

Archaeological Field Unit

**Archaeological Recording at Hinxton Hall:
The New Lake Site, Phase II**

S Leith

1995

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. A69

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SUMMARY

In June 1995, the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council carried out an unfunded recording brief at Hinxton Hall (TL 4968/4457) during the second phase of excavation of a lake. This work is part of the development of the Hinxton Hall site by Fuller Peiser on behalf of The Wellcome Trust.

Part of a rectilinear enclosure was revealed, dated to the third to fourth centuries AD, very similar to an enclosure recorded during the first phase of lake development. The paucity and abrasion of finds in these features suggests an agricultural function during the Roman period, rather than settlement in this precise location.

A timber building of probable early to mid Saxon date was excavated and recorded, most likely part of the settlement of that period revealed during the main excavation in 1993-94.

A series of ditches on the same line date from the Roman and post-medieval periods. This suggests, as in the first phase of lake development, a continuity of land boundaries from the Roman period through to the nineteenth century.

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INTRODUCTION

Between the 16th and the 23rd of June, 1995, the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council carried out an unfunded recording brief at Hinxtion Hall (TL 4968/4457) during the second phase of excavation of a lake (Fig 1). The first phase took place in December, 1994 (Leith 1995). The present lake development involved the excavation of an area c1965m² to about 2m deep. This work is part of the development of the Hinxtion Hall site by Fuller Peiser on behalf of The Wellcome Trust.

TOPOGRAPHY

The site of the present lake development is located upon the interface between the first/second gravel terrace of the east bank of the river Cam, and the Middle Chalk downland to the east. The ground surface slopes down slightly from east to west towards the river, from 31m to 30m OD.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS WORK

Between August 1993 and April 1994, two phases of evaluation and a large open area excavation took place in the grounds of Hinxtion Hall. The main area of archaeological interest was the southern part of the site which revealed a mid to late Saxon settlement. This settlement was represented by a succession of timber buildings, as well as associated rubbish pits, ovens, hearths, and wells. In the later period the settlement was enclosed by a large v-shaped ditch or ditches. Significant prehistoric remains were also revealed, including pits, quarry pits, a linear ditch, and a chalk-cut shaft. These contained flint artefacts and pottery dating from the Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age.

An area of earthworks between the present lake development and the river was surveyed in March, 1995 (Leith & Sperry 1995). The main area of earthworks is comprised of a hollow way, and a series of rectilinear enclosures and platforms adjacent to it. This hollow way corresponds to a track on the 1799 OS draft 1" map. Documentary evidence suggests occupation in this area in the seventeenth century, although the alignment of these earthworks, which is similar to that of the Late Saxon settlement, may suggest an earlier date.

The first phase of lake development revealed a number of Roman ditches, including a rectangular enclosure and field boundaries, which date from the first to the fourth centuries. A series of ditches, a possible fenceline, and a chalk wall formed a boundary which was aligned with the Roman enclosure. The origin of this boundary is unknown, but it appears to have existed and been reinforced for a considerable period of time before going out of use at the time of emparkment in the mid-nineteenth century. This suggests a continuity of land boundaries from the Roman through to the post-medieval periods.

METHODOLOGY

Part of the area of the present lake development had been built up with hard-core to provide an access road to the building site. This was removed, and the area was cleaned

