



cambridgeshire
archaeology

ABSTRACT

A desk-based study of land in Sutton parish (centred NGR TL095/995) has been commissioned by The Commission for the New Towns. The study area (82 hectares/203 acres) contains six (possibly seven) recorded sites - a ring-ditch, a linear ditch and pit alignment, the Ermone St Roman road, and Medieval ridge and furrow. A single post-hole is undated, and another cropmark recorded may refer to two enclosures plotted in the SMR. The surrounding landscape is densely packed with Prehistoric and Roman sites. The potential of the study area to contain previously unknown sites is considered very high, and local topography enhances the potential. Recommendations for a further phase of field evaluation prior to detailed planning application are made.

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INTRODUCTION

Cambridgeshire Archaeology, the contractual fieldwork section of the Archaeology Office of Cambridgeshire County Council, have been commissioned to undertake a desk-based report on the known and potential archaeology of land in Sutton parish, near Peterborough, on behalf of the Commission for the New Towns.

The study area covers some 203 acres (82 hectares) of land on the north side of the A47 trunk road, west of Upton Lodge. The land is currently under "set-aside" and is the subject of proposals to create a golf course with clubhouse, a petrol station and a hotel. The study is intended to assess the known and potential archaeology of the area, in order to allow informed decisions to be made regarding the preservation or investigation of archaeological remains which would be affected by the proposed development.

The study is a desk-based exercise, relying upon information contained in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) of Cambridgeshire County Council and through contacts with other professional archaeologists working in the area. A single cursory site visit has been made (27/2/92).

Sites and Monuments Records are gazetteers of known sites, and neither the SMR nor comments made below regarding the potential for other sites, should be construed as definitive. Fieldwork is necessary before any real confidence is possible and will therefore form an essential part of the planning and development process.

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The site is situated on the north side of the Nene valley on a south facing hill slope. The land rises to a maximum height of 40m OD at the northern boundary sloping down to 15m OD at the southern boundary near the A47 (see Figure 1). The local topography may be archaeologically significant. The fields along the A47 are very gently sloped, with a marked, steeper slope where the east-west field boundary occurs. This steeper slope will have resulted in colluvium accumulating in the middle of the lower fields, possibly obscuring (and protecting) archaeological remains. Similarly, the fields north of the east-west field boundary form a broad flat plateau, again rising sharply to the hill-top where the Top Field Spinney is located. Colluvium is again to be expected along the base of this slope.

