

N.I.A.B. Research Centre, Park Farm, Impington

An Archaeological Evaluation and Excavation



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Summary

An archaeological evaluation and subsequent excavation was carried out at Park Farm, Villa Road, Cambridgeshire (centred TL 4340 6310) by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit between 14th February and 25th March 2008. The work was undertaken on behalf of the National Institute of Agricultural Botany in advance of the redevelopment of a field station and laboratory. A total area of 1,426m² was examined in seventeen trial trenches, followed by a small open area excavation and three further trenches totalling 796 m².

The evaluation and excavation revealed Late Bronze Age activity in the form of a four post structure and an eighteen post sub-circular structure, indicative of small scale or seasonal flux occupation. Later agricultural activity was indicated by a Middle Iron Age curvilinear ditch and evidence of two alignments of post-medieval fields. The results of the excavation contradict the traditional opinion that the Gault clay area north of Cambridge was not suitable for such prehistoric settlement, and suggests that the 'blank' in the archaeological record reflects an absence of evidence due to more limited fieldwork in these areas.

Introduction

Between 14th February and 25th March 2008 a team from the Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) undertook an archaeological evaluation and excavation commissioned on behalf of the National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB). The work was undertaken in advance of the redevelopment of a field station and laboratory at Park Farm to the west of Impington village, Cambridgeshire centred on TL 4348 6310. The total area sampled comprised 2222.97m², comprising seventeen initial trial trenches followed by a small excavation area and three further judgmental trenches.

Topography and Geology

The proposed development area (PDA) is located immediately to the west of the villages of Impington/Histon at a height between 11.32m OD and 14.12m OD. The PDA encompasses three hectares of land situated within the current NIAB site which presently comprises agricultural fields, houses, barns and a laboratory. The PDA is bounded to the north, south and west by farmland and to the east by the disused Huntingdon to Cambridge railway line (see figure 1).

The PDA is located on Third Terrace River Sands and Gravels overlying pockets of Gault Clay (British Geological Survey 2002).

Archaeological Background

Antiquarian observations and aerial photographic plots of archaeological remains reveal extensive evidence for Roman activity in the vicinity of the PDA with known prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval activity in the wider area.

Archaeological crop-marks 250m to the southeast of the site (CHER 05187) are thought to relate to a Roman villa situated within the wider vicinity, although the precise extent and location is not known (VCH 1978). This small set of rectilinear crop-marks at approximately TL 434 627 are described elsewhere as a 'possible villa' (Philips 1970). Two hundred metres to the west of the site (CHER 09209) and 300m to the south (CHER 08950) further crop mark evidence of Roman, medieval and later prehistoric enclosures and double ditches have been identified.

The 'checker board' planting regime of varied plants within the wider NIAB land may be one reason why there are no crop-marks of archaeological features recorded in close proximity to the PDA. However, the air photo evidence suggested a strong potential for finding features related to Iron Age or Roman agricultural activity and possible settlement activity extending into the PDA.

Previously undertaken non-intrusive surveys in neighbouring villages have produced scanty results, due to medieval and Post-medieval remains of ridge and furrow cultivation and deep arable soils masking earlier features. As a consequence, attempted aerial photographic assessments, field walking and geophysical surveys have failed to locate much evidence of prehistoric activity or reflect the archaeological nature of this area that has been proven by subsequent excavation (see e.g. Hatton 2006).

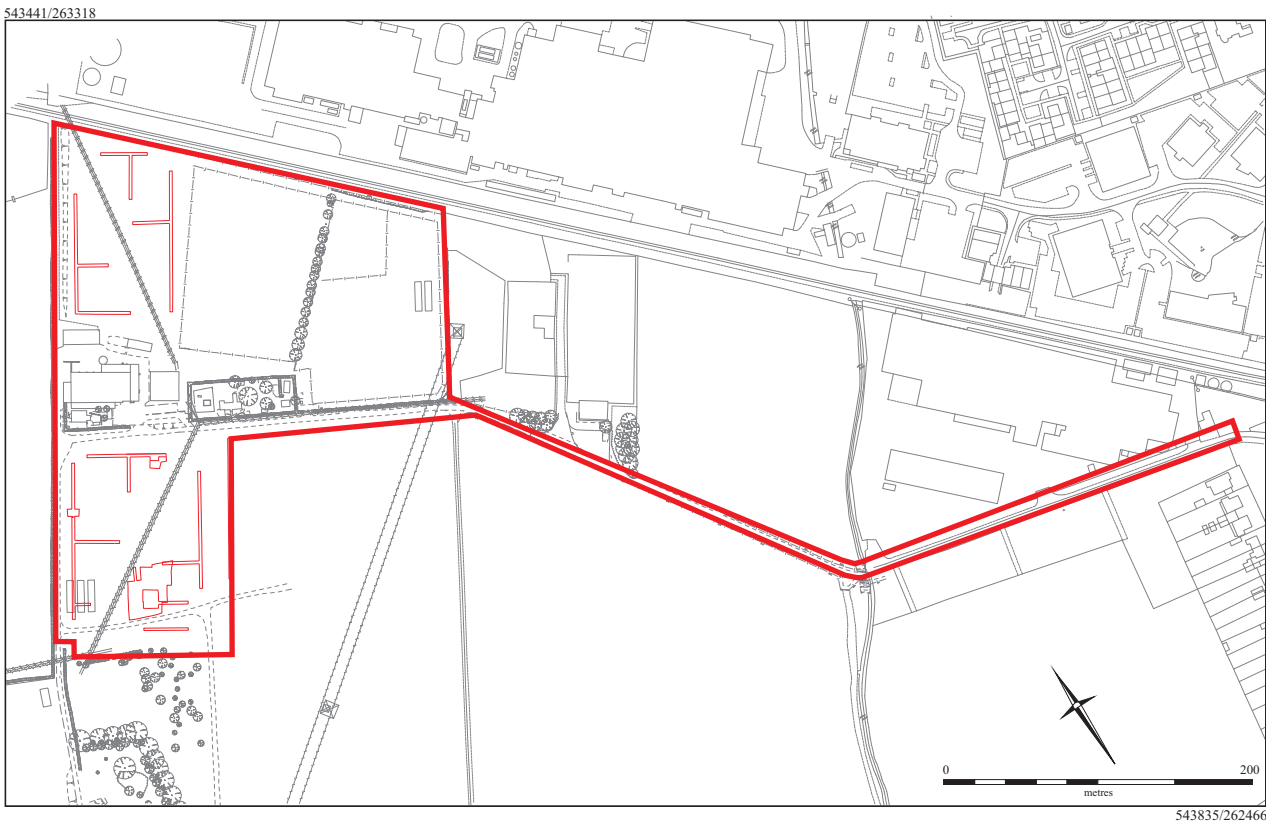
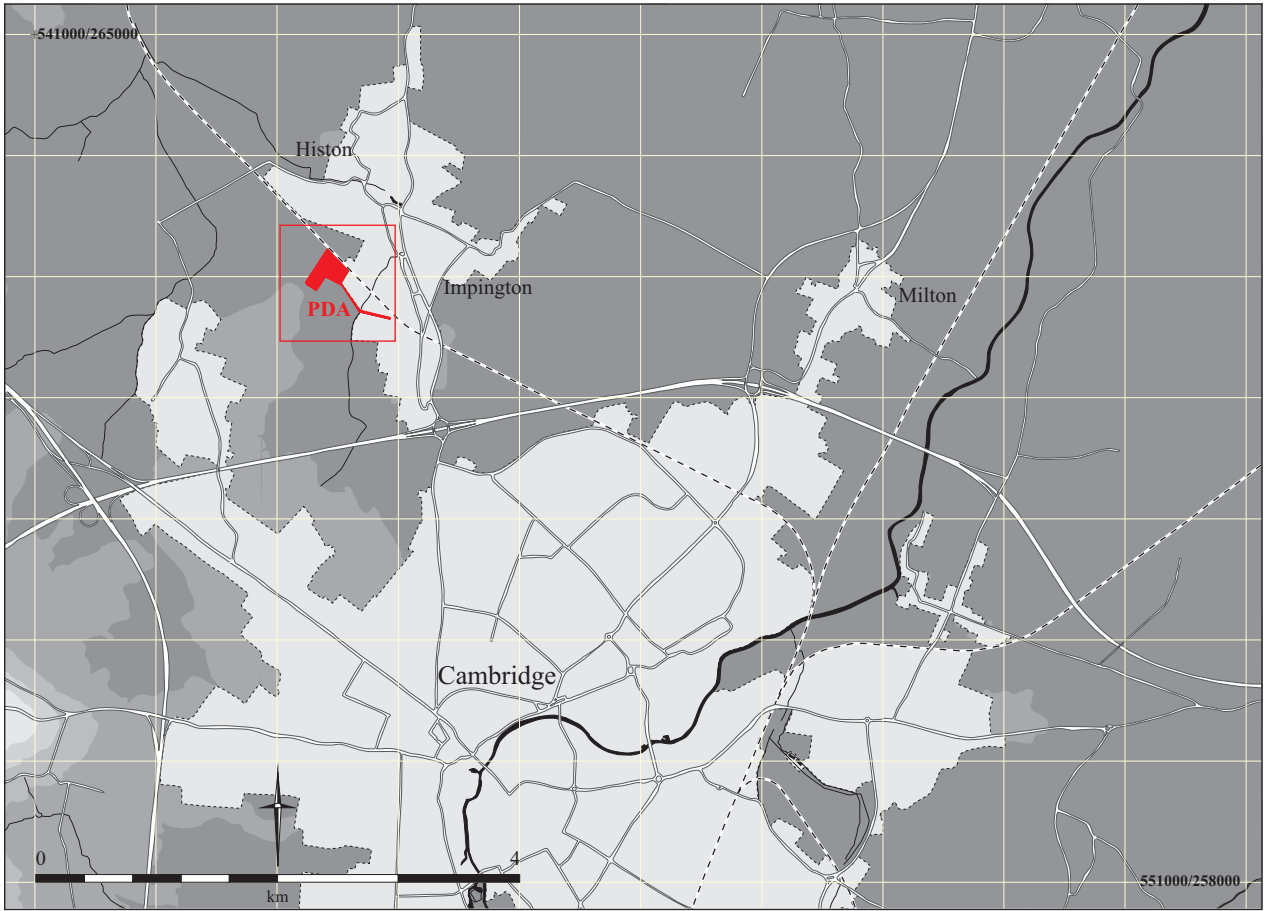


Figure 1. Location Map.

A worked flint scraper (CHER MCB16173) and a jade axe head (CHER 05188) are the only prehistoric finds located within the near vicinity of the PDA.

Former structural remains include a post-medieval windmill (CHER 05179) noted on the 1801 enclosure map 600m to the northwest of the PDA and a Second World War pillbox adjacent to the former rail line 200m to the north of the site (CHER CB15199). The nearby 'Villa Road' is apparently not related to the speculation about a Roman villa but was named in 1922 after the first model village cottages with indoor bathrooms, erected by Chivers and Sons for local employees. Although noted as being built in 1904, photographic evidence shows that they had already been constructed by 1901. The nearby 'Villa Place' is the most recent development dating from c.1986 (Ennals & Whitehead 2005).

Further away to the east of the PDA on land between the parishes of Impington and Milton, excavations at Butt Lane have produced evidence of Neolithic activity, Bronze Age activity, Iron Age settlement and agricultural remains (including a farmstead) and a Romano-British 'Villa' (Conner 1997, 1998, 1999 and Reynolds 1994). To the south of the PDA on land between the parishes of Impington and Chesterton, excavations at Arbury Camp, Kings Hedges Road revealed an extensive Iron Age ring work which was almost completely devoid of associated settlement features (Evans & Knight 2002 and 2005).

Methodology

The evaluation trenches at Impington focused on two fields north and south of the existing laboratory. Within "north field" seven trenches were excavated totalling 5.13% of the field and within "south field" ten trenches were excavated totalling 5.64% of the field, the trenches from both fields totalled 748.44m in length. Box trenches were extended around archaeology identified within trenches 8 and 10. Two proposed trenches (Tr15 and Tr17) were not excavated due to underlying services. An area of open excavation was created around trench 12 in order to examine the extent of the archaeology within this area, followed by a further three trenches to reveal the extent and character of a linear feature.

Prior to excavation, the trenches were metal detected and scanned using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT). Topsoil and subsoil deposits were machined under archaeological supervision using a toothless ditching bucket on a 20 tonne 360° tracked excavator. Height restrictors were used to allow safe tracking underneath overhead electricity wires. During machining for the open-area excavation, a 7.5 tonne 360° was used in order to stay within the safe-working distance of the wires.