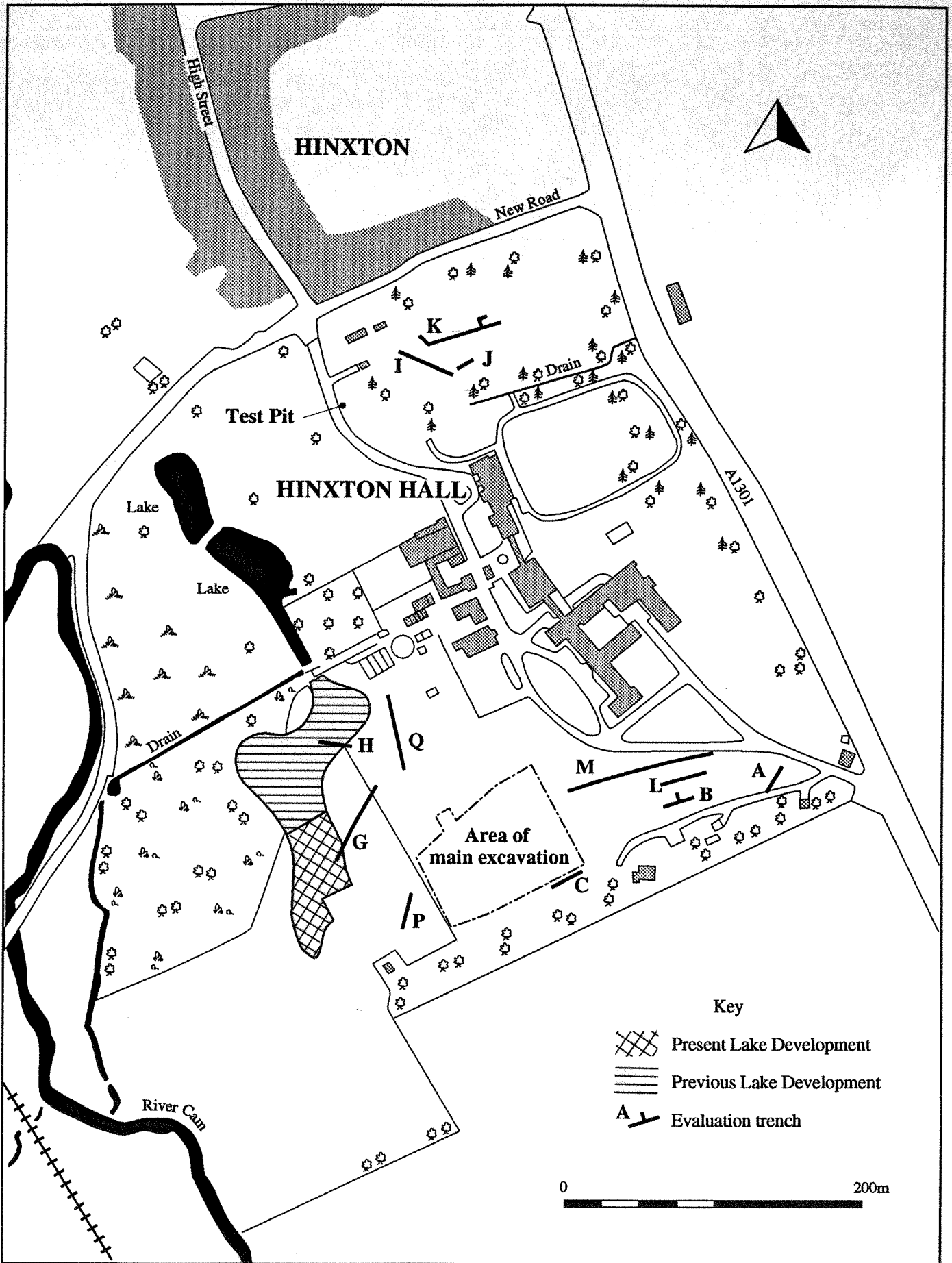


Figure 1 Site Location Plan

with a tracked 360 degree excavator with a toothless ditching bucket in order to reveal any archaeological features in plan. The machine was also used to dig sections through the larger features revealed, while smaller features were part excavated by hand. The features were recorded using photography, section drawing, and planning, according to the recording system of the Archaeological Field Unit. Wherever possible artefacts were recovered to assist the dating of deposits, however as many of these came from machine-excavated sections it must be stressed that quantities of artefacts recorded as present in features are greatly under-represented.

RESULTS (Fig 2)

After cleaning, the surface of the excavation area varied from 29.6m to 30m OD, and most archaeological features appeared to have suffered some degree of horizontal truncation, possibly due to ploughing in the centuries before emparkment. There were several areas of recent disturbance related to the building development, including a wide drain from the building site into the first half of the new lake (Fig 2). Several fragments of human cranium found when machining adjacent to the drain suggest that a burial had been disturbed when the drain was excavated.

Undated features

A straight linear feature, **6111**, ran roughly north / south from the northern edge of excavation to a rounded butt end to the south. About 23m of its length was revealed, and it measured 0.65m wide and 0.16m deep. It had straight sides tapering gently to a point, giving it a shallow V shape. The fill, **6110**, was a very dark greyish brown silty sand with a moderate number of large flints, some larger than 0.10m.

A straight linear feature, **6065**, aligned roughly east / west, ran from the western edge of excavation tapering out towards the east. About 12m of its length was revealed, and it measured 0.47m wide and 0.12m deep. It had very steep, almost vertical sides with a sharp break of slope to a flat base. The fill, **6064**, was a very dark greyish brown silty sand with occasional gravel and small fragments of chalk, with the gravel becoming more frequent towards the base.

A short linear feature, **6144**, aligned roughly east / west, had a rounded butt end to the west, and was truncated to the east by the recent drain. It measured c 2m long and 0.25m wide, and was not excavated.

Possible tree boles

Several large, irregular oval features appeared to be possible pits in plan, but excavation showed them to be shallow and irregular, and are more likely to be tree boles. **6072**, an oval shape in plan, measured 2.35m by 2.0m, and 0.20m deep, with very irregular sides and base. The fill, **6071**, was a very dark greyish brown silty sand with frequent gravel, containing one fragment of tile. **6074** was an irregular sub-oval, 1.25m by 1.0m, with a similar fill to **6071**.

A large sub-circular feature, **6145**, measured c 1.8m in diameter and was not excavated.

A large shallow sub-circular feature, **6113**, measured 2.3m in diameter and 0.36m deep. The fill, **6112**, was a very dark greyish brown sandy silt with frequent gravel and large flints up to 0.10m, and contained iron, glass, pot, bone, tile, and oyster shell. An adjacent large irregular sub-oval feature, measuring c 2.5m by 1.8m, appeared to have

