

Roman Enclosures at Nos 6 & 8 Earlth Road, Willingham, Cambridgeshire

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Cambridgeshire
County Council
Environment &
Community Services

Commissioned by Jason C. Frost Development Consultants

Cover Images

Machine stripping, Soham	On-site surveying
Roman corn dryer, Duxford	Guided walk along Devil's Dyke
Bronze Age shaft, Fordham Bypass	Medieval well, Soham
Human burial, Barrington Anglo-Saxon Cemetery	Timbers from a medieval well, Soham
Blue enamelled bead, Barrington	Bed burial reconstruction, Barrington Anglo-Saxon Cemetery
Aethusa cynapium 'Fool's parsley'	Medieval tanning pits, Huntington Town Centre
Digging in the snow, Huntingdon Town Centre	Beaker vessel
Face painting at Hinchingbrooke Iron Age Farm	Environmental analysis
Research and publication	Monument Management, Bartlow Hills

CCC AFU Report Number 865

**Roman Enclosures at Nos 6 & 8
Earith Road, Willingham,
Cambridgeshire**

An Archaeological Evaluation

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Site Code: WIL EAR 06
CHER Event Number: ECB2169
Date of works: 14-27th March 2006
Grid Ref: TL 4043 7071

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was conducted by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (CCC AFU) between 14th and 17th March 2006 at Nos 6 & 8 Earith Road, Willingham (TL 4043 7071) prior to the demolition of the existing properties and out buildings and construction of six new dwellings with associated access and services. The work was commissioned by Jason C. Frost Development Consultants.

CCC AFU were commissioned to mechanically excavate three trenches (total area 100m²) in the development area. The evaluation uncovered a moderate sized enclosure ditch on a north to south alignment in Trench 1. In Trench 2 a smaller ditch was recorded on a west-southwest to east-southeast alignment that formed part of another enclosure. Two further ditches and a number of modern intrusions were recorded in Trench 3.

A fourth trench 14m² was opened within the development area at the request of Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advisor Kasia Gdaniec in order to determine the route across the site of the ditch recorded in Trench 1. This feature was recorded in Trench 4 on the same alignment as picked up in Trench 1. The ditch also truncated a less extensive linear feature that formed part of an earlier enclosure.

The finds recovered from these features were mainly Roman in origin. The pottery assemblage consisted of jars, cooking pots and a dish and was typical of low status kitchen and storage assemblages associated with Roman period farmsteads of 2nd–4th century AD. An assemblage of horse bone, along with heavily fragmented cattle remains, was retrieved that was indicative of butchery, or possibly tannery waste.

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





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Drawing Conventions

Sections		Plans	
Limit of Excavation		Limit of Excavation	
Cut		Deposit - Conjectured	
Cut-Conjectured		Natural Features	
Soil Horizon		Intrusion/Truncation	
Soil Horizon - Conjectured		Sondages/Machine Strip	
Intrusion/Truncation		Illustrated Section	
Top of Natural		Archaeological Deposit	
Top Surface		Excavated Slot	
Break in Section/ Limit of Section Drawing		Modern Deposit	
Cut Number		Cut Number	118
Deposit Number	117		
Ordinance Datum	18.45m ODN 		
Stone			

1 Introduction

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Kasia Gdaniec of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA; Planning Application S/1710/05/F), supplemented by a Specification prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (CCC AFU).

The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *Planning and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by CAPCA, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by CCC AFU and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

2 Geology and Topography

The site overlies first terrace sand and gravel deposits and Ampthill Clays (British Geological Survey Sheets 187 and 188, Huntingdon and Cambridge, 1981). The site lay at between 4.56mOD and 4.41mOD and the topography of the development area was fairly level with a recorded variation in height across the site of less than 0.20m.

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 Prehistoric

A number of prehistoric finds are recorded for the area in and around Willingham. These include two polished Neolithic flint axes to the north of the village in Middle Fen (CHER 05599 and 05733), Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age features found during an excavation in 1997 (MCB 14092 Connor & Robinson 1997) and an Iron Age ditch recorded in an evaluation west of the High Street (MCB15004 Casa Hatton & Kemp 2002).

To the east of the village and lying adjacent to the Aldreth causeway is the site of Belsars Hill. The causeway, although currently undated, is assumed to be of Iron Age provenance (CHER 01770) and linked the Isle of Ely with the mainland.

