

Land at Six Hills Road, Ragdale, Leicestershire



Archaeological Fieldwalking Survey Report



October 2014

Client: CgMs on behalf of Lightsource

OA East Report No: 1688

OASIS No: oxfordar3-193341

NGR: SK 658 207

Land at Six Hills Road, Ragdale, Leicestershire

Archaeological Fieldwalking Survey

By Pat Moan BA AlFA

With contributions by Carole Fletcher HND BA AlFA

Editor: Rachel Clarke BA MfA

Illustrator: Pat Moan BA AlFA

Report Date: October 2014

Report Number: 1688

Site Name: Land at Six Hills Road, Ragdale, Leicestershire

HER Event No: X.A137.2014

Date of Works: October 2014

Client Name: CgMs on behalf of Lightsource

Client Ref:

Planning Ref:

Grid Ref: Centred on SK 658 207

Site Code: X.A137.2014

Finance Code: XLESHR14

Receiving Body: Leicester Museum Services

Accession No: X.A137.2014

Prepared by: Pat Moan
Position: Fieldwork Supervisor
Date: October 2014

Checked by: Aileen Connor
Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: October 2014
Signed: 

Disclaimer

This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.

Oxford Archaeology East,

15 Trafalgar Way,
Bar Hill,
Cambridge,
CB23 8SQ

t: 01223 850500
f: 01223 850599
e: oeast@thehumanjourney.net
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net/oeast>

© Oxford Archaeology East 2014
Oxford Archaeology Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627

Table of Contents

Summary.....	5
1 Introduction.....	7
1.1 Location and scope of work.....	7
1.2 Geology and topography.....	7
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	7
1.5 Acknowledgements.....	8
2 Aims and Methodology.....	9
2.1 Aims.....	9
2.2 Methodology.....	9
3 Results.....	10
3.2 Finds Summary.....	11
4 Discussion and Conclusions.....	12
Appendix A. Finds Quantification Table.....	13
Appendix B. Bibliography.....	15
Appendix C. OASIS Report Form.....	16

List of Figures

- Fig. 1 Site location, showing fieldwalking area (red)
Fig. 2 Fieldwalking results

List of Plates

- Plate 1 View from centre of field, looking north
Plate 2 View to north-west of field, note set aside in background

Summary

Between 21st and 24th October, Oxford Archaeology East carried out a fieldwalking survey of approximately 26.8ha of land to the east of Six Hills Road, Ragdale (SK 685 207). The area surveyed encompassed a single field, recently ploughed and drilled with winter barley.

The survey has not shown any potential archaeological sites within the field. A small assemblage of Medieval pottery was found scattered across the field, as well as a moderate amount of post-medieval ceramic building material (CBM). These are likely to represent manuring scatter from the late medieval to post-medieval periods.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological fieldwalking survey was conducted at land east of Six Hills Road, Ragdale, Leicestershire (SK 685 207; Fig.1). The land is planned to be developed into a solar farm.
- 1.1.2 This archaeological survey was undertaken in accordance to a Written Scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by OA East and agreed upon by CgMs (Wiseman 2014).
- 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 *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2012).
- 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 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The British Geological Survey indicates that the solid geology of the site comprises mudstone of the Sunthorpe Mudstone Association, overlain by superficial diamicton (Oadby Member) (BGS: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>; accessed 27/10/14). The site lies at 140m OD.
- 1.2.2 The area is currently under arable cultivation. Records of ridge and furrow suggests that the site has been farmed since at least the Middle Ages, indicating that the ground is largely undisturbed.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 An archaeological background to the site was undertaken in a Desk-based Assessment (Wylie 2014) and has been referenced below.

Prehistoric

- 1.3.2 There are few prehistoric artefacts or sites recorded near the development site. A number of potential barrows have been identified 800m north-west of the site at Six Hills (MLE3455), and one 500m to the east, noted in aerial photographs (MLE3896).
- 1.3.3 An Early Bronze Age palstave and a Middle Bronze Age axehead have been found in the area, as well as two Iron Age coins.