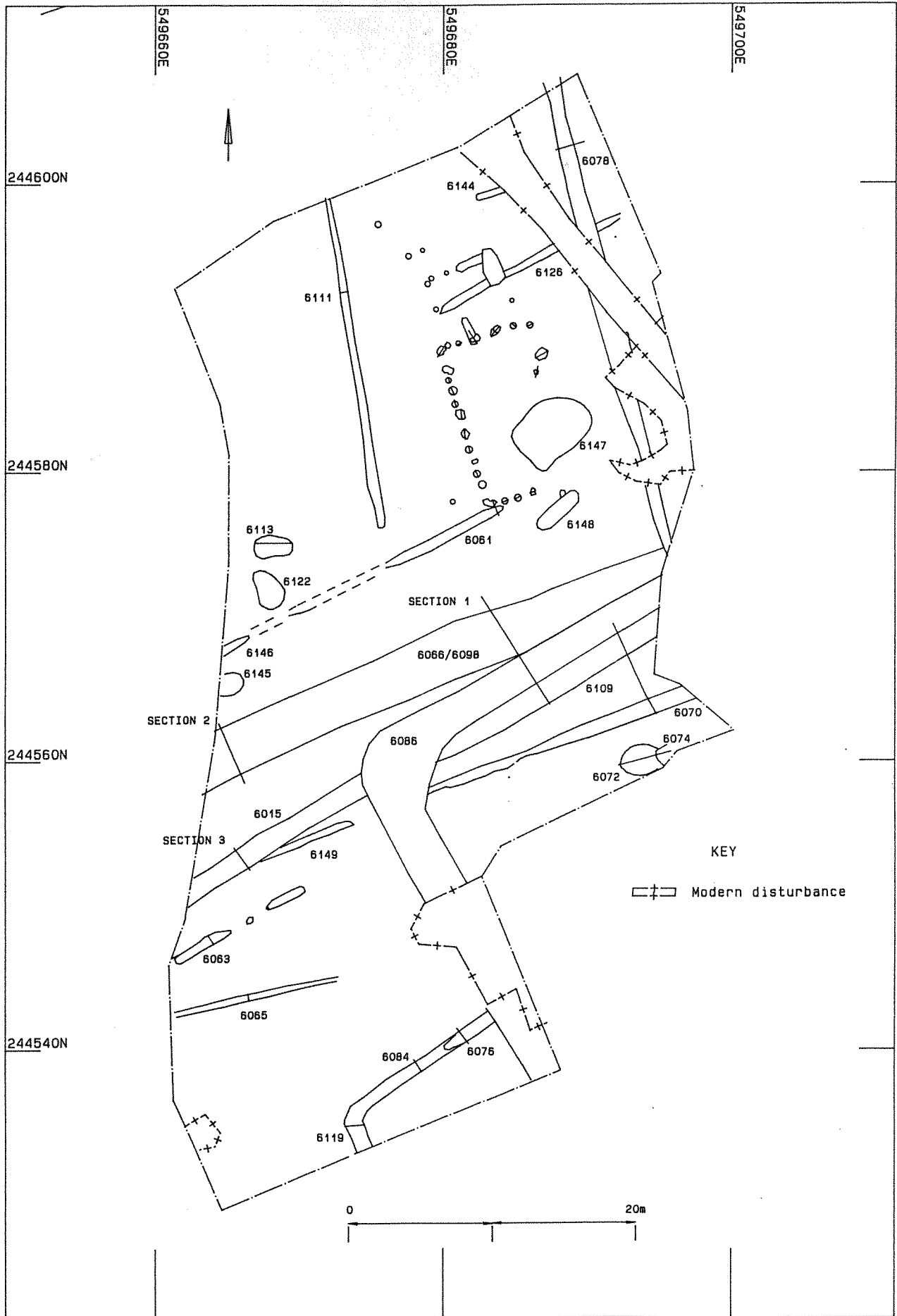


Figure 2: Feature Plan

irregular sides when partly excavated. The fill, 6122, was similar to 6112, and contained pot, bone, nails, slag fragments and oyster shell.

These two features contained a considerable quantity of artefactual material, of both Roman and medieval date. It is not unusual for tree boles to contain artefacts; they can be derived from manure used during tree planting, from the roots disturbing earlier features, or from the hole being used for rubbish dumping after the collapse of the tree. This area was shown as being part of the wood on the 1831 plan of the Hinxtton estate.

Possible Roman features

A linear ditch, **6119/6084**, appeared to form the corner of an enclosure. It ran east-north-east / west-south-west for 12m then turned a rounded corner to continue for 3m north-north-west / south-south-east. It was truncated by **6086** to the east, and extended into the baulk at the southern edge of excavation. The width of the ditch varied from 0.74m to 1.10m, and the depth from 0.34m to 0.42m. The sides were steep and straight, tapering to a rounded point giving the ditch a rounded V shape. The fills (6077, 6082, 6083, and 6118) were greyish brown silty sands and gravels.

This ditch appeared to be recut along part of its length by **6076**. This recut was on the same line as the original ditch, running for c 4m from the point of truncation by **6086**, and tapering to a rounded butt end to the west. It was the same shape as the original ditch, but slightly narrower and shallower, measuring 0.92m wide and 0.33m deep. The fill, 6075, was a black clayey sandy silt with a high organic component, and contained animal bone, Roman pottery, and tile.

A straight linear ditch, **6066/6005**, was aligned east-north-east / west-south-west. About 34m of its length was revealed, and it was truncated along its length to the south by the recut **6098/6003**. At Section 1 (Fig 3), the water table was encountered at 1.05m, but the ditch may have been c 1.5m deep. The north side had a shallow shelf at the top, then descended steeply, becoming steeper towards the base. The south side was truncated away by **6098/6003**. The lower fill, 6102, was a grey silty sand with frequent gravel, and the upper fill, 6101, was a mottled orange and greyish brown slightly sandy silt. At Section 2 (Fig 3), the ditch was 0.95m deep, with a wide shelf at the top of the north side, and a wide, steep, flat-bottomed V shape at the base. The lower fill, 6004, was a very dark grey silty sand, and the upper fill 6132, was a dark grey sandy silt with frequent gravel.

