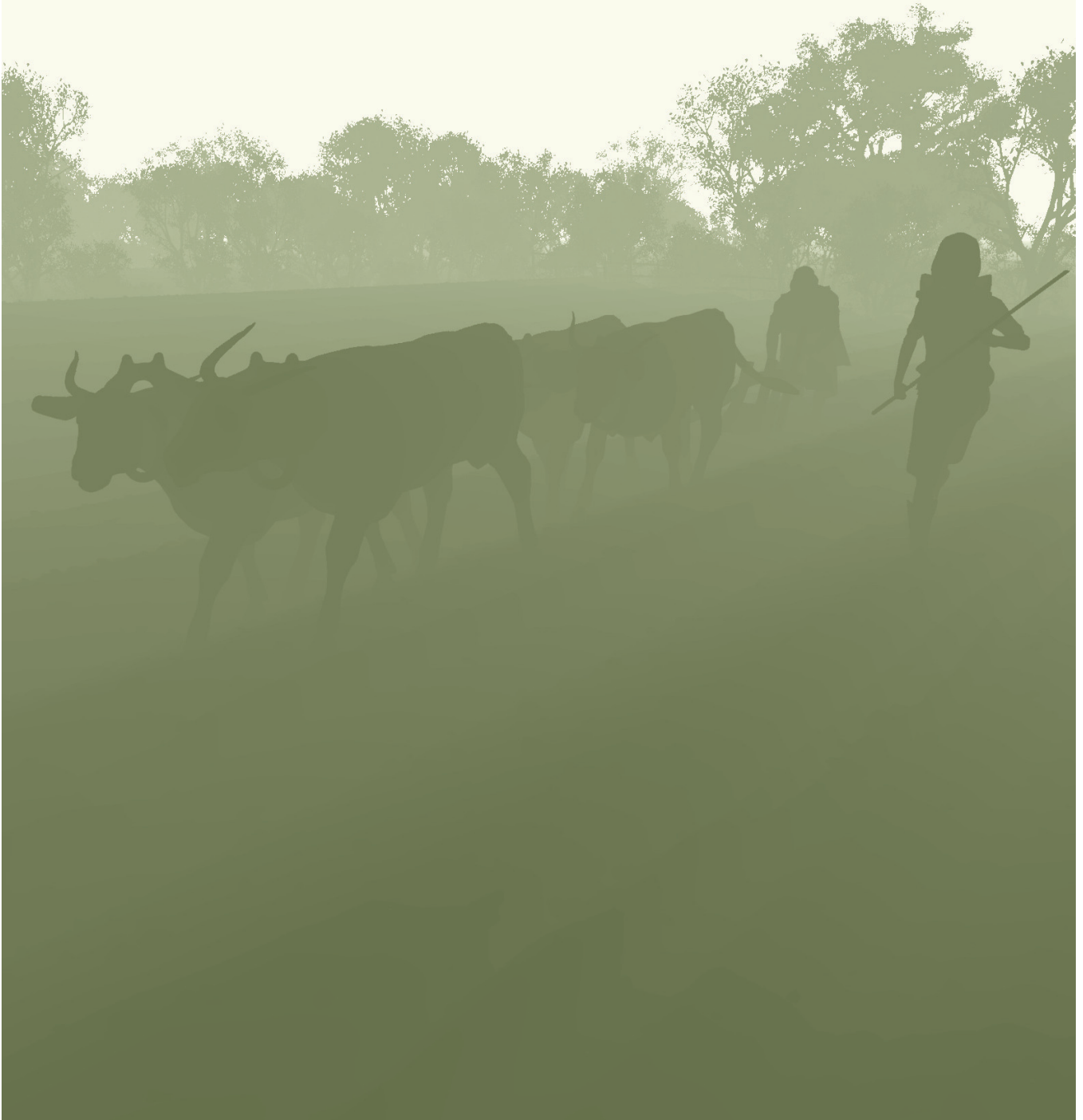


CHAPTER 6

Retrospective



by John Lewis and Alex Smith

Introduction

In the introduction to this volume, we set out the academic aim and approach that has been adopted by Framework Archaeology at Terminal 5 and our work at other BAA Airports:

The archaeology of inhabitation demands more than the recording of the traces of human activity and the history of inhabitation involves more than tracing the changing organisation of activities in a landscape.

Inhabitation concerns the practical ways in which people established their presence in the material, social and political conditions of their day. To establish a presence involves having the power, common to all human agency, to move and act in the world according to available opportunities and constraints, where such actions express knowledge of various levels of technical proficiency, social adequacy and moral authority. The archaeology of inhabitation is therefore an investigation of the various ways the human presence was established in and contributed towards maintaining or transforming the material and social conditions of history. It is an investigation of the material, moral and political contexts of human diversity.

(Lewis this volume, Chapter 1)

We have tried to follow this approach through the narrative of this volume, whilst attempting to provide the reader with the degree of description necessary in a volume which reports the findings of a major programme of excavation. Admittedly, this philosophy, has succeeded to varying degrees, and it is particularly noticeable that the authors of the chapters covering the later periods have found it difficult to adopt this philosophy within an academic framework that becomes increasingly dominated by historical documentary evidence.

