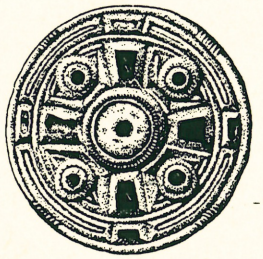

Archaeological Field Unit

Multi-Period Finds at High Street, Great Wilbraham

Tim Denham & Jonathan Last

1997

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. 133

Commissioned By Lovell Partnerships (Southern) Ltd

Multi-Period Finds at High Street, Great Wilbraham, Cambridgeshire

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Summary

In June and September 1996 the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council carried out two phases of archaeological work within an L-shaped plot of land of about 0.4 ha, fronting onto the High Street in Great Wilbraham on the south side of the village, near Frog End (TL 547 572). Both phases of work were funded by Lovell Partnerships (Southern) Ltd.

Air photo and historical evidence gave no indication of any activity other than arable farming on the site, which is not currently under cultivation. However, features of various periods were discovered, including: Roman or post-Roman field boundaries and ditch sections/elongated pits, some of which cut through an earlier buried soil and some of which were sealed by a later subsoil; a medieval activity area consisting of a central pit with four surrounding postholes; and a variety of post-medieval features including clunch and yellow brick land drains, soakaways, a ditch, pits and postholes.

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1 INTRODUCTION

In June and September 1996, the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council conducted an archaeological evaluation and limited second phase excavation in advance of a housing development on a plot of land by the High Street, Great Wilbraham, Cambridgeshire (TL 547 572). Both phases were funded by Lovell Partnerships (Southern) Ltd and undertaken in accordance with briefs designed by Louise Austin, Development Control Officer at Cambridgeshire County Council.

The intention of the initial evaluation was to determine the nature, age, extent and degree of preservation of archaeological resources on the property (Last 1996). The subsequent excavations were required to clarify the exact nature of the archaeology at this site and address the medieval/post-medieval development of Frog End, Great Wilbraham. Both phases of work are documented in this report.

2 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY & LAND USE

The project area is located immediately north of the High Street at the southern end of Great Wilbraham village, near Frog End (Fig. 1). It lies away from the village core, and is about 500 m south of the medieval church. The 0.4 ha parcel is L-shaped, bounded by residential properties to either side and allotment gardens to the rear. Behind the allotments runs a footpath, parallel to and about 150 m away from the High Street. To the west of the site the path is accompanied by a boundary ditch. The site presently lies under grass, but has been arable land since the war (Appendix 1). It is generally level although the rear (north-west) of the site is about 0.5 m higher than the portion nearer the road. This latter portion is in turn some 0.4 m higher than the High Street itself, which suggests the road forms a hollow-way.

Great Wilbraham lies some 10 km east of Cambridge city centre and 11 km south-west of Newmarket, on the road between Fulbourn and Bottisham. The village lies at a height of about 15 m OD on the south-eastern side of a band of Lower Chalk, approximately 8 km wide, which runs north-east/south-west along the Fen edge (British Geological Survey, Sheets 188 & 205). A couple of kilometres south of the village the land rises onto the Middle Chalk, reaching 100 m OD about 6 km to the south-east of Great Wilbraham, on a line between Balsham and Dullingham. The north-east/south-west orientation of the natural landscape of the south-eastern Fen edge, in terms of both topography and geology, has had a major impact on the orientation of the human landscape. These influences are witnessed by the alignments of modern roads, fields and parish boundaries, as well as by ancient features like the Icknield Way and the Cambridgeshire Dykes (Malim *et al.*, forthcoming; and see below).

There are also more local variations in geology. The Lower Chalk near Wilbraham is broken up by riverine deposits associated with Little Wilbraham river, with a band of 4th Terrace river gravels running north-west from Little Wilbraham village towards Stow-cum-Quy. This band is slightly detached

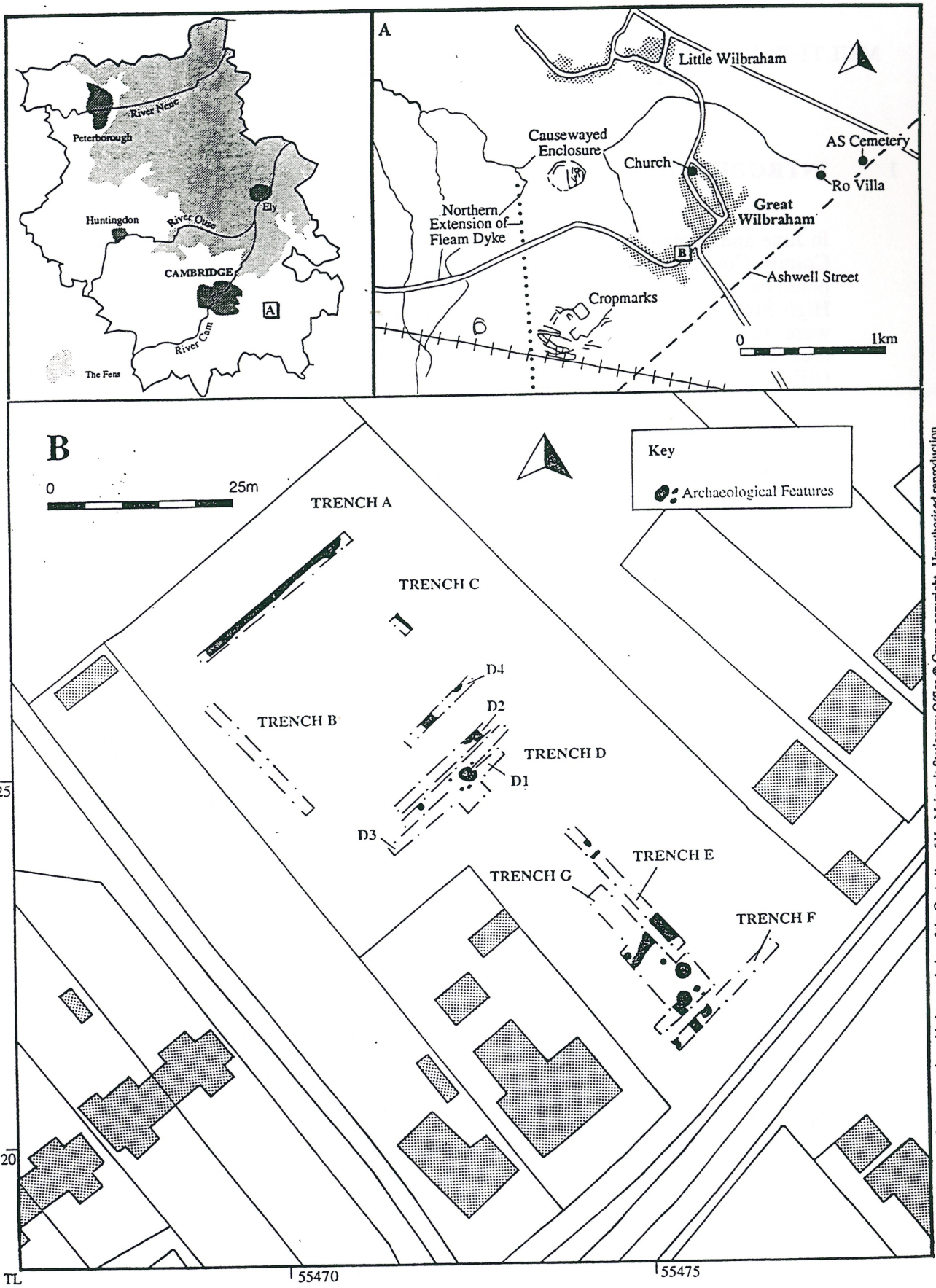

***Figure 1** Site Location and Trench Plan*

from pockets of 1st and 2nd Terrace gravels overlain by peat (Wilbraham, Fulbourn and Teversham Fens), which lie a few hundred metres to the south-west. The edge of the peat fen (now drained) is some 1.5 km north-west of the present site.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The area around Great Wilbraham contains a number of important archaeological and historical sites (Fig. 1).

3.1 Previous Archaeology

In the Neolithic period a causewayed enclosure was constructed on a locally prominent knoll of chalk marl, close to the Fen, about 1 km north-west of the present site. The enclosure was investigated by David Clarke, John Alexander and Ian Kinnes in 1975 and 1976, but remains unpublished. The excavated ditch segments were associated with quantities of Middle Neolithic Mildenhall Ware pottery. The site fits into a regional earlier Neolithic landscape in which enclosures probably formed 'central places' of varying function (cross-cutting our categories of 'domestic' and 'ritual') for small, relatively mobile early farming communities. Great Wilbraham causewayed enclosure is more or less equidistant from other known sites at Fornham All Saints, Suffolk (to the east-north-east) and Haddenham, Cambridgeshire (north-north-west), as well as a dubious enclosure at Melbourn, Cambridgeshire (south-west). Each of these lies about 20 km away, while more distant sites such as Cardington (Bedfordshire) and Etton (Cambridgeshire) may fit into this regional pattern, which resembles the 'territorial' distribution of the Wessex enclosures more than the linear, riverine spread of the intervening Thames valley sites (cf. Mercer 1990: fig 1) or of later Neolithic monuments in the east Midlands (Malim, forthcoming).

Other Neolithic finds in the Wilbraham area include a cache of polished stone axes found near the Temple, just north-east of the village (Fox 1923). Later prehistory is less well represented in the vicinity but the Street Way, part of the Icknield Way zone, lies to the south of Great Wilbraham and this was probably an important route across the east Midlands during the Iron Age. In Cambridgeshire the Icknield Way runs through that critical corridor between the forested chalk uplands to the south-east and the Fens to the north-west.

Roman sites are more prevalent in the area: part of a villa complex 1 km east of Great Wilbraham was excavated by Cambridgeshire County Council in 1990 (Etté & Hinds 1993); a small bronze enamelled votive stand was discovered as a stray find just 250 m from the present site (M. Henig in Taylor 1986: 29-31); and excavations in 1992 at Rookery Farm, 1 km to the south-west, located a ditch, cobbled yard area and kiln rubbish (Frend & Cameron 1993). These finds imply Roman activity spanning at least the 2nd to the 4th centuries AD. The north-west/south-east orientation of ditches and enclosures in the area of Frend's excavation, associated with Roman finds from fieldwalking, suggests other cropmark features of a similar alignment in the area could be Roman. These include a possible droveway to the north-west of the present site, near the causewayed enclosure, and ditches in the nearer part of Rookery Farm, to the west (Appendix 1). The apparently Romanised route along the Street Way (Ashwell Street), south of Great Wilbraham, is also on the same alignment,

running north-east/south-west, although Taylor (1973: 223-4) suggests the present trackway primarily respects boundaries laid out by 18th century Enclosure Commissions.

