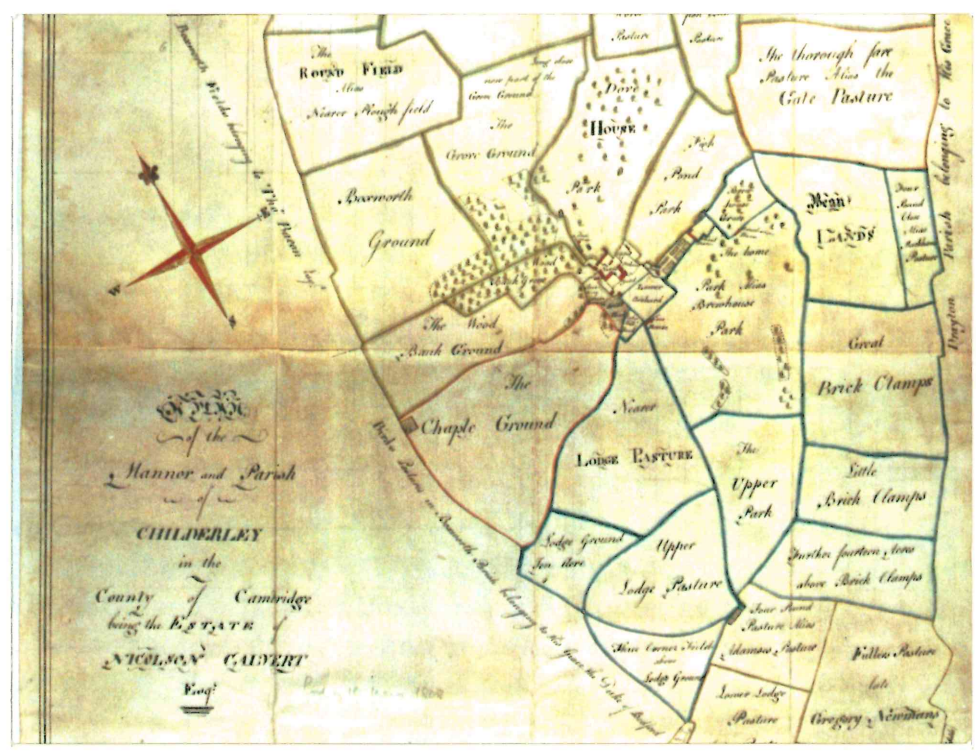


ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD OFFICE  
FULBOURN COMMUNITY CENTRE  
HAGGIS GAP, FULBOURN  
CAMBRIDGE CB1 5HD Tel: 881614  
(Fax)

OFFICE COPY.

# Medieval Village & Deer Park of Childerley



# Mediaeval Village and Deer Park of Childerley. Boxworth to Childerley Pipeline.

By

Steve Kemp AIFA  
and  
Twigs Way BSc, MA, AIFA

February 1992

Archaeology Section  
Shire Hall, Castle Hill  
Cambridge CB3 0AP

Tel. (0223) 317312



report no. 46

1849 Tithe map of Childerley. (Cambridge University Library CUL EDR/ Tithe Child)  
by permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library

## Table of Contents

Summary

Introduction 1

Geology and Topography 1

Pipeline Route and Methodology 1

The Archaeological Report

SMR Report 3

Methodology 3

Areas of Archaeological Significance 4

Conclusion 7

The Historical Record and Landscape

1. Childerley 7

2. Boxworth 12

Discussion 13

Conclusion 14

Recommendations 15

Bibliography 16

Appendix A

List of Contexts 17

## List of Figures

Fig 1 Map of the Parishes of Boxworth and Childerley showing the pipeline route, cropmarks and areas of archaeological significance. 2

Fig 2 Sketch plan of the features located in Area 2. 6

Fig 3 Section through feature 3. 6

Fig 4 Boxworth Map of 1650. 10

Fig 5 Map of the parishes of Boxworth and Childerley showing agricultural practices of the mid 18th century. 11

**Mediaeval Village and Deer Park at Childerley  
Boxworth to Childerley Pipeline.**

**Summary**

During the autumn of 1991 an archaeological recording brief was undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Section for Cambridge Water Company. The project involved the recording of a pipe-line running between High Barns in the parish of Boxworth and Grove Park in the parish of Childerley.

Two areas of disturbance were to be monitored; the deer park boundary on the parish border, and the ploughed site of Little Childerley, a deserted mediaeval village at Grove Park.

The pipe trenching at the parish boundary went unrecorded. As there are no upstanding remains in this area the impact on this field monument is unknown. Two cobbled surfaces were found at Little Childerley. These are likely to represent trackways connected with the mediaeval and post-mediaeval communications network. In an infilled ditch wood was found to survive suggesting high potential for preservation of water-logged remains within the sunken features of the village.

Historical information points towards a gradual reduction in the population of the Childerley villages prior to the abandonment of the settlements and the establishment of parkland. The deer park increased in size through the post-mediaeval period until it surrounded the hall and covered over 250 acres at its height, prior to recent contractions.

## Introduction

The Archaeology Section was commissioned by Cambridge Water Company (CWC) to undertake an archaeological recording brief along the course of the Boxworth to Childerley pipeline. Pipeline work was carried out by a contracted company for CWC during late September and October 1991. The authors were on site to monitor much of this work.

Two areas archaeological and historical importance were mentioned on the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR); the deserted mediaeval village (DMV) site of Little Childerley and the parish and deer-park boundary earthworks between Childerley and Boxworth.

This report has been structured to present the archaeological information gained through the recording of the pipeline route, and historical information has been used to place these findings in a historical and social context within the landscape.

## Geology and Topography

The soils of Childerley and Boxworth overlie chalky tills and are therefore largely of a permeable calcareous clayey type on which arable production is dominant. (MAFF, 1984).