6101 was cut by **6100**, a small feature, possibly a posthole, seen only in Section 1. It measured 0.20m wide and 0.25m deep, with straight sides tapering to a rounded point. The fill, 6099, was a dark greyish brown sandy clay silt with several large flint nodules. This was cut by **6098/6003**.

Another feature was visible only in Section 1, **6105**, and may have been another linear feature. It was 1m to 1.2m wide, and 0.4m deep, with concave sides and base. The fills, 6103 and 6104, were dark grey silty sands and gravel with frequent flints and chalk flecks. This feature was cut by the ditch **6098/6003**.

The ditch **6066/6005** was recut along its length by **6098/6003**, a straight ditch parallel to the original ditch, but located slightly towards the south. At Section 1, it measured 4m wide and a minimum of 1.05m deep where the water table was encountered, with a possible depth of 1.4m to 1.5m. The south side was steep, slightly concave to a narrow shelf, then descending steeply, almost vertically, towards the base. The north side was slightly concave with a shallow shelf at the top, then descending steeply towards the base. The north side was a very similar shape to the original ditch, **6066/6005**. At Section 2, the ditch measured 3.4m wide and 0.8m deep. Here there was no shelf on the south side, and both sides had a rounded break of slope with a flat base.

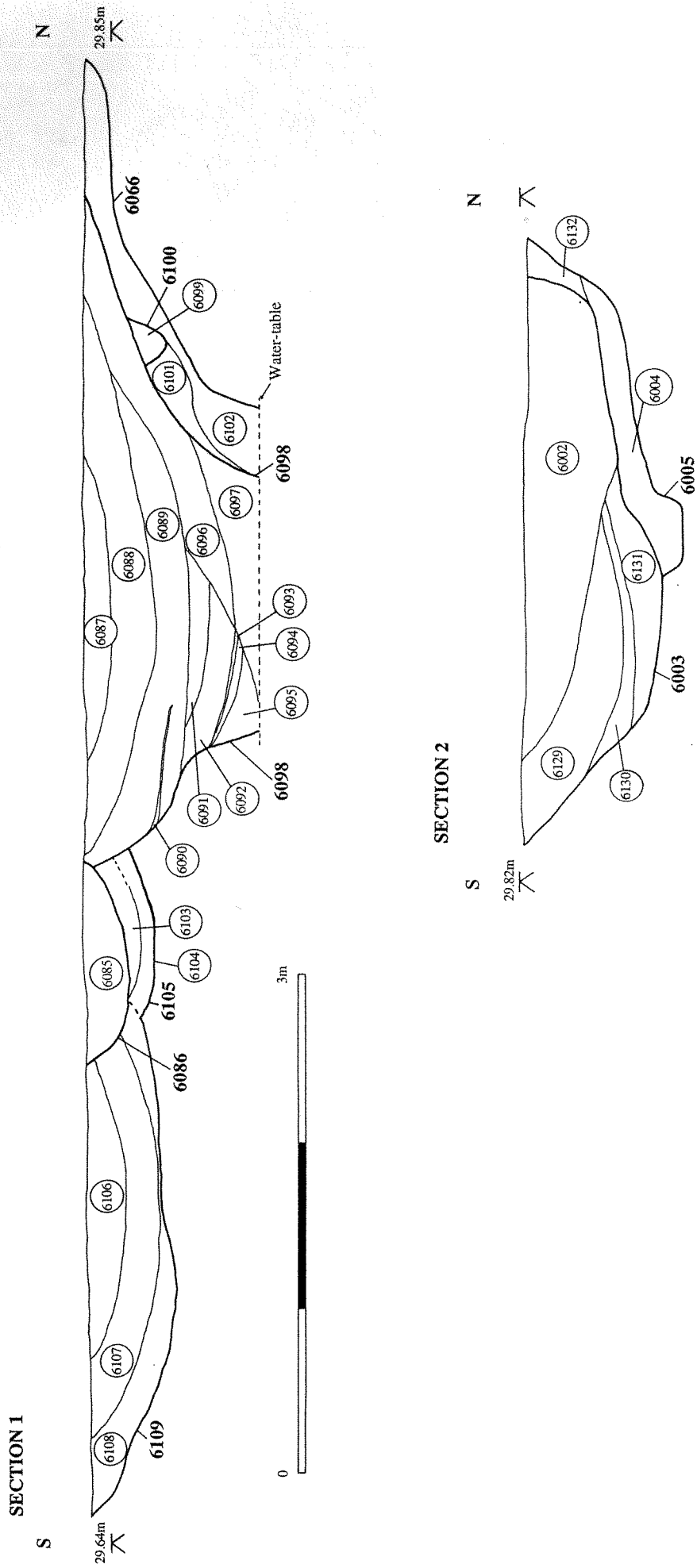


Figure 3 Ditch Sections 1 and 2

Both sections through this ditch showed the primary fills tipping in from the north side. This may imply that a bank was piled on this side of the ditch, with the initial fills representing silting due to erosion of the bank. Two upper fills of the ditch, 6089 and 6088, contained bone, Roman pottery, and tile.

Timber building (Fig 4)

A rectangular timber structure with earth-fast foundations aligned roughly north / south, measured 11.5m by 6.5m, with a possible annexe measuring 5m by 5m situated axially on the north end. The plan of this building was made up of the north and west walls, and part of the south wall. There appeared to be no remains of the east wall, apart from 6117, a large, shallow possible posthole measuring 0.9m by 0.7m and 0.08m deep. The posthole 6007 did not appear to be part of the structure as it differed in shape and had a distinct fill.

