



# **Foss Ditch Field, Hockwold cum Wilton, Norfolk**

## **Archaeological Evaluation Report**

**February 2018**

**EW Porter & Son (Agent: Andrew Hawes)**

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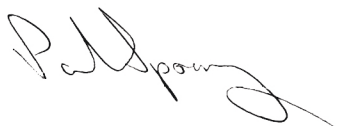


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Prepared by: Simon Birnie (Supervisor)  
Checked by: Chris Thatcher (Project Officer)  
Edited by: Lawrence Billington (Project Officer)  
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Signature:



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**OA South**

Janus House  
Osney Mead  
Oxford  
OX2 0ES

t. +44 (0)1865 263 800

**OA East**

15 Trafalgar Way  
Bar Hill  
Cambridge  
CB23 8SG

t. +44 (0)1223 850 500

**OA North**

Mill 3  
Moor Lane Mills  
Moor Lane  
Lancaster  
LA1 1QD

t. +44 (0)1524 880 250

e. [info@oxfordarch.co.uk](mailto:info@oxfordarch.co.uk)

w. [oxfordarchaeology.com](http://oxfordarchaeology.com)

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## Foss Ditch Field, Hockwold cum Wilton, Norfolk

### *Archaeological Evaluation Report*

*Written by Simon Birnie BA(Hons) ACIfA*

*With contributions from Rachel Fosberry ACIfA, Lawrence Billington MA PhD, Denis Sami PhD and Nick Gilmour MA ACIfA*

*Illustrations by Séverine Bézie BA MA.*

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## Summary

Between the 22nd and the 30th of January 2018 Oxford Archaeology (OA East) carried out a trial trench evaluation at Laylands Farm, Foss Ditch Field, Hockwold cum Wilton, Norfolk (TL 7537 8768).

A total of 11 trenches were excavated, targeting the location of a proposed agricultural reservoir. Two of the trenches, 2 and 6, revealed archaeological features. Trench 2 contained an east to west aligned ditch, from which one sherd of Romano-British fine greyware pottery was recovered. Trench 6 contained a tree throw feature from which an assemblage of 154 worked flints and five sherds of Early Neolithic pottery were recovered.

The probable Roman ditch is likely to be associated with a previously recorded area of Roman settlement close to the site, whilst the Early Neolithic assemblage appears to attest to episodic activity on the site during this period.

## Acknowledgements

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The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Paul Spoerry and Chris Thatcher. The fieldwork was directed by Simon Birnie, who was supported by Anne-Marie Woolley. Survey and digitising was carried out by Sarita Louzolo.

Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the management of Natasha Dodwell, processed the environmental remains under the management of Rachel Fosberry, and who also prepared the archive under the management of Katherine Hamilton.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by EW Porter & Son (Agent: Andrew Hawes) to undertake a trial trench evaluation at the site of a new proposed agricultural reservoir.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken to inform the Planning Authority in advance of a submission of a Planning Application. A brief was set by James Albone (Norfolk County Council) outlining the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to inform the planning process. A written scheme of investigation was produced by OA detailing the methods by which OA proposed to meet the requirements of the brief (Tysbaeva 2017).

### 1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The field sits at c.10m OD, gently sloping south towards the River Little Ouse, which defines the boundary for Norfolk County. To the east of the site is the Weeting Heath National Nature Reserve.
- 1.2.2 The area of proposed development is in arable use, and the soils are shallow, lime-rich and freely draining (Landis <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/#>).
- 1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as situated on the Holywell Nodular Chalk and New Pit Chalk Formations overlain by sand and gravels of river terrace deposits. (British Geological Survey <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html> ).

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological background presented below is based on a 1km radius search of the Norfolk and Suffolk Historic Environment Records.

#### **Prehistoric**

- 1.3.2 A large number of Palaeolithic handaxes (NHER 5303), as well as a Neolithic axehead, flint flakes and a scraper (NHER 5467) have been found c.900m north-west of the site. A Neolithic scraper, part-polished axe, and chipped adze were recovered around 1km to the north-east (NHER 14942). Approximately 600m north-east, a Neolithic barbed and tanged arrowhead was recovered (NHER 5596). A Late Upper Palaeolithic long flint blade (NHER 22013) and three Mesolithic blades (SHER BRD036) were found c.850m south-east.
- 1.3.3 Fragments of putative prehistoric trackway (NHER 5435), aligned east to west, surround the site, these were in use up to the post-medieval period.

#### **Bronze Age**

- 1.3.4 A Bronze Age round barrow known as 'Wafes Howe' (NHER 15525), c.18m in diameter and 1.5m high, is situated just below the brow of a ridge around 1km north-east of the study area.

- 1.3.5 A number of Bronze Age worked flints, including arrowheads, scrapers and borers have been found through fieldwalking 1km west-south-west of the site (NHER 35099). An Early Bronze Age arrowhead was recovered around 1km north-east of the site in 1953 (NHER 14942). A complete bronze socketed axe, bronze palstave, chisel and looped spearhead were found in dredgings taken from the Little Ouse 1km south of the site (SHER BRD070, BRD036).

### **Iron Age**

- 1.3.6 The Fossditch or Fendyke (NHER 1089) is a defensive bank and ditch linear monument situated 200m east of the site. The monument is of uncertain date and is currently interpreted as either Iron Age or Early Saxon. It forms a five and half mile (8.9km) long defensive line aligned north to south between the River Wissey and the Little Ouse and has been preserved as a scheduled monument in places. Though the stretch nearest the site has not been scheduled, for the purposes of protection and management it should clearly be treated as part of the same monument. The proximity of the site to the Fossditch may shed some light onto its date and purpose.
- 1.3.7 Fragments of Iron Age and Roman pottery, metalwork (SHER BRD036) and Iceni coins (SHER BRD145) have been found 900m south of the site.