The land is slightly undulating generally ranging between 40 and 60m O.D dipping to less than 30m O.D in the north-western corner of Boxworth parish. Childerley Hall lies on the edge of a slight north-east trending valley. The O.S marks this as the course of a small stream which has been much altered by recent drainage works.

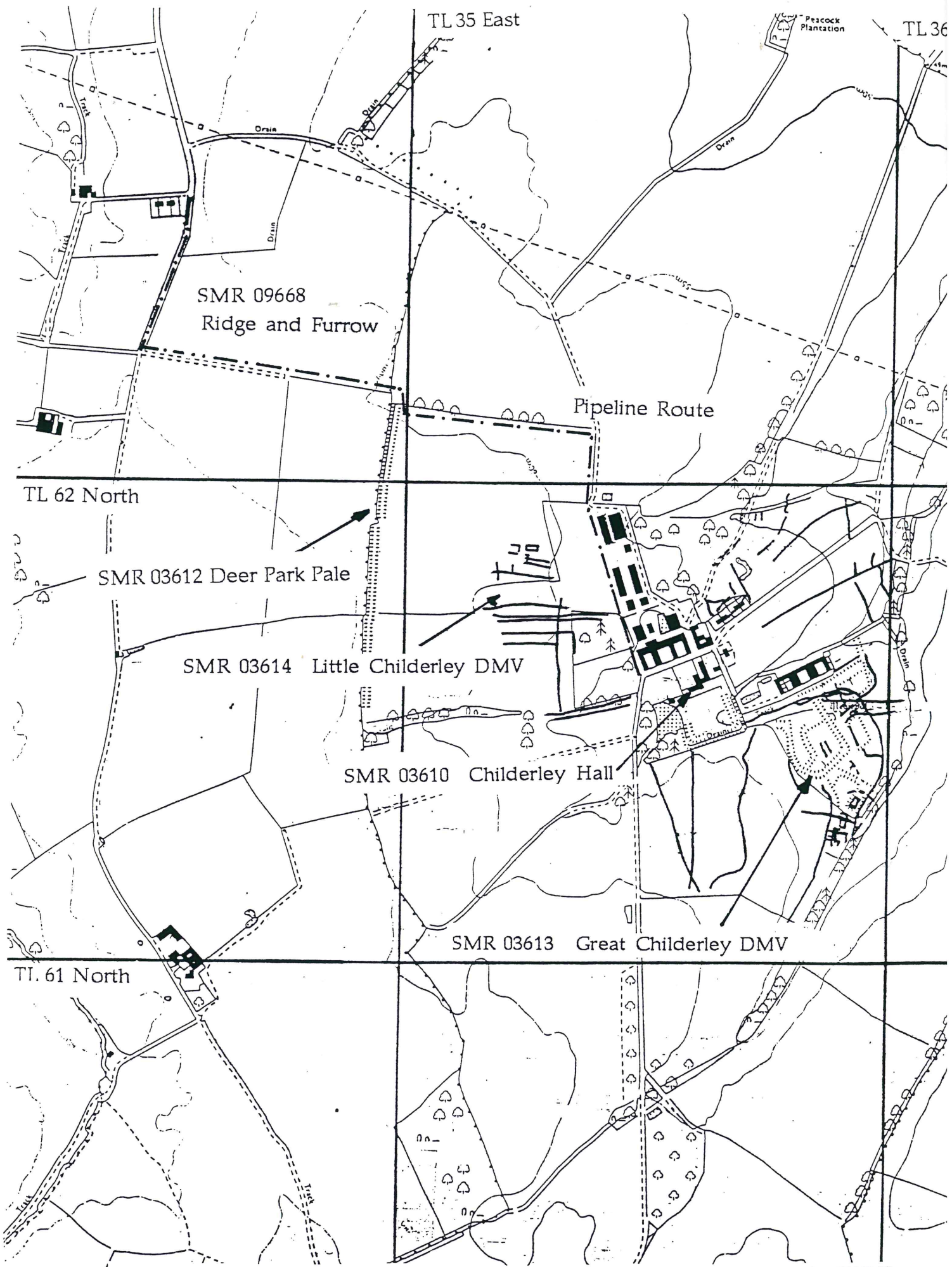
## Pipeline Route and Methodology

The pipeline runs between High Barns in the parish of Boxworth to Childerley Hall. (See fig 1 for route)

The pipeline work was carried out in two main phases;

1. The stripping of an easement of 6-8m in width along ploughed land.
2. The excavation of the pipe-trench and laying of the pipe. No easement was required along the Battle Gate road or on the eastern side of the Grove.

The pipe trench was excavated to a depth of approximately 1.00m and 0.60m wide using a *digger/loader* ('JCB') with a small toothed bucket. Sixty metres of trenching were excavated at a time, with back-filling commencing immediately after the trenching. Initial infilling occurred with gravels followed by the pipe, more gravels and levelled off with spoil from the excavated trench.



Based upon Ordnance Survey Map No.

with the sanction of the Controller of HMSO (Licence No LA 07649 X)

Fig 1 Map of the parishes of Boxworth and Childerley showing the pipeline route, cropmarks and areas of archaeological significance.

## The Archaeological Report

**SMR Report;** Sites affected by the pipeline route are shown on Fig. 1.

A search of the Sites and Monuments Record for Cambridgeshire (SMR) held by the Archaeology Section Cambridgeshire County Council was undertaken prior to work on the site. The SMR lists over 11,000 known archaeological sites within the County, allowing archaeologists to assess the affects of ground disturbance on the 'archaeological resource'.

### Sites affected by the pipeline route

**SMR 03612** A mediaeval parish boundary marked as earthworks on the O.S maps. The boundary is formed by a double ditch and bank, and may represent the pale of a mediaeval deer park. When the site was visited in March 1991 earthworks existed up to a height of approximately 2m. Most of the trees dating back to about the time of the park formation have been felled. Aerial photographs show a path/track leading from the location of a gate house (marked on earlier maps) to the DMV (Great Childerley) and Hall.

