

Archaeological Field Unit

**Middle and Late Iron Age Settlement and Roman Agriculture at
Highfields, Caldecote, Cambridgeshire:
Assessment and Post-Excavation Project design**

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(TL 5882/3546)**

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1 INTRODUCTION

Excavation has been undertaken in Caldecote Highfields, Cambridgeshire (TL 3546/5882). The excavation was commissioned by Wilcon Homes Ltd., who are currently redeveloping the site and was undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (AFU).

The general potential of the site was defined by a phase of evaluation trenching carried out by the AFU during 1996. Results from the evaluation suggested that an Iron Age and Roman occupation site had survived in the form of earth-cut features such as ring ditches, enclosure systems, and pits. It was suggested in the evaluation report that the site did not extend across the whole of the current development area (Oakey 1996). The background contained in the report will not be reiterated here.

In 2000, an excavation was carried out on the land immediately to the north of this site that further refined the model of archaeological potential. Both Iron Age and Roman settlement was revealed at the northern end of the site, while an Iron Age enclosure around a roundhouse was partially exposed at the southern end. Part of a trackway and the start of a Roman field system lay on the eastern side of the site, and the headland of the medieval ridge and furrow appeared to conform to the line of the trackway.

A summary of the excavation results is presented below, along with the results of post-excavation assessment, and an updated project design for further analysis work leading to publication. This assessment has been carried out in accordance with English Heritage guidance (English Heritage 1991) and the requirements of the agreed specification for archaeological works.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The original research framework for the excavation analysis and reporting of archaeological remains at High Street, was defined by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Office in their brief (Thomas, June 2001). The following extracts include the original paragraph numbering.

Firstly, the context within which the investigations were taking place was defined:

- '1.2 Situated on Boulder Clay, the site is of archaeological significance. Although an archaeological evaluation of the site produced inconclusive results (Oakey, 1996, *Iron Age and Romano-British Field Systems at Highfields, Caldecote: An Archaeological Evaluation*, AFU Report No 125), a subsequent archaeological excavation of the adjacent site to the north revealed extensive Iron Age and Roman remains (Kenney, 2001, *Middle and Late Iron Age and Roman Settlement at Highfields, Caldecote: Assessment and Post-Excavation Project Design*, AFU Report No PXA 30). The archaeological features included a series of enclosures, a trackway, a roundhouse and a funerary

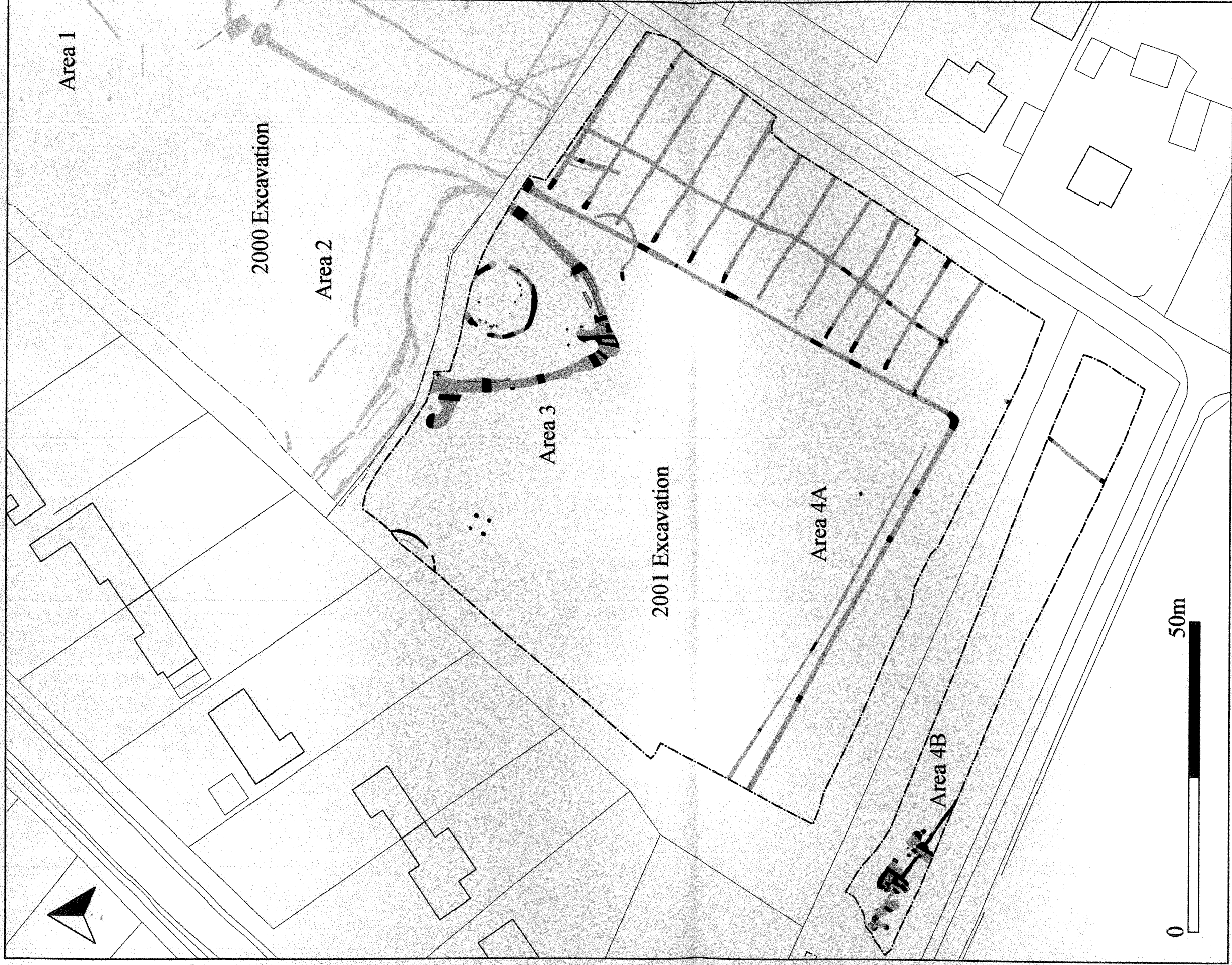


Figure 1 2001 excavation showing features in relation to 2000 excavation. Excavated sections shown in black only for 2001

enclosure. Iron Age enclosures extended across the southern boundary into the present site.'

Next, the aims and objectives were defined:

'4.1.1 The primary objective is to preserve the archaeological evidence contained within the site **by record** and to attempt a reconstruction of the history and use of the site. The following research priorities are important considerations, although the project manager is welcome to propose others. Attention is drawn to the issues raised in Glazebrook, J. (ed.) 1997, *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource Assessment*. East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Paper 3 and Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J. (eds.) 2000, *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties: 2 Research Agenda and Strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8.'

Furthermore, the research priorities were defined as follows:

'4.2.1.1 To investigate the morphology of the settlement and its sequence of development.'

'4.2.1.2 To contribute to an understanding of the domestic economy of the Iron Age in this region.'

'4.2.1.3 To contribute to an understanding of pottery development and distribution.'

'4.2.2.1 To contribute to an understanding of the spatial/temporal relationship of the Iron Age and Roman settlement and agricultural use in the region.'