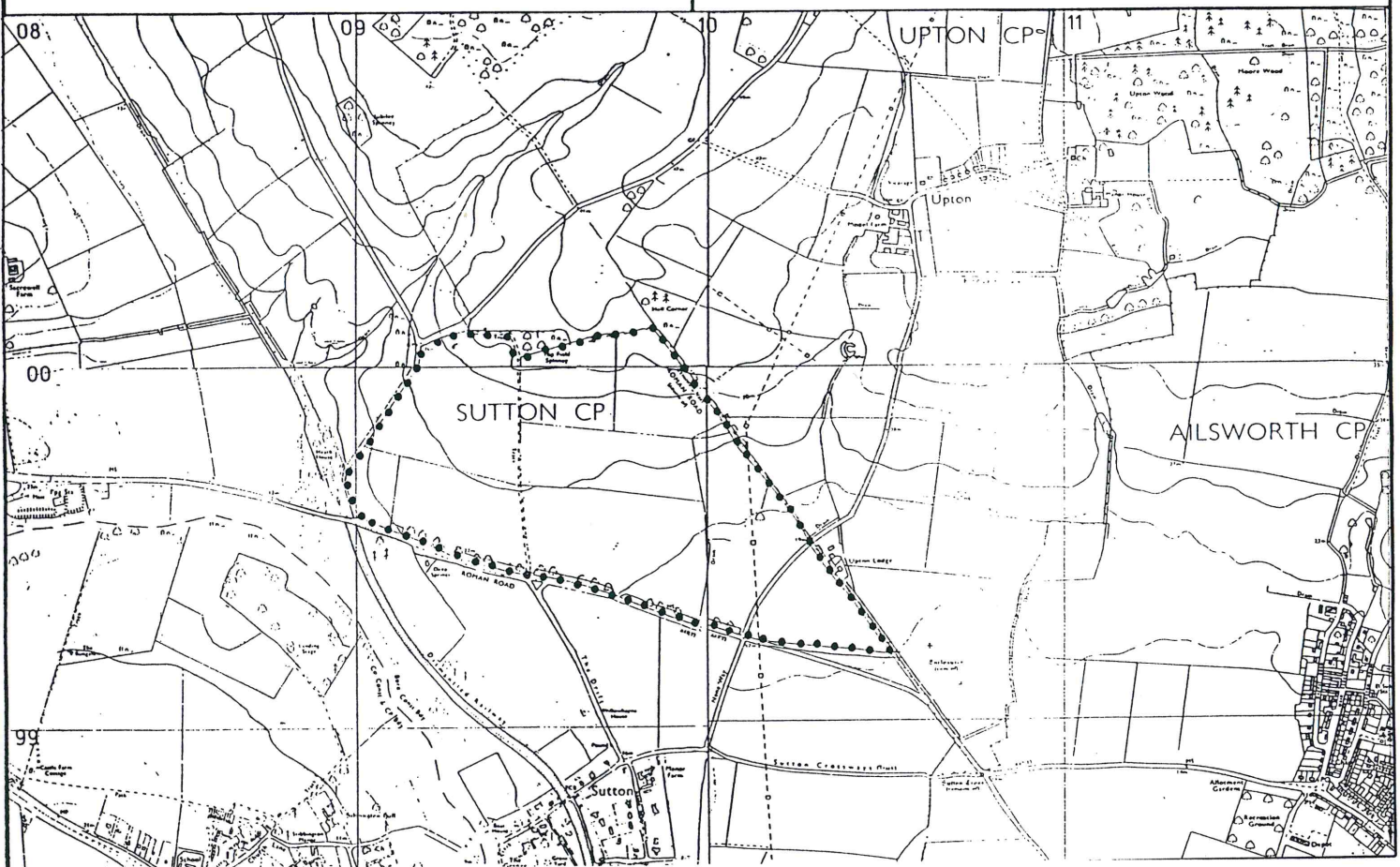
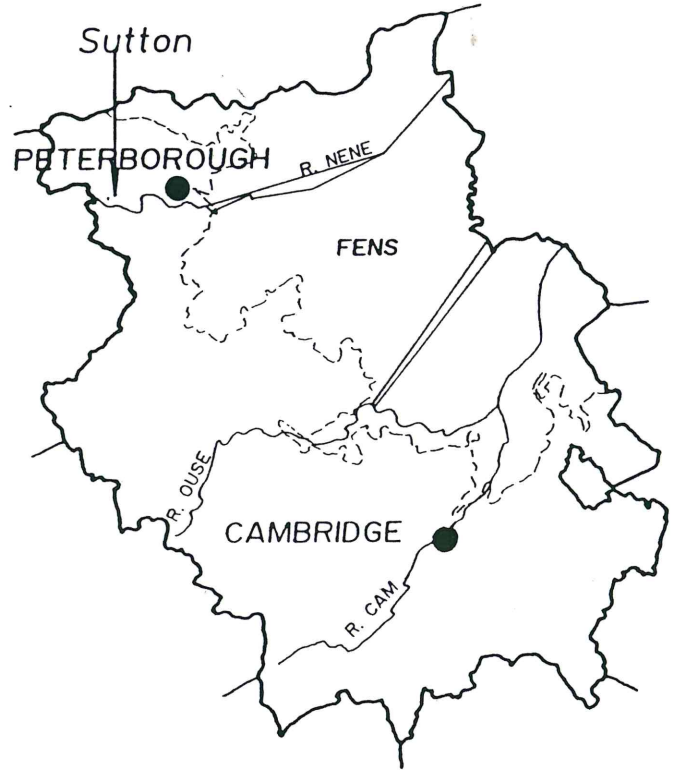
The site is partially capped by cornbrash limestone which overlies Blisworth clay and Blisworth limestone, Upper Estuarine Series clays and Lincolnshire limestone (BGS Map 157). On the lower slopes, the UES clays and Lincolnshire limestone is overlain by river terrace gravels. There is a head deposit on the eastern boundary near Upton Lodge.

The soil matrix generally comprises brown, sandy silty clay with pea gravel which lies over the site 0.25 - 0.30m thick, covering the archaeological "natural". A geotechnical report by Soils Engineering Ltd (on behalf of Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick Consulting Engineers to the Commission for the New Towns), provided to Cambridgeshire Archaeology, contains 30 soil profiles across the area. These are invaluable for the information about soils and underlying geology and land topography.