**SMR 03614** The DMV of Little Childerley. The site was 'completely' destroyed by ploughing between 1955 and 1959. Aerial photographs taken prior to this show traces of house platforms, ridge and furrow and trackways surviving as earthworks. Cobbled strips have been revealed by ploughing and sherds of 11-13th century pottery occur in proximity to the settlement.

**SMR 09668** Traces of ridge and furrow lying between Childerley parish boundary and High Barns Cottages shown on aerial photographs prior to the 1960's.

### Outside the area affected by the pipeline:

**SMR 03609** Post mediaeval fishponds, moat and gardens are located to the south of the Hall.

**SMR 03610** The Hall dates back to the 16th century and was remodelled in the 18th Century.

A mediaeval? stone coffin was found nearby at NGR TL 356/616.

**SMR 03613** To the south-east of Childerley Hall lies the village earthworks of Great Childerley with traces of ridge and furrow and field boundaries surrounding (**SMR 03615**) the deserted settlement. The DMV site consists of hollow ways, house platforms, church site, manor house site, fish ponds and quarries. The settlement was depopulated in the 15th century by Sir John Cutts; Archaeological work was carried out by John Alexander (1961) after ploughing and bulldozing of 'little park' (Great park, Gt Childerley).

## **Methodology**

As no new sites were discovered during the monitoring of the easement it was possible to concentrate on areas of archaeological significance highlighted by the SMR. The two areas of interest centred around the deer park boundary where earthworks were known to survive, and the DMV which was judged to provide the greatest archaeological potential in terms of finds, dating evidence and settlement features.

Features were recorded in plan after the stripping of the easement, and in section during the pipelaying operations. Pipelaying activities did not appear to be adversely affected by our work. Recording took place during the excavation of the pipetrench (within safety limitations) and prior to the laying of the pipe. The trenching personnel had no access to a phone on-site and as we were unable to leave staff on site to monitor all works due to limited funding monitoring required an element of prediction and good timing. This arrangement was not always satisfactory. Excavation of the pipe trench in the location of deer park boundary occurred later than scheduled and then rather unexpectedly. Work on the eastern side of the grove occurred sometime after trenching immediately to the north. We were informed by the pipelaying company that I would be contacted when work re-commenced, this did not happen. No archaeologists were available on site to record these areas.

### **Areas of Archaeological Significance**

#### Area 1 Deer park/parish boundary.

It was proposed to monitor this area in order to trace the course of the deer park boundary and record a section through the feature to study the morphology of the park pale. This area was not recorded due to the unexpected start date by the pipe trenching team. No finds were found on the surface of the back-filled trench. This was not surprising due to the distance from the settlement centres of Childerley and the role of the boundary in mediaeval society. The excavator driver appeared to be conversant with archaeological practices and the appearance of archaeological features, he did not observe any soil change in the 'natural' across the area.

Conclusion The trenching and pipe laying in this area was not observed by professional archaeologists. It would appear from information provided to the archaeologists that the deer park pale does not deviate from the north-south alignment to an east-west one running along the recent hedge/tree boundary. As only young trees are in evidence in the east-west boundary earthworks along this stretch may have been destroyed. If the ditch had turned here, the bank would appear to have been levelled at some point in the past. The ditch should have been recognised as a major change in the clay deposits by the excavator driver. The boundary may either continue northwards along the present drainage ditch or terminate at this point. It is not unknown for such boundaries to be of more than one type of manufacture ie. ditch and bank in one area and fence in another. This is particularly true when boundaries alter chronologically.

The deer park pale is defined by a double ditch and double bank. On the western side of the boundary lies a small v-shaped ditch with slight bank directly to the east. This feature continued northwards beyond the extent of upstanding earthwork remains as a drainage ditch. It is not known whether this was the original function of this feature or whether it has been adapted from the western boundary of the enlarged park. East of the slight bank is a ditch up to circa. 0.50m in depth. This rises to the bank on the eastern side of circa. 2.5m in height and approximately 2m wide.

#### Area Two Little Childerley DMV

Monitoring of the easement and trenching occurred in the vicinity of Little Childerley DMV between the northern most turkey shed and the grove to the north west of Childerley Hall.



During soil stripping three archaeological features were recognised. These were recorded in plan with excavation occurring of the cobbled surface (feature 2); removing the overburden and collecting finds. Sections were recorded at an appropriate level during trenching activities.

**Feature 1.** Contexts Cut **1**; Fills **4, 6, 7**. See Fig 2 for location

This is an east-west running ditch approximately 3.80m in width and over 1m in depth. The upper fill contained large amounts of burnt material and is probably associated with a large bonfire located in the area. The farm staff remember burning material in a slight depression here. Below this was a mid-grey brown layer of silty sands with some organics. This deposit is likely to represent the back-filling of the ditch during ploughing and levelling operations of the late 1950's. Below this is layer **Z** which shows the gradual silting up of the ditch prior to the levelling activities. Wood and bone were found preserved within this waterlogged deposit.

**Feature 2.** Context **3**. See Fig 2 for location

A layer of cobbles of flint, chalk and sandstone laid into a clayey matrix. The section cut by the pipe trench showed this to be only a single layer in thickness (approx. 0.1m). The cobble surface extends east-west and may represent a mediaeval and/or post mediaeval trackway or road.

The farm workers recognised an associated clay filled feature cutting the cobbled surface as one in which they had placed dead turkeys (in plastic bags) during the mid 1970's. The remains were discovered during the cutting of the pipetrench.

Finds included early, late and post mediaeval pottery. Faunal remains include cow and sheep and other domestic species. with a single possible deer tooth. A small copper alloy pin was also recovered.