Nonetheless, that such a philosophical aim could be adopted for this project at all reflects the structural changes in British archaeology: with a shift from 'rescue' to commercial archaeology in the 1990s has come much greater archaeological excavation and an

increase in our understanding of the past. For this final chapter, we will examine briefly the changes which have occurred in our understanding of the past landscapes of West Middlesex and the Middle Thames Valley from the late 1970s onwards, and how the Terminal 5 project has added to that body of knowledge. Our first benchmark is the 1976 publication by the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society of a Special Paper entitled *The Archaeology of the London Area: Current knowledge and problems* (Collins *et al.* 1976). This slim volume outlined the current state of knowledge of London's past on a period by period basis, and also noted the fields where further research was required. The second benchmark is the publication in 2000 of *The Archaeology of Greater London* (MoLAS 2000). The drafting of this volume was begun in the mid 1990s and thus tended to reflect the results and thinking of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Nonetheless, this volume is an order of magnitude larger than the 1976 paper, reflecting both the large amount of excavation and research that had been undertaken since the advent of PPG16 in 1990, and also the substantial work undertaken in Greater London during the economic boom of the late 1980s. Both the 1976 and the 2000 documents were strategic overviews, focusing on present knowledge and areas for further research.

Figure 1.6 in this volume shows the very large area around Heathrow that has been investigated archaeologically. These investigations were undertaken by several organisations (eg the Museum of London, Framework Archaeology and Wessex Archaeology amongst others) over different periods of time and with different analysis and publication schedules. The Terminal 5 excavations are some of the first to be published, to be followed in 2010/2011 by those of Wessex Archaeology with the Museum of London publication sometime in the future. It is against this background of fragmented programmes of excavation and research that the Terminal 5 results must be placed.

Hunter-gatherers of the Mesolithic, 10000–4000 BC

In 1976 and 2000, our understanding of the Mesolithic period was very much influenced by key sites in the Colne and Lea Valley floodplains. Most of these dated to the Early Mesolithic, with relatively few key Late Mesolithic sites (Lewis 2000, 53; Lewis *et al.* 1992). Although the Terminal 5 excavations have not added greatly to the body of knowledge for the Mesolithic period, they have contributed in two main ways. Firstly, the Mesolithic flintwork residing in later features provides confirmation (if confirmation was needed) of landscape exploitation away from the Colne floodplain, whilst the stakeholes at Bedford Court demonstrate floodplain activity during the 7th millennium BC. The contrast between the two depositional environments demonstrates that the brickearth capped gravel terraces of the Thames are unlikely to yield well preserved Mesolithic lithic and faunal scatters comparable to those of the fine grained alluvial floodplain deposits of the Colne.

No direct evidence was provided to shed light on the Mesolithic / Neolithic transition. Clearly, the 'culture' of Mesolithic people was enshrined in oral tradition and practices which only occasionally were expressed (or which survive) through the medium of artefacts. What we have suggested is that the burnt flint-filled pits at Terminal 5 marked a location in the landscape which came to acquire a meaning to the people that met there. The juxtaposition of the pits, probably dating from sometime between 7760–6610 and 6190–5640 cal BC, with the 4th millennium BC Stanwell Cursus did show that the people marked and altered the landscape at specific locations thus imbuing the landscape with great chronological depth, long after the original meaning of the location had been lost.

The first farmers of the Neolithic 4000–2400 BC

Mention of the C1 Stanwell Cursus turns our attention to one of the major contributions of the Terminal 5 project. In 1976 the excavation of the Yeoveney Lodge, Staines, causewayed enclosure during the early 1960s (finally published by Robertson-Mackay in 1987) was still the focus of Neolithic studies in West London (Macdonald 1976, 25). This was supplemented by isolated pits containing Peterborough Ware, although Grooved Ware pottery remained rare (*ibid.*). The Stanwell Cursus was still regarded as a Roman road in 1976 (Merrifield 1976, fig 7), although by 2000 excavation had correctly identified it as a Neolithic cursus (O'Connell 1990). In addition, excavations ahead of gravel extraction north of Heathrow had revealed many more pits containing Peterborough Ware and Grooved Ware pottery, as well as circular and rectangular monuments (Crockett 2001). On the Colne floodplain excavations at Horton had revealed a double-ditched enclosure of Neolithic date at Moor Farm (Ford and Pine 2003).

By the time of the Terminal 5 excavations it was, therefore, clear that West Middlesex contained an extensive Neolithic landscape of linear and circular monuments, and that Terminal 5 would provide the opportunity to investigate this landscape further, and the Stanwell Cursus in particular. Interest in cursus monuments has risen over the last decade with several monuments being excavated and published (Barclay *et al.* 2003). As discussed in Chapter 2, the Terminal 5 excavations revealed one of the largest (and most extensively excavated) concentrations of cursus monuments in Britain, together with a handful of small circular monuments and pits.