English Heritage (1997) identify the following themes which provide the broader framework for this investigation:

'Processes of change

Communal monuments into settlement and field landscapes (c 2000-300 BC)

The gradual change from the monument-dominated landscape of the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age to the settlement-dominated landscape of later prehistory was clearly far from uniform or synchronous across Britain. The processes involved, and the scale of their regional variation, are still poorly understood

Briton into Roman (c 300 BC-AD 200)

A high level of continuity in settlement and land use and, by implication, in social and economic organisation, between the Late Iron Age and Romano-British periods is becoming increasingly apparent, as are contemporary regional variations. Increasing awareness of the complexity of the transition, combined with issues of ethnicity, and social and economic dislocation, would seem to offer great potential for exploiting complex data sets.'

In addition, the following supplementary objectives were listed in the Specification (Macaulay, 2001):

'4.2.1 The determination of the spatial relationship between the prehistoric trackway and the medieval headland.'

A wider view of the orientation and position of the trackway and headland will enable more certain conclusions to be drawn about the continuity of use of boundaries and routeways in this landscape.'

The results of the excavation and assessment, together with updated project aims and objectives are presented below.

3 EXCAVATION METHODS

The format for excavation was set out by Cambridgeshire County Council (Development Control) in accordance with established PPG 16 mitigation practice. The programme of work included the excavation of a single open area, to be excavated as two contiguous halves. These areas were numbered 3 and 4, continuing the scheme begun in the previous year's excavation on the Bloor Homes site (Kenney 2001).

In the area immediately to the north of the site, ground works and subsequent construction for the Bloor Homes development was almost complete at the time these archaeological investigations were taking place.

A single 360° tracked excavator was employed for the removal of overburden, with up to two 25-ton dumper trucks being used to stockpile the spoil. The topsoil and any subsoil from Area 3 was stored on Area 4 and the spoil from Area 4 was stockpiled on Area 3 once excavation was completed on the first half of the site. Total overburden (topsoil and subsoil) depth varied between 0.20m and 0.70m over the excavated areas.

After machine stripping, selected areas were cleaned by hand. Archaeological features were outlined using spray paint in order to assist visibility in poor weather and then planned by hand at a scale of 1:100. A metal detector survey was conducted across the site in order to pinpoint metal finds within features, and certain objects were excavated from within the medieval plough furrows at this stage. A grid located with respect to the Ordnance Survey was set up during stripping of the first area. Grid pegs were located in each area at 10 metre intervals. These were used to plan excavated features by hand at a scale of 1:100 or 1:50. Sections and profiles across excavated features were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. All excavated deposits and cuts were described on AFU single context recording sheets. Monochrome and colour photographs were taken to supplement the drawn and written record.

4 EXCAVATION AREA SUMMARY

Although the two areas of excavation were spatially contiguous, they were not both open contemporaneously, and thus it was a useful tool during excavation to consider them as separate entities. The results laid out below continue this scheme for ease of reference.

4.1 Area 3 (North)

Area 3 consisted of slightly more than half of the total excavation area. Three things quickly became apparent during the first stage of stripping the area. Firstly, the pattern and alignment of ridge and furrow observed during the previous year's excavations was clearly seen to continue across Area 3. The surviving medieval headland, which had been visible as an upstanding earthwork before stripping began, also extended into the new excavation area. This headland did not conform to the modern hedge line, but ran NNE-SSW across Area 3. When the topsoil and subsoil were removed, the headland could be seen to be tracing a path close to that of two parallel ditches that appeared to bound a trackway. Secondly, a series of parallel ditches ran perpendicular to the westernmost of the trackway ditches, forming a pattern obviously of agricultural origin and predating the ridge and furrow. Thirdly, the bulk of the enclosure system seen first in the evaluation and subsequently in the excavation of Area 2 was revealed and confirmation obtained that it contained a single roundhouse. Evaluation in 1996 had not picked up archaeology other than the ridge and furrow in the south-west of Area 3, although Trench B4 had encountered the enclosure ditch system and the very edge of the roundhouse. Other features within this enclosure included a square four-post structure.

In the north-west corner of the site, two of the medieval furrows cut through a section of interrupted narrow circular ditch some 15m in diameter. This was interpreted as part of an Iron Age roundhouse and closely resembled the example found in Area 1 during the 2000 excavations. This feature was not revealed by the evaluation. Adjacent to this building lay four postholes in a square arrangement, a common feature of Iron Age sites, often interpreted as the foundations for grain stores.

To the east of this roundhouse lay the enclosure system containing the second roundhouse. The enclosure could now be seen to be roughly triangular in shape with a narrow 'passageway' to the west which seemed to be the entrance. The roundhouse gully had two very apparent phases, with the later one containing a black fill with numerous sherds of Iron Age pottery. Two medieval furrows truncated the roundhouse gully, but fortunately one passed directly through the entrance, narrowly missing the terminals. When the interior of the roundhouse was hand cleaned, a number of postholes were revealed and excavated, but as with the example in Area 1, they formed no obvious pattern.

East of the enclosure lay the agricultural system, which consisted of nine parallel ditches running WNW-ESE and terminating to the west within 1m of a perpendicular bounding ditch. This group of features was reminiscent of the pattern found at

Wollaston in Northamptonshire, which has been subsequently identified as a Roman vineyard. The example at Caldecote is physically almost identical in size, spacing and arrangement to that at Wollaston and has thus been provisionally given the same interpretation. It is possible that the western boundary ditch was first established for at least part of its length during the Iron Age and recut during the Roman period. Certainly, the more haphazard ditch that cuts across the vineyard planting trenches forming the eastern ditch of the trackway appears to be a later Roman imposition.

To the south-west of the enclosure, a semi-circular gully around 10m across was cut by the western trackway ditch. A similar feature was found in the southern part of Area 2 during the 2000 excavation.

4.2 Area 4 (South)

Area 4 consisted of slightly less than half of the total excavation area. Although it had been intended to be a single open area, this became logistically impossible because of service runs crossing part of it. The portion directly to the south of Area 3 was designated 4A, while further to the south beyond the hedge that was to remain lay Area 4B. Area 4C was the name given to the trench to the west of Area 4B. As seen in evaluation Trenches B1 and B2, much of Area 4A appeared archaeologically blank apart from the ridge and furrow, however, the excavation revealed a very different story. The potential vineyard continued into Area 4A and ended, while the bounding ditch to the west turned a corner and headed north-westwards. The eastern ditch of the trackway also terminated in Area 4A, however, this may have been part of an entrance, since another terminal was located 15m further south. Evaluation trench F1 lay within Area 4B but revealed no archaeology. As it turned out, to the west of the trench lay a complex of pits cutting a narrow WNW-ESE gully. Area 4C revealed no archaeology, in common with evaluation Trench F2, which it lay parallel to.

In Area 4A the western bounding ditch of the vineyard took an abrupt turn ninety degrees to the north-west, continuing in a straight line to the baulk and creating an enclosure. Within this appeared a narrower and less substantial gully and the remains of a single small pit or posthole.

The vineyard trenches ended with the southernmost one joining the boundary ditch to the west some 9m before the ditch turned a corner westwards. The eastern ditch of the trackway terminated just south of the last vineyard trench.