**Feature 3.** Contexts **5, 8, 9**. see Figs 2 and 3

This was a large east-west trending depression. Only the northern boundary was traced within the easement. This feature consisted of a large depression filled by a layer of clayey silts probably associated with the 1950's levelling activities. At the base of this feature a cobbled surface was set into clay. The cobble layer was approximately 3m wide and 0.10m thick, and is assumed to trend east west along the northern edge of the feature.

No associated finds.

This may represent a hollow way or sunken trackway/road forming part of a communications network for Little Childerley.

#### **Finds collections;**

1. Finds were collected from the stripped easement within area 2.

These included saxo-norman (St Neots Ware), early mediaeval (shelly ware), late mediaeval and post-mediaeval pottery.

2. From field walking area to the west of the easement between the Grove and a line 40m to the north. A concentration of mediaeval pot had been observed during casual finds collection. The area was field-walked in order to provide a rough date for the settlement of the site. The finds collected included early mediaeval and mediaeval pottery.

Fig 2 Sketch plan of features located in Area 2. Scale 1:1,000

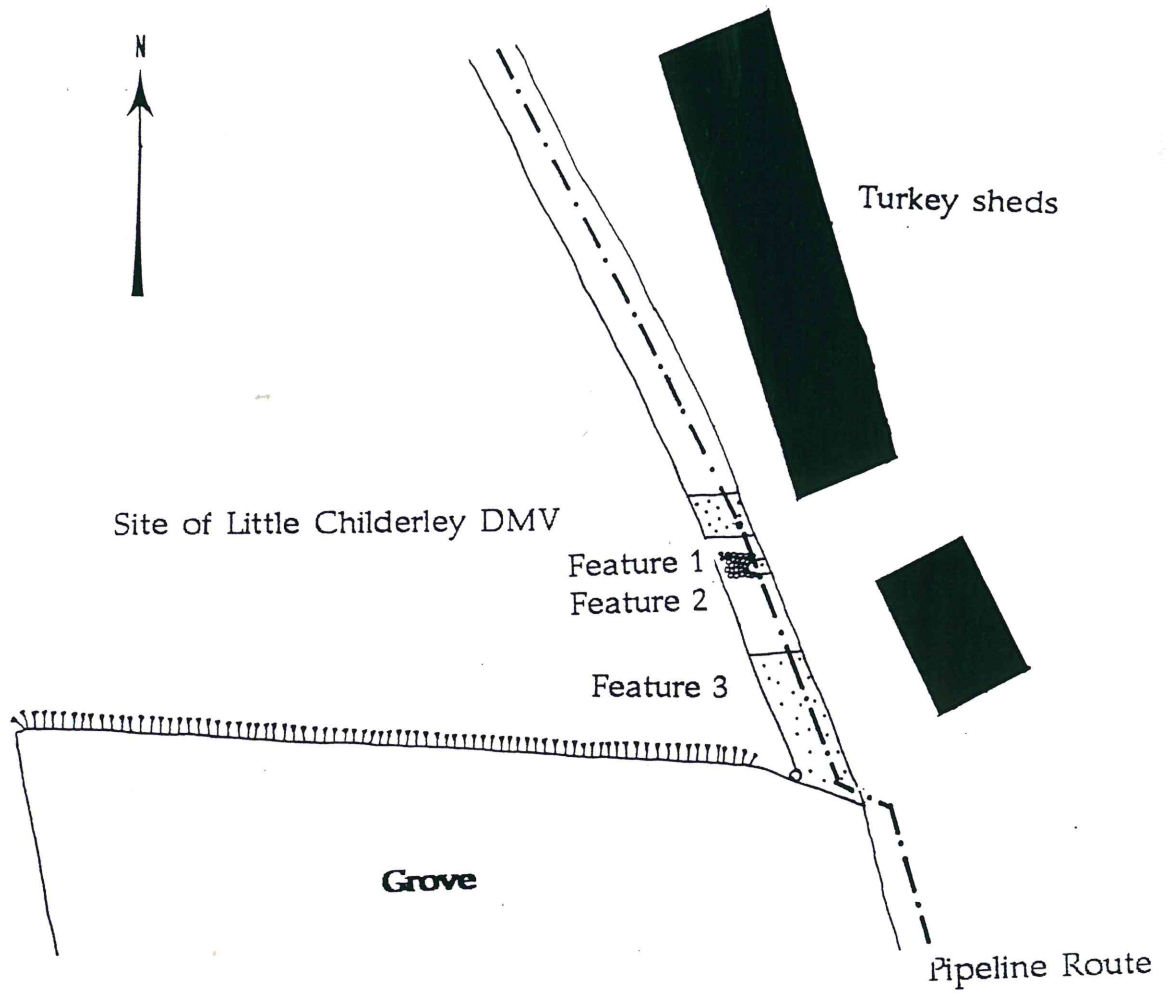
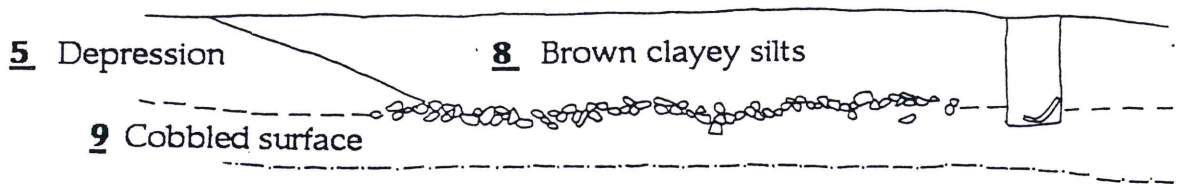


Fig 3 Section through feature 3. Scale 1:40



## Conclusion.

The site of Little Childerley was levelled by ploughing and associated activities during the late 1950's. The recording brief has shown that sunken features associated with the DMV still exist below the ploughsoil. Furthermore, due to the clayey nature of the substrate (natural), important waterlogged remains are likely to exist within such features. The cobbled surfaces may represent the remains of trackways which can be observed on the aerial photographs forming part of a complex communications network between Little Childerley, Great Childerley and other settlements and activity centres such as the Hall. The pottery evidence suggests that some of these routeways were maintained or developed after the abandonment of Little Childerley.