Following machining, all archaeological features were immediately base-planned. A minimum of 50% of each discrete feature was excavated increasing to 100% in many cases. Excavation was carried out by hand and all finds were retained. The recording followed a CAU modified MoLAS system (Spence 1990); assigning context numbers (e.g. [fill], [cut]) to stratigraphic units and feature numbers, F., to interrelated stratigraphic units (e.g. a ditch cut and fills). Base plans were drawn at 1:50, sections at 1:10. The photographic archive comprises colour slides, black and white prints as

well as digital images. A representative range of features were bulk sampled. All work was carried out in strict accordance with statutory Health and Safety legislation, by CAU risk assessment, and within the recommendations of SCAUM (Allen and Holt 2007).

The artefacts and accompanying documentary records have been compiled into a stable indexed archive. This is currently stored at CAU under the project code PFI 08. Within the text, the reference to a feature number is marked in Bold (e.g. **F.01**) and context numbers in square brackets (e.g. [01]). The Historic Environment Record event number is ECB 2864.

Results

A total of 53 features and 119 contexts were recorded within the PDA. The site was split between two fields north and south of the existing laboratory. The open excavation area is discussed separately from the evaluation trenches. Two sub soils and two alluvium deposits were recorded within the evaluation as described below.

Topsoil [72] mid greyish brown soft clayey sandy silt with occasional small and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded gravels, between 0.25m-0.4m deep.

Subsoil 1 [73] mid orangey brown moderately firm clayey silt with occasional inclusions of gravel, sometimes frequent, between 0.1m-0.3m deep.

Subsoil 2 [74] mid orangey yellow soft silty sand, between 0.1m-0.3m deep.

Alluvium (upper) [75] light to mid orangey brown firm but friable silt, 0.5m deep.

Alluvium (lower) [76] light to mid orange firm but friable in places silt with occasional gravel pockets increasing with depth, 0.75m deep.

Natural [77] mid orangey brown soft silty sand with frequent inclusions of angular gravel, occasionally the gravel is in pockets, occasionally the silty sand is in pockets.

Evaluation Trenches

Seventeen trenches were excavated on a northwest-southeast and northeast-southwest orientation within two open agricultural fields. The northern field (1.04 hectares) was evaluated with seven trenches totalling 297.94 linear metres (534.54m²). This comprised a sample of 5.13% of the field area. The southern field (1.57 hectares) contained ten trenches totalling 451.34 linear metres (892.16m²). Box trenches 8 and 10 (91.13m²) increased the final sample to 6.26% of the field area.

Alluvial deposits were present in six of the seventeen trench profiles, mostly confined to the northern field (Table 1 Appendix 1). During the evaluation, the water table was noted to be high in the northern field, the land in this area being described as prone to waterlogging by the site manager (M. Leaman *pers comm.*). Nearby excavations to a depth of c1.2m for the Guided Bus project were observed to be completely waterlogged.

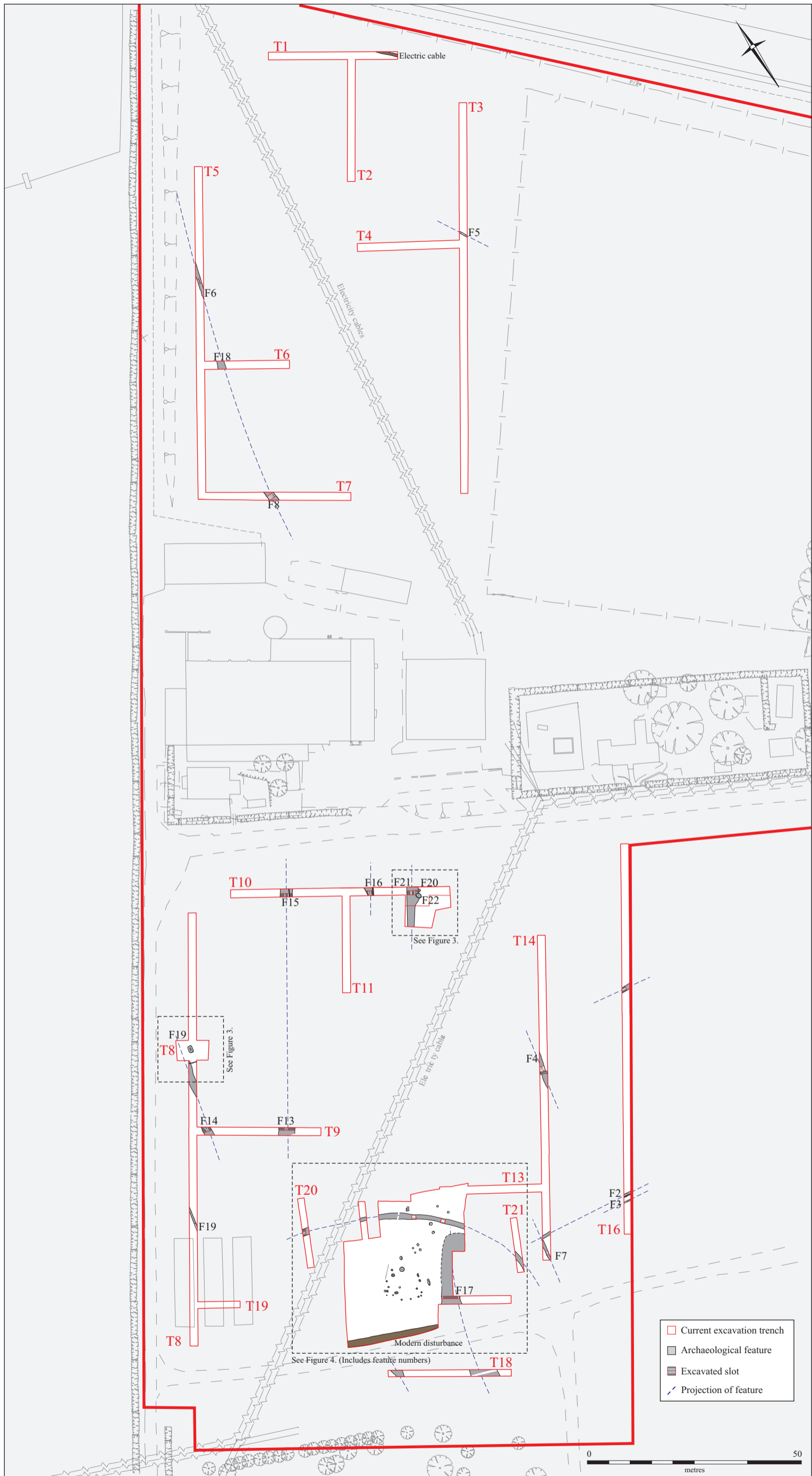


Figure 2. Trench Location Plan and Results.

Of the seventeen trenches, eleven contained archaeological remains, with twenty two features and forty-six contexts being recorded. The majority of features were post-medieval in date (eleven furrows, three brush drains, one small ditch and one pit) however three Late Bronze Age postholes and two pits were also identified (figures 2 & 3).

In general, soil depths were shallow, with an average of 40 to 50cm of topsoil and subsoil sealing archaeological deposits in the southern field

Trench 1 (30m long orientated NW-SE)

Trench 1 contained no archaeology and had a north-south aligned electricity cable running at the south-eastern end. Alluvium was recorded at a depth of 0.24m-0.31m deep and between 0.27m-0.32m thick.

Trench 2 (29m long orientated NE-SW)

Trench 2 contained no archaeology. Alluvium was recorded at a depth of 0.22m-0.27m deep and 0.24m-0.44m thick.

Trench 3 (89m long orientated NE-SW)

Trench 3 contained one narrow, shallow ditch, (**F.05**) oriented north-south which produced no material dating evidence but cut the sub-soil so is therefore presumed to be post-medieval. This ditch was not aligned with any others within the PDA. Evidence of ploughing was identified in the form of north-south aligned plough scars. Alluvium was recorded at a depth of 0.2m-0.3m deep and between 0.22m and 0.31m thick.

F.05 Ditch

Cut [10] shallow north-south linear with moderately shallow sides, a shallow break of slope and a concave base (length 1m excavated; width 0.44m; depth 0.09m). Fill [09] light-mid brownish grey firm clayey silt with rare small stone inclusions.

Trench 4 (23m long orientated NW-SE)

Trench 4 contained no archaeology and only one modern field drain aligned north-south. Alluvium was recorded at a depth of 0.17m-0.27m deep and 0.3m thick.

Trench 5 (76m long orientated NE-SW)

Trench 5 contained a wide, shallow north-south orientated post-medieval furrow (**F.06**) which was aligned with **F.08** identified in trenches 6 and 7. Two northwest-southeast aligned field drains were also identified.

F.06 Furrow

Cut [12] moderately shallow north-south linear with moderately steep sides, and a slightly concave base (length 1m excavated; width 0.77m; depth 0.15m). Fill [11] light-mid brownish yellowy grey clayey silt with rare gravel inclusions and occasional larger stones.

Trench 6 (20m long orientated NW-SE)

Trench 6 contained a wide, shallow north-south orientated post-medieval furrow (**F.08**) which could also be seen in trench 7 and as **F.06** in trench 5. Three northwest-southeast aligned field drains were also identified.

Trench 7 (33m long orientated NW-SE)

Trench 7 contained a wide, shallow north-south orientated post-medieval furrow (**F.08**) which could also be seen in trench 6 and as **F.06** in trench 5. Three northwest-southeast aligned field drains were also identified.

F.08 Furrow

Cut [16] north-south linear with a sharp top break of slope, steep sides and an uneven, disturbed base (length 1m excavated; width 1.75m; depth 0.28m). Fill [15] mid orangey brown firm clayey silt with moderate gravel inclusions.

Trench 8 (99m long orientated NE-SW)

Trench 8 contained one shallow sub-rectangular pit (**F.18**) which produced no dating evidence and one narrow north-south orientated post-medieval brush drain (**F.19**). This feature was not aligned with any other linears but was on the same orientation as many other furrows within the PDA. One wide, shallow post-medieval furrow (**F.14**) orientated north-south was also identified within trench 8 and could be seen within trench 9. Three southeast-northwest orientated and one southwest-northeast orientated field drains were also identified. Alluvium was recorded at a depth of 0.4m and was 0.15m thick located in the centre of trench 8 only.

Box Trench 8 was excavated to determine the extent of archaeological features surrounding pit **F.18** and was 7m by 4.5m encompassing an additional 28.75m². No further features were found within box 8 suggesting that **F.18** was an isolated pit.