In Area 4B, several pits that may have been Bronze Age in date were cut by a narrow gully of Iron Age or Roman date, which was itself later truncated by numerous intercutting pits in two rough spatial groupings. The gully had also been cut in segments of varying depth, as well as having postholes inserted along its length at irregular intervals. At the east end of the trench, the ditch that originated at the southern edge of Area 4A was seen to continue southwards and this may be the same linear feature encountered in both Trench E5 (1996) and Trench 9 (2001).

5 PERIOD SUMMARY

5.1 Neolithic or earlier

The excavation produced a few flint artefacts that may belong to a period earlier than the Bronze Age, however, these are all thought to be residual and no features securely dated to earlier prehistoric periods have been found.

5.2 Bronze Age

Some Bronze Age finds were made in Area 4B, however, these were residual in the fills of later features. Several of the pits in this area were cut by the narrow ditch that crossed the area, and may therefore be Iron Age or earlier.

5.2 Middle Iron Age

The multiple phases of enclosure seen in Area 3 and the roundhouse it contains all date to the Middle Iron Age. It is harder to date the adjacent trackway ditch, but there does appear to be at least two phases to it, and it may have originated in the Iron Age. A semicircular ditch outside the enclosure also produced Iron Age pottery and may belong to the same period. Part of a single roundhouse with an interrupted gully was found in the north-west corner of the site. Although no pottery was recovered from the fills of this feature, its similarity to the Middle Iron Age roundhouse found in Area 2 may indicate a similar date.

5.3 Late Iron Age

It would appear from the initial pottery spot-dating that the final phase of the 'triangular' enclosure dates to this period, as does the large pit that obliterates the southern corner of it, which contained several quern fragments as well as an almost complete example.

5.4 Roman

The agricultural system of parallel ditches and perpendicular bounding ditch that covered most of the eastern side of Areas 3 and 4 has been interpreted as a Roman vineyard, dated by the pottery recovered from the fills. Their similarity to features found at Wollaston in Northamptonshire suggests a vineyard, since the spacing is too narrow for drainage. Several of the pits and the ditch in Area 4B also date to this period.

5.5 Medieval

The site contained a similarly sizeable snapshot of the local medieval ridge and furrow pattern as had the previous year's excavation, including a headland that conformed to the route of the trackway. This headland was still extant as an upstanding earthwork bank before stripping of the site began. The width of the gap between the furrow ends was mirrored in the spacing of the trackway ditches. This suggests that the trackway survived as a route or boundary feature until the medieval period and was then preserved beneath the bank of the headland.

5.6 Post-Medieval

Several post-medieval gullies and ditches were uncovered in Area 3, and at least one enclosure was of 17th century date, having produced a pony-sized horseshoe of a type common at that time.

6 ASSESSMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

6.1 STRATIGRAPHIC AND STRUCTURAL DATA by Scott Kenney

6.1.1 Quantity of material and records

The number of records relating to the excavated features are as follows:

420 context records, of which 273 describe deposits, 146 describe cuts, and 1 refers to general cleaning.

19 hand drawn plans at a scale of 1:100; 3 hand drawn plans at a scale of 1:50

1 section drawings at a scale of 1:50; 42 section drawings at a scale of 1:20; 47 section drawings at a scale of 1:10

280 photographs;

42 sample records.

6.1.2 Provenance and dating

The majority of datable deposits can be attributed to the Iron Age and Roman periods based on pottery spot dates, stratigraphic and spatial associations and alignment of features. A number of excavated deposits contained no datable finds and their dating therefore relies on other evidence.

In area 3, 65% of the excavated deposits could be dated to the Middle Iron Age, and a further 19% dated to the Roman period. The remaining deposits, some 16%, can be attributed to the Late Iron Age. Despite the lack of artefactual material other than metalwork, the furrows were assigned to the medieval period because of their morphology.

In area 4A, 8% of the excavated deposits could be dated to the Middle Iron Age, and the remaining 92% dated to the Roman period. Despite the lack of artefactual material

other than metalwork, the furrows were assigned to the medieval period because of their morphology.

In area 4B, 42% of the excavated deposits could be dated to the Middle Iron Age, and a further 53% dated to the Roman period. The remaining deposits, some 5%, could possibly be attributed to the Late Bronze Age. Despite the lack of artefactual material other than metalwork, the furrows were assigned to the medieval period because of their morphology.

6.1.3 Range and variety

Feature types were almost entirely confined to cut features containing one or more deposits; the vast majority of the deeper features being waterlogged at their base. There was no evidence for surviving deposits outside cuts in Areas 3 or 4.

The site was characterised by ditches, both deep boundary ditches from the Iron Age, and shallow ditches of Roman date that apparently formed an agricultural system. A small number of pits were excavated which can be attributed to the Middle Iron Age and two pits were dug that may belong to the Late Bronze Age. Two buildings could be discerned in plan on the site, both at the northern end, and both roundhouses dating from the Middle Iron Age.

Table of excavated feature types by area. These are numbers of features rather than cuts, and include several very large enclosures.

Area	Pits	Ditches/gullies	Post holes	Buildings
3	5	18	19	3?
4A	1	7	0	0
4B	17	2	5	0

6.1.4 Condition

The archaeological deposits were horizontally truncated across the site, and there was no evidence for buried soils or surviving surfaces associated with the buildings. There was, however, apparent survival of the line of a prehistoric trackway as a boundary feature through into the medieval period. Topsoil was between 0.2 and 0.3 metres in depth, and in the area of the headland there was up to a further 0.4m of subsoil. Intrusions from post-medieval or modern features were limited to a few pipe trenches.

Features were a mixture of intercutting and discrete, and these stratigraphic relationships may be used to aid in phasing of the site, alongside the pottery spot dating, morphology and other evidence.

6.1.5 Primary sources/documentation

The records for excavated deposits are complete and have been checked for internal consistency. Written records have been completed on archival quality paper using light-fast, waterproof ink, and are fully indexed. Drawn records are in pencil on film, and are clear, annotated, and fully indexed. A matrix has been produced for those areas of the site that had greater stratigraphic complexity than simply below topsoil and above natural.

Primary records for both the evaluation and the excavation are all retained at AFU offices, Fulbourn, Cambridge.

6.1.6 Means of collecting the data (method of assessment)

The primary paper records have been checked in conjunction with the site matrices and the assessments of artefactual and ecofactual materials to amass the information for this assessment. General finds information for individual contexts has been collated using the computer database. Preliminary grouping of contexts into discrete features has been undertaken. Raw stratigraphic phasing has been used as a tool to aid in grouping the intercutting features. Phase interpretations will also draw on artefact dates, spatial associations and alignments.

6.1.7 Selection of data for further analysis

By setting the site within its local and regional context, it is possible to assign a scale of significance to the remains from different periods. Most significant would be the Middle and Late Iron Age component, followed by the Roman, with the Post-Roman the least significant. It is therefore suggested that those contexts which are thought to be Middle or Late Iron Age in date and associated with the earliest settlement of Highfields should be subjected to the most detailed analysis. Similar attention will be paid to the Roman component, with particular emphasis on any potential chronological overlap of the two occupation areas.