### **Roman**

- 1.3.8 A Roman spindle whorl (NHER 19421) and a large volume of Roman pottery and building material (NHER 35099) were found concentrated in the southern half of the field, suggesting that this location, 1km west-south-west of the site, is the site of a Roman building. Other possible Roman buildings are located c.700m north-east (NHER 39316) and 500m south-west (NHER 36368).
- 1.3.9 A substantial Roman settlement (NHER 5587) lies to the south. Aerial photographs show cropmarks forming a regular pattern of roads and numerous buildings, preserved as a scheduled monument (SM299). The settlement is bisected by the Fossditch (NHER 1089). In the 1950s, several diadems and a crown were discovered on the site after ploughing, prompting an excavation which revealed chalk floors and pits. One of the excavated buildings was probably a temple or a related religious structure. Coins, brooches and votive objects were recovered in the area, as well as another diadem and three pewter hoards (NHER 5588).
- 1.3.10 The site of another scheduled Roman settlement, (SM234, SHER BRD008) visible as cropmarks, is located around 1km south-west of the site. Surface finds include tesserae, tooled stone, marble, glass, brooches, a small pewter dish, pottery and building rubble. More Roman finds, pottery, coins, and a votive curse tablet, have been dredged from the Little Ouse river (SHER BRD 017).
- 1.3.11 The number of Roman structural remains in the area suggested the possibility that Roman features extended within the site.

### **Saxon and Medieval**

- 1.3.12 A fragment of an Early Saxon clay loomweight (NHER 36993), three medieval coins, a medieval buckle frame (NHER 59913) and medieval and post medieval pottery (NHER

39316) were found in the fields c.600m north of the site. A Late Saxon iron sword that was bent in half was found during dredging of the Little Ouse (NHER 15748).

### **Post-medieval**

- 1.3.13 A scatter of post-medieval pottery, tile and building material (SHER BRD036), and a silver bracelet of southeast Asian origin (NHER 13695) were found near the Little Ouse.
- 1.3.14 Two lime kilns (SHER BRD088) survive at 'Lime Kiln Farm' around 1km south-of the site. Earthworks pits (NHER 38811) likely to be associated with post-medieval gravel extraction were identified during an earthwork survey around 700m north-west.

### **Modern**

- 1.3.15 A number of pits possibly associated with 19th century gunflint mining or 20th century gravel extraction (NHER 56100) lie c.1km north of the site.
- 1.3.16 Several World War Two anti-glider ditches (NHER 48877) are preserved as earthworks, subdividing the field into squares, around 900m to the north-west.

## 2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project sought to establish the character, date, state of preservation of archaeological remains within the proposed development area.

2.1.2 The scheme of works detailed the following aims:

- establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains on the site, characterise where they are found (location, depth and extent), and establish the quality of preservation of any archaeology and environmental remains
- provide sufficient coverage to establish the character, condition, date and purpose of any archaeological deposits
- provide sufficient coverage to evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking deposits
- set results in the local, regional, and national archaeological context – and, in particular, its wider cultural landscape and past environmental conditions
- provide – in the event that archaeological remains are found – sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables, and orders of cost.

#### Research frameworks

2.1.3 This evaluation took place within the context of the Regional Research Frameworks relevant to this area:

- *Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24)
- *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern counties: 1. Resource Assessment* (Glazebrook 1997, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 3);
- *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern counties: 2. Research Agenda and Strategy* (Brown & Glazebrook 2000, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 8)

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

- 3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, and include a stratigraphic description of the trenches which contained archaeological remains. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits are tabulated in Appendix A. Finds and environmental reports can be found in Appendices B and C respectively.

### 3.2 General soils and ground conditions

- 3.2.1 The soil sequence between all trenches was fairly uniform. The natural geology of chalk with occasional sand patches was overlain directly by ploughsoil, no subsoil was present.
- 3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good, and the trenches remained dry throughout. Archaeological features, where present, were easy to identify against the underlying natural geology.

### 3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits (Fig. 2)

- 3.3.1 Archaeological features/deposits were present in two of the 11 trenches, Trenches 2 and 6. A natural tree throw feature, not associated with any archaeological material, was also investigated and recorded in Trench 5.

### 3.4 Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

- 3.4.1 Trench 2 was aligned north-east to south-west and was located in the northern part of the evaluation area. It was 50m in length, 1.6m in width and the natural geology was exposed at an average depth of 0.47m.
- 3.4.2 An east-west aligned ditch (6) (Plate 1; Fig. 3, Section 2), was identified at the north eastern end of the trench. It measured 0.7m in width, with steep sides and a flat base with a depth of 0.28m. Its sole fill (7) was a mid reddish brown soft silty sand from which one Romano-British fine grey ware pottery sherd was recovered (App. B.1), alongside six residual worked flints (App. B.2). A bulk environmental sample was taken from this feature (sample 3), alongside a small spot sample taken for potential pollen analysis (sample 2) (see App. C.1).
- 3.4.3 The spoil from Trench 2 was scanned with a metal detector which resulted in the recovery of a Roman coin (SF1) (App. B.3).

### 3.5 Trench 5 (Fig. 3)

- 3.5.1 Trench 5 was aligned north-west to south-east and was located towards the centre of the evaluation area. It was 50m long, 1.6m wide and the natural geology was exposed at an average depth of 0.45m. A single cut feature (8) was identified 15m from the north western extent of the trench. This feature proved to be a natural tree throw, but was fully recorded. It measured 2m east-west, 1.4m north-south with a depth of 0.48m. No finds were recovered from its single, dark greyish brown silty sand.

### 3.6 Trench 6 (Fig. 4)

- 3.6.1 Trench 6 was aligned north-east to south-west and was located in the western part of the evaluation area. The dimensions of this trench were initially 50m in length, 1.6m in width and the natural geology was exposed at an average depth of 0.50m.
- 3.6.2 A relatively large possible cut feature was identified in the western end of Trench 6. It was decided that it would be beneficial to extend the trench to characterise the type and extent of the feature. A 7m by 6m area was therefore opened up at the south-eastern end of the trench to fully expose the feature (Fig. 4).
- 3.6.3 This feature (**4**) proved to be a tree throw (Figure 4; Plates 2 & 3). It was curvilinear in plan with a length of 3.5m, ranging in width between 0.7m up to 1.30m and up to 0.36m deep, with a concave base. The sole fill of this feature (5) was a dark brownish grey soft silty sand which produced five sherds of Early Neolithic pottery, 154 pieces of worked flint and a single unworked burnt flint (App. B.1 & B.2). A 16 litre bulk environmental sample was from this feature (Sample 4) alongside three smaller spot/series samples taken for potential pollen analysis (samples 1.1 to 1.3, see Fig. 4, Section 1). Surrounding this feature was natural sand deposit 10, this deposit was investigated and was found to overly natural chalk deposit 1.
- 3.6.4 The spoil from Trench 6 was scanned with a metal detector which resulted in the recovery of a Roman coin (SF2) (App. B).