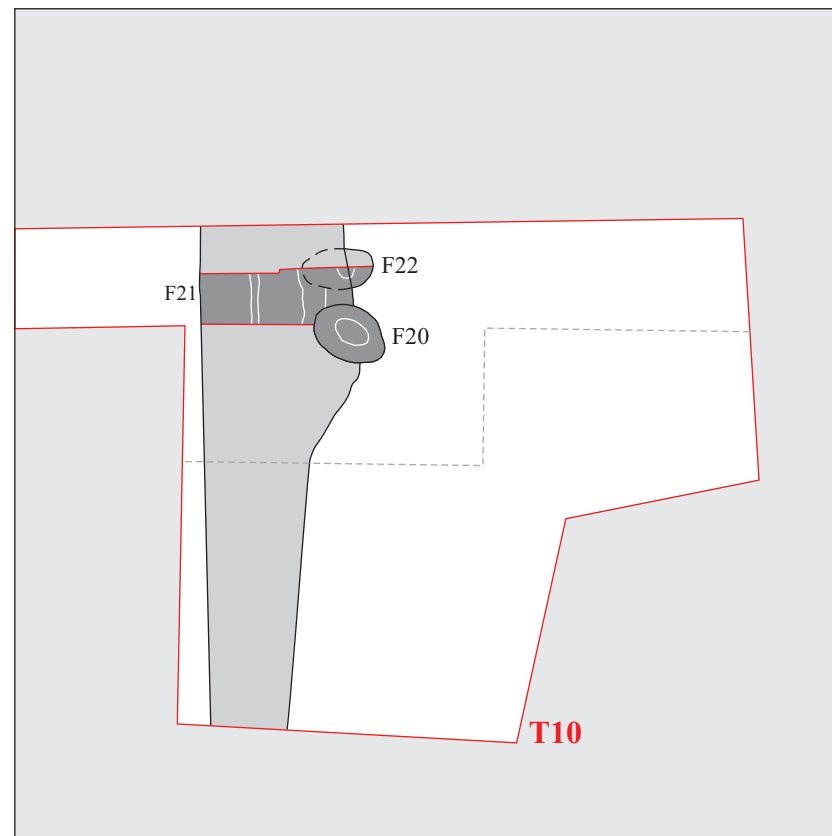
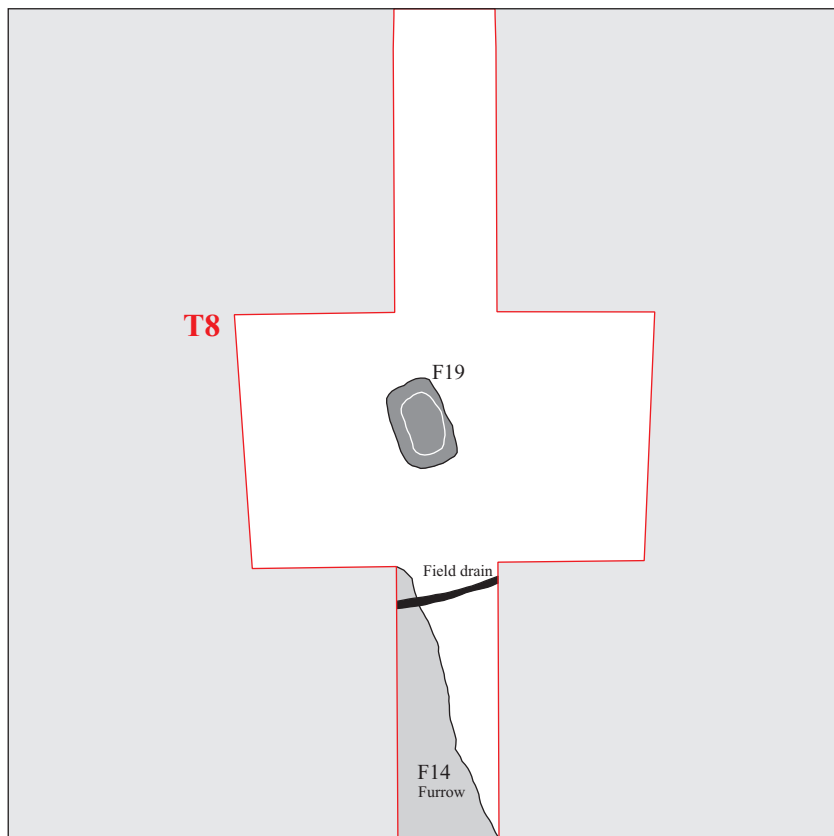
F.18 Pit

Cut [37] sub-rectangular in plan with steep sides, a sharp break of slope and a slightly concave base (length 1.5m; width 0.9m; depth 0.15m). Fill [36] mid orangey brown clayey silt with occasional stone inclusions

F.19 Gully/ Bush drain

Cut [39] north-south linear with near vertical slightly concave sides and a slightly concave but overall flat base (length 1.1m excavated; width 0.35m; depth 0.25m). Fill [38] mixed orangey brown silty clay with occasional to moderate stone/ gravel inclusions and some re-deposited clay natural.

Trench 9 (28m long orientated NW-SE)



Box Trench 8.

Box Trench 10.

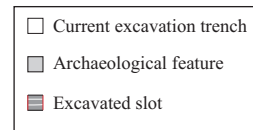
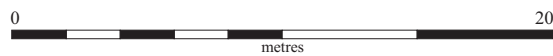


Figure 3. Box Trenches 8 and 10.

Trench 9 contained two wide, shallow post-medieval furrows, one (**F.14**) orientated north-south could be seen in trench 8 and the other (**F.13**) orientated northeast-southwest could be seen in trench 10 as **F.15**. Three field drains all on different orientations (northeast-southwest, north-south and east-west) were also identified within trench 9.

F.13 Furrow

Cut [27] shallow north-south linear with gradual sides, a non perceptible break of slope and a very slightly concave to flattish base (length 1m excavated; width 3.7m; depth 0.1m). Fill [26] mid brown silty clay with occasional stones.

F.14 Furrow

Cut [29] shallow north-south linear with gradual sides, a non-perceptible break of slope and a slightly concave to flat base (length 1m excavated; width 2m; depth 0.15m). Fill [28] mid brown silty clay with occasional stone inclusions.

Trench 10 (50m long orientated NW-SE)

Trench 10 contained three wide shallow post-medieval furrows orientated northeast-southwest. Furrow **F.16** which contained one sherd of very abraded 16th/ 17th C. glazed red earthenware with slip, (Craig Cessford *pers comm.*) and **F.21** did not appear in any other trench. Furrow **F.15** could be seen in the south-eastern end of trench 9 as **F.13**. Furrow **F.21** truncated an earlier pit (**F.22**) and was truncated by a later post-medieval pit (**F.20**). Pit **F.20** was a shallow flattish sub-circular feature that produced no material dating evidence but was interpreted as post-medieval due to its relationship with the furrow. Pit **F.22** was an earlier shallow sub-circular feature, and could be dated only to a pre post-medieval phase. Five modern field drains were also located within trench 10, four on a northeast-southwest orientation and one on a north-south orientation.

Box Trench 10 was excavated to determine the extent of any further archaeological features surrounding pits **F.20** and **F.22** and was 10.11m by 7.43m encompassing an additional 62.38m². The edges of pit **F.22** were identified but no further features were found within Box 10 therefore the two pits were deemed to be isolated.

F.15 Furrow

Cut [31] shallow northeast-southwest linear with shallow break of slope, shallow sides, and a flattish base (length 1m slot; width 2.75m; depth 0.18m), truncated by a field drain. Fill [30] light to mid brownish grey, firm clayey silt with rare to occasional stone inclusions.

F.16 Furrow

Cut [33] north-south linear with truncated sides and an irregular but overall concave base (length 1m excavated; width 1.09 remaining, depth 0.41m). Fill [32] mid orangey brown mottled with greyish brown soft sandy silt with occasional stone inclusions and rare patches of clay and 1 sherd of 16th/ 17th C pottery.

F.20 Pit

Cut [41] oval in plan with moderately steep concave sides, a moderate break of slope and a flattish base (length 1m excavated; width 0.66m; depth 0.2m). Fill [40] mid brownish grey firm clayey silt with moderate inclusions of charcoal and red staining and occasional large stones.

F.21 Furrow

Cut [43] northeast-southwest linear with shallow sides a shallow break of slope and a flat base (length 1m excavated; width 2.6m; depth 0.11m). Fill [42] light to mid yellowy brown, clayey silt with occasional stone inclusions.

F.22 Pit

Cut [46] oval in plan with moderately steep sides, a sharp break of slope and a sharply concave base (length unknown; width 1.32m; depth 0.51m). Two fills [44] mid to dark brownish grey, firm, clayey silt with occasional large stones and charcoal flecks, bulk sampled <5>; [45] mid greyish brown, firm, clayey silt with occasional large stones.

Trench 11 (22m long orientated NE-SW)

Trench 11 contained two modern field drains, one orientated northeast-southwest and the other east-west. Tree throw **F.12** was also recorded within trench 11 but produced no material culture.

F.12 Tree Throw

Cut [25] irregular in plan and in profile (length 1.64m; width 0.47m; depth 0.33m). Fill [24] light brownish grey, firm sandy silt with moderate small stone inclusions.

Trench 12 (28m long orientated NW-SE)

Trench 12 contained three small circular postholes arranged in a line extending northeast outside the trench. Postholes **F.09**, **F.10** and **F.11** were between 0.22m-0.3m in diameter and between 0.1m-0.28m deep and contained Late Bronze Age pottery. One north-south orientated shallow, wide post-medieval furrow (**F.17**) was identified in the centre of trench 12 and could be seen in the south-eastern end of trench 18. One modern east-west orientated field drain was also identified within trench 12.

F.09 Posthole

Cut [19] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, near vertical sides, and a sharply concave base (length 0.28m; width 0.26m; depth 0.28m). Two fills [17] mid greyish brown, moderately compact slightly silty sand with moderate charcoal flecks, occasional inclusions of small angular gravel and Late Bronze Age pottery, bulk sampled <01>; [18] light orangey brown, moderately loose sand with rare inclusions of small angular gravel, bulk sampled <02>.

F.10 Posthole

Cut [21] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, moderately steep concave sides and a concave base (length 0.22m; width 0.20m; depth 0.12m). Fill [20] light-mid greyish brown mottled with reddish brown, moderately loose, silty sand with moderate small charcoal flecks, rare inclusions of angular gravel and Late Bronze Age pottery, bulk sampled <03>.

F.11 Posthole

Cut [23] circular in plan with a moderate top break of slope, moderately shallow concave sides and a flattish base (length 0.3m; width 0.27m; depth 0.1m). Fill [22] light orangey greyish brown mottled with red patches, loose, silty sand with moderate charcoal flecks and occasional small angular gravel, bulk sampled <4>.

F.17 Furrow

Cut [35] shallow northeast-southwest linear with a shallow top break of slope, gradual sides and a flat base (length 0.5m excavated; width 4.45m; depth 0.13m). Fill [34] mid orangey brown, firm, slightly silty sand with frequent inclusions of angular gravel and small stones.

Trench 13 (23m long orientated NW-SE)

Trench 13 contained two modern field drains orientated northeast-southwest and east-west and a modern pipe orientated north-south which could also be seen in trench 14.

Trench 14 (74m long orientated NE-SW)

Trench 14 contained one wide shallow post-medieval furrow (**F.04**) orientated north-south and one narrow north-south orientated post-medieval bush drain (**F.07**) which did not appear in any other trenches. Six modern field drains were also located within trench 14, five orientated northwest-southeast and one orientated northeast-southwest.

F.04 Furrow

Cut [08] shallow north-south linear with irregular shallow sides, a non-perceptible break of slope and an irregular base (length 1m excavated; width 1.11m depth 0.23m). Fill [07] mid greyish brown soft sandy silt with moderate flint inclusions.

F.07 Bush Drain

Cut [14] north-south linear with moderately steep slightly convex sides, a sharp top break of slope and a flattish base (length 1m excavated; width 0.56m; depth 0.23m). Fill [13] mid yellowish brown firm sandy silt with occasional stone inclusions and rare coke fragments.

Trench 16 (89m long orientated NE-SW)

Trench 16 contained one narrow but steep-sided post-medieval brush drain (**F.03**) orientated east-west which was 1m south of post-medieval furrow and field drain **F.02**. A second wider and shallower post-medieval furrow (**F.01**) also orientated east-west was located in the centre of the trench. A further two field drains were identified in trench 16 orientated east-west and southwest-northeast. Alluvium was recorded at a depth of 0.24m-0.31m from ground surface and was between 0.27m and 0.32m thick.

F.01 Furrow

Cut [02] shallow east-west linear with gradual sides and a slightly concave base (length 1m excavated; width 1.1m; depth 0.1m). Fill [01] light brown silty clay with occasional stone inclusions, contained 2nd-4th C. Roman greyware pottery.

F.02 Furrow/ Field Drain

Cut [04] shallow east-west linear with moderately steep sides, a sharp break of slope and a flat base (length 1m excavated; width 0.7m; depth 0.05m). Fill [03] pale slightly greyish brown silty clay with occasional stone inclusions, contained an inverted U field drain.

F.03 Bush Drain

Cut [06] east-west linear with near vertical sides, a sharp top break of slope and a concave base (length 1m excavated; width 0.3m; depth 0.4m). Fill [05] dark brown silty clay with re-deposited natural lumps and occasional stone inclusions.