The Terminal 5 evidence suggests fairly widespread clearance of woodland prior to the construction of the cursus monuments. We have tried to show how these monuments were constructed to link together locations in the landscape which already had

histories and were important to the inhabitants. Therefore, although their appearance in the archaeological record may seem sudden, it is likely that this major architectural transformation was in fact rooted in the past. Unfortunately the Terminal 5 excavations have been able to add nothing to the refinement of the chronology of the 4th and 3rd millennia, with other projects (eg Powell forthcoming) offering greater promise in this direction.

If the cursus complex is the signature of the late 4th millennium, then the Terminal 5 excavations seem to confirm that the 3rd millennium landscape contained little in the way of new monument construction aside from the occasional ring ditch. Instead we are presented with the sense of a landscape shaped by ancient monuments and a population that used them, together with pit deposits containing Peterborough Ware and Grooved Ware pottery, as part of the mechanism of apportioning land and resources amongst the community.

The Early Bronze Age: a time of transition 2400–1600 BC

The centuries between *c* 2400 BC and 1600 BC were poorly understood in the 1976 and 2000 assessments, and the Terminal 5 excavations appear to have done little to improve matters. However, the excavations (in combination with others in West London, see Fig. 1.6) seem to confirm the suspicion that the communities inhabiting the higher gravel terraces of the Middle Thames did not construct large henge monuments in the later 3rd and early 2nd millennia, and the adoption of Beaker pottery and burial traditions appears to be superficial in the extreme. This Early Bronze Age period is important, both in its own right and also because the origins of the transformations that led to the construction of the 2nd millennium field systems lay at this time.

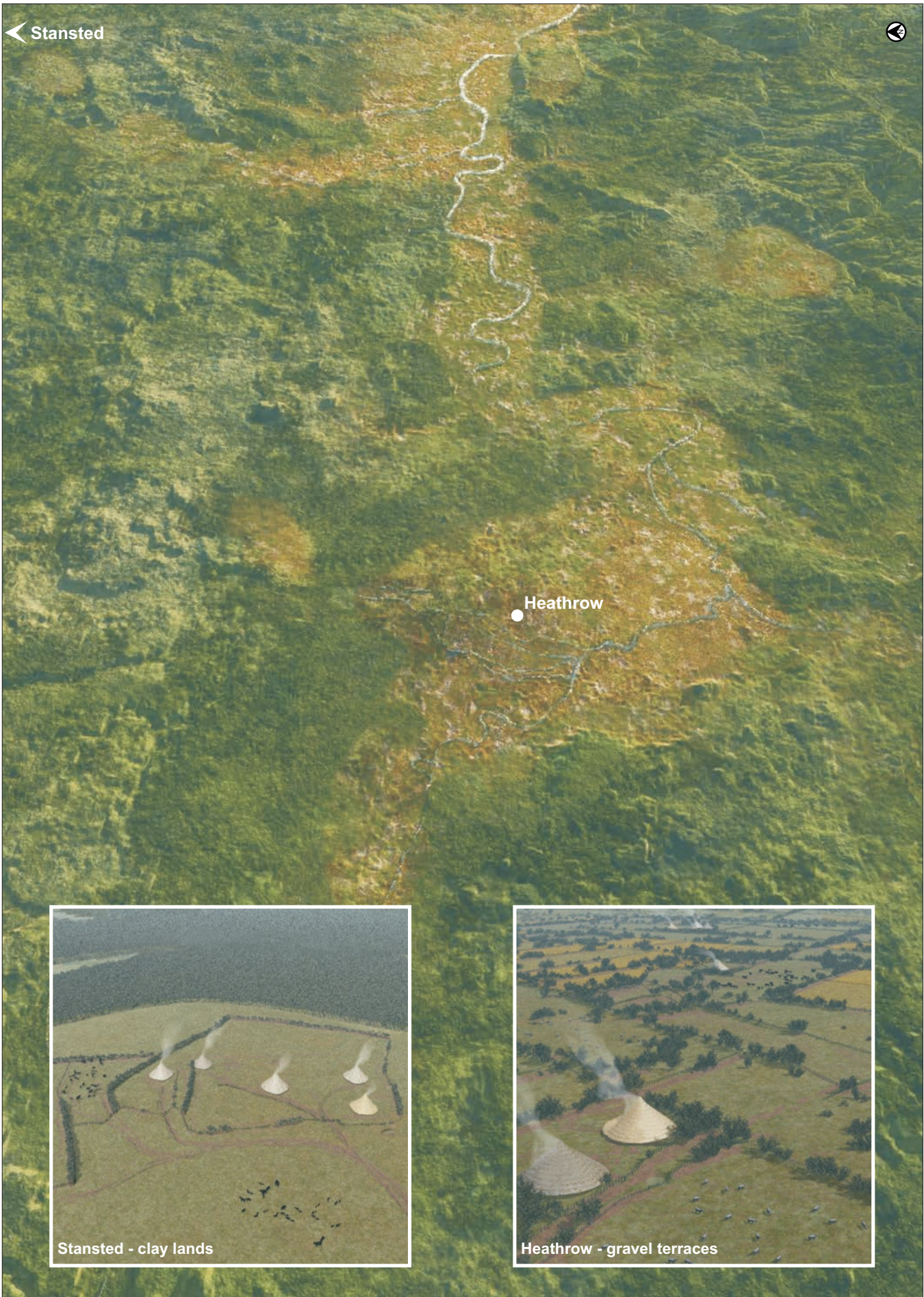
We have suggested that the mechanisms of ceremony and ritual that had been used to apportion landscape resources

