Eye Hall Farm, Horningsea

An Archaeological Evaluation



Katie Anderson



Eye Hall Farm, Horningsea, Cambridgeshire,

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Katie Anderson

With contributions David Hall and Vida Rajkovača

Illustrations by Bryan Crossan

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An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) Eye Hall Farm, Horningsea, Cambridgeshire (centred on TL 499636) between the 6^{th} and 8^{th} July 2010. The work was commissioned by Maple Arenas on behalf of Fiona Apthorp in advance of the proposed construction of a horse manage.

Two trenches were machined, totalling 44.35m in length. A series of ditches, primarily dating to the Medieval or post-Medieval period were identified, including two which formed a possible enclosure. A small quantity of Medieval pottery was recovered alongside a small assemblage of animal bone. Despite the location of the site, there was no evidence for Roman Pottery production, in connection with the Horningsea industry, with just two residual sherds of Roman pottery recovered.

INTRODUCTION

An Archaeological evaluation was carried out at Eye Hall Farm, Horningsea, Cambridgeshire (TL 499636) by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit between the 6th-8th July 2010, as a result of a planning application for the construction of a manege. The project was undertaken on behalf of Fiona Apthorp. The site code was EHH10.

Geology and Topography

The PDA covers an area of approximately 0.18 ha and is located at 7.5m AOD. The underlying geology is the West Melbury Marley Chalk Formation. The site is located approximately 500m to the west of the River Cam. The B1047 runs to the west of Eye Hall Farm. The PDA itself slopes in two directions, from east to west and north to south (see Fig 2). The difference in heights particularly north to south are likely to be a result of the earthwork located immediately north of the PDA (CHER 05459, see Fig 4).

Archaeological Background

A search of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) for findspots and sites within a 500m radius of the site was conducted. The results are listed below (see Table 1), with a summary for each period.

Prehistoric

There is limited evidence for Prehistoric activity within a 500m radius of the site, comprising two Iron Age coins (CHER 05546a and 11070) and a Bronze Age rapier and knives hoard (CHER 05423).

Roman

The site is located within a known, nationally important area of Romano-British pottery production, with several kilns having been excavated approximately 300m to the southeast of the PDA (SAM no.DCB363). The kilns produced predominately greyware vessels from the later 1st century AD to the early 4th century AD and formed part of the Horningsea pottery industry (Evans 1991, Walker 1911, McKenny Hughes 1904). The products are widely distributed across the region. Although no evidence of pottery production has been found within Eye Hall Farm itself, several scatters of pottery have been found very nearby (CHER 06372 and 06350 see Table 1). A Roman settlement was also identified in the area (CHER 05546).

Anglo Saxon

Evidence of Anglo Saxon activity in the vicinity of Eye Hall Farm was limited to findspots of a small number of coins and pottery sherds (CHER 10868). Further finds were encountered while dredging of the River Cam took place, comprising two Sword fragments, a broken spear head and parts of two shields (CHER 06335, 08092 and 05423a).

Medieval/post Medieval

Eye Hall is 16th century AD in date and is a listed building (LBS No. 50607) with what is described on recent 1:2500 OS Maps as a Medieval or Post-Medieval moat running along the northern boundary of the PDA. However, in the RCHM this earthwork is referred to as a garden boundary or ha-ha, dating to the early 19th century (RCHM County of Cambridge 1972 Vol.2: 73, see Fig 6). There is also a deserted Medieval and Post-Medieval settlement located near to Eye Hall Farm (CHER 05553, Oosthuizen 1985). Changes to the road networks around Eye Hall Farm saw the road linking Horningsea to Fen Ditton and Cambridge shift (see Fig 3). From the Middle Ages until the early 19th century, the northernmost section lay to the west of Eye Hall, but at inclosure in 1810 its route was shifted to the east of Eye Hall (Wareham & Wright 2002). The earlier layout of the road would have been located very near to the PDA.