Trench 18 (27m long orientated NW-SE)

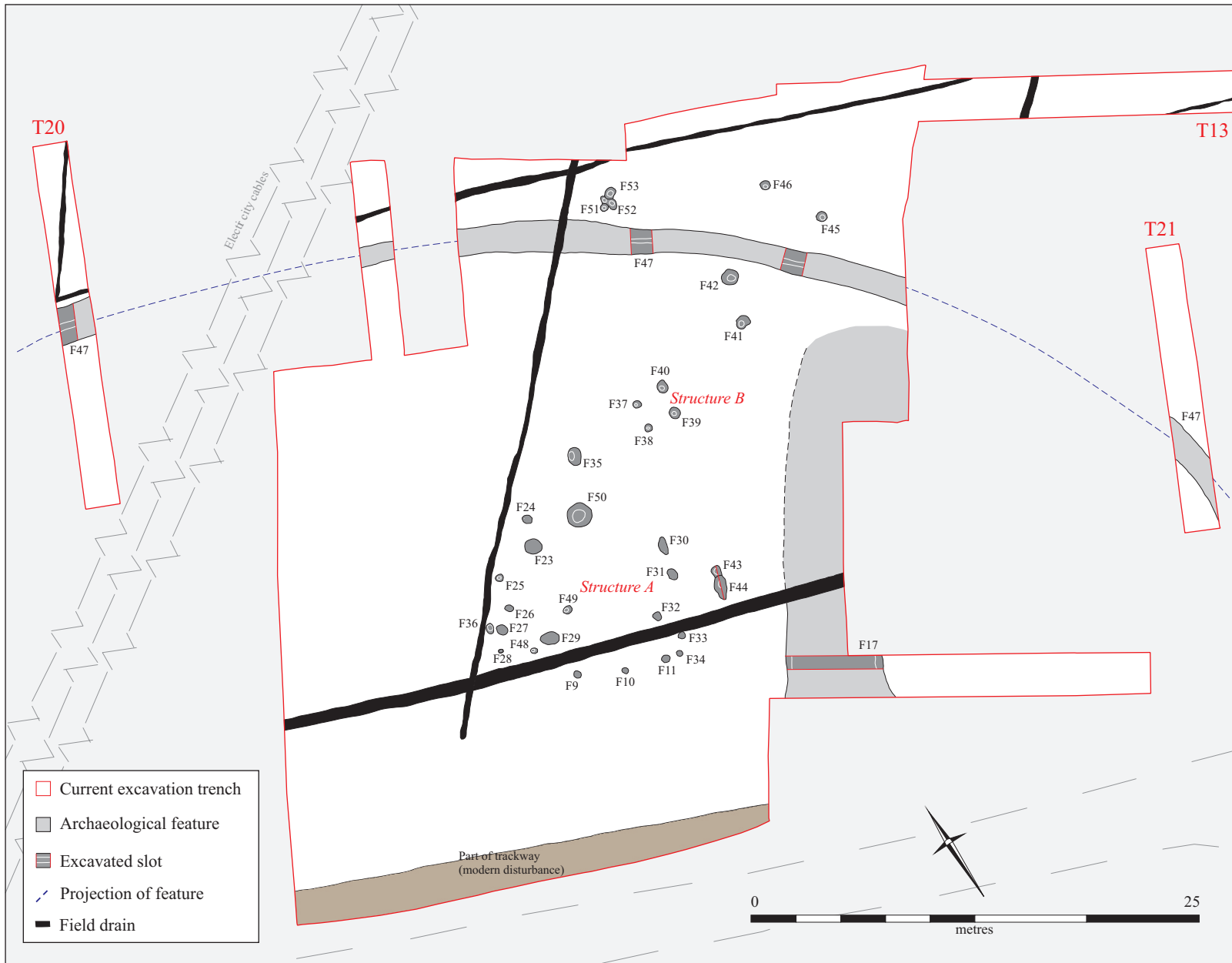


Figure 4. Open Area with Two Exploratory Trenches.

Trench 18 contained two wide shallow post-medieval furrows aligned north-south one of which can be picked up in trench 12 as **F.17** and was cut by a modern irrigation pipe orientated roughly southeast-northwest.

Trench 19 (10m long orientated NW-SE)

Trench 19 did not contain any archaeological features and only one modern field drain orientated northeast-southwest.

Area 12 Excavation

The open area which was extended from the footprint of trench 12 was excavated in order to investigate the extent of the posthole structure previously located (**F.09**, **F.10** and **F.11**). A further twenty five postholes and five pits were identified forming two structures all of which could be dated to the Late Bronze Age based on associated artefacts or through their chronological or diagnostic relationships. Six of the aforementioned postholes did not form part of any obvious structure. Four of the pits (**F.23**, **F.35**, **F.44** and **F.50**) have a loose association with **Structure A** which was created by 18 postholes: **F. 09-F.11**; **F.24-F.34**; **F.36**; **F.43**; **F.48**, and **F.49** as described below. **Structure B** was a four post structure formed by **F.37-F.40** as described below. Ditch (**F.47**) was identified to the north of Structures A and B, three further trenches (Tr20, Tr21 and Tr22) were excavated to locate the extent and nature of this ditch which curved southeast and southwest around the northern end of the excavation area and appeared to continue outside the PDA (figure 4).

Structure A

Structure A was made of a minimum of eighteen posts none of which were obviously structural, however six (**F.26**, **F.29**, **F.32**, **F.36**, **F.48** and **F.49**) appeared to be internal. This structure was non-symmetrical and irregular and lacked the coherency of a typical round house with the posts not being evenly spaced. Taken as a whole, the arrangement of posts made an incomplete sub-circular configuration some 10.5m by 8m at maximum length with a maximum of 8m internal measurement between posts. It is possible that an entrance could be seen to the southeast (see figures 5 & 6), an interpretation which is possibly supported by the environmental evidence from pits and postholes (see Appendix 6). There may have been multiple phases of construction within the structure explaining the irregularity and lack of one distinct outside ring. Due to the shallow nature of features within Structure A it is likely that further postholes once existed but were truncated by later agriculture (overburden in this area was between 30 and 50cm only). It is also possible that the arrangement of post holes represents more than one structure although the lack of any obvious partial circles means that this remains a tentative possibility.

Fifteen of the eighteen postholes were circular and between 0.2m-0.41m in diameter and 0.1m-0.4m deep. The remaining three (**F.27**, **F.30** and **F.31**) were sub-circular and had one sloping side leading to a sloping base which is evidence that the posts were leant to one side, possibly when they were erected or dismantled. Only one posthole (**F.09**) contained two fills, one of which was a 'post pipe'. Nine of the eighteen contained Late Bronze Age pottery evenly dispersed throughout the

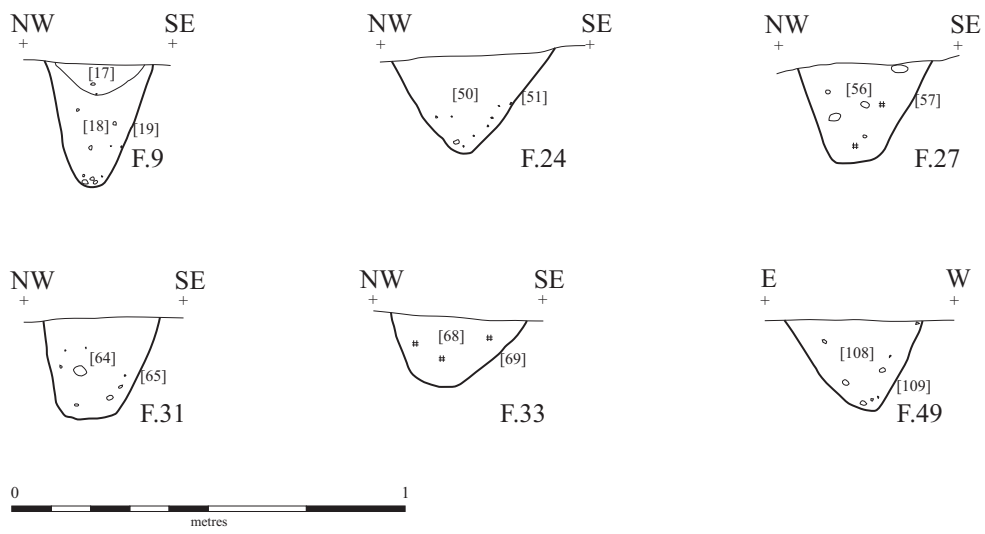


Figure 5. Photo and Sections of Postholes from Structure A.

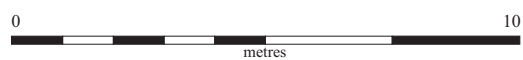
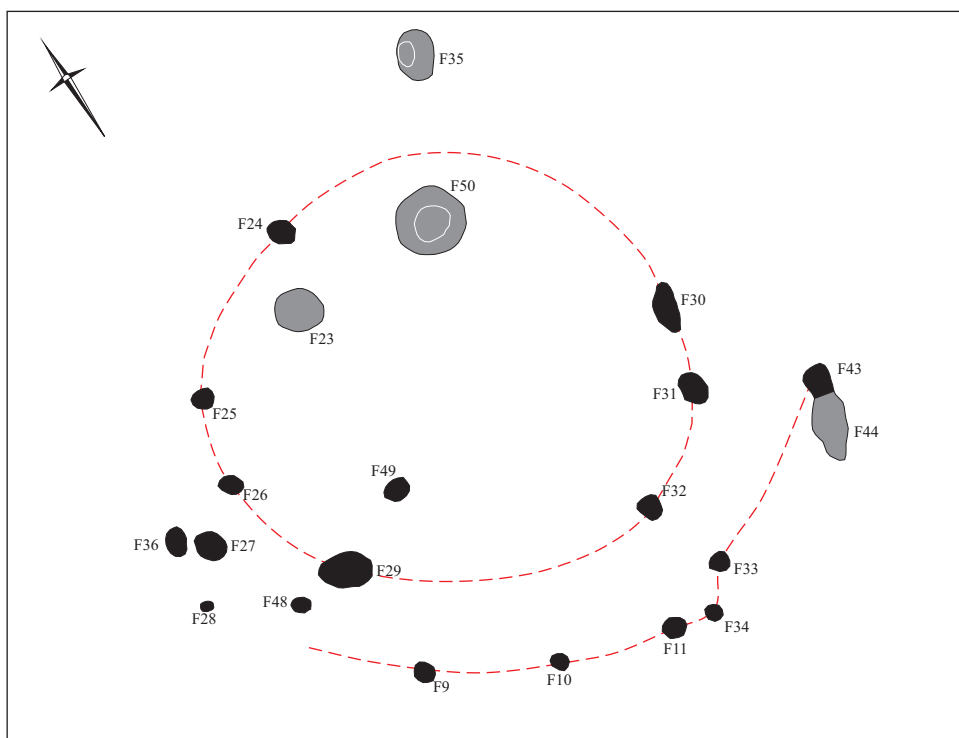
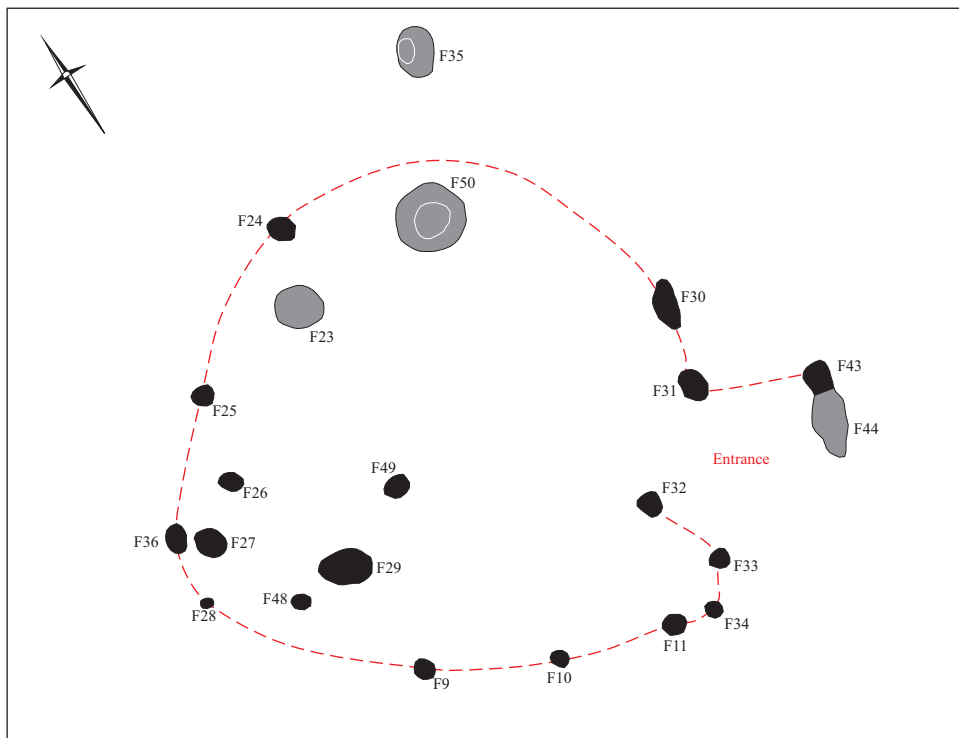


Figure 6. Possible Configurations of Structure A.

arrangement of posts. Worked flint associated with core reduction strategies prevalent during the Bronze Age were identified in three of the postholes. Nine of the postholes were bulk sampled and a variety of environmental remains were recovered. Key finds included molluscs that indicated a seasonally wet environment and cereal remains of barley, emmer and spelt wheat. A small quantity of chaff was also recovered, indicating nearby cereal processing.

F.09, F.10, F.11 as previously discussed in Trench 12.

