

**Akeman Street Roman Road and Romano-British
Settlement at Landbeach, Car Dyke Farm**



Cambridgeshire
County Council

Akeman Street Roman Road and Romano-British Settlement at Landbeach, Car Dyke Farm

Stephen Macaulay BA MPhil AIFA

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Editor Tim Malim BA

Illustrators Jon Cane BA & Carol Fletcher HND BA
With Contributions by Caroline Gait BA PGCE MPhil,
Phil Copelstone BA Dip Ind Arch AIFA & Duncan Schlee BA MSc

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Cambridgeshire County Council
Fulbourn Community Centre
Haggis Gap, Fulbourn CB1 5HD

Tel. (01223) 881614



Report No 141 Akeman Street from the air

Photograph Alan Wyatt



Archaeological Field Unit

SUMMARY

Investigations at the Roman road of Akeman Street and the remnants of a Romano-British farmstead, enclosure ditches and droveways confirmed the presence of features previously identified from aerial photography. The Roman road had undergone extensive erosion due to modern farming practices, with little of the agger surviving today although the roadside ditches were still evident. Archaeological deposits revealed the presence of an earlier trackway the ditches of which had been backfilled and left for a period during which a soil developed above them before construction of Akeman Street occurred. A ring-ditch, representing a possible timber building, was enclosed by ditches which contained excellent ecofacts surviving in waterlogged fills and metalled trackways were found to run between parallel enclosures. Pottery dated the trackway and settlement to the 2nd-4th centuries AD, and therefore also indicates a date for construction of Akeman Street.

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1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological investigation at Car Dyke Farm, Landbeach (TL 475 661) was undertaken between the 16th and 27th of September 1996 by the Archaeological Field Unit (AFU) of Cambridgeshire County Council. The project was part of the continuing programme of management of the archaeological resource on the Cambridgeshire County Farms Estate. The excavation was jointly funded by the Cambridgeshire County Farms Estate, South Cambridgeshire District Council and the AFU.

The investigation was in an area of known archaeological importance. The Roman road of Akeman Street, which runs from Cambridge to Ely, is well documented (Margary 1967) and runs through the field. In addition the area around Landbeach, Waterbeach, Milton and generally to the north of Cambridge towards the Fen Edge is rich in Iron Age and Romano-British sites identified as cropmarks from aerial photography. At Car Dyke Farm cropmarks suggest the remains of agricultural enclosures, trackways and farmsteads, in addition to the Car Dyke canal which lies to the east running from Waterbeach towards Cottenham (*Fig 1*).