Taylor (1969) also records ditches running north-west/south-east on the north-eastern side of the village, 250 m from the 5th-6th century AD Saxon cemetery in Little Wilbraham parish (excavated in the 19th century by Neville: Kennett 1971, and refs. therein), with which he suggests they may be connected. Pagan Saxon activity around Great Wilbraham is clearer now that construction of the Fleam Dyke, a stretch of which runs about 1 km to the west of the village but no longer survives as an earthwork (Etté & Hinds 1993), has been carbon-dated to around the 5th century AD (Malim *et al.*, forthcoming).

3.2 Historical Background

The modern villages of Great and Little Wilbraham began to emerge in the later Saxon period. Their name apparently derives from Wilburh, daughter of Penda, a 7th century king of Mercia. She was granted land behind the Fleam Dyke by her father, and the royal connection stuck; according to the Domesday Book, *Witborham* (Great Wilbraham) "was always in the King's demesne" (VCH I). After the Norman invasion part of the estate was held for Alan of Brittany, Earl of Richmond (Yorkshire), by his chamberlain, Odo (Stokes 1926). In the early 13th century the manor was granted to the Knights Templar. Although it passed to the Knights Hospitaller after the Templars' dissolution in the 14th century, the manor house on the north-east side of the present village is still known as Wilbraham Temple.

After the Dissolution the village was run by the leading farming families, the Olivers, Ballards and Smiths (Cambridgeshire Federation of Women's Institutes 1989). The population in 1517 was, by different ecclesiastical taxation returns, 24 households (Peter's Pence) or 39 chimneys (Ely Farthings). In the 17th century, Great Wilbraham with its new secular landowners became a centre of nonconformist religion. By 1676 there were 170 inhabitants (Stokes 1926).

In the 18th century much of the local farmland was bought up by the Hicks family. However, the map produced by the Enclosure Commission of 1797, whose work also included the drainage of Wilbraham Fen (Hawkins 1990), shows the land north-west of the footpath running behind the present site as being owned by I. Dickinson and W. Haylock. The field boundaries are already substantially those of the present day, and no structures are evidenced on the site. The 1885 OS map (1:2500) shows a similar situation. Since then properties have been constructed on both sides of the High Street down towards Rookery Farm and Frog End, including the property south-west of the present site (not part of the project area, explaining its L-shape).

Other than buildings associated with Rookery Farm and Kennel Farm south of the High Street, the land west of the junction with Mill Road has no known settlement history. Aerial photographic evidence similarly revealed no traces of archaeological features on the present site. The adjacent meadow to the west does contain earthwork remains of ponds, trackways and potential house platforms, presumably of medieval date (Cambs SMR 2772). A D-shaped enclosure seen on air photographs to the north-west is probably also medieval (Appendix 1). The presence of settlement features here at Frog End might explain the existence and name of the footpath known as Toft Lane, which runs parallel to the High Street behind the present site and alongside the meadow.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 First Phase

During the evaluation 110 m of linear trenches and a small open area extension to one trench, totalling 160 sq m in all (or about 4% of the total area), were laid out within the field (Fig. 1). In the absence of aerial photographic evidence (Appendix 1) the six trenches (A-F) were distributed across the property in order to obtain a representative sample of the archaeology.

4.2 Second Phase

During the second excavation phase, approximately 170 sq m of linear trenches and a small open area were opened up within the field. These excavations were intended to target the medieval/post-medieval finds encountered on two portions of the property during the evaluation: four trenches (Trenches D-1 to D-4) totalling approximately 45 m in length were positioned to determine the spatial extent of the features originally identified within Trench D; and an open area (Trench G) totalling 100 sq m was located to investigate the features identified within Trenches E and F.

4.3 General Methodological Procedures

All mechanical excavations were conducted using a JCB equipped with a 1.5 m wide toothless ditching bucket. Each trench and open area was excavated down to the top of archaeologically significant strata, subsoil or natural chalk depending upon which was encountered first. Subsoil deposits were also removed by machine in some areas. The trenches were then cleaned by hand (using shovel and hoe, and trowels where necessary) and photographed.

All features were recorded on pre- and post-excavation plans, photographed in colour and black and white, and documented using the Archaeological Field Unit's single context recording system. At least one example of each feature type was sample excavated. The trenches and open areas were planned by EDM theodolite, and the trench plan was subsequently tied in to the national grid.

All finds collected in the field were transported to the Fulbourn office for cleaning, identification and quantification. All artefactual material is to be permanently stored at the County Archaeological Store at Landbeach.

5 RESULTS

Both the topsoil and natural bedrock varied considerably between the trenches. A uniform dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2) silty ploughsoil (1), approximately 0.3 m deep, was present across the property. Undulations in the natural chalk were filled by a less plastic and slightly less stony mid-brown (10YR 5/3-5/4) sandy subsoil (2) in the vicinity of Trenches A, C, D-2 and D-4, and a yellowish brown, relatively homogeneous silty subsoil (52) in Trench G. No subsoil was present in the major part of the remaining trenches. The depth of

machining therefore ranged from 0.3 m in Trench B to 0.7 m in parts of Trenches A, D-2, D-4, E and G.

5.1 Trench A

Trench A was 26.5 m long, and ran north-east/south-west across the rear of the site, close to the garden allotments. At the north-east end deposits 1 (topsoil) and 2 (subsoil) were removed by machine to a depth of 0.70 m, where a mixed chalk/sand horizon was encountered. In this area deposit 2 was underlain by a 0.10 m thick subsoil deposit of yellowish-brown (10YR 5/4-6/4) slightly clayey sand (5), from which a struck flint was recovered. All archaeological features were sealed by the subsoil (2).

On initial inspection it appeared that the natural chalk/sand angled down from the south-east to north-west across the trench, explaining its appearance only on the south-east side. However, from a sounding excavated down to 0.95 m into the natural sand at the south-west end of the trench, it became clear that the variations in stratigraphy were produced by a linear (**23**) which ran longitudinally, though slightly obliquely, through the trench. The fill (22) of this cut resembled deposit 5. A section across the trench revealed that fill 22 contained fragments of animal bone and was partly sealed by a lens of redeposited chalk.

From an examination of the north-east portion of the trench, it was clear that this linear (**23**) intersected and cut a north-west/south-east oriented linear (**25**). Both features contained a single fill of silty sand (22 and 24 respectively), but 24 appeared slightly yellower (2.5Y 5/4) than 22 (10YR 5/3-5/4). A section was excavated at the intersection of the two linears which showed some slumping in the sides of cut **25** (Fig. 2). Finds recovered from the point of intersection included a quantity of animal bone and a single Roman rim sherd. These derived from the fill (22) of the later ditch (**23**).

Based upon their morphology, both linears have been interpreted as ditches. Ditch **25** was 1.28 m wide with slightly concave sides, angled at about 45°, and a rounded base. It was cut 0.34 m below the level of the natural chalk/sand. Ditch **23** was the same depth but had slightly steeper sides and a flattish base. North-east of the intersection with **25** it became shallower in both depth and angle of sides, and apparently terminated with a rounded end 1.5 m further on.

Prior to backfilling, an extension measuring 2.0 x 1.6 m was excavated by machine on the north-west side of the trench, 1.5 m south-west of the hand-excavated ditch segments (Fig. 2). It was positioned in order to locate the north-western edge of ditch **23**, which was thereby found to be some 1.20-1.25 m wide. The section also confirmed that ditch **23** was cut through subsoil deposit 5.

5.2 Trench B

Trench B measured 20.3 m long and ran in a north-west/south-east direction on the south-west side at the back of the site (Fig. 1). Its location was chosen to expose any continuation of the earthworks in the meadow to the west that might run through into the evaluation area. 0.33 m of topsoil was removed to expose the natural chalk. Two bands of natural orange sand crossed the trench about 5 m apart but no archaeological features were present. Given that the north-west end of Trench B and the south-west end of Trench A were only 5 m apart, the differences in the height and composition of the natural between the trenches