F.24 Posthole

Cut [51] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, moderately steep straight sides and a sharply concave base (length 0.41m; width 0.35m; depth 0.24m). Fill [50] light brownish grey moderately compact sandy silt with occasional inclusions of small angular gravels and occasional charcoal flecks, bulk sampled <6>.

F.25 Posthole

Cut [53] circular in plan with sharp top break of slope, near vertical sides and a concave base (length 0.22m; width 0.20m; depth 0.27m). Fill [52] mid grey mottled with patches of orangey brown, moderately compact sandy silt with rare small angular gravel inclusions and moderate charcoal flecks, bulk sampled <8>.

F.26 Posthole

Cut [55] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, near vertical sides and an almost flat base (length 0.29m; width 0.28m; depth 0.17m). Fill [54] mid greyish brown mottled with small patches of dark orangey brown, moderately compact sandy silt with occasional small angular and rounded gravel and frequent inclusions of charcoal, bulk sampled <9>.

F.27 Posthole

Cut [57] sub-circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, near vertical sides and an almost flat base (length 0.34m; width 0.29m; depth 0.26m). Fill [56] mid greyish brown mottled with small patches of dark orangey brown, moderately compact, sandy silt with moderate inclusions of angular gravels and small charcoal flecks, bulk sampled <11>.

F.28 Posthole

Cut [59] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, near vertical sides and a flat base (length 0.2m; width 0.2m; depth 0.1m). Fill [58] light orangey brown moderately compact sandy silt with occasional inclusions of small gravel, rare charcoal flecks and Late Bronze Age pottery and worked flint, bulk sampled <12>.

F.29 Posthole

Cut [61] circular in plan with a moderately sharp top break of slope, moderately steep straight sides and a sharply concave base (length 0.5m; width 0.5m; depth 0.27m). Fill [60] mid to dark grey mottled with a light orangey brown, moderately compact sandy silt with occasional inclusions of angular and rounded stones, moderate burnt stone fragments and Late Bronze Age pottery, bulk sampled <10>.

F.30 Posthole

Cut [63] oval in plan with a sharp top break of slope, near vertical sides and a sloping base (length 0.5m; width 0.27m; depth 0.27m). Fill [62] mid grey mottled with small patches of light orangey brown firm silty sand with frequent inclusions of angular gravel and moderate charcoal flecks, contained worked flint, bulk sampled <15>.

F.31 Posthole

Cut [65] oval in plan with a sharp top break of slope, near vertical sides and a flat base (length 0.38m; width 0.3m; depth 0.28m). Fill [64] mid greyish brown moderately firm sandy silt with

frequent inclusions of gravel, moderate charcoal flecks, occasional burnt stones and Late Bronze pottery, bulk sampled <16>.

F.32 Posthole

Cut [67] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, steep sides and a flattish base (length 0.4m; width 0.38m; depth 0.13m). Fill [66] mid greyish brown firm clayey silt with frequent large stone inclusions, occasional charcoal flecks and Late Bronze Age pottery.

F.33 Posthole

Cut [69] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, steep sides and a concave base (length 0.33m; width 0.3m; depth 0.18m). Fill [68] light to mid greyish brown, moderately compact sandy silt with occasional inclusions of small gravel, moderate charcoal flecks and Late Bronze Age pottery, bulk sampled <14>.

F.34 Posthole

Cut [71] circular in plan with a moderate top break of slope, moderately steep sides and a sharply concave base (length 0.2m; width 0.2m; depth 0.13m). Fill [70] light to mid greyish brown moderately compact sandy silt with occasional inclusions of small angular gravel and moderate charcoal flecks, bulk sampled <13>.

F.36 Posthole

Cut [81] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, steep, near vertical sides and a sharply concave base (length 0.34m; width 0.34m; depth 0.23m). Fill [80] mid to dark greyish brown moderately compact sandy silt with occasional angular and sub-angular gravels and occasional charcoal flecks, bulk sampled <19>.

F.43 Posthole

Cut [95] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, near vertical slightly convex sides, and a flat base (length 0.39m; width 0.39m; depth 0.4m). Fill [94] mid brownish grey soft sandy silt with moderate small stone inclusions, contained Late Bronze Age pottery, animal bone and worked flint, bulk sampled <20>.

F.48 Posthole

Cut [107] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, near vertical sides and a concave base (length 0.22m; width 0.22m; depth 0.21m). Fill [106] mid brownish grey, moderately compact, silty sand with occasional small charcoal flecks, bulk sampled <29>.

F.49 Posthole

Cut [109] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, very steep, slightly concave sides and a sharply concave base (length 0.35m; width 0.35m; depth 0.25m). Fill [108] light to mid brownish grey, moderately compact, silty sand with occasional small angular gravel and occasional charcoal flecks, bulk sampled <30>.

Structure B

Structure B consisted of four posts (**F.37**, **F.38**, **F.39** and **F.40**) in a small quadrilateral configuration 1.75m by 1.75m at maximum length with a maximum internal distance of 1m between posts. The posts were evenly spaced and all circular in plan between 0.32m-0.42m in diameter and between 0.07m-0.18m deep containing single fills and no material dating evidence (see figure 7).

F.37 Posthole

Cut [83] circular in plan with shallow top break of slope, shallow sides and a flattish base (length 0.29m; width 0.29m; depth 0.1m). Fill [82] mid to dark brownish grey soft sandy silt with occasional stone inclusions, bulk sampled <21>.

F.38 Posthole

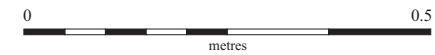
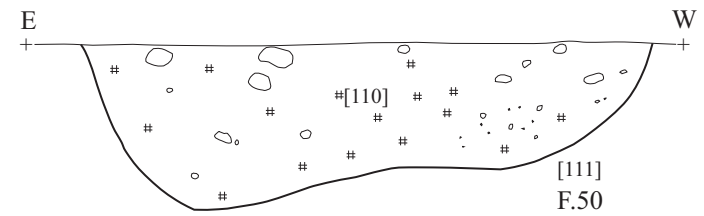
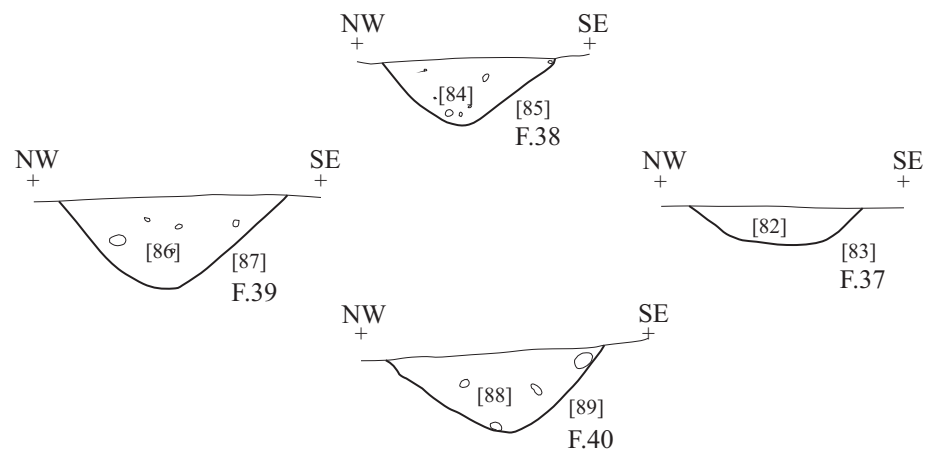


Figure 7. Structure B and Pit F.50.

Cut [85] circular in plan with a moderate top break of slope, moderately steep straight sides and a sharply concave base (length 0.28m; width 0.28m; depth 0.11m). Fill [84] mid brownish grey soft sandy silt with occasional stone inclusions, bulk sampled <22>.

F.39 Posthole

Cut [87] circular in plan with a moderately sharp top break of slope, moderately steep straight sides and a concave base (length 0.4m; width 0.4m; depth 0.16m). Fill [86] mid brownish grey soft sandy silt with occasional stone inclusions, bulk sampled <23>.

F.40 Posthole

Cut [89] circular in plan with a moderately sharp top break of slope, moderately steep slightly concave sides and a concave base (length 0.37m; width 0.37m; depth 0.14m). Fill [88] mid brownish grey soft sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions, bulk sampled <24>.

Outlying Postholes

Six postholes in three pairs were excavated with no obvious arrangement or attachment to Structures A or B. Postholes **F.41** and **F.42** were sub-circular in plan, between 0.57m-0.66m in length and 0.17m-0.33m deep with one sloping side leading to a sloping base. Both features contained Late Bronze Age pottery suggesting a date contemporary with the structures. Postholes **F.45** and **F.46** were between 0.36m-0.41m wide and 0.1-0.21m deep, one of which contained Late Bronze Age pottery. Postholes **F.51** and **F.53** were both 0.3m wide and between 0.24m-0.3m deep, both with one sloping side leading to a sloping base. Three of the postholes contained worked flint typical of core reduction technology.

F.41 Posthole

Cut [91] sub-circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, near vertical western side, a moderately steep slightly concave stepped to steep eastern side (length 0.57m; width 0.52m; depth 0.33m). Fill [90] mid brownish grey moderately compact silty sand with occasional inclusions of angular and sub-angular gravel and occasional charcoal flecks, contained Late Bronze Age pottery and worked flint, bulk sampled <25>.

F.42 Posthole

Cut [93] sub-circular in plan with a moderately sharp top break of slope, moderately steep concave sides, and a slightly concave base (length 0.66m; width 0.63m; depth 0.17m). Fill [92] light to mid greyish brown, moderately compact sandy silt with occasional gravel inclusions and rare small charcoal flecks, contained Late Bronze Age pottery and worked flint bulk sampled <26>.

F.45 Posthole

Cut [99] sub-circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, steep slightly concave sides and a concave base (length 0.36m; width 0.36m; depth 0.21m). Fill [98] mid to light greyish brown, moderately loose, silty sand with occasional small angular and sub-angular gravel and occasional charcoal flecks, contained Late Bronze Age pottery and worked flint, bulk sampled <27>.

F.46 Posthole

Cut [101] circular in plan with a moderately shallow top break of slope, shallow concave sides and a gently concave base (length 0.41m; width 0.38m; depth 0.1m). Fill [100] light to mid greyish brown, moderately compact, silty sand with occasional small angular gravel and rare charcoal flecks, bulk sampled <28>.

F.51 Posthole

Cut [113] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, steep to near vertical sides, and a gently concave base (length 0.3m; width 0.3m; depth 0.24m). Fill [112] mid brownish grey, moderately compact slightly plastic, sandy silt with moderate small and medium poorly sorted sub-angular and sub-rounded flints and gravels and occasional small charcoal flecks with a diffuse basal boundary.

F.53 Posthole

Cut [115] sub-circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, steep near vertical sides and a sharply concave base (length 0.35m; width 0.3m; depth 0.3m). Two fills [116] pale to mid yellowish grey, moderately compacted sandy silt with occasional small charcoal flecks and rare to occasional grit and gravel inclusions with a diffuse basal boundary; [117] mid grey, moderately compacted slightly sticky sandy silt with occasional to moderate charcoal flecks and small and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded gravels, bulk sampled <33>.

Pits

Five pits were excavated within the open area one of which (**F.52**) had no relationship with either of the identified structures but truncated postholes **F.51** and **F.53**. The remaining four pits were loosely associated with Structure A, all of which contained Late Bronze Age pottery and two contained worked flint consistent with core reduction technology. **F.23** and **F.50** were located inside the structure and contained large amounts of charcoal and burnt material suggestive of domestic activity. **F.50** was wide, shallow and flat and contained a particularly charcoal rich fill and red deer teeth, possibly being a former fire pit. Assuming that the entrance to the structure was situated to the southeast (as suggested in figure 6), pit **F.44** would have lain just inside the opening. This feature also contained faunal evidence (mammal skull fragment) suggestive of domestic activity. Pit **F.35** (a small sub-circular feature) was situated just outside, immediately north of Structure A and contained finds indicative of domestic activity (over 80 percent of the animal bone recovered from the site including burnt fragments).

F.23 Pit

Cut [49] oval in plan with sharp top break of slope, gradual slightly concave sides and a flat base (length 0.68m; width 0.64m; depth 0.17m). Two fills [47] dark greyish brown, moderately loose sandy silt mottled with patches of light brownish yellow silty sand with occasional inclusions of angular gravel, frequent charcoal flecks, 7 worked flints and Late Bronze Age pottery; [48] light to mid greyish brown with moderately firm sandy silt with occasional angular gravel inclusions, small fragments of burnt stone and moderate charcoal flecks. Bulk sampled <7>.