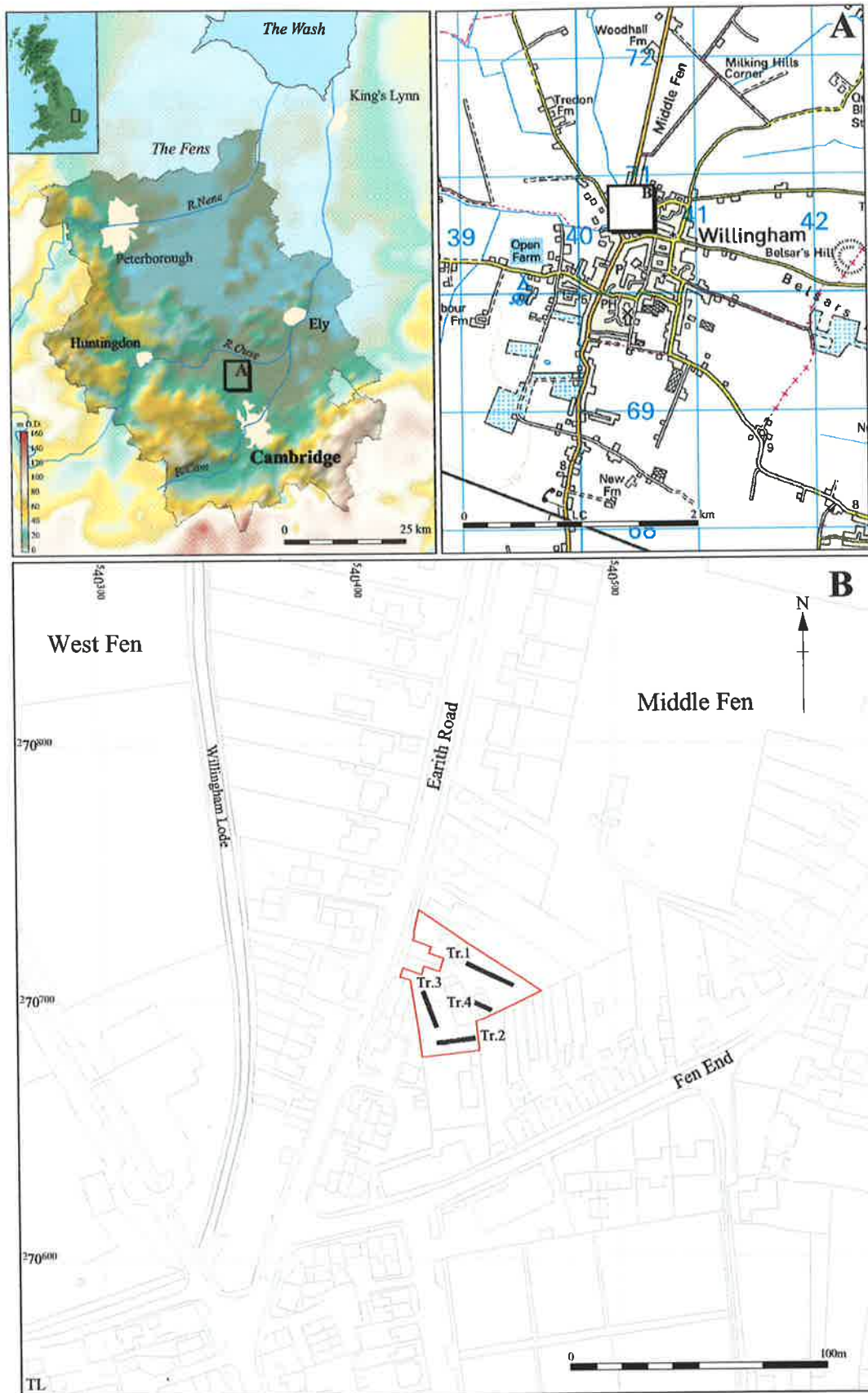


Figure 1: Site location map showing trenches (black) and development area (red)

Furthermore, Iron Age and Roman crop marks have been noted at Milking Hills Corner to the northeast of the village (CHER 05776b & c) and excavations there by the Fenland Survey revealed Late Iron Age features which possibly constituted part of a settlement (CHER 07976). Late Iron Age and Roman pottery (CHER 08600 and 08600a) were also recovered from an area of dark occupation soils at the site. To the south of the village an area of dark soil also yielded Iron Age and Roman pottery sherds (CHER 08615 and 08615a) and undated earthworks have been recorded near to Manor Farm (CHER 09898 & 09899).

3.2 Roman

There are numerous Roman finds recorded from the northern part of the village in close proximity to the development area. These include a Roman ditch located during an evaluation on Church Street (MCB14621 Dickens 1999) also, Roman pottery (CHER 05602, 05603 and 05604) and a Roman coin of Gratian (CHER 05730) found immediately to the southeast of the development area.

During an evaluation on the High Street (CHER11937A) Roman features including a grave were found. Further excavations on the High Street in 1997 (MCB 14092 Connor & Robinson 1997) revealed a single inhumation found in the backfill of an east to west orientated ditch. Burials in ditch terminals are characteristic of the Late Iron Age and Roman period. This particular burial was attributed to the Late Roman or post-Roman period on the basis of an associated pottery sherd and the stratigraphic sequence of associated features.