The postholes all had almost identical fills, very dark grey, with occasional strong brown mottles, sandy silt with moderate gravel. Most were circular in plan, averaging 0.45m in diameter, and their depths ranged from 0.1m to 0.2m, with certain exceptions (see below).

The west wall consisted of ten postholes, plus double posts at the corners. Two large, oval postholes flanked an entrance at the middle point of the wall. These measured about 0.7m by 0.6m, and 0.2m to 0.25m deep, considerably larger and deeper than the others. One posthole, 6029, appeared to have a recut.

The north wall was made up of four circular postholes and two double ones which flanked an entrance at the middle point of the wall. The posts on either side of the entrance were much deeper than the average, being 0.32m and 0.41m deep. The short linear, 6068, was also probably part of the wall structure.

The south wall consisted of 3 postholes, including 6059, a double, heart-shaped posthole.

The possible annexe at the north end of the structure was truncated by later features 6126 and 6134. The short linear 6124 may have been part of the structure. The annexe consisted of double posts at the north-west corner, one posthole from the west wall, one from the east wall, and one posthole and the linear 6124 on the north wall. The postholes 6121, 6135, and 6136 may represent part of a fenceline.

Linear which predates 6015

A straight linear feature, 6070, ran roughly east / west for c 20m, between the eastern edge of excavation and the point where it was truncated by 6086. It was widest towards the east, c 1.10m, and tapered to 0.60m to the west. Where sectioned, it had concave side and base, giving it a wide, shallow U shape, 0.30m deep. The fill, 6069, was a very dark greyish brown silty sand with frequent gravel and stones, and occasional chalk flecks. This linear was truncated by 6086.

To the west of 6086, a linear feature on the same line as 6070 ran for c 7m, from the point where it was truncated by 6015 in the west to peter out towards the east. This was possibly the continuation of 6070, which was truncated away here. It was 0.50m wide, and the fill, 6149, was the same as 6069. This feature was not excavated.