Roman

- 1.3.4 The modern Six Hills Road, running east to west 400m north of the site, originates as a Roman road (MLE8764). Near this road, at Six Hills, a variety of Roman ceramics have been found, including tile and samian, and other pottery sherds (MLE7961). A Roman brooch was found 1km to the south of the site (MLE17336), and the Portable Antiquities Scheme reports a number of other Roman findspots in the area. Finds include a coin, finger ring, and brooch.

Saxon

- 1.3.5 There have been no Saxon finds in the area, although the village of Ragdale is mentioned in the Domesday Book.

Medieval

- 1.3.6 There is a deserted medieval village 1km to the south-west of the site (MLE3848). It is referred to as 'Willowes' in surviving documents. Fieldwalking has recovered pottery dating from the 9th to 15th centuries, and house-platforms were still visible in the 18th century.
- 1.3.7 The village of Ragdale developed on roughly its current site through the Middle Ages (MLE3888), 700m to the south-west of the development site. There are two areas of earthworks near the Ragdale Old Hall, thought to be medieval (MLE3837). The cross in the churchyard is a Scheduled Monument (NMR 1014510), and is also Grade II* listed – as is the Church of All Saints (NMR 1188553). Settlement activity in the village is unlikely to have spread as far as the survey site.

1.4 Post-medieval and Modern

- 1.4.1 Post-medieval activity is largely restricted to buildings in the village of Ragdale, which include the 16th century Ragdale Old Hall (MLE3836).

1.5 Acknowledgements

- 1.5.1 Will Bedford of CgMs Consulting commissioned the works on behalf of Lightsource Renewable Energy Ltd, who funded the work.
- 1.5.2 The fieldwork was directed by the author, assisted by David Brown and Malgorzata Kwiatkowska. The site was managed by Aileen Connor.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of this survey was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, and significance of any possible archaeological sites within the development area.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The survey area comprised a single field, measuring approximately 26.8ha in size.
- 2.2.2 The WSI (Wiseman 2014) detailed that fieldwalking be conducted following the “Essex Method”. The site was thus divided into units of one hectare, each numbered individually. The development area was further sub-divided into 20m transects aligned north-east to south-west with the field boundaries and numbered 1-5 from west to east within each hectare. A 2m-wide corridor was walked down each transect, resulting in a 10% sample of the field being walked.
- 2.2.3 All categories of artefactual material were hand collected from the surface of the plough soil in 20m sample intervals from a pre-established baseline. Labelling comprised six figures: the first two refer to hectare number followed by transect number (two digits) and finally distance along the transect in 20m intervals. For example, “110420” would represent hectare 11, transect 4, 20m down transect. Finds were then recorded with this number (Appendix A).
- 2.2.4 All artefacts have been cleaned, processed, classified by material and artefact class and spot-dated to broad period categories.
- 2.2.5 Site conditions were overcast, with occasional rain and strong winds. The field was ploughed, harrowed, and had recently been drilled with winter wheat (Plates 1 & 2). The crop had only just germinated and thus did not restrict visibility during the survey.

3 RESULTS

- 3.1.1 Upon commencement of the survey, Hectares 6 and 20 were found to be set-aside and had not been ploughed (see Plate 2), resulting in fieldwalking not being viable for these hectares.
- 3.1.2 The distribution of artefacts (Fig. 2) does not appear to show any concentration of finds that could indicate an archaeological site. The spread is quite random, and would be expected with manuring processes.
- 3.1.3 The finds assemblage recovered from the fieldwalking survey is summarised by hectare in Table 1 below. See Fig. 2 for a plot of finds by artefact amount within each hectare.