1.1 Aims of the Project

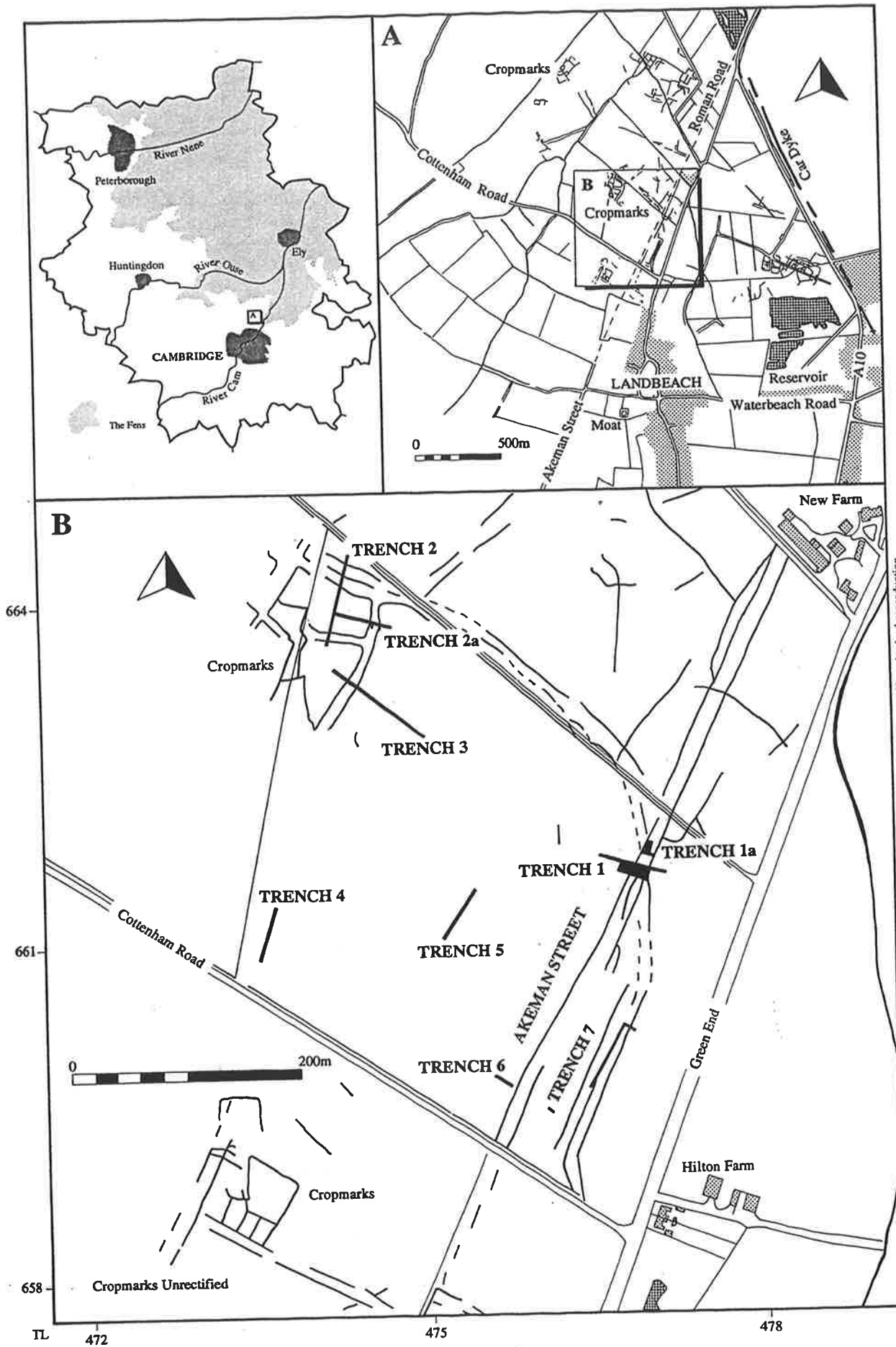
In 1989 the 46,000 acres of the Cambridgeshire County Farms Estate had an archaeological survey undertaken (Malim 1990) in which Car Dyke Farm was identified as a site of considerable archaeological potential, and if the circumstances arose an archaeological investigation would be warranted. Furthermore if the survival of archaeological remains was found to be of sufficiently high quality and if it could be demonstrated that continued ploughing was damaging and destroying these remains, then the site was to be removed from arable cultivation as part of the agreed Farms Management Plan. The change of tenant farmer in 1996 from Alan Wyatt to David Smart has facilitated this project.

The aims of the evaluation project were to;

- i) assess the extent of plough damage to the site.
- ii) date and determine the quality of surviving archaeological deposits.
- iii) assess the effect continued ploughing would have on the remaining archaeology.
- iv) determine the limits and extent of the archaeology within the field.

Additional questions arising were;

- v) attempt to date the construction and eventual disuse of Akeman Street and to examine the relationship between cropmark features and the Roman road.
- vi) take the opportunity to promote and present the archaeological remains to the local community.



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Figure 1 - Location Map of Car Dyke Farm, north of Landbeach with unrectified cropmarks

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The site at Car Dyke Farm lies on the very low lying ground north of Cambridge and west of the River Cam immediately north of the village of Landbeach, at an average of 4m above OD at National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 475 661. The geology is 2nd Terrace gravels (late Ipswichian/Devensian) overlying gault clay. There is a recognisable pattern of Romano-British settlement located on the well drained gravels along the Fen Edge, north of Cambridge.