A



B



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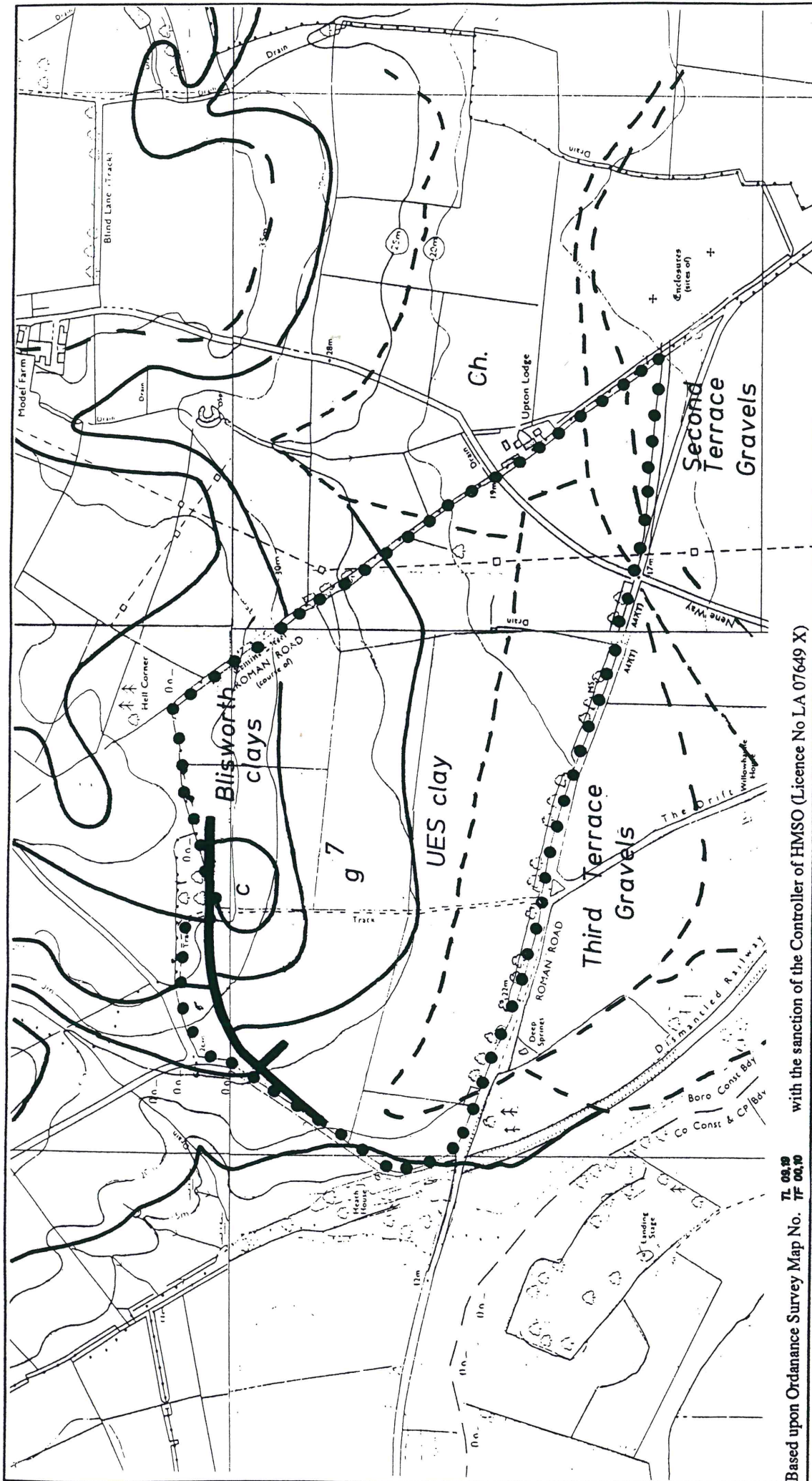
LAND NEAR SUTTON LOCATION

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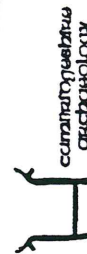
PREPARED BY: DATE:

SCALE: 1: 20,000

PLAN NO: FIG. 1



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Land near Sutton Geology and Topography

KEY

- c cornbrash
- g7 Blisworth limestone
- UES Upper Estuarine Series
- Ch head

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Scale

1. 10,000

Date

FIG. 2 2.92

POLICY BACKGROUND

The historical and archaeological landscape can be viewed as a unique and non-renewable resource. Open land, which has in modern times become marginal and peripheral to modern settlements and farming, can however contain a wealth of historic and archaeological sites. Above ground earthworks, ancient boundaries and industrial workings relating to early farming and settlements can be found on marginal land. Even on land where there is no evidence above ground for archaeological or historical monuments, soilmarks and cropmarks seen on aerial photographs can reveal ancient landscapes of settlements and field systems beneath the ploughsoil. It is therefore imperative that an area of development be seen not just as an area of potential archaeological sites, but as part of a wider landscape of archaeological significance.

This archaeological landscape, because historical records and surface evidence may not exist, is therefore increasingly vulnerable to various types of damage and destruction. One major contributor to the loss of historic and archaeological landscapes is major changes in land-use.

As a result of increasing problems resulting from social and economic needs of modern society and preservation of the historic landscape, archaeological considerations have assumed a prominent role in impact and environmental assessment of planning applications since the late 1980's. This has resulted in the Department of the Environment's Planning and Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16: 1991) in which clear guidelines are given for the consideration of archaeology within the planning process, and as a planning constraint. The substance of PPG 16 has been anticipated and highlighted in Cambridgeshire County Council's Structure Plan 1989, and encompassed in the Peterborough District Local Plan (Draft Proposals 1991), thus reflecting the importance attached to the archaeology of the County.

The County Structure Plan states that Local Planning Authorities will exercise their powers of development control to preserve scheduled monuments and other important archaeological sites in the County (P14/12). Provision under Policy P14/13 can allow planning authorities to include conditions requiring the provision of adequate opportunities for excavation and recording. Where there is no overriding case for preservation of an archaeological site, opportunities will be sought, prior to the granting of planning permission, for excavating and recording the site. Furthermore, developers will be advised of the need to report any archaeological discoveries during their work to the County Council, and may be expected to contribute to the cost of essential archaeological work required as a result of their proposals (14.56).

