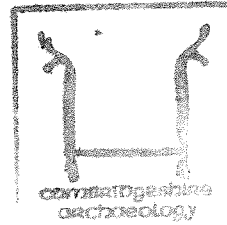
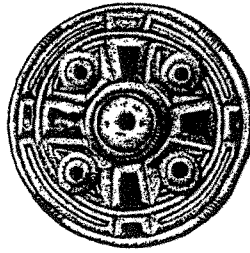


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Former Ciba Geigy Site, Hinxton Road, Duxford : An Archaeological Evaluation

Judith Roberts

1999

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. B60

Commissioned by Persimmon Homes (East Midlands) Ltd

**Former Ciba Geigy Site, Hinxton Road, Duxford:
An Archaeological Evaluation**

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September 1999

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation of a one hectare site on Hinxton Road, Duxford was undertaken by the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit in September 1999. Seven trenches were dug and revealed remnants of tree clearance, modern disturbance, undated ditches and a possible posthole. No clear evidence for occupation of the area was discovered.

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**Former Ciba Geigy site, Hinxton Road, Duxford
an archaeological evaluation
(TL 4825 4585)**

INTRODUCTION

In September 1999 the Archaeological Field Unit (AFU) of Cambridgeshire County Council undertook an evaluation to reveal archaeological remains at Hinxton Road, Duxford (TL4825 4585) (Fig. 1). The work was carried out on behalf of Persimmon Homes (East Midlands) Ltd in advance of residential development.

GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

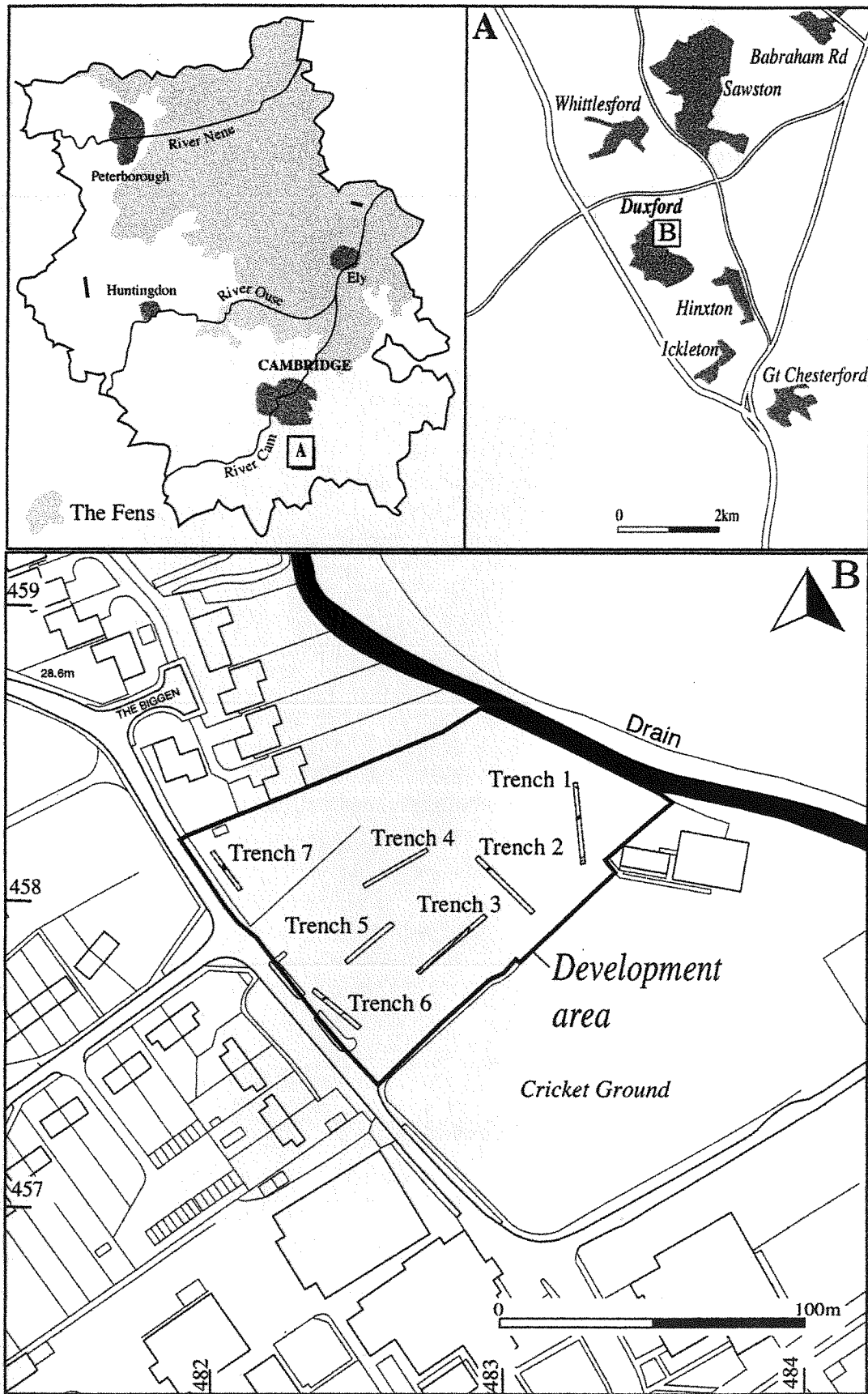
The 1 hectare site lies on the boundary between first and second terrace gravels (Sheet 205, British Geological Survey 1985) and at a height of approximately 27mOD. It was recently part of a factory site and since demolition is covered with building debris. Many of the trenches contained a layer (varying in thickness) of a clay silt with very few stones beneath the demolition debris and overlying the chalk and gravels.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Duxford lies about 11 kilometres south-east of Cambridge, close to the river Cam. It is a polyfocal settlement centred on the churches of St. John's and St. Peter's and on a green situated between two streets leading west from each church. Each focus has an associated moated manor at its east end. Another manor also existed which could have been a separate settlement (now deserted) north of the present village. Until 1874 Duxford consisted of two ecclesiastical parishes but it has probably always been a single secular settlement. In the past the village economy was based on agriculture although it lies close to an important river crossing at Whittlesford Bridge with a ford to Hinxton to the south. The river Cam has been diverted and channelled on various occasions for the mill.