3 BACKGROUND

Although there has been no archaeological investigation on the field prior to the 1996 excavation, the quality and nature of the remains has been known for sometime. Background archaeological information divides between the well documented Roman road called Akeman Street (Margary 1967, Philips 1970) and the little documented but extensive data of probable Romano-British cropmarks identified through aerial photography (Cambridgeshire SMR).

3.1 Akeman Street or Mere Way Roman road

Akeman Street is the name given to a Roman road, sections of which run from Cirencester through Verulamium (St. Albans), and then possible to Biggleswade, before connecting Ermine Street with Cambridge from where the road ran further northeast across the Fens to a possible destination of Denver thus meeting with the Fen Causeway.

In its western sections it has been seen as a major military road of possible Claudian date, or of the decades immediately succeeding this (Branigan 1987 p63). The stretch from Arrington to Cambridge and beyond has been investigated a number of times (Fox 1923 p165) and given a general Roman date based on its method of construction and engineering.

Akeman Street runs north eastwards from Cambridge Castle to the outskirts of the city following the modern streets; Stretton Avenue, Carlton Way and Mere Way. From that point, past King's Hedges it runs to Butt Lane, Impington and is known as the 'Mere Way'. Here it survives as a road/green lane. North of Butt Lane it becomes a farm track which runs north (west of Landbeach village) to Cock Fen Lane, beyond which it survives as a recognisable cropmark and the *agger* produces a visible raised camber (*Fig 1/Plate 1*). The road then crosses the Car Dyke Roman canal at Goose Hall Farm where the modern A10 follows its course towards Ely for 1.5 miles before disappearing at Chittering. The *agger* re-appears at Stretham as a faint swelling (on Middle Common). Finally the road re-appears about half a mile south of Ely where the modern road rejoins it and from there the road is thought to go on to Littleport (Margary 1967).

The most recent excavation of Akeman Street (or Mere Way) was carried out at Milton, close to Mereway Farm, to the south of Butt Lane, by the AFU (Ozanne 1991). A machine-excavated section was opened and recorded during an archaeological survey prior to the construction of a Water Main by the Cambridge Water Company. This investigation discovered that the line of the green lane was slightly off course to the west of the original Roman road. The flanking ditches of the Roman road were 16m apart between centres, 1.2-1.4m wide and 0.6-0.7m deep. The *agger* survived to a height of 0.45m and was 10m



Plate 1 - Aerial photograph of cropmarks at Car Dyke Farm, Landbeach viewed from the south. Akeman Street is clearly visible as two parallel lines heading north towards Ely, the modern A10 follows the Roman road at New Farm. The present excavations were in the yellow field immediately north of the modern road. (By permission of Alan Wyatt)

wide being made up of hard-packed clayey silt overlain by 0.15m of compacted sand and gravel metalling. The author suggested that this material was derived from quarrying from the flanking ditches. It was notable that no evidence pertaining to dating the construction or disuse of the road was retrieved during this investigation.

3.2 Romano-British activity

To the north of Cambridge there exist a number of extensive cropmark complexes suggesting a pattern of dispersed farming hamlets amongst a well-ordered system of fields and trackways dating to the Late Iron Age and Roman periods (Leith & Reynolds 1992). Agriculture would have been a mixed arable and pastoral economy, supplemented by fenland produce. The area is likely to have developed a more organised agricultural economy with the construction of the Roman road of Akeman Street (Margary 1967, Ozanne 1991 & Walker 1910) and the Car Dyke Roman canal, which linked the southern fens to Lincolnshire (Fox 1923, Philips 1970, Simmons 1979, Macaulay & Reynolds 1994) carrying agricultural and building materials, and the hypothesised creation of an Imperial Estate in the Fens during the Hadrianic period (AD 117-138) which saw the first systematic drainage of the fens and the exploitation of its resources (Philips 1970).