<i>Hectare</i>	<i>Flint</i>	<i>Horseshoe</i>	<i>Medieval Pottery</i>	<i>PM Pottery</i>	<i>CBM</i>	<i>Total</i>
2				1	7	8
3	1			1		2
4				1	6	7
5	1				2	3
9	1		1		6	8
10				1	1	2
11				2	5	7
12					8	8
13				2	5	7
15				1		1
16					1	1
17				2	3	5
18	1			1	3	5
19				1	1	2
21					1	1
22		1			1	2
23					3	3
24	1			2	3	6
25	2			1		3
26			1			1
27				1		1
28			1	2	10	13
29					2	2
30					3	3
31					1	1
34					1	1
35				1		1
36				1		1
Total	7	1	3	21	73	105

Table 1: Finds by Hectare

3.2 Finds Summary

Flint

- 3.2.1 A total of seven flints was recovered during the survey (6.6% of the assemblage). Of these, two artefacts are worked. They were made from fine grained flint of good quality and are both primary flakes in highly abraded condition. Unfortunately neither are diagnostic in form. This small lithic assemblage is indicative of background prehistoric activity within the area, and do not in themselves indicate the presence of a prehistoric site being within the field.

Pottery

With Carole Fletcher

- 3.2.2 A total of 24 sherds of pottery was recovered (22.8% of the assemblage). All sherds are highly abraded and weathered, with a very small average sherd weight (17.1g). Of these, three sherds have been spotdated to the late medieval to early post-medieval period. They are all in a sandy fabric and are likely to have been locally produced. Unfortunately, no diagnostic features are surviving, thus not allowing for a more accurate date to be made of the pottery. The other 21 sherds in the assemblage date to the post-medieval to modern periods. The assemblage is evidently from manuring processes, and not indicative of any site being located within the field.

Ceramic Building Material (CBM)

- 3.2.3 The CBM recovered forms 68.2% of the assemblage. They are variable in form and fabric, but all date to the post-medieval period and are highly abraded. The majority of the assemblage likely relates to manuring in the field during the post-medieval period and is not of any significance. Similarly, other fragments recovered are parts of land drain, likely damaged by deep ploughing or mole drains. All fragments are highly abraded and plough damaged, leaving no diagnostic features.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The fieldwalking survey has not identified any concentrations of artefacts that would indicate that a site of archaeological interest is located within the field. The pottery and ceramic building material is most likely from manuring undertaken in the field during the late medieval and post-medieval periods. From the distribution of artefacts plotted within the field (Fig. 2), it is probable that the artefacts were deposited in the south-western corner of the field, by the entrance next to the road, and have then been ploughed through the field. This would explain the relatively high amount of finds recovered from this area of the field compared to the other hectares.
- 4.1.2 It should be noted however, that it is difficult to locate archaeology that is artefactually sparse with fieldwalking. For example, prehistoric field systems and sites such as cemeteries are very difficult to locate with the use of geophysics and fieldwalking alone. Similarly, the fact that prehistoric and Saxon pottery is usually of such a friable quality it will often not survive in the ploughsoil to be found during a fieldwalking survey. Because of this, it is possible that archaeological remains may be located within the field that have not been identified by this survey.
- 4.1.3 Overall, this survey has not located any non-designated heritage assets within the proposed development area and it is unlikely this field has seen any pre-medieval activity in the past that is visible through this method of evaluation.