Peterborough Local Plan Section 9.69 states that the overriding objective is that threatened archaeological sites are preserved in situ, and planning authorities will normally require all planning applications to develop on sites of recognised or suspected archaeological importance to be accompanied by an archaeological evaluation (BE 62). As Section 9.74 points out however, "the commissioning of an archaeological evaluation.....should not be construed as a negative process.....it may show that there is no reason to withhold planning consent." Should the evaluation establish the need for further investigations Section BE64 may be invoked where a comprehensive appraisal is required, showing details of all features of archaeological interest, together with proposals for the preservation by excavation and recording of all features and excavated material.

Since the early 1990's, English Heritage (Golf Course Proposals in Historic Landscapes 1991) and Local Government planners have been concerned with large-scale changes in land-use as a result of economic, social, and industrial developments. Golf courses have attracted close attention as they affect large areas of former open and sometimes marginal land. Modern golf courses now form their own distinct

landscapes, transforming one type of landscape to another. The actual landscaping work of levelling earthworks for greens, creating bunkers and watercourses, creating banks and dumps of material, and soil stripping over cropmark features, can obliterate or cause irreversible damage to archaeological features, both above and below ground. Modern services and building foundations, as well as the infill of other amenities can also affect the underlying archaeology.

The Peterborough Local Plan Section 9.72 states that large-scale developments in the landscape, such as golf courses, will all require an archaeological evaluation.

HISTORICAL SURVEY

The incorporation of the Soke of Peterborough into the counties of Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire, and on a more local basis Peterborough New Town, has meant that historical material is archived in the Record Offices at Huntingdon and Northampton, and not kept in the County Record Office in Cambridge.

The study area lies in the south east of the modern parish of Sutton, which was part of the parish of Castor prior to 1851 when the church was a chapel to that of Castor. There are no early records mentioning the village or surrounding land of Sutton. The abbey manor of Sutton is not mentioned in the Domesday Book nor in the returns of the Northamptonshire Survey of the 12th century. Royal grants of Richard I and Henry III show that by this time Sutton was indeed the chapelry of Castor, and that the village including a mill, was well established. During the 12th century the manor was assigned to the almoner of Peterborough with whom it remained until the Dissolution of the monastery when it was passed to the Dean and Chapter of Peterborough.

Ermine Street, running along the east side of the study area, constitutes the parish boundary with Ailsworth parish and this parish crosses the Roman road to run along the northern edge of Top Field Spinney at the northern edge of the study area. A track, probably a continuation of "The Drift", which may be an ancient track, crosses the A47 Roman road and runs north-south through the study area and Top Field Spinney onto the road running north-east towards Ermine Street.

The parish was not enclosed until 1903, which is considered very late, although informal enclosure had taken place in 1880. Contemporary records suggest that only two people were working on the land in the nineteenth century up to enclosure. The enclosure Map of 1903 is based on the O.S. Second Edition at a scale of 25" to the mile.

There are several other maps held at the Northamptonshire Record Office and it is recommended that these be consulted fully prior to any further archaeological work being done. In particular, the tythe maps and awards, the map of lands held by the earl Fitzwilliam of 1853 (Map 1016) should be consulted.

GAZETTEER OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES ON SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

The information below is summarised from the Sites and Monuments Record, maintained by the Archaeology Section of Cambridgeshire County Council, Shire Hall. The sites listed below are shown on Figures 3-5.

STUDY AREA

A total of ten test pits were dug by the Nene Valley Research Committee, four of which lie in or adjacent to the study area. These include:

SMR No.		Description
8465	TL 1023/9918	Excavation of ten trial pits during the construction of the Castor/Ailsworth by-pass in 1984.
8468	TL 1051/9918	
8472	TL 1060/9907	
8474	TL 1060/9900	
8473	TL 1143/9942	
8464	TL 1135/9939	

PREHISTORIC

Note: Paleolithic material may occur in the Second and Third Terrace River gravels, underlying the fields along the A47 southern boundary of the area. Very deep disturbances (ie. creation of a lake) could affect these remains.

SMR No.	Grid Ref.	Period	Description
227	TL 0911/9961	Bronze Age (BA)	Cropmark ring ditch approx. 60 feet in diameter, on gravel. Cropmark linear ditch.
10044	TL 093/999	Prehistoric	Cropmark field system and pit alignment.

ROMAN

10250	TL 1011/0985 - 0001/0985	Roman	Ermine Street, Roman road
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MEDIEVAL

228	TL 096/996	Medieval	Cropmark ridge and furrow.
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UNDATED

230	TL 0926/9935	Undated	Soilmark on gravels. Contractors slip trench produced undated post hole.
5665	TL 0991/9965	Undated	Cropmark; part of north and west sides of a rectangular enclosure.

