Gaul Road, March, Cambridgeshire

An Archaeological Excavation

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Summary

An archaeological excavation was undertaken by Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) on land off Gaul Road, March, Cambridgeshire in January and February 2014. The work was carried out in advance of a small housing development.

Excavations over an area measuring 1500 m^2 revealed a number of pits; the majority of which were clustered in three distinct groups. One of the pits contained a large assemblage of Early Neolithic artefacts, whilst the remaining features were largely sterile of material culture, however they all arguably date to the Early Neolithic.

The site seems to be located in the periphery of more extensive Early Neolithic settlement and may represent associated practices perhaps specific to their hinterland location. Some of the pits may also demonstrate pit digging practice atypical of the Early Neolithic in the region.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological excavation was undertaken by Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) on land off Gaul Road, March, Cambridgeshire (TL 2205 6660) in January and February 2014. The work was carried out in advance of a small housing development with associated landscaping, access and services. A site comprising 0.3ha within the development area was subject to archaeological excavation to further investigate archaeological remains revealed during evaluation of the site (Tabor 2011).

The project was undertaken on behalf of Langwith Builders. Work was carried out in accordance with a project design specification (Beadsmoore 2013) produced by the CAU and approved by Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (CHET). The site is identified by the site code GRM13.

1.1 Location, geology and topography

The site was on land off Gaul Road on the western fringe of the town of March, not far from the current course of the river Nene (Figure 1). The site was bounded to the north by Gaul Road and an electrical substation to the south. The site itself was pasture as was the remaining adjacent land.

The site is at 1m OD and is generally flat. The land to the east and north-east gently slopes into fen, located no more than 500m away. The underlying geology consists of Pleistocene till deposits (Boulder Clay) over the Jurassic Kimmeridge Clay formation, which forms a north-south trending ridge making up March Island.

The site lies within the Cambridgeshire Fens, a low lying area, which over the last 10,000 years has been subject to dramatic geographical changes largely influenced by rising and falling sea levels. The site is on the western edge of what was previously March Island, an elongated area of higher ground raised above the previous fenland environment. In the Mesolithic and Neolithic a major tidally influenced river channel flowed just over 1km to the west, Between the river and clay ridge making up March island was an inter-tidal zone of mudflats and dynamic tidal creeks, as revealed at the proposed college of west Anglia site (Boreham 2007). This environment continued to encroach on the isle of March until the Iron Age when fresh water marsh replaces the tidal flats.

1.2 Archaeological background

Mesolithic-Neolithic

Our understanding of the prehistoric occupation of the Isle of March is limited, certainly in comparison to other areas in the fenlands. The earliest and most informative evidence of prehistoric occupation come from a site located approximately 200-300m from the present Gaul Road development area. Originally identified in the 1920's, the Mesolithic and Neolithic lithic scatter (Wymer 1977) has

recently been excavated revealing the remains of Late Mesolithic and Early Neolithic settlement (Mellor 2011) (Figure 1).

Further evidence of Mesolithic and Neolithic occupation is limited to small quantities of residual material discovered at excavations in March at The College of West Anglia (Tabor 2007), Hundred Road (Hutton 2008), and Foundry Way (Murrell 2009). These finds are consistent with no more than a background level of activity representing general presence in the vicinity.

Bronze Age-Iron Age

The Bronze Age is better represented. A plough soil scatter of Early Bronze Age material at the College of West Anglia site appears to represent some scale of settlement (Tabor 2007). Similar Early Bronze Age plough soil scatters are also present at Westry and Flaggrass (Hall 1987). Of the same date a fine handled Beaker was discovered during the construction of March railway station in the 1860's and a dolerite axe hammer was uncovered in the churchyard of St Wendreda. Both artefact types are usually associated with burial contexts; however, no barrows or other Early Bronze Age burials have yet been discovered in March. Middle Bronze Age cremations and watering holes have been discovered at Hundred Road (Hutton 2008), which may be associated with a potential field system of the same date (*ibid*.).

Iron Age occupation at March appears to have taken place at both Grandford and Flaggrass (Hall 1987). Further Iron Age activity is represented by two coin hoards to the south of March island (Hall 1987), whilst more extensive Iron Age settlements are located on nearby Stonea island.

Roman

A significant number of Roman sites are known – through aerial photographs, excavations and find spots – on the island of March. The area was clearly of significance during the Roman period and it has been the subject of academic interest for some time. Major settlements are recorded at Grandford and Flagrass (to the north of the development area), and Stonea Grange (to the south-east), along with numerous smaller settlements. An extensive transport and communication infrastructure also existed, which includes the Fen Causeway, the major Roman Road that traversed the Fens, as well as a network of smaller roads and canals linking individual settlements. Indeed the extent of the infrastructure around March has led to suggestions that the area is a 'planned' landscape – albeit one that may not have achieved its full intended potential (see Hall 1987) - established in order to exploit the rich resources of the area. Briquetage recovered in large quantities at many sites suggests that salt production was a major part of the Roman economy while livestock rearing is suggested by cropmarks representing extensive fieldsystems, paddocks and droveways visible on aerial photographs (*ibid.*). The main concentrations of Roman activity are, however, in the north and east of March 'island' and Stonea to the south-east, little is recorded in the immediate vicinity of the development area.

Medieval – Post-medieval

During the Saxon period the 'centre' of the region appears to have moved from March to Doddington to the south (Hall 1987). Little is known about the location of the medieval settlement of March although the Church of St. Wendrada and areas of recorded ridge and furrow lie to the south of Gaul Road (*ibid.*). The current settlement at March dates largely to the 19th century or later and is associated with the expansion of the railways.

Previous archaeological work

A trial trench based evaluation of the site itself was undertaken by the CAU in 2011. Investigations revealed a number of linear post-medieval feature interpreted as planting beds, a number of probable pits of unknown age, but of most significance, a sizeable pit containing 20 sherds of Early Neolithic Mildenhall style plain bowl pottery and a small assemblage of flint and bone, which in sum is representative of domestic practices (Tabor 2011).