### 3.7 Blank Trenches

- 3.7.1 The remaining trenches were devoid of archaeological features or deposits, although variations in the natural geology and other probable tree throws were encountered and investigated.
- 3.7.2 The spoil (topsoil) from all trenches was scanned with a metal detector. This resulted in the recovery of two Roman coins from otherwise blank trenches; SF3 was recovered from the spoil of Trench 8 and SF4 was recovered from the spoil of Trench 7 (see App. B.3).

### 3.8 Finds summary

- 3.8.1 One sherd of Romano-British fine grey ware pottery was recovered from deposit 7, ditch **6** (Trench 2). Bulk sample <3> proved to be devoid of any preserved remains.
- 3.8.2 A total of 154 Early Neolithic worked flints, one unworked burnt flint and 5 sherds of Early Neolithic pottery were recovered from deposit 5, tree throw **4** (Trench 6). Bulk sample <4> was devoid of any preserved remains other than sparse charcoal fragments. A set of series samples <1.1>, <1.2> and <1.3>, taken for potential pollen analysis from deposit 5 of tree throw **4** have not been processed at this stage of analysis, but have been retained in the archive.



## 4 DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 The archaeological features were clearly visible within both Trench 2 and Trench 6. The natural geological horizon beneath the ploughsoil, into which the features were cut, was also clearly identifiable.

### 4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

- 4.2.1 Two trenches (Trench 2 and Trench 6) contained evidence for archaeological remains on the site.
- 4.2.2 Ditch 6 in Trench 2 may have represented part of the field systems associated with Roman settlement to the south of the evaluation area (NHER 5587).
- 4.2.3 The environmental bulk samples taken from deposit 7, ditch 6, were devoid of any preserved remains. A sample taken for potential pollen analysis from this feature (sample 2) has not been processed at this stage of analysis but has been retained in the site archive.
- 4.2.4 The finds recovered from tree throw 4 in Trench 6 demonstrated Early Neolithic activity on the site, probably associated with an episode of activity.
- 4.2.5 The environmental bulk samples taken from tree throw deposit 5, tree throw 4, were devoid of any preserved remains other than sparse charcoal remains. A series of samples taken for potential pollen analysis from this feature (sample 1.1 to 1.3) have not been processed at this stage of analysis but are retained in the site archive.
- 4.2.6 The evaluation trenches provided sufficient coverage of the intended area of development and deposits were tested to assess whether they masked any underlying archaeology. For example, natural sand deposit 10 was extensively investigated in Trench 6. No evidence for archaeological remains was found in Trenches 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, which would appear to indicate that the proposed development area did not lie in, or particularly close to, any areas of significant settlement.

### 4.3 Interpretation

#### *Neolithic.*

- 4.3.1 Tree throw feature 4 in Trench 6 contained a significant quantity of Early Neolithic flintwork and pottery which suggest this feature had been deliberately infilled during this period. It seems likely that this finds assemblage derived from a midden/occupation type deposit attesting to an episode of Early Neolithic activity on the site.

#### *Romano-British.*

- 4.3.2 Trench 2 provided limited evidence of a possible field system associated with the Roman settlement to the south (NHER 5587) in the form of ditch 6, which contained one Romano-British fine grey ware pottery sherd.

- 4.3.3 The recovery of four Roman coins, all dating to the 4th century AD, from topsoil deposits is in keeping with the rich record of Roman activity in the immediate area (section 1.3). However, these finds do not necessarily imply actual settlement on the site and could instead represent chance losses, or finds introduced by manuring.

## 4.4 Significance

- 4.4.1 The evaluation identified limited archaeological remains within the targeted area. This included evidence for Roman activity in the form of a possible field system ditch and an assemblage of Early Neolithic worked flints and pottery sherds recovered from a tree throw.

## APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of ploughsoil overlying natural geology of chalk.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.46
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3	Layer		0.46	Ploughsoil.		
1	Layer			Natural.		
Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench 2 consisted of ploughsoil overlying natural geology of chalk with some sandy patches. It contained one east-west aligned ditch at the north-eastern extent of the trench.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.47
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3	Layer		0.47	Ploughsoil.	Roman coin SF1 (metal detector)	
1	Layer			Natural		
6	Cut	0.7	0.28	E-W aligned ditch		Roman
7	Deposit			Fill of 6. Mid reddish brown soft silty sand.	Romano-British pot sherd	Roman
Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of ploughsoil overlying natural geology of chalk.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.40
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3	Layer		0.40	Ploughsoil.		
101	Layer			Natural.		
Trench 4						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of ploughsoil overlying natural geology of chalk.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.46
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3	Layer		0.46	Ploughsoil.		
101	Layer			Natural.		

Trench 5						
General description Trench 5 consisted of ploughsoil overlying natural geology of chalk. It contained one tree throw 15m from the north western extent of the trench.					Orientation	NW-SE
					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.45
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3	Layer		0.45	Ploughsoil.		
1	Layer			Natural.		
8	Cut	2m x 1.4m	0.48	Tree throw		
9	Deposit		0.48	Fill of 8. A dark greyish brown soft silty sand.		
Trench 6						
General description Trench 6 consisted of ploughsoil overlying natural geology of chalk with some patches of natural sand 10. It contained one tree throw. Was extended at SW end to 7m x 6m.					Orientation	E-W
					Length (m)	51
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.50
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3	Layer		0.50	Ploughsoil.	Roman coin SF2 (metal detector)	
1	Layer			Natural chalk.		
4	Cut	1.3m	0.36	Tree throw		Neolithic
5	Deposit	1.3m	0.36	Fill of 4. Mid reddish brown soft silty sand.	Neolithic pottery. Neolithic flints.	Neolithic
10	Layer	3m/5m		Natural Sand.		
Trench 7						
General description Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of ploughsoil overlying natural geology of chalk.					Orientation	NE-SW
					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.42
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3	Layer		0.42	Ploughsoil.	Roman coin SF4 (metal detector)	
1	Layer			Natural		
Trench 8						
General description Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of ploughsoil overlying natural geology of chalk.					Orientation	NE-SW
					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.46
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3	Layer		0.46	Ploughsoil.	Roman coin SF3 (metal detector)	
1	Layer			Natural.		