Grid Ref	Period	Description	CHER
			05546,
TL 497 635	Romano-		05714,
TL 494 632	British	Romano-British pottery kilns, clay pit and settlement	05550
			05554,
		Deserted Medieval and post-Medieval settlement	05554a,
TL 498 636,		located near to Eye Hall. Both visible as earthworks. A	05553,
TL 499 634	Medieval	medieval/post-medieval moat.	05555
TL 50 64		Two sword fragments, a broken spear head, a shield	
		boss, a scabbard and a human skull dredged from the	
		River Cam and spearhead found in the Cam at	06335,
	Anglo-Saxon	Horningsea	08092
	Romano-		
TL 498 634	British	Large quantities of Romano-British Pottery	5551
		Fieldwalking and geophysical survey of land southwest	
		of the Roman pottery kilns. A rectangular enclosure	MCB
TL 495 633,	Romano-	was identified. Pottery, animal bone and oyster shells	17417,
TL 495 635	British	recovered.	08319
TL 496 640	Bronze Age	Bronze rapier and knives found in 1932	5423
		Eye Hall is 16th cent. with a Medieval or post-	
		Medieval moat. Antiquarian excavations where	
		conducted in the early 20th century. Listed Building	
TL 498 636	Post-Medieval	No. 50607	
		Iron umbo of Anglo Saxon shield, dredged from the	
TL 496 640	Anglo-Saxon	bed of the river Cam	05423a
TI 404 425	Angle Caren	Finds of sceattas and 4 pagan / middle Anglo Saxon sherds	10040
TL 496 635	Anglo-Saxon		10868
	Romano-	Roman pottery recovered during dredging of the River	
TL 500 642	British	Cam	6373
TL 496 634			05546a,
TL 496 635	Iron Age	Two coins recovered	11070

Table 1: Table of CHER data from within a 500m radius of the site

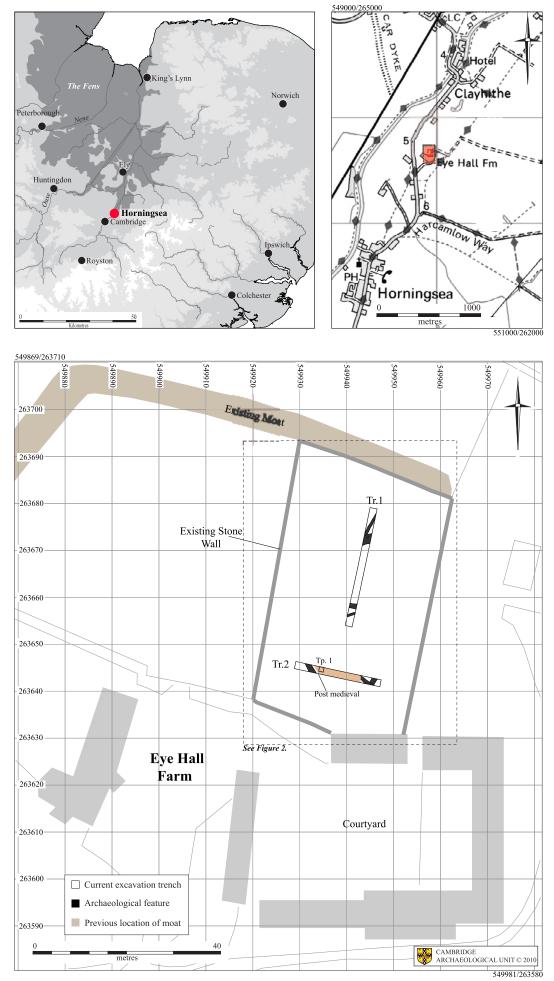


Figure 1. Location Plan

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation comprised two machine excavated 1.5m wide trenches with a total length of 44.35m located within the proposed area of development, which amounted to a 5% sample of the overall area (0.15ha). Topsoil and deposits overlying the archaeology were machined under archaeological supervision and scanned by eye and with a metal detector. Trenches were planned at 1:50 and sections were drawn at 1:10. All of the archaeological features were planned immediately and subsequently sampled. A minimum of 50% of each discrete feature was excavated, while 1m sections were excavated across linear features. Excavation was carried out by hand and all finds were retained. Recording was conducted using the CAU modified Museum of London system. All trenches were surveyed into the OS grid using GPS.