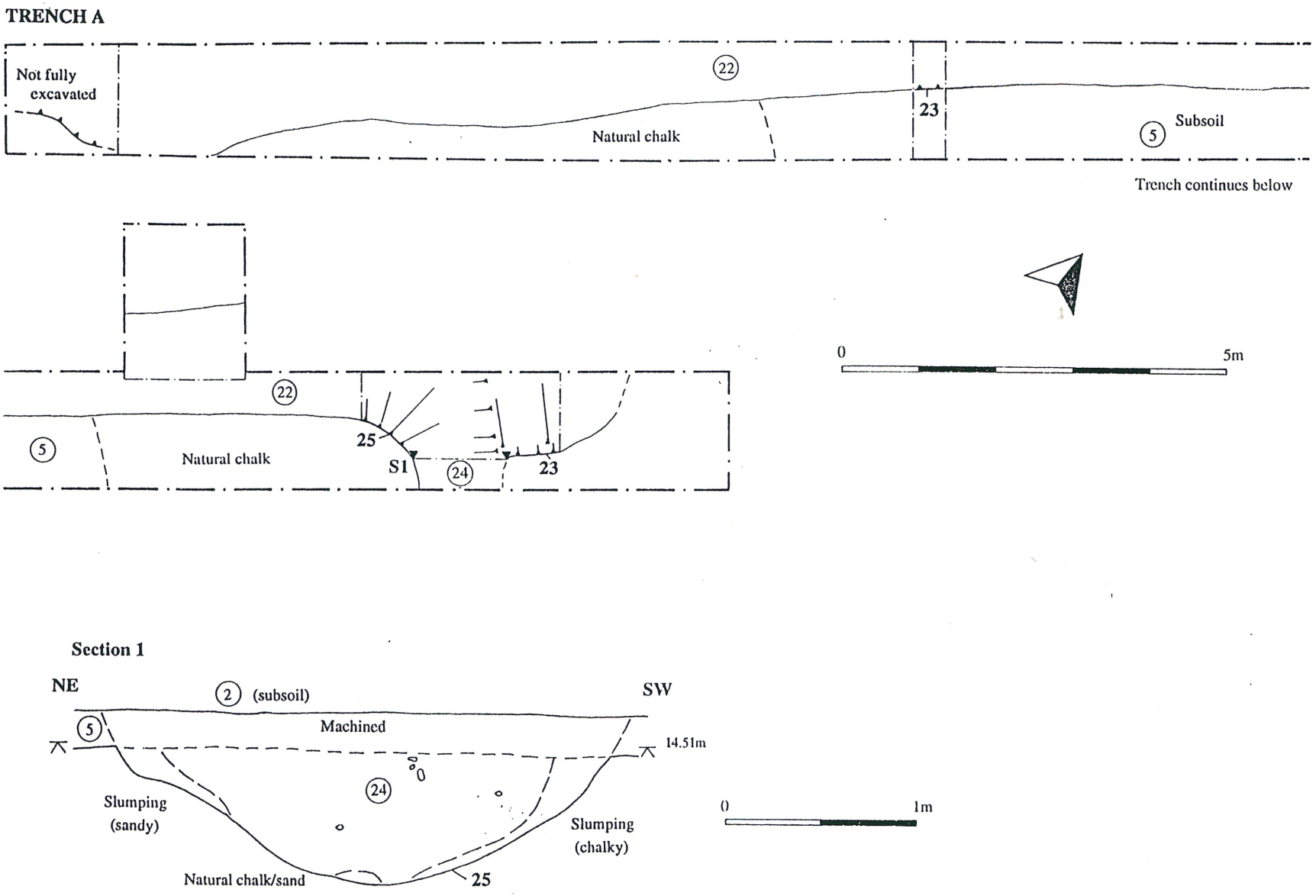

Figure 2 *Plan and Section of Boundary Ditches* ***23*** *and* ***25*** *(Trench A)*

were striking. The natural changed from clean chalk to sand or mixed chalk/sand, and its depth from 0.3 m to 0.7 m below the ground surface (the difference in absolute heights was about 0.3 m). Subsoil deposits 2 and 5 were not present in Trench B.

5.3 Trench C

This trench was 3.1 m long, and was excavated between Trenches A and D on the north-eastern side of the site in order to assess further the evident variation in the depth of topsoil. It was machined to a depth of 0.53 m, with approximately 0.3 m of ploughsoil (1) and 0.2 m of subsoil (2) being removed. As in Trench A, one edge of a linear feature running longitudinally (north-west/south-east) through the trench was revealed. A slot 0.6 m wide was excavated, revealing the cut of a ditch (**4**) with a relatively steep (c 60°) concave side and a flattish but uneven base. It was cut 0.20-0.25 m below the natural chalk and filled with a yellowish brown (10YR 5/4) silty clayey sand (3). Both in profile and fill it differed somewhat from its inferred continuation (24 & **25**) to the north-west in Trench A, and this may be a result of the changing nature of the natural (from sand to chalk) between Trenches A and C. One piece of animal bone and a possible struck flint were recovered from fill 3. The good condition of the bone compared with that from the sandier soil of fill 22 emphasised the change in matrix across only a few metres.

5.4 Trench D

Trench D measured 20 m long and ran in a north-east/south-west direction (parallel with Trench A) across the centre of the site. About 0.35 m of topsoil was removed at the south-west end and up to 0.55 m at the north-east end where an amorphous spread of greyish brown (10YR 5/2) sandy silt, resembling deposit 2, appeared. This was interpreted as representing the limit of the subsoil filling a depression in the natural at the rear of the site. It lacked the clear edges of a cut feature and was spatially restricted to the north-east end of the trench. The subsequent excavation of Trench D-2 suggests it may have sealed the continuation of ditch **86** (see 5.5.2 below).

The main feature exposed within Trench D was a large semi-circular soilmark about 2 m in diameter running into the section near the middle of the trench, and apparently associated with a couple of squared postholes. A small area of about 20 sq m was opened on the south side of the trench, revealing the rest of the circular feature and two more postholes (Fig. 3). The pit (**12**) was only 0.23 m deep, with rather irregular sides and a flattish base. It was filled with a soft greyish brown (10YR 5/2) sandy silt (13) which yielded four struck flints, a single Roman potsherd and one piece of animal bone. The surrounding postholes (**7**, **9**, **11** - the fourth was unexcavated) were subrectangular in plan and varied in depth from 0.15 to 0.28 m; they were filled with deposits (6, 8, 10, 35) similar to pit-fill 13, and lacked visible post-pipes. No finds were collected from the postholes. Towards the south-west end of the trench another possible small pit, again with a similar fill (36), was revealed but not excavated.

5.5 Trench D Extensions

In order to investigate the spatial contiguity of any features associated with the pit and postholes identified during the evaluation, four trenches (D-1, D-2, D-3, D-4) were opened in the vicinity of Trench D during the excavation phase (Fig. 3).

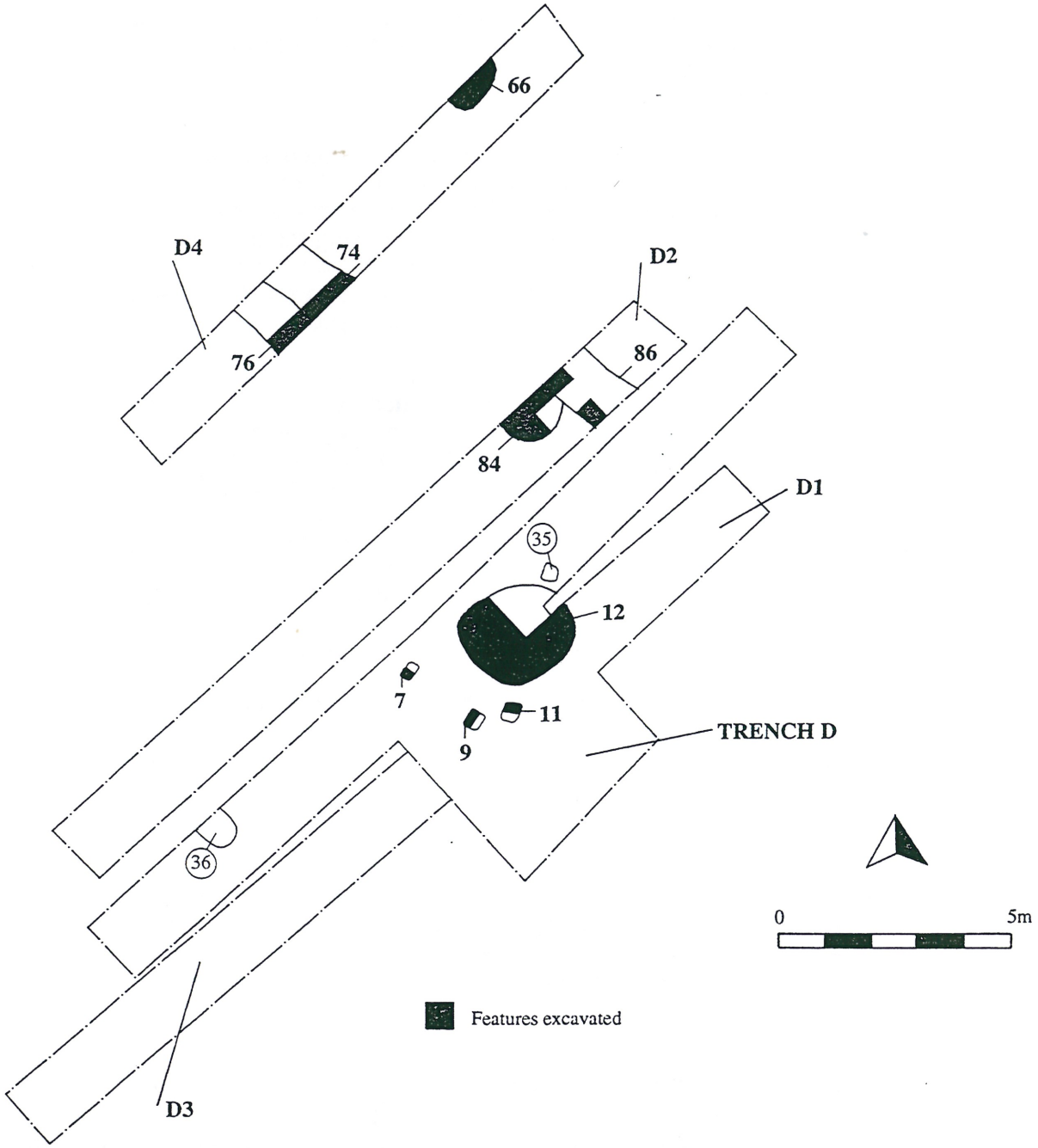

Figure 3 *Plan of Trench D and Extensions*

5.5.1 Trench D-1

This trench was 5 m long and located adjacent to and south-east of the north-east end of Trench D. The topsoil (1) was removed to reveal the natural chalk surface. A small segment of pit **12** (section 5.4) extended into the trench and was excavated. The finds from this segment consisted of a Roman sherd and an early medieval Thetford ware sherd, dating to AD 900-1150.

5.5.2 Trench D-2

This trench was 17 m long and located parallel to the north-west side of Trench D. The topsoil (1) was removed along the length of the trench to expose a gently undulating natural chalk surface. In the north-east end of the trench the subsoil (2) was encountered and investigated using the mechanical excavator. Following cleaning, two archaeological features were apparent: a linear (**86**) and a semi-circular feature (**84**). Both features were filled by a sediment indistinguishable from the subsoil (85 and 83, respectively).

The linear (**86**), which was orientated north-west/south-east across the trench and interpreted as a ditch section or elongated pit, was 1.6 m wide and 0.1 m deep. The ditch sides gently sloped to an irregular base. No finds were collected during the excavation of fill 85. The absence of this feature within Trenches D-1 and D-4 indicated that it was not part of a continuous ditch. The semi-circular feature (**84**) was 0.9 m long and 1.1 m wide within the trench base, and 0.1 m deep. Based on its alignment with linear **74** in Trench D-4, (section 5.5.4) this feature was interpreted to be a ditch terminus. The sides gently sloped to a concave base. The fill (83) contained a residual flint flake.

