Flood Alleviation Scheme, River Great Ouse, Eaton Ford

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Archaeological Evaluation Report

Report Title

Archaeological Evaluation at

the Flood Alleviation Scheme close to the West Bank of the River Great Ouse, Eaton Ford

By James Fairbairn

With contributions by Rachel Fosberry, Stephen Wadeson, Carole Fletcher and Chris Faine

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

Summary

Between the 24th and 27th of February 2009 Oxford Archaeology East was commissioned by May Gurney and the Environment Agency to machine excavate 130m of linear trenching on or near the line of the planned cut-off trench of the St Neots Flood Alleviation Scheme. The results revealed high levels of alluvial deposits associated with a flood plain, a gravel terrace or headland with artefacts being recovered from the early neolithic period. There was also some evidence of Romano-British Occupation in the form of shallow ditches.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted close to the west bank of the River Great Ouse at Eaton Ford, St Neots Town Parish.

1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council, supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (formerly Cambridgeshire County Council's CAM ARC).

1.1.3 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 CCC, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

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

1.2 Topography and Geology

1.2.1 The site lies on the west bank of the river Ouse and rises westward from 14.53mOD to 15.25mOD. According to the institute of Geological Sciences map 1:50,000 the site lies on 2nd terrace river gravels, whilst local knowledge suggested pockets of alluvium exist to the west.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

The site lies at Eaton Ford, previously in the historic Bedfordshire parish of Eaton Socon that is now within modern Cambridgeshire. Eaton Ford lies adjacent to the River Great Ouse, the eponymous crossing of which precipitated settlement in the vicinity from at least the Roman period onwards.

The earliest evidence for activity in the area are flint scatters from the Mesolithic period (c.5000BC) found several hundred metres to the northeast on this riverbank (CHER 8405), and much further away on the eastern riverbank and to the south (CHER Nos 373, 377, 512); these scatters may be random small-scale workings and casual losses rather than indicative of major activity areas.

This part of the Great Ouse valley is particularly rich in prehistoric remains, including monuments forming an important node in a 'ritualised' landscape, although for the most part the remains known locally lie on the eastern side of the river. This landscape consisted of monuments dating from c.4000BC and continuing into the Iron Age, c.700BC, (CHER Nos 376, 381, 447, 6150 and 11671). A long barrow (CHER No. 381) seems to be the earliest monument (4000-3000BC) with placed human and animal remains. Two later Neolithic (3000-2400BC) 'Cursus' sit within this landscape, as do a ritual/funerary double enclosure with numerous discrete Neolithic pits containing 'placed deposits', and a hengiform ring-ditch. Three later Neolithic cremation burials were found within this complex. At least two Bronze Age ring ditches were former funerary structures (excavated by Herne in 1984 and Kemp in 1997).

Between the historic town of St Neots and the river lies an area known as the Coneygeare that may have been used in the first century AD as a Roman fort (CHER Nos 391 and 396), overlooking the river crossing. In the early nineteenth century its earthworks survived above ground to the extent that it was mapped as a large rectangular encampment on the First edition 1" Ordnance Survey Map. Tebbutt recorded in the St Neots Gazetteer that this encampment had almost been completely destroyed by gravel quarrying in the 19th century. Remains of a settlement, measuring at least 400m by 300m, have been found directly to the east and south of the postulated fort whilst it is also clear that there was an Anglo-Saxon cemetery in the vicinitiy (CHER 392). Cropmarks consisting of Roman small square fields and pits and circles have been recorded to the west of Ernulf School (CHER No. 389) and late Roman occupation has been investigated here.

Eaton place names are now recognised as representing settlements with water course management responsibilities in the post-Roman period, and clearly this role contributed to the importance of Eaton Socon.

Eaton Socon is known to have been of considerable importance in the late Anglo-Saxon period; a late Anglo-Saxon/Saxo-Norman settlement was found partly under and to the west of the later Eaton Socon Castle, but this position is more than a kilometre south of the subject site. The honour of Eaton Socon was given to Picot, William I's standard bearer and Sheriff of Cambridge, and it functioned as important baronial centre for several centuries afterwards.

Eaton Ford was a separate medieval settlement, it clearly had a Saxon antecedent but the exact location of early activity is not known. The existence of a late medieval hall on the road approaching the bridge (CHER 515) indicates occupation within 150m of the western end of this scheme, but whether at any point it extended further towards the river is not clear.

Eaton Socon's later prosperity derived from its position on Great North Road, the most important route northwards from London from the later 17th century onwards. Eaton Ford lies off this road line.

Across the river the late Saxon centre of Eynesbury, south of the crossing point, developed into the medieval town of St Neots further to the north and here the fording point was replaced by a bridge from at least the 13th century onwards. The late-medieval stone bridge still survives northeast of the subject site (CHER 545).

1.4 Acknowledgements

1.4.1 The author would like to thank the clients, May Gurney and The Environment Agency who funded and commissioned the Archaeological work. The project was managed by James Drummond Murray. James Fairbairn carried out the evaluation with the assistance of Dave Brown, Peter Boardman and Steve Graham. Chris Montague metal detected trenches and spoil heaps using a Whites Spectrum XLT metal detector. and the site survey was carried out by Gareth Rees and Lucy Offord using a Leica GPS1200.

2 Aims and Methodology

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 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.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The Brief required that 130m of trial trenching was to be excavated along the length of planned cut-off trench to a depth of the geological horizons,or to the upper interface of archaeological features or deposits, or to the planned cut-off laying depth of 1.80m, whichever was encountered first.

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

2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by Gareth Rees and Lucy Offord using a Leica GPS 1200. Drawn plans were incorporated with the survey data to accurately plot the position of the trenches

2.2.4 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector by Chris Montague of OA East using a Whites Spectrum XLT Metal Detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.

2.2.5 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East'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.