The area is rich in archaeological remains of Roman date, related to these monuments. There is industrial activity along the River Cam, linking to the Car Dyke which includes the pottery kilns at Milton and Horningsea, while at Cottenham evidence of Bronze smelting at The Lots was identified (Leith & Reynolds 1992). Generally, however the sites relate to agricultural and settlement activity; Milton landfill site (Reynolds 1995, Bray & Reynolds 1997, Connor 1997), land around Landbeach Car Dyke Farm (SMR Nos. 05343, 05348, 08593, 08594, 08595, 08596 08597, 08595, 08834, 08835, 08844, 08846), Iron Age and Roman settlements at Waterbeach, along the River Cam (Guttmann & Robinson 1996) and cropmark sites at Cottenham, Milton, between Landbeach and Waterbeach and cropmarks are also found generally in a broad band north of Cambridge towards the Fen Edge (Cambridgeshire SMR).

This pattern for Roman settlement in south Cambridgeshire is described in Philips (1970), Wilkes & Elrington (1978), and Macaulay (1995). The settlements are located on the gravel terraces in close proximity to water courses, on the well drained land. Following the pattern of pre-Conquest Iron Age settlements which continues into and throughout the Roman period.

4 METHODOLOGY

The aim of the project was to effectively sample and assess the archaeological remains surviving as cropmarks and to investigate Akeman Street Roman road. There exists extensive cropmark data for the area, however it was not possible within the project budget to have these re-assessed or accurately re-plotted. The trenching policy aimed to encompass not only the Roman road (Trench 1 and 1a) but also cropmarks suggesting a Romano-British farmstead, enclosures and trackway (Trenches 2 and 3). The remaining trenches (4-7) were aimed to sample isolated features, trackways and 'blank' area to test for the presence of archaeology (*Fig 1*).

A 360° mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket was employed to strip topsoil and subsoil, and to reveal archaeological features in-situ. Topsoil and subsoil were divided so that both could be metal detected. This was an attempt to demonstrate the extent of plough damage to archaeological deposits. A total of 1250m² of trenching was opened, including the extension to trenches.

This represented only approximately 1% of the area of the site, however in the light of the density of the archaeology this was a sufficient area to adequately sample and investigate the site and fulfil the project aims.

All trenches were cleaned by hand and recorded using the TST (Total Station Electronic Theodolite) survey equipment. Recording was conducted using the standard AFU single context recording system, with planning and section drawing at appropriate scales. A full photographic record was compiled, in addition to the TST survey. Sampling was limited, within the scope of the project, only deposits exhibiting signs of exceptional preservation were taken for palaeoenvironmental analysis.

An integrated programme for local volunteers, work placement students and to provide information to the general public was adopted, this follows the AFU policy of involving the local community and promotion of the cultural heritage.

5 RESULTS (see also Appendix 1)

5.1 Trenches 1 and 1a

Trench 1 measured c.60m long, initially 1.6m wide (single bucket width) orientated east-west. It was positioned over cropmarks indicating the presence of the roadside ditches of Akeman Street Roman road, at a point where the cropmarks also suggested that a trackway intersected with it. The Roman roadside ditches were visible as cropmarks from ground level, while the *agger* of the road surface was visible as a slight rise. Once the road had been located the trench was widened to 10m (north-south), over the *agger*, to allow the area to be investigated in plan (*Fig 2*). A section through the road *agger* was excavated using the mechanical excavator. Once Trench 1 had been cleaned and features identified, another Trench 1a (*Fig 2*) was opened to the north (10m x 12m), to reveal the intersection of the east roadside ditch (27) and eastern track ditch (38).

The earliest recorded feature was a single ditch gully in Trench 1a 34, which was cut by the eastern ditch 38 of the trackway. It was not possible to fully excavate this feature or extend the trench to understand more fully its function.

5.1.1 Late Iron Age/Roman Trackway

The evidence derived from Trenches 1 and 1a show that the trackway, visible as a cropmark, predated the construction of the Roman road of Akeman Street and confirmed the cropmark data which showed the track running from the southeastern corner of the field curving round to the northwest corner of the field (*Fig 1*). Three sections were excavated through the eastern trackside ditch (14, 38 & 116) and two sections were recorded of the western ditch (4 & 104) in section (*Fig 3*). The track ditches were located 8m apart, each ditch was c.1.9m wide and c.0.6m deep, with a broad U shaped and flat bottomed base