Trench 9						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of ploughsoil overlying natural geology of chalk.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.40
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3	Layer		0.40	Ploughsoil.		
1	Layer			Natural.		
Trench 10						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of ploughsoil overlying natural geology of chalk with occasional small patches of sand.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.50
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3	Layer		0.50	Ploughsoil.		
1	Layer			Natural.		
Trench 11						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of ploughsoil overlying natural geology of chalk.					Length (m)	50
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.47
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
3	Layer		0.47	Ploughsoil.		
1	Layer			Natural.		

## APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

### B.1 Pottery

*By Nick Gilmour*

#### *Introduction*

- B.1.1 Five sherds (61g) of pottery were recovered from context 5, of tree throw **4**, Trench 6. All of these sherds were in a similar fabric, consisting of common medium to coarse flint (up to 5mm) and moderate sand. No sherds are decorated and no rims are present. However, the fabric suggests that this material is of Early Neolithic date, comparing well to larger assemblages of this date from Norfolk and across east Anglia (e.g. Healy 1988, 71). Although no highly diagnostic sherds are present, it appears that at least two different vessels are represented in the assemblage.
- B.1.2 A single sherd (9g) of Roman fine greyware was found within context 7 of Ditch **6**. This body sherd is not diagnostic, but is likely to be of Earlier Roman date (S. Macaulay pers. comm.).

### B.2 Flint

*By Lawrence Billington*

#### *Introduction and quantification*

- B.2.1 A total of 154 worked flints and a single unworked burnt flint were recovered during the evaluation. The assemblage has been examined and catalogued/classified according to a simple typo/technological scheme (Table 1); no detailed technological or metric analyses have been undertaken at this stage of analysis.
- B.2.2 With the exception of six flints from the fill of ditch **6**, the flint assemblage derived from a single deposit, 5, fill of tree-throw feature **4**. The flints from ditch **6** comprise unretouched removals including several pieces with trimmed striking platform and blade-like dorsal scars, which are probably of earlier Neolithic or Mesolithic date. The remainder of this report will deal exclusively with the more substantial assemblage from tree-throw **4**.

Trench	6	2
Context	5	7
Cut	4	6
Context type	Tree-throw	Ditch
Chip	36 (30)	
Irregular Waste	4	
Primary Flake	5 (1)	2 (1)
Secondary Flake	62 (4)	3 (2)
Tertiary Flake	17 (3)	1
Secondary Blade	13	
Tertiary Blade	7	
Serrated Blade	1	
Retouched flake	2	
Core	1	
<b>Total worked</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>6</b>
BF count	1	
BF weight	0.7	

Table 1. Basic quantification of the flint assemblage.

(Figures in brackets refer to pieces recovered from environmental sample residues (>2mm).)

### Raw materials and condition

B.2.3 The entire assemblage is made up of good quality fine-grained light to dark grey translucent flint. Surviving cortical surfaces vary somewhat, but are invariably thin and somewhat weathered with a few pieces bearing heavily recorticated thermal surfaces. The morphology of cortical removals suggests the exploitation of small to medium nodular flints – probably rarely larger than 150mm in maximum dimension. The raw material is typical of flint derived from deposits closely associated with the parent chalk but which has been subject to a degree of weathering/transport under periglacial conditions, and is entirely characteristic of the kind of flint which occurs widely in surface deposits across the coversand and chalk derived soils of the Breckland (see Healy 1996, 50; 1991; 1998; Bishop 2012). There is no indication of flint with a very fresh unweathered cortex suggestive of a source direct from the chalk, whilst coloured/stained orange/yellow flints, often present as a minority element in assemblages from the area, are also absent.

B.2.4 The assemblage is generally in good condition. Virtually all of the flint shows some recortication but this is invariably very light, taking the form of a blue clouding sometimes only present on surface of individual pieces. This recortication has tended to make some of the thinner feathered edges of removals somewhat brittle/friable and minor edge-damage is fairly frequent in the assemblage as a whole.

### Composition

B.2.5 The assemblage is dominated by unretouched removals. Only a single core was recovered and three retouched pieces were identified. The assemblage includes elements belonging to all stages of core reduction, including decortication flakes, core

trimming/rejuvenation flakes, regular non-cortical removals, chips and, as mentioned, a single core and several retouched tools. A brief attempt at refitting was unsuccessful and, although several pieces seem likely to derive from the same nodule of raw material, it is clear that the assemblage represents fragmentary parts of a larger body of material derived from several reduction sequences. This said, the assemblage is coherent in terms of technology and raw material and there is little doubt that it represents a single period assemblage.

### *Technology*

- B.2.6 The assemblage is clearly the product of a systematic approach to core reduction geared towards the production of lamellar flakes and blades/bladelets. Around 20% of the unretouched removals have been classified as blades. Whilst these include some fine prismatic pieces, the majority are less regular and in technological terms there is little to distinguish between many of the narrow more regular flakes and those pieces classified here as blades. The assemblage includes a relatively large number of decortication flakes, some which are relatively large, and the majority of removals carry at least some cortex, with around a fifth of unretouched removals having no cortex on their dorsal surfaces. That such tertiary removals are underrepresented in the assemblage suggests that some of these finer removals have been removed for use elsewhere, with the assemblage somewhat biased towards the earlier stages/waste-products of core reduction.
- B.2.7 The technological attributes of the unretouched removals suggest the systematic exploitation of cores from a single striking platform, with careful trimming of the platform edge and the careful use of previous flake scars and ridges to control the morphology of flakes. The ventral features of the removals suggest the use of direct percussion using hammers of various degrees of hardness. Some of finer tertiary blade based pieces are distinguished by ventral features especially diagnostic of the use of 'soft' stone hammers (Pelegrin 2000), whilst many of the larger decortication flakes have pronounced bulbs of percussion and impact marks consistent with the use of harder stone hammers. Core rejuvenation appears to have been relatively informal, with larger flakes removed to clear debitage surfaces of hinged or stepped scars. The single core recovered is fragmentary but retains one main striking platform from which fairly broad flakes have been removed and bears multiple incipient cones of percussion.