2.2.6 A total of 160L of bulk soil samples were taken and processed at OA East's environmental department at Bourn.

2.2.7 Site conditions were dry and sunny. A high water combined with flood water from recent snow led to the flooding of three trenches.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Trench 1 was located at the western most extent of the site and was 10m long and 2.00m wide with a maximum depth of 1.10m. Trench 1 had an East – West orientation.

3.1.2 Trench 2 was located on the line of the planned cut-off trench and was 11m long and 2m wide with a maximum depth of 0.65m. Trench 2 had a East-Northeast West-southwest orientation.

3.1.3 Trench 3 was located on the planned line of the cut-off trench and was 10m long and 2m wide and had a maximum depth of 0.40m. Trench 3 had a East-West orientation.

3.1.4 Trench 4 was Located on the line of the planned cut-off trench and was 15.5m long and 3.5m wide with a maximum depth of 1045m. Trench 4 had a East -west orientation.

3.1.5 Trench 5 was located close to the line of the cut-off trench and was 20m long and 2m wide with a maximum depth of 0.70m. Trench 5 had a East-West orientation.

3.1.6 Trench 6 was located on the line of the planned embankment and was 10m long and 2m wide with a maximum depth of 0.40m. Trench 6 was orientated East-West

3.1.7 Trench 7 was located on the line of the planned embankment and was 25m long and 2m wide with a maximum depth of 0.45m

3.1.8 Trench 8 was located close to the line of the cut-off trench and was 20.00m long and 2.0m wide with a maximum depth of 1.70m. Tench 8 had a north south orientation.

3.1.9 Trench 9a & 9b was located at the northern most end of the site and was split into two parts to straddled a public footpath that was in use throughout the evaluation. Trench 9 was 19m long and 1.83m wide and had a maximum depth of 0.48m. Trench 9 had a northeast – southwest orientation.

Trench Descriptions

3.2 Trench 1

3.2.1 Trench 1 outwardly produced no obvious archaeological features but further examination revealed some evidence of gravel quarrying. The natural whitish yellowy gravel 104 had an uneven upper interface with the overlying secondary reddish brown subsoil 103, this together with a discolouration of the gravel base in parts of the evaluation trench does suggest that quarrying or the removal of gravel was taking place in the immediate vicinity. The Gravel layer in trench 1 is somewhat lower than trench 2 despite being at the highest point on site again suggesting the removal of gravel. Layers 103 and 104 were topped by a mid reddish brown clayey sandy silty subsoil 102 and a dark greyish brown silty sandy topsoil 101, these had a cumulative depth of 0.70m.

3.3 Trench 2

3.3.1 Trench 2 produced evidence of Romano-British occupation in the form of a shallow linear ditch cut into natural sand and gravel. This ditch had a steep visible side and a flattish base, only half its profile was visible due to its close proximity to the edge of excavation (see Fig 2). Two slots **207** and **204** were dug through this feature, each contained a single similar fill 203 and 206 these consisted of a mid-grey reddy brown

sandy silt with fine gravel inclusions, the fill from **207** produced five sherds of Romano-British pottery (See appendix A). This ditch ran eastwards and seemed to reappear as **404** in trench 4. Disturbance noted in the western end of trench 2 has been attributed to rabbit warrens.

3.4 Trench 3

3.4.1 Trench 3 was dug to a depth of 0.40m and produced no archaeological features. A topsoil layer 302 consisted of a mid reddish brown sandy silty material overlain by a mid greyish brown sandy silt topsoil 301 containing sparse amounts of gravel. These existed to a cumulative depth of 0.40m.

3.5 Trench 4

3.5.1 Trench 4 was dug on the proposed line of the cut-off trench and through a mid greyish brown sandy silty topsoil 401 and a subsoil 402 consisting of mid reddish brown material containing sparse amounts of gravel. These overlay what seems to be alluvial deposits relating to the flood plain of the Ouse. 411 consisted of a layer of layer of dark yellowish brown sand and gravel this layer was relatively thin having a maximum depth of 0.15m. This was in turn sealed by layer 410 which consisted of light orangey blue sandy clay. Neither of these layers produced finds. Layer 409 lay directly above 410 and was made up of an alluvial material consisting of light orange sandy clay containing small to medium stones, this layer did produce small amounts of residual pottery of a probable Roman-British date. Cutting into the alluvial deposits were two small gulleys **414** and **412** The use of these two shallow gulleys is uncertain the area that they are cut into would have most probably been on the edge of the flood plain and subsequently submerged for extended periods and as they run parallel to the river drainage does seem unlikely. One possibility is that these small ditches or gulleys may relate to a raised area that may once of been a bank which is still just visible today running south across parkland, this bank may have been a defensive feature or even an early form of flood defence. One of these gulleys **412** produced a small flint knife blade of possible neolithic date and one small pot sherd of uncertain date. The area immediately east of this bank is higher and consists of an outcrop of gravel, this area is discernibly higher and would have been an ideal place for settlement. The western end of trench 4 revealed a curvilinear ditch **404** (see section 11) containing a mid orangey brown silty sand, the fill of this ditch contained small amounts of bone and small sherds of Romano-British pottery. This feature may relate to the probable Romano-British ditch **204** found in trench 2, and together with the possible gravel removal or quarrying in trench 1 does suggest the possibility of this area having some industrial or settlement use.

3.6 Trench 5

3.6.1 Trench 5 was dug to depth of 0.70m into the upper interface of the natural yellowy white gravel. Overlying the natural geology was a dark orangey sandy silty clay 502, that existed to a depth of 0.50m. This in turn was overlain by 0.12m of mid reddish brown clay silt topsoil 502 capped by 0.10m of turf. No archaeological features were recorded within trench 5.

3.7 Trench 6

3.7.1 Trench 6 was located on the line of the planned embankment and was dug to a depth of 0.40m. This trench contained no archaeological features but did show remnants of a

natural drainage channel cutting through the lower dark red silty sandy clay subsoil 602, the channel was elongated in shape with amorphous edges, it ran for approximately 1.5 before being truncated by a gas service trench. These drainage channels are discussed in more detail in the description of trenches seven and eight. The subsoil layer was capped by a dark grey silty clay subsoil 601. The subsoil and topsoil layers had a cumulative depth of 0.40m.