RESULTS

Both of the trenches contained archaeological features (see Table 2). In total seven features were identified and excavated, all of which were linear.

Trench	Coord	linates	Length (m)	Depth (m)	Archaeology
1	549940/263653	549945/263678	25.72	0.93-0.34	Yes
2	549929/263645	549947/263641	18.60	0.34-0.40	Yes

Table 2: Trench information

Trench 1

Trench one was north-south aligned and was 25.72m in length. It comprised between 40-16cm of dark brown-grey silty clay topsoil, with 10-19cm of lighter grey silty clay subsoil. The northern end of the trench was significantly deeper than the southern end, measuring 93cm and 34cm respectively (see Fig 3). This is likely to be due to presence of a deposit visible for the first c.3m of the trench. This layer comprised dark grey/brown compacted, silty clay and varied in thickness between 35-19cm. This is potentially made-ground, created in order to level the site. Another possibility is that this layer represents up-cast from the construction of the Post-Medieval garden boundary, located immediately to the north of the PDA, although thorough cleaning of a section of this showed that this layer did not represent a bank (see Fig 4).

The maximum feature depth was 0.53m (Feature 3) and all of the features were linear ditches or gullies (see Fig 2).

F.1 – Ditch. E-W linear, cut [003], with steep northern edge, the southern edge is concave, with a gradual break of slope and a 'V' shaped base (1m wide x 0.45m deep). Upper fill [001] Mid brownish grey clay, with fine grained sandy-silt. Frequent small to medium sized gravel stones-up to 3cm and occasional large stones (5cm +). Animal bone and Late Saxon/Medieval pottery was recovered from this fill. Lower fill [002], light grey slightly silty clay. This appears to be slumped natural from the sides of the feature. Late Saxon/Medieval pottery and a small quantity of animal bone was collected.

F.2 Ditch NE-SW aligned. Cuts [005 and 007] Shallow steep sides, slightly concave base with gradual break of slope (0.65m wide x 0.13-0.21m deep) Single fill [004 and 006] a mid grey silty clay, moderately compacted with common to abundant small stones/gravel inclusions, and patches of

yellow/orange sandy silt. Three sherds of Late Saxon/Medieval pottery, and two fragments of animal bone were recovered. This feature cuts F.3 on its northern edge [010].

F.3 Ditch NE-SW aligned. Cut [010] moderate gentle slopes at the top with a sharp convex break of slope to steep side with a flat, slightly rounded base (c. 2.25m wide x 0.53m deep). Upper fill [008] comprising dark-brown very moist still clay with frequent small to large angular stones and occasional charcoal. Animal bone and Late Saxon/Medieval pottery were recovered from this fill. Lower fill [009] Pale brown/bluish grey clay with frequent angular stones, some mottling of [008], infrequent charcoal. No finds were recovered from the lower fill. This feature is cut on its northern edge by F. 2 [005/007].

F. 7. NE-SW aligned linear gully/ditch. Cut [020] Shallow linear with gentle sloping sides and gradual break of slope to flattish, 'U'-shaped base (0.53m wide x 0.1m deep). Single fill [019] comprising compact mid-brown silty clay with occasional charcoal inclusions and frequent small to large angular stones.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was orientated east-west, measuring 18.60m in length and varying in depth between 0.34-0.46m (see Fig 3). The topsoil comprised dark brown/grey clay measuring between 10-14cm in thickness. However, for much of the length of the trench, there was a mixed layer of building debris, including bricks and tiles, which measured up to 24cm in depth. Between c.4.5m and 14m there was a layer of disturbed natural along the base of the trench, which appears to be a result of disturbance from an earlier building, located in this area. A small structure (probable animal shed) is visible from the 1902 1:2500 OS Map until the 1969-72 1:2500 OS Map (see Fig 3), which appears to be located within the boundary of Trench 2. A 1x1m test pit was dug through this material, and the natural was found to be approximately 8cm below this layer.