Even though both features were filled by sediments indistinguishable from the subsoil, it was apparent in section that linear **86** cut, and was consequently more recent than, the ditch terminus (**84**). Furthermore, both features had been severely truncated during the development of the subsoil, which was probably agricultural in origin.

5.5.3 Trench D-3

This trench was 11.5 m long and located adjacent to the south-east side of Trench D. The topsoil (1) was removed to reveal a gently undulating natural chalk without evident archaeological features. Depressions on the upper surface of the chalk had filled with topsoil and were manually investigated to ensure that they did not mask any cultural features.

5.5.4 Trench D-4

This trench was 12.6 m long and located approximately 4.5 m north-west of Trench D-2. It was excavated in order to determine the spatial extent of the features encountered within Trench D-2. The topsoil (1) and portions of the subsoil (2) were removed to reveal two linears (**74** and **76**) and a semi-circular feature (**66**). All three features were filled by a sediment indistinguishable from the subsoil (73, 75 and 65 respectively). The subsoil overlay the natural chalk to a much greater depth than in Trench D-2.

The eastern linear (**74**), which extended across the trench, was 1.8 m wide and 0.12 m deep. It had very shallow, concave sides and a slightly concave base (Fig. 4). The fill of this feature (73) contained a single Mesolithic or Neolithic flint blade. The western linear (**76**) also extended across the trench, and

measured 0.8 m wide by 0.12 m deep. It had slightly concave sides and a concave base. No artefacts were collected from the fill of this feature (75).

A third feature (**66**) was located at the north-east end of the trench. The cut was 1.1 m long within the base of the trench, 0.6 m wide and 0.15 m deep. Its shallow and concave sides sloped to an irregular base. The fill (65) contained a single flint-tempered sherd, probably of Neolithic or Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age date. Despite being unabraded this find is almost certainly residual. It is possible that feature **66** represents the terminus of the north-west/south-east orientated linear seen in Trenches A and C (cuts **25** and **4**, respectively). However, the alignment is not an exact one and it seems more likely that **66** is a pit.

As with the features documented within Trenches C and D-2, the fills of ditches **74** and **76** were largely indistinguishable from the overlying subsoil. The major differentiating characteristic was the presence of small pebbles along the base of the feature fills. Both linears had been severely truncated during the development of the agricultural subsoil (2) but it was possible to determine in section that linear **74** cut and hence was more recent than linear **76**. There are a number of similarities between the two pairs of intercutting features within Trenches D-2 and D-4: all the fills are similar in colour and composition and difficult to distinguish from the subsoil (2); the features have been severely truncated during the development of the subsoil; and the chronological relationships of the two pairs are similar. However, the two pairs of features are not fully aligned, which suggests that they do not all represent ditches extending between the two trenches. Cuts **74** and **84**, which are aligned, are suggestive of a ditch which terminates in Trench D-2 but features **76** and **86** do not extend into adjoining trenches, suggesting that they represent elongated pits or shorter ditch sections.

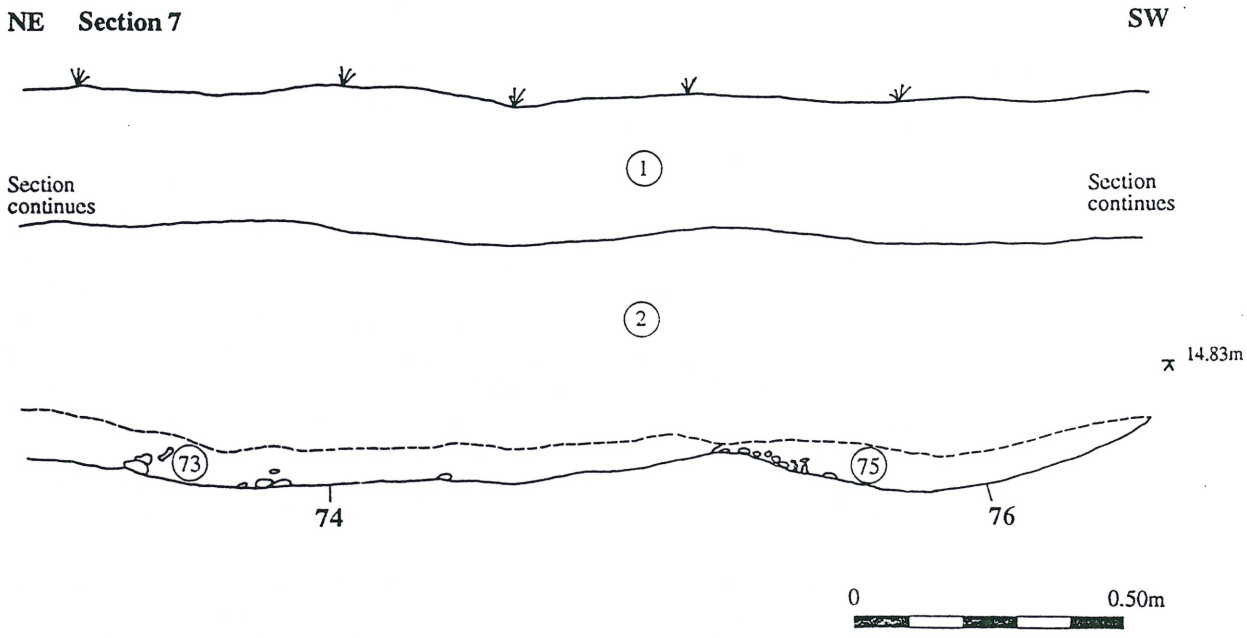

Figure 4 Section of Ditches 74 and 76 (Trench D-4)

5.6 Trench E

This trench measured approximately 22 m long and ran in a north-west/south-east direction across the centre of the south-eastern part of the site (Fig. 5). Again the depth of machining varied, with the ploughsoil overlaying the natural chalk at a depth of 0.33 m at the north-western end. A lighter (but still greyish) underlying deposit (60) was present in the centre and at the south-eastern end of the trench, where the depth of machining reached 0.65-0.75 m.

Two features were revealed towards the rear (north-west) of the trench. A small circular or oval pit (**26**), only 0.15 m deep, was filled with a greyish brown sandy silt (27), similar to the feature fills in Trench D but including frequent fragments of chalk. 1.5 m south-east of this pit was a north-east/south-west oriented linear ditch or gully (**28**), 0.40 m wide and 0.18 m deep, with an identical fill (29) to that of **26**. Gully **28** had steep, rather irregular sides and a flattish base, presenting a somewhat different profile to the larger ditches in Trenches A and C. Neither fill 27 nor 29 yielded any artefactual evidence.

At the south-east end of Trench E, near the road, a broad depression (**30**) crossed the trench, running north-east/south-west (see below, 5.8). It was 0.38 m deep and contained two fills. The upper fill (31) was 0.18m thick and resembled 27 and 29 but contained fewer chalk fragments; it seemed to become rather more sandy towards the edges of the feature. The lower fill (32) was 0.12 m thick and somewhat darker in colour. A few large pieces of post-medieval glazed pottery came from the surface of fill 31; no artefacts were recovered from the excavated slot, but brick and tile fragments were present elsewhere on the surface. Feature **30** was sealed by an overlying subsoil deposit (60), 0.38 m thick, which contained fragments of modern brick and glass.

5.7 Trench F

Trench F was 19.7 m long and ran in a north-east/south-west direction, parallel to and about 5 m back from the High Street. It was positioned in order to pick up any traces of structures adjacent to the road. The south-west end was machined to a depth of 0.30 m and the north-east end to 0.42 m. All the features were in the southern 8 m of the trench.

A linear ditch (**16**) ran north-north-west/south-south-east across the trench, about 4 m from the south-west end. It was about 0.3 m deep and 1.1 m wide, with a flat base and a concave eastern side angled at about 45°. Set hard against the western side of the ditch, which was much steeper, was a clunch-built field drain (15), consisting of blocks of roughly shaped stone laid on the chalk ditch bottom to form the sides of the drain, and further blocks laid across the top with drainage apertures left between them. The stones were bonded with a yellow (2.5Y 7/6) sandy mortar. The ditch was then filled with a dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2) soft sandy silt (14), containing general refuse (potsherds, animal bone, clay pipe-stems, iron nails) of a post-medieval date.

One metre to the north-east of this feature were two shallow, intercutting pits (**18** and **21**) with rather different fills. The earlier cut (**21**) was an oval or linear feature, not fully revealed in the trench, measuring at least 1.0 by 0.7 m and 0.26 m deep. It had two fills, the upper (19) being a light olive brown (2.5Y 5/3) firm sandy silt, 0.12 m thick, and the lower (20) a similar matrix but including frequent lumps of white/yellow chalk, about 50-80 mm in size. Fill 19 produced two small potsherds of different dates (Roman and medieval).