Roman pottery was also recovered from ditches and a heavily truncated pit. The overall quantity of Roman finds was very small with much of it thought to have been residual material in Anglo-Saxon features, some of which may have been deliberately collected. The assemblage recovered by the excavation suggested that any Roman presence on the site was confined to enclosed fields at some distance from any domestic structures existing in the vicinity (MCB 14092 Connor & Robinson 1997).

A scatter of Roman pottery has been recorded (CHER 01892) approximately 500m to the northwest of the development area along West Fen Road whilst to the north of the village metal detectorists found three pewter plates with chi-ro symbols along with pottery and other remains (MCB 14716).

On the southern edge of the village, a pit whose contents included Roman coins and pewter plates is recorded (CHER 11162). Coins and pottery dated to the Roman period (mid 2nd to mid 4th century) have also been recorded to the southeast of the village (CHER 05563, 05564 and 05565). Between the village and Belsars Hill, more Roman

pottery, querns and building material have been found (CHER 05729 and 08606).

3.3 Anglo-Saxon

Excavations at the High Street revealed eight complete post-built 'halls' along with a series of other settlement-related features (CHER 11973b). No positive evidence was found for buildings constructed on beam-slots, which suggests that the main phase of occupation was during the Early Saxon, or Early-Middle Saxon period. The pottery assemblage from the site contained examples of Early, Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon/early post-conquest wares, however, the majority of the pottery was undecorated, handmade and dated to the Early/Middle Saxon. Middle Saxon Ipswich Ware was recovered in small quantities but the general paucity of this style supports the idea that the settlement was predominantly Early-Middle Saxon. Late Saxon (Thetford Ware and St Neots Ware) pottery was also recovered from ditches and pits towards the north end of the site. It is thought that these features related to the establishment of properties fronting Church Street and the period during when Willingham began to attain its present form (MCB 14092 Connor & Robinson 1997).

Visible in the walls of the church, which is first documented in the 9th century (CHER 05794a), are fragments of an Anglo-Saxon stone cross. Further to the south, between the village and Belsars Hill, an assemblage of Late Saxon pottery has been recorded (CHER 08606a). A ceramic money pot was also discovered containing thousands of Late Saxon coins (CHER 11781a).

3.4 Medieval

Excavations at the High Street in 1997 uncovered a small number of pits and a ditch, thought to belong to the later medieval period. This confirmed the documentary and cartographic evidence that the area, although 'central' to the modern village, lay between medieval and post-medieval properties fronting the High Street, Church Street and Long Lane (MCB 14092 Connor & Robinson 1997).

Archaeological evaluations on Green Street, the High Street (CHER11973c) and Church Street (MCB 14621) all uncovered medieval features. A silver coin was amongst the finds recorded from Green Street (MCB16302- Hickling 2005). A small amount of medieval pottery was also found at Fen End (CHER 05602a) and medieval and later boundary and drainage ditches were found on an evaluation north of Over Road (MCB 15003 Keir & Murray 2002)

Furthermore, the parish church of St Mary and All Saints dates to the 13th and 14th centuries, but contains fragments of Norman masonry (CHER 05794).

3.5 Other Archaeological Investigations

An evaluation behind 76 High Street revealed no archaeological features, but did yield pottery dated from the 16th century onwards and horseshoes dated as late 15th to 16th century (Bailey 2003).

A watching brief conducted at the parish church revealed no archaeological features (Hatton 1998).

Residual Iron Age, Roman and medieval pottery sherds, along with several post-medieval features, were recorded during an evaluation at land off Rampton Road in 2001 (CHER MCB15868), which lies to the south of the site development area. Another evaluation next door in 1999 produced two undated ditches.

An evaluation at the corner of Short Lane and Green Street in 1999 revealed no archaeological features (Prosser & Seddon 2000).

4 Methodology

The objective of this evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using CCC AFU's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

Four 10L environmental samples were taken from relevant features to provide an indication of the level of survival of charred grain and other ecofacts. The evaluation took place in mainly dry and overcast conditions though there were sunny periods and showers during the course of the evaluation.