The adjacent Mesolithic and Neolithic site at Gaul Road excavated by Mellor (2011), is also relevant, as it appears the two sites may well be at some point have been broadly chronologically contemporary and perhaps closely linked. Mellor's site, initially identified by FM Walker in the 1920's as a lithic scatter (Wymer 1977), comprises a prehistoric buried soil and palaeochannel contained within a previous stream valley preserved beneath alluvium, which represents rising sea levels and changing environmental conditions happening throughout the Neolithic. The preserved buried soil contained a substantial amount of worked flint (2721 pieces) primarily dating to the Later Mesolithic and Early Neolithic. A number of sherds of pottery were also discovered, many of which are probably Mildenhall Ware (Knight, this report). Features including pits, posthole and a hearth were also identified, however they were difficult to date. A possible linear boundary was also identified, which was associated with Peterborough Ware pottery. Palaeoenvironmental data from the site suggests tree clearance and soil cultivation took place in the vicinity. Essentially the site is domestic in character and represents settlement throughout the Later Mesolithic and Early Neolithic, however it remains uncertain as to whether this is temporally unbroken (Bishop 2011). Settlement within this location appears not to have continued into the Later Neolithic on account of tidal inundation leading to unfavourable environmental conditions (Mellor 2011).

2.0 RESEARCH AIMS

The primary aim of the excavation was to preserve the archaeological evidence by record in attempt to reconstruct the use of the site to add to the limited understanding of the Neolithic of the Isle of March, and to relate this to a broader understanding of the Neolithic in the East Anglia region.

The evaluation of the site raised a number of specific questions, which this excavation aimed to address. These aims are as follows;

1 - To establish whether the pit discovered during the evaluation existed in a wider complex of features, as Early Neolithic pits of the region characteristically exist in small clusters (Garrow 2006), furthermore, it was still feasible the pit was a component of a causewayed enclosure.

2 - As the pit may be considered atypical in terms of form in comparison to other Early Neolithic pits, the excavation aims to develop an understanding of the feature and any associated features in comparison to broader contemporary trends.

3 - As Early Neolithic settlement already exists nearby at Mellor's (2011) Gaul Road site. The excavation aimed to investigate any potential relationship between the two sites.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Topsoil and subsoil layers were removed using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless bucket and operating under direct archaeological supervision at all times.

The site was located using an advanced Global Positioning System (GPS) with Ordnance Datum (OD) heights obtained. Potential archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:50 and subsequently sample excavated. All potential features were hand excavated and archaeological finds were retained. Environmental bulk soil samples were taken from selected features. A written record of archaeological features and *in situ* buried deposits was created using the CAU recording system (a modification of the MoLAS system) and sections were drawn at an appropriate scale.

4.0 RESULTS

A dark grey clayey former agricultural topsoil covered the entire site. Below this, a thin mid-light grey silt clay subsoil was preserved in places over the site, but appeared to have been truncated by ploughing across the majority of the area. It seems likely that in part, some of the upper surface of the natural clay geology has also been subject to some plough truncation.

A total of 20 archaeological features, all pits were observed and excavated, as were 14 tree throws. The majority of features occurred in 3 distinct clusters, however 7 of the 20 pits seemed to form no discernable grouping (Figure 2).

Pit group 1

The pit group was made up of 5 features (F100-103 and F119), all of which were small, generally circular, shallow pits, which appear to have been subject to some plough truncation. F102, F103 and F119 were inter-cutting, however no stratigraphic relationship between these features could be seen. Their fills all consisted of a dark charcoal rich soil possibly enriched by organic cultural debris that could be described as 'midden' material. No artefacts were recovered from any of the pits, which clearly

make it difficult to date the pit group, yet a number of other attributes may inform the age of these features. The form and 'middeny' fills of these pits are comparable to those commonly found in pits on East Anglian Early Neolithic pit sites (Garrow 2006) such as, Kilverstone (Garrow et al 2006), Hurst Fen (Clarke 1960) and Spong Hill (Healy 1988). Clustering of pits is also noted at a number of these sites, Kilverstone (Garrow 2002) and Sutton Gault Reservoir (Tabor 2011a) in particular. The Gaul Road pits proximity to known Early Neolithic settlement is also suggestive of an Early Neolithic date, as pits of the period are often believed to be directly associated with domestic practices (Thomas 1999, Garrow 2006).

Pit group 2

Pit group 2 comprised 6 pits (F104-5, F112, F114, F118 and F120). All but one of these was oval in shape, small in size, with mid grey clay silt fills, which presumably derived from a previous subsoil horizon. F112 was much larger than the other pits (1.85 diameter and 0.85m deep), and almost shaft like in form. Its fills were largely subsoil derived except a deposit in the lower fills (1027), which appeared to be a dump of charcoal rich 'middeny' material similar to the fills of the pits in Group 1. However in this case the deposit contained a considerable amount Early Neolithic Mildenhall pottery, worked flint and animal bone. The survival of animal bone is unusual at Neolithic sites in East Anglia. In comparison to the few contemporary sites that have produced bone, Etton causewayed enclosure (Pryor 1998) being the main example, the species represented at Gaul Road are in line with general trends for the region.

Given the distinct and probable intentional clustering of pit group 2 it is perhaps possible to assume all feature are contemporary, and therefore Early Neolithic in date, or more accurately, 3600-3200BC as this is the accepted period for usage for Mildenhall Ware (Gibson 2002). In comparison to other Mildenhall Ware associated pit sites in the region, these pits morphologically atypical, F112 especially.

Pit group 3

Group 3 consists of 4 inter-cutting pits (F107-110) sub oval in form. No stratigraphic relationships were observed between the features and the fills were a dark charcoal rich 'middeny' material similar to the fills of the pits in group 1. A single work flint was recovered from F107, however this is perhaps not accurate dating evidence.

Undated features

Pits F105-6, F111, F113 and F115-117 were all similar in form and size, generally circular and shallow. No artefacts were retrieved from any of the pits and they seem to form no specific alignment or arrangements.

Tree throws

A total of 14 tree throws were present on the site. All of which were excavated although none yielded any artefacts.

5.0 DISCUSSION

In summary, the excavation revealed 3 pits groups, which are arguably Early Neolithic in date, although only F112 yielded Early Neolithic material that was clearly contemporary with the pit. If the dating evidence for the remaining pits is accepted, the site demonstrates elements of pit digging practices, which are both characteristic (Pit Group 1 and 3) and uncharacteristic (Pit Group 2) of the Early Neolithic. Even if the remaining features are not dated to the Early Neolithic, pit F. 112 still represents pits digging practices atypical of the period.