3.8 Trench 7

3.8.1 Trench 7 was located on the planned line of the embankment of the flood alleviation scheme. This trench was dug to a depth of 0.40m and contained narrow shallow natural drainage channels **710** and **708.** The single fills of these channels were virtually identical, both being a mid grey clayey silt, only the fill of channel **710** contained any finds, these consisted of two sherds of post medieval pottery and an undated piece of CBM. A shallow pit with an uneven base thought to be a tree throw **704,** truncated the drainage channel **708,** this tree throw was filled with a greyish brown silty clay material 705 containing a single residual sherd of medieval pottery and a single piece of CBM.

3.8.2 The amorphous edges the uneven base and the alluvial type fills of the drainage channels strongly suggest that these have been naturally formed by flood and rain water finding the route of least resistance into the river, all channels found in trenches six, seven and eight have similar silty clay fill characteristics and all follow the downward slope towards the river. Interestingly at two separate points in trench eight the channel seems to have been dug or cleaned and the edges straightened, maybe in an attempt to aid the flow of flood water into the river. These two points seem to be the only place that human intervention has had an effect on these channels. The fact that these channels contained only post medieval finds and have cut their course through the subsoil layer means that any human intervention must be of a fairly recent date. All features in trench seven were sealed by a mid reddish brown sandy silty clay subsoil 702, and a dark reddish brown sandy silty clay topsoil 701. These existed to a depth of 0.28m.

3.9 Trench 8

3.9.1 Trench 8 revealed two drainage channels **816** and **806** (see section 4) these were probably naturally formed (see description of trench 7) but do show signs of being dug or cleaned **816** has a particularly well defined side on its eastern edge. Both channels were filled by a firm brown silty clay, finds were only found within the fill of **806** and consisted of small amounts of brick and tile dating to the post medieval period

3.10 Trench 9a and 9b

3.10.1 Trenches 9a and 9b straddled a public footpath both were dug to a depth of 0.40m into a dark red silty clay topsoil. Neither trench showed any sign of archaeological features and was backfilled immediately to limit the disruption on the public footpath.

3.11 Finds Summary

3.11.1 Finds were almost exclusively Romano-British and from the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. The pottery seems to be locally produced utilitarian coarse wares and indicative of a low status settlement. Three sherds identified as Early to Middle Bronze Age Shelly ware were discovered in trench 2, these were thought to be residual in an otherwise

Romano-British Context. A well patinated early Neolithic Blade (Mortimer pers com) was found in trench four, this again is thought to be of residual nature. The small assemblage of bone found during the evaluation is too small to draw any conclusions from but was identified as being from domestic mammals most probably cow and horse and is indicative of waste from a small scale settlement.

3.12 Environmental Summary

3.12.1 The environmental assemblage revealed just two plant grains which may have accidentally been burnt while being dried for storage or during cooking over an open fire. Sedge seeds were also found indicative of the type of plants growing along a river bank. A microscopic amount of slag was recovered but the absence of hammerscale suggests that smithying was not taking place in the local vicinity.

4 Discussion and Conclusions

4.1 Discussion

4.1.1 The evaluation on the site of the flood alleviation scheme on the west bank of the Ouse has produced evidence of the probable edge of the flood plain in the Romano-British period and also some evidence of industrial or settlement practices on the gravel outcrop at the western extent of the site. Trench four revealed the edge of a gravel outcrop with a possible bank running North-South parallel with the river and West of this bank Roman-British ditches and possible evidence of gravel quarrying were also noted. West of this gravel outcrop all trenches revealed high levels of alluvial deposits, these are likely to exist as far as the the river itself.

4.2 Significance

4.2.1 From previous archaeological works more is known about human activity on the East bank of the River Great Ouse than that on the west bank, but this limited archaeological evaluation has given us a significant chance to further our knowledge of human interaction in the locality. It seems that people were living or working on the gravel outcrop overlooking the Ouse and its associated flood plain at least as far back as the Romano-British period.

4.3 Recommendations

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

APPENDIX A. FINDS REPORTS

A.1 Pottery

By Stephen Wadeson and Carole Fletcher

Finds Quantification

Context	Material	Object Name	Weight in kg	Comments
203	Ceramic	Vessel	0.100	
206	Ceramic	Vessel	0.035	
301	Ceramic	Ceramic Building Material	0.045	
301	Ceramic	Vessel	0.011	
301	Ceramic	Tobacco Pipe	0.002	
403	Ceramic	Vessel	0.023	
405	Ceramic	Vessel	0.017	
405	Bone	Bone	0.019	
409	Bone	Bone	0.065	
409	Ceramic	Vessel	0.037	
701	Ceramic	Ceramic Building Material	0.052	
705	Fired Clay	Fired Clay	0.051	
705	Ceramic	Vessel	0.002	
709	Shell		0.003	
709	Ceramic	Vessel	0.008	
711			0.003	Coal
711	Ceramic	Tobacco Pipe	0.005	

Small Finds

Context	Small Find Number	Material	Object Name
201	2	Cu Alloy	Artefact
302	3	Pb	Musket Ball
402	4	Cu Alloy	Artefact
711	5	Pb	Sheet- offcut

The Finds

5 Summary

5.1.1 A Total of 41 sherds weighing 0.232 of pottery from multiple periods were recovered from the evaluation. The majority of these, 34 sherds, weighing 0.194kg, are Romano-British. In addition three sherds (0.017kg) of Early-Middle Bronze Age pottery, two sherds (0.013kg) of medieval pottery and two sherds (0.08kg) of 19th century bone china were also recovered.

5.2 Methodology

5.2.1 This multi-period assemblage was examined in accordance with the guidelines set down by the Study Group for Roman Pottery (Webster 1976; Willis 2004). The total assemblage was studied and a catalogue prepared.