F.35 Pit

Cut [79] sub-circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, an almost vertical north-western side, a moderately steep south-eastern side and a base sloping towards the north-west (length 0.6m; 0.5m; depth 0.23m). Fill [78] mid to dark brownish grey, moderately compact sandy silt with occasional inclusions of angular and sub-angular gravel, moderate charcoal flecks and occasional flecks of cremated bone, contained animal bone, Late Bronze Age pottery and worked flint, bulk sampled <17>.

F.44 Pit

Cut [97] sub-oval in plan with a sharp top break of slope, steep slightly concave sides and a concave base (length 1.1m; width 0.58m; depth 0.52m). Fill [96] mid brownish grey, soft, fine sandy silt with rare to occasional small stone inclusions, contained Late Bronze Age pottery and animal bone, bulk sampled <18>.

F.50 Pit

Cut [111] circular in plan with a sharp top break of slope, a near vertical eastern side, a steep slightly concave western side and an irregular base (length 1.05m; width 0.96m; depth 0.3m).

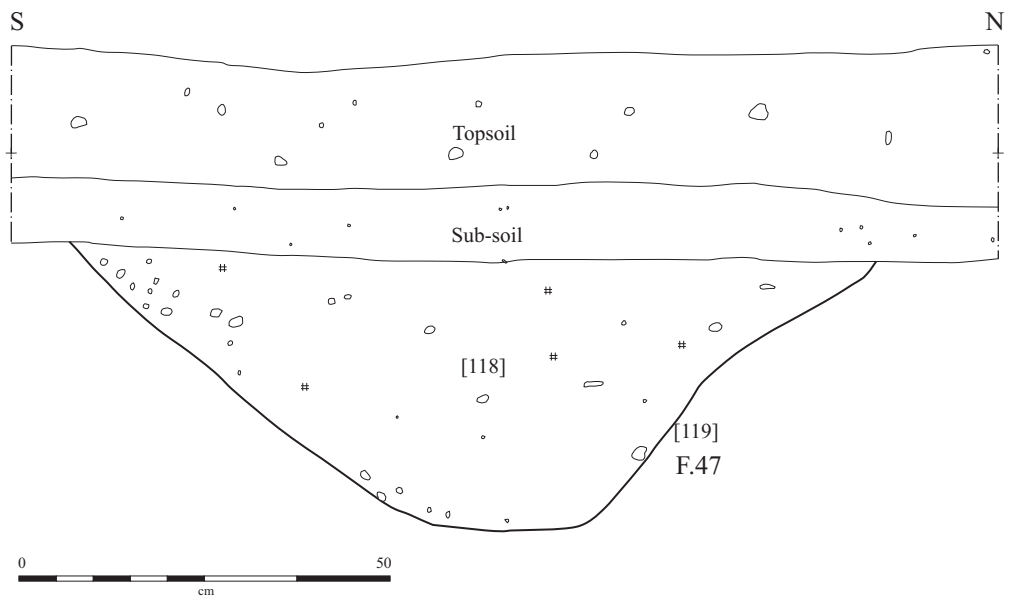


Figure 8. Photo and Section of Iron Age Ditch F.47.

Fill [110] dark brownish grey, moderately compact, sandy silt with frequent small sub-rounded gravel, moderate small and medium burnt stone and frequent dark black charcoal rich patches, contained Late Bronze Age pottery, worked flint and animal bone, bulk sampled <32>.

F.52 Pit

Cut [114] elongated sub-oval in plan with a moderate top break of slope, steep sides and a sharply concave base (length 0.85m; width 0.45m; depth 0.38m). Two fills [116] pale to mid yellowish grey, moderately compacted sandy silt with occasional small charcoal flecks and rare to occasional grit and gravel inclusions with a diffuse basal boundary; [117] mid grey, moderately compacted slightly sticky sandy silt with occasional to moderate charcoal flecks and small and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded gravels, bulk sampled <33>.

Ditches

Three slots were excavated through curvilinear ditch **F.47** which ran east-west and to the north of Structures A and B. This ditch curved to face southeast-northwest and continued outside the PDA at both ends. The ditch varied in size along its length, being between 1.1m and 1.65m wide and between 0.35m-0.6m deep. The feature contained only one homogenous fill which was difficult to determine from surrounding natural geology. The overall profile remained the same along the ditch length (see figure 8). One small fragment of Middle Iron Age comb-incised pottery was obtained from within the fill.

F.47 Ditch

Cut [103] linear with a sharp top break of slope, a steep northern side, a moderately steep southern side convex in places and a concave base (length 1m excavated; width 1.33m; depth 0.3m). Fill [102] light brownish grey, moderately compact, silty sand with moderate angular and sub-angular gravel and rare charcoal flecks, bulk sampled <31>.

Cut [105] linear with a sharp top break of slope, steep slightly concave sides, and a concave base (length 1m excavated; width 1.1m; depth 0.38m). Fill [104] light brownish grey, moderately compact, silty sand with moderate inclusions of angular and sub-angular gravel and rare charcoal flecks, contained middle Iron Age pottery.

Cut [119] linear with a sharp top break of slope, steep sides, slightly convex to the north and a concave base (length 1m excavated; width 1.63m; depth 0.55m). Fill [118] mid yellowish greyish brown, moderately soft silty sand with rare to occasional small rounded and sub-angular mixed stones and rare charcoal inclusions.

Discussion

The majority of the archaeology identified from the PDA was located within the open excavation in the form of two terminal Bronze Age posthole structures, a Middle Iron Age ditch and associated pits and postholes. Two later alignments of post-medieval field systems were also recognised within the evaluation trenches. One surface find from the Late Mesolithic/ Earlier Neolithic also hinted at earlier activity within the wider vicinity.

The Late Bronze Age activity was characterised by two posthole structures with associated pits and several outlying postholes most of which contained small sherds of abraded terminal Bronze Age pottery some of which were burnt. Structure B was a simple four post configuration whereas Structure A was more complex and revealed no consistency in size or form, and had no obvious entrance or distinct outer shape. This irregularity suggests the structure had been reworked/ rebuilt perhaps several times.

The burnt fills within the pits, the pottery, animal bone and the nature of the sherds (bowl jar) exhibit attributes of basic domestic activity. All of the poorly preserved/ weathered animal bone recovered from the site came from pits associated with Structure A. However there is such a small assemblage of bone that it is quantitatively inadequate to sustain propositions about animal usage on site, particularly when no evidence of butchery or pathology was recovered (*Rajkovača*, Appendix 5)

The analysis of environmental bulk samples from Structure A and nearby pits also revealed remains which were consistent with domestic activity through processing of hazelnut shells, emmer wheat and probably barley and spelt wheat (*Ballantyne*, Appendix 6). Interestingly, the density of plant and charred remains did indicate some spatial patterning of use within the structure, including supporting evidence that the entrance was to be found on the southeast side. Whilst the unclear phasing of construction makes it difficult to relate spatial patterning to individual phases of activity, these results are nevertheless important and comparative with other round house structures from the same period (see *Ballantyne 2000*, *Jones 2006*).

The lack of any other substantial features in the vicinity and the superficial nature of the structure would lead to the assumption that it was occupied for a short time. It is also possible that these structures represent the beginnings of a small scale inland settlement or that they were sitting on the edge of a settlement outside the limitations of the PDA. The palaeoenvironmental evidence is again useful here, with molluscan remains suggesting that the area around Structure A was at times wet or flooded, perhaps on a seasonal basis. This finding, which in some way supports the traditional view of these areas as ‘marginal’ or ‘difficult’ land, is a clear contradiction to the archaeological evidence. In this case, whilst the land may not have been the most favourable all year round, the results of the excavation demonstrate that it was still occupied and many areas were probably also under arable cultivation.

An inland terminal Bronze Age settlement with parallels to Park Farm, was excavated at Striplands Farm, West Longstanton (*Patten & Evans 2005*) where a vast number of postholes were recorded which possibly represented several structures. Structural identification was difficult (as it is here at Park Farm) and the ‘out of character’ orientation of one of the roundhouses, the pottery and animal bone recovered suggested that the activity at Striplands may not have been the norm and was potentially more representative of short-term occupation.

Previous records of prehistoric remains within the close vicinity of the PDA other than that of the Iron Age is limited, the majority of previous archaeological evidence comes in the form of Roman and Iron Age settlements. The closest evidence of Bronze Age activity comes from the parish of Milton, identified during evaluations and excavations carried out between 1994 and 1998. The Middle Bronze Age features discovered were consistent with small scale settlement possibly representing a culture of shifting, seasonal settlements; robust structures and ancillary buildings such as a small roundhouse associated with a four-post structure (*Conner 1999*). This early activity was ephemeral with evidence of the Later Iron age being much stronger. Late Bronze Age evidence in the form of pottery sherds was identified at an archaeological evaluation (*Bray & Reynolds 1997*), and Early Bronze Age activity in the form of a single beaker vessel and associated pit cluster (*Lucas 1998*), however this does not

point to sustained occupation in the Bronze Age as an associated Late Bronze Age settlement is absent from the site. Further northeast at the Waste Management centre, Ely Road, Waterbeach evidence of the Bronze Age is limited to findspots (Gibson 1999), an undated posthole structure presumed to be prehistoric (Cooper 2004) and three features containing Late Bronze Age pottery presumed to be part of a settlement (Masser 2000).

The low density of settlement within the area of the PDA may be explained by the lack of a nearby inland water supply which would have been crucial both for short- and long term occupation. The heavy clay soils on this terrace (north of Cambridge) have traditionally been thought of as marginal during the prehistoric period (Hatton 2006) and thought to be too heavy for prehistoric tools therefore largely unworkable and unsuitable for settlement. This land has therefore been thought of as being wooded and un-attractive for long-term settlement. However, excavations at Butt Lane, Milton and the evidence here at Park Farm would suggest that there is at least a short term/ seasonal flux settlement activity in the area. It is possible that large pits and watering holes may lie just outside the PDA which would have provided adequate water supplies for occupation similar to that found at Striplands Farm. An absence of evidence in close proximity to the PDA (rather than a presumed absence of settlement) may be one reason for the low density of features on this small site.

The Iron Age period was represented by one curvilinear ditch which bisects the site. Previous works in the nearby parishes of Histon, Milton and Waterbeach have all demonstrated substantial evidence of Iron Age settlement. At Waterbeach (Cooper 1994), a similar curvilinear ditch with pale fills and very little cultural material was identified. In 1990 and 2002 evaluation trenches and test pits were excavated on land east of the already identified large Iron Age ringwork at Arbury Camp, Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge. This work revealed an absence of occupation either within or surrounding the outside of the ringwork (Evans 1991 and Evans & Knight 2002). The lack of any pits or further ditches surrounding the curvilinear ditch suggest the Iron Age ditch was not enclosing an occupation area but may instead be a boundary away from a possible (as yet un-identified) activity/ occupation area. It is possible that the rectilinear and enclosure cropmarks identified in the surrounding area of the PDA (CHER 05187) and (CHER 09209) previously thought to be Roman are in fact Iron Age in date and may be part of the same settlement placing the curvilinear in the centre of the activity. However this can only be inferred as no excavations have been carried out on any of the cropmarks.

Peripheral evidence for activity in the Roman period was found in the form of three residual sherds of 2nd-4th century greyware pottery from the field surface and from within a post-medieval furrow. This is not indicative of a settlement but is likely evidence of Roman agricultural activity in the vicinity of the PDA.

Evidence of the medieval and post-medieval farming landscape was present in the form of three alignments (north-south, east-west, and northeast-southwest), of furrows, brush drains and land drains forming two alignments of fields (see figure 2). It was evident that the modern field drains and plough scars respected the previously established medieval and post-medieval fields.

Conclusion

The evaluation and excavation has added to the limited knowledge of Bronze Age activity in the parishes just north of Cambridge. Whilst covering a fairly small area, the identified activity at the very least implies a seasonal/ flux Bronze Age settlement in the area and demonstrates that these areas can no longer be considered 'sterile' during later prehistory.