To understand these pits in more detail it is necessary to discuss them in the context of broadly contemporary activity in the area. As mentioned, there is a known Mesolithic and Neolithic settlement site in close proximity (Mellor 2011) (Figure 1), which produced finds of probable Mildenhall pottery (Knight, this report) and flint implements contemporary with the use of Mildenhall pottery (Bishop 2011), which suggests activity at Mellor's Gaul Road site and the present site may have been broadly contemporary and therefore, potentially associated. However, Mildenhall Ware and associated flint technologies may have been in use for several hundred years (Gibson 2002), indicating that occupation at the Gaul Road settlement sites was not necessarily continuous (Bishop 2011).

In terms of the distribution of Early Neolithic activity in the landscape the sterility of the tree throws on site and the fact that no Neolithic material was found during the Fenland Projects fieldwalking survey (Hall 1987) suggests the site is outside Mellor's (2011) Gaul Road Early Neolithic settlement area. However the presence of domestic material in F112 suggests a relative proximity to the settlement, thus the site may be best describe as peripheral to the settlement or in a hinterland location.

As previously mentioned, F112 is distinctly different in form to pits commonly found at Early Neolithic sites, as are the associated pits in pit group 2. This may represent practices not regularly identified at Early Neolithic sites, which may be specific to a number of influences. For Example, if the site is in fact located in the hinterland of settlement it may be expected that a different range of practices may be encountered from those in traditional settlement sites that were perhaps not appropriate for the main settlement area. Alternatively, as the site is on clay and not gravel terrace as many Early Neolithic domestic sites are (Garrow 2006), it may be possible the pits represent practices that are geologically specific, such as, clay extraction pits.

However, although much of the site is atypical, layer (1027) F112 seems to represent regionally familiar depositional practices (Garrow 2006), the dumping of cultural debris or 'midden' into pits suggests common depositional trends are still in some way relevant to this form of pit digging, and that common domestic practice is still being played out at the site, perhaps illustrating the site's link and proximity to the settlement foci.

At a regional level, the site demonstrates that the pit digging practices represented by F112 and perhaps a number of other features are uncommon, but by no means unique. A small number of nearby sites exhibit similarities. Broome Heath is a Mildenhall associated pit site considered representative of settlement (Wainwright 1972). Many of the pits may be described as generally typical, however at least 6 of the 67 pits

excavated are considerably larger and deeper, and in form similar to F112 at Gaul Road (Figure 5). Their infill sequences are also comparable, largely subsoil filled with a basal deposit of 'charcoal rich soil'. In the case of Broome Heath, the larger atypical pits seem to be located amongst the smaller more typical pits, seemingly within the settlement foci (Wainwright 1972) in contrast to the Gaul Road site.

The more recently excavated site at Parnwell, near Peterborough yielded a similarly large pit with a comparable infill sequence and assemblage of flint and Mildenhall Ware pottery to Gaul Road pit F. 112, although of the decorated bowl variant (Figure 6). The pit was set aside from a further group of 10 Mildenhall Ware associated pits of a more typical form (Webley 2007). The geological location of the Parnwell site is also similar to Gaul Road, on clay fringing the gravel terrace. The only difference is that no Mildenhall Ware associated settlement is known in the vicinity of the site, however, the sites itself may well be evidence of settlement.

Although uncommon, comparable sites to Gaul Road do seem to exist, suggesting Early Neolithic pit digging practices are in fact varied, whilst also inferring that domestic practices carried out in settlement are in turn more dynamic than otherwise believed. The apparent rareness of these atypical pits may actually be a product of the inherent difficulties of detecting Neolithic domestic sites. It seems these sites are only recognised when they produce a considerable plough soil artefact scatter or when large amounts of artefacts and debris are accumulated, Mellor's (2011) Gaul Road site is a prime example. This is invariably at the heart of dense settlement areas, therefore when they are excavated only the main focus of settlement is examined. It seems smaller sites or less dense sites like Gaul Road or Parnwell are generally only found by chance as they leave little signature that can be detected by survey techniques, consequently, many such site may remain undiscovered. If indeed this is the case, Early Neolithic pit digging practices and in turn domestic practices may be far more dynamic that previously considered.

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6.0 SPECIALIST STUDIES

6.1 Prehistoric Pottery – *Mark Knight*

Pit F.112 produced 60 sherds of Early Neolithic pottery weighing 196g (MSW 3.3g). The condition of the material was good and included a small percentage (5%) of medium-sized sherds (Table 1). All of the fragments shared the same fabric type (hard with frequent small, medium and large, poorly sorted flint/quartz and common small sand). No features sherds were present. In summary, the assemblage incorporated a

small collection of relatively thick-walled (*c.* 10mm) plain body sherds that included fresh pieces alongside fragments that had been burnt and/or weathered post-breakage.

Phase	Feature	Context	Number	Weight	MSW	Large >8cm	Medium >4cm	Small <4cm
GRM 2011	F.5	17	20	140g	7.0g	0	4	16
GRM 2013	F.112	1027	60	196g	3.3g	0	4	56
Totals:			*80*	*336g*	*(4.2g)*	*0*	*8*	*72*

Table 1: Assemblage breakdown

The material derived from F.112 represented the 'remainder' or other half of an assemblage retrieved from the same feature (previously known as F.5) within the original trench-based evaluation (Tabor 2011). Combined, the two collections formed a coherent assemblage of 80 sherds (weighing 336g) that included two rolled or out-turned rims belonging to a medium-sized S-profiled bowl characteristic of the heavier plain Mildenhall tradition (Clark et al 1960).

Although not diagnosed as being Early Neolithic, plain featureless sherds made of quartz-rich fabrics were recovered from tree-throw and pit-related contexts from the adjacent Gaul Road Excavations carried out by Archaeological Project Services (Allen 2011, 29-33). The description of these fragments corresponds with the material found in pit F.5/F.112.

6.2 Faunal Remains – *Vida Rajkovača*

This studied has combined the bone recovered from the evaluation (Tabor 2011) and this excavation.