F.4 NW-SE aligned ditch. Cut [012] Steep concave sides, shallow with sharper break of slope on the west edge to flat base (1.3m wide x 0.26m deep). Single fill [011] consisting of a stiff mid to dark brown grey silty clay with a small sand component. Occasional small angular and sub- angular stones grit and pea grit as well as occasional charcoal. Green clay mottling was present in the lower two thirds. There is modern disturbance to the eastern edge of the feature. A single piece of animal bone was recovered from this feature.

F. 5 NE-SW aligned ditch. Cut [015] moderately steep sides with a flat base and a gradual break of slope (1.15m wide x 0.27m deep). Upper fill [013] a dark-brown/grey silty clay, moderately compacted with common small and medium sized stones-up to 3cm. Lower fill [014] comprising a mid grey silty clay with patches of green flecks and sandy gravel, probably natural slump. No finds were recovered from this feature. The feature is cut on its southern side by another ditch, F.6. However given the angle of these features, it is possible that they formed part of an enclosure.

F.6 NW-SE aligned ditch. Cut [018] Very steeps sides (only one exposed in excavation) with a slightly rounded base and a gradual break of slope (0.40m deep, c. 75m wide). Upper fill [016] comprising a mid brown-grey silty clay, moderately compacted with common to abundant small to medium sized stones. Animal bone was recovered from this fill. Lower fill [017] a dark grey brown silty clay with patches of lighter grey clay and green flecks, with common small charcoal inclusions. Several fragments of animal bone were recovered from this fill. F.6 cuts ditch F.5 on its southern side. These two ditches were at right angles to one another and therefore possibly formed an enclosure.

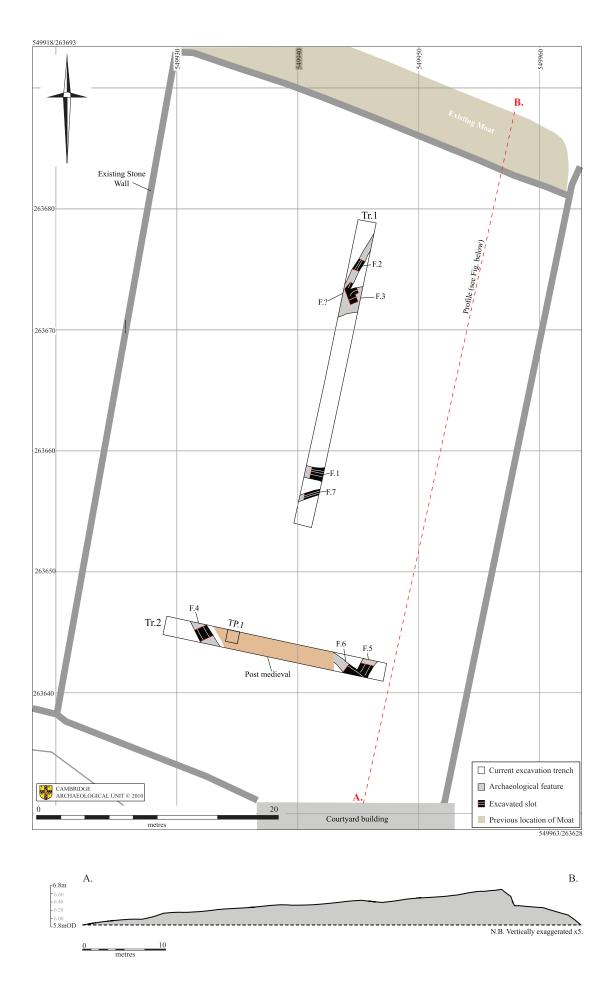


Figure 2. Trench Plan (above) with profile of north to south transect across site