in the 3rd millennium continued to be used and to evolve into the early 2nd millennium, with the partial adoption of some Beaker associated artefacts (eg flintwork) and new pottery forms (the scraps of Beaker and Collared Urn). These artefacts were deposited in contexts which were the result of local practices and interpretations, such as the Aurochs burial (Cotton *et al.* 2006), pits containing pottery fragments (eg pit 707016 in T5C) and small ring ditches with poor artefact assemblages. Some time around 1600 BC, the tradition of using ceremony and ritual to apportion landscape resources, which had grown out of the monumental landscape of the 4th millennium, was replaced with physical landscape division.

The Middle Bronze Age agricultural landscape (1600–1100BC)

The creation of Middle Bronze Age field systems is widespread across southern England, and their extent has been mapped by Yates (2007), drawing on the huge increase in archaeological fieldwork following the implementation of PPG16 in 1990. Whatever caused this change was not confined to the Thames Valley, but was a fundamental change to society and farming practices which left lasting impacts on the landscape across large parts of Britain.

Revealing and documenting the evolution of the agricultural landscape of the second half of the 2nd millennium BC is perhaps the greatest contribution of the Terminal 5 excavations. It has illustrated the extent and complexity of the field divisions and trackways and the dispersed settlement pattern (Plate 6.1). We can see field boundaries and banks topped with hedgerows surrounding fields utilised for both arable and pastoral agriculture. The ubiquitous waterholes also provide evidence of woodworking to produce wattle revetments, tools and domestic utensils. This landscape could only be tentatively predicted in 1976 (Barrett 1976, 35), whilst in 2000, the first results of fieldwork from the 1990s were starting to filter through



← Stansted



• Heathrow



Stansted - clay lands



Heathrow - gravel terraces

(Brown and Cotton 2000), although control of agricultural land was still seen as predominantly a Late Bronze Age phenomena (Brown and Cotton 2000, 92), whilst field systems were not considered as fully as settlement and burial evidence or metalwork from the Thames.

It is worth considering for a moment that whilst Terminal 5 has contributed to our understanding of the 2nd millennium settlement pattern, the burial and metalwork evidence is relatively scarce. The scarcity of cremations at Terminal 5, apart from the small cemetery adjacent to farmstead 11 (Leivers this volume, Chapter 3), can at least be partly explained by the previous truncation of the site by the airport and sewage works. In contrast, it is hard to view the scarcity of metalwork as anything other than a true pattern of deposition. The scarcity of metalwork is not confined to the Terminal 5 site: other large scale excavations by Wessex Archaeology (Crockett 2001, 2002 and Powell forthcoming) and the Museum of London (MoLAS forthcoming) between the M4 and A4 to the north of Heathrow have produced similarly low frequencies of Bronze Age metalwork. It is clear that in this part of the Middle Thames Valley, bronze artefacts were carefully collected for re-cycling and re-use and/or deposition. This would at least partly explain the distribution and composition of metalwork 'hoards' (discussed by Brown and Cotton 2000, 88) and of course, the rich metalwork finds from the River Thames (for a summary, see Brown and Cotton 2000, 86–8). One is therefore left to conclude that the discovery of any Bronze artefact in the West London landscape is a particularly significant occurrence.

If the Terminal 5 excavations have revealed the complexity of the 2nd millennium BC field systems on the Middle Thames gravel terraces, the organisation of the landscape on the London Clay of north Middlesex is far

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Plate 6.1: The Middle Bronze Age landscape of the Middle Thames Valley, looking east

from clear, due to a relative paucity of fieldwork. For a possible model of Bronze Age settlement of the clay lands, we can instead turn to the recent excavations at Stansted Airport (Framework Archaeology 2008). Extensive excavations by Framework Archaeology (*ibid.*) and Essex county Council (Havis and Brookes 2004) at Stansted Airport have revealed a completely different form of 2nd millennium BC landscape, devoid of extensive field systems, on the Essex claylands (Fig. 6.1). Clearly, the field systems of the 2nd millennium were not universally adopted and Yates's map (2007, 111, fig. 12.2) shows large areas of Britain where no field systems have been detected. The Middle and Late Bronze Age Stansted settlements were predominantly located on valley sides, where the slopes would have aided drainage of the fertile soils, and would have been supplied with water from the streams in the valley bottoms or waterholes (Framework Archaeology 2008, figs 4.7 and 4.41). Extensive division of the landscape by fields and trackways is conspicuously absent, and natural features such as streams and brooks seem to have been more important in defining landscape blocks. We can thus suggest that, in the absence of large excavations on the London claylands, the landscape of the later 2nd millennium BC north of the Thames terraces would have had more in common with Stansted than Heathrow. This raises interesting questions regarding the contrasting agricultural regimes on the London Clay and the gravel terraces, and issues of short and long fallow agricultural systems and land tenure discussed by Barrett (1994, 143–4).

