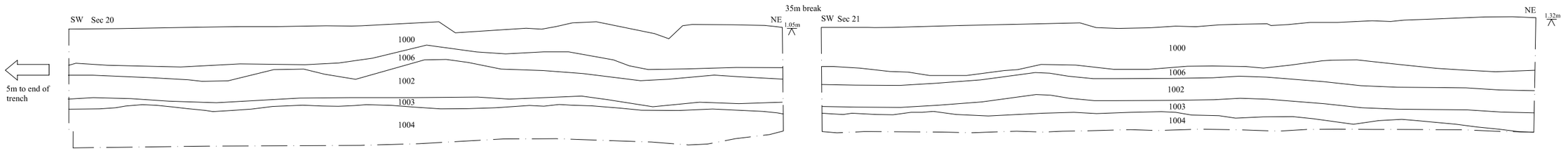
Fig. 7 Trench plans and sections

Scale Plans at 1:50, sections at 1:30 at A3

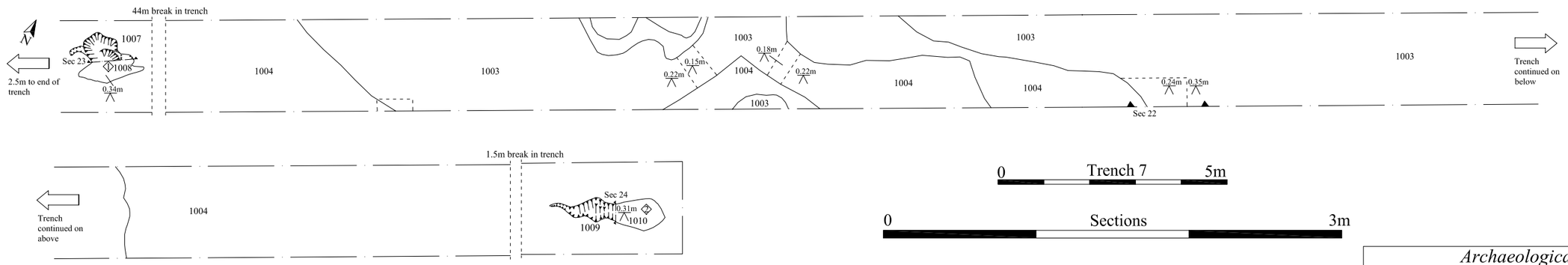
Trench 5



Trench 6



Trench 7

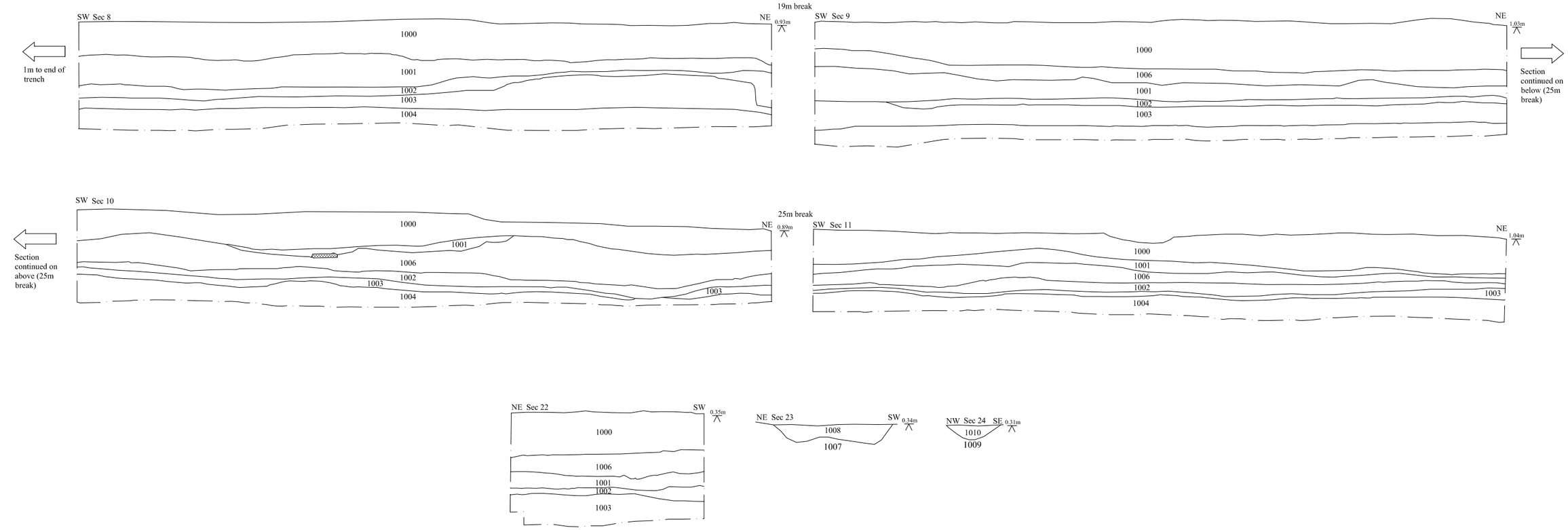


Archaeological Solutions Ltd

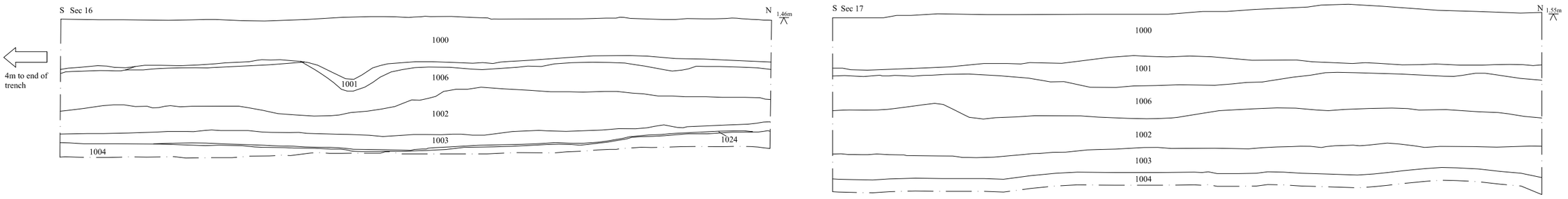
Fig. 8 Trench plans and sections

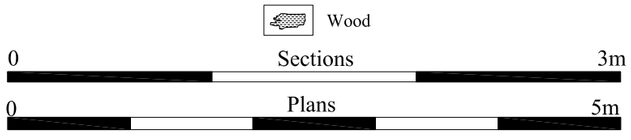
Scale Plans at 1:50 & 1:100, sections at 1:30 at A3

Trench 7 (Continued)



Trench 8





Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Fig. 9 Trench plans and sections

Scale Plans at 1:50, sections at 1:30 at A3

Dryland
Skirtland
Fen
River
Settlement
Barrow
?Votive metalwork deposit
Uncertain edge

FLAG FEN & FENGATE
NORTHEY ISLAND
BRADLEY FEN/KING'S DYKE
SPEAR HOARD
SWORD
RAPIER
SWORD
SOCKETED AXE & FLINT KNIFE
SPEAR
U1
2
1 FLINT SCATTER
U2 POT BOILER
CHER 06804
SITE
SAM 3393
SUET HILLS
R. Nene
N

Reproduced from the 1999 Ordnance Survey 1:25000 map with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright Archaeological Solutions Ltd Licence number 100036680

Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Fig. 10 Reconstruction of Bronze Age landscape near King's Delph Gate Farm (after Hall 1992, fig. 10; Hall 1987, fig. 38, French & Pryor 1993, fig. 103)

Scale 1:25,000 at A3

< 0m AOD
0-4m AOD
5-9m AOD
10-14m AOD
15m AOD+

SITE

N

Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Fig. 11 Contour map of King's Delph area (present day)

Scale 1:25,000 at A3