SITES OUTSIDE STUDY AREA

PREHISTORIC

9121	TL 1047/9944	Prehistoric/ Iron Age	Cropmark ring ditch, 15m in diameter.
9122	TL 093/999	Prehist.	Cropmark enclosure with rounded ends and narrow straight sides, ends greater in diameter than width of centre. Traces of ditches running to the west and north-west with no apparent pattern.
9113	TL1044/9939	Prehist. & Roman	Cropmark ditches, seen also in field to the north
229	TL 099/990	Neolithic	Flint
2138	TF 108/007	Neo.	Settlement
94 SAM 97	TF 091/008 Little Wood Piece	BA.	Cropmark enclosure, ring ditch and linear feature associated with SAM 97.
97	TF095/008	IA	Cropmark trapezoidal enclosure plus superimposed pit row running approx. east-west and probably linking field remains at TF 090/008 (Record No. 94).
1968	TF 081/009	Neo/BA	Axe
1971	TF 082/008	Neo/BA	Flint
1965	TF 081/007	Neo	Axe
1972	TF 084/004	Neo.	Flint knife
1979	TF 083/003	Neo/BA	Flint
1970	TF 086/002	Neo.	Flint
176	TF 0835/9985	BA	Cist burial
190 SAM 201	TL 087/998 Toll Bar Field, Sacrewell Farm	Neo/BA/	Finds scatter associated with SAM 201. Several worked flints found along with later Roman material.
178	TL 0986/9904	BA	Ring ditch
1584	TL 103/985	BA	Flints
1590	TL 106/995	IA	Iron Age pottery scatter, some Roman pottery associated.
1591	TL 109/997	Prehist.	Prehistoric pottery and flint scatter, associated with Anglo-Saxon and Roman pottery, and slag.
2139	TF 1030/0103	IA ?	Glass bead.

8359	TL 0995/9924	BA	Cropmark ring ditches, two concentric circles diameters 100ft by 80ft. Possible traces of a ring of pits within the inner circle. SE end of the pit alignment appears to end at or near the ring ditches to the south-west.
8368	TL 0995/9924	?	Cropmark pit alignment extending from the SE of the modern A 47 road for 250 yards. It is almost straight for 170 yards then turns slightly to the NW and curves SSE to end near the SW side of a double ring ditch.
9086	TL 102/986	BA	Cropmark ring ditches and enclosure. One ring ditch has diameter 120 ft, double ring ditch comprising to concentric circles of diameters 100 ft, and 120 ft. The inner ditch seems to be interrupted by a number of causeways. Also two conjoined enclosures, rectangular and ditched, the larger is 75 ft by 40 ft, the smaller 30 by 60 ft. No entrances or internal features are visible. Also ring ditches with internal features and ridge and fullow imposed on semicircular feature.
9087	TL 106/985	BA	Cropmark ring ditches. Three ring ditches with diameter of 180ft, 100ft and irregular ring ditch 90 ft in diameter. Also completion of ring ditch at TL 1072/9855 and ring ditch at TL 1064/9864.
9166	TL1065/9850	BA	Bronze Age flints, also 4 ring ditches on aerial photographs
9167	TL 1062/9865 - 1074/9882	Prehist/Ro.	Cropmark track running N - S towards the west of the enclosure.
1986	TL 0950/9915	BA	Ring ditch
1987	TL 0940/9905	BA	Ring ditch

ROMAN

95 and 96	TF 093/005 (091/008?)	Ro	Cropmark site of roman buildings and pottery examined by Artis in 1828. OS in 1969 speculated that this refers to the Sutton Heath Roman site.
217	TL 094/985	Ro	Settlement, stone building tiles and pottery. Geology alluvium.
267	TL 107/992	Ro	Cropmark Iron Age/Roman fort and enclosure. Small rectangular fort 250 ft by 400 ft: also small enclosure 300 by 350 ft. Site is immediately adjacent to Ermine Street.
1590	TL106/995	Ro	Finds scatter. Pottery and finds, also prehistoric material.
1591	TL 109/997	Ro	Roman finds scatter, also prehistoric and Anglo-Saxon material associated.

2133 and 2134	TF 100/100	Ro	Surface finds. Coins, one a Hadrian dupondius, and slag
4389 SAM 97	TF 089-092/006-012	Ro	Cropmarks and finds scatter. Stone walls still preserved despite recent ploughing, from which pottery came. Field system lies to the north-east. Depression of possible old quarry in S corner of the site.
7668	TF 1091/0000	Ro	Stray find and excavation. Stone coffin hit by panbuster and subsequently excavated. Small rectangular coffin with slightly coped lid and lead lining decorated with scallop shells and twisted cord. Contained a child, about 9 years old. Narrow necked flagon late C3 - 4 associated with burial, lying broken partly inside and outside coffin. Burial already disturbed by finder. Pathology suggests dietary deficiency or temporary childhood disease.
9088 SAM 138	TL 106/992	Ro	Cropmark. Narrow ditch enclosing almost square area of 2 acres with rounded corners, west side bowing slightly. Narrow entrances in the north side near the NW corner and in the east side near the NE corner.
9099	TL112/984	RO	Roman buildings and kilns 600m SW of Ailsworth
9103	TL 1101/9941	Ro?	Cropmark rectangular enclosure and linear ditches.
9104	TL 113/995	Ro	Cropmarks of possible Romano-British enclosures comprising a dense unpatterned assemblage of features, possibly a settlement site, an almost square enclosure, over an acre in size and with convex sides and no internal features. A sub-rectangular enclosure covering just under a quarter of an acre with a large gap in the NW corner. No interior features.
9113	TL 1044/9939	Ro	Cropmark fragments of ditches, also in the field to the north.
9116	TL132/995	RO	Settlement S of Roman road outside Scheduled area
1901 SAM 127 (cf SAM's 98 & 159)	TL11-121/97-969	RO	Roman town of Durobrivae. See discussion below.