Overall, we see that the Terminal 5 excavations have made a major contribution to our understanding of the development of the landscape in the latter half of the 2nd millennium BC. Furthermore, there is now sufficient data available from large area excavations of landscapes with different topographies and geologies in other parts of southern Britain to begin the process of analysis at an inter-regional scale.

The Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age agricultural landscape (1100–400 BC)

Returning to the gravel terraces of West London, the Terminal 5 excavations have documented the complex development of the settlement and field systems through the latter half of the 2nd millennium BC. Leivers (this volume, Chapter 3) has suggested that the large open area between trackways 11 and 3 acted as 'common Land' between the aggregate fields of the Colne Valley system to the west and the coaxial fields of the Heathrow Plateau system to the east. Fragmentation visible in the 'aggregate' field system around 1400 BC was followed by the coalescing of settlement around Farmsteads 3 and 4 in the final 2nd and early 1st millennia BC. In contrast, the 'coaxial' landscape to the east appears to have become increasingly sub-divided, with newer smaller settlements appearing during the same period (see Chapter 3). The arrangements of the field systems at Imperial Collage to the north (Crockett 2001; Powell *et al.* forthcoming), Cranford Lane to the north-east (MoLAS forthcoming) and Horton to the south-west (Chaffey *et al.* forthcoming), all differ. Clearly, local solutions to questions of tenure and land use were being adopted within an overall social framework, giving rise to a mosaic of fields, trackways, common land and settlement.

In the *Archaeology of Greater London*, it was noted that Early Iron Age settlements were scarce, and this had been used to suggest a diminution of activity compared with the Late Bronze Age (Waite and Cotton 2000, 105). Unfortunately, the Terminal 5 evidence is insufficient to understand in detail the inhabitation of the landscape during the Early Iron Age from *c* 700 to 400 BC.

The study of development during the first half of the 1st millennium BC is hampered by problems with radiocarbon dating and ceramic chronologies, but at Heathrow it is clear that from 400 BC onwards, a single larger central settlement replaced all the other