5.2.2 The sherds were examined using a hand lens (x20 magnification) and were divided into fabric groups defined on the basis of inclusion types present. The fabric codes are descriptive and vessel form was also recorded.

6 Quantification

6.1.1 The sherds were counted and weighed to the nearest whole gram and decoration and abrasion were also noted.

7 The Assemblage

7.1.1 The assemblage is made up of fragmentary, moderately abraded and abraded sherds with an average sherd weight of approximately 5.7g

7.1.2

Era	Sherd Count	Weight (Kg)	Weight (%)
Early-Middle Bronze Age	3	0.017	7.3
Romano-British	34	0.194	83.6
Medieval	2	0.013	5.6
Post medieval	2	0.008	3.4

Table 1: Pottery by period.

7.2 Early-Middle Bronze Age

7.2.1 Three abraded sherds of shelly pottery from context 203 were identified as Early-Middle Bronze Age (Mortimer pers com). These sherds are residual in an otherwise Roman context.

7.3 The Romano-British Pottery

A Total of 34 sherds, weighing 0.194kg, of Romano-British pottery was recovered from 3 trenches. The majority of the pottery is moderately abraded with some severely

abraded sherds and has a small average sherd weight of 6g. The poor condition of the pottery indicates high levels of post-depositional disturbance.

7.3.1 Proto sandy grey wares form the majority, *c.*55% (by sherd count) of the Romano-British pottery recovered from site, by weight they represent 41% of the assemblage. Present in a limited range of forms with only jars sherds recognised, they are typical of locally produced (but as yet unsourced) coarse wares. Pottery of this type is common in most domestic assemblages in this region throughout the Roman period. In addition to the sandy grey wares there are seven abraded sherds of white ware and a single sherd of sandy oxidised wear.

7.3.2

Fabric	Code	Sherd Count	Weight (Kg)	Weight (%)
Sandy grey ware		7	0.041	21.1
Sandy grey ware		19	0.080	41.2
Sandy oxidised ware		1	0.003	1.5
White ware		7	0.07	36.1

Table 2: Romano-British Pottery Quantified by fabric.

8 Post Roman Pottery

8.1.1 The post Roman pottery assemblage comprises of an abraded body sherd from a Hedingham type ware jug dating to the 13th century, an extremely abraded, undiagnostic sherd of orange sandy ware and two unabraded sherds from a 19th century bone china saucer with traces of over glaze decoration.

9 Discussion

9.1.1 This is a small, predominantly Romano-British assemblage with a modest element of post Roman pottery. Largely recovered from stratified deposits the fabrics and forms present are typical of a utilitarian domestic assemblages recovered from low order settlements within this region (Evans 2003, 105). Consistent with other Roman sites of this date within South Cambridgeshire.

9.1.2 The majority of the assemblage consists of locally produced utilitarian coarse wares manufactured between the mid 1st and mid 2nd centuries AD. There are no fine wares or specialist wares present in the assemblage.

10 Conclusion

10.1.1 The Romano-British assemblage spans the chronological period from the mid 1st to mid 2nd century AD. An assemblage of unsourced locally produced coarse wares and typical of low status utilitarian domestic assemblages within this region (Evans 2003, 105) it would suggest there is an as yet unlocated Romano-British settlement or farmstead nearby.

11 Further Work

11.1.1 No further work is required

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Context	Fabric	Sherd Count	Weight (Kg)	Basic Form	Decoration	Rim/Base/Body Sherd	Date for Sherd	Date for Context
203	Sandy Grey Ware	2	0.005		Incised	Body Sherd	MC1-MC2	MC1-MC2
	Sandy Grey Ware (proto)	2	0.007			Body Sherd	MC1-MC2	
	Sandy Grey Ware (proto)	13	0.037	Jar		Rim and Body Sherd	MC1-MC2	
	Shelly Ware	3	0.017			Body Sherd	Early-Middle Bronze Age	
	White ware	5	0.033			Body Sherd	MC1-MC2	
206	Sandy Grey Ware	2	0.013			Body Sherd	MC1-MC2	MC1-MC2
	Sandy Grey Ware (proto)	3	0.022	Jar		Rim and Body Sherd	MC1-MC2	
301	Orange Sandy Ware	1	0.011			Body Sherd	13th-mid 14th century	13th-mid 14th century
403	Sandy Grey Ware	2	0.004			Body Sherd	MC1-MC2	MC1-MC2
	Sandy Grey Ware	1	0.019	Jar copying a Belgic form		Body Sherd	MC1-MC2	
405	Sandy Grey Ware (proto)	1	0.014			Body Sherd	MC1-MC2	MC1-MC2
	Sandy Oxidised Ware	1	0.003			Body Sherd	MC1-MC2	
409	White Ware	2	0.037			Body Sherd	MC1-MC2	MC1-MC2
705	Hedingham type ware	1	0.002	Jug	Applied	Body Sherd	13th-mid 14th century	13th-mid 14th century

Context	Fabric	Sherd Count	Weight (Kg)	Basic Form	Decoration	Rim/Base/Body Sherd	Date for Sherd	Date for Context
709	Bone China	2	0.008	Bowl		Rim	19th century	19th century

Ceramic Building Material and Fired Clay by Carole Fletcher

12 The Assemblage

12.1.1 The fieldwork generated a small assemblage of 0.097kg of ceramic building material (CBM) including unclassified material and 0.0.051kg of fired clay. This was recovered from three contexts from Trenches 3 and 7 and the bulk of material is Roman in date.

12.1.2 For this assessment the CBM and fired clay was counted, weighed and classified by form. Levels of abrasion, any evidence of re-use or burning were also recorded following the guidelines laid down by Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group (ACBMG 2002). No preservation bias has been recognised and no long-term storage problems are likely.