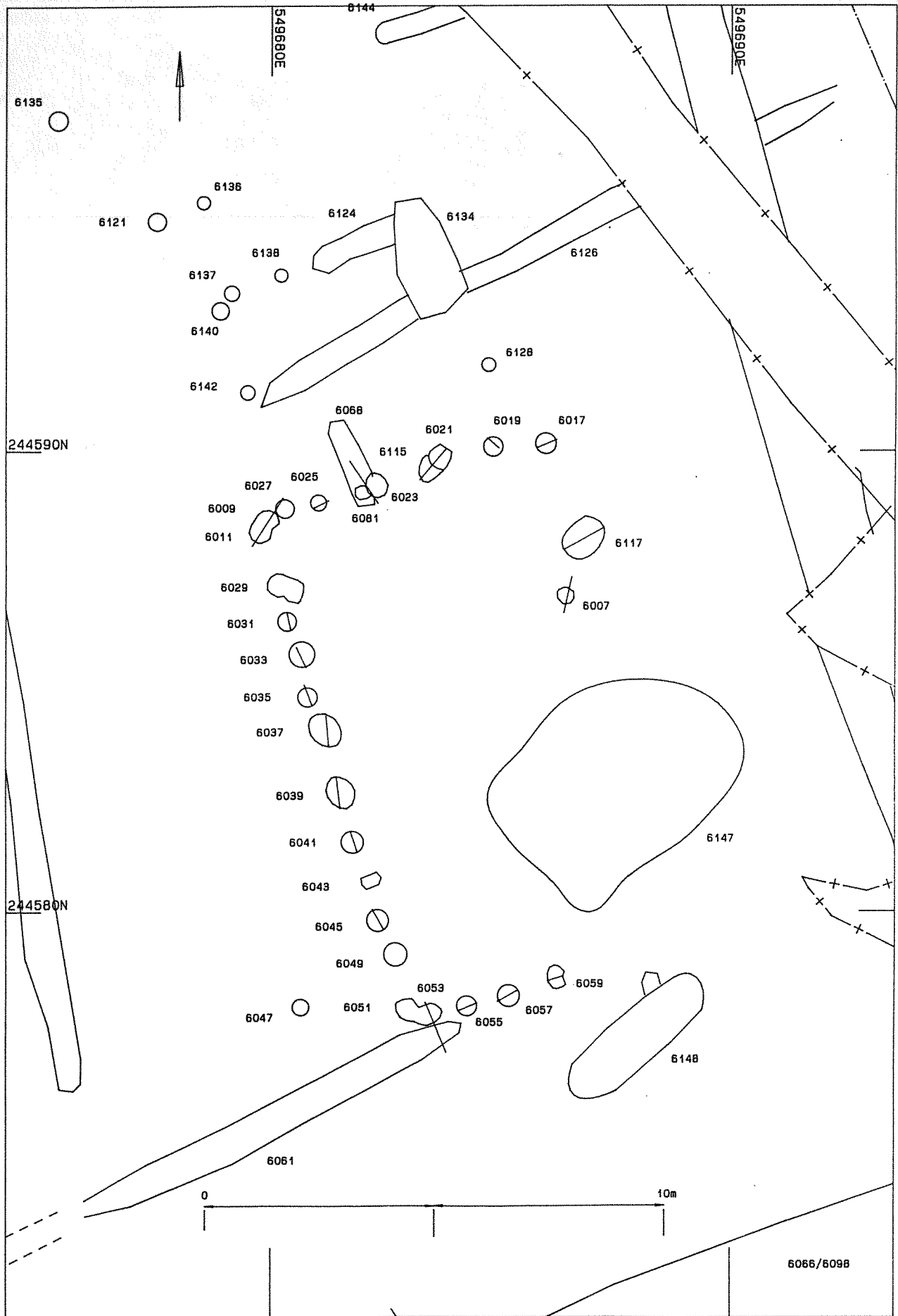


Figure 4: Plan of Timber Building

Possible field drains

A straight linear feature, **6063**, ran east-north-east / west-south-west, from the western edge of excavation to a rounded end to the east. It was intermittent, but this was probably due to its shallowness and the degree of truncation. It measured a minimum of 11m long, 0.64m wide, and 0.10m deep. Its slightly irregular sides sloped gently to a gradual break of slope with the concave base. The fill, **6062**, was a greyish brown clayey/silty sand with frequent gravel.

A straight linear feature, **6061**, ran east-north-east / west-south-west, from the western edge of excavation to a rounded end to the east. It was roughly parallel to **6063**, and was also intermittent along its length. It measured a minimum of 22m long, 0.8m wide, and 0.13m deep. It had slightly irregular, concave sides and base. The fill, **6060/6146**, was a very dark grey, with strong brown mottles, sandy silt with a moderate amount of gravel and small stones. This linear cut **6052**, the fill of posthole **6053**.

A straight linear feature, **6126**, ran east-north-east / west-south-west, roughly parallel to **6063** and **6061**. About 15m of its length was revealed, from the eastern edge of excavation to a rounded end to the west. It had concave sides and a flat base, and measured 0.45m wide and 0.12m deep. The fill, **6125**, was a grey sandy clay silt with a moderate amount of gravel and small flint fragments. This linear was truncated by the linear ditch **6078**, and by a probable pit, **6134**.

Possible post-medieval ditches

A straight linear ditch, **6078**, was aligned roughly north / south, and 33m of its length was revealed, running into the baulks at either end. It measured 0.7m wide and 0.18m deep. The sides were steep and straight, with a sharp break of slope to a flat base. The fill, **6079**, was a dark greyish brown silty sand with a moderate amount of flint nodules, becoming more frequent towards the base. The fill contained one pot sherd and animal bone where excavated. This ditch cut the upper fills of ditch **6098** and linear **6126**, and it was truncated by recent disturbance.

A straight linear ditch, **6015/6109**, was aligned north-east / south-west, and 38m of its length was revealed. West of **6086** at Section 3, the ditch was 1.45m wide and 0.35m deep, with straight sides continuous with a concave base. The lower fill, **6014**, was a very dark greyish brown clayey sand with occasional stones and flints, and the upper fill, **6012**, was a light yellowish brown silty sand and gravel. East of **6086** at Section 1 (Fig 3), it was *c* 3m wide and 0.55m deep. The lower fill, **6108**, was a grey silty sand with frequent gravel, and the upper fills, **6106** and **6107**, were dark yellowish brown, mottled with orange, silty clay. The two sections excavated through this ditch, *c* 24m apart, show it to be much wider to the east of **6086**, and with very different upper fills. However, in plan it was clearly the same ditch being cut by **6086**. It is possible, however, that the ditch was recut to the east of **6086**. This ditch cut the linear **6149**, and was cut by **6086**.

Possible 19th century ditch

A linear ditch, **6086**, ran roughly north-east / south-west for *c* 23m, then turned a rounded corner to continue north-west / south-east for *c* 24m. It extended into the baulk at the eastern and southern edges of excavation. The width of the ditch varied, averaging *c* 1.15m, being widest at the corner. It measured 0.25m deep, however it was visibly truncated during machining as it was cut from a higher level than most of the archaeological features. The sides and base were concave. The fill, **6085**, was a dark yellowish brown with orange mottles silty clay. A narrow line of chalk clunch blocks,

0.10m wide, ran along the top of this fill and was mostly truncated during machining. This ditch cut the fills of **6109**, **6069**, **6076**, and **6098**.

Other possible post-medieval or modern features

A large oval feature, 6134, appeared in plan to cut the linears 6124 and 6126. It measured 2.5m by 1.2m. It was not excavated, but the fill contained tile and brick which suggested a post-medieval or modern date.

An elongated oval feature, 6148, measured 3.5m by 1m and was not excavated. It contained brick, metal pipe, and glass which suggest a modern date.

A large area of disturbed natural, 6147, measured 5m by 4m and contained fragments of brick. This may have been the result of modern disturbance.

INTERPRETATION

The ditch **6119/6084** and its recut probably represent the corner of a rectilinear enclosure. The recut, where excavated, contained a considerable amount of abraded Roman pottery and tile, dated to the third to fourth centuries AD. The first phase of lake development revealed another rectilinear enclosure, also Roman in date. Although the size and shape of these two enclosure ditches differed, they may both be related to agricultural activities during the Roman period.

The wide straight ditch, **6066/6005**, and its recut **6098/6003**, may also have been Roman in date, however the abrasion of all the pottery and tile from this site suggest the possibility of residual material. The ditch represents a substantial boundary, recut at least once, although it is impossible to say how long the ditch was cleaned out before it was left to silt up. There is evidence to suggest there may have been a bank on the north side of the ditch. If this were the case, the north side is more likely to have been the interior of an enclosure, as it is more common to have a bank and palisade on the interior of a ditch.