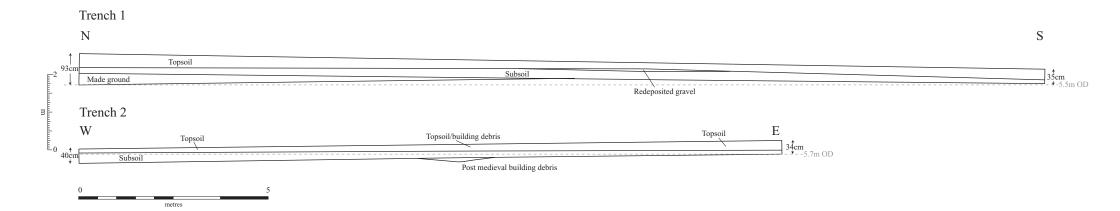


Figure 3. Sections of Trenches

DISCUSSION

The features encountered during the evaluation comprised of seven ditches that are likely to represent different phases of activity. This included two which were at right-angles to one another (Features 5 and 6, Trench 2) which may have formed part on an enclosure, although Feature 6 cuts Feature 5 and was much deeper (see Fig 4). Feature 4, Trench 2, although shallower, is on a very similar alignment as Feature 6, thus suggesting that these were contemporary with one another. Unfortunately no datable material was recovered from any of these features, thus their date is unclear. Feature 2, Trench 1, is on the same alignment as Feature 5. Two St Neots Ware sherds, dating to the 12th century, were recovered from this feature. However, Feature 2 cuts an earlier ditch, Feature 3, from which nine sherds of pottery were collected. This included at least one residual Romano-British sherd, as well as four 12th century St Neots Ware sherds and one 12th century Thetford Ware sherd. Given that the pottery from Feature 2 was collected from the intersection between the two ditches, it is likely that this material was residual, having come from Feature 3 originally.

Feature 1 was on a different alignment to the other ditches, suggesting it was not contemporary with any of the others. It contained eight sherds of pottery (30g), including two St Neots ware sherds and two Thetford Ware sherds (12th century), alongside four Medieval sherds, including one dating to the 15th century. Feature 7, Trench 1 contained no datable material and was on a different alignment to the other ditches.

Feature 3 is therefore likely to have been the earliest feature, possibly dating to the 12th century, although it should be considered that the pottery assemblage comprised generally small sherds, which may suggest redeposition. Feature 1 is the latest dating feature, which is 15th century or later in date. The lack of finds from Features 4, 5 and 6 make dating problematic, but it is suggested that they are contemporary with Feature 2, based on alignments, thus making them post-12th century (probably Medieval) in date. It is therefore possible that these features are associated with the abandoned Medieval settlement (see Fig 6).

The relatively small quantity of material recovered from features suggests that these may have been enclosure/boundary ditches, some of which may have been on the periphery of the Medieval settlement, as had these been near to the centre of a settlement, a greater quantity of material culture would be expected. The lack of evidence for Roman activity is interesting, given the location of the site is very close to the Horningsea pottery kilns. This may however provide an eastern boundary for the kilns.

The difference in depth witnessed in Trench 1, is likely to be a result of landscaping of the area, which is probably related to the construction of the garden boundary, which appears to become more substantial between the 1902 and 1969-72 OS maps (see Fig 3). This may have affected underlying features.