Appendix 1: Summary of Evaluation Trenches

Trench	Co-ordinates	Length (m)	Area (m ²)	Depth (m)	Alluvium	Archaeology
1	543445.24/ 263215.43 543469.77/ 263199.46	29	51.56	NW 0.82 – SE 0.72	Yes	No
2	543460.53/ 263204.32 543445.35/ 263181.18	28	48.77	NE 0.83 – SW 0.9	Yes	No
3	543476.48/ 263182.20 543428.14/ 263107.97	89	158.21	NE 0.72 – SW 0.53	Yes	Yes
4	543438.25/ 236167.83 543458.08/ 263155.82	23	42.13	NW 0.64 – SE 0.64	Yes	No
5	543418.05/ 263203.14 543377.12/ 263139.25	76	139.2	NE 0.58 – SW 0.44	No	Yes
6	543394.44/ 263164.43 543410.72/ 263154.08	20	36.6	NW 0.48 – SE 0.63	No	Yes
7	543323.57/ 263140.39 543405.90/ 263121.21	33	58.07	NW 0.47 – SE 0.57	No	Yes
8	543323.57/ 263061.77 543269.78/ 262979.05	99	176.44	NE 0.45 – SW 0.55	Yes	Yes
box trench 8			28.75			
9	543297.27/ 263019.58 543320.75/ 263004.01	28	51.55	NW 0.45 – SE 0.45	No	Yes
10	543333.28/ 263060.60 543375.45/ 263133.94	50	89.11	NW 0.51 – SE 0.49	No	Yes
box trench 10			62.38			
11	543355.05/ 263045.87 543343.04/ 263027.24	22	40.66	NE 0.49 – SW 0.43	No	No
12	543312.24/ 262963.48 543335.99/ 262948.28	28	51.74	NW 0.51 – SE 0.41	No	Yes
13	543336.01/ 262977.85 543355.90/ 262965.66	23	42.29	NW 0.2 – SE 0.5	No	No
14	543387.36/ 263013.79 543347.88/ 262951.37	74	133.35	NE 0.4 – SW 0.35	No	Yes
15	NOT EXCAVATED					
16	543414.72/ 263020.86 543366.51/ 262946.05	89	159.45	NE 0.6 – SW 0.6	Yes	Yes
17	NOT EXCAVATED					
18	543304.02/ 262949.07 543326.94/ 262934.24	28	42.2	NW 0.45 – SE 0.35	No	Yes
19	543275.61/ 262986.39 543283.77/ 262981.21	10	14.24	NW 0.49 – SE 0.43	No	No

Table 1: Summary of Evaluation Trenches

Appendix 2: Prehistoric Pottery (Mark Knight)

The assemblage comprised 87 pieces of prehistoric pottery weighing 455g. The majority of the sherds were small (MSW 5.2g) and partially abraded. Some of the sherds appeared to have been burnt and most of the sherds were hard and abrasive. The abrasive character of the sherds was enhanced by the exposed burnt flint inclusions. A single everted rim fragment from F.50 and an angular neck sherd (F.43) represented the only feature sherds from the whole assemblage whilst only one piece was decorated (F.47). The everted rim belonged to a smallish ovoid-shaped bowl or jar with a diameter of about 15cm and probably of Late Bronze Age date. It shared the same flint-rich fabric as multiple plain body sherds from Features 9, 10, 23, 29, 31, 32, 33, 35, 41, 42, 44 and 50. Some of the body sherds were large (6 x 6 cm) and almost flat suggesting that they once belonged to largish, straight-sided vessels. Potsherds not made of the flint rich fabric included the angular neck fragment (hard with common small quartz and flint) from F.43, a grog-rich lump from F.45 and a sand-rich body sherd found on the surface of Trench 8/9. As with the flint-rich pieces the neck angle could also be Late Bronze Age. An Iron Age sherd was produced by F.47. It was thin-walled and had a ‘sandwiched’ cross-section made up of a dark core between thin, pale brown sandy slips. The external surface of the sherd retained feint traces of comb-incised lines.

Feature	Context	Number	Weight (g)
9	17	6	2
10	20	2	2
23	48	4	14
29	60	13	60
31	64	5	23
32	66	8	63
33	68	1	2
	Surface	2	5
35	78	6	38
41	90	1	3
42	92	2	5
43	94	2	5
44	96	7	32
45	98	1	5
47	104	1	1
50	110	26	195
<i>17</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>455</i>

Table 2: Prehistoric Pottery Assemblage Breakdown

Appendix 3: Roman pottery (Katie Anderson)

Three sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the site. Two refitting, sandy greyware sherds, weighing 7g were collected from [01] Feature 1, dating 2nd-4th century AD. A further sandy greyware sherd was recovered from the surface, similar in composition to the two recovered from Feature 1, weighing 8g. This sherd also dates to 2nd-4th century AD. Very little can be said about the pottery, except that the fabrics are probably locally made. The very small quantity of pottery recovered suggests this site was outside of a Roman settlement.

Appendix 4: Lithics (Emma Beadsmoore)

A total of 24 (<81g) flints were recovered from the site; one flint is burnt, the remaining material is unburnt and worked. The majority of the flints were recovered from features, whilst three were collected as surface finds. The material is listed by feature and type in Table 3

Feature	Type					totals
	chip/chunk	secondary flake	tertiary flake	tertiary blade	miscellaneous retouched flake	
23	2	3	1		1	7
28		2	1			3
30		1				1
35	2	1	1			4
41		1				1
42		2				2
43	1		1			2
45		1				1
surface		1	1	1		3
Sub totals	5	12	5	1	1	24

Table 3: Flint Types and Quantities

The limited quantity of flint recovered from the site comprises largely unretouched flakes and flint working waste. The flints are the products of expedient flake production/core reduction strategies, strategies that were prevalent during the Bronze Age. The flint in the features is therefore potentially broadly contemporary with the features. Two of the three flints collected from the surface of the site are also expediently manufactured potentially Bronze Age waste flakes, whilst the third is a Late Mesolithic/earlier Neolithic blade.

feature	context	raw mat	type	burnt	broken	red	plat	ham	scar dir	term	notes	date	weight g
23	47	1	1	2		2							1
23	47	1	2	2		3							1
23	47	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	3	5	irregular impact point		3
23	47	1	3	2	1	2	2	3	3	5	irregular		2
23	47	1	3	2	2	2	5	2	3	1	quite thin, but irregular scars		2
23	47	1	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	bad angle		1
23	47	1	45	2	1	3	11	3	3	5	blade that rejuvenated awkward scars on a blade core, heavily retouched and/or damaged	10	4
28	58	1	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	5	bad angle, quite smooth scars		8
28	58	1	3	2	2	2	5	1	3	5			2
28	58	1	3	2	2	3	2	1	3	5	irregular		1
30	62	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	3	5	thick plat, buckled bulb		11
35	78	1	1	1		2							<1
35	78	1	1	2		3							<1
35	78	1	3	2	2	3	1	3	1	1			<1
35	78	1	3	2	2	2	5	3	3	1	bad angle		6
41	90	1	3	2	2	2	5	1	3	1			<1
42	92	1	3	2	1	2	5	3	3	5	chunky, irregular		2
42	92	1	3	2	2	2	5	3	3	5	bad angle, irregular		5
43	94	1	2	2		2							19
43	94	1	3	2	2	3	2	1	3	3	irregular		3
45	98	1	3	2	2	2	2	3	1	1			<1
surface	surface	1	3	2	2	3	2	3		3			2
surface	surface	1	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	irregular		2
surface	surface	1	4	2	2	3	1	2	1	1	good angle, neatly isolated plat, parallel scars	6//8	1

Table 4: Detailed Analysis of Flint

Appendix 5: Animal Bone (Vida Rajkovača)

Introduction

A small assemblage of animal bone was recovered from the Park Farm Impington site during an evaluation and excavation carried out in 2008 dated to Late Bronze Age. The assemblage numbered 27 fragments, 12 of which were identifiable to element and only a further 3 identified to species. The assemblage was identified using CAU reference collection, Schmid (1972) and Hillson (1999).

Preservation

Of four contexts analysed, three demonstrated quite poor and one showed moderate preservation. This equates to a total number of 26 fragments quite poorly preserved, showing some signs of bone damage or weathering compared to only one moderately preserved fragment.

Results

Of 27 fragments recorded, only three were possible to assign to species (Table 5.). Animal bones recovered were only found in four features (F. 35, 43, 44, 50), three of which were pits and one was a posthole. Feature 35 yielded 21 bone fragments: eight unidentified medium (ovicaprid-sized) mammal limb bone and teeth fragments and 13 unidentified fragments. One ovicaprid metapodial bone was recovered in the feature 43. F. 44 produced one unidentified medium mammal fragmented skull. Finally, F. 50 yielded two red deer teeth fragments and two unidentified fragments. The low percentage of fragments identifiable to species is due in part to the relatively high numbers of fragmented limb bones which could only be assigned to a size category (Medium Mammal). No pathology, butchering or gnawing marks were observed.

Species	NISP	MNI
Red deer	2	1
Ovicaprid	1	1
UUM	15	-
UMM	9	-

Table 5: Animal Species Frequency by NISP (Number of Identifiable Specimens) and MNI (Minimum Number of Individuals)

Key: UMM & ULM = Unidentified Medium and Large Mammal / UUM = Unidentified Fragment.

This was an impoverished assemblage in terms of species representation and it is quantitatively inadequate to sustain propositions about animal use on the site.

Appendix 6: Environmental Samples

The Environmental Bulk Samples from Park Farm, Impington (PFI 08)

Rachel Ballantyne

Methodology

Fifteen samples were submitted for analysis; twelve from Structure A (a probable Bronze Age roundhouse), one from Structure B (an associated four-post structure), one from nearby posthole F.41, and one from Iron Age ditch F.47.

All samples were flotation-sieved by Dan Britton using a modified version of the Siraf tank (Williams 1973) at Cambridge Archaeological Unit. Both flots (300µm) and heavy residues (>1mm) were dried prior to sorting by the author. Flots and 1–4mm heavy residue have been sorted using a low-power binocular microscope (Leica MS5) with >4mm residue sorted by eye, and identifications made using the reference collections of the Pitt-Rivers Laboratory for Bioarchaeology, Department of Archaeology, University of Cambridge. Taxonomic references in this report follow Stace (1997) for plants and Beedham (1972) for molluscs. Raw data is presented in Table 1 at the end.

Preservation

Low densities of charred plant remains are present widely, but their quality is poor; cereal grains are both puffed from charring, and fragmented and abraded from their burial environment. Numerous other artefacts are present, and are also fragmented and abraded: burnt clay/pottery, burnt and unburnt bone, worked flint and burnt flint. The mixed and fragmented composition of the samples indicates that these remains are displaced from their original charring context, as is characteristic of occupation debris.

Very low amounts of untransformed, intrusive, roots and seeds are present in all samples. The plant species are characteristic of disturbed, nutrient-enriched soils and are probably artefacts of the recent use of the area, including its excavation. There is no indication of once-waterlogged contexts from the plant remains; however the molluscs are characteristic of damp or wet soils. The local environment of the roundhouse thus appears to have been seasonally wet, possibly with localised pools of water or flooding.

Range of plant taxa

The charred plant assemblage is dominated by cereal grains and hazelnut shell fragments (*Corylus avellana*). One chaff fragment indicates emmer wheat (*Triticum dicoccum*). The grains, which are less reliable for identification, are comparable to barley (*Hordeum vulgare sensu lato*), emmer wheat and spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*).

The range of economic species fits with the mid/late Bronze Age (Grieg 1991) and is similar to those from a late Bronze Age/Iron Age settlement at nearby Haddenham, on the Isle of Ely (Jones 2006). At Haddenham it was possible from the associated weed seeds to state that cereal cultivation was local. However at Park Farm, Impington, too

few wild seeds are present to make any similar assertion. The wild seed taxa are all characteristic of disturbed soils, such as redshank (*Persicaria maculosa*) and knotgrass (*Polygonum arviculare*), and so are probable weeds of the cereal crop.

Range of mollusc taxa

Shells are present in seven samples from Structure A: pits F.23, F.35, F.44 and postholes F.9, F.25, F.31 and F.43. The richest remains are from posthole F.9 and pit F.23, upon which the following discussion is based (other samples have 2 or 3 shells from the same range of taxa).

The most abundant species are *Valvata cristata*, *Lymnaea truncatula* and *Anisus leucostoma*, which are associated with shallow vegetated water, and can tolerate periods of drying. Two less frequent species are terrestrial, rather than semi-aquatic, and favour damp to wet vegetation: *Carychium tridentatum/minimum*, and *Vertigo antivertigo*. Finally, *Trichia hispida*, is a common species with no specific habitat preferences. Together, the shells indicate that the area around Structure A was at times wet to flooded, probably on a seasonal basis. The shells are a component of the occupation debris re-deposited into the pit and posthole fills, so these damp conditions may be contemporary with, or post-date, use of the structure.