Farm staff have observed the destruction of similar cobbled surfaces during the ploughing of these fields. Information provided by the farm staff suggests that no archaeological features, pottery or building fabric were observed during the excavation of foundations for the turkey sheds.

A large number of bones, identified at the time as human, have in the past been discovered in this area by the farm staff and re-buried in a large pit elsewhere on the farm (location regrettably lost). This suggesting that the church associated with the village of Little Childerley has been disturbed by farming practices.

The site is also known to the farmers as the location of a WWII airplane crash site.

From aerial photographs and archaeological evidence it would appear that the DMV of Little Childerley was unaffected by the pipelaying activities. Though the site is probably heavily truncated by almost 40 years of ploughing, important archaeological remains are likely to be preserved within sunken features.

## The Historical Record and Landscape

The Childerley to Boxworth pipeline runs through two parishes that on brief examination may be seen to exhibit very different histories. The emphasis on parkland and pasture in Childerley contrasts strongly with the open field arable pattern in Boxworth. However more detailed research reveals social and economic ties between the two parishes so that much may be learnt from their joint consideration.

### 1. Childerley

The landscape history of the parish of Childerley has, since the 16th century at least, been dominated by the imposition of the deer park covering at one time over 250 acres of the area immediately surrounding the Hall. The creation of this park resulted not only in the final depopulation of the villages (although both had been in serious decline before this) but also, ironically, in the preservation of their remains under pasture. In places this preservation has continued up until the last 40 years and may continue to a limited extent to the current day.

Documentary records for the Childerleys are fairly poor, the manorial court records have not been preserved and, unusually for such a large landowner, there appear to have been no estate maps commissioned earlier than the mid-eighteenth century. However, evidence from various other governmental and manorial records combined with the evidence of indicative field names as given on the estate plan of 1808 (CUL Ms Plans 552) can be integrated with the archaeological evidence to give a good account of the parish.

Despite the small size of the parish (1,069a) Childerley contained two settlements during most of the middle ages. These were known as Great Childerley and Little Childerley from the early 13th century onwards and both have been located on the ground with their associated earthworks. The two sites were within 1.5 miles of each other, with Great Childerley lying to the east of the present day hall bounded by a stream to the south east, and Little Childerley being to the west.

As is typical of Cambridgeshire, the parish was divided into several manors. In this case, one manor can be equated with Little Childerley, whilst the other was divided into two moieties subsequent to 1284/1290. In the 15th century one part of Great Childerley and the manor of Little Childerley were in the single hands of the Hore family with the other part being held separately. This remained the case until the manors were acquired by Sir John Cutts in the years 1508 and 1509 resulting in single ownership of almost all the parish.

From that time all manorial rights have been held together although the manors were still formally distinguished until the 18th century. The Cutts family held the estate until the late 17th century when it was sold to the Calvert family. These in turn held it until the mid 19th century when it again changed hands several times in quick succession. These long periods when almost the entire parish has been in the sole hands of important land-owning families has had a strong influence on the parish economy and landscape, with a stress on pasture for either parkland or sheep being maintained over several centuries. There being no necessity for numbers of farm staff with accompanying families and dwellings the villages of Childerley have never been re-settled. The few workers that were needed either lived in buildings associated with the Hall or came from Boxworth creating close economic and social links.

Both Great and Little Childerley are recorded in Domesday and there appears to have been a different type of population within each. Great Childerley had the majority of the villani, cottars and bordars, whilst Little Childerley housed 3 of the 4 servi. Over two thirds of the combined value was also produced by Great Childerley, which had five of the seven and a half ploughlands and most of the peasant ploughteams.

By 1279 Little Childerley is again recorded as exhibiting a slightly poorer social pattern with an emphasis on land held in villeinage when compared to the other settlement where the emphasis was on freehold. The two main manors had their own windmill, these are not recorded after 1300, a single mill was also recorded in 1260. The exact location of these is not now known.

Two churches were present in the 13th century with the advowson of each belonging to the lords of the manor, but the church of Little Childerley was described by the middle of the following century as a chapel of the Great Childerley church. The values of these (in terms of tithes and other income) was unequal and again there are indications that Little Childerley was much the poorer settlement. Great Childerley rose from a value of £6 in the early 13th century to £10 by 1276, and £13 when combined with Little Childerley in 1340. The living of Little Childerley, however, was only worth £1 at the earlier date and £5 in 1276. By 1535 on the eve of almost complete depopulation the united living was only worth £6 10s.

The churches were united in 1489; Walker (1879) suggests that the church of Childerley Parva (Little Childerley) was actually 'taken down' after this date. That of Great Childerley was closed by 1552 and by at least 1600 services for the family were held in the chapel connected with Childerley Hall. Glebeland was absorbed into the estate on its purchase by Sir John Cutts and tithes were also leased to the estate by the 18th century. A Tithe map and accompanying apportionments was produced in 1849 and is stored at the Cambridge University Library. (CUL EDR/Tithe Child).

The site of the Great Childerley church (variously known as St Nicholas or St Mary) is known as lying near the east end of the former village street. The site of the Little Childerley church cannot currently be located.

Small areas of woodland were recorded as belonging to each of the manors until about 1400. These never exceeded 15 acres and woodland area was not increased until well into the 19th century when parts of the parkland were wooded. The former park would typically have been predominantly of woodland pasture with little understorey, as suggested on the illustration of the park on the Boxworth Map of 1650. (Hunts. Record Office. Ref. LR23/367) Fig 4.