12.1.3 The condition of the overall assemblage is moderately abraded and the average size of brick and tile fragments from individual contexts is small at 48.5g. The assemblage includes no commonly recognised types of brick or tile found on many Roman sites, the single fragment of Roman brick or tile is undiagnostic, with only a single surface surviving. The single fragment of medieval or later CBM has been identified as roof tile

12.1.4 The quantities of material present are not sufficient to indicate a tiled roofed or heated building on the site. though they do suggest that a building existed in the vicinity of the site. The location of the building or buildings that are the source of the CBM remain unknown.

12.1.5 The CBM and fired clay represented in the assemblage are summarised in Table 1

CBM Type	Fragment Count	Weight (kg)	Weight (%)
Brick or Tile	1	0.052	35.1
Roof Tile	1	0.045	30.4
Fired Clay	1	0.051	34.5

Table 1: CBM and fired clay by count, weight and % by weight

13 Conclusion

13.1.1 The assemblage is small and is difficult to assess beyond providing basic information. The presence of the abraded fragment of Roman brick/tile and fired clay alongside late medieval or post medieval roof tile almost certainly relates to Roman and later domestic activity somewhere in the vicinity of the site.

13.1.2 No further work is recomended

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14 Animal Bone, by Chris Faine and Carole Fletcher

14.1 Summary

14.1.1 A total of 13 fragments of bone were recovered from ten contexts in Trench 4, with 12 fragments being unidentifiable to species (92.3% of the total sample). Fragments were obtained from features largely dating from the mid 1st-mid 2nd century AD. The condition of the assemblage is poor, with the majority of fragmentation being attributed to taphonomic processes. The assemblage is fragmented and metrical analysis was not possible.

14.2 Methodology

14.2.1 All data was initially recorded and all elements identifiable to species and over 25% complete were included, elements not identifiable to species were classed as “large/medium/small mammal”. Completeness was assessed in terms of percentage and zones present (after Dobney & Reilly, 1988).

14.3 The assemblage

14.3.1 Bones present are from large or large/medium mammals, only a single fragment of bone from context 405 was identifiable but could not be tied down to one species. No evidence of butchery was found on the bone from context 405 or 409, where the surface of the bone has been extensive eroded.

14.3.2 Unfortunately the assemblage is too small to draw any conclusions from, with the domestic mammal remains most likely representing small-scale settlement waste.

Context			
405	5 fragments	Unidentified	Large/Medium Mammal
405	1 fragment	Distal Femur	Cow/Horse
409	7 fragments	Unidentified (possibly femur)	Large Mammal

Table 1 Species distribution for the entire assemblage

15 Further Work

15.1.1 No further work is required.

Bibliography

Dobney, K . and Reilly, K. 1988 A method for recording archaeological animal bones: the use of diagnostic zones. *Circaea* 5(2): 79-96

16 Clay Tobacco Pipe by Alasdair Brooks.

16.1.1 Two small fragments of clay tobacco pipe stem were recovered from contexts 301 (Trench 3) and 711 (Trench 7). These fragment are likely to be 17th century in date.

17 SHELL

17.1.1 Small fragments from a Swan mussel were recovered from context 709 in Trench 7.

APPENDIX B. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

B.1 Environmental samples

By Rachel Fosberry

Summary

A total of eight bulk samples were taken form a variety of features within the confines of the evaluated area. The results of the flotation show that preservation of plant remains is by both charring and waterlogging and is largely confined to naturally occurring vegetation and occasional charred cereal grains.

18 INTRODUCTION

18.1.1 Eight bulk samples were taken from features within the evaluated areas of the site in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains, bones and artefacts and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations.

18.1.2 Features sampled include layers and features within ditches from Trenches 2, 4 and 8.

19 Methodology

19.1.1 The volume of bulk soil samples collected was 20L

The total volume of each sample were processed by water flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flots were collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residues were washed through a 0.5mm mesh. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residues were passed through 5mm and 2mm sieves and a magnet was dragged through each resulting fraction prior to sorting for ecofacts (e.g. animal bone, fish bone, charcoal, shell, etc..) and artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification. Identifications were made by the author without comparison to the OA East reference collection and should be seen as provisional. Nomenclature for the plant classification follows Stace (1997).

20 QUANTIFICATION

20.1.1 For the purpose of this initial assessment, items such as seeds, cereal grains and small animal bones have been scanned and recorded qualitatively according to the following categories

= 1-10, ## = 11-50, ### = 51+ specimens

20.1.2 Items that cannot be easily quantified such as charcoal, magnetic residues and fragmented bone have been scored for abundance

20.1.3 + = rare, ++ = moderate, +++ = abundant

20.1.4 Table x summarises the results obtained

Sample Number	Context Number	Cut Number	Feature Type	Flot contents	Residue Contents
1	802		Layer	Sparse charcoal, single w heat grain	Pottery
2	805		Layer	no plant remains	No finds
3	815	816	ditch	w aterlogged seeds	Pottery
4	807	808	ditch	w aterlogged seeds	Sw an mussel shells, slag
5	203	204	ditch	Sparse charcoal, single barley grain	Pottery, slag
6	405	406	ditch	Sparse charcoal	Animal bone
7	409		layer	Sparse charcoal	No finds
8	415	414	ditch	Sparse charcoal	Small glass fragment

21 RESULTS

21.1 Preservation

21.1.1 The majority of the samples contain plant remains preserved by carbonisation.

21.1.2 Samples 3 and 4 are preserved by waterlogging (survival due to anioxic conditions)

21.2 Plant Remains

Cereals

21.2.1 Charred cereal grains are present in two of the samples; Sample 1(Context 802) contains a single wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grain and Sample 5 (Context 203)contains a single barley (*Hordeum* sp.) grain. No chaff elements occur.

Weed seeds

21.2.2 Samples 3 and 4 both contain moderate quantities of seeds preserved by waterlogging including bramble (*Rubus* sp), buttercup (*Ranunculus* sp.), dock (*Rumex* sp) and sedges (*Carex* sp.).

21.3 Ecofacts and Artefacts

21.3.1 Three of the samples contain occasional sherds of pottery. Samples 3 and 4 both contain microscopic fragments of slag.