MEDIEVAL

576 SAM 220	TF 108/005	Med	Shrunken Medieval village earthworks of Upton. Furlongs poorly defined. The remains of shrunken village consist of hollow way running W - E which meets the remains of others running N - S. House platforms well preserved and noted as running into neighbouring orchards.
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1586	TL 100/985	Med	Soilmarks of ridge and furrow to the south and east of the village of Sutton.
1588	TL 101/999	Med	Finds scatter of slag.
1589	TL 102/992	Med	Earthworks. Ridge and furrow to the north of Upton Lodge.
1591	TL 109/997	A/S	Finds scatter of Anglo-Saxon pottery associated with Prehistoric and Roman artifacts.
2136	TF 106/000	A/S	Finds scatter. A small Anglo-Saxon settlement, and pottery scatter, covering several acres.
2137	TF108/000	Med	Finds scatter of slag.
4389 SAM 97	TF 085-092/006-012	Med	Pottery also associated with Roman settlement.
4575	TF 107/006	Med	Soilmark. Ridge and furrow.

UNDATED

5665	TL 0991/9965	?	Cropmark of rectangular enclosure.
9102	TL 1080/9965	?	Cropmark enclosure system and ditches.
10073	TL111/984	?	Cropmark of an enclosure

DISCUSSION OF THE KNOWN ARCHAEOLOGY

The geotechnical test pits numbers, 7 and 9, both along the (A47) southern boundary, encountered "made ground" containing ash at depths of 1.2 metres from ground surface. This is highly suggestive of archaeological features (not necessarily ancient) encountered by chance.

The two plateaux mentioned above are also likely places for settlements, especially as the geological interface may create a "spring-line" which would provide a fresh water supply.

Prehistoric (Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age)

There are four SMR records within the study area relating to the prehistoric period. These include the ring ditch (00227) and probably the pit alignment (10044), the un-numbered cropmark at TL 101/997 and the cropmark enclosure (5665, the latter two could be the same site). When considered against the wider landscape of known sites, there is every possibility that new sites may be found. The known enclosures may represent farming settlements, with contemporary field systems also likely to be present. The alluvium recorded in the south-east corner of the study area (in the geotechnical report) may overlie, and thus obscure, earlier prehistoric remains. Earlier prehistoric settlement should focus on lighter soils, with the higher lands cleared and settled in later prehistory.

Roman

No Roman sites are recorded from within the study area. The north-eastern site boundary is however, formed by the Roman road, Ermine Street. The southern boundary, the modern A47, is similarly believed to be based upon a Roman road. The surrounding landscape reveals a very dense pattern of Roman sites in what was the hinterland for the regionally important Roman town of Durobrivae. The northern industrial suburbs of Durobrivae at Normangate Field are only one kilometre south-east of the study area along Ermine Street.

Durobrivae is a walled Roman town best known from aerial photographs. It encloses 17 hectares in extent and the extramural suburbs sprawl over a further 60 hectares. By the fourth century it had probably been promoted to regional capital status (*civitas*) and could have served as an administrative headquarters for the Fenland. The hinterland's economy was based on pottery manufacture which centred on the Normangate Field suburb, with iron extraction and smelting focused on the hills just north of the study area.

Less than two kilometres east-south-east of the study area is the Roman settlement at Castor. The modern village overlies a massive, elaborate stone building, surrounded by many others. This clearly served as the residence for a government official, thus emphasizing the importance of the area.

Considering the density of Roman sites in the vicinity, it is thought likely that use of the study area was made during the Roman period, and therefore field systems, and settlements are likely to be discovered. These may focus along the course of the two Roman roads.

Medieval Period

The Medieval archaeology of the study area and surrounding landscape have been discussed in greater detail in the Historical section above. In summary, the study area includes one SMR record of ridge and furrow (SMR 228), and further ridge and furrow earthworks survive on the east side of Ermine Street (SMR 1589). The study area would appear to have been principally used for agricultural purposes during the Medieval and post-Medieval periods, with settlements occurring at Upton (***scheduled ancient monument, no. 220***), Ailsworth/Castor, Sutton and Wansford. Settlement remains of these periods are considered less likely to occur within the study area than remains of the prehistoric and Roman periods.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL OF THE STUDY AREA

Considering the density of sites in the surrounding landscape, the study area has revealed surprisingly few sites. This is probably deceptive. The area would appear never to have been systematically fieldwalked - hence the absence of archaeological artefacts. Moreover, it is common for areas this size to contain sites which escape detection from the air due to crop cover uncondusive to crop-marks (indeed, the clay-based soils of the area are generally uncondusive). The archaeological potential of the area is thus considerably greater than first impressions would suggest. The potential is further enhanced by the topographic situation - the gentle south facing slope, adjacent to the Nene valley, would have been a favoured settlement locale.