All faunal remains were recovered from F112 early Neolithic (Mildenhall Ware) pit. The pit contained four bone specimens with a combined weight of 68g. From fill (1027) came a cow rib fragment, the distal end of a cow meta tarsus and a sheep right scapula in 4 fragments. The cow rib fragment and meta tarsus displaying a series of fine knife marks and a deep cut mark consistent with meat removal. Context (1025) yielded a heavily eroded roe deer antler tip.

6.3 Charred Plant Macrofossils – Val Fryer

Introduction and method statement

Excavations at Gaul Road, on the western edge of March 'island', were undertaken by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU). The work recorded a small number of pits, one of which (F112) was of Early Neolithic date. Samples for the retrieval of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken, and nine were submitted for assessment.

The samples were bulk floated by CAU and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Table 1. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (1997). All plant remains were charred. Modern roots, seeds and arthropod remains were also recorded.

Sample No.	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109
Context No.	**1000**	**1026**	**1027**	**1009**	**1017**	**1019**	**1043**	**1030**	**1006**
Feature No.	**F100**	**F112**	**F112**	**F104**	**F108**	**F109**	**F118**	**F119**	**F103**
Plant macrofossils									
Corylus avellana L.		x	x						
Charcoal <2mm	xx	xx	xxx	x	x	x	x	xx	x
Charcoal >2mm	x	xx	xx		x				
Charcoal >5mm		x	x						
Other remains									
Black porous material		x	x		x				
Bone			pmc						
Burnt/fired clay			cf		cf				
Small coal frags.	x				x				
Sample volume (litres)	**8**	**8**	**15**	**10**	**12**	**12**	**10**	**5**	**8**
Volume of flot (litres)	**<0.1**	**<0.1**	**<0.1**	**<0.1**	**<0.1**	**<0.1**	**<0.1**	**<0.1**	**<0.1**
% flot sorted	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Table 2: Charred plant macrofossil assemblage
Key x = 1 – 10 specimens xx = 11 – 50 specimens xxx = 51 – 100 specimens pmc = probable modern contaminant cf = compare E.Neo = Early Neolithic

Results

All nine flots are extremely small (i.e. <0.1 litres in volume) and limited in composition, with most containing little other than occasional flecks of charcoal. This is common for assemblages of potential Early Neolithic date, particularly those from isolated and undefined (i.e. of unknown use) pit groups. However, two of the current assemblages (samples 102 and 103 from F112) do contain a slighter higher density of charcoal/charred wood (both comminuted fragments and pieces >5mm in size), and both also include individual large fragments of hazel (*Corylus avellana*) nutshell. The latter have been separated from the flots and placed in individual glass vials.

The few other remains that are recorded are all thought to be intrusive within the contexts from which the samples were taken. Such contamination is also a common issue within assemblages of this date, particularly where the feature fills have been ramified by roots from the modern plough horizon or where the land within which the features are cut has undergone prolonged and intensive occupation/disturbance.

Conclusions and recommendations for further work

In summary, the recovered assemblages, which are small and sparse, are largely typical of material of this date. Although little can be deduced about the taphonomy of the current remains, it would appear that the occupants of the site were still largely reliant on gathered foodstuffs; this is, perhaps, not that surprising given that the area would have been rich in game, fish and wild plant foods.

As none of the assemblages contain a sufficient density of material for quantification, no further analysis is recommended. However, a summary of this assessment should be included within any publication of data from the site.

6.3 Flint - Emma Beadsmoore

A total of 14 (<153g) flints were recovered from two features during the excavation of the site; 11 (<135g) are worked, whilst 3 (18g) are worked and burnt. The flint is listed by context and type in Table 3; the 7 flints recovered from F. 112 (F. 05) during the evaluation have been added to the table.

Feature	Type									Totals
	chunk	primary flake	secondary flake	tertiary flake	secondary blade	tertiary blade	irregular core	multiple platform core	end scraper	
108			1	1						2
112	1	1	11	1	1	1	1	1	1	19
Sub totals	1	1	12	2	1	1	1	1	1	21

Table 3 – Flint types listed by feature

The majority of the material was recovered from one feature, F.112, a pit that also yielded Mildenhall pottery. The 19 flints recovered from F.112 comprise a small assemblage of flint working waste and one tool, an end scraper. The assemblage is broadly the product of systematic flake production/core reduction, where narrow flakes and blades were manufactured from prepared platforms, which is characteristic of earlier Neolithic flint working strategies and chronologically compatible with the pottery. However, the assemblage also contained expediently manufactured material. Three flakes were broken and burnt and the end scraper was well worn, indicating that at least some of the material had not been deposited in the pit straight after manufacture.

The remaining material comprised two flakes from F. 108; one of the flakes was broadly compatible with Neolithic flake production/core reduction, whilst the other was chronologically non-diagnostic.

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8.0 APPENDIX

Feature	Feature Type	Context	Context Type	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)
		1000	Fill			
100	Pit	1001	Cut	0.98	0.85	0.11
		1002	Fill			
101	Pit	1003	Cut	0.7	0.8	0.16
		1004	Fill			
102	Pit	1005	Cut	0.45	0.45	0.07
		1006	Fill			
103	Pit	1007	Cut	0.8	0.8	0.13
		1008	Fill			
		1009	Fill			
104	Pit	1010	Cut	1.4	0.75	0.4
		1011	Fill			
105	Pit	1012	Cut	1.3	0.65	0.28
		1013	Fill			
106	Pit	1014	Cut	0.8	0.45	0.1
		1015	Fill			
107	Pit	1016	Cut	1.2	0.6	0.3
		1017	Fill			
108	Pit	1018	Cut	2.2	1.7	0.3
		1019	Fill			
109	Pit	1020	Cut	2.3	1.9	0.5
		1021	Fill			
110	Pit	1022	Cut	1.7	1.6	0.24
		1023	Fill			
111	Pit	1024	Cut	1.7	1.08	0.31
		1025	Fill			
		1026	Fill			
		1027	Fill			
		1028	Fill			
112	Pit	1029	Cut	1.85	1.8	0.85
	Pit	1032	Fill			
113		1033	Cut	1.66	0.99	0.22
	Pit	1034	Fill			
114		1035	Cut	1.28	0.74	0.15
		1036	Fill			
115	Pit	1037	Cut	0.68	0.46	0.12
		1038	Fill			
116	Pit	1039	Cut	0.72	0.58	0.18
		1040	Fill			
		1041	Fill			
117	Pit	1042	Cut	0.96	0.92	0.21
		1043	Fill			
118	Pit	1044	Cut	1.18	0.75	0.36
		1030	Fill			
119	Pit	1031	Cut	0.82	0.6	0.16
	Pit	1045	Fill			
120		1046	Cut	1.8	0.58	0.13