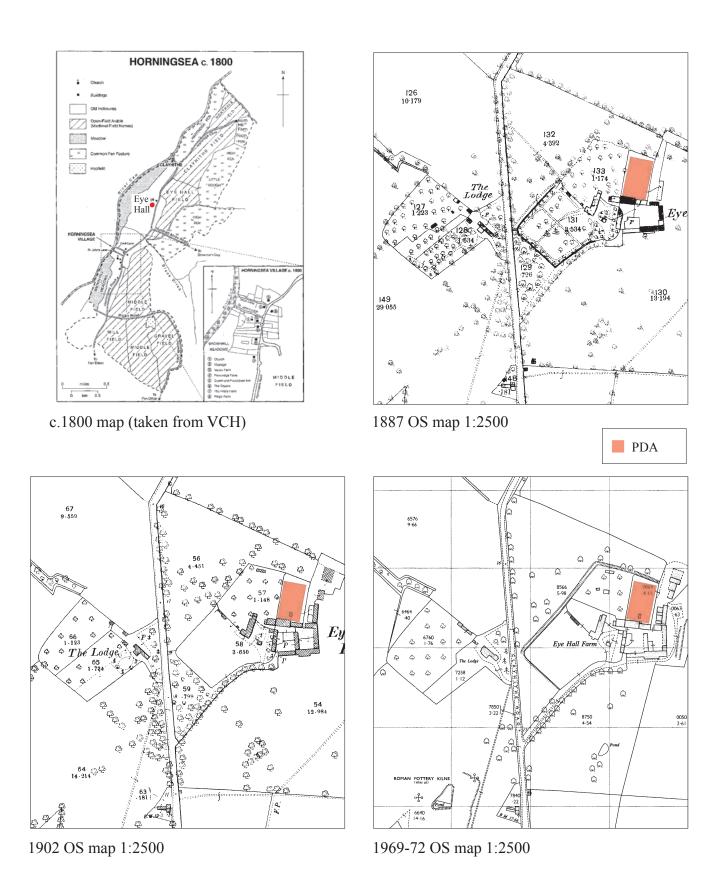


Figure 4. Historic Maps





Figure 5. Slot through features F.5 and F.6 (top) and section of Trench 1 (bottom) showing the raised land surface.

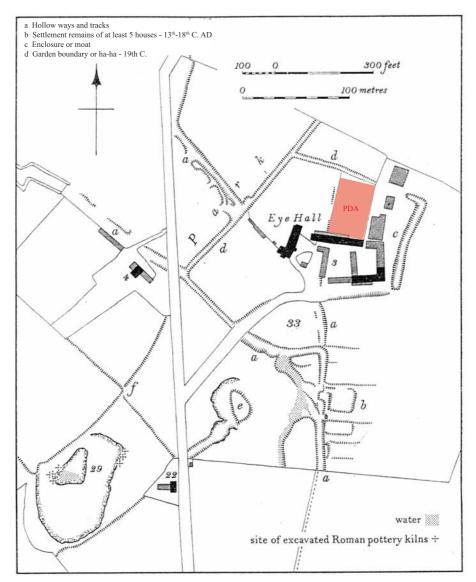


Figure 6. Map of earthworks around Eye Hall Farm, taken from the Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of Cambridgeshire, Vol.2: North East Cambridgeshire (Fig 90)

CONCLUSION

The archaeology on the site is characterised by a series of ditches, which given the relative lack of finds, may represent enclosure/boundary ditches, some of which may relate to the deserted Medieval settlement (CHER 05553, see Fig 6).

The evaluation produced evidence dating to the c. 12th century AD. This date is only applicable to one ditch, Feature 2, with a possibility that the pottery is residual. The remaining ditches are undated, with the exception of Feature 1 which is tentatively dated 15th century. It is uncertain whether the remaining ditches pre-date the construction of Eye Hall (16th century), or are contemporary or later. However, given that the old route of the road ran along the eastern side of the house, between the Medieval period (the date of construction of the road is uncertain) and the 19th century, it is likely that these features pre-date this, as the old route of the road would have come very close to the current site. It is possible, that the remaining ditches post-date the realignment of the road, although this would date them to between c.1800-1887, as by the 1887 OS 1:2500 map, the PDA is enclosed creating its current shape, with no evidence of ditches.

The construction of a small outbuilding/animal shed on the PDA in the early 20th century caused disturbance to the area around Trench 2, although it is unlikely that this would have disturbed any underlying archaeology.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The site was excavated and interpreted by Grahame Appleby and Iona Robinson. The site was surveyed, digitized and illustrated by Bryan Crossan. Finds were washed and catalogued by Illanith Pongolini. The project manager was David Gibson. Dan McConnell monitored the project on behalf of CAPCA.