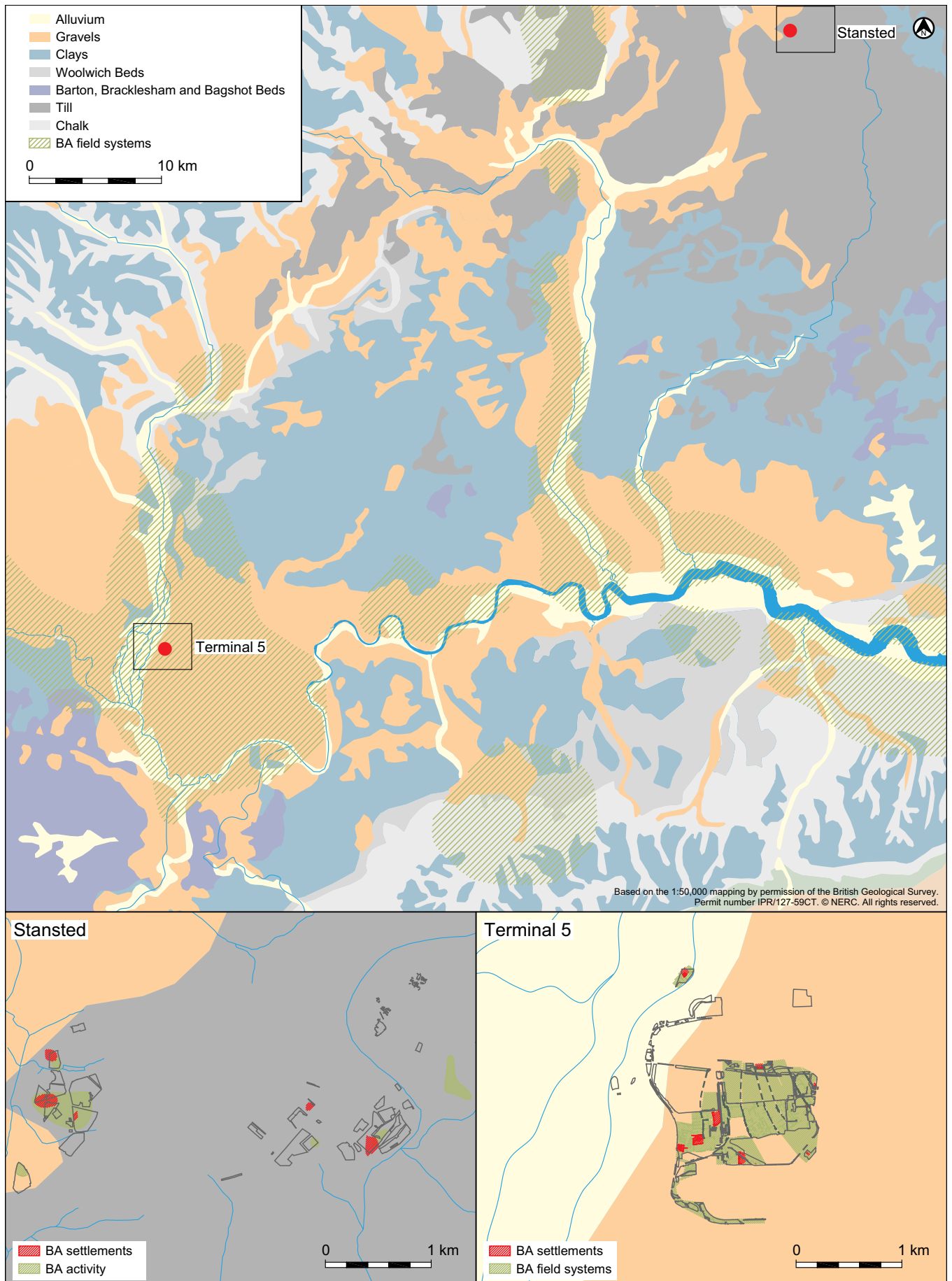


Figure 6.1: Comparison of the Middle and Late Bronze Age landscapes at Heathrow and Stansted

scattered settlements of the Middle and Late Bronze Age (see below). The processes that led to this (including environmental change and soil degradation) have been considered already (see Chapters 3 and 4); however one of the most compelling reasons lies in the nature of the closely sub-divided landscape. The successful development of the individual landholdings may paradoxically have required more co-operation between groups. In other words, successful development would have reached a point where it could only continue by farmsteads working in co-operation, rather than isolation. Within the wider context of Bronze Age society, co-operation also depended on complex networks of gift exchange (eg Rowlands 1980), and the collapse of these networks in the 8th Century BC as iron replaced bronze would have had a marked effect on social organisation and hence settlement pattern and land use (Framework Archaeology 2006, 166). At Heathrow, the location of the single settlement in the area of 'common land' between Trackways 3 and 11 can be traced to the Late Bronze Age, but it is from the Middle Iron Age (400–100 BC) that an archaeologically distinct settlement becomes apparent in the centre of the Terminal 5 site.

The Middle Iron Age to the end of the Roman period (400 BC–AD 400)

Compared with the Early Iron Age, the Middle Iron age of West London was well documented (Wait and Cotton 2000, 106). Iron Age sites in the Middle Thames and Heathrow in particular have been comparatively well represented in previous excavations. The famous site of the Heathrow 'temple' and earthwork enclosure was excavated by in 1944 ahead of construction of the airport and finally published in 1993 (Grimes and Close Brookes 1993). To the south of the airport, Iron Age settlement structures have been excavated at Mayfield Farm, East Bedfont (Farrant 1971 and MoLAS forthcoming), while to the north, at Stockley Park, a small settlement of three or four roundhouses was excavated by the Museum of London in the mid

1980s (MoLAS forthcoming and Merriman 1990). In Surrey, Iron Age settlement evidence has been recovered from Ashford Prison (Carew *et al.* 2006), and at Eton Rowing Course in Buckinghamshire an Iron Age boundary ditch was cut diagonally across a Middle Bronze Age field system, but avoided two double enclosures that it contained (Allen and Mitchell 2001). Extensive Iron Age settlements have also been excavated in the Upper Thames, such as at Cotswold Community (Powell *et al.* 2010) and Claydon Pike (Miles *et al.* 2007).

Wait and Cotton made the observation that in spite of a comparative wealth of settlement evidence, the landscape organisation and subsistence economy were less easy to document, although they did suggest that earlier field systems continued to be used (Wait and Cotton 2000, 106). It is here that one of the main contributions of the Terminal 5 excavations to the study of the period 400 BC–AD 400 can be found. Namely, that we have achieved an understanding of the development of a settlement and its economic basis and how it was situated within its landscape. For example, Brown and Smith (this volume, Chapter 4) have shown how the location of the settlement in the 'common ground' between the two Bronze Age field systems would not have been accidental. This was the only large open area available to build a new settlement, but furthermore, would have represented a neutral area where the families from the aggregate landscape of the Colne Valley and the coaxial landscape of the Heathrow Plateau could join together. The result was that from 400 BC onwards the settlement pattern changed to more widely spaced but larger settlements (eg the Phase 1 settlement at Terminal 5 consisted of at least 10 roundhouses; Chapter 4, Fig. 4.20), which farmed as a single community the previously separate farmsteads of the 2nd millennium.

The extent of the Terminal 5 excavations make it clear that the settlement was, compared with those of the 2nd millennium, relatively isolated (see Fig. 4.1). The only other indications of possible settlement were a small

enclosure and a few pits at the extreme east of the excavated area, which could represent the periphery of another settlement. Failing this, the nearest known settlements are the Heathrow 'temple' site, 3.2 km to the north-east, and Mayfield Farm 2.9 km to the south-east. The landscape surrounding Iron Age settlement in other parts of the Middle Thames has also proved puzzling, as, compared to the ubiquitous field ditches of the 2nd millennium, Iron Age field boundaries are relatively scarce. This has led some authors to propose that the 2nd millennium fields were abandoned, even 'decommissioned' (Yates 2007), to be replaced with, presumably, an open prairie-like plain (although note the suggestion by Wait and Cotton of continued use of earlier fields: see above).