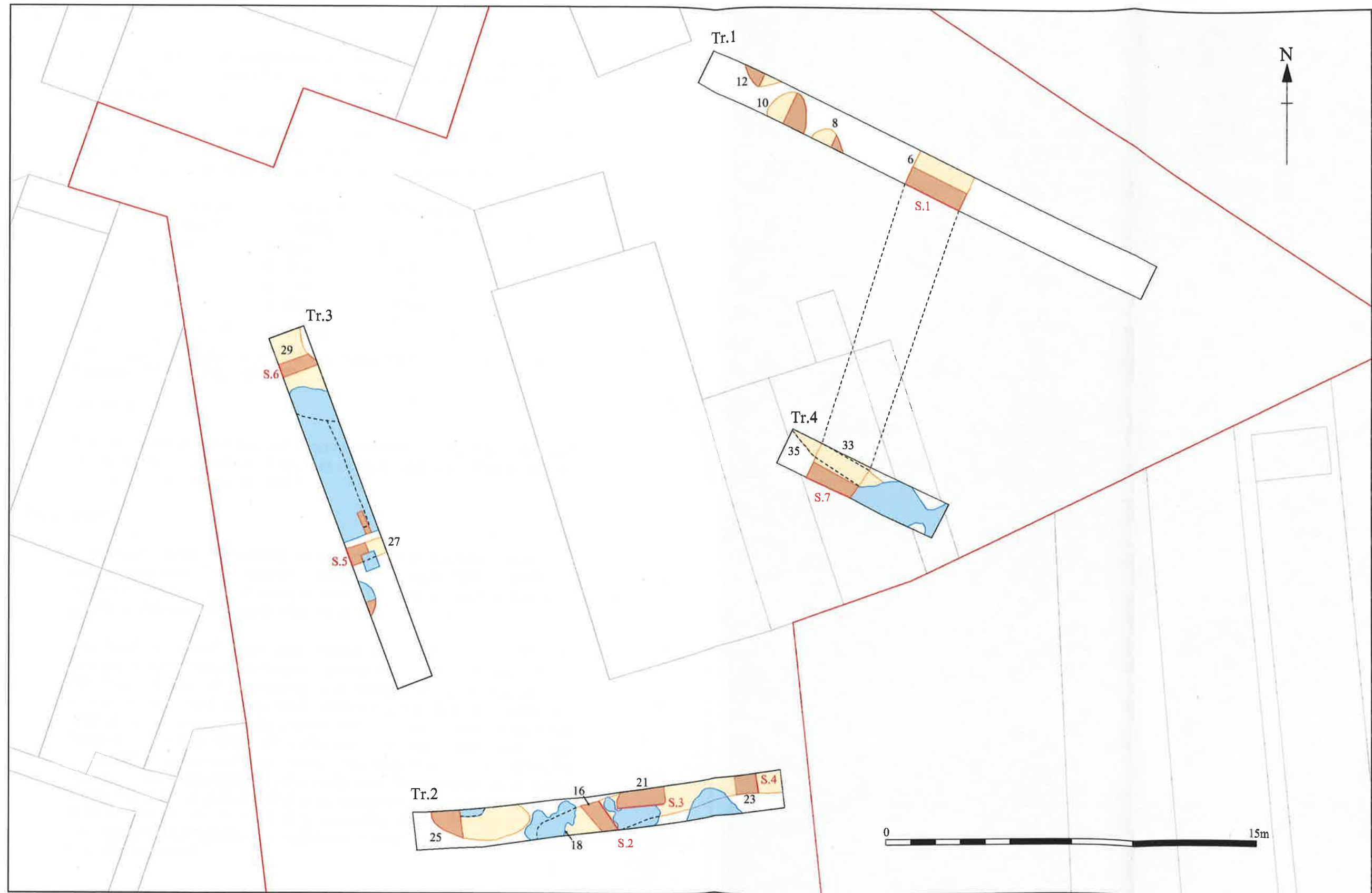


Figure 2: Detailed trench plans

5 Results

A layer of topsoil (001) was recorded which extended across the entire site. Immediately beneath this was a subsoil (002) that sealed all of the archaeological features.

The topsoil (001) comprised a dark black grey brown sandy silt that was between 0.22m and 0.35m thick. The subsoil (002) comprised a mid grey brown sandy silt between 0.10m and 0.36m thick.

Trench	Topsoil (001)	Subsoil (002)	Total depth of trench
1	0.34m	0.20m	0.54m
2	0.29m	0.14m	0.43m
3	0.34m	0.15m	0.49m
4	0.25m	0.30m	0.55m

Table 1: Depths of deposits across the development area

Mixed sand and gravel natural geological deposits were recorded at between 4.12mOD & 3.91mOD.

5.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was 20.0m long and aligned northwest to southeast adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. A ditch and a number of isolated pits were identified and recorded.

5.1.1 Ditch

A moderate sized ditch (006), on a northeast to southwest alignment, was excavated. This feature, along with ditch 003 (Trench 4), appeared to form part of an enclosure. The feature was U-shaped in profile, 2.20m in width and 0.75m deep.