Between the 13th and end of the 15th centuries both manors were predominantly arable but by 1510 grassland covered half or more of the manors and following Sir John Cutts enclosures and imparkment there was no arable at all left by 1600. This emphasis on pasturage continued until the late eighteenth century (Fig 5) and during that time records reveal the presence of sheep and cattle variously forming the basis of the estates economy. The deer in the parkland occasionally shared their grazing with the domestic animals, and will themselves have contributed towards the households kitchens as well as emphasising their social standing.

In the 16th century the park was described as 'of good extent, plentifully stored with a well conditioned fallow deer and sufficiently wooded for use and ornament . . . the soil though somewhat wet and cold as most grounds thereabout be, is fruitful and healthful in good proportion' (Walker, 1879). Also lying within the park at that time was a very large coney warren from which rabbits were sent to London twice a week to be sold and from which the estate gained 'a large revenue', in addition to stocking their own larders.

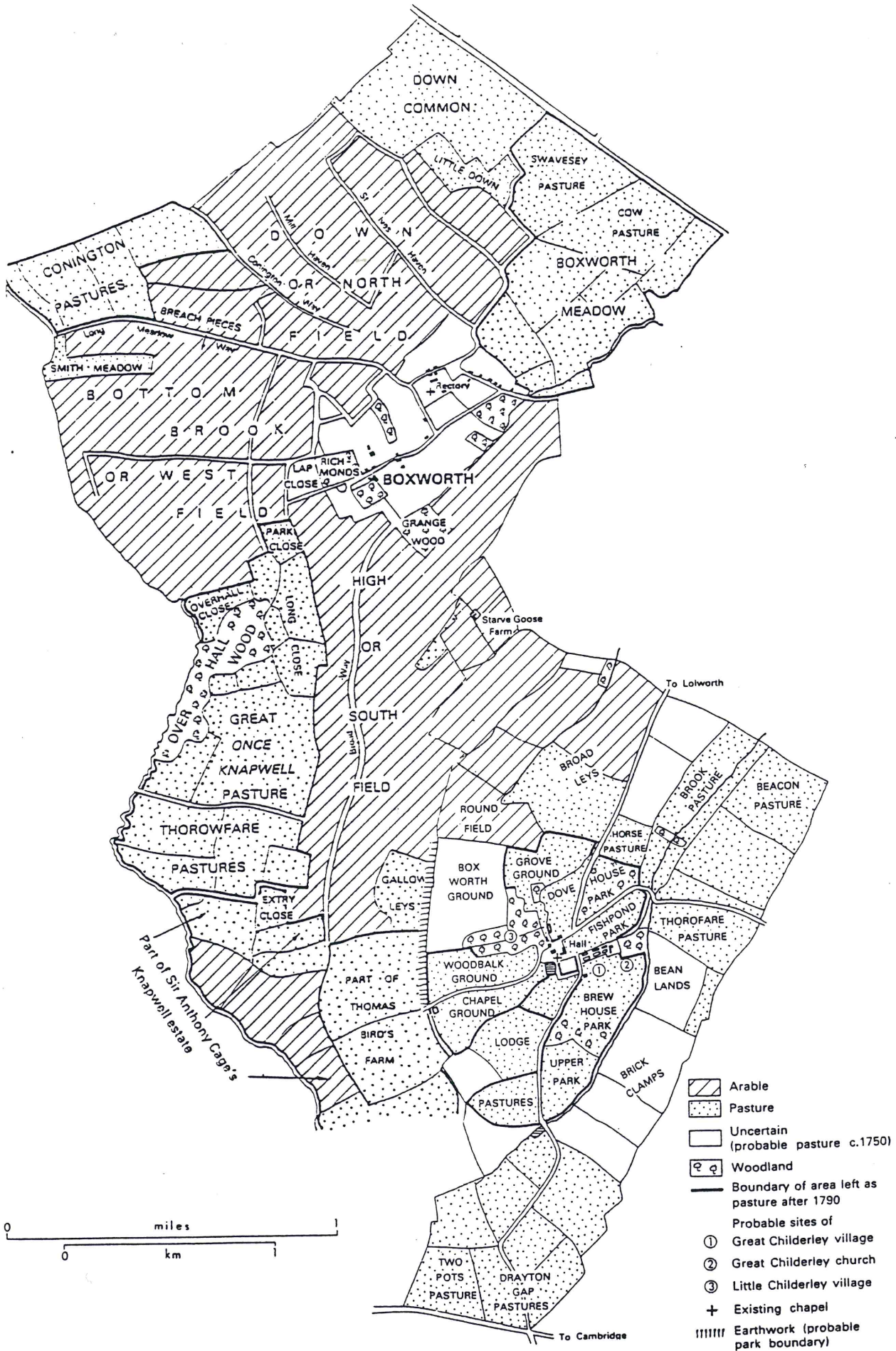
During the mid eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the amount of land under arable gradually rose again and employment numbers increased. Some of these labourers lived in Boxworth (continuing the close relationship between the two parishes) whilst others were housed in converted outbuildings of the Hall. Continued ploughing and mechanisation in the present century has, unfortunately, led to damage of the old village settlements which were reported as still partly upstanding in the 17th century and present as massive earthworks at the beginning of this.

In 1852 numerous burials were found and reported when a lawn to the south of the Hall was being levelled, and more recently further burials and remains of cobbled roads and buildings have been disturbed by agricultural activities. The DMV of Great Childerley was explored archaeologically by Alexander (1961) who recovered pottery dating to the saxo-norman and 12th to 14th century and several areas of cobbling. Much of this site is currently under pasture again and earthworks have been surveyed and interpreted (RCHM, 1968). The Little Childerley site is unfortunately badly damaged by ploughing,



Fig 4 1650 plan of Boxworth fields  
(Hunts Record Office Ref. LR23/367)

Fig 5 Map of the parishes of Boxworth and Childerley showing agricultural practices of the mid 18th century.  
 From VCH Vol. IX p. 40 & 270



which is continuing, and has never been properly investigated.