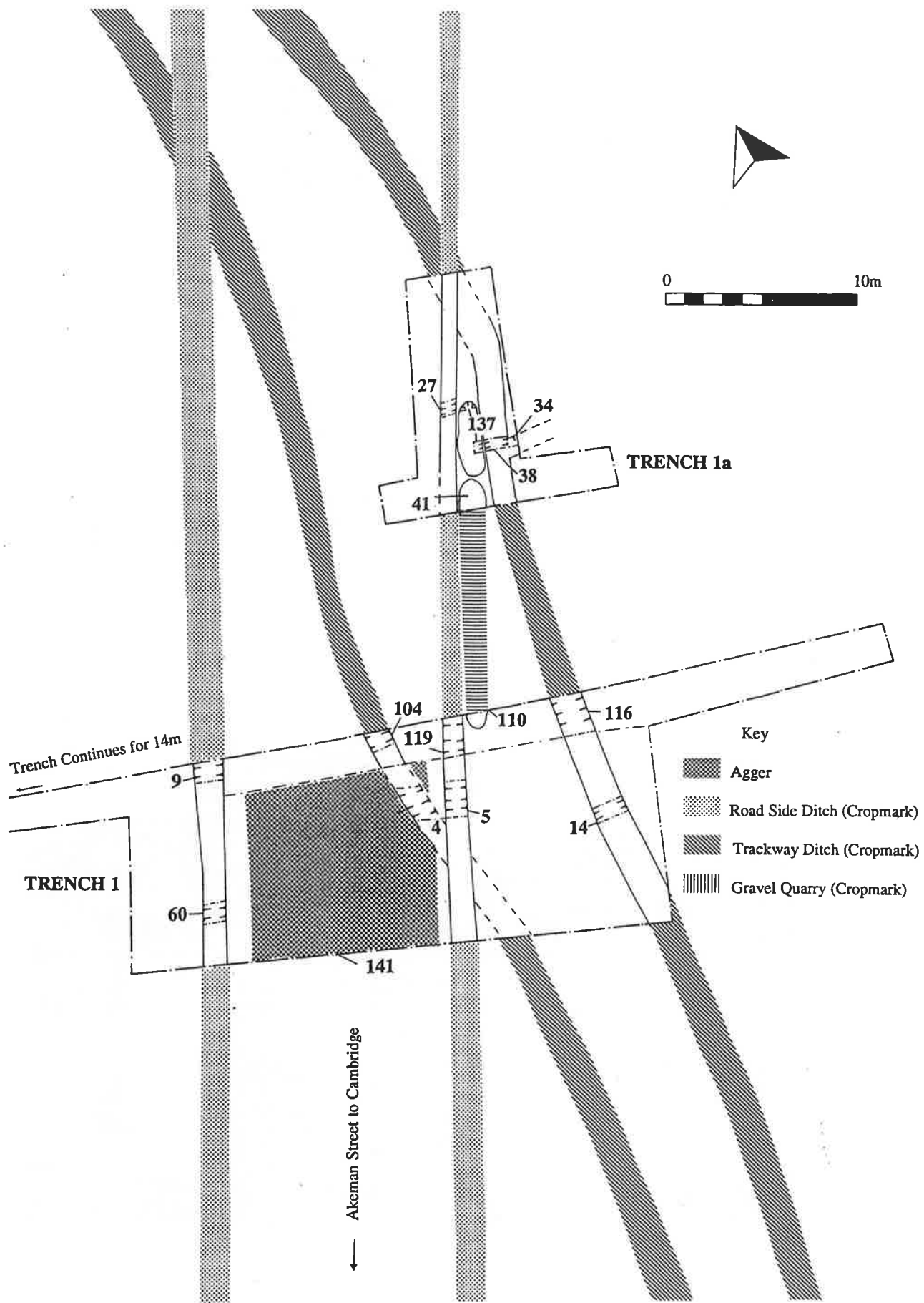


Figure 2 - Plan of Trench 1 and 1a

(Figs 2 & 3). No evidence for the surface between the ditches survived in Trench 1 (however there was evidence of a gravelled metalling between the corresponding ditches in Trenches 2 and 7, Sections 5.2 and 5.7). The ditches of the trackway gradually silted up and were finally intentionally infilled during the construction of the *agger* for Akeman Street (Fig 3 and Appendix 1). Context (102) appears to have been dumped to form a flat level surface for this *agger* (Fig 3).