The ditch contained three well-defined fills (003, 004 & 005). The primary fill (005) contained frequent gravel inclusions and was probably the result of natural weathering and silting during the earliest use phases of the ditch as its sides stabilised. Fill 004, the secondary deposit, comprised a mottled green grey silt sand from which cattle bone and a single sherd of undiagnostic Roman Sandy ware were recovered; this greenish hue, which was distinct to the secondary fill, have may have represented a cess element. The homogeneous nature of the deposit suggested that it accumulated over an extended period of time. The tertiary ditch fill (003) extended above the top of the cut and appeared to represent a deliberate infilling of the feature in order to level the ground.

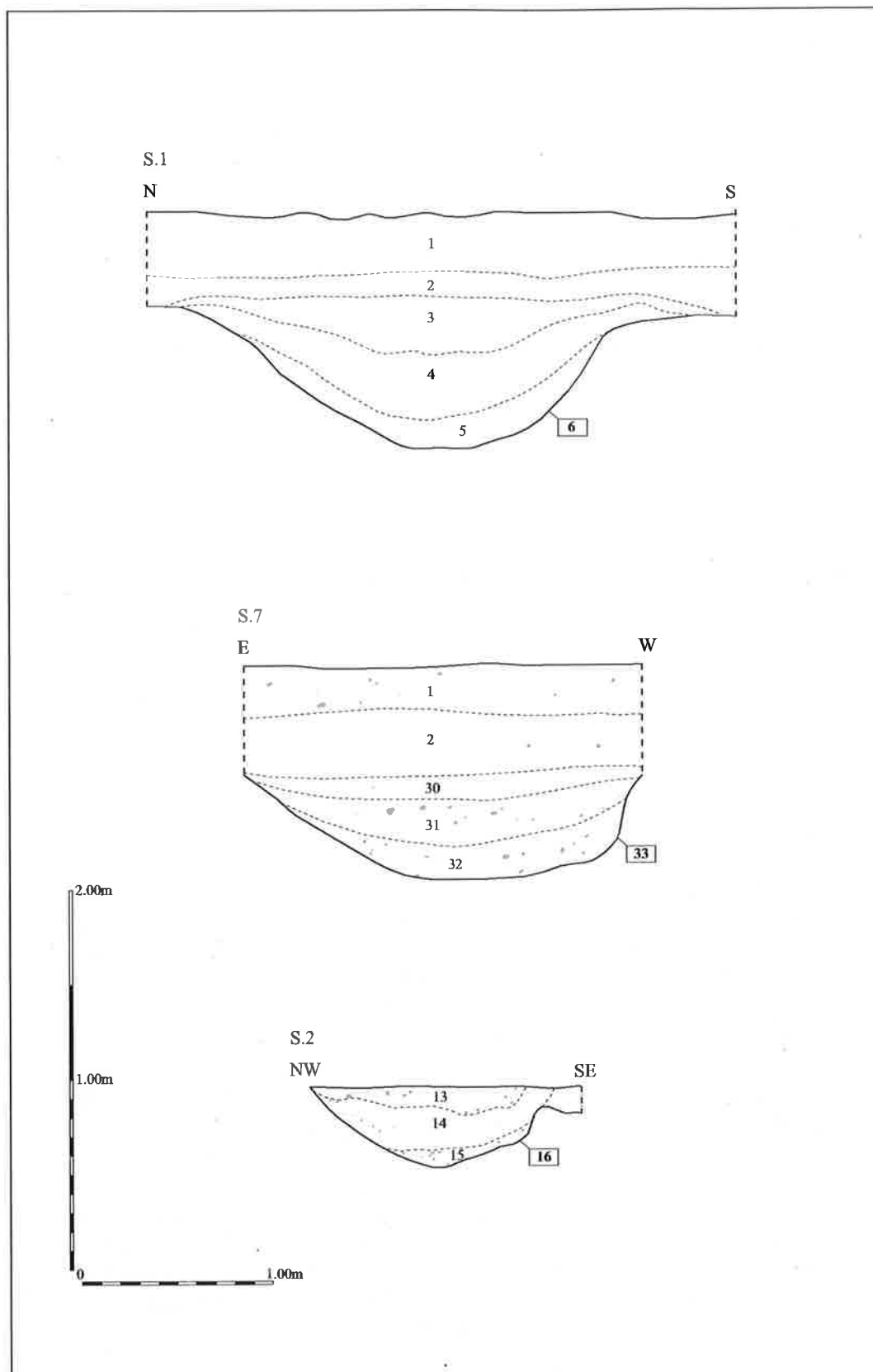


Figure 3: Sections from Trenches 1, 2 and 4

5.1.2 Pits

Three shallow pits concentrated at the northern end of the trench (**008**, **010** & **012**) were excavated. They appeared very similar to one another in plan and profile and contained single light mottled grey silty sand fills (**007**, **009** & **011**) which were approximately 0.10m thick. No finds were recovered from the pits and their exact function remained unclear.