The village lies between two branches of the prehistoric Icknield Way and this may be reflected in the alignment of the two principal streets. Evidence for early settlement in the area is quite extensive. A Bronze Age enclosure (SMR no. 4093) and Neolithic flint extraction site lie to the north-west of the village (SMR no. 10483) and stray finds and settlement sites have been found along the river valley (Schlee and Robinson, 1995).

A Roman iron shackle (SMR no. 4224) has been found south of St. Peter's church and an extensive Roman cropmark site has been identified just over the Cam in the parish of Hinxton.



Based upon Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. (Cambridgeshire County Council licence No. LA 07649X 1999)

Figure 1 Site Location Plan

There is little, or no, archaeological evidence for the Anglo-Saxon occupation of the village. Its relatively large population of 37 tenants in 1086 suggests that it was already a thriving settlement by the late Saxon period. In 950 it was called *Dukeswrthe* and in the Domesday survey it was *Dochesuuord* and in 1397 it was recorded as *Dokesford*. The name derives from Old English 'Ducc's enclosure' where *Ducc* is a personal name (Reaney, 1943).

Several manors existed in Duxford during the medieval period. These were Temple, Lacy's, Bustelers and D'Abernons manors. In 1230 Temple manor was given to the Knights of the Temple who held it until their suppression in 1308. It then passed into the king's hands and was relinquished in 1313 to the Knights Hospitaller who also owned and ran the hospital at Whittlesford Bridge, several miles to the east. The estate remained in their possession until the Dissolution. Since then it has changed hands many times and is still called Temple Farm. Temple Close, a series of converted barns, is west of Chapel Street. Traces of what may be the rectangular moat remain between the farm and the river. On the 1885 Ordnance Survey map of Duxford and the 1830 enclosure map a series of water channels are shown in this area which may be related to the water mill, a short distance to the east.

A second manor was held in the honour of Richmond, for Count Alan of Brittany at the time of Domesday. It belonged to the Lacy family by the 1270s and remained with them until 1350 after which it passed down through the Swinburne family. A house known as Old Lacey's Farm survives opposite St. John's Church. The site of the medieval manor is opposite the farm, east of the High Street. Surviving earthworks suggest that the moat consisted of two rectangular enclosures. The western half of the moat has subsequently been destroyed by housing.

Bustelers manor, held by Hardwin de Scalers in 1086 and then by the le Goiz family, took its name from William le Busteler, its owner in 1327. In the 17th century it passed to the Parys family, who farmed the land from a house near the west end of the High Street, known as Bustelers Farm. The remains of the medieval moated site was to the south of St. Peter's church. The river lay further east at this time and its old course is probably marked by the present parish boundary.