Artefacts recovered from sections of the trackway ditches include: a Bronze (Cu Alloy) finger ring and Roman pottery found in (114) the basal fill of Cut 116 the eastern track ditch (Fig 3 and Appendix 1). Roman Pottery was recovered from the basal fill (62) of Cut 14, and a single sherd of Mortarium was retrieved from the final fill (11) in 14, another section of the eastern trackway ditch (see Appendix 2). Sherds are undiagnostic, suggesting only a Roman date.

As Figures 2 and 3 demonstrate, the trackway ditches are cut by the eastern roadside ditch of the Roman road (5 & 27). In addition a significant period must have elapsed between the infilling of the trackway ditches and the construction of Akeman Street. A buried soil horizon (111) seals east trackway ditch 116, however this soil is removed by the construction of the *agger* over the western ditch. The buried soil does not survive to the west, i.e. beneath Akeman Street where the construction of the *agger* and earlier quarry pits have undoubtedly removed any traces. Where the buried soil (111) survived it is a heavily leached yellow-brown sandy/silt, and no artefacts were retrieved.

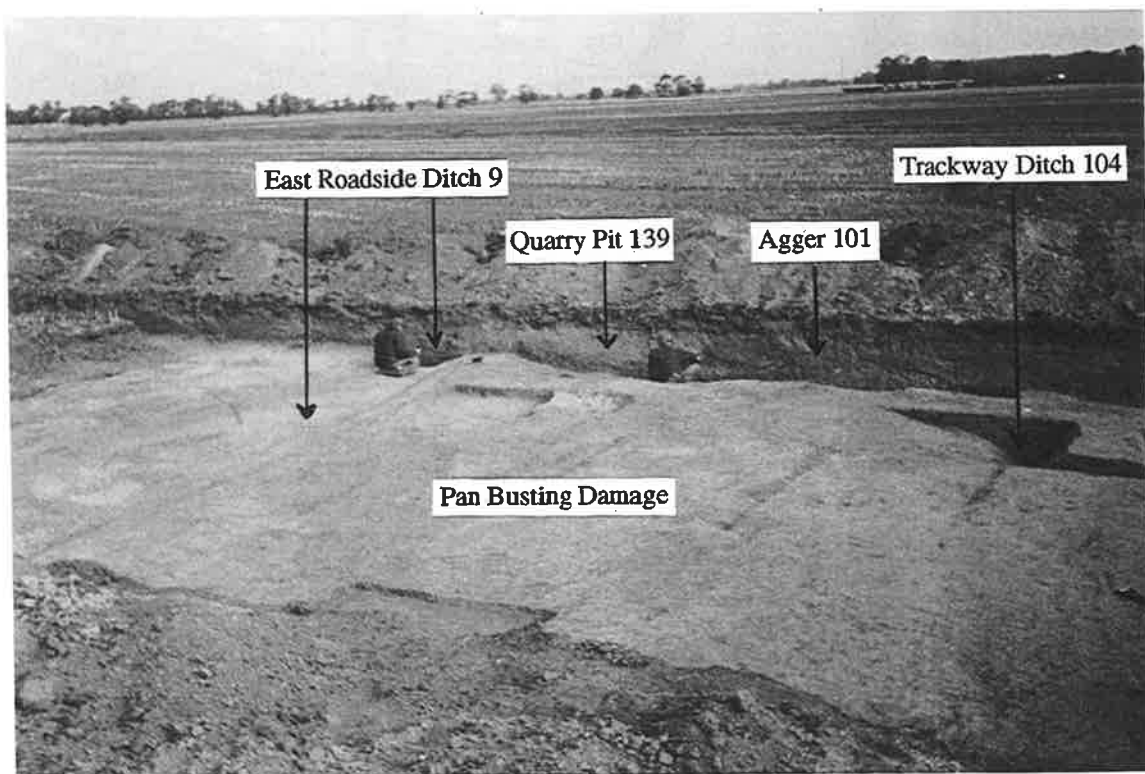


Plate 2 - Trench 1 plough and pan busting damage to the *Agger* of Akeman Street

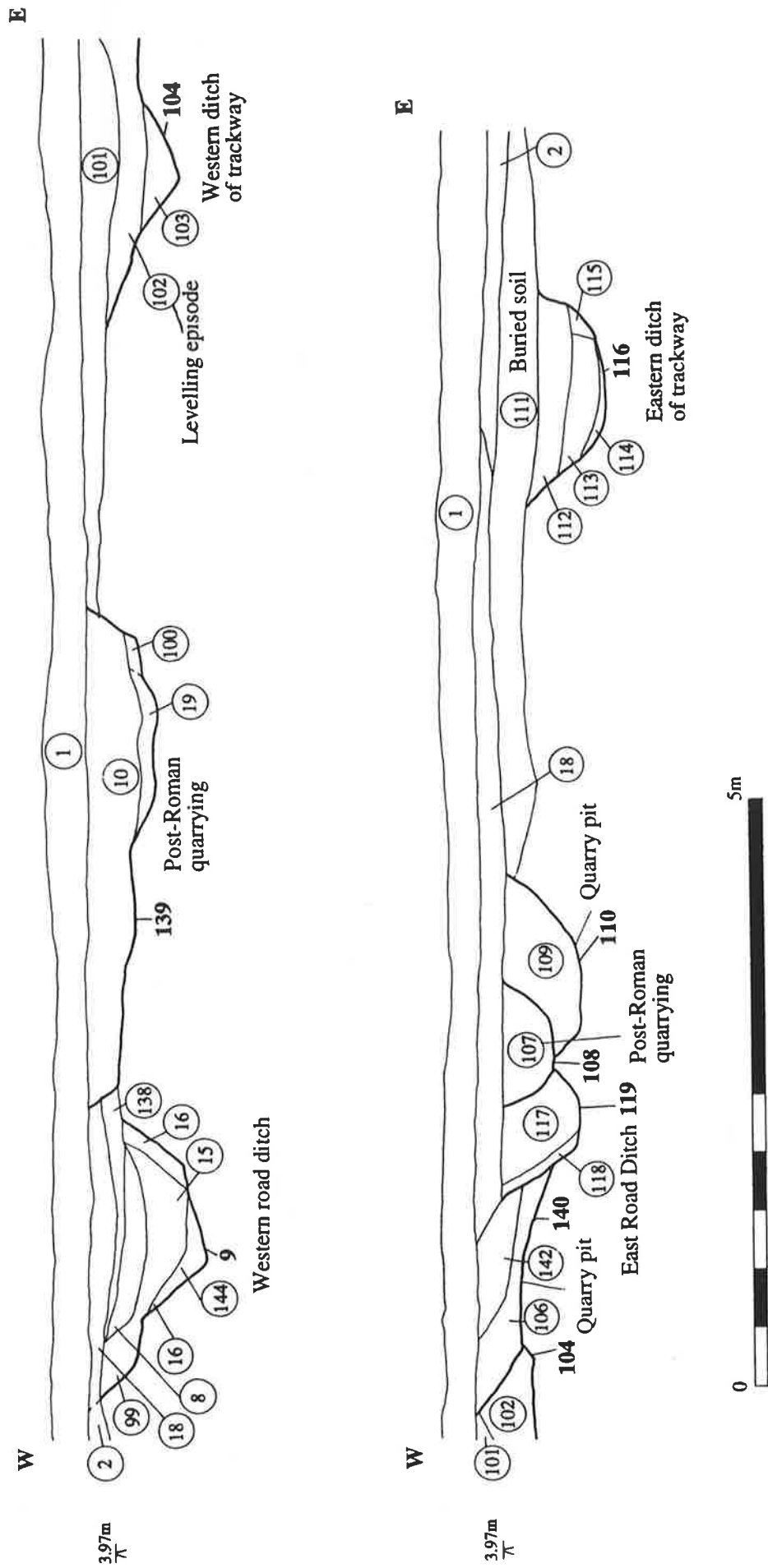
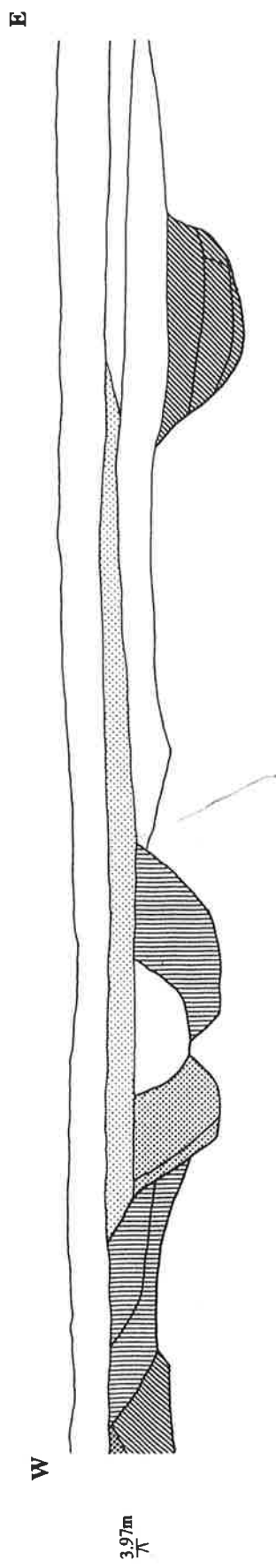
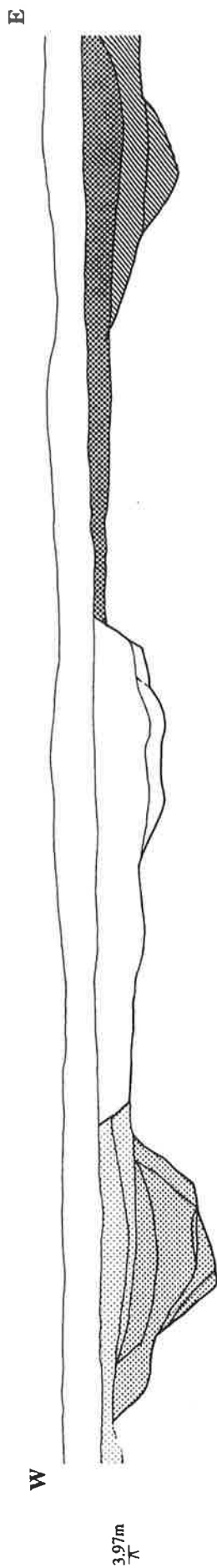