### *Tool manufacture/use*

- B.2.8 Three retouched pieces are present in the assemblage. The first of these is a serrated blade, made on a fine tertiary removal with a short length of fine serrations along part of its right lateral edge which bears macroscopically visible use gloss/polish. The other two retouched tools are less readily classified. One is a large lamellar decortication flake which bears some irregular steep dorsal retouch on its lower right lateral edge and distal end. The other is a thin, relatively broad tertiary blade with a naturally pointed distal termination which has been modified/strengthened by light retouch; bifacial at the tip and extending up both lateral edges, where it is restricted to the dorsal face. The upper lateral edges have been blunted/backed by abrupt dorsal



retouch, giving a broad tang at the proximal end which may have been inserted into a haft. This piece may have been used a piercing/cutting tool or perhaps as a projectile point. Aside from the retouched pieces, several pieces bear macroscopically visible edge-damage that may have been the result of use although this has proved difficult to distinguish from other forms of incidental/post-depositional damage/wear.

## **Discussion**

- B.2.9 The technological traits and composition of the assemblage are all entirely typical of a date in the early Neolithic (c. 4000-3300 cal BC) and can be closely compared with other earlier Neolithic assemblages known from the Breckland and Eastern Fen Edge (e.g. Clark et al 1960; Beadsmoore 2006) and more widely across southern Britain. Although coherent in terms of technology, raw material and composition, the assemblage has clearly been drawn from a much larger assemblage of material deriving from several individual episodes of core reduction and includes pieces from all stages of core reduction. As such, the worked flint is typical of earlier Neolithic assemblages derived from pit and tree-throw deposits in the region and is likely to have ultimately derived from more substantial surface/midden deposits associated with episodes of earlier Neolithic occupation (see Healy 1988, 2012; Garrow 2006).
- B.2.10 The assemblage, and the earlier Neolithic activity it represents, should be seen in the context of the rich record of early Neolithic activity along the valley of the Little Ouse, which include major surface scatters with an earlier Neolithic component such as those around Two Mile Bottom and Thetford (e.g. Hewitt 1914), the extensive scatters recorded around the fen-edge of the Wissey embayment (Silvester 1991; Healy 1996), and others deeper in the fens along the roddon of Little Ouse as at Peacock's Farm (Clark et al 1934). Very large flint assemblages have also been recovered locally from the extensive Early Neolithic pit sites at Kilverstone (Garrow et al 2006) and Hurst Fen (Clark et al 1960).
- B.2.11 The assemblage, whilst relatively small, is a useful addition to the local/regional record of stratified and chronologically unmixed early Neolithic lithic assemblages. More importantly it demonstrates the potential for any further work to recover substantial assemblages of earlier Neolithic flint-work from the site if similar features are found to occur more widely.

## B.3 Metalwork

By Denis Sami

### Introduction

B.3.1 Late Roman copper-alloy coins dating to the period spanning between AD 350 and 378 were recovered metal-detecting the ploughsoil context 3. The coins – except SF 3 – are very well preserved and it was therefore possible to identify the issuing emperor. In addition, it was possible to identify the original mint of SF 1 and 2.

### Statement of potential

B.3.2 Given that the coins were recovered from ploughsoil deposits, the assemblage has limited interpretative potential. Nonetheless, the chronological consistency of the assemblage suggests Late Roman activity in the area, possibly limited to the second half of the fourth century AD and most likely related to the nearby Roman settlement (NHER 5587).

### Methods statement

B.3.3 Given the good preservation of the metal, the coins were cleaned from soil residues to facilitate the identification. The *Roman Imperial Coinage* (RIC) volumes 8 and 9 were used as main reference.

### Retention, dispersal and display

B.3.4 All the coins need to be preserved and stored accordingly to the current standard procedure. No further action is needed.

### Catalogue

SF	Context	Description	Chronology
1	3	A copper-alloy <i>nummus</i> of Gratian, Reece period 19. O: DN VALENS PF AVG, pearl diademed, draped and cuirassed bust right. R: SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE, Victory advancing left holding wreath and palm, SM(leaf)RB in ex (RIC IX Rome, 24b). Diam:16.7 mm Thickness:1.5 mm Weight:	AD 364-78
2	3	A copper-alloy <i>nummus</i> of Magnentius, Reece period 18. O: DN MAGNENTIVS PF AVG, draped bust right. V: VICTORIAE D D N N AVG ET CAE, two Victories standing, facing each other, holding wreath between them inscribed VOT/V/MVLT/X. Mintmark possibly PAR (Arle)	AD 350-53
3	3	A copper-alloy <i>nummus</i> of Valentinian I, Valens or Gratian, Reece period 19. O: DN VALENS PF AVG, pearl diademed, draped and cuirassed bust right. R: SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE, Victory advancing left holding wreath	AD 364-78
4	3	A copper-alloy <i>nummus</i> of Gratian, Reece period 19. O: DN GRATIANVS AVGG AVG, pearl-diademed, draped and cuirassed bust right R: GLORIA NO-VI SAECVLI, Emperor standing facing, head left, holding labarum in right hand and resting left hand on shield.	AD 367-75

Table 2. Catalogue of coins.

## APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

### C.1 Environmental Remains

*By Rachel Fosberry*

#### Introduction

C.1.1 Two bulk samples were taken from features within the evaluated area at Foss Ditch Field, Hockwold cum Wilton, Norfolk in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations. Samples were taken from features encountered within Trenches 2 and 6. Series samples were taken for pollen analysis from fill 5 of tree-throw **4** and from fill 7 of ditch **6**, these have not been subject to any processing or analysis at this stage of the project.

#### Methodology

C.1.2 The total volume (16L) of each of the samples was processed by tank flotation using modified Siraff-type equipment for the recovery of preserved plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The floating component (flot) of the samples was collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through 10mm, 5mm, 2mm and a 0.5mm sieve.

C.1.3 The dried flots were scanned using a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 60 and an abbreviated list of the recorded remains are presented in Table 3.

#### Quantification

C.1.4 For the purpose of this initial assessment, items such as artefacts have been scanned and recorded qualitatively according to the following categories:

# = 1-5 specimens

C.1.5 items that cannot be easily quantified such as molluscs and charcoal has been scored for abundance

+ = rare, ++ = moderate, +++ = abundant

#### Results

C.1.6 Both samples were devoid of any preserved remains other than sparse charcoal fragments in Sample 4, fill 5 of tree-throw **4** in Trench 6.