Distribution patterning of occupation debris

Patterning in the distribution of charred plant remains in the roundhouse is immediately apparent, despite the intermittent distribution of samples. The richest remains are from postholes F.31 and F.33 and pit F.44, which are all to the south-east where an entranceway might be expected (c.f. Barrett 1997). Very low amounts of charred plant remains are more widely distributed, and are less easily interpreted. The richest artefactual remains at Park Farm – of burnt and unburnt bone, worked flint, burnt flint and fired clay/pottery – occur in pits F.23, F.35 and F.50.

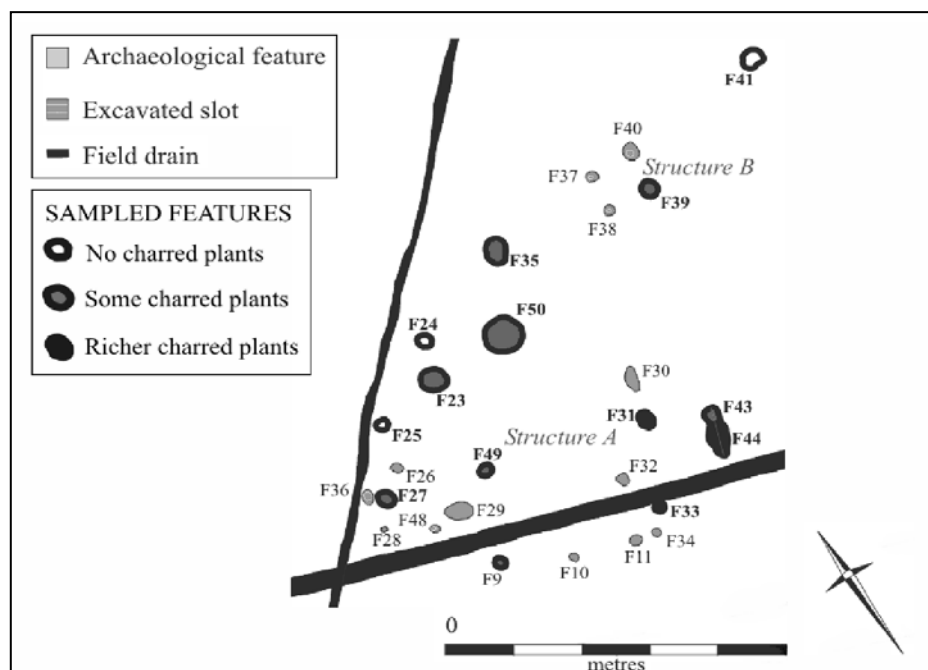


Figure 1: Distribution of charred plant remains from sampled contexts

Detailed examination of charred plant and other artefact distributions in a roundhouse at Whittlesey Brick Pits (Ballantyne 2000) illustrated that richer occupation debris occurred in the entranceway and internal pits. Detailed quantification and spatial analysis is not attempted for this assessment report, but the similarities between the Park Farm and this earlier study are compelling and would benefit from further study.

Conclusions

The assemblage reveals occupation debris associated with the use of a Bronze Age roundhouse upon seasonally wet land. The charred plant remains are dominated by hazelnut shells and grains of wheat and barley, suggesting cooking waste; the very limited chaff and wild seeds further support this interpretation. The inhabitants relied upon both farmed and gathered plant foods, although the limited wild seeds have precluded any interpretation about arable ecology or location.

The assemblage provides an important addition to our picture of middle to later Bronze Age economy and living environments upon the southern fen-edge. The results are comparable, as noted earlier, to assemblages from Haddenham (Jones 2000) and Whittlesey Brick Pits (Ballantyne 2000).

Recommendations

The fifteen samples analysed for this report are fully recorded and quantified, so no further work is required. However, a further sixteen samples from the Bronze Age features, including all the other postholes in Structures A and B, are as yet unprocessed and could be processed should further work be required.

Sample number		<2>	<6>	<7>	<8>	<11>	<14>	<16>	<17>	<18>	<20>	<23>	<25>	<30>	<31>	<32>
Context number		[18]	[50]	[47/48]	[52]	[56]	[68]	[64]	[78]	[96]	[94]	[86]	[9]	[108]	[102]	[110]
Feature number		F.9	F.24	F.23	F.25	F.27	F.33	F.31	F.35	F.44	F.43	F.39	F.41	F.49	F.47	F.50
Feature type		posthole	posthole	pit	pit	posthole	posthole	posthole	pit	pit	posthole	posthole	posthole	posthole	ditch	pit
Period		Bronze Age	Bronze Age	Bronze Age	Bronze Age	Bronze Age	Bronze Age	Bronze Age	Bronze Age	Bronze Age	Bronze Age	Bronze Age	Bronze Age	Bronze Age	Iron Age	Bronze Age
Sample volume/ litres		4 L.	11 L.	15 L.	4 L.	8 L.	6 L.	5 L.	8 L.	9 L.	10 L.	15 L.	15 L.	15 L.	15 L.	15 L.
Fraction of flots sorted		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Latin Name	English Name / Mollusc habitat															
CEREAL GRAINS																
<i>Hordeum vulgare sensu lato</i> grain	domesticated barley grain	1					1					1				
<i>Triticum c.f. dicoccum</i> Schübl. grain	emmer wheat grain						1									
<i>Triticum c.f. spelta</i> L. grain	spelt wheat grain							1		1						
<i>Triticum dicoccum/spelta</i> grain	spelt/emmer wheat grain							1								
<i>Triticum</i> sp. grain	wheat grain				1	1	1	1	1			1		1		
<i>Hordeum/Triticum</i> sp. grain	barley or wheat grain								1							2
<i>Avena</i> sp. grain	wild or domesticated oat grain				1	1										
cereal indet. grain						1							1			
CEREAL CHAFF																
<i>Triticum dicoccum</i> Schübl. glume base	emmer wheat chaff									1						
<i>Triticum</i> sp. glume base	hulled wheat chaff						1		1							
NON-CEREALS																
<i>Corylus avellana</i> L. kernel	hazelnut kernel											1				
<i>Corylus avellana</i> L. nutshell	hazelnut shell fragment			++				-	-	-	-			-		+
small Caryophyllaceae indet. (<1mm)	small Pink Family seed					1		1								
<i>Persicaria maculosa</i> Gray	redshank							2			1					
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> L.	knotgrass						1	1								
<i>Rumex sanguineus/conglomeratus/obstusifolius</i>	small-seeded dock									1						
medium <i>Vicia/Lathyrus/Pisum</i> sp. (3-4mm)	vetch/wild pea/pea									1						
<i>Phleum pratense</i> L.	timothy		1													
small seed indet. (<3mm)								1								
CHARCOAL																
overall volume of charcoal/ millilitres		< 1 ml.	1 ml.	8 ml.	1 ml.	< 1 ml.	1 ml.	3 ml.	4 ml.	2 ml.	1 ml.	< 1 ml.	< 1 ml.	1 ml.	< 1 ml.	15 ml.
large charcoal (>4mm)			+	++	+	-	+	+	++	+	-			-	-	++
medium charcoal (2-4mm)		-	+	++	++	+	+	++	++	++	++	+	-	++	+	+++
small charcoal (<2mm)		+	++	+++	+++	++	++	+++	+++	+++	+++	++	+	+++	++	+++
- large <i>Quercus</i> sp. charcoal	oak wood															
- parenchymous tissue	unidentifiable starch-rich tissue			-								-	-			
- woody stems																
fly ash	silica ash concretion			-	-			-	-							-
charred concretion					-										-	+
INTRUSIVE BIOLOGICAL ITEMS																
<i>Triticum aestivum/turgidum</i> TYPE glumes	free-threshing wheat chaff															
<i>Betula pendula</i> Roth	silver birch															
<i>Chenopodium album</i> L.	fat-hen	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> L.	knotgrass		+										-	-	-	
<i>Fallopia convolvulus</i> (L.) A. Löve	black-bindweed															
<i>Solanum nigrum</i> L.	black nightshade															
<i>Carduus/Cirsium</i> sp.	thistle															
intrusive roots		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	++	+	+	+
MOLLUSCS																
<i>Valvata cristata</i> (Müller)	slow, muddy water with vegetation	5		10					1							
<i>Lymnaea truncatula</i> (Müller)	shallow waters & flooded pastures	1		4				2								
<i>Anisus leucostoma</i> Millet	seasonal ponds and ditches	3		5				1	1	1						
small Planorbidae indet.	generally overgrown still water	1														
<i>Carychium c.f. minimum</i> (Müller)	well vegetated, wet soils			4												
<i>Carychium tridentatum</i> (Risso)/ <i>minimum</i> (Müller)	generally well vegetated; wet/damp	7		1							1					
<i>Vertigo antivertigo</i> (Draparnaud)	wet places; marshes, meadows			2												
<i>Vertigo/Pupilla</i> sp.		1		2												
<i>Trichia hispida</i> (L.) TYPE	catholic	1		1												
OTHER ARTEFACTS > 1mm (from flots and residues)																
burnt bone fragments		-	-	-		- rodent		-	++	+	-	-		-	+	+
bone fragments				-				-	++		+					+
worked flint		+	-	+		-		-	-						+	
burnt flint		-		++		+		+	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	++
burnt stone				++												++
fired clay/ pottery		-	-	+		-	-	+	++	+	+		+	++	+	+

Table 1: Raw data from the environmental bulk samples at Park Farm, Impington (PBI08)

KEY: - 1 or 2 items, + less than 10 items, ++ 10 to 50 items, +++ greater than 50 items

Acknowledgements

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The site was excavated and interpreted by Ben Davenport, Laura James, Kerry Murrell, Ricky Patten, Ilanith Pongolini Virginia Vargo and Andrew Wheelan . The site was surveyed by Donald Horne and Jane Matthews and digitized and illustrated by Bryan Crossan. Finds were washed and catalogued by Jason Hawkes and environmental samples were processed by Dan Britton. The fieldwork and post-excavation was managed by Robin Standing.

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OASIS ID: cambridg3-43089

Project details

Project name N.I.A.B Research Centre, Park Farm, Impington: An Evaluation and Excavation

Short description of the project An archaeological evaluation and subsequent excavation was carried out at Park Farm, Villa Road, Cambridgeshire (centred TL 4348 6310) by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit between 14th February and 25th March 2008. The work was undertaken on behalf of the National Institute of Agricultural Botany in advance of the redevelopment of a field station and laboratory. A total area of 1,426m² was examined in seventeen trial trenches, followed by a small open area excavation and three further trenches totalling 796 m². The evaluation and excavation revealed Late Bronze Age activity in the form of a four post structure and an eighteen post sub-circular structure, indicative of small scale or seasonal flux occupation. Later agricultural activity was indicated by a Middle Iron Age curvilinear ditch and evidence of two alignments of post-medieval fields. The results of the excavation contradict the traditional opinion that the Gault clay area north of Cambridge was not suitable for such prehistoric settlement, and suggests that the 'blank' in the archaeological record reflects an absence of evidence due to more limited fieldwork in these areas.

Project dates Start: 14-02-2008 End: 25-03-2008

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes ECB 2864 - HER event no.

Any associated project reference codes PFI08 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Monument type POSTHOLE STRUCTURE Bronze Age

Monument type DITCH Iron Age

Significant Finds	POTTERY Bronze Age
Significant Finds	FLINT Bronze Age
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches','Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Rural commercial
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

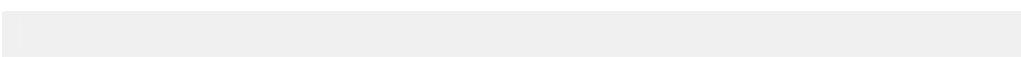
Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE IMPINGTON N.I.A.B. Headquarters, Park Farm
Postcode	CB24 9NZ
Study area	2222.97 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 4348 6310 52.2469294353 0.101909767877 52 14 48 N 000 06 06 E Point
Height OD	Min: 11.32m Max: 14.12m

Project creators

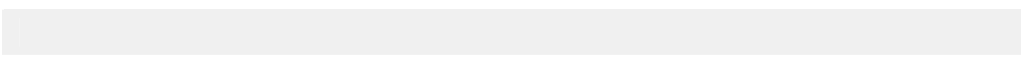
Name of Organisation	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Robin Standring
Project director/manager	Robin Standring

Project supervisor	Kerry Murrell
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	National Institute of Agricultural Botany



Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Physical Archive ID	PF108
Physical Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Environmental','Worked stone/lithics'
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Digital Archive ID	PF108
Digital Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Environmental','Survey','Worked stone/lithics'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Spreadsheets','Survey','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Paper Archive ID	PF108
Paper Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Environmental','Survey','Worked stone/lithics'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Map','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Survey','Unpublished Text'



Project
bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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