The fourth manor, D'Abernons, was held in 1086 by Arnulf, later lord of the Ardres (Pas de Calais). In 1200 it came into the possession of Roger d'Abernon from whom it took its name. The manor was probably located to the north of the village.

Duxford is an example of a single village containing two parish churches. Both were established by 1200 by the lords of two manors (Laceys and Bustelers) suggesting competition between the two land owners.

Housing extended eastwards along St. Peter's and St. John's streets and clustered around the village green. Old houses built on the green indicate encroachment at an early stage. The areas were linked by a network of back lanes such as Mangers Lane and Long Lane. Until the 1820s there was almost no housing west of the main road, near the river. The land there was owned by the various manors and Duxford Mill. Several mills are recorded from Domesday onwards, owned by d'Abernons and Temple manors. The latter continued in use to the present day and over time has constructed new streams diverting the river.

The village was linked to Ickleton via the southern branch of the Icknield Way, known as Walden Way in the 17th century, and to Hinxton by a road winding across

the meadows and crossing the river at a ford. The main road to Pampisford crossed the river at Whittlesford Bridge.

METHODOLOGY AND CONSTRAINTS

The subject site appears to have been under industrial buildings for many years, since at least the 1940's. The trenching strategy was designed to test whether any archaeological remains had in fact survived the considerable impact which these industrial buildings had made on the site.

Over 160m of trench was opened by machine. Selected areas were cleaned and features excavated by hand. The trenches were planned, photographed and recorded using the standard techniques of the AFU. Modern intrusive features were recorded in plan but not excavated. Spoil was scanned by eye to determine the presence of artefacts in the plough soil. Trenches were located in relation to Ordnance Survey grid using a total station.

Owing to the presence of large amounts of building debris over the whole development area, the site was not considered suitable for geophysical survey. Aerial photographic survey of adjacent sites was consulted but did not provide information relating to the development site and further aerial photographic work was not considered to be useful. The environmental potential of the site did not appear to be high and a qualified specialist will not be involved in this stage of the work.

RESULTS

Trench 1

Trench 1 (26.7m long) contained patches of gravel with areas of degraded chalk beneath 0.4m of a clay silt soil and a between 70mm and 100mm of demolition debris which was produced when the site was levelled. The trench was located to test for survival of archaeological remains close to the river and under small buildings on this part of the site. At least one modern linear feature (foundation trench or pipeline) ran approximately north-east-south-west across the trench. This had been backfilled with modern rubbish. Three undated and shallow linear features ran north-west-south-east across the trench. A small fragment of animal bone was recovered from one (12), in the middle of the trench but otherwise they contained similar fills which were indistinguishable from the subsoil, i.e. a slightly clayey silt with very few small stones but very occasional larger flint pebbles or nodules.

Trench 2

Trench 2 (26.8m long) had in its base natural chalk which was sealed by approximately 0.5m of slightly clayey silt with very few stones. There was one feature (8) which was filled with this clay silt overburden (7) which contained no finds. This was a oriented north-east-south-west, was 0.7m wide and 0.3m deep with

steep sides and a flat base. Two manholes and a modern pipe also crossed the trench and there was a high level of disturbance by modern building and demolition.

Trench 3

Trench 3 (30m long) varied in depth between 0.6 and 1m. There was considerable disturbance by pipes and foundations along this trench, possible petro-chemical contamination and fragments of asbestos roofing on the ground surface. Beneath the overburden (0.3m at the south-western end and 0.8m at the north-eastern end) two linear features ran along much of the length of the trench and one crossed more obliquely. Feature 4 was 0.55m long and 0.15m deep with concave sides and base. The fill was a slightly clayey silt with a very small percentage of sand and very rare flint nodules and small pebbles. This single fill (3) was cut by a pit containing modern debris. Feature 6, running parallel to 4, was over 2m long (and appeared to extend along most of the trench). It was over 0.3m deep with a single, compact grey brown slightly sandy clay silt. Two fragments of bone (one foot bone from a large mammal and a rib fragment from a medium sized mammal). This again had been cut by the modern pit.

Trench 4

Trench 4 (25m long) degraded chalk at the eastern end with patches of sandy gravel. A high proportion of the trench had been disturbed to a depth of 1.8m by modern building foundations which had been removed and backfilled with rubbish.

Trench 5

Trench 5 (20m long) contained nothing but modern footings and pipe trenches. Where visible the natural geology appeared to be mainly gravel but the level of disturbance was very high and extended to over 1m below the present ground surface.