Sample No.	Context No.	Feature No.	Feature Type	Trench No.	Volume processed (L)	Flot Volume (ml)	Molluscs	Charcoal	Pottery	Flint debitage
3	7	6	Ditch	2	16	1	++	+	#	#
4	5	4	Tree throw	6	16	10	+	++	0	##

Table 3: Environmental samples

- C.1.7 The plant remains recovered from this site are restricted to charcoal only. Snail shells are reasonably well preserved but include the intrusive burrowing snail *Ceciliodes acicula*.
- C.1.8 The series samples taken for pollen analysis from ditch **6** and tree-throw **4** have been retained in case research funding becomes available in the future as, if pollen survives, they have potential to provide information on the local environment.
- C.1.9 If further excavation is planned for this area, it is recommended that environmental sampling is carried out in accordance with Historic England guidelines (2011).

### **Discussion**

- C.1.10 The plant remains recovered from this site are restricted to charcoal only. Snail shells are reasonably well preserved but include the intrusive burrowing snail *Ceciliodes acicula*.
- C.1.11 The series samples taken for pollen analysis from ditch **6** and tree-throw **4** have been retained in case funding becomes available in the future as, if pollen survives, they have potential to provide information on the local environment.
- C.1.12 If further excavation is planned for this area, it is recommended that environmental sampling is carried out in accordance with Historic England guidelines (2011).

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<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>

Landis:

<http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/#>).

## APPENDIX A

## OASIS REPORT FORM

### Project Details

OASIS Number	Oxfordar3 - 303614		
Project Name	Foss Ditch Field, Hockwold cum Wilton, Norfolk		
Start of Fieldwork	22.1.18	End of Fieldwork	30.1.18
Previous Work	Unknown	Future Work	Unknown

### Project Reference Codes

Site Code	XNFHOK18	Planning App. No.	
HER Number	ENF143014	Related Numbers	

Prompt	Requirement from local planning authority
Development Type	Agricultural Reservoir
Place in Planning Process	Pre-application

### Techniques used (tick all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography – interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/> Grab-sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-core	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording of Fabric/Structure
<input type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core
<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography	

Monument	Period	Object	Period
Ditch	Roman (43 to 410)	Pottery	Roman (43 to 410)
Tree throw	Neolithic ( - 4000 to - 2200)	Flint and Pottery	Neolithic ( - 4000 to - 2200)
	Choose an item.	Coins	Roman (43 to 410)

Insert more lines as appropriate.

### Project Location

County	Norfolk	Address (including Postcode) Laylands Farm, Brandon Road, Thetford, Norfolk. IP26 4NQ
District	Kings Lynn and West Norfolk	
Parish	Hockwold cum Wilton	
HER office	Norfolk	
Size of Study Area	160m2	
National Grid Ref	TL 7537 8768	

### Project Originators

Organisation	OA East
Project Brief Originator	James Albone

Project Design Originator	Daria Tsybaeva
Project Manager	Paul Spoerry / Christopher Thatcher
Project Supervisor	Simon Birnie

## Project Archives

	Location	ID
Physical Archive (Finds)	NMAS	ENF 143014
Digital Archive	OA East	XNFHOK18
Paper Archive	NMAS	ENF 143014

Physical Contents	Present?	Digital files associated with Finds	Paperwork associated with Finds
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Remains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Worked Stone/Lithic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Digital Media

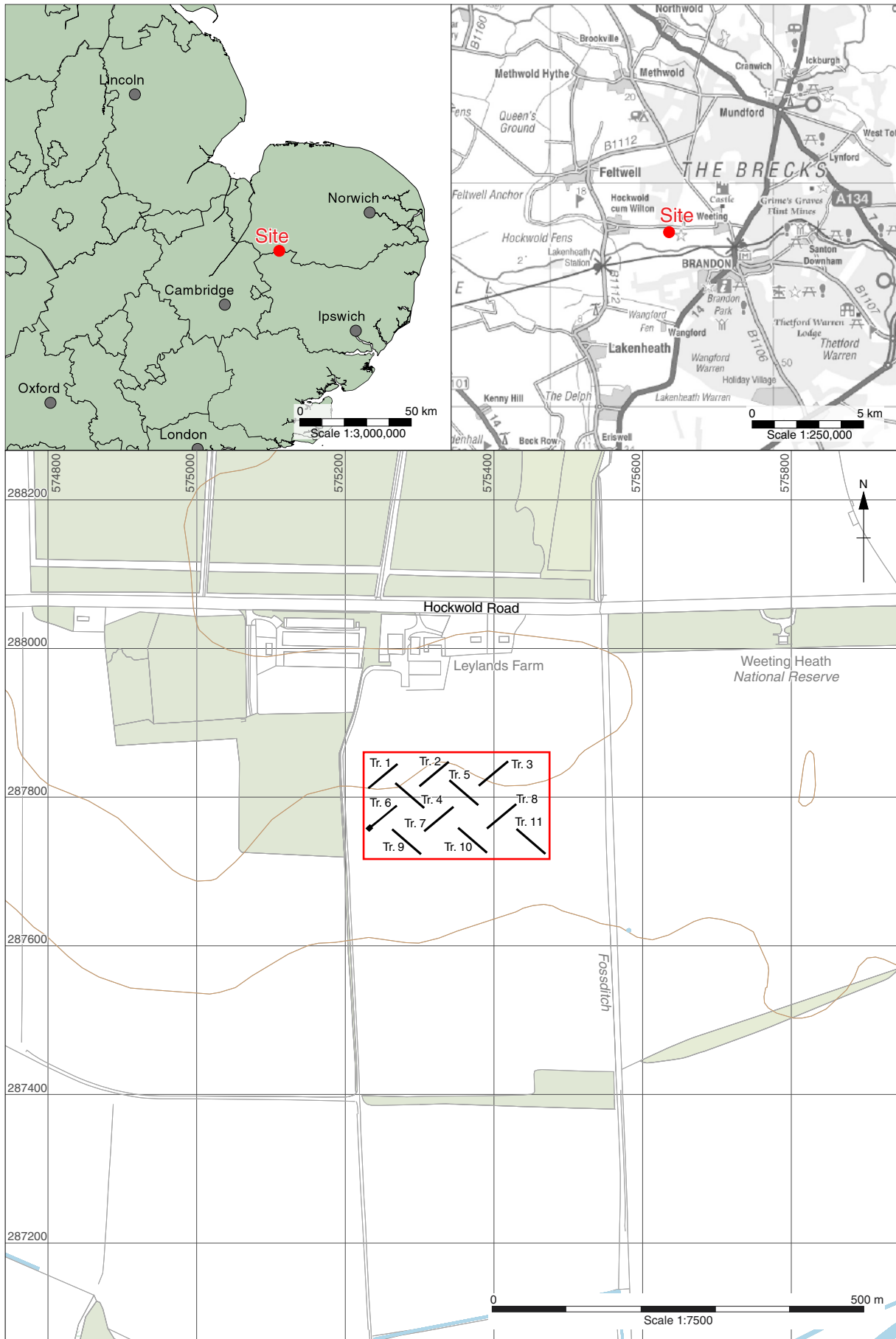
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Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Paper Media