6.1.8 Statement of potential

The contextual data is likely to be sufficient to provide a solid foundation on which to build the site narrative. A wide range of the available context types were fully excavated and recorded. In addition, the archaeological features present on the development area were all recorded in plan. The presence of buildings and settlement boundary features will provide a good base for the analysis and interpretation of spatial and typological distributions.

It is crucial that the site data is properly analysed and reported on in order that it may form a solid foundation upon which the finds data can be based. Without a solid, well-constructed and cross-referenced site database, information from other sources is likely to be compromised.

Establishing a dating sequence will be crucial in establishing phasing sequences and will help to establish a tighter dating sequence for similar sites elsewhere in the region.

6.1.9 Analysis methods and quantity statement

It is suggested that the site data is subjected to rigorous analysis. All contexts dating to the main period of occupation should be grouped and phased based on information from pottery, scientific dating techniques, and based on feature types and their spatial distribution. This information should then be distributed to specialists so that they are able to analyse the different material categories on the basis of the contextual data. The site report will be based on a combination of the contextual data and the reports compiled by individual specialists, it is therefore envisaged that the final report will not be written until all specialist analysis is completed. Reference to, and comparison with other sites of a similar period and type will be made wherever possible. In

particular it is thought that some useful comparisons could be made with Wessex Archaeology's excavations at nearby Cambourne, and the AFU's previous excavations at Highfields, in addition to various other sites, both in the county and further afield.

6.1.10 Potential of methods to meet aims and objectives

By subjecting the contextual data to rigorous analysis and incorporating all the specialist data into the site record it should be possible to produce a database and report which can be used for useful comparison with other excavations of sites of the Iron Age period. This is especially important given the current lack of data for sites of this period on the Cambridgeshire claylands. A number of stratigraphically linked context groups can be used to establish phasing for the site and this will be dated by reference to the pottery. Useful work will be done on spatial distribution and comparison of feature types. It is thought likely, for example that associations between individual boundary ditches may be established in order to assess the longevity of the various settlements and whether there are any signs of zoning in activities, status and so on within the settlement(s). It will be especially important to identify when settlement ceased to exist in this area and whether there is any continuity other than the trackway into the medieval period

6.1.11 Task list (accompanied by estimate of time)

Compile groups and phasing for distribution to specialists	10 days (PO)
Liaise with specialists and incorporate specialist reports	3 days (PO)
Compile illustrations list and liaise with illustrator	1 day (PO)
Write excavation report	10 days (PO)
Contribute to report, the site in its regional context	1 day (FUM)
Complete Archive	2 days (PO)
Edit Report	2 day (PM)
Incorporate edits	3 days (PO)
Proof reading	1 day (PM)
Draw and mount maps/plans/sections/pot drawings	5 days (ILL)

Where Cons = Conservator, ENV = Environmental supervisor,
ILL= Illustrator, PM = Project Manager, PO = Project Officer,
FUM= Field Unit Manager

*The above does not include publication staff costs.

6.2 POTTERY by Paul Sealey

6.2.1 Provenance and quantity

The material from Caldecote Highfields consists of 322 sherds weighing 2.395kg. It derives from pits, ditches, postholes and structural gullies across the site.

6.2.2 Dating

The assemblage is approximately 58% Roman by weight, with the remainder being Middle and Late Iron Age. In general, most of the excavated contexts contained pottery of only one period.

The MIA pottery traditions of south Cambridgeshire developed after the *floruit* of the c.600-300 BC Darmsden-Linton and Chinnor-Wandlebury styles of the EIA (Cunliffe 1968,178-81,figs 1-4; 1974,39,325-6; 1978,41-2,359-60).

The MIA pottery represented at Caldecote had a long life until at least the end of the 1st century BC.

Then - and later - pottery assemblages in Cambridgeshire start to see the introduction of wheel-thrown and grog-tempered wares affiliated to the Aylesford-Swarling 'Belgic' tradition so well represented in north-east Kent, Hertfordshire and Essex (Thompson 1982).

To judge by the earliest brooches associated with 'Belgic' pottery, it did not emerge in north-east Kent, Hertfordshire and Essex until c.70 BC. But its introduction to Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk took place much later and more sporadically (*op. cit.*,17).

Translating this into terms of absolute dates for the Caldecote assemblage is difficult and the c.25 BC date suggested here for the introduction of 'Belgic' pottery should be viewed with caution.

In parts of Cambridgeshire and East Anglia, pottery of MIA type was not finally displaced until the early Roman period (Lyons & Percival 2000,222). This persistence of MIA pottery in East Anglia was singled out as an important topic by the recent research agenda for the Iron Age (Haselgrove *et al.* 2001,3).

Hill (1999a, 202) has understandably questioned the validity of a middle Iron Age for the region at all, and suggested introducing instead a twofold division of the Iron Age into an earlier and a later phase. But 'Belgic' pottery *is* present in south Cambridgeshire in the late Iron Age – at cemeteries like Hinxton - and this needs to be acknowledged.

Although very little 'Belgic' and MIA pottery is present at early Roman Caldecote, there is no reason to suppose either that occupation came to an end before AD 43, or that we need to postulate a gap in the continuity of occupation in the mid to late 1st century AD.

6.2.3 Fabric and forms

A significant portion of the assemblage is of hand-made Middle Iron Age wares, including some from the East Midlands scored ware tradition. These fabrics occasionally occur as a small component of some later contexts.

The prehistoric pottery is nearly all hand-made; the only exceptions are a very few symmetrical (and therefore wheel-thrown) rims in sandy fabrics dated to the late Iron Age.

With prehistoric sherds that have diagnostic typological features it was evident that the pottery was MIA. In view of this, it is reasonable to suppose that even featureless body sherds in fabrics other than grog also belong to the MIA.

The distinctive features of this MIA tradition as represented by the Caldecote Highfields assemblage are:

- vessel forms dominated by bowls with slack S profiles
- flat, as opposed to pedestal bases
- plain, undecorated bodies and rims; the only exceptions being the occasional rim decorated with straight incised lines set obliquely across the top of the actual rim, and diagonal grooves across body sherds

A few vessels are decorated with rough score marks that exemplify the east Midlands scored ware tradition (Elsdon 1992) and their presence suggests contact with regions to the north and west.

In terms of pottery style zones, the MIA ceramic from Caldecote has close affinities with pottery from elsewhere in East Anglia. It exemplifies the same MIA tradition found in Norfolk, through Suffolk (Martin 1999,74-81; Percival 1999) into north and central Essex (Drury 1978,51-85) and north-east Hertfordshire (Ozanne 1961).

The Roman pottery forms the major component of the whole assemblage and ranges from conquest period material to such late fragments as a 3rd/4th century AD mortarium.

6.2.3 Primary sources and documentation

This assemblage will be compared to those published from Edix Hill, Barrington (Woudhuysen 1998), Lingwood Wells, Cottenham (Hill 1999b), Castle Hill in Cambridge (Farrar et al 1999) and the Aylesford-Swarling cremation cemetery at Hinxtton (Hill et al 1999). Other unpublished assemblages may be studied if time allows.

6.2.4 Data collection

Each context will have the sherds separated into periods and then subdivided into fabric types.