Brown and Smith, together with the environmental specialists (this volume, chapter 4), have shown that some of the old Bronze Age fields were abandoned and the landscape does seem to have become more open. Grazing and pastoralism appears to have been the main form of subsistence as evidenced by environmental data and the construction of small stock pens. It seems that arable agriculture played a much smaller part in the economy than in the Middle Bronze Age. Nonetheless, it is also clear that many of the old field boundaries remained, and were only altered or demolished where necessary. Thus the Middle and Late Iron Age settlement was not located in a landscape wiped clean of earlier features, but in a landscape with a skeleton of old field boundaries, trackways, hedgerows and ancient Neolithic earthworks (see Fig. 4.2). These were the structural conditions that the people of the Iron Age inherited and transformed through the agency of inhabitation. In contrast, on the Essex claylands at Stansted, the Iron Age inhabitants did not inherit an enclosed landscape from the 2nd millennium, and it was not until the Middle and Late Iron Ages that droveways and major field banks were built, starting the process of reordering the world with physical boundaries 1000 years after this was first undertaken at Heathrow (Framework Archaeology 2008).

The Middle Iron Age developments at Terminal 5 continued into the Late Iron Age and early Roman period, though with increasing modifications such as different architectural forms, larger more agglomerated stock pens and—much more significantly—a complete realignment of the eastern Bronze Age field system, possibly associated with increased arable cultivation. Similar accelerated changes were seen at other settlements in the Heathrow area such as Imperial College Sport Ground, although the changes were certainly not uniform, and the overall impression is of quite a varied local landscape, generally developing in a piecemeal fashion throughout the Iron Age and into the Roman period. Some elements of older Bronze Age field systems no doubt continued in use (or were still at least visible parts of the landscape), as seen with the western lower lying area at Terminal 5, while some field boundary alignments had clearly been first laid out in the earlier Iron Age. The later Iron Age and early Roman period saw further elaboration of these existing field systems along with the creation of other systems, perhaps responding to new economic or social stimuli. Defined trackways also developed, though in many cases these don't appear to date to before the later 1st century AD, possibly under Roman influence.

In all cases, the agrarian landscapes continued to develop quite intensively until at least the 2nd century AD, and the increased network of trackways in the wider landscape presumably linked the disparate farmsteads with market centres in the newly established towns. The evidence overall suggests that many settlements in the Heathrow landscape reached their peak in the later 1st to early 2nd century AD, with an accompanying intensification of agricultural production. All settlements still appeared to have operated mixed farming regimes, although there is evidence for an increase in arable production as well as diversification into economic activities such as hay-making. It is likely that this agricultural expansion was associated with the need to create a surplus within the emerging Romano-British economy,

though there is little evidence for any great archaeologically detectable wealth, and very few early to mid Roman coins. The economic fortunes of many of these settlements, which can mostly be described as simple low-status farmsteads, may have depended to some degree on the emergence and development of the small town at Staines and of course the major trading centre at London. The apparent decline of these urban centres from the later 2nd century could in part explain an accompanying decline in some settlements, although this was not the case at Terminal 5. However, the major social, political and economic upheavals of the late Roman period in Britain may be traced in the rural landscape of Heathrow.

While the main settlement at Terminal 5 itself exhibits few significant developments in the later Roman period, aside from the appearance of a substantial posthole structure, the eastern field system was transformed by the creation of a huge 'ladder' enclosure and associated droveway, designed to accommodate high levels of livestock traffic. This system was probably linked to another substantial droveway and 'ladder' system to the north at Imperial College Sports Ground and may have continued southwards towards the town at Staines. This suggests a greater emphasis on pastoral agriculture during the later Roman period, probably associated with cattle farming.

Similar levels of agricultural expansion and specialism are witnessed across the wider Heathrow region at this time, with signs of new field boundaries, enclosures, corn driers and even newly founded settlements. The impetus for such development was probably commercial, perhaps driven by wealthy estate owners to maximise profits in a steadily changing economic environment. Farms like the one at Terminal 5 may have been incorporated (if they were not already) into large managed agricultural estates (*latifundia*), perhaps belonging to the owners of more remote villas and/or wealthy townhouses in London. Rural

farmers on these estates may have become *coloni*, essentially subsistence workers who were tied to the land in service of the estate, though also able to produce a meagre surplus for themselves.

It would seem that there is little evidence for the Heathrow settlement continuing beyond the end of the 4th century, with many other settlements in the area also probably in decline by at least the middle of the 4th century. If this landscape was part of a large managed estate, then the fairly rapid decline could be explained by the general economic uncertainties and decline in eastern Britain at this time—it was part of the more widespread disintegration of the Roman social, political and economic state.

The Terminal 5 excavations have shown a remarkable degree of continuity in settlement from the Middle Iron Age to the end of the Roman period. Although domestic architecture and agricultural practices changed during this period, the settlement remained essentially a small rural agricultural community. Continuity of settlement in East London had been noted by in the *Archaeology of Greater London* (MoLAS 2000, 155), although at the time it was felt harder to document this for West London. The major changes occurred within the wider world: changes to Late Iron Age society, the Roman conquest, the founding of *Londinium* and *Pontes* (Staines). These much wider economic, social and political changes can be seen in the rearrangement of the fields and the construction of the 'ladder enclosure' to name but two examples. It is to be hoped that the Terminal 5 excavations, along with an increasing body of other excavated evidence from the last decade, may move the focus of Romano-British studies in the Middle Thames away from *Londinium* and other towns to the rural landscape that helped support these urban centres. For example, *The Archaeology of Greater London* devotes approximately 25 pages to the Roman City of London, whilst the countryside is dealt with in less than six (MoLAS 2000, 127–152).