Other areas of interest on the present estate include the chapel (built or re-built) in 1600 and now restored; an area called in the 19th century the Willows but now called the Oziers, which appears to contain fishponds and other water-management earthworks; and remnants of the 16th century park pale running along the western parish boundary. The pale can also be seen on the 1650 plan of Boxworth fields (Fig. 4).

## 2. Boxworth

The Childerley to Boxworth pipeline in fact only ran through the southern tip of Boxworth well away from the main settlement in the central part of the parish. Therefore only a brief historical outline of Boxworth is given here along with a few comparative comments between Childerley and Boxworth.

The parish of Boxworth is much larger than Childerley (being approx. 2,600 acres). Situated mainly upon clays and shales much of the southern area has been under woodland or pasture until the 16th century. The population has undergone extreme fluctuations but from 1086 until the 16th century appears always to have greatly outnumbered the population of Childerley. For example in 1279 there were probably 100 landholders and 80 dwellings in Boxworth whereas Childerley at the same time had 20 and 25 tenants in the two villages respectively. By 1377 the contrast is even more marked with 76 tenants paying the poll tax in Childerley and 299 in Boxworth. It must be recalled that these figures may not only reflect differences in actual numbers of population but also in wealth.

However, there was severe shrinkage of the Boxworth population in the Middle Ages and by 1524 there were only 18 people who were eligible to pay the Lay Subsidy. By 1563 there were still only 17 households and population increase did not really commence until the early 19th century. This shrinkage is all the more interesting given the probability of similar decline in the Childerley parish prior to the expansion of the park.

The parish was divided into two manors one being slightly larger than the other. The greater of these was the manor which, by the 15th century, was called Overhall; the manor house is presumed to be represented by the earthworks of a moated sites within the northern part of Overhall Grove. Pottery from this area suggests that the manor house was occupied from the 11th to 14th centuries and the house is known to have 'disappeared' well before 1600.

Both this and the Huntingfields manor came to the Cutts family of Childerley in the 16th century and seem to have been used both to supplement pasture land and provide the arable component lacking at Childerley. In 1690 towards the end of the Cutts ownership the parish included 900 acres of arable mostly divided between five farms. The village also housed workers from the Childerley estate at later periods.

The superb plan of Boxworth in 1650 shows the three main fields that provided this arable and also depicts the main areas of woodland and pasture. Interestingly, comparison of the archaeological maps held at the County Council Archaeology Section with this early plan demonstrate an almost exact match between the areas of open fields shown in the 17th century and remains of ridge and furrow detectable until very recently.



The presence of a large depopulated village available for purchase in the immediate vicinity of their Childerley estate appears to have given the Cutts the opportunity to expand their own park and pasture land in the area of the Hall whilst maintaining other farming activities elsewhere. This situation came to a close when the Boxworth manors were sold off at the beginning of the 18th century to pay for the Cutts family debts.

The current pipeline runs through the area that was occupied by open fields in the 17th century and as such was not expected to disturb any archaeological features.

### Discussion

The historical documentation alludes to a change in landscape utilization within the mediaeval and post-mediaeval periods. During the mediaeval period the parish was occupied by the village sites of Great and Little Childerley using the surrounding farmland for arable and pasture, prior to the establishment of the deer park in the 16th century.

Historical, aerial photographic and archaeological evidence suggests that the main settlement centre of Little Childerley to be slightly to the west of the easement. Land to the south of Little Childerley village has been steam ploughed in the past and this makes it very difficult to define the extent of the village, it is likely that the wooded area on the early 19th century map (fig 5) marks the extent of the village earthworks prior to the introduction of mechanised farming.

The only features affected by the trenching were parts of the village communications network ie. the two cobbled surfaces which appear to have led to and from Little Childerley, and a large boundary/drainage ditch. Evidence from feature 3 shows that this route was either retained after the depopulation of Little Childerley or created in the post-mediaeval period parallel to an earlier route suggesting some continuity of use in the area.

A windmill and church are known to be associated with the village neither of which are recognisable in the field or from the aerial photographs. The field marked as chapel ground in fig 5 is likely to refer to the post-mediaeval landscape based around the hall where the chapel now stands.

The location of Great Childerley is still visible today, though the margins of the settlement have been encroached on by ploughing.

The 16th century saw the formation of the park and subsequent expansions and contractions; over 250 acres were taken out of production by the Cutts family (approximately a quarter of all parish lands) and the cartographic evidence suggests that at a maximum up to half the parish may have been under parkland. Presumably this was only possible where there was a lack of population pressure (as suggested by historical documentation), and a wealthy landowner (the Cutts also held the Boxworth manors of Overhall grove and Huntingfields to supplement the Childerley agricultural production).

The initial park appears to be centred around the DMV of Little Childerley west of the Hall, within the area defined by the entrenched parish boundary and the east-west running tree alignments. Whether all the boundaries were entrenched at this time is difficult to say; as no east-west alignment exists today at this point we may be observing the differential survival of the earthworks as a result of later agricultural practices. Alternatively, the Cutts family may have planned for the expansion of the deer park at an early stage (particularly with the rapidity with which the expansion seems to have occurred) with the eventual aim of setting the Hall within a new landscape bounded on all sides by the park. Other types of boundary may have been used to contain the deer. It is presently believed that fencing may have been used to define the boundary/pale of the enlarged deer park.

The deer park boundary has largely been preserved in the form of field boundaries and field names only on the northern side of the park has later field boundary changes disrupted the park boundary. The boundary here is likely to extend between Boxworth Ground and Round Field, and along the northern boundaries of Grove Ground (excluding Long Close) and Dovehouse Park.

### **Conclusion**

Historical records and personal recollections of current farmhands, combined with still perceivable archaeological traces of the tracks and hollow ways linking the two old villages, the earthworks of the church and the old manorial site and crofts and tofts of Great Childerley enable most of the old landscape of Childerley to be reconstructed.