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APPENDIX 1 Pottery - Katie Anderson with David Hall

A small assemblage of pottery, totalling 19 sherds weighing 76g was recovered from the evaluation. All of the material was examined and details of fabric, form and date were recorded, along with any other information deemed important. The majority of the assemblage comprised sherds dating c.12th century AD, although there is a possibility that this material may be pre-conquest.

Context	Ft	Tr	No.	Wt(g)	Fabric	Date
1	1	1	1	1	Orange sandy	15th Century
1	1	1	2	6	St Neots Ware	12th Century
1	1	1	2	5	Grey sandy wares	Medieval
2	1	1	3	18	Thetford Ware	12th Century
6	2	1	2	5	St Neots Ware	12th Century
8	3	1	4	27	St Neots Ware	12th Century
8	3	1	1	5	Thetford Ware	12th Century
8	3	1	1	3	Pakenham colour-coat	2nd-4th century AD
8	3	1	1	1	Buff Sandy ware	RB
8	3	1	2	5	Sandy greyware	Medieval

Table 3: All pottery by context

Feature 1 contained eight sherds of pottery, weighing 30g, recovered from the two fills. The pottery from [001] comprised two St Neots Ware sherds (12th century AD) one orange sandy ware, dating to the 15th century and two probable Medieval sandy sherds. Three further sherds were recovered from the lower fill [002], including two 12th century Thetford Wares, and one sandy sherd, which is likely to be Medieval.

Two St Neots Ware sherds (5g) were recovered from Feature 2 [006], both dating to the 12th century.

Nine sherds weighing 41g were recovered from Feature 3. This included one Romano-British colour-coated sherd (3g), dating 2nd-4th century AD and one small buff sandy ware sherd, dating Romano-British. It was found alongside later dating material and is therefore likely to be residual. Four sherds of St Neots Ware pottery (27g) and one Thetford Ware sherd (5g) were also recovered from this feature. The remaining three sherds were small sandy greywares and could be Romano-British or Medieval in date.

APPENDIX 2 Faunal Remains – Vida Rajkovača

The evaluation carried out at EHH site resulted in the recovery of 17 assessable bone fragments, nine of which were identified to species. The material came from seven different contexts associated with five features (F.1; F.2; F.3; F.4 and F.6) all of which were dated to Medieval and Post-Medieval period. State of preservation was quite poor to moderate with several specimens showing signs of weathering.

Taxon	NISP	NISP%	MNI	
Cow		6	67	1
Ovicaprid		1	11	1
Chicken		1	11	1
Red deer		1	11	1
Cattle-sized		4		•
Sheep-sized		4		
Total		17	100	

Table 4: Number of Identified Specimens and Minimum Number of Individuals

Two ageable cattle specimens recovered from F. 3 gave different age at death. Unfused radius indicated that cattle were most likely raised on site (0-12 months) and mandible showed that some beasts were maintained into their adulthood (senile) probably being exploited for their secondary products.

Although found in small numbers, the prevalence of cattle and cattle-size elements seems to reflect the economy favouring large domesticates. Given that red deer was represented with humerus fragment, it is possible that venison was also consumed on site. Overall, the faunal evidence seems to indicate the presence of a nearby settlement and beyond stating the presence of species on site it is difficult to assess the assemblage any further due to its small size.