Alluvial deposits up to 1.8 metres thick are recorded in the south-eastern corner of the study area. At present no evidence is available to date the deposition of this alluvium, but it is possible (or likely) that it incorporates or seals/overlies archaeological horizons. These archaeological remains will evade detection from the air and by

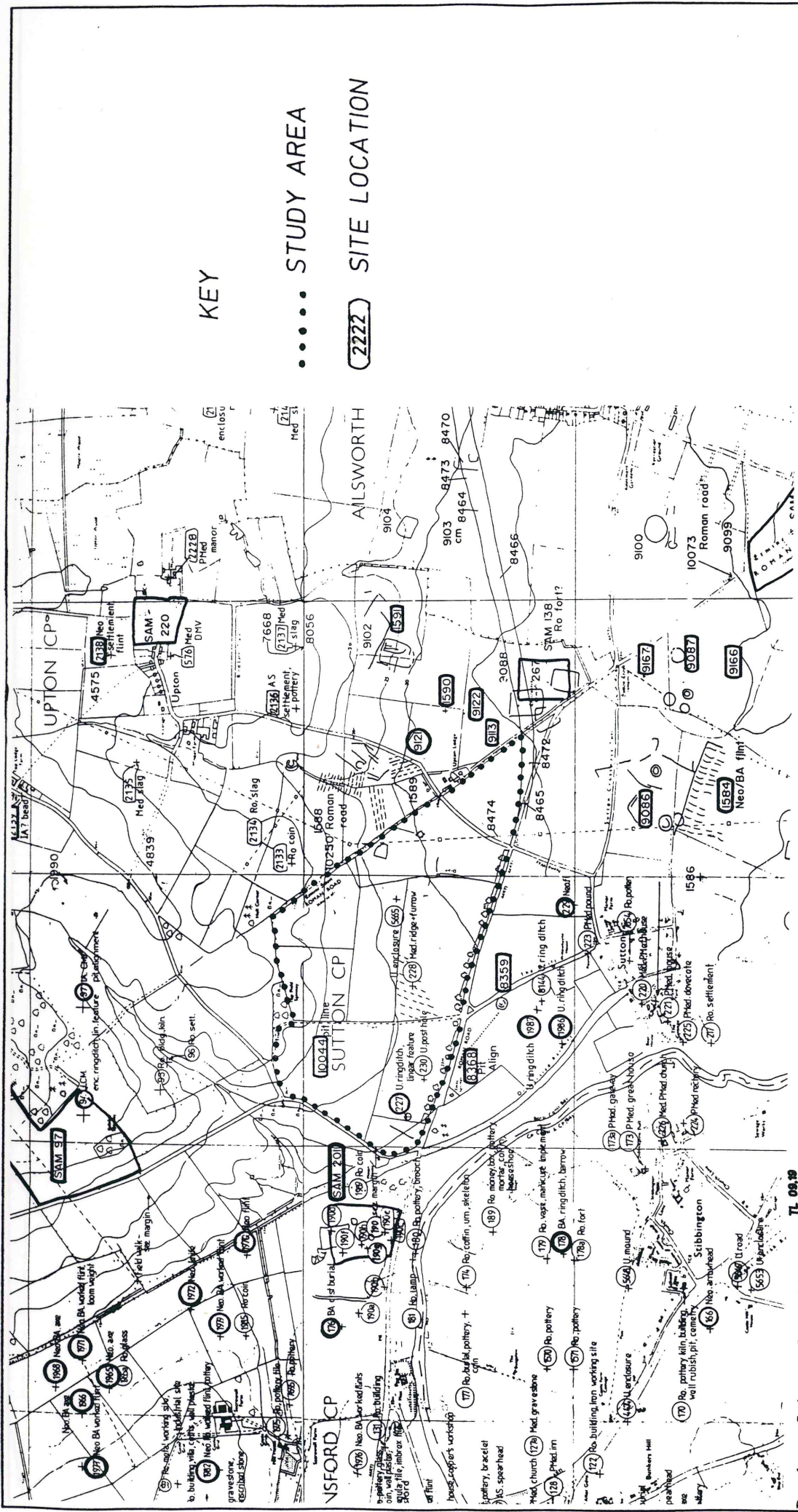


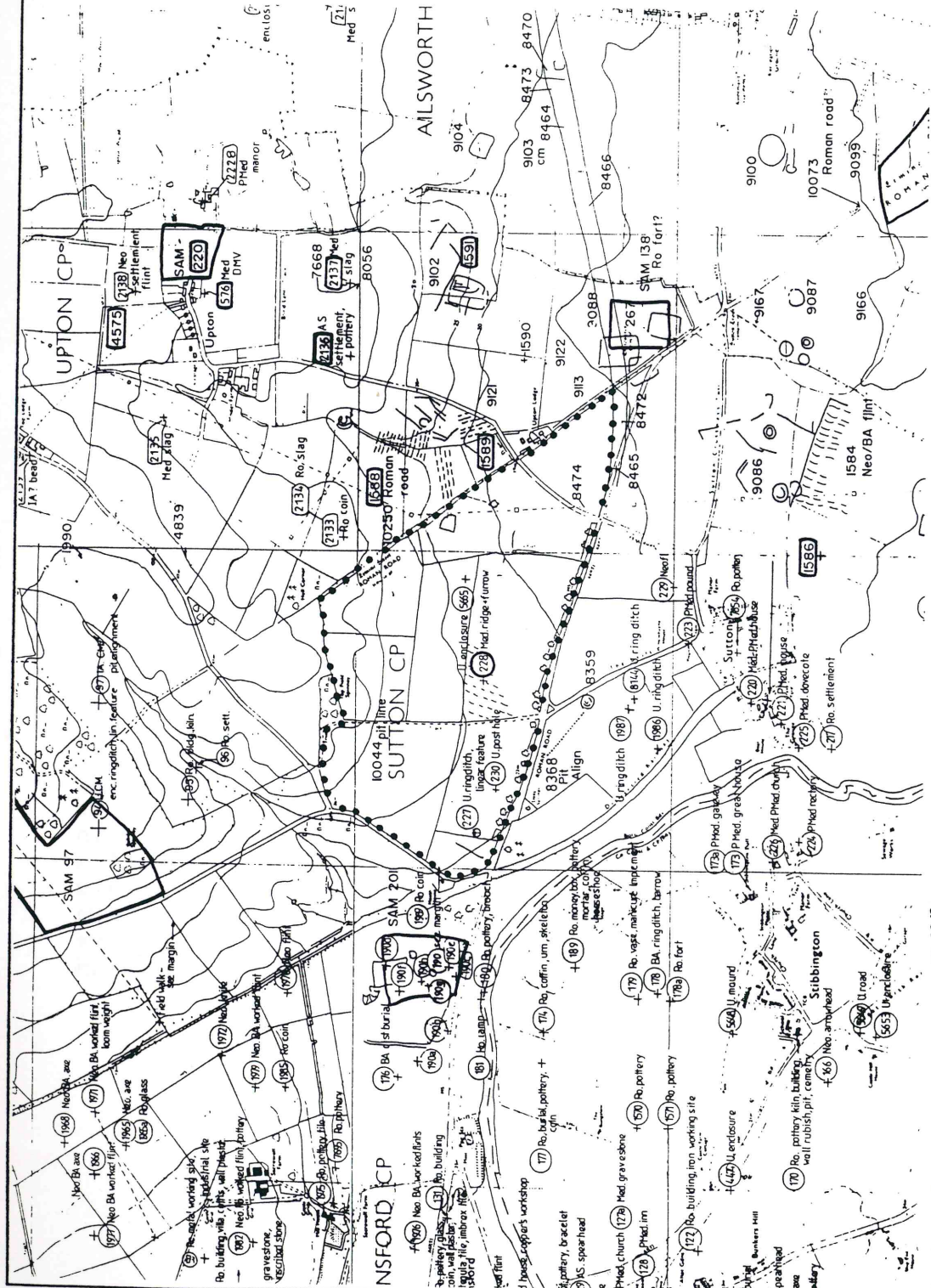
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FIG. 3
LAND NEAR SUTTON
PREHISTORIC SITES

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FIG. 5
LAND NEAR SUTTON
MEDIEVAL SITES

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ordinary field survey means, and will therefore be relatively more difficult to locate. These remains will however be very valuable as the alluvium will have protected the sites from subsequent disturbance. If such sites exist, they should preserve valuable evidence and therefore merit more intensive excavation and recording.

Previous archaeological work in the area, in advance of the A605 roadworks, suggests that the predominately clay-based soils are unresponsive to aerial photography and fieldsurvey, but that considerable numbers of previously unknown sites are present (Dr CAI French, pers comm).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The presence of at least five sites (and possibly a sixth cropmark site) within the study area, and the great density of sites in the surrounding landscape, indicates that an archaeological field assessment will be necessary to allow a fully informed decision about the archaeological heritage to be made.

An archaeological assessment programme must be agreed with the County Archaeologist, but we would suggest the following elements:

- 1) A more detailed check of historical and cartographic sources in Northampton County Record Office
- 2) A review and plotting of aerial photographic evidence
- 3) As the study area is set-aside land, a magnetic susceptibility survey, followed by a magnetometry or resistivity survey on areas of likely archaeological sites is recommended
- 4) Combination of test-pits and trial trenches to be excavated of:
 - a) known sites and sites located by the investigations recommended above,
 - b) excavation of up to 2% of the alluviated area to prospect for "hidden" sites.

The field assessment will highlight areas which should be preserved or excavated, and should provide sufficient information to allow a detailed and costed programme of excavation, analysis and publication to be agreed with the County Archaeologist, to be prepared for inclusion in detailed development proposals, probably as a Section 106 agreement.

CONCLUSIONS

The present desk-top study has revealed no archaeological remains of sufficient importance to render the proposed development inadmissible. There are however archaeological sites known from within the study area, and many sites located within a kilometre of the area. It is therefore concluded that the potential of the study area to have other, as yet unknown sites, is quite high. By initiating a consideration of the archaeology early in the planning process, it should be possible to conduct a field assessment (as above) and therefore redesign the golf course and associated service elements in order to avoid disturbance to archaeology worthy of preservation. Sites which do not merit preservation and cannot be avoided should receive further investigation, as appropriate, before construction begins.