The linear **6070** may have been related or contemporary to this ditch, as it appears to be parallel with it, running c 6m to the south of the ditch.

The timber building had suffered some horizontal truncation, as did the whole site, and therefore no floor surfaces or internal structures survived. Only one posthole contained any dating evidence, two sherds of very abraded Roman pottery. This could well be residual and cannot be used as reliable dating evidence.

The ground plan of this building is typical of an early to mid Saxon building style. This tradition of building seems to have commenced in the early Saxon period, and bears little resemblance to earlier Romano-British building types (Marshall & Marshall 1991, 29). This building has several of the distinctive characteristics which James *et al* (1984, 184) describe as shared by many sites of this period: the building is rectangular, precisely laid-out, constructed with earthfast foundations, with a door in the centre of the long wall, and with an annexe at one end. The dimensions of this building are also typical (Marshall & Marshall 1991, Fig 1), and the length/width ratio follows the most common model, that of the overlapping squares variation of the two-square model (James *et al* 1984, 186 and Marshall & Marshall 1991, 41).

It seems unlikely that this building is Romano-British in origin, based on its ground plan. Similarly, it does not resemble the majority of the late Saxon structures, which are

of sill beam construction. Its proximity to the main area of excavation where several early to mid Saxon sunken-featured buildings were excavated, suggests that this building is of the same period and related.

The location of the building adjacent to the large ditch, **6066/6005**, and its recut **6098/6003**, suggests the possibility that the building may have been related to the ditch, or that an existing ditch may have been used later as a boundary when the building was constructed. James *et al* state that most of the structures within the early medieval building tradition stand within, or abut palisaded enclosures.

The three linear features, **6061**, **6063**, and 6126, were all roughly parallel, and very similar in size, shape, and fills. They were probably field drains, running down the slope towards the river. The fact that one of these, 6126, was cut by the ditch **6078** which appears to have existed by the early nineteenth century (see below), implies that these drains are early post-medieval in date. They did not contain any evidence for ceramic drains, but they may have been brush drains, or simple channels to aid drainage.

The linear features **6065**, **6111**, and 6144 may also have been field drains, but they differ in fills and alignment from those above and are not necessarily contemporary.

The ditch **6015** is the continuation of the ditch which runs along the south edge of the wood and survives as an upstanding earthwork (Leith & Spoerry 1995). This ditch corresponds to a field boundary on both the 1831 plan of the Hinxtan Estate, and the Enclosure Map of 1833.

The ditch **6078** corresponds to a field boundary or drainage ditch on the 1831 plan of the Hinxtan Estate, which was roughly perpendicular to **6015** and joined the corner of the rectangular pond to the north. The 1833 map showed this boundary in a slightly different position, running to the west of the pond. No archaeological evidence was found for a boundary in this position, although it may have been marked with a fence or hedge which left no traces on the archaeological record.

The ditch **6086** was later than **6015**, and does not appear on either of the maps of the 1830s or on the OS 1st edition map surveyed in 1886. It therefore presumably dates from the period 1833 to 1886. This must have been a short-lived boundary which was removed when the grounds of the Hall were emparked, sometime before 1886.

DISCUSSION

The present phase of lake development has revealed an intensity of land use from the Roman through to post-medieval periods. The rectilinear enclosures, here and in the first phase of lake development, suggest Roman field systems which extend to the south of the present area of development, and possibly also to the west towards the river. This, with the results of excavations at Hinxtion Quarry (Evans 1993), suggests that in the Roman period, the gravel terraces on the east bank of the Cam near Hinxtion were being exploited for agricultural purposes.

The presence of the probable early to mid Saxon building has great significance in the light of the main excavations which took place in 1993-94 to the east of the present development. In this area, the early to mid Saxon period was represented by four sunken-featured buildings, one possible earthfast timber structure, and a few pits. The presence of this building suggests that during this period the settlement was dispersed over a much larger area. In contrast, the late Saxon settlement, enclosed within a ditch, was mostly restricted to an area of slightly higher ground in the southern part of the main area of excavation.

The series of ditches running roughly north-east / south-west across the present development area, suggests, as in the first phase of lake development and at Hinxtion Quarry, a continuity of land boundaries from the Roman period through to the nineteenth century. The presence of the Saxon building to the north of these boundaries might suggest that the earlier boundary ditch, 6066 etc, was reused at this stage. This could imply that during the Saxon period, Roman boundaries were still visible landscape features which were used to delineate the settlement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank David Hillman of Bovis for his cooperation; Richard Heawood, Scott Kenney, Judith Roberts, and Twigs Way for their hard work on site; and Melodie Paice for illustrating Figure 1.

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OS Draft 1", 1799 sheet 147

Plan of land divisions in Hinxtton Estate, 1800 (CRO R57/24/1/57a)

Plan of Hinxtton Estate, 1831 (CRO R57/24/1/57b)

Enclosure Map, 1833 (CRO Q/RDc47)

OS 1st Edition, 1899 (Sheet Lix NE)

APPENDIX A: BUILDING MATERIAL

by Phil Copleston

<i>Context</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Condition</i>	<i>Comments</i>
6001	106g	<i>Imbrex</i>	Unabraded	
6071	40g	<i>Pedalis</i>	Abraded	
6075	111g	<i>Bipedalis</i>	Abraded	Soft buff-brown fabric, score marks on upper surface
6088	251g	<i>Pedalis</i>	Very abraded	One fragment with mortar
6112	30g	Tile	Abraded	Medieval? Thin section, hand-made, sanded under-surface.