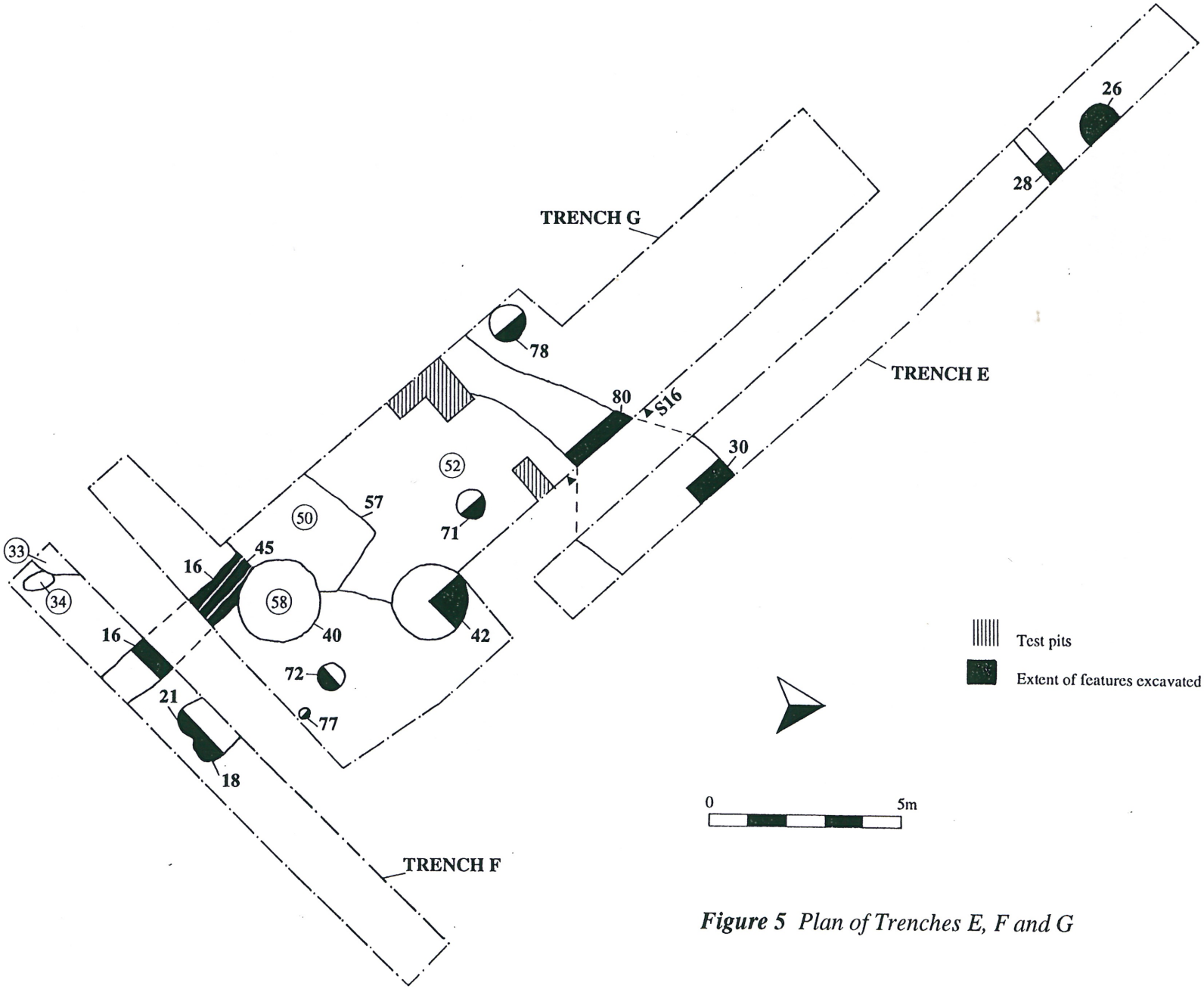

Figure 5 *Plan of Trenches E, F and G*

Although the fill (17) of feature **18** was indistinguishable from the adjacent deposit (19), it clearly truncated the distinctive chalky lower fill (20) of feature **21**, and is therefore later. It was rather shallower (0.15 m deep) than **21** and measured at least 1.2 by 0.9 m. Fill 17 produced no pottery, only bone and flint.

Two other features were revealed at the extreme south-western end of the trench. One was of unknown extent with a fill similar to 17 and 19 (33); the other, which appeared just to intersect with it, was a small oval feature, about 0.8m long, with a greyer, stony fill (34). Neither of these were excavated.

5.8 Trench G

This open area was excavated to enable the nature and extent of the medieval/post-medieval features encountered in Trenches E and F to be clarified. The area measured 20.5 m long from north-west to south-east and was approximately 100 sq m in area (Fig. 5).

Machine excavation removed the topsoil (1) and a subsoil with modern materials (60) across the area. The subsoil (60) constituted a destruction layer and contained brick, chalk and flint cobbles, suggesting that it originated through the demolition of buildings nearby, although no definite evidence of occupation was present on the site. The layer thinned towards the north-west and also tapered off before the south-eastern boundary of the trench. Its stratigraphic position indicated that it post-dates the early 19th century. Underlying this deposit within the central portion of the area was a subsoil (52) that in turn overlay a clayey sediment (62) which was rich in organics. The organic-rich clay (62) underlying subsoil 52 had probably formed at the base of a pond. A slot excavated through both deposits failed to recover any cultural materials.

An upper band of sediment similar to subsoil (52) contained fine lenses of degraded and blackened wood. This spatially limited band (designated as 64) suggested that the accumulation of the sediment had been punctuated by discrete events during which either the wood was deposited through mass movement processes, or the subsoil (52) had served as a temporary land surface. The nature of the wood and its reduced state suggested the former interpretation was more probable. It is likely that the silty sediments (52 and 64) are agricultural and colluvial in origin (similar to subsoil 2). Subsoil 52 was cut by ditch **80**, whereas deposit 64 overlay the major fill (55) of the ditch.

A north-south oriented ditch (**80**) was aligned along the north-western edge of subsoil 52. The ditch traversed Trench G, was 1.9 m wide and approximately 0.2 m deep. Its sides were slightly concave and angled at approximately 45°. The base was irregular and broad (Fig. 6). No artefacts were collected during the excavation of a section through the fills (55 and 87) of this ditch. The delineation of the base of the south-eastern edge of the ditch was problematic given that the clayey sediment underlay both it and the adjacent subsoil (52).

The interpretation of the eastward continuation of ditch **80** and subsoil 52 is problematic. The uncertain correlation of contexts between Trenches E and G, which were opened during different phases of excavation, provides three alternative interpretations:

1) The subsoil and ditch fill were not differentiated within Trench E during the evaluation phase.

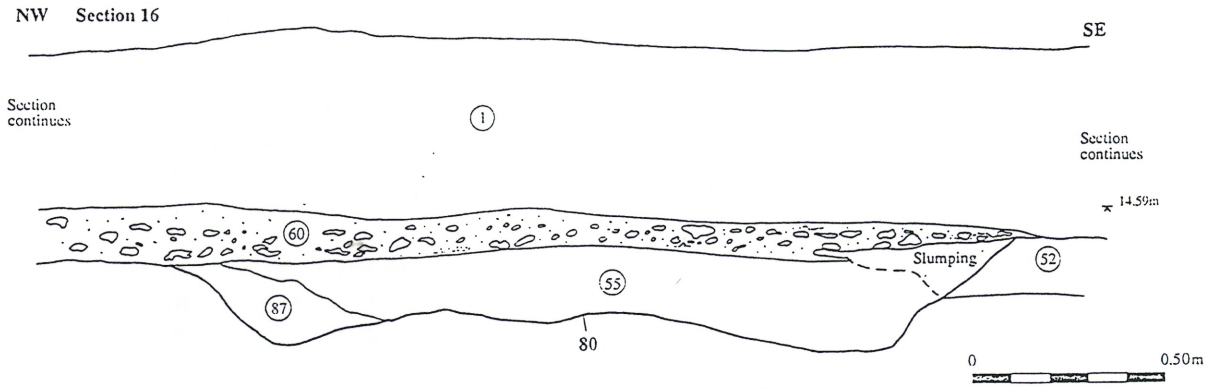

***Figure 6** Section of Ditch 80 (Trench G)*

2) Feature **30** is a continuation of cut **80**, with the difference in width being attributable to a flaring eastward and/or the variable depths of machining. The subsoil 52 was therefore not present within Trench E.

3) Feature **30** is a natural depression and deposits 52 and 62 correspond to fills 31 and 32, respectively, in Trench E. Ditch **80** would then have to terminate between the two trenches.

Alternative (3) is unlikely since the northern limit of **30** was defined by a cut edge and the location of ditch **80** along the edge of the subsoil (52) would suggest that it was deliberately placed there, possibly to enhance drainage. Consequently, it might be expected to extend along the edge of the subsoil further east. The lack of evident organic lenses within **30** suggests alternative (2) is more probable and deposit 52 is therefore more limited in its easterly extent than ditch **80**.

In the south-eastern portion of Trench G a number of intercutting features were noted. These constituted a soakaway (**57**) and two superimposed drains, one clunch built (59) and the other of yellow brick (53). The soakaway had been cut into the subsoil (52). The earlier drain (59), which ran into the soakaway, was constructed of chalk clunch of variable size and was a continuation of the field drain (15 and **16**) documented in Trench F (section 5.7). Given that this feature had already been investigated within Trench F it was not excavated further. The drain had been placed within a cut (**16**) and had been severely truncated by the excavation of the cut (**45**) for the yellow brick drain (53). The overlying field drain was constructed of yellow bricks and hence dated to the 19th century AD. The fill for this yellow brick field drain (46) was itself cut by the excavation of a large circular pit (**40**). The portion of the soakaway (**57**) visible in the base of the trench measured 3 m by 3 m and its depth was unknown given that it was only partially excavated. The upper fill (49) was removed to expose an underlying fill (50) which was not excavated. Fill 49 contained post-medieval brick, 18th to 19th century pottery and a mid-19th century clay pipe.

Two large pits were recorded in the vicinity: pit **40** cut the soakaway and the yellow brick field drain (53) as well as the natural chalk strata, while pit **42** cut

the natural chalk and the subsoil (52). Pit **40** measured 2.4 m by 2.0 m and was only partially excavated. Given that this feature cut the yellow brick field drain, it must be less than 200 years old. Pit **42** was roughly circular in plan and measured 2.0 m by 1.8 m at the surface. In quarter section it was revealed to be 0.65 m deep with steep sides and a concave base. The fill of this pit (41) contained post-medieval pottery, tile and brick, animal bone and a fragment of possibly Roman floor tile. It therefore dates to the post-medieval or modern period. The function of both pits is unclear; they may have been used as soakaways to improve drainage locally or they may have functioned solely as rubbish pits.

The stratigraphic matrix for the remaining features within Trench G is relatively flat. Consequently it is only possible to describe each feature and offer a tentative interpretation of its function and age. It is probable, however, that all the postholes exposed in this trench are post-medieval or modern.

Located within the trench were three postholes: cut **72** was approximately 0.7 m in diameter and 0.09 m deep; cut **71** was approximately 0.8 m in diameter and 0.22 m deep; and cut **77** measured 0.65 m by 0.55 m and was 0.08 m deep. Cuts **71** and **72** contained similar fills and both had vertical sides and irregular bases. The topsoil-like fills and the morphology of the cuts suggested that these features were recent and contemporaneous, although fill (54) of posthole **71** contained a residual sherd of Roman pottery. Cut **77** also had vertical sides with an irregular base which had been packed with post-medieval brick. This packing as well as the lighter colour of the fill (44) and its subrectangular shape suggest that posthole **77** was not directly associated with postholes **71** and **72**. Postpipes were not visible in any of the postholes and it is uncertain what kind of structure they represent.