APPENDIX A. FINDS QUANTIFICATION TABLE

Grid Square	Artefact	Count	Spotdate	Weight (g)
020300	CBM	3		39
020320	CBM	1		57
020380	POT	1	1580-1700	26
020540	CBM	3		20
030280	CBM	1		7
030460	FLINT	1		8
040180	CBM	2		53
040240	CBM	1		93
040320	CBM	3		67
040500	POT	1	1800-1900	4
050180	POT	1	1600-1900	5
050380	CBM	1		397
050440	CBM	1		2
090200	CBM, FLINT	2, 1		21, 3
090380	POT	1	NCD – late med?	2
090400	CBM	2		63
090560	CBM	2		33
100360	POT	1	1780-1900	11
100520	CBM	1		43
110120	CBM	2		3
110200	POT	1	1700-1900	6
110340	POT	1	1580-1700	16
110380	CBM	1		72
110460	CBM	2		38
120100	CBM	1		104
120420	CBM	1		71
120440	CBM	4		50
120460	CBM	2		267
130100	POT, CBM	1, 1	1580-1700	24, 8
130140	CBM	2		113
130220	CBM	1		17
130240	POT, CBM	1, 1	Plant pot	4, 3
150480	POT	1	1780-1900	4
160180	CBM	1		6
170200	POT	1	1580-1700	22
170400	CBM	1		28
170540	POT	1	1580-1700	78
170560	CBM	2		46
180120	CBM, FLINT	2, 1		15, 2
180300	POT	1	1600-1900	8
180400	CBM	1		22
190120	POT	1	1400-1750	14
190240	POT	1	1580-1700	6
210200	CBM	1		47
220140	HORSESHOE	1	Post-Med.	100
220580	CBM	1		41
230520	CBM	3		310
240100	CBM	1		14

Grid Square	Artefact	Count	Spotdate	Weight (g)
240120	CMB, FLINT	1, 1	1400-1750	36, 6
240440	CBM	1		40
240460	CBM	1	1580-1700	53
240540	POT	1		4
250200	FLINT	1		1
250280	FLINT	1		4
250380	POT	1		6
260540	POT	1	1200-1500	5
270160	POT	1		4
280100	POT	2	NCD-late med?	17
280120	CBM	5		75
280140	CBM	2		69
280280	CBM	3		18
280580	POT	1		30
290500	POT	2	1400-1750	44
300100	CBM	1		3
300140	CBM	1		43
300240	CBM	1		44
310180	CBM	1		7
340200	CBM	1		1
350460	POT	1		6
360540	POT	1	1200-1500	63

APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- | | | |
|-------------|------|---|
| Wiseman, R. | 2014 | <i>Written Scheme of investigation: Archaeological Fieldwalking.</i> Oxford Archaeology East |
| Wylie, J. | 2014 | <i>Six Hills Road Solar Development: Cultural Heritage Desk Based Assessment.</i> Hyder Consulting. |

APPENDIX C. OASIS REPORT FORM

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-193341		
Project Name	Land at Six Hills Road, Ragdale, Leicestershire		
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	21-10-2014	Finish 24-10-2014
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	Unknown

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	XLESHR14	Planning App. No.	
HER No.	X.A137.2014	Related HER/OASIS No.	

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5
Development Type	Other

Please select all techniques used:

<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/> Grab-Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-Core	<input type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
<input type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> 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
	Select period...	Pottery	Medieval 1066 to 1540
	Select period...	CBM	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901
	Select period...	Flint	Uncertain

Project Location

County	Leicestershire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	Melton Mowbray	Six Hills Road, Ragdale Leicestershire
Parish	Ragdale	
HER	Leicestershire	
Study Area	26ha	National Grid Reference SK 658 207

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	
Project Design Originator	Rob Wiseman
Project Manager	Aileen Connor
Supervisor	Pat Moan