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Diary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drawing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Manuscript	<input type="checkbox"/>
Map	<input type="checkbox"/>
Matrices	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microfiche	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miscellaneous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research/Notes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photos (negatives/prints/slides)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sections	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>







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Figure 1: Site location showing archaeological trenches (black) in development area outlined (red)

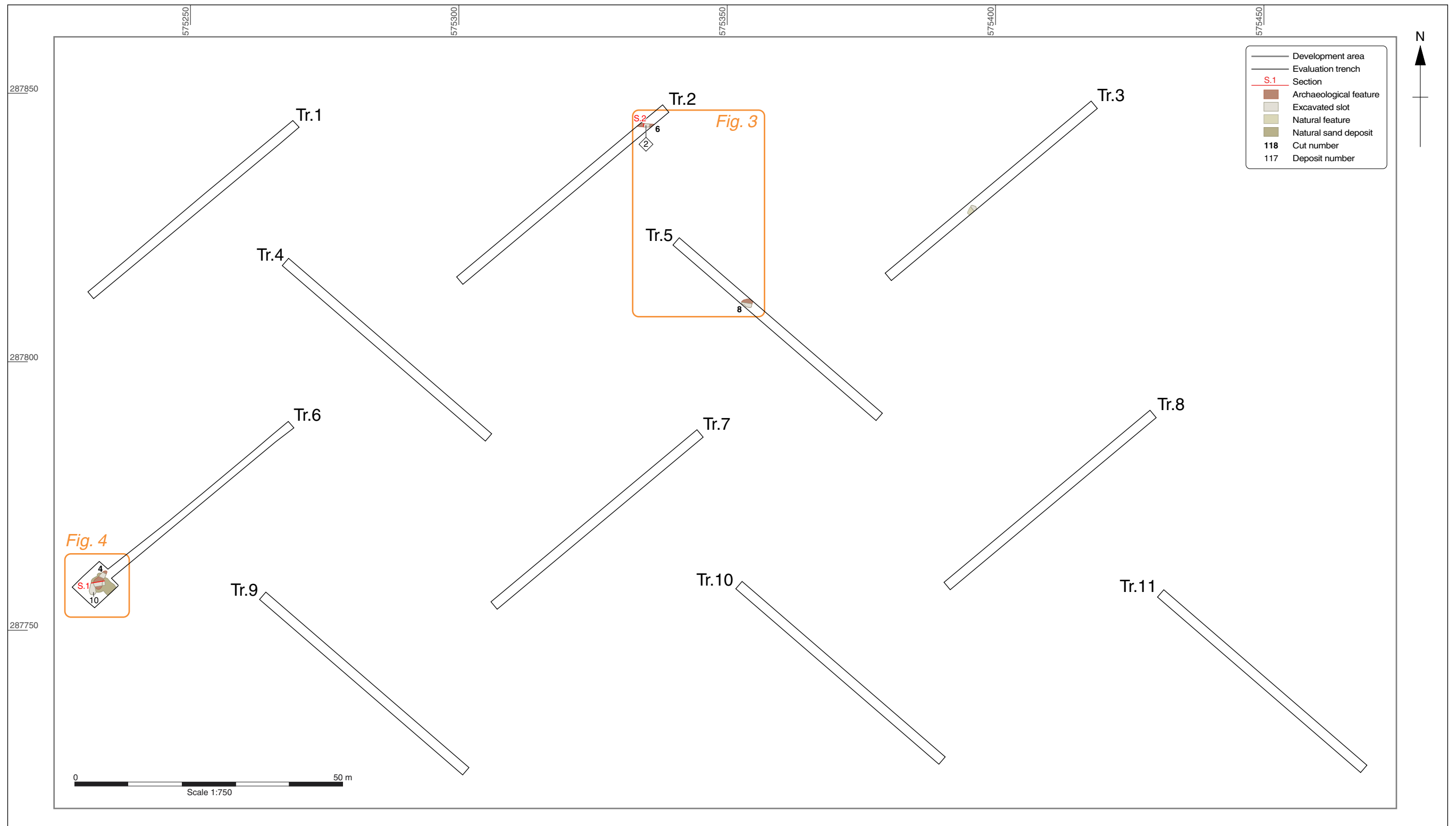


Figure 2: Trench plan

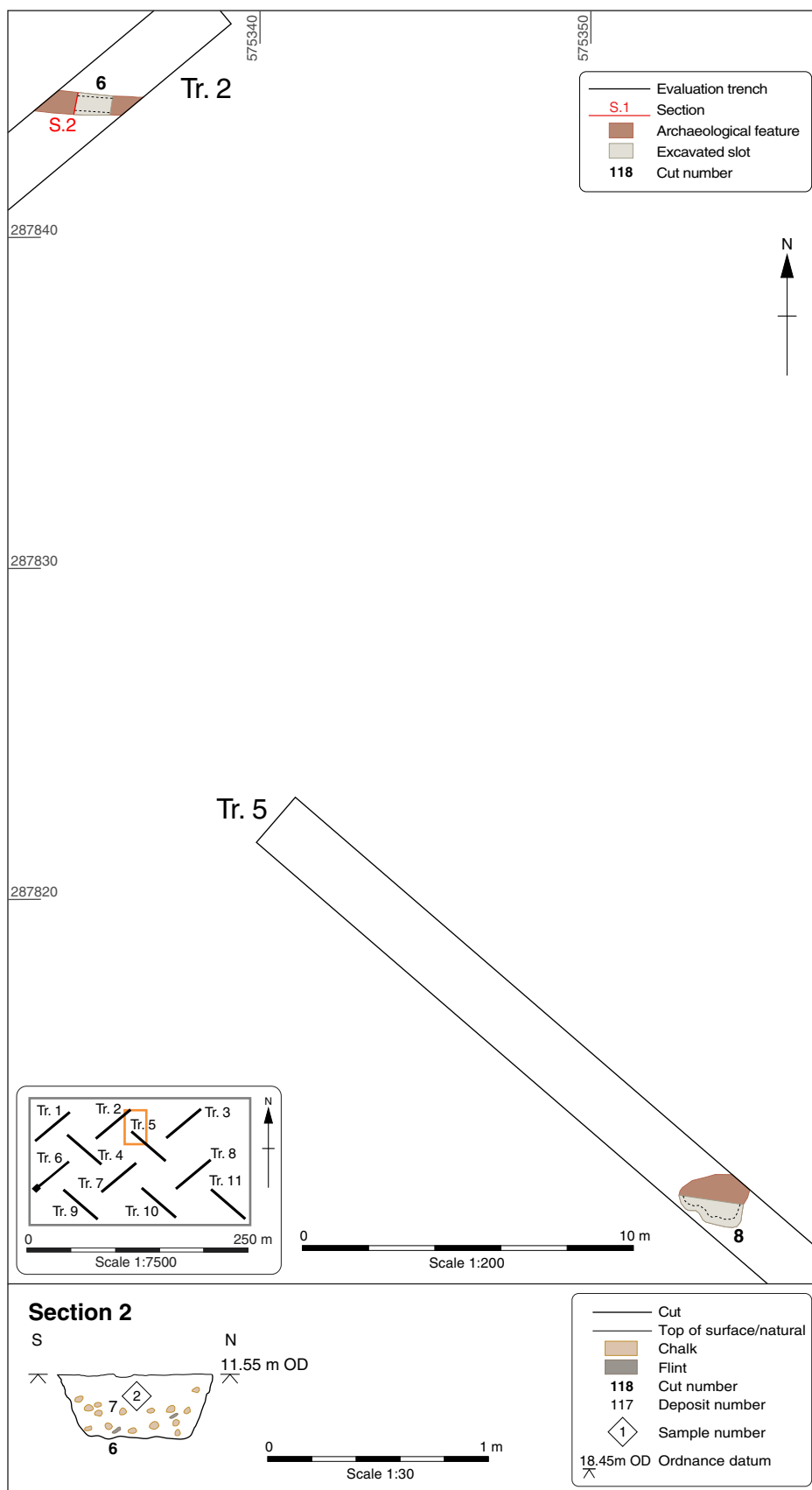


Figure 3: Detailed plan of Trenches 2 and 5 with selected section







Plate 1: East facing Roman ditch 6, Trench 2