A shallow pit (**78**) with a similar fill to two of the postholes (**71** and **72**) was also excavated. It measured 1.4 m by 1.0 m and was 0.11 m deep with concave sides and a flat base.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Prehistoric

The features revealed at Great Wilbraham seem to indicate several phases of activity down to the 19th century AD. The earliest finds from the site are the struck flints from various contexts, but in each case they appear to be residual. Most striking in this respect is the later prehistoric single-platform core from fill 14, apparently reused as packing for the field drain and displaying some recent damage. The only association among the flints is the well-preserved (although heavily patinated) group of three blades and a flake from fill 13; one of the blades has been retouched to produce a slightly concave micro-denticulate edge. A flint blade was also collected from fill 73. These flints could be of earlier Neolithic type, which would correspond with the period of use of the causewayed enclosure to the north-west, but the micro-denticulate piece suggests a Late Mesolithic date is more likely (Tim Reynolds, pers. comm.). Despite their association, however, they must be residual within pit **12**, which also produced sherds of Roman pottery and medieval Thetford ware.

It is possible that subsoil deposit 5 in the northern part of Trench A is essentially prehistoric in date, and represents early soil formation on the natural sand/chalk. The ditches in Trench A cut through this deposit, which is not

present in Trench C, and were sealed by subsoil 2. The similarity between deposit 5 and ditch fills 22 and 24 initially hindered recognition of the linears as cut features but the machined extension to Trench A clarified the relationship (see 5.1 above). The small bone fragment assigned to context 5 therefore derives from ditch fill 22, since it came from the north-west side of the trench, but the flint flake was found at the north-east end, beyond the limit of the ditches. The small, abraded fragment of flint and sand-tempered pottery, probably prehistoric, from the base of deposit 2 in Trench A was also found in a section away from the ditches. It is therefore likely that the lowest deposit at the rear of the site predates the linear features cut during the Roman or post-Roman period.

In the central portion of the property a sherd of hand-made, flint-tempered pottery was found in the fill of pit **66**. This dates to the Neolithic or Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age and is probably residual, but indicates human presence in the area at this time. It is not the same fabric as the sherd from Trench A, since the inclusions are considerably coarser.

6.2 Roman/Post-Roman

The ditches found in Trenches A and C at the rear of the site represent field boundaries, without substantial evidence for associated occupation. The elongated pits and/or ditch sections found in Trenches D-2 and D-4 may represent further elements of this system or associated activities, but the precise function of these intercutting features remains uncertain.

While the morphology of the ditches, with concave bases and shallow sides, might suggest they are not Roman, the most recent find within them was a small but relatively unabraded fragment of an externally-thickened and pointed rim from a large bowl of colour-coated ware, with dark grey surfaces and a light grey core. The fabric resembles late Roman wares from Verulamium (Phil Copleston, pers. comm.). The sherd was found in association with a deposit of poorly-preserved animal bone, including a large fragment of a cattle pelvis (Lorrain Higbee, pers. comm.), at the point of intersection of ditches **23** and **25** in Trench A. Both these ditches were sealed by subsoil 2. The only other datable finds from the linear features comprise residual prehistoric material.

All of the ditches contained fills which resembled the subsoil (2) and all appeared to have been sealed and truncated by this deposit, as did feature **66** in Trench D-4. This would suggest, as would the texture of the deposit, that subsoil 2 is agricultural in origin and developed over a lengthy period of time. Its accumulation may have varied across the site, since the ditch in D-2 and D-4 (**74** and **84**) appeared to have both been cut into and truncated by this deposit, while there is some evidence that the ditches within Trenches A and C are cut through an earlier deposit (5) and entirely predate subsoil 2. However, although the common alignments of the latter and the features further south need not imply contemporaneity, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate two distinct phases of ditches. It remains possible, for instance, that cuts **25** (Trench A), **4** (Trench C) and **66** (Trench D-4) are the same feature, although these segments appear to show different relationships with deposit 2.

In sum, the ditches and associated features are most likely of late Roman or post-Roman date, associated with a developing ploughsoil, although the absence of definitely non-residual finds within these features prevents a more accurate determination of their age.

Four other fragments of Roman pottery were found on the site: one relatively large sherd of a flat base in a dark grey sandy fabric with a brown interior surface came from the topsoil over Trench A; two small fragments of grey ware derived from features **12** and **20**; and a sherd of a wheel-made jar was collected from fill 54. Both the larger pieces, therefore, were found in the trench which contained the ditches; and no post-Roman pottery was discovered at the back of the property. The grey ware sherd from fill 19 of feature **20** at the front of the evaluation area, however, was found in association with a piece of shell-tempered St Neots-type ware, which is of early medieval date. Similarly the other grey ware sherd, from the large pit **12**, was associated with a piece of Thetford ware, which is also of early medieval date. These associations suggest that residual Roman pottery is scattered across the site, which probably also explains the presence of a Roman sherd in the fill of posthole **71**. This residuality may reflect Roman manuring practice which would have left a scatter of potsherds in the fields. The implied Roman agriculture may therefore have been associated with the field ditches discussed above.

6.3 Medieval

It seems plausible that the pit and four postholes in Trench D represent some kind of covered activity area: the square postholes are not very regularly spaced around pit **12** but their fills are very similar to that of the pit and they make little sense on their own. Unfortunately, the excavations of Trenches D-1, D-2 and D-3 failed to identify any associated postholes, although the undated elongated pits/ditch sections may be associated with this feature rather than with the ditches at the back of the site. The postholes clearly represent more than a light fence, and some kind of structure is therefore implied. The surviving depth of the postholes is also indicative of subsequent truncation by at least 0.5 m. This group of features is dated to the medieval period by a single sherd of Thetford ware. A small pit in Trench F contained a sherd of St Neots type and other undated features of similar type may also be medieval. The activity during this period therefore consists of a medium density scatter of features. There are too few finds to indicate occupation on the site itself.

6.4 Post-Medieval

A variety of post-medieval activity is concentrated towards the street front. The field drain is interesting because the associated finds, pipe-stems and glazed coarse ware sherds suggest a 17th-18th century date. Thus this field drain did not predate by long the widespread use of ceramic drains, as evidenced by its truncation by a yellow brick drain. The household refuse from the fill of the clunch drain trench consisted of small or abraded sherds, implying it is redeposited. However, the finds are of a sufficient density to suggest occupation nearby, which according to the maps discussed above (Section 3) would be located along the High Street to the east or on the other side of the road.

The large feature, filled respectively by sediments 64, 52 and 62 in Trench G, is probably a natural depression in the chalk. This depression may have been either permanently or periodically waterlogged, i.e. as a pond, within which the organic rich, clay deposit (62) accumulated. This was in turn overlain by agricultural/colluvial deposits (52 and 64) which are of uncertain date, although they may be equivalent to the subsoil deposit (2) at the rear of the site. Based on stratigraphic relationships, it is possible that deposit 52 closely predates fill 31 in Trench E (section 5.8), the surface of which included glazed wares similar to those from the drain trench, as well as a sherd of Cistercian ware, probably

of 17th century date (Paul Spoerry, pers. comm.). On this basis, therefore, subsoil 64 was probably a land surface during the post-medieval period. The presence of a post-medieval or modern make-up deposit (**60**) immediately overlying 52 supports this interpretation.

The successive construction of the ditch (**80**), drains (53 and 59) and soakaways/pits (**57**, **40** and **42**), and the possible artificial distribution of subsoil 60 indicates that the poor drainage at the front of the property persisted through the post-medieval period. The other pits and postholes cut into the subsoil (52) and chalk at the front of the property exhibit only limited structural relationships and no specific land use can be associated with them. The dark colour of the fills within some of these postholes (**71** and **72**) suggests that they are probably recent, although no definitive stratigraphic relationships can be established for them.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Summary

The most economical interpretation of the finds from both archaeological investigations across the site is that:

- the ditches and other features in Trenches A, C, D-2 and D-4 are of Roman or post-Roman date;
- the postholes and pit in Trench D are medieval, as may be some other features in Trenches E, F and G;
- the larger features and linears located at the front of the property, in Trenches E, F and G, are all post-medieval or more recent.

The distribution of finds exhibits a spatial separation of activities from different periods across the property: Roman and post-Roman features are concentrated towards the back of the site; medieval towards the centre; and, post-medieval towards the present-day street front. This separation reflects the changing patterns of land use through time.

Although the presence of worked flints and post-medieval features on the site are interesting, the main points of interest concern the Roman and medieval features. If the ditches are indeed Roman then they reflect a landscape oriented similarly to the present day field and property boundaries: the evaluation trenches were aligned with the ditches because they also respected the existing orientation of landscape features. A reason for the persistent alignment on a north-west/south-east axis of many cropmark features in the landscape of this part of the southern Fen edge has been suggested above (Section 2). The only excavated comparison in the vicinity is the ditch investigated by Frend & Cameron (1993: 7-8) at Rookery Farm, which the excavators suggest served for drainage. However, this was narrower and steeper than the present features, and sealed by a layer of cobbles, suggesting a much closer connection with actual occupation (the same probably goes for the ditches mentioned in the vicinity of the Great Wilbraham villa [Etté & Hinds 1993]).

The relationship of the presumed medieval features to known occupation is also somewhat problematic. However, it is clear from the nearby earthworks and the aerial photographic evidence that medieval occupation at Frog End could have been quite extensive: together they suggest a spread of at least 350 m in the fields to the west of the present site. That no great density of features or finds

was recorded during the present evaluation implies this settlement was always separate from the core of Great Wilbraham (around the church and green) to the north-east. The features discovered on the present site, including the possible covered workplace, may represent the margins of this zone of occupation west and south-west of the village proper. The two medieval sherds (from features **12** and **20**) suggest an early date (pre-1150 AD) for this activity, but these fragments could quite possibly be residual.

The post-medieval features at the front of the site indicate that there have been successive attempts to improve the drainage locally: construction of a ditch; construction of drains and soakaways; and possible deliberate raising of the ground surface. Consequently, the project site remained unoccupied despite settlement at Frog End and limited expansion of the village core along the High Street. Nearby occupation is suggested by the finds within feature fills and subsoil 60. It has not been possible to infer the structures or activities with which the pits and postholes at the front of the site are associated.