Two early landscapes survive virtually intact within the parish of Childerley. The Mediaeval landscape survives in the form of the field monument of Great Childerley DMV and the deposits of Little Childerley which were levelled by ploughing during the late 1950's.

The Late Mediaeval/post - mediaeval landscape is preserved in the form of field boundaries and field names, the groves and pasture land including the DMV's were a component of this landscape. The entrenchment along the western boundary appears to be associated with the original park prior to later expansion using fences to contain the deer. Only in the north has the boundary been radically altered by late field changes. The embankment is judged to be one of the best preserved deer park pales in the County.

The parishes of Boxworth and Childerley provides an interesting picture of adapting relationships and related landscape modifications in the mediaeval and post-mediaeval society.

## Recommendations

### **Pipelines**

Due to the problems which came to light during this project we recommend that details concerning the body contracted to undertake trenching should be provided at the earliest date possible so that a constructive relationship can be guaranteed prior to the commencement of work. This will allow archaeologists to understand the working practices and the time schedule involved, and for archaeologists to explain their role in the procedures. This should help the contracted bodies (archaeologist and trenching company) to avoid any damaging conflict of interest. This project has shown that the archaeologists need to be kept informed of any changes in the schedule; this requires the goodwill of all *contracted* bodies and the *sponsor*.

One of the important areas defined by the County Archaeologists through the planning process was not recorded due to this problem.

### **Concerning Preservation**

The DMV site of Great Childerley appears to be one of the best preserved village sites in Cambridgeshire. The site has undergone very limited excavation and some ploughing on its peripheries. Evidence from the site of Little Childerley suggest that waterlogged remains are likely to be preserved in the area. It is surprising to the authors that the site has never been recommended to English Heritage for scheduling.

The DMV of Little Childerley has been truncated by ploughing; we were informed by farm staff that ploughing is still affecting archaeological remains such as cobbled surfaces. The results of the recording brief show that important remains may still survive within sunken features such as hollow ways, ponds etc. some of which are likely to be waterlogged due to the clayey ground conditions.

The deer park boundary/entrenchment survives up to 2m in height, and is judged to be one of the best preserved park pales in Cambridgeshire.

We hope that the landowners will contact the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Section for advice concerning the management of these field monuments and the archaeological 'resource' in order to help us preserve your past.

## Bibliography

- Alexander, J. 1961. Excavations at Childerley, Camb. *DMV Research Group 9th Annual Report*. 9-11. London.
- MAFF 1984. *The Soils of England and Wales. Sheet 4 Eastern England*. The Soil Survey of England and Wales.
- Royal Commission on Historic Monuments. 1968. *An Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of Cambridge. Vol. one. West Cambridgeshire*. HMSO. London.
- Victoria Histories of the Counties of England. 1967 onwards. *Cambridge and the Isle of Ely (vol. ix)*. Univ. of London. Inst. of Historical Research. London.
- Walker, F.A. 1879. *Childerley, Some Account of the Parishes of*. West, Newman and co. London.

## Appendix A

### List of Contexts in stratigraphic order within their associated feature

#### Feature 1

No	Type	Description
<u>4</u>	Fill	A silty clay fill, dark grey brown in colour with frequent gravels and pebbles up to 0.05m in size. Evidence for burning. <u>Interp.</u> Evidence for recent burning within a hollow formed by the ditch <u>1</u> .
<u>6</u>	Fill	Mid to grey brown silty clays with some organics and occasional gravels. <u>Interp.</u> Backfilling associated with ploughing and levelling during the late 1950's.
<u>7</u>	Fill	Light olive green/grey homogeneous clayey silts. The fill is gleyed with wood and bone preserved in the waterlogged deposits. The base of the deposit was not reached. <u>Interp.</u> Deposited as the result of natural infilling as the ditch went out of use.
<u>1</u>	Cut	Linear feature aligned east-west. 3.80m in width and greater than 1m in depth, the feature was not bottomed. Basal fills were waterlogged. <u>Interp.</u> A drainage or boundary ditch.

#### Feature 2

No	Type	Description
<u>3</u>	Layer	Layer of flint, chalk and sandstone cobbles laid into a clayey matrix. The cobble layer trends east to west. Finds included pottery of early to post-mediaeval date, a copper alloy pin and bones of domesticated fauna and a single cervus tooth ?. <u>Interp.</u> Mediaeval or post-mediaeval track or roadway.

#### Feature 3

No	Type	Description
<u>8</u>	Fill	Mid to dark brown clayey silts with occasional flint fragment. <u>Interp.</u> Deposit associated with ploughing and levelling of the late 1950's.
<u>5</u>	Feature	A shallow depression over 14m in width. At the base of this a cobbled surface was discovered during trenching. <u>Interp.</u> Sunken feature infilled with <u>8</u> .
<u>9</u>	Layer	Layer of flint cobbles laid into mottled yellow clays lying within the depression ( <u>5</u> ).

#### Finds Collections

<u>2</u>	Finds	Finds collected from the easement of area 2. These included St. Neots ware, early mediaeval, late mediaeval and post-mediaeval (Tudor green ?) pottery
<u>12</u>	Finds	Finds collected from transects on the western side of the easement between the grove and 40m north. 4 transects were walked at 5m intervals, transect 1 being closest to the easement. Finds included a number of early mediaeval sherds (pre-13th century) and a mediaeval rim and handle.

Pottery types were kindly recorded by Alison Taylor.

All other contexts refer to modern or natural deposits.

All site archives have been deposited with the County Archaeologist for Cambridgeshire.



cambridgeshire  
archaeology

Rural Management Division  
Department of Property  
Shire Hall  
Cambridge  
Tel. (0223) 317404

The Archaeology Office  
Rural Management Section  
Department of Property  
Shire Hall  
Cambridge  
Tel. (0223) 317312