Project Archives

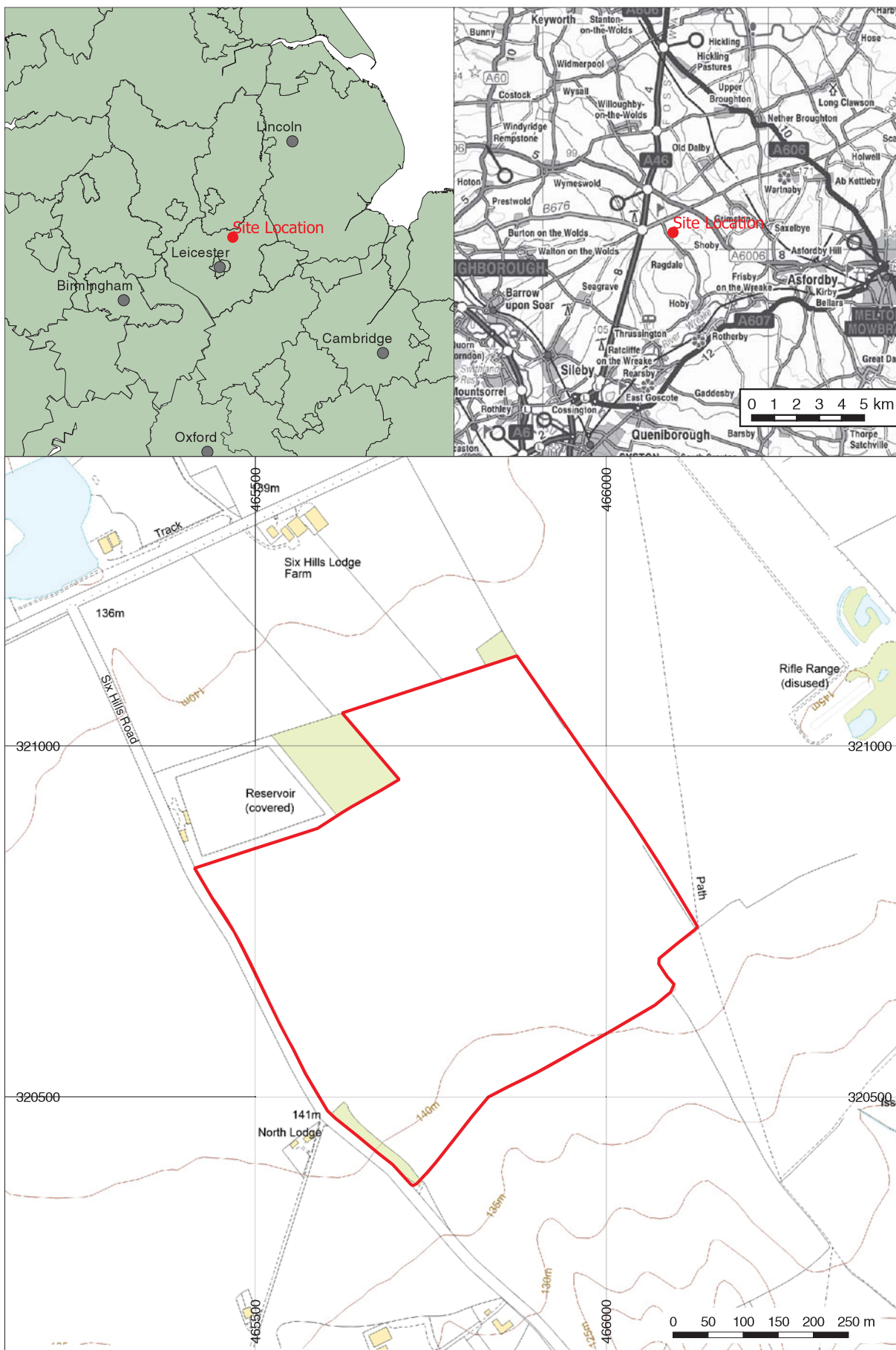
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Leicestershire Museum Service	OA East	Leicestershire Museum Service
X.A137.2014	XLESHR14	X.A137.2014

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stratigraphic		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Stone/Lithic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media	Paper Media
<input type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/> Map
<input type="checkbox"/> Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Matrices
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text	<input type="checkbox"/> Microfilm
<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/> Misc.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2013. All rights reserved.