21.3.2 Sample 8 contained a tiny fragment (2mm x 1mm) of green glass.

21.3.3 Two Swan mussel (*Anodonta cygnea*) shells are present in Sample 4

21.4 Contamination

21.4.1 Modern roots were present in large quantities in all of the samples.

22 DISCUSSION

1.1.1 The charred plant remains in this assemblage are limited to two cereal grains. The grains may have been accidentally burnt while being dried prior to storage or during cooking over open fires prior to accumulating in features as general scatters of burnt refuse.

1.1.2 The plant remains from the waterlogged samples 3 and 4 are sufficiently dissimilar for them to be from different features. Sample 4 contained Swan mussels which inhabit muddy, stagnant or sluggish water such as streams. The sedge seeds indicate sedges growing perhaps along the bank. Sample 3 contains more species of plants that would be common on drier land such as dock and bramble. However both samples contain very similar microscopic fragments of slag and it is noticeable that hammerscale is absent. This suggests that smithing was not occurring in the close vicinity of these features but that industrial waste was been discarded here.

23 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

23.1.1 The preliminary appraisal of a selection of samples from this site have shown that there is limited potential for the recovery of plant remains. No further work is recommended at this stage.

23.1.2 If further excavation is planned, sampling should be undertaken as investigation on the nature of cereal waste and possible weed assemblages is likely to provide an insight into to utilisation of local plant resources, agricultural activity and economic evidence from this period.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Stace, C., 1997 *New Flora of the British Isles*. Second edition. Cambridge University Press

Key: # = 1-10, ## = 11-50, ### = 51+ specimens

Appendix C. OASIS Report Form

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	57485		
Project Name	Evaluation at the St Neots flood Alleviation Scheme		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	24-02-2009	Finish	27-04-2009
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	No

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	STNFAS09	Planning App. No.	N/A
HER No.	ECB 3169	Related HER/OASIS No.	

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Development Type	Pipelines/Cables

Please select all techniques used:

☐ Aerial Photography - interpretation	☐ Grab-Sampling	☐ Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
☐ Aerial Photography - new	☐ Gravity-Core	☐ Sample Trenches
☐ Annotated Sketch	☐ Laser Scanning	☐ Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
☐ Augering	☐ Measured Survey	☒ Targeted Trenches
☐ Dendrochronological Survey	☒ Metal Detectors	☐ Test Pits
☐ Documentary Search	☐ Phosphate Survey	☐ Topographic Survey
☒ Environmental Sampling	☐ Photogrammetric Survey	☐ Vibro-core
☐ Fieldwalking	☐ Photographic Survey	☐ Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
☐ Geophysical Survey	☐ Rectified Photography	

Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the NMR Monument Type Thesaurus and significant finds using the MDA Object type Thesaurus together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

Monument	Period	Object	Period
Ditches	Roman 43 to 410	Pottery	Roman 43 to 410
	Select period...	Lithic	Neolithic -4k to -2k
	Select period...		Select period...

Project Location

County	Cambs	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	
District	St Neots	West Bank of The River Great Ouse, Eaton Ford, St Neots Town Parish	
Parish	St Neots		
HER	Cambs		
Study Area	130sqm linear trenching	National Grid Reference	TL 1785 5990

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	CAPCA
Project Design Originator	James Drummond Murray
Project Manager	James Drummond Murray
Supervisor	James Fairbairn

Project Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Cambs County Store	OA EAst	Cambs County Store
Accession ID ...	Accession ID ...STNFAS09	Accession ID ...STNFAS09

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	☒	☐	☐
Ceramics	☒	☐	☐
Environmental	☐	☐	☒
Glass	☐	☐	☐
Human Bones	☐	☐	☐
Industrial	☐	☐	☐
Leather	☐	☐	☐
Metal	☐	☐	☐
Stratigraphic		☐	☐
Survey		☐	☐
Textiles	☐	☐	☐
Wood	☐	☐	☐
Worked Bone	☐	☐	☐
Worked Stone/Lithic	☒	☐	☐
None	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐

Digital Media	Paper Media
☒ Database	☐ Aerial Photos
☐ GIS	☒ Context Sheet
☐ Geophysics	☒ Correspondence
☒ Images	☐ Diary
☐ Illustrations	☒ Drawing
☐ Moving Image	☐ Manuscript
☐ Spreadsheets	☐ Map
☐ Survey	☐ Matrices
☒ Text	☐ Microfilm
☐ Virtual Reality	☐ Misc.
	☐ Research/Notes
	☒ Photos
	☒ Plans
	☒ Report
	☒ Sections
	☐ Survey

Notes:

Drawing Conventions

Plans

Limit of Excavation

Natural Features

Sondages/Machine Strip

Intrusion/Truncation

Illustrated Section S.14

Archaeological Deposit

Excavated Slot

Modern Deposit

Animal Disturbance

Cut Number 118

Deposit number 117

Sections

Limit of Excavation

Cut

Deposit Horizon

Deposit Horizon - Conjectured

Intrusion/Truncation

Top Surface/Top of Natural

Break in Section/
Limit of Section Drawing

Cut Number 118

Deposit Number 117

Ordnance Datum 18.45m OD

Inclusions

Convention Key

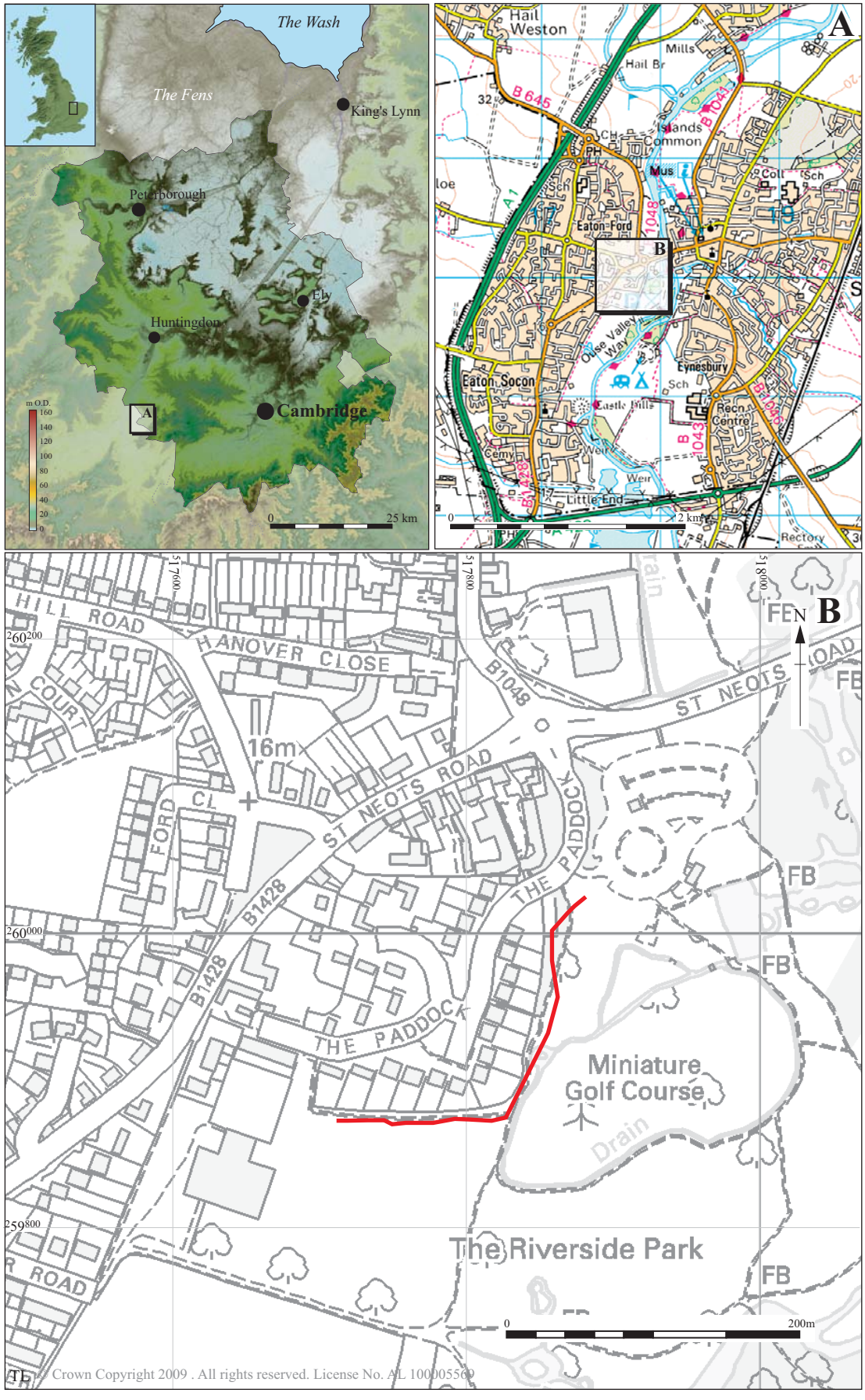
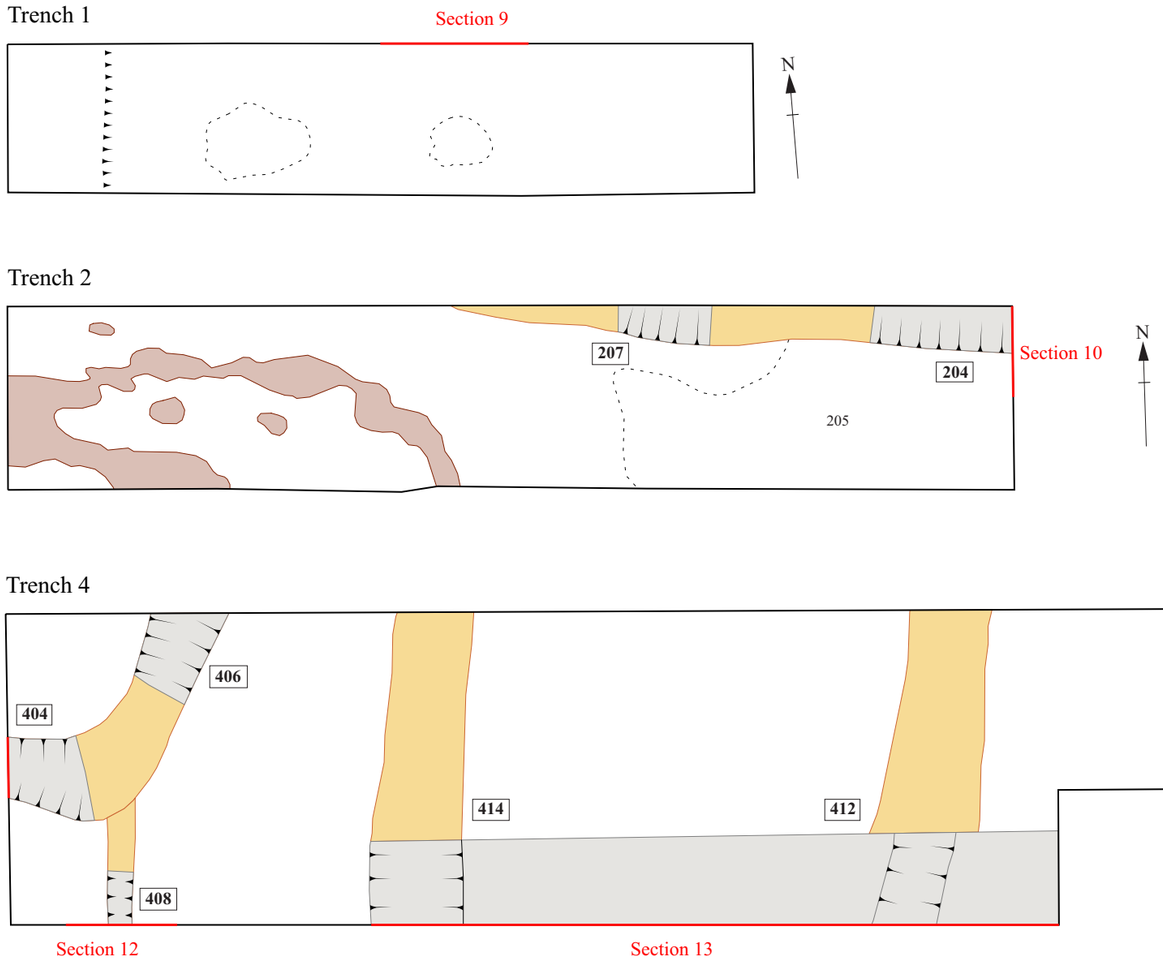