7.2 Retrospective

The inability to conclusively resolve the precise form and date of past activity in several areas of the site reflects both broader methodological problems and the manner in which this particular project was structured. The extent of work required in contract-led archaeology is often determined by the requirements of the planning process rather than guided by the archaeological evidence *per se*. In this case, the limited second phase of excavation was targeted on a specific group of features which the evaluation had already shown to be elements within a much broader palimpsest on the site. It was therefore hardly surprising that a further 170 sq m on a 0.4 ha site (4% of the area) raised as many questions as it answered, especially regarding the *extent* of certain phenomena and the *relationships* between deposits in different parts of the site.

These problems can be illustrated for both areas investigated during the excavation phase:

(i) The inability to interpret the specific age and function of a number of features in the middle of the site. The focus of the excavation in this area was the pit with surrounding postholes in Trench D, and not the ditch system identified in Trenches A and C. However, no further information concerning the Trench D structure was revealed during the excavation. Instead, a number of features of uncertain type and age were exposed whose relationships with features elsewhere on the site are unknown.

(ii) The postholes within Trench G are probably structural. However, the area stripped of topsoil was too small to shed much light on the type of structure they represent. Consequently, any interpretation of the functions of the pits and postholes in Trenches E, F and G is limited.

While the evaluation trenches were sufficient to characterise the nature of archaeology on the site, a larger open area excavation incorporating the earlier trenches would have been required to address these specific problems and properly untangle the site phasing and formation processes. In this case, the second phase fell between two stools, namely the limited aims of an evaluation exercise and the 'preservation by record' considered to be the purpose of a full-scale excavation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Jonathan Last, who conducted the evaluation, is grateful to Spencer Cooper for working on site and to Judith Roberts for the TST plan. Tim Denham, who conducted the excavation, is grateful to Spencer Cooper and Steve Membery for working on site. Thanks are also due to Tim Malim and Ben Robinson for helpful suggestions. Phil Copleston, Lorrain Higbee, Tim Reynolds and Paul Spoerry cast their eyes over the finds. Thanks also to the illustrators Carole Fletcher and Twigs Way. The projects were managed by Tim Malim and carried out for Lovell Partnerships (Southern) Ltd in accordance with briefs designed by Louise Austin of the County Archaeology Office.

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APPENDIX 1

HIGH STREET, GREAT WILBRAHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Aerial Photographic Assessment

1.0: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Archaeology from aerial photographs

Detailed archaeological interpretation of contemporary and historical aerial photographs allows the accurate mapping of archaeological sites recorded as cropmarks (caused by the differential growth of crops over buried features, Wilson 1982), soilmarks (caused by differences in soil colour over ploughed features, Wilson *ibid.*) and shadows cast by upstanding earthworks. Aerial photographic evidence is, however, limited by seasonal, agricultural, meteorological and environmental factors which affect the extent to which either buried or upstanding archaeological sites can be detected under a given set of environmental conditions (Riley 1987, 17-40).

Within its limitations, aerial photography and photographic interpretation provides information which cannot easily be detected by other means, and is a complementary part of multi-disciplinary archaeological investigation. It also provides a cost effective landscape overview and accurate guidance for ground based investigations or positioning of evaluation trenches, particularly in the absence of any other definite archaeological information.

1.2 The study area

The archaeological study area as defined by Cambridgeshire Archaeology comprises a land plot centred at TL54775724. The land falling within the surrounding 1km grid square,TL5457, was included in this investigation.

All soil type data has been derived from the Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW) 1:250000 map (SSEW 1983a) the Legend to the Soil Survey maps (SSEW 1983b). The study plot area lies on chalk and its derivative soils of the Moulton, Swaffham Prior and Wantage 2 associations. The village and the land plot lie on well drained chalky drift over chalk (571k), similar soils lie to the east (511e). To the north the silty soil is shallow over the chalk and in parts affected by groundwater (342d). Each of the deposits produces patterned ground, which shows as marks in growing crops.

The landuse on the assessment area has been consistently arable farming since 1946. The 1943 photography suggests the land was turned over to allotments for the duration of the war. The immediate environs are given over to modern settlement whilst to the north-west and beyond the settlement the land is under arable regimes.

1.3 Aerial photographic sources

The entire study area was subjected to thorough aerial photographic library searches, and the most relevant aerial photographic sources available for consultation within the timescale of this assessment were consulted and interpreted as judged appropriate to the assessment. Vertical and/or oblique photographs from the following sources were consulted:

Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photographs (CUCAP)
Mond Building, Free School Lane, Cambridge
All Obliques and verticals.

National Library of Air Photographs (NLAP)
National Monuments Record Centre, Kemble Drive, Swindon, Wiltshire.

Cambridgeshire County Council
County Record Office, Shire Hall, Cambridge

All photographs consulted are listed in section 3.

1.4 Assessment specification

Vertical and oblique aerial photographs were interpreted to identify archaeological and relevant non-archaeological information (the latter including palaeo-channels, soil depth changes and any recent subsurface disturbances which may affect the integrity and understanding of features evaluated in the field). Photo interpretation aimed to qualify reasons for the visibility of archaeological evidence and to explain, as necessary, any gaps in the aerial record. The searches also extended beyond the boundary of the assessment area to determine whether any archaeological features were likely to continue from their sources in to the assessment area.

All archaeological features from prehistoric through to the National Monuments Record terminal date of 1945 which were visible on aerial photographs were mapped at 1:10 000 scale.Standing buildings were not recorded unless they showed as degraded stone foundations or robber trenches.

1.5 Interpretation and mapping methodology

Photographic interpretation, rectification and mapping was carried out following procedures defined by Palmer and Cox (1993). All photographs were closely examined, under 1.5x and 4x magnification, and viewed stereoscopically where appropriate. Transparent interpretative overlays were prepared, from which archaeological and associated relevant data were digitised.

Interpreted features were rectified, where appropriate, by computer using the Bradford aerial photographic rectification software, AERIAL 4.20 (Haigh 1993). AERIAL 4.20 calculates values for the closeness of control point match and, using an initial plane surface rectification, the mean control point positioning error in all cases was under ±4.0m. Rectified interpretations

were processed through a CAD package, with reference to the original interpretations, to create the final drawing. A hard copy of this drawing has been output enlarged from the 1:10 000 mapping as illustration to this report and as a digital file, gtwil.DXF.

2.0: ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

2.1 Results

No crop-mark or earthworks features were recorded within the assessment area. Vertical photographic coverage was available over four decades and in no year did the crops growing in the field show any evidence of any underlying disturbance, archaeological or otherwise.

In the field to the immediate west of the assessment area, labelled **a**, possible features are recorded on the pre-development photography. All the 1940s verticals show a oval depression roughly in the central to the field. The vertical stereo pair of photographs F21.58/2041 75-76 also show two slight banks running towards the assessment area across the field straddling the depression. However the interpretative validity of these features is low and possible functions and dates impossible to surmise. The depression is probably modern and associated with animal feeding or watering. This field has since been built upon.

To the north of the study area at **b** the soil is notably thin and the chalk often exposed and evident through the crop. Two linear chalk exposures are tentatively interpreted as very degraded headlands although they may be no more than natural undulations. There was no evidence for ridge and furrow and furthermore the modern field boundaries do not suggest the continuation of a medieval system of land division.

At **c** 400 metres north-west of the assessment area at TL543574, a field, maintained as pasture contains earthwork features. These features are recorded on most of the vertical coverage and survive as earthworks at least until 1968. Although difficult to interpret from the vertical photography the features appear to comprise a D-shaped enclosure with associated linears and a small depression. These were possibly domestic in function and are probably no earlier that Medieval in date.

At **d** 400metres west of the assessment field at TL544571 lies a group of crop-marked features. These features comprise a pair of very straight intersecting perpendicular ditches and two sides and the curved corner of a possible enclosure. Locational inaccuracy may occur on the map as the field is incompletely recorded, and insufficient control available on the vertical photography recording these features.

At TL541578, labelled **e,** there is crop-marked evidence for parallel ditches, probably defining a droveway. The droveway lies to the immediate east of a causewayed enclosure (beyond the area of investigation.). The droveway runs NW-SE in the direction of the assessment area. However it is unlikely that this feature will be found to continue into the assessment area.

2.2 Discussion

Although no archaeological features were recorded within the assessment area on the aerial photographs examined this must not be taken to indicate complete absence of archaeological features.

The landscape as a whole was certainly settled and used in prehistory and through to the modern day. Potential for the survival of archaeological features in the area is evidence by features recorded and excavated in the vicinity of the village of Great Wilbraham.

Several factors may contribute to the perceived absence of features within the study area. Archaeological features cut into the the chalky drift may have filled with similar deposits of variable sized chalk particles. Thus the difference in moisture retention between soil and feature fills may be too small to produce differential crop growth.

This may be exacerbated by the considerable erosion of the soils and features. Frequent ploughing and the nature of the chalk drift subsoil presents a more fragile than usual environment for archaeological remains. Given the long history of modern ploughing over the assessment site and the surrounding area considerable truncation of dug archaeological features is to be expected. Hence the potential for affecting crop growth is greatly reduced.

The nature of the archival photography must also be considered as contributory to the lack of archaeological features. Much of the 1940s vertical photography was of poor quality and was generally taken too early or late in the crop growing season to record crop-marked features. Of course from the 1950s onwards the area encircling the assessment area was masked by the new village developments.

2.3 Conclusion

Allowance should be made for the potential of locating buried archaeological features within the assessment area that were not identifiable from the aerial photographic sources.

3.0: AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Photographs Consulted

Source: Cambridgeshire County Council Record Office.