Figure 1: Site location showing fieldwalking area (red)

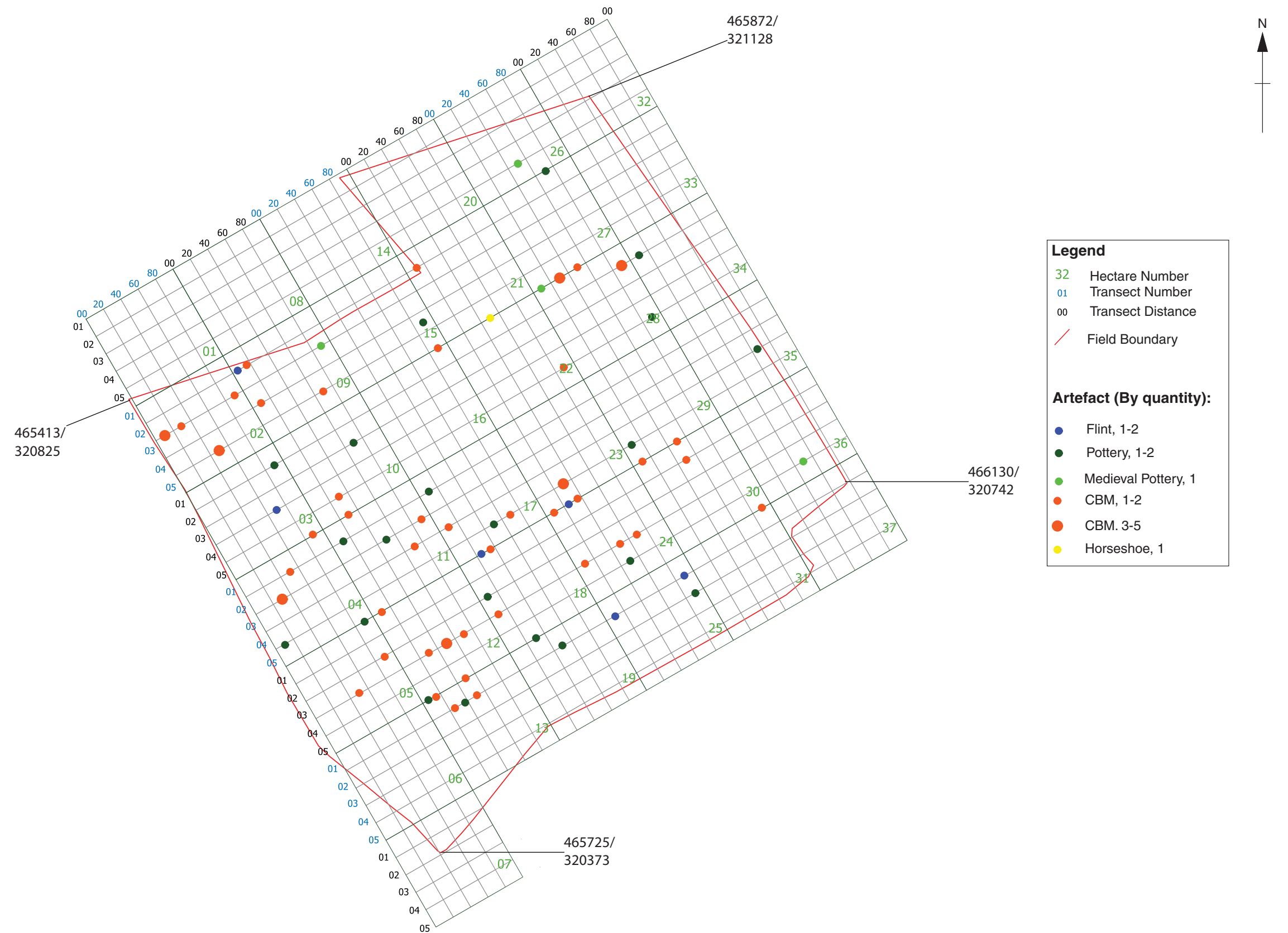


Figure 2: Fieldwalking results



Plate 1: View from centre of field, looking north



Plate 2: View to north-west of field, note set aside in background



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarchaeology.com
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



Director: Gill Hey, BA PhD FSA MIFA
*Oxford Archaeology Ltd is a
Private Limited Company, N^o: 1618597
and a Registered Charity, N^o: 285627*