Figure 1: Location of study area (red)



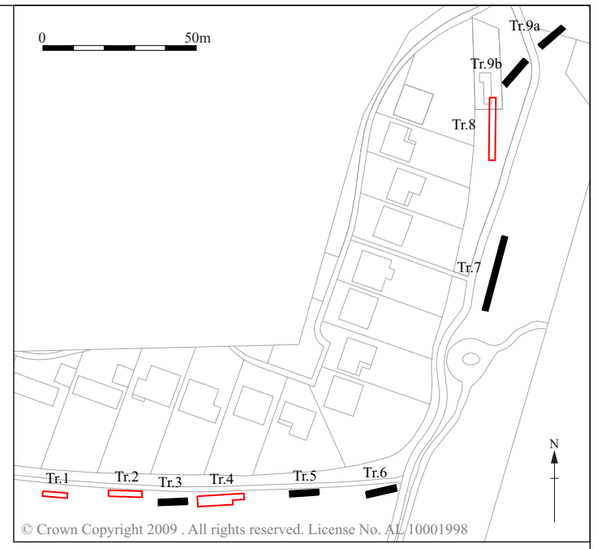


Figure 2: Trench plans (scale 1:150, inset plan scale 1:2000)

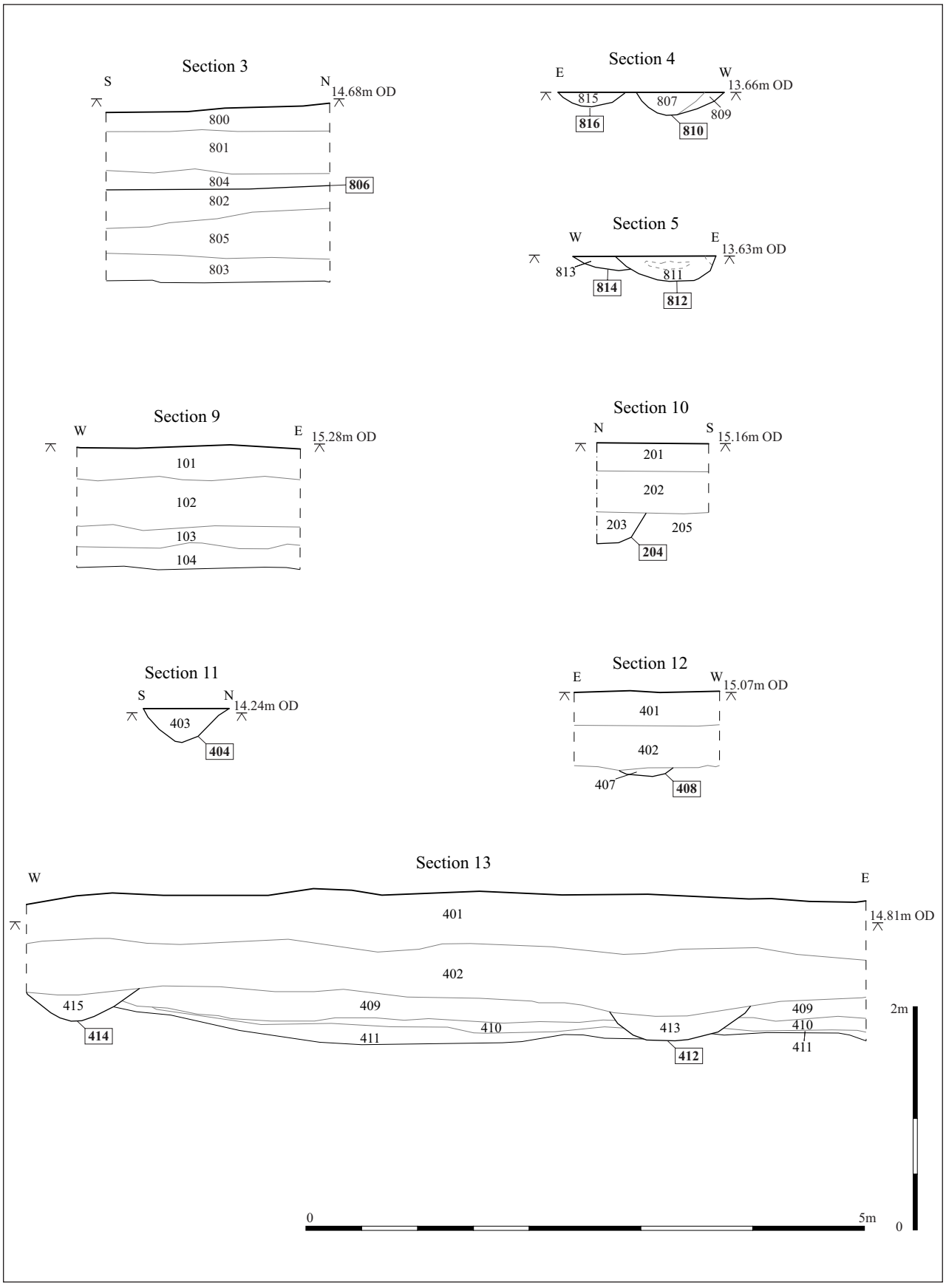


Figure 3: Section drawings (1:50)

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