Table 4 - Feature and context index

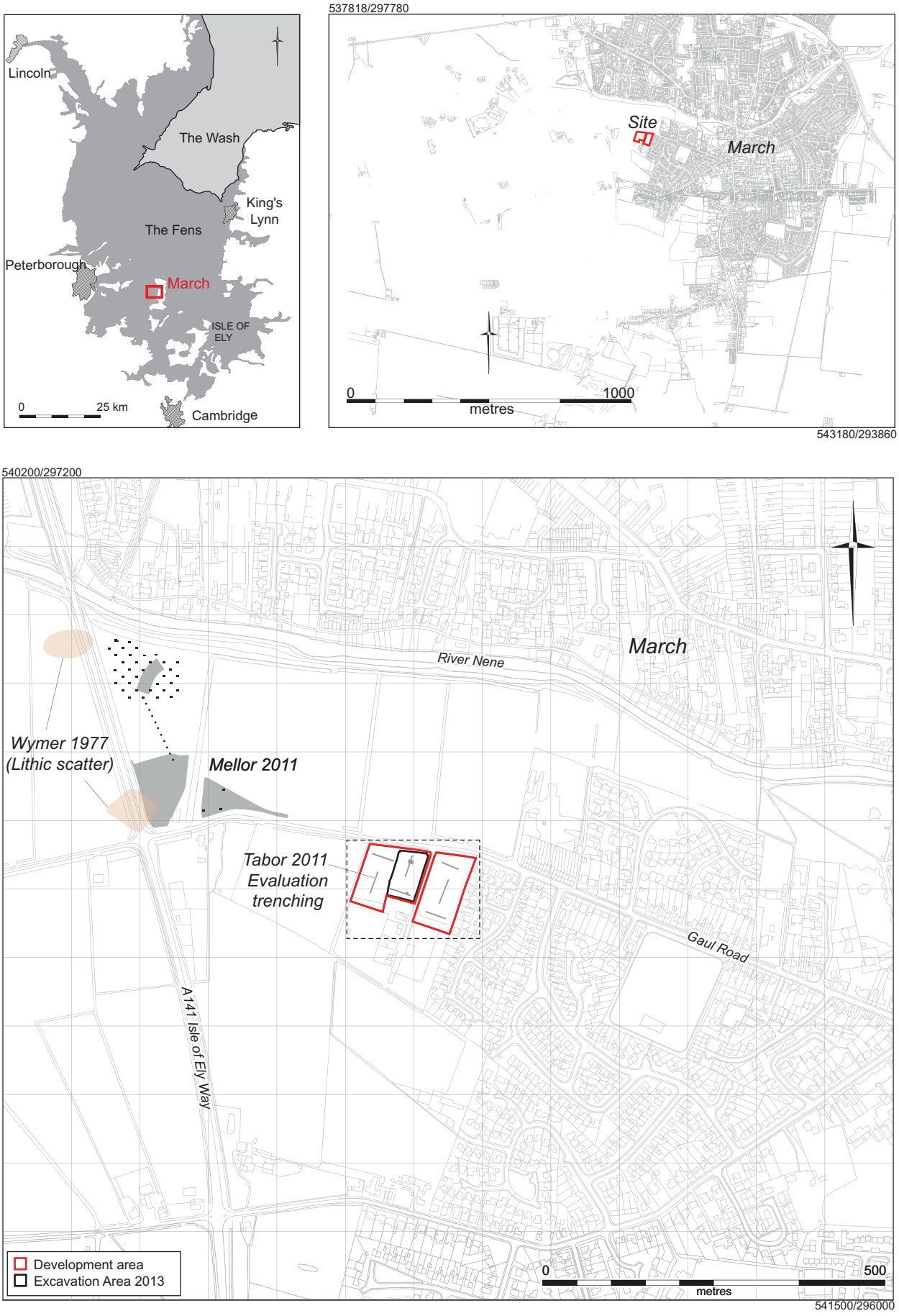


Figure 1. Location map

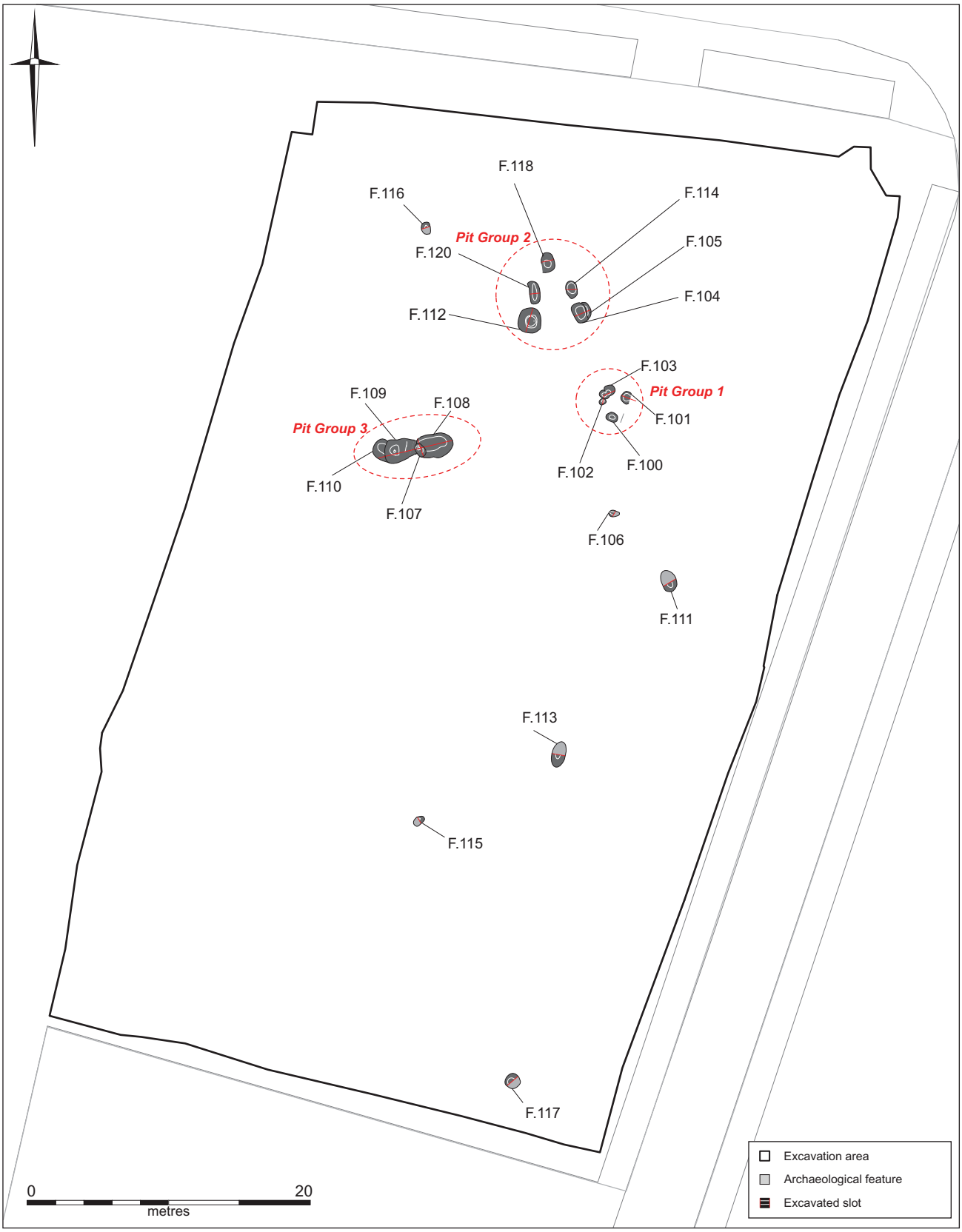
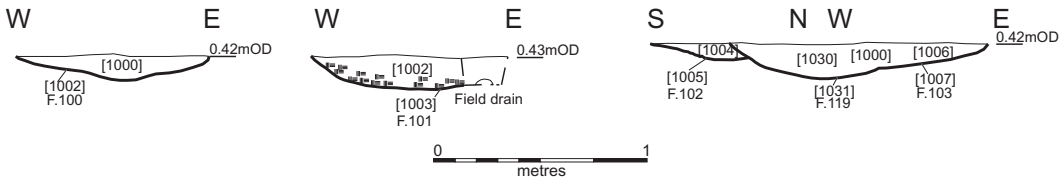