6.2.5 Discussion and potential

To understand the significance of the Caldecote pottery, one needs to look at broad picture for Iron Age pottery in south Cambridgeshire. The period begins with two overlapping pottery style zones of flint-tempered wares known as Chinnor-Wandlebury and Darmsden-Linton (Cunliffe 1968,178-81,figs 1-4; 1974,39,325-6; 1978,41-2,359-60) current c.650-300 BC. This is followed by a plain ware tradition of sand-tempered vessels; a regular minor component on some sites are vessels inspired by the east Midlands scored ware tradition. From c.50 BC the region is exposed to the new Aylesford-Swarling "Belgic" wheel-thrown and grog-tempered ceramic of Essex and Hertfordshire (Thompson 1982).

The Middle Iron Age assemblage from the site is important because a Middle Iron Age pottery tradition in south-east Cambridgeshire still awaits definition (Woudhuysen 1998,37-8), at least in published format. There is enough pottery of Middle Iron Age type to provide at least two pages of A4 illustrations. Present amongst this material (and in lesser quantities in later contexts from the site) are sherds derived from the east Midlands scored ware tradition (Elsdon 1992).

The late Iron Age and early Roman contexts include such middle Iron Age pottery but with increasing quantities of wheel-thrown sherds in sandy wares derived ultimately from the Aylesford-Swarling or "Belgic" ceramics so well represented to the south in late Iron Age Hertfordshire and Essex. Some of the "Belgic" pottery from Caldecote is hand-made and might represent local copies. An attempt could usefully be made to quantify the incidence of hand-made and wheel-thrown pottery to assess the pace at which pottery technology was developing in the period.

Late Iron Age and conquest period groups of the kind described allow one to address the problem discussed by Hill (1999a,202), the validity of the traditional division of the East Anglian Iron Age into an early, middle and late phase. Hill has rejected the tripartite division on the grounds that middle Iron Age wares remained current in Cambridgeshire until the Roman invasion.

This is understandable, but the partial adoption of "Belgic" pottery in south Cambridgeshire (as Hill himself demonstrated at the Aylesford-Swarling cemetery of Hinxton) (Hill *et al.* 1999) suggests we should not abandon the existing phasing without further discussion.

This explains the importance of Caldecote. As we have seen, there are contexts with wares of exclusively Middle Iron Age type. But (larger) groups of late Iron Age and conquest period date are also present. Several distinct strands can be identified in these late Iron Age and conquest period contexts:

- middle Iron Age hand-made wares,
- east Midlands scored ware,
- late Iron Age wheel thrown wares of "Belgic" affiliation,
- imported Roman wares, and

- early Romano-British pottery.

Groups like this should give an opportunity to gauge the rate at which “Belgic” pottery was adopted in south Cambridgeshire on a settlement site. The presence of more securely dated conquest period groups in which so-called late Iron Age pottery traditions are evidently contemporaneous with middle Iron Age pottery types gives scholarship an opportunity to define and quantify and date this poorly understood period of cultural transition.

These transitional middle to late Iron Age groups document the hesitant adoption of Aylesford-Swarling “Belgic” pottery in a region reluctant (for whatever reason) to forsake its traditional ceramic identity. Some of this “Belgic” pottery is grog-tempered and may represent “imports” from Essex or Hertfordshire. But most of the Caldecote “Belgic” is sand-tempered (like the middle Iron Age pottery from the site) and evidently represents Aylesford-Swarling pottery at least one remove from its most developed Essex and Hertfordshire format. This middle to late Iron Age transition has not hitherto been addressed on the basis of a Cambridgeshire settlement site.

It would seem that the middle and late Iron Age contexts at Caldecote belong to a site that saw uninterrupted activity right through until the Roman period. Indeed the association of pottery of Iron Age type with Roman wares allows one to date the persistence of this tradition.

The integration of pottery of Iron Age type with Roman at Caldecote suggests the project should for completeness give some account of *all* the Roman wares from the site.

6.2.6 Recommendations

To understand the pottery from the site and its potential, the existing site documentation of context sheets and plans will be studied. Discussions with the excavator will take place to establish the site phasing.

All sherds will be examined with a hand-lens to determine how many different fabrics are present and the character of these fabrics.

Descriptions of the fabrics will be written. At the same time, sherds will be examined for evidence of use, decoration and manufacturing technique.

Detailed hand-written notes will be kept on each context for the site archive.

When the sherds are being examined to define the fabrics, they will be weighed and counted by fabric group within contexts.

This quantified data will be collated and tables prepared showing the incidence of fabric groups for the assemblage in total, and by phase, and for selected contexts.

The average sherd weight of the Iron Age pottery will be established.

Contexts with sherd weights significantly higher than the site average will be examined afresh to assess the extent to which they represent primary rubbish or structured deposition.

The fabric groups will need to be related to the local solid and drift geology to establish if the pottery could have been made in the immediate locality of Caldecote.

The nearest sources to Caldecote of the fossil shell used to temper some of the Iron Age pottery need to be located.

6.2.7 Task list

Illustration and numbering of selected sherds

1 day (ILL)

Analysis and report

6 days (EC)

6.3 THE FAUNAL REMAINS by I Baxter

6.3.1 Quantity

A relatively small assemblage of bone was recovered from hand-excavated deposits. A small additional amount of bone was recovered from the heavy residues of sieved environmental bulk samples.

The total weight of the assemblage is 2324g; this figure includes material recovered from the samples. For the purpose of this assessment the whole assemblage (305 fragments) has been rapidly scanned (table.1).

Table 1. Highfields, Caldecote: (CALHF 01). Number of hand-collected mammal bones (NISP)

Taxon	Period				Total	
	Bronze Age	Iron Age	Romano-British	Medieval	Post-Medieval	
cf. Aurochs (<i>Bos primigenius</i>)	1	-	-	-	-	1
Cattle (<i>Bos f. domestic</i>)	-	10	3	-	-	13
Sheep/Goat (<i>Ovis/Capra f. domestic</i>)	3	31	-	-	1	35
Sheep (<i>Ovis f. domestic</i>)	-	(8)	-	-	(1)	(9)
Pig (<i>Sus f. domestic</i>)	4	6	-	-	-	10
Horse (<i>Equus caballus</i>)	-	5	1	-	-	6
Dog/Fox (<i>Canis/Vulpes sp.</i>)	-	1	-	-	-	1
Badger (<i>Meles meles</i>)	-	2	-	-	-	2
Mole (<i>Talpa europaea</i>)	-	-	-	-	7 ¹	7
Large Mammal	-	3	-	-	-	3
Medium Mammal	-	8	-	-	-	8
Medium/Small Mammal	1	-	-	-	-	1
Unidentified	13	154	19	-	19	205
Total	22	220	23	0	27	292

¹“Sheep/Goat” also includes the specimens identified to species. Numbers in parentheses are not included in the total of the period.

¹ six bones from a partial skeleton

6.3.2 Provenance

The assemblage was recovered from pits, ditches, postholes, quarries and structural gullies.

6.3.3 Range and variety

The animal bones belong almost exclusively to domestic species. Sheep/goat fragments are most frequent at 30%, closely followed by cattle and pig at 11%. The cattle include the so-called "Celtic" small horn. There is probably a recovery bias against the remains of smaller species. Horse remains are relatively common, accounting for 7% of the total.