Range: The range of tile and brick fabrics falls into three groups: a sandy orange fabric, typical of much Roman material from this region; a softer buff-brown finer fabric with occasional coarse flint inclusions, not uncommonly found in the eastern part of this Roman province; and a harder reddish thin section tile fabric, of much later date. The range of Roman-period forms mainly consist of function-unspecific *Pedalis/Bipedalis* forms - a flat tile in various standard sizes used in a variety of situations, such as flooring, wall facing or string coursing within rubble (although *Bipedali* were commonly used to bridge between the *Pilae* floor support columns of hypercaust systems) - traces of mortar accreting to one fragment from context 6088 may be indicative of this. A single roof *Imbrex* fragment was found, a type of tile intended to form an arched waterproofing seal over the abutting, upward protruding flanges of *Tegulae* roof tiles, although they were commonly adapted for other purposes as well. The single fragment of non-Roman tile was not identified, other than being a flat, thin tile, similar to those used as floor surfaces.

Period: This assemblage is made up almost entirely of Roman material, apart from a single fragment of tile from context 6112 which may be medieval. None of the Roman tile is particularly datable, although it probably falls within a second to third or fourth century AD range, except a fragment of softer, buff-brown fabric from context 6075 which may be of a slightly later date range - say third to fourth centuries AD. The single fragment of harder reddish fabric from context 6112 is probably Medieval.

Quantities and Residuality: The rapid method of on-site recovery means that the total quantity of material is only 538g, and consequently makes any interpretation difficult. It was noted that all fragments were quite heavily abraded, and were therefore probably all found in residual contexts.

Significance: As noted in the paragraph above, little interpretation can be made of this material due to its very small recovered quantities and its abraded nature. Roman tiles of these types are very common on Roman sites, as well as many post-Roman sites, and could have come from a small type of building. This may be indicative of the possible one-time presence of a small tile-roofed Roman building nearby, with tiles used within it for their intended purpose, or adaptively used in alternative functions from new. Just as easily, however, this assemblage could signify later reuse or dumping from elsewhere.

APPENDIX B: CERAMICS

by Phil Copleston

<i>Context</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Fabrics</i>	<i>Forms</i>	<i>Condition</i>	<i>Date</i>
6001	167g	Oxidised ware, one with slipped surface, hand-made reduced ware	Jars	Abraded	C2-4 AD
6006	274g	Oxidised ware, reduced ware	Jars	Abraded	C2-4 AD
6022	8g	Cream ware	Flagon	Abraded	C2-4 AD
6075	298g	Oxidised ware, greyware, coarse oxidised ware	Jars, Storage Jars with combed decoration	Abraded	C3-4 AD
6079	14g	Colour coated greyware	Jar	Very abraded	C2-4 AD
6088	73g	Oxidised ware, colour coated oxidised ware, greyware	Jars, some incised decoration, Mortarium with quartzite grits	Very abraded	C4 AD?
6089	38g	Oxidised fabric with cream colour coat	Flagon	Abraded	C2-3 AD
6112	88g	Greyware, oxidised ware, reduced ware, Harold ware	Jars, small Cup Some internal combing on one greyware sherd	Abraded	C3-4 AD
6116	60g	Reduced ware, oxidised ware	Jars, Flagon, Bowl?	Very abraded	C2-3 AD
6122	17g	Nene Valley colour coated ware, cream ware, oxidised ware	Jars Possibly same vessel as 6006	Very abraded	C2-3 AD

Range: The fabric range of this assemblage is all of local and regional grey, reduced, oxidised, shelly and colour-coat wares. The only notable fabrics are a sherd of shelly ware from kilns in the area of Harold, Bedfordshire, and sherds of Nene Valley Colour Coated Wares from kilns in the lower Nene Valley, west of Peterborough. Several other fabrics were noted, particularly from flagons and a mortarium, but these have not been sourced here. The range of forms comprises jars, both food storage and preparation vessels, as well as some tablewares, flagons and a single mortarium. No imported table wares or wares of higher status were noted.

Period: This assemblage is too sparse and undiagnostic to allow good dating, but generally it is from the second to fourth centuries AD. However, some material is earlier within this range (sherds from context 6089), and some slightly later (sherds from contexts 6075 and 6088).

Quantities and Residuality: The total quantity of material was just 1037g, and all in an abraded condition. This suggests that most of this material was probably found in residual contexts or is otherwise unreliable for dating purposes, other than the comments noted above. Also, it should be born in mind that, due to the rapid on-site recovery methods, this assemblage may not be representative of the actual pottery population present in the ground.

Significance: This pottery assemblage is representative of typical domestic ceramics from the Roman period, with a range of fabric and forms indicative of food storage, preparation, and table serving vessels (grey, reduced and oxidised wares, Harold and Nene Valley wares in forms of jars, larger storage jars, flagons and a drinking cup). Coarse, shelly wares, such as Harold Ware, were often employed as cooking vessels, but no direct evidence was noted for this (such as external sooting or internal residues),

although this is not surprising considering the abraded nature of the assemblage. No imported wares were noted (which are often present in such domestic assemblages); all were local or regional in origin. Overall, this suggests a fairly low-status assemblage, deposited as domestic refuse in the mid- to late Roman period, and probably later disturbed and redeposited.



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