Vertical photographs

106G/UK/1490 3062-3064	9 May 1946	c.1:10 000
Fairey Surveys 200942-944	June-August 1969	c.1:10 000
BKS run 12 535 346-347	late summer	c.1:10 000
BKS run 13 535388-90	late summer	c.1:10 000
MAL/54 69 212-214	9 June 1969	c.1:10 000

Source: Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photographs (CUCAP)

Vertical photographs

RC8 EA 148	23 March 1982	1:10 000
RC8 EI 201-202	11 May 1982	1:10 000
RC8 JM 118-120	30 June 1987	1:10 000
RC8 KnBF 122, 124	12 June 1988	1:10 000

Source: National Library of Aerial Photographs (NLAP)

Vertical photographs

106G/UK/1490 3161-3164	9 May 1946	1:10 000
58/2041 F21 74-76	3 October 1956	1:10 000
58/2041 F22 74-76	3 October 1956	1:10 000
540/1737 41-42	1 November 1955	1:20 000
58/1900 41-42	17 October 1955	1:20 000
MAL/68038 210-212	2 June 1968	1:11 000
MAL/68039 1-3	2 June 1968	1:11 000
MAL/69054 211-214	9 June 1969	1:10 500
MAL/69055 2-5	9 June 1969	1:10 500
US/7PH/GP/LOC267 5046-5047	10 April 1944	1:13 300
US/7PH/GP/LOC285 5029-5030	19 April 1944	1:12 500
MAL/69070 91-93	22 July 1969	1:10 500
MAL/76042 18-19	10 June 1976	1:10 000
AC/294 5030-5032	9 March 1943	1:8 000
OS/68133 33-35	31 May 1968	1:7 500
OS/68133 111-112	31 May 1968	1:7 500
OS/68133 178-180	31 May 1968	1:7 500
OS/69275 74-76	13 June 1969	1:22 000

Oblique Photographs

TL5357/1	Crawford Collection 1920s- 1930s
TL5457/1	5 August 1969

TL5457/2	5 August 1969
TL5657/2	16 April 1985
TL5657/3	16 April 1985
TL5657/4	16 April 1985
TL5658/1	20 March 1956

5.0: REFERENCES

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Palmer, R. and Cox, C. 1993. *Uses of aerial photography in archaeological evaluations. Institute of Field Archaeologists, Technical Paper 12.* IFA, Birmingham.

Wilson, D. R. 1982. *Air Photo Interpretation for Archaeologists*, London.

SSEW 1983a *Legend for the 1:250000 Soil Map of England and Wales (A brief explanation of the constituent soil associations).* Harpenden.

SSEW 1983b Soils of England and Wales. 1:250000 map, Sheet 4, Eastern England.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Client: Aileen Connor, Cambridgeshire Archaeology.

Photo library search: Library Staff at CUCAP, NLAP and Cambridgeshire CRO

AIR PHOTO SERVICES

76 The Green Lyneham Wiltshire
01249 891411

PROJECT: **High Street**
Great Wilbraham
Cambridgeshire

CLIENT: **Cambridgeshire Archaeology**

SURVEY BY: AD and RP

DATE: June 1996

SOURCE: NLAP, CUCAP, CRO

Archaeological ditch

Archaeological bank

Dubious archaeological bank

Dubious headland

Study area

Original Interpretation and mapping at 1:10 000.

gtwil.pdw

APPENDIX 2: Context Descriptions

Context	& Trench	Description	Nature	Below	Above
1	all	Topsoil	10YR 4/2 (dark greyish brown) sandy silty clay		2
2	A, C	Subsoil	10YR 5/3-5/4 (mid/yellowish brown) sandy silt	1	3, 22
3	C	Fill	10YR 5/4 (yellowish brown) silty clayey sand	2	**4**
4	A	Cut	Cut of flat-based linear ditch	3	natural
5	A	Layer	10YR 5/4-6/4 (yellowish brown) clayey sand	**25**	natural
6	D	Fill	10YR 5/2 (greyish brown) sandy silt	1	**7**
7	D	Cut	Cut of square posthole	6	natural
8	D	Fill	10YR 5/2 (greyish brown) sandy silt with frequent chalk	1	**9**
9	D	Cut	Cut of square posthole	8	natural
10	D	Fill	10YR 5/2 (greyish brown) sandy silt with frequent flints	1	**11**
11	D	Cut	Cut of square posthole	10	natural
12	D	Cut	Cut of large oval pit	13	natural
13	D	Fill	10YR 5/2 (greyish brown) sandy silt	1	**12**
14	F	Fill	10YR 4/2 (dark greyish brown) sandy silt	1	15
15	F	Deposit	Clunch-built field drain	14	**16**
16	F	Cut	Cut of flat-based linear ditch	15	natural
17	F	Fill	2.5Y 5/3 (light olive brown) sandy silt	1	**18**
18	F	Cut	Cut of oval pit	17	natural
19	F	Fill	2.5Y 5/3 (light olive brown) sandy silt	**18**	20
20	F	Fill	2.5Y 5/3 (light olive brown) sandy silt with frequent chalk	19	**21**
21	F	Cut	Cut of oval pit	20	natural
22	A	Fill	10YR 5/4 (yellowish brown) silty sand	2	**23**
23	A	Cut	Cut of flat-based linear ditch	22	24
24	A	Fill	2.5Y 5/4 (light olive brown) silty sand	**23**	**25**
25	A	Cut	Cut of U-profiled linear ditch	24	natural
26	E	Cut	Cut of oval pit	27	natural

27	E	Fill	10YR 5/2 (greyish brown) sandy silt with frequent chalk	1	**26**
28	E	Fill	Cut of linear gully	29	natural
29	E	Fill	10YR 5/2 (greyish brown) sandy silt with frequent chalk	1	**28**
30	E	Cut	Cut of large ditch or pit	32	natural
31	E	Fill	10YR 5/2 (greyish brown) sandy silt with frequent flints	subsoil	32
32	E	Fill	10YR 4/2 (dark greyish brown) sandy silt	31	**30**
33	F	Fill	Circular/oval feature fill (unexcavated)		
34	F	Fill	Oval feature fill (unexcavated)		
35	D	Fill	Posthole fill (unexcavated)		
36	D	Fill	Pit fill (unexcavated)		
37-39			allocated in error		
40	G	Cut	Cut of large circular pit (not fully excavated)	58	46, 49
41	G	Fill	10YR 5/2 (greyish brown) sandy clayey silt	60	**42**
42	G	Cut	Cut of large, steep-sided, circular pit	41	52
43	G	Fill	10YR 5/3 (mid brown) sandy silt	1	**72**
44	G	Fill	10YR 5/3-6/3 (mid/pale brown) clayey silt	1	**77**
45	G	Cut	Cut of flat-based, yellow brick drain	53	14
46	G	Fill	Fill of cut for yellow brick field drain removed during cleaning	**40**	53
47-48			allocated in error		
49	G	Fill	10YR 4/1 (dark grey) silty clay	**40**	50
50	G	Fill	10YR 4/1 (dark grey) silty clay	49	**57**
51			allocated in error		
52	G	Subsoil	10YR 6/4 (yellowish brown) sandy clayey silt	**80**	62
53	G	Deposit	Yellow brick field drain	46	**45**
54	G	Fill	10YR 4/3 (brown) clayey silt	1	**71**
55	G	Fill	10YR 6/4 (yellowish brown) sandy silt	64	87
56			allocated in error		
57	G	Cut	Cut of large soakaway (not fully excavated)	50	52
58	G	Fill	10YR 4/2 (greyish brown) silty clay	1	**40**

59	G	Deposit	Clunch built field drain (same as 15)	14	**16**
60	G	Subsoil	10YR 4/2 (greyish brown) sandy silt with frequent chalk	1	64
61			allocated in error		
62	G	Deposit	10YR 3/2 (very dark greyish brown) clay (same as 32)	52	natural
63			allocated in error		
64	G	Deposit	same as 52 with 10YR 2/1 (black) degraded wood	60	55
65	D-4	Fill	10YR 6/6 (brownish yellow) clayey silt	2	**66**
66	D-4	Cut	Cut of shallow, flat-based pit	65	natural
67-70			allocated in error		
71	G	Cut	Cut of circular posthole	54	52
72	G	Cut	Cut of circular posthole	43	natural
73	D-4	Fill	10YR 5/6 (yellowish brown) clayey silt	2	**74**
74	D-4	Cut	Cut of shallow, concave-based, linear	73	75
75	D-4	Fill	10YR 5/4 (yellowish brown) clayey silt	**74**	**76**
76	D-4	Cut	Cut of shallow, concave-based, linear	75	natural
77	G	Cut	Cut of subrectangular posthole with packing	44	natural
78	G	Cut	Cut of shallow, flat-based pit	79	natural
79	G	Fill	10YR 4/2 (dark greyish brown) sandy silt	60	**78**
80	G	Cut	Cut of shallow, concave-based, linear ditch	87	62
81-82			allocated in error		
83	D-2	Fill	10YR 5/4 (yellowish brown) clayey sandy silt	**86**	**84**
84	D-2	Cut	Cut of shallow, concave-based, ditch terminus	83	natural
85	D-2	Fill	10YR 5/4 (yellowish brown) clayey sandy silt	2	**86**
86	D-2	Cut	Cut of shallow, concave-based, linear	85	83
87	G	Fill	10YR 5/2 (greyish brown) silty sand	55	**80**

APPENDIX 3: Finds Quantification Table

GREAT WILBRAHAM, HIGH STREET 1996: Finds Types By Context (in grams)

Trench	Cut No.	Context	Pottery Weight	*Pottery Count*	Tile & Brick	Field Drain	Clay Pipe	Metals Fe	Stone	Flint Weight	*Flint Count*	Glass	Animal Bone	Shell	Total Weight by Context
A	/	u/s								4	*1*				**4**
A	/	1	19	*1*											**19**
F	/	1	19	*1*						3	*1*				**22**
A	/	2	2	*1*											**2**
C	**4**	3								3	*1*		7		**10**
A	/	5								6	*1*		1		**7**
A	**12**	13	17	*3*						15	*4*		11	24	**67**
F	**16**	14	105	*13*	43		10	112		49	*1*	1	18		**338**
F	**18**	17								7	*1*		25		**32**
F	**21**	19	5	*2*											**5**
A	**23**	22	27	*4*									258		**285**
E	**30**	31	162	*4*											**162**
G	**42**	41	287	*12*	2500				443				109		**3339**
G	**77**	44			162										**162**
G	**57**	49	642	*24*	2517	64	3						111		**3337**
G	**71**	54	7	*1*									1	1	**9**
D-4	**66**	65	4	*1*											**4**
D-4	**74**	73								1	*1*				**1**
D-2	**84**	83	1	*1*					828	2	*1*				**831**
Total Weights by Finds Type			**1297**	*68 sherds*	**5222**	**64**	**13**	**112**	**1271**	**90**	*12 pieces*	**1**	**541**	**25**	**8636**

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