6.3.4 Condition

The preservation of the bone ranges from good to poor, with most of the assemblage fair to poor. Much of the bone is highly fragmented.

6.3.5 Method of assessment

All the bone recovered from the site has been used as the basis for this assessment. Numbers of "countable" bones, ageable mandibles and measurable bones are recorded in Table 1. The counting system was based on a modified version of the system suggested by Davis (1992) and used by Albarella and Davis (1994).

6.3.6 Selection of data for further analysis

No further analysis of the assemblage is warranted.

6.4 ENVIRONMENTAL by Chris Stevens

6.4.1 Quantity

A total of 42 flotation samples were taken for the recovery of charred plant remains and other archaeologically significant material.

A range of environmental samples were taken during the excavation to obtain data on spatial variation in site economy, local environment, and the functions of specific features. The samples were all bulk samples for the recovery of charred and waterlogged plant macrofossils.

Animal bone was hand collected during excavation. In addition, heavy residues from flotation were sieved for the recovery of any small animal bones and other classes of environmental material.

Although marine molluscs (shellfish) were occasionally recovered during excavation, they occurred in insufficient quantities to warrant specific analysis.

Forty-two samples were assessed in total from the Caldecote Highfields site for both charred plant macro remains and molluscs. Given the poor number of remains the samples were examined and quantified in full and this represents a final report.

The samples were scanned using a low-powered binocular microscope, at the Pitt-Rivers Laboratory, McDonald Institute, Cambridge. Very few of the samples produced

botanical remains, although most produced some molluscan remains. The extracted material was quantified and is presented in Table 1, an * indicates seeds that were recovered and identified from the residue rather than the flot. The nomenclature used for the botanical material was Stace (1997) and Cameron and Kerney (1979) for the land molluscan and Pflieger (1998) for the water mollusca.

6.4.2 Provenance

The full range of feature types sampled was as follows: 23 from ditch fills, 6 from gully fills, 11 from pit fills, and 7 from posthole fills.

6.4.3 The Charred Evidence

The samples were generally poor in charred plant remains. The most predominant find was that of glumes of spelt or emmer wheat, *Triticum spelta/dicocum*. These were most frequent in samples <14>, <15> <16> and <31>. Such finds usually come from domestic waste burnt in the hearth, the result of the routine processing of crops taken from storage. As such these contexts may be assumed to be related more to where such activities were carried out, or lying within the vicinity of middens where hearth material was deposited. Both spelt and emmer wheat were represented, although spelt would appear more common. Weeds were relatively scarce in the samples and were predominantly of common arable weeds, though the presence of seeds of *Carex* sp. (sedge) may possibly infer some cultivation of wetter soils. The lack of weed seeds may also point to the storage of crops that were stored as semi-clean spikelets. However, the poor quantities of the samples means such interpretations should be regarded with caution.

The find of a seed of wild or possibly domestic apple, *Malus* sp. from sample <33> was of some interest and properly represents at least some utilisation of wild resources.

6.4.4 The Molluscan Evidence

Shells of molluscs were relatively frequent in the samples and at the very least indicate the existence of neutral to calcareous soils since the samples were deposited. *Bathymphalus contortus*, *Bithynia tentaculata*, *Lymnaea* sp., are all associated with wet conditions and the presence of the former two would indicate standing if not running water and/or flooding events across the site, especially in the samples <40>, <41> and <42>. Shaded and grassland species were also present and may indicate long grasslands and shrub while shells of *Pupilla muscorum*, a species of disturbed open habitats, was relatively scarce occurring only in sample <37>.

6.4.5 Interpretations

The lack of cereal related charred remains could be related to one or a combination of several interrelated factors. Charred remains consisting of cereals are generally associated with domestic activities. They are also associated mainly with the more frequent of these activities, namely the taking of cereals from storage and their preparation for consumption mainly on a daily basis.

The absence of cereals then tends to be associated with an absence of settlement; a short-lived settlement; the absence of domestic cereal processing; and/or the storage of cereals in such a form that wastage of grain is minimal. It may also be associated

with areas where midden or hearth material is not allowed to enter features, or features are quickly in filled before material can find its way into them.

The presence of cereals within at least one sample might lend itself to suggest that domestic waste was present on the site, and it should be noted that other sites in the region producing house-structures have similarly produced very little grain when sampled (Authors own observations).

The number of molluscs from <18>, <19>, <20>, <40>, <41> and <42> might indicate that features did not in-fill quickly, but may have been open for long enough to receive domestic waste where it had been present in suitable quantities. The molluscan fauna itself suggests little disturbance and a strong scrub element. Continuous disturbance, especially arable and grazing, tend to diminish the scrub-land fauna, whilst allowing a mature fauna associated with both disturbed ground, and if grazing (indicated by *Hellicella itala*) a dominant grassland element as well, to develop over time. The features themselves testify to some disturbance, however, the general absence of a molluscan fauna associated with such disturbance (*Pupilla muscorum*, *Pomatius elegans*) suggests it was short-lived and may support any hypothesis of a short-period of occupation or activity on the site.

The last possibility, that cereals were stored in a more processed state so leading to less production of waste, is seen at sites such as Wandlebury in the region (authors own observations). Other sites in the region have tended to have high numbers of both glumes, and smaller weed seeds supporting the idea that they were storing crops largely unprocessed as sheaves. The evidence from Caldecote is inconclusive, as not enough material was recovered for a sound judgement to be made on this issue. However, the one sample producing several glumes, and fewer hulled wheat grains, typical of processing waste taken from storage of grain stored as spikelets, also produced few weed seeds and these were of the larger sized typical of the final stage of removal by hand. This may suggest that the samples represent the processing of grain stored as semi-cleaned spikelets, i.e. partially processed and that this may have contributed to the absence of at least weed seeds.

6.4.6 Summary

The samples were examined in full, and no further work is required on them. The lack of charred material within them has been discussed. While samples with few mollusc remains may indicate features that have filled in too quickly for the recovery of charred material, those containing molluscs suggest other reasons, such as storage of more fully processed grain or short-lived occupation, for the scarcity of charred 'domestic' waste in the samples.

The finding of cereals within the samples would tend to point to some domestic activity and the storage of cereals at the site, though whether they were farmed locally is impossible to say. The lack of disturbance and high element of scrub may be due to a lack of activity on the site, or possibly a short-lived occupation where grassland faunas and faunas of disturbed soils were unable to establish themselves. The presence of water-molluscs suggests damp conditions and possibly even some flooding of the site.

6.4.7 Task list

No further work is recommended.

6.5 LITHICS by Barry Bishop

6.5.1 Introduction

Thirteen fragments of stone and two struck flint objects were recovered from excavations at the above site. This report quantifies and describes the material, offers some comments on its significance and suggests recommendations for further work. As the material was only cursorily examined, a more detailed examination of the material may alter or amend any of the interpretations offered here.

6.5.2 Objects of Stone

6.5.2.1 Stone Fabrics

Five different stone types were present:

- 1) Dark grey coarse-grained quartzitic sandstone (gritstone), probably from derived sources (erratics).
- 2) Fine grained medium brown siliceous sandstone.
- 3) Relatively soft light greyish yellow fine grained laminated calcareous mud or siltstone, effectively a hard chalk marl.
- 4) Light greyish white glauconitic calcareous sandstone or clastic limestone, possibly from the Greensand Belt located to the west and north of the site, although as the underlying geology of the site consists of erratic rich boulder clay, suitable raw material may be available from these deposits. Such stone has been long favoured for quern manufacture throughout southern Britain (eg Cunliffe and Poole 1991, 390).