Trench 6

Trench 6 (21.6m long) contained 0.3m of clay silt overburden over a soft creamy white degraded chalk. Irregular sub-circular and linear features crossed the trench. Several of these were investigated but proved to be shallow with irregular bases and were probably caused by tree roots or burrowing animals. One feature (2) proved to be more substantial. This was 0.6m deep with a diameter of 0.4m and had almost vertical sides and a flat base. The fill (1) was indistinguishable from the overburden but contained a single foot bone from a medium/large sized mammal. No other bones were recovered from this feature.

Trench 7

Trench 7 (16m long) contained a base of fairly compact chalk, slightly degraded in parts with 0.25m of overburden. There was evidence of considerable root disturbance along the trench and investigation revealed the irregular patches to be mainly shallow and were possibly related to the hedge line (visible in 1997/98 aerial photographs) and other trees on this part of the site. One feature, 13, which appeared to be linear, running approximately east-west across the trench, was 0.3m deep in its excavated

section and 1.10m wide. It contained fragments of bone from at least three animals (rodent vertebrae, medium sized mammal (dog?) and large mammal (cow/horse)). Two large pebbles (approximate diameter 100mm) of a sedimentary stone were found in the fill. No other finds were recovered from this fill. The base was concave with hollows containing pea-grit.

DISCUSSION

Documentary research suggests that the subject site was beyond the core of the medieval village and not within the sphere of the Roman settlements to the north-east or south. Evaluation trenches suggest that this area may have been used for agriculture. There is evidence for trees on part of the site before the Ciba Geigy factory was built but it is clear that modern buildings have had a huge impact on the site and it is possible that the site was levelled (as the adjacent sports field appears to have been) before construction. The least disturbed areas are those closest to Hinxton Road but even these show no signs of archaeological activity.

The conditions were warm and dry and features were clearly visible in the natural geology. It is likely that had medieval or earlier features existed on the site they would have been identified. No finds, other than very few fragments of animal bone, were recovered, thus it has not been possible to date any of the features that pre-date its most recent use.

CONCLUSIONS

The absence of medieval or earlier remains in the soil or any of the features and the high level of modern disturbance across the site suggest that further work is unlikely to provide much information on the early occupation here.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Mr. A. Evans of Persimmon Homes (East Midlands) Ltd. which funded the project. William Wall was the Project Manager and Jon Cane produced the illustrations. The work was monitored by Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Office (Development Control).

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Sutherland, T.L. and Sperry, P. 1995 Archaeological evaluation at Moorfield Road, St. John's Street, Duxford. Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit report no. 110

Maps consulted:

Ordnance Survey 1886

Tithe Map 1842

Inclosure map 1830

Sites and Monuments records for the parish of Duxford

Those highlighted are close to the subject site

SMR no.	Period	
1007	post-medieval	moat
1007A	mediæval	manor
1263	mediæval	moated site
1264	mediæval	moated site
1265	mediæval	moated site
4056	Neolithic	worked flint
4057	Neolithic	worked flint
4058	Palaeolithic	worked stone
4058A	Neolithic	worked flint
4059	Neolithic	worked flint
4060	Neolithic	worked flint
4077	Neolithic and bronze age	worked flint
4082	mediæval	field system
4083	Palaeolithic	worked stone
4084	Neolithic	worked flint
4085	Neolithic	worked flint
4086	Mesolithic	worked flint
4091	bronze age	axe
4092	undated	human remains
4093	bronze age	spear
4099	medieval	standing monument
4124	undated	soilmark
4124A	mediæval	ridge and furrow
4129	post-medieval	building
4131	post-medieval	building
4210	Roman	settlement
4210A	prehistoric	worked flint
4218	undated	barrow?
4219	Roman	roof tile
4224	Roman	shackle
4225	Roman	shackle
4267	bronze age	barrow
4698	mediæval	church
4698a	Anglo Saxon	worked stone
8905	undated	cropmark
9677	undated	cropmark
9738	Roman	settlement
9741	undated	soilmark
9741A	mediæval	ridge and furrow
9976	mediæval	earthwork
9977	undated	earthwork
9979	undated	earthwork
10408	post-medieval	dovecote
10483	Neolithic	worked flint
10483A	bronze age	enclosure
10840	mediæval	earthwork
10841	mediæval	earthwork
10842	mediæval	earthwork
11227	undated	cropmark
11450	undated	soilmark
11698	Roman	pottery
11698a	Anglo-Saxon	pottery
11698b	mediæval	pottery
11698c	post-medieval	pottery and building material
11757	post-medieval	inhumations
11808	Mesolithic and Neolithic	worked flint



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