Figure 2. Plan of excavation area

Group I Pits



Group III Pits

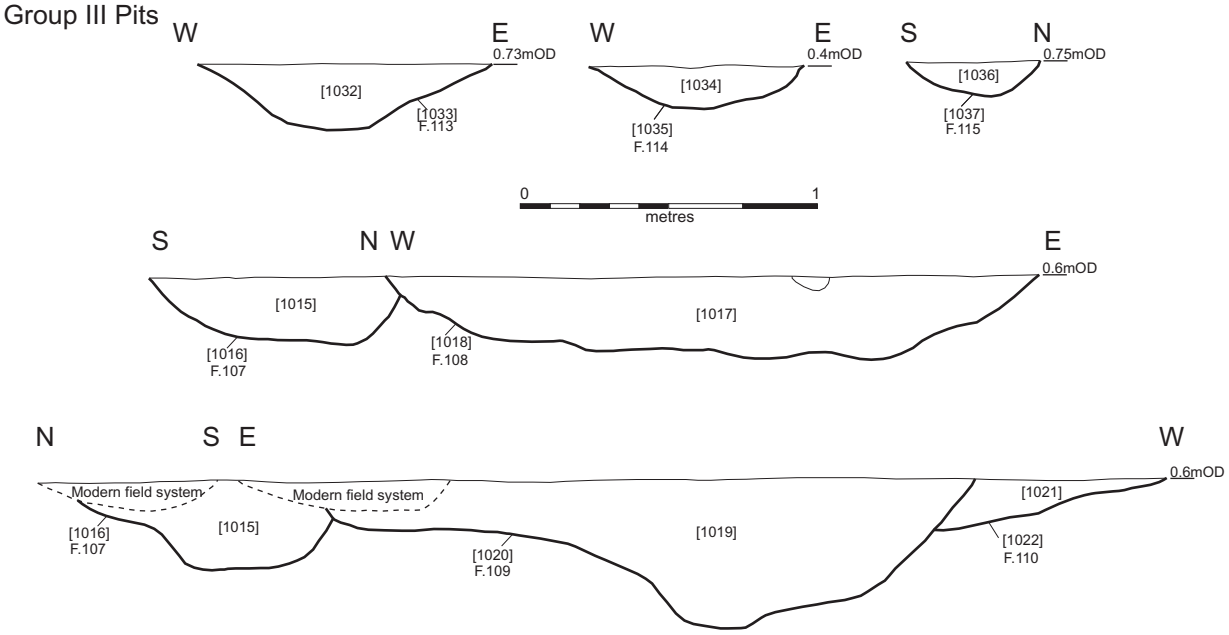


Figure 3. Group I and III pits