Although of the same facies, slight differences were noticeable within fabric 4. The rotary quern upper stone from (1005) contained noticeably higher proportions of glauconite than those from (1128) and (1134), where the glauconite particles were fewer and more localised in their distribution. The particle sizes of the fragment from (1005) were also noticeably larger and contained in a higher proportion of calcareous matrix. Such variations would be expected especially if the raw materials consisted of erratics.

- 5) Light brownish grey, very fine grained dense with moderate Fe rich oolitic grains or (geologically recently?) filled pores up to 4mm diameter. Either very fine-grained calcareous sandstone or amygdaloidal basalt the grain size being too small to differentiate with a 10X hand held magnifying glass. Fe panned.

6.5.2.2 Catalogue of Stone Objects

- (33): Irregular shaped rounded cobble of fabric 3. No evidence of modification although some scratches to one of the surfaces, if not incidental, may indicate use as a 'cutting board' type working surface or very tentatively

- some form of abstract decoration. 1025g.
- (121): Small split rounded cobble fragment of fabric 4. No evidence of modification. 280g.
- (330): Fragment of rounded cobble of fabric 1. Fe stained exterior. No evidence of modification. 900g.
- (354): Small split rounded cobble of fabric 2. No obvious modification although some smoothing to the edge may possibly indicate as use as a polisher/burnisher/smoothen. 78g.
- (1005) SF2: Fabric 4. *c.* quarter arc of the upperstone of a rotary quern. Finely tooled, double wedge shaped in profile with the central part in the vicinity of the spindle hole unusually thin. Has one virtually flat smoothed surface and a roughly pecked concave opposed surface and the remains of a sub-rectangular central spindle hole / feeder. Estimated original diameter *c.* 320mm, thickness: at edge 90mm, at centre 17mm.
- (1023) SF11: Fragment of saddle quern base. Large rounded cobble fragment of fabric 5. One side is flat and partially smoothed; the opposing side is partially flat and partially concave. 174mm thick X >216mm X >143mm.
- (1128) SF8: Fabric 4. Almost complete lowerstone of a rotary quern. Part of perimeter and part of cone holding central spindle hole (not continuous through stone) damaged. Diameter 355mm, maximum thickness 75mm, minimum thickness 25mm.
- (1128) SF11: Fabric 4. *c.* quarter arc of an upper rotary quernstone with part of the central spindle hole, which continues right through the stone, present. Estimated original diameter *c.* 350mm, maximum thickness 450mm.
- (1134) SF6 and 7: Fabric 4. Two fitting fragments representing *c.* third of an upper rotary quernstone. Worn break scars show this was broken in antiquity. Estimated original diameter 300-400mm, maximum width 60mm.
- (1169) SF9: Fragment of saddle quern base. Irregular shaped large rounded cobble fragment of fabric 4. Exterior Fe stained. Single flat smoothed surface. 88mm thick by >267mm X >162mm.
- (1174) SF24: Small split rounded cobble of fabric 4. Fe stained exterior. No evidence of modification. 255g.
- (1260): Irregular shaped rounded cobble of fabric 3. No evidence of modification although some scratches to one of the surfaces, if not incidental, may indicate use as a 'cutting board' type working surface or some form of abstract decoration. 2890g.

6.5.2.3 Discussion of the stone objects

Of the stone types present only fabrics 4 and 5 were unquestionably utilised as raw materials. Although not particularly convincing, some utilisation of the other stones should not be entirely discounted.

Many of the pieces present undoubtedly consisted of glacially/alluvially derived erratics, as evidenced from the wear visible on their outer surfaces. The rotary quern fragments have been completely modified and it cannot therefore be demonstrated whether these originated from erratics or were quarried. Their size may argue for the latter although the size of some of the rounded cobbles, such as (1023), may invalidate this.

6.5.2.4 Saddle Querns

Both examples consisted of large cobbles, partially rough-hewn but mostly retaining their natural shape, and with irregular shaped grinding surfaces. The example from context (1169) had a single flat surface while that from context (1023) had a flat surface opposed with a concave surface. Such querns first appear in Britain during the Neolithic and continue in use until at least into the Roman period.

6.5.2.5 Rotary Querns

Fragments representing an upperstone and at least two and possibly three lowerstones were present. The upperstone had an unusually thin centre with a very flat upper surface, and a roughly pecked concave grinding surface showing no traces of wear. It would appear that this either represented a modified and re-used quern or that what would normally be considered the grinding surface actually acted as a hopper with the flat surface used for grinding.

Two of the fragments of the lowerstones refitted and the fragment recovered from context (1128) may also have been part of the same stone; the stone fabrics were identical as were the patterns of wear. Although the thickness of the stones was different such variations are common (eg the nearly complete example from (1128)) and although it cannot be demonstrated there is no reason to believe the fragments were not from the same stone.

All of the lowerstones displayed identical patterns of wear; a narrow band of smoothing around the perimeter demonstrates that all had been used prior to the grinding surface being neatly chiselled off, either to 're-sharpen' the surface or possibly 'deface' it, although the neatness of the chiselling would argue against the latter. The newly created surfaces were almost flat and set at a low angle, although prior to this they may have been more characteristically dome shaped ('beehive' querns). Before the newly tooled surfaces were used, however, the stones were broken and discarded.

Rotary querns are recorded in Britain at least from the middle of the fifth century BC (Cunliffe and Poole 1991, 396), and although variations within some traits may have a chronological significance, such as progressive tendencies to becoming larger in diameter, smaller in thickness and with a decrease in the angle of their grinding surface (Curwen 1937), few means are available to precisely date them.

The upperstone was relatively small, which would be compatible with its recovery from a Middle Iron Age ditch (context (1005)). It is relatively thin for such an early date, although as it has been potentially re-used this may not be surprising. An equivalent context also produced a saddle quern fragment (context (1169)); the concurrent use of both types being not uncommon during the Middle to Late Iron Age.

The lowerstones from contexts (1128) and (1134) can only be dated to the Middle Iron Age to Roman period. Although they are not particularly large examples, suggestive of an earlier date, their relative thinness and flatness of the grinding surfaces, as well as their refined tooling may indicate a later Iron Age or possibly even Roman date.

6.5.2.6 Contextual considerations

Both of the saddle querns were recovered from roundhouse gullies, one alongside a rotary quern. The lower rotary quern stones were all recovered from a large pit cut into the enclosure ditch. Querns of all types have frequently been associated with ceremonial or ritual type activities from the Neolithic onwards, possibly due to their associations with fertility and their role within the cycle of arable production, transforming raw materials into food through the processing of grain (eg Hingley 1992; Hill 1995). They are frequently recovered from enclosure ditches and roundhouse gullies, especially their terminals or significant points such as corners, and are often considered as 'special' or 'placed' deposits, associated with both foundational and closing ceremonies (eg Jobey 1975; Heslop 1987). Such deposits usually consist of fragmentary querns, such used or broken items may have been seen as sources of fertility (Brück 1995, 262), and deliberate destruction of objects may have been necessary in order for the material to be acceptable as an offering (Needham and Spence 1997, 86).