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 15m long and aligned west to east adjacent to the southern boundary of the site. A ditch that ran along the length of the trench and an isolated pit were excavated.

5.2.1 Ditch

Three sections were excavated through a moderate sized ditch (**016**, **021** & **023**) aligned south-southwest to east-northeast. The ditch was 1.28m in width and 0.43m deep and large enough to have formed a part of an enclosure. **020**, the primary fill of ditch cut **021**, contained several sherds of undiagnostic Roman grey ware and a sherd of Roman Sandy ware, frequent animal bone and a high frequency of gravel inclusions washed in via natural weathering processes. In the remaining sections the fill sequence for this feature comprised a primary naturally derived deposit (**015** & **020**), followed by successive disuse fills (**013**, **014** & **019** respectively).

The ditch was truncated at its western end by an amorphous modern feature (**018**); see below. It seems likely that the ditch terminated beneath this modern disturbance to form one side of a south facing enclosure entrance or, alternatively, changed direction onto a north to south alignment and continued southwards beyond the limit of the development area, as it was not visible beyond the western edge of the modern intrusion.

The fill of this feature (**017**) contained a single large body sherd from a Horningsea storage jar, which was thought to be residual.

5.2.2 Pit

A shallow, partially revealed, pit (**025**) was excavated at the western end of the trench. The feature was ovoid in plan, flat based and 0.25m in depth with a single homogeneous fill that did not yield any finds. It was certainly not deep enough to be adequately explained as a quarry or storage pit and the lack of any finds evidence made its function difficult to discern.

5.2.3 Modern Disturbance

A fairly extensive area of modern disturbance (**018**) was recorded in Trench 2, the fill of which (**017**) comprised loose black brown clay silt. A second modern intrusion was also recorded truncating pit **025** that contained modern domestic waste.

5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was excavated adjacent to the western boundary of the site. It was aligned north to south and 15.00m in length. There was fairly extensive modern disturbance evident within this trench, perhaps as a result of its proximity to the existing properties and Earith Road. However, two ditches were visible within the trench and these were excavated accordingly.

5.3.1 Ditches

Ditch **027** was a fairly shallow gully 0.90m in width and 0.30m deep on a west-southwest to east-northeast alignment roughly parallel to the ditch investigated in trench 2. A mid yellow and grey silt sand deposit (**026**), from which no finds were recovered, filled the feature.

Ditch **029** was a more substantial cut at the northernmost end of the trench which was aligned northwest to southeast and appeared to be curving onto a north to south alignment at the point at which it was encountered in the trench. No finds were recovered from the feature's light brown grey silty sand fill (**028**).

5.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 was excavated in order to determine the route of ditch **006** across the development area. The trench was excavated to a length of 7.00m in order to expose the entirety of the ditch and a section was subsequently excavated.

5.3.1 Ditches

The continuation of ditch **006** was recorded in this trench. The cut excavated in Trench 4 (**033**) was marginally smaller in size than **006** being 2.10m in width and 0.53m deep and had a more pronounced U-shaped profile. It did however contain the same sequence of fills; a primary fill derived from gravel natural and inwashed silts (**032**), a mottled green grey silt sand secondary fill (**031**) and a tertiary deposit that extended beyond the limit of the cut (**030**). A high frequency of animal bone, including elements of adult horse and cattle and a single sherd of undiagnostic Roman Grey Ware was recovered from deposit **031**.

This feature truncated a smaller ditch **035**, whose northwest to southeast alignment was similar to that of ditch **029** in Trench 3. It was

impossible to draw any conclusions about the relationship between these two ditches as their exposed extent was limited by the size of the trenches. However the stratigraphic relationship recorded in Trench 4 indicates that a phase of occupation predating the enclosure demarcated by ditch **006** and **033** was present within the development area.

6 Discussion

The trial trenching identified sections of a number of enclosure sized ditches and the stratigraphic evidence suggested at least two phases of land use on the site. The earliest phase comprised ditch **035** from Trench 3. No dating evidence was recovered from the feature, however the stratigraphic relationship recorded in Trench 4 between ditch **035** and **033** indicates that **035** predated the larger enclosure ditch recorded in Trenches 1 and 4.

Ditch **035** was clearly undermined by the construction of the enclosure represented by **033**, which suggests that either it had fallen out of use by this time or a new type of landuse was being imposed.

This latter enclosure almost certainly extended beyond the limit of the development area but its route remains uncertain as it was not picked up in Trench 2, where it would have intersected with ditch **016** were it to continue on the same alignment. It is possible that the ditch terminated somewhere between Trenches 2 and 4 or deviated, possibly towards ditch **029** to the northwest, or southeast out of the development area.