Ft	Con	Tr	cut/fill	Feature	Alignment	length	width (m)	depth (m)	sides	hasa	Date	associated cut	Finds
1	1	1	f	Type Ditch	E-W	(m)	(111)	(111)	sides	base	Date	associated cut	Pottery-2x12th century, 1x15th century 2x med. Animal bone
1	2	1	f	Ditch	E-W								Pottery - 3x Thetford Ware 12th century. Animal bone
1	3	1	c	Ditch	E-W	x	1	0.45	steep north, concave south	V' shaped	Med?		
2	4	1	f	Ditch	NE-SW								
2	5	1	c	Ditch	NE-SW		0.65	0.21	Moderately steep	Concave	Med/post med	[007] F. 2, [010] F.3	
2	6	1	f	Ditch	E-W								Pottery - 2x St Neots Ware 12th century
2	7	1	c	Ditch	E-W	x	0.33	0.13	Moderately steep	Concave	Med/post med	[005] and [010]	
3	8	1	f	Ditch	NE-SW								Pottery - 9 sherds, including 2xRB, 4x St Neots and 1x Thetfore Ware. Animal bone
3	9	1	f	Ditch	NE-SW								
3	10	1	c	Ditch	NE-SW	x	dug to 1m	0.53	Gentle to steep	Flat	Late Saxon/early Med	[005] and [007]	
4	11	2	f	Ditch	NW-SE								Animal Bone
4	12	2	c	Ditch	NW-SE	X	1.3	0.26	steep/concave	Flat	Med/post med	Disturbed by later building	

5	13	2	f	Ditch	N-S								
5	14	2	f	Ditch	N-S								
5	15	2	c	Ditch	N-S	x	1.15	0.27	Moderately steep	Flat	Med/post med?	[018] Feature 6	
6	16	2	f	Ditch	E-W								Animal Bone
6	17	2	f	Ditch	E-W								Animal Bone
6	18	2	c	Ditch	E-W	x		0.42	Very steep	slightly rounded	Med?	[015], Feature 5	
7	19	2	f	Ditch	NE-SW								
7	20	2	c	Gully/ditch	NE-SW	X	0.53	0.1	Gradual	u-shaped	Med-post med		

Table 5: Feature Descriptions

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

OASIS ID: cambridg3-80487

Project details

Project name Eye Hall Farm, Horningsea. An Archaeological Evaluation

Short description of the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) Eye Hall Farm, Horningsea,

Cambridgeshire (centred on TL 499636) between the 6th and 8th July 2010. The work was commissioned by Maple Arenas on behalf of Fiona Apthorp in advance of the proposed construction of a horse manage. Two trenches were machined, totalling 44.35m in length. A series of ditches, primarily dating to the Medieval or post-Medieval period were identified, including two which formed a possible enclosure. A small quantity of Medieval pottery was recovered alongside a small assemblage of animal bone Despite the location of the site, there was no evidence for Roman Pottery production, in connection with the Horningsea industry, with just a single, residual

sherd of Roman pottery recovered.

Project dates Start: 06-07-2010 End: 08-07-2010

Previous/future work

No / Not known

Any associated project reference

codes

EHH10 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Cultivated Land 1 - Minimal cultivation

Significant Finds DITCH Medieval

Methods & techniques

'Targeted Trenches'

Development type Farm infrastructure (e.g. barns, grain stores, equipment stores, etc.)

Development type horse manage

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 HORNINGSEA

Eye Hall Farm

Postcode CB5 9

Study area 0.18 Hectares

Site coordinates TL 499 636 52.2497059442 0.196108244021 52 14 58 N 000 11 45

E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 7.50m Max: 7.50m

Project creators

Name of Organisation

Cambridge Archaeological Unit

Project brief originator

Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory

body

Project design originator

David Gibson

Project

director/manager

David Gibson

Project supervisor Katie Anderson

Type of sponsor/funding

Landowner

body

Name of sponsor/funding body

Fiona Apthorp

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient

Cambridge Archaeological Unit

Physical Archive

EHH₁₀

'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Environmental' **Physical Contents**

Digital Archive recipient

Cambridge Archaeological Unit

Digital Archive ID EHH10

Digital Media available

'Database', 'Spreadsheets', 'Survey', 'Text'

Paper Archive ID EHH10

Paper Media available

'Unspecified Archive', 'Context

sheet','Drawing','Map','Photograph','Plan','Report','Survey

','Unpublished Text'

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Author(s)/Editor(s) Anderson, K.

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Other bibliographic CAU report No. 953

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