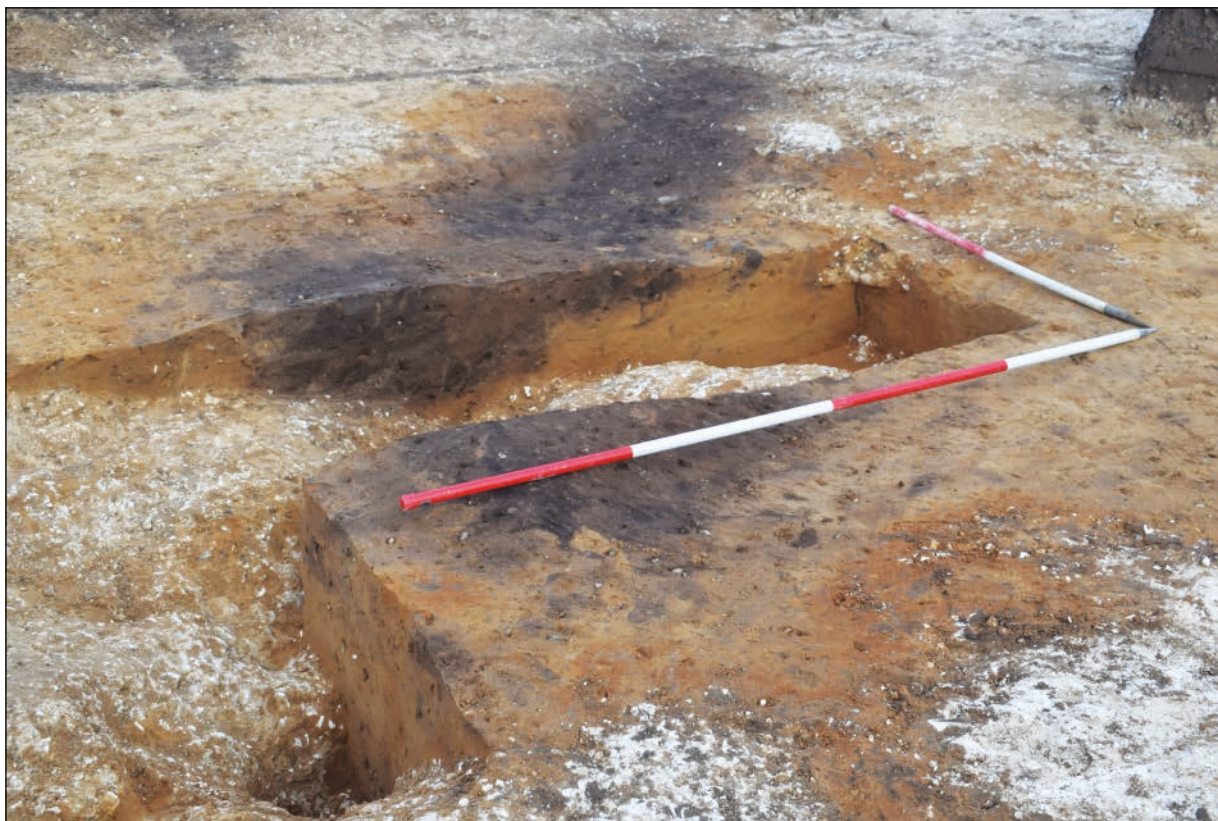


Plate 2: Tree throw 4 from the south west, Trench 6





Plate 3: Tree throw 4 from the west, Trench 6







**Head Office/Registered Office/  
OA South**

Janus House  
Osney Mead  
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800  
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496  
e: [info@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto:info@oxfordarchaeology.com)  
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

**OA North**

Mill 3  
Moor Lane  
Lancaster LA1 1QD

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000  
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606  
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)  
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

**OA East**

15 Trafalgar Way  
Bar Hill  
Cambridgeshire  
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850 500  
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)  
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



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