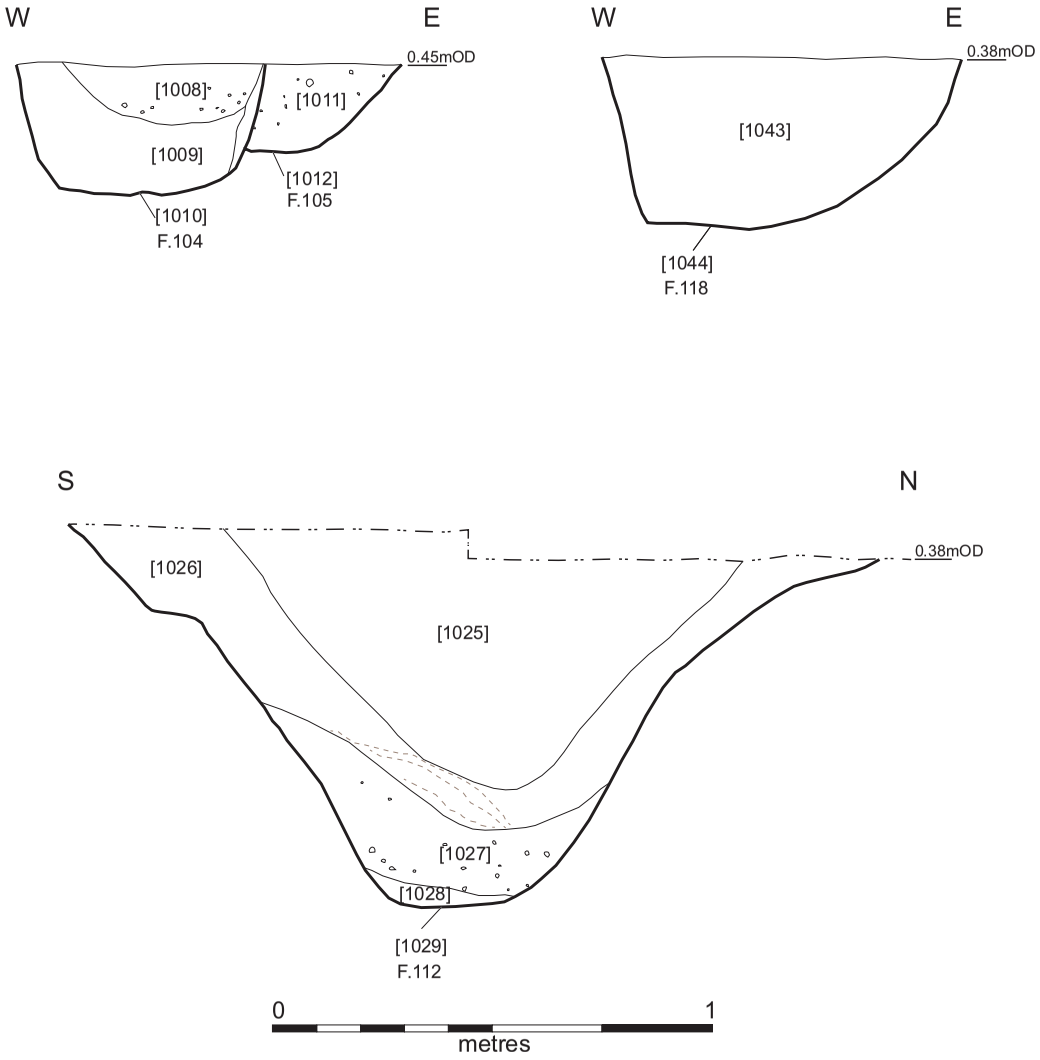


Figure 4. Group II Pits

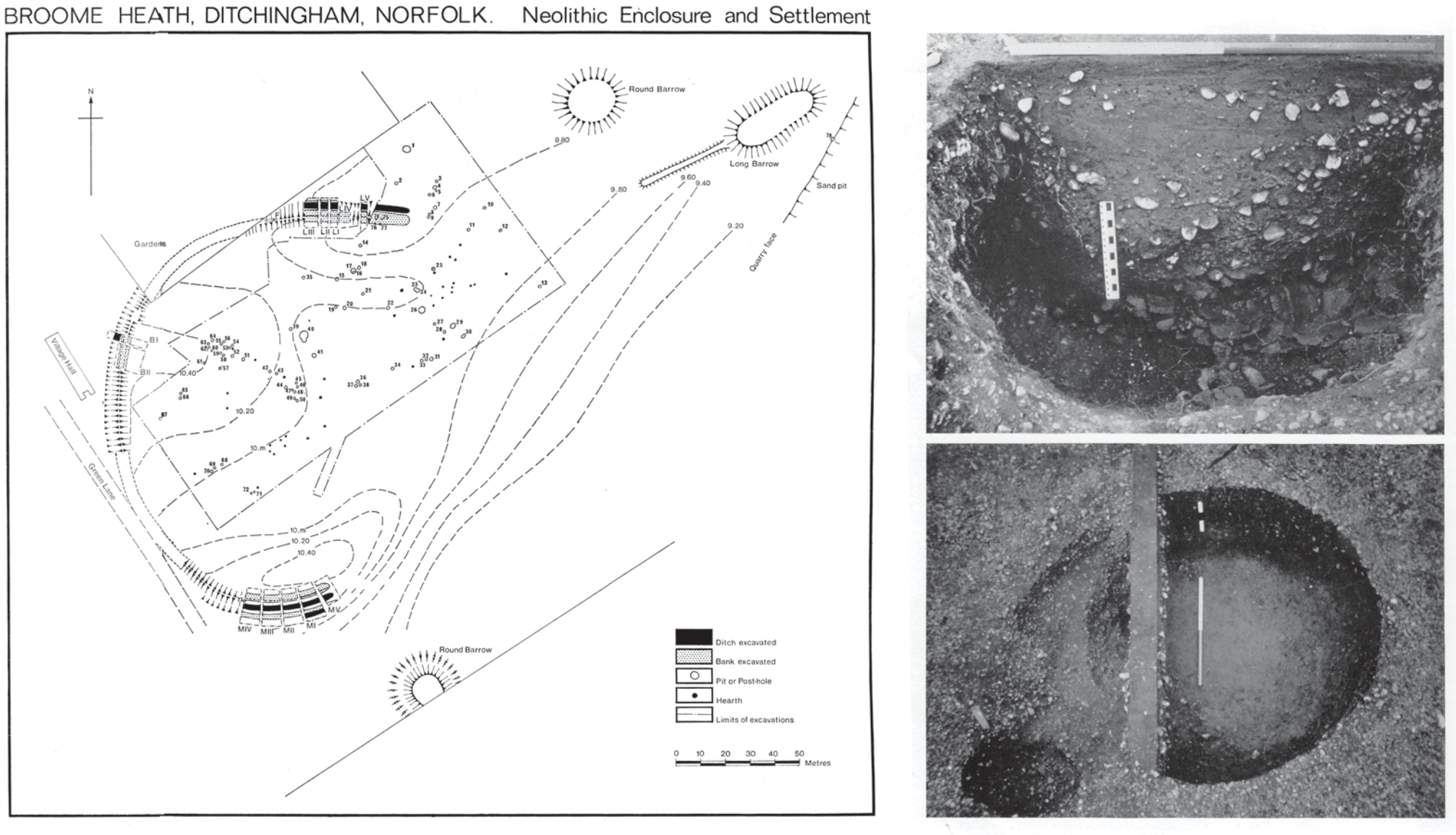


Figure 5. Broome Heath, Ditchingham, Norfolk (Wainwright, 1972)