Saxon and medieval to the modern day

Compared to the prehistoric and Roman periods, the contribution of the Terminal 5 excavations to the understanding of the evolution of the Middle Thames landscape through the Saxon and medieval periods is more limited.

As we have shown, by AD 400 the fertile brickearth capped gravel landscape of Heathrow had been shaped by over 2000 years of mixed agriculture and settlement on an intensive scale. The landscape would have been largely clear except for relict hedgerows and droveways ranging in date from the Middle Bronze Age to the late Roman period, and it is highly likely that heath land was already established to the east of Terminal 5 by the Roman period.

Throughout this book, we have argued that almost all the changes that we have observed archaeologically had their roots in earlier practices and values attached to places. For example, the Stanwell Cursus has clear links with the pre-cursus landscape, the monuments of the later Neolithic were built to accommodate the cursus complex, and the middle 2nd millennium BC land divisions may have echoed the social groupings of the Early Bronze Age. However, the early Saxon period may mark the first clear break with the past history of inhabitation at Heathrow.

The settlement pattern of the early–middle Saxon period was characteristically dispersed and transitory, with the small Saxon settlement of sunken-featured buildings, pits and postholes south of the medieval and present day village of Longford being a good example. Although there is clearly a large gap from the early Saxon to the early medieval period, the evidence from Longford shows how a medieval settlement could develop from a Saxon precursor. At Heathrow, the middle Saxon period saw the emergence of more stable settlement locations with increasing nucleation in the late Saxon period leading to the familiar pattern of villages and open fields. During the early medieval

period, the remaining woodland was cleared and heath land reclaimed from small hamlets, expanding settlement away from the villages.

The Terminal 5 excavations revealed a complex of field-barns, enclosures and fields at Burrow Hill which formed part of the medieval agricultural system. Perhaps the most important contribution of the Terminal 5 medieval evidence is that it demonstrates the longevity of the Middle Bronze Age field banks and hedges at Burrows Hill (area 49). The Stanwell Enclosure map of 1748 clearly depicts field boundaries that the archaeological excavations proved were medieval (Fig. 5.25). However, those medieval ditches in many instances followed the alignment of Middle Bronze Age ditches which must have been fully silted by the medieval period (Fig. 5.14). The most plausible explanation is that the medieval field boundaries followed banks and hedgerows which were relics of the 2nd millennium BC field system. Of course, large areas of the Bronze Age field system had disappeared or had been altered in the Roman period, but clearly pockets of 2nd millennium BC landscape were still extant in the late 18th century AD, if not later.

The post-medieval rural tranquillity of Heathrow was disturbed with the construction of the Perry Oaks Sludge works in 1935 and the whole landscape changed in 1944 with the construction of Heathrow Airport.

Conclusion

The archaeological investigations at Terminal 5 have demonstrated a remarkable history of human inhabitation. It has demonstrated the extraordinary scale of human endeavour in changing the natural environment, and how successive generations came to change the landscape they inherited. We hope we have shown how the project has contributed to advancing our understanding of this particular part of the Middle Thames landscape since the last strategic overview in 2000.

The Terminal 5 project has again shown the value of investigating very large areas of landscape. The challenge for the future, both for the Heathrow area and for British archaeology in general, is to devise a process whereby the results of many excavations by different organisations that have resulted from PPG16 can be brought together to form an atlas of past human inhabitation. In this respect it is hoped that the data displayed in the Freeviewer in this book and the on-line version hosted by ADS will provide a model for an on-line digital atlas that will move beyond the portrayal of archaeological sites and finds as a series of dots or site outlines.

In 2000 the hope was expressed (Andrews *et al.* 2000, 530) that the Terminal 5 project would show that a particular theoretical approach to archaeological practice can produce cost effective and interesting results to the benefit of clients, archaeologists and general public alike. This aspiration was largely in response to the way in which commercial archaeology in Britain had developed since the introduction of PPG16 in 1990, with its emphasis on the primacy of ‘the record’ and a consequent deferral of interpretation (Andrews *et al.* 2000, 527). Our hope has been that this volume, together with Volume 1 (Framework Archaeology 2006) and the volume on excavations at Stansted Airport (Framework Archaeology 2008), will demonstrate that we have gone some way towards fulfilling this aim. The impact of the Terminal 5 project within the archaeological profession was demonstrated in 2008, when the project was awarded the Best Archaeological Project Award and the Freeviewer was highly commended as Best Innovation at the British Archaeological Awards. It is pleasing to note that the new Planning Policy Statement 5 has shifted the emphasis away from PPG16’s ‘preservation by record’ and instead placed advancing ‘our understanding of the past’ at the heart of the document. It was this desire to make a tangible and significant contribution to the knowledge and understanding of past lives which has been fundamental to the ethos that has guided the Terminal 5 project.