The pot sherds recovered from enclosure ditch **006** and **033** suggest that the feature was Roman; or that at the very least it was still in use during the Roman period despite being earlier in origin. Late Iron Age features, which possibly constituted part of a settlement, were revealed during excavations (CHER 07976) at Milking Hills Corner to the northeast of the village and Iron Age and Roman crop marks have also been noted (CHER 05776b & c). It is therefore plausible that the finds were residual deposits in part of an earlier enclosure system.

The secondary fill of ditch **033** (fill 031) contained 13 fragments of horse bone, which displayed evidence of butchery. A similar assemblage of horse bone, along with heavily fragmented cattle remains and undiagnostic Roman pot sherds were recovered from **016**, which again suggests a Roman origin for this feature. The animal bone assemblage was indicative of butchery, or possibly tannery waste.

The environmental samples taken from ditch **006** were virtually sterile producing a single charred pea cotyledon from context 004 but no other material suitable for further dating or species analysis.

This archaeological sequence corresponds broadly with the pattern of finds and features recorded in the northern part of Willingham from where a large body of evidence for Roman occupation has been recovered. For instance a Roman ditch was recorded during an evaluation on Church Street (MCB14621 – Dickens 1999) to the south east of the development area and Roman pottery (CHER 05602, 05603 and 05604) and a Roman coin of Gratian (CHER 05730) were found on Fen End.

It has also been suggested, in the light of the excavations conducted at the High Street in 1997, that any Roman presence was confined to enclosed fields at some distance from the High Street (MCB 14092 - Connor & Robinson 1997); the sequence of enclosure ditches recorded during the evaluation would appear to corroborate this assessment.

No Saxon or medieval finds were recorded during the evaluation. The High Street excavations of 1997 revealed eight complete post-built 'halls' along with a series of other settlement-related features (CHER 11973b) dated to the Early-Middle Saxon period and a number of features, the finds evidence from which was suggestive of a Late Saxon provenance. It was suggested that these were related to the establishment of properties fronting Church Street and the period during which the nascent village began to attain its present form (MCB 14092 Connor & Robinson 1997).

The results of the evaluation support the evidence gleaned so far about the development of Willingham during the Saxon and medieval periods where the settlement appears to have been limited to the area currently occupied by the centre of the modern village. This concentration of settlement is in all likelihood explained by the fact that the fen extended south of the development area during that time rendering the northern part of the village unsuitable for sedentary habitation (East Anglian Archaeology 1996).

7 Conclusions

The evaluation successfully demonstrated a reasonable concentration of archaeological deposits within the development area and that Roman settlement and occupation in the form of enclosures was in evidence. Furthermore, that evidence for earlier occupation survived within the development area, though this remained undated. Unfortunately the extent of the enclosures could not be determined within the limited scope of the evaluation. The level of preservation of bone and pottery was good but the environmental sample revealed very little charred plant matter or ecofactual evidence. This may have been the result of poor preservation within the well drained soils.

Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank developer Jason C Frost Development Consultants who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by James Drummond-Murray.

The brief for archaeological works was written by Kasia Gdaniec, who visited the site and monitored the evaluation.

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Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Trench Number	Type	Function
001	All	Topsoil	
002	All	Subsoil	
003	1	Tertiary fill of ditch 006	Disuse
004	1	Secondary fill of ditch 006	Disuse
005	1	Primary fill of ditch 006	Use
006	1	Cut of Ditch	Enclosure ditch
007	1	Fill of pit 008	Disuse
008	1	Cut of pit	Indeterminate
009	1	Fill of pit 010	Disuse
010	1	Cut of pit	Indeterminate
011	1	Fill of pit 012	Disuse
012	1	Cut of pit	Indeterminate
013	2	Tertiary fill of ditch 016	Disuse
014	2	Secondary fill of ditch 016	Disuse
015	2	Primary fill of ditch 016	Use
016	2	Cut of Ditch	Enclosure ditch
017	2	Fill of pit 018	Disuse
018	2	Cut of pit	Indeterminate
019	2	Secondary fill of ditch 021	Disuse
020	2	Primary fill of ditch 021	Use
021	2	Cut of Ditch	Enclosure ditch
022	2	Fill of ditch 023	Disuse
023	2	Cut of ditch	Enclosure ditch
024	2	Fill of pit 025	Disuse
025	2	Cut of pit	Indeterminate
026	3	Fill of ditch 027	Disuse
027	3	Cut of ditch	Enclosure ditch
028	3	Fill of ditch 029	Disuse
029	3	Cut of ditch	Enclosure ditch
030	4	Tertiary fill of ditch 033	Disuse
031	4	Secondary fill of ditch 033	Disuse
032	4	Primary fill of ditch 033	Use
033	4	Cut of Ditch	Enclosure ditch
034	4	Fill of ditch 035	Disuse
035	4	Cut of ditch	Enclosure ditch

Appendix 2: Animal Bone Assessment

by Chris Faine

The assemblage consists of 18 identifiable elements from 6 contexts provisionally identified as Romano-British in date, with a further 15 fragments not identifiable to species. Context 31 contains the partially butchered remains of least one adult horse. The majority of surviving elements consist of ribs and vertebrae, possibly indicating butchery or tanning waste. The remaining contexts consist of heavily fragmented cattle remains, all from adult animals, again most likely butchery waste.