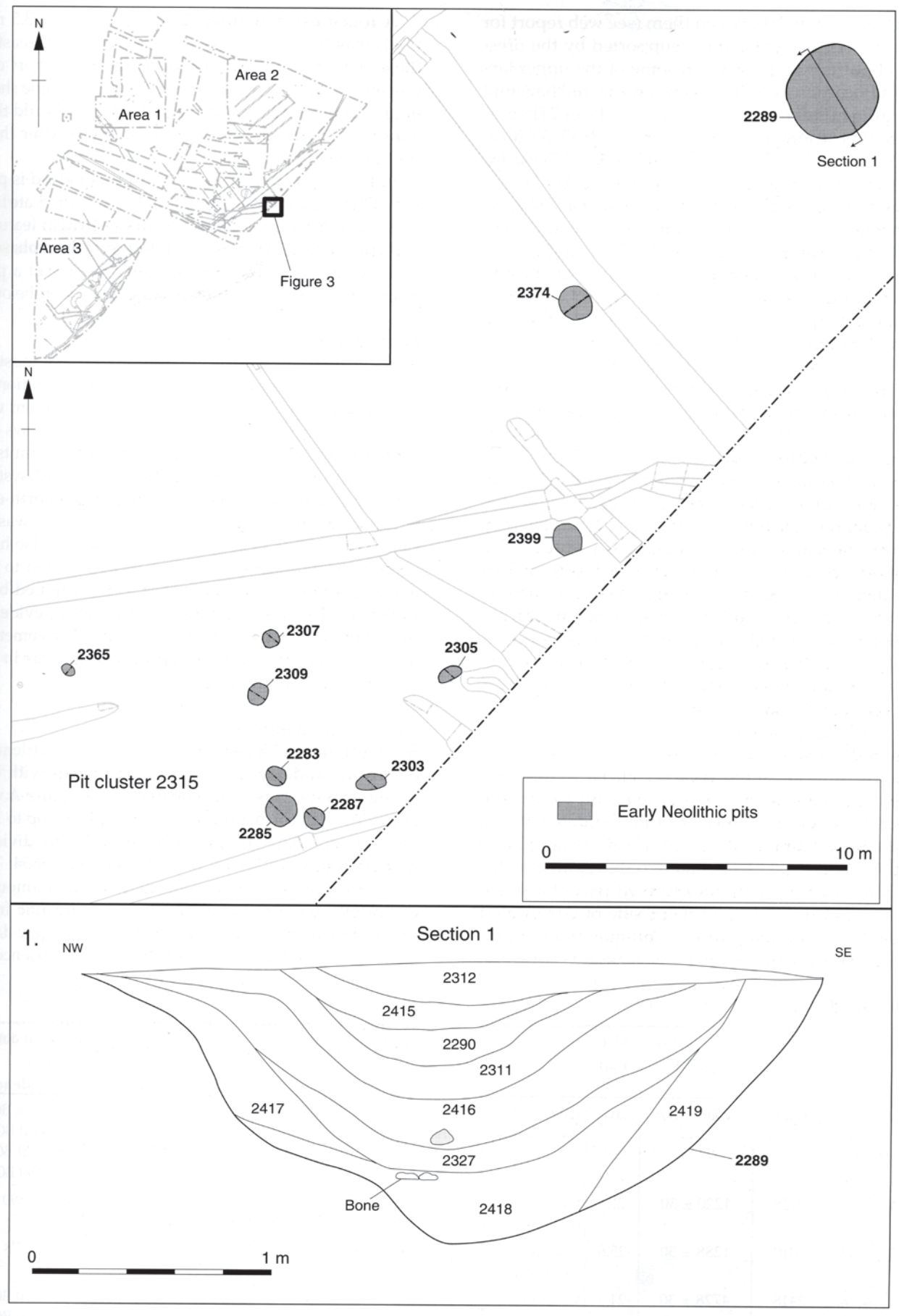


Figure 6. Parnwell Early Neolithic pits (Webley, 2007)

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

Printable version

OASIS ID: cambridg3-180612

Project details	
Project name	Gaul Road, March
Short description of the project	An archaeological excavation was undertaken by Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) on land off Gaul Road, March, Cambridgeshire in January and February 2014. The work was carried out in advance of a small housing development. Excavations over an area measuring 1500 m2 revealed a number of pits; the majority of which were clustered in three distinct groups. One of the pits contained a large assemblage of Early Neolithic artefacts, whilst the remaining features were largely sterile of material culture, however they all arguably date to the Early Neolithic. The site seems to be located in the periphery of more extensive Early Neolithic settlement and may represent associated practices perhaps specific to their hinterland location. Some of the pits may also demonstrate pit digging practice atypical of the Early Neolithic in the region.
Project dates	Start: 02-01-2014 End: 13-02-2014
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	ECB4080 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	GRM13 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 2 - Undisturbed Grassland
Monument type	PITS Early Neolithic
Significant Finds	POT Early Neolithic
Significant Finds	FLINT Early Neolithic
Significant Finds	BONE Early Neolithic

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE FENLAND MARCH Gaul Road, March
Study area	1500.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 2205 6660 52.2835659257 -0.210582516182 52 17 00 N 000 12 38 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 1.00m Max: 1.00m

Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	Emma Beadsmoore
Project director/manager	Emma Beadsmoore
Project supervisor	Alasdair Wright
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Langwith Builders

Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Physical Archive ID	GRM13
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Digital Archive ID	GRM13
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Paper Archive ID	GRM13
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Drawing","Plan","Report","Section","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title	Gaul Road, March, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Excavation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Wright, Alasdair
Other bibliographic details	Report No. 1237
Date	2014
Issuer or publisher	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Place of issue or publication	Cambridge
Description	24 pages, A4 size, spiral bound with laminated cover
Entered by	Alasdair Wright (alasdair.wright@gmail.com)
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Please e-mail English Heritage for OASIS help and advice