The querns recovered here were compatible with such interpretations. They originated from a limited type of deposit and the rotary quern fragments could all be considered unusual, the upperstone possibly re-used and the lowerstones apparently re-sharpened. All of the examples here had been used and subsequently broken, although no evidence for deliberate breakage was apparent and the fracture marks were not always sharp, suggesting that they had been lying around sometime before burial. Hill notes that in many cases the quern fragments from the sites he studied in Wessex had been curated before deposition (Hill 1995, 108-109). In the context of the examples here, burial within roundhouse gullies may signify the 'closing' or decommissioning of the roundhouse, whilst the pit containing the larger collection of lower rotary quernstones may have signified the decommissioning of the entire enclosure.

6.5.3 Objects of Flint

- (16) SF 18: Mesolithic tranchet adze/axe. Fine-grained flint with small patch of hard chalky cortex on one surface and the remains of a thermal scar on the other. Flint is iron stained and, predominantly on one surface, is recorticated. It is in good condition with some slight sand glossing and occasional later (but not recent) chipping to the edges and one end. It was manufactured by thinning and shaping one edge, then turning over and finishing the other side (sequential rather than alternative flaking; cf Ashton 1988), with much of the piece finished with neat shallow flaking. It is more or less symmetrical in plan, straight but slightly plano-convex in profile and predominantly sub-triangular in cross section, although one end thins down to a flattened oval shape. Both ends have been neatly worked and finished with the characteristic tranchet blow to both surfaces, one has moderate damage/usewear whilst any such traces to the other end have been masked by later damage. Both cutting edges are convex and relatively narrow. No observable traces of hafting. 170mm X 48mm X 34mm. 310g.
-
- (106): Utilised blade. Fine-grained fully recorticated flint retaining *c.* 10% hard chalky cortex. Edge trimmed narrow striking platform, pronounced bulb of percussion and feather distal termination with parallel dorsal scars. Some

light retouch/heavy utilisation traces along one edge and distal suggestive of use as a cortically backed cutting implement. 56mm X 21mm X 7mm. 9.2g.

6.5.3.1 Discussion of the flint objects

The tranchet axe or adze represents a typical example of a characteristic Mesolithic tool type (eg Field 1989) and the utilised blade would be compatible with such a date. Tranchet adze/axes were used throughout the Mesolithic and the date range of c.8000–4000 uncal. bc cannot be further refined. Both pieces were recovered from Roman or later features and are clearly residual. Occasionally Mesolithic material has been incorporated into later ceremonial activities involving deposition (eg Cotton, referenced in Andrews 2001) although there would appear to be little indication of such practices here. There is little published evidence of Mesolithic activity in the vicinity of the site, most work in the region having tended to concentrate in and around the fen margins and islands. Recently evidence of Mesolithic activity in the form of short stay camps has been identified to the southeast at Trumpington (Hinman forthcoming) and there is little reason to doubt that similar activity may have been fairly extensive throughout the region.

6.5.4 Recommendations

The tranchet adze/axe provides additional evidence for Mesolithic activity in southwest Cambridgeshire, although little light can be shed on the nature or chronology of that activity. Its presence and a short description, preferably illustrated, should be briefly included in any publication of the project.

The quernstones add to a growing corpus of information and provide important additional insights concerning the nature of later Iron Age ceremonial or ritual activity. Descriptions and illustrations of these should be fully incorporated into any published accounts of the excavations, along with detailed considerations of their contextual positioning and associations and comparisons of similar practices of comparable local, regional and national sites.

Although it is likely that the raw materials for the rotary querns were obtained from within the region, if not locally, further work on provenancing the stone utilised for the querns could potentially provide insight into trading links, exchange or raw material exploitation. If this is seen as priority then samples of the stone should be examined by a geologist qualified for working in the region and with knowledge of the lithology of the local drift deposits.

The chronology of querns is at present poorly detailed and extensive comparative research may be able to refine the dating of at least the rotary querns.

7 SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL

7.1 SITE CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE

English Heritage's updated survey of archaeological endeavour and agenda for future work (English Heritage, 1997) once again draws attention to the importance of archaeological remains dating to the Iron Age from the hitherto 'barren' claylands of Cambridgeshire. The more recent Regional Research Agenda and Strategy document (Brown and Glazebrook 2000) also focuses on this subject as a 'Gap in Knowledge', in particular the distribution of such settlement sites.

Recent work has proven beyond all doubt that these claylands were exploited to their fullest potential from the Bronze Age onwards, and the number of excavated Iron Age sites is now multiplying annually as development in Cambridgeshire continues to accelerate.

The southern part of the excavated area at Caldecote forms only a fraction of a settlement site from the Middle Iron Age. The main focus of occupation lies untouched to the south of this, within another proposed housing development. It is not yet known whether this settlement was particularly long-lived, however, the excavated boundaries and probable entrances are repeatedly recut, realigned and restated over time. The final phase of filling seems to indicate a catastrophic demise for this particular site.

Coupled to the usual research aims of understanding the diet, economy and settlement development of this period, there is a particular opportunity with this site to further clarify the nature of the introduction of new pottery types during the Iron Age and to measure their persistence into the Roman period.

7.2 UPDATED PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The updated aims and objectives for post-excavation analysis can now be defined as:

1. Refine dates and sequence of Iron Age settlement development.
2. Contribute towards an understanding of the distribution and development of pottery of the Iron Age period in the region.
3. Contribute to knowledge about diet, health and living conditions during the Iron Age period.
4. Contribute to knowledge about the character and management of the local environment during the Iron Age and Roman periods.
5. Contribute to knowledge about Iron Age buildings, and wood technology.
6. Contribute to knowledge about Iron Age quern technology.

7. Contribute to knowledge about internal settlement organisation during the Iron Age period.
8. Contribute to knowledge about agricultural organisation during the Roman period.
9. Consider evidence for continuity of landscape features from Pre-Middle Iron Age to the medieval period.

The Table below summarises the potential of each of the suggested analysis areas to meet the research aims and objectives.

Research Aims:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Main analysis area									
Stratigraphic/date	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pottery	X	X				X	X	X	X
Other Finds	X		X			X	X		
Faunal remains			X	X	X				
Plant macrofossils			X	X	X			X	

It is important to note that each of the areas of analysis will be of little value if studied without regard to its context both at site, local, and regional level. Assessment has indicated that there may be potential for looking at the spatial distribution of a variety of data types. It is, for example, immediately apparent that certain areas of the site were more rich in pottery than others, and that certain individual features contained disproportionately large amounts. Further analysis should show whether these differences are spatial or temporal, and thus whether we have zonation in settlement activity or change in settlement character over time.

8 PUBLICATION SYNOPSIS

It is intended to publish the report in the Cambridgeshire Archaeology report series. It is suggested that the report follows an established pattern as follows.

Background to excavation, archaeological context

The site summary - phases of activity

The pottery

The environmental remains

The faunal remains

The other finds

Discussion and Conclusions (including documented history notes, regional and local settlement context)

TASK LIST

Project Management	4 days (PM)
Report Preparation and Checking	3 days (ILL)

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