Context	Element	Species	Siding	Butchery	Notes
4	Inominate	Cattle	L	Y	Butchered above acetabulum
5	Scapula	Cattle	N/A	Y	Shattered scapula blade
20	Femur	Horse	L	N	Distal epiphysis
20	Humerus	Cattle	R	Y	Shattered at distal metaphysis
28	Calcaneus	Cattle	L	N	Calcined
31	Tibia	Horse	L	N	
31	Rib	Horse	R	Y	Butchered midshaft
31	Cervical vertebrae	Horse	N/A	Y	Right articular process removed
31	Thoracic vertebrae	Horse	N/A	Y	Neural spine removed
31	Cervical vertebrae	Horse	N/A	N	
31	Thoracic vertebrae	Horse	N/A	N	
31	Rib	Horse	L	Y	Butchered midshaft
31	Thoracic vertebrae	Horse	N/A	N	
31	Rib	Horse	L	Y	Butchered midshaft
31	MT	Cattle	L	N	
31	1st phalange	Horse	N/A	N	
31	Rib	Horse	R	N	
31	Thoracic vertebrae	Horse	N/A	N	

Table 2: Animal bone assemblage by species and element

Appendix 3: Environmental Appraisal

by Rachel Fosberry

1 Introduction and Methods

Four bulk samples were taken from features within the evaluated area of the site in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations.

Ten litres of each sample were processed by tank flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flot was collected in a 0.5mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through a 1mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residue was passed through 5mm and 2mm sieves and a magnet was dragged through each resulting fraction prior to sorting for artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification and the presence of any plant remains or other artefacts is noted in Table 3.

2 Results

Sample Number	Context Number	Cut Number	Context type	Charcoal	Legume	Grain
1	3	6	Ditch fill	-	-	-
2	4	6	Ditch fill	-	+	-
3	5	6	Ditch fill	+	-	-
4	6	10	Ditch fill	-	-	-

Table 3: Environmental samples from WIL EAR 06

Preservation of charred plant remains was very poor, with no survival except for small fragments of wood charcoal in sample 3 and a single pea cotyledon in sample 2. The two remaining samples were completely devoid of charred plant matter. Modern contaminants in the form of rootlets and a few common seeds such as *Chenopodium* sp. are present in all of the samples.

Key to Tables

+ = 1 – 10 specimens ++ = 10 – 100 specimens +++ = 100+ specimens

3 Conclusions and Recommendations

The general lack of plant remains suggests that conditions at the site do not favour preservation, the presence of half of a pea being inconclusive. No further work on this material is required.

Appendix 4: Pottery

by Stephen Macaulay

A total of 165g of Roman pottery (9 shards) were recovered from the excavations at Earith Road, Willingham (WIL EAR 06).

The pottery is in a fairly poor condition with the assemblage being comprised of abraded coarse ware pottery.

The assemblage is comprised entirely of coarse wares derived from local (Cambridgeshire) sources. Grey and sandy wares dominate (88%) with a single large body sherd from the classic Horningsea storage jar the only piece not necessarily made in the immediate local. Earith is the location of a sizable Roman settlement, utilising the transport network of the Car Dyke canal and local waterways (Old West River). Recent investigations at The Camp Ground, Colne Fen, Earith have revealed a significant Roman settlement and earlier Iron Age occupation (CAU unpublished).

The assemblage is comprised of jars, cooking pots? and a dish and is a typical kitchen and storage assemblage of low status.

The date range of the assemblage is 2nd–4th century AD. The only diagnostic sherd being the Horningsea storage jar (2nd-4th century), all other material is generic Roman date.

Type	No. Sherds	Weight (g)
Grey Ware	5	46
Sandy Ware	2	38
Oxidised Sandy Ware	1	6
Horningsea Ware	1	75
Total	9	165

Table 4: Pottery sherds by type

Context	Weight (g)	Pottery type	Vessel	Decoration	
04	14	Sandy Ware		None	Body
17	109	Horningsea Ware, Grey Ware	Storage jar	None	Body
19	24	Sandy Ware	Dog Dish bowl	None	Rim
20	12	Oxidised Sandy Ware, Grey Ware		None	Body
31	6	Grey Ware		None	Body
	165			None	

Table 5: Pottery sherds by context



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