Figure 3 - South facing section of Trench 1 showing Akeman Street Roman road, quarry pitting and an earlier Roman trackway



- Agger
- Road Side Ditch
- Plough Disturbed Agger
- Gravel Quarry
- Trackway Ditch



Figure 4 - Trench 1 section with phasing information

5.1.2 Akeman Street Roman road

No other archaeology was discovered to predate the building of the Roman road in Trenches 1 or 1a. *Figure 3* has recorded the south facing section of Trench 1, and shows the relationships between both roadside ditches, the earlier trackway's ditches, the surviving *agger* and several phases of quarry pitting for gravel. The road's construction/history can be divided into 5 major phases; Phase I (gravel quarrying); Phase II (construction of the *agger*); Phase III (digging of the roadside ditches); Phase IV (infilling of ditches); Phase V (Post-Roman quarrying of the *agger*); Phase VI (modern agricultural erosion).

Phase I of road construction is represented by gravel quarrying. Pits 110 and 140 are both recorded in section (*Fig 3*) and 110 extends into both Trenches 1 and 1a (*Fig 2*). Two further quarry pits 41 and 137 were recorded in Trench 1a. These are characterised by irregular broad pits (Appendix 1) which are positioned along the line of what later became the western roadside ditch. Such quarrying prior to Roman road construction was normal practice, when either pitting or a broad quarry ditch would be dug to provide gravel for metalling the road surface of the *agger*.

Phase II follows the quarrying, when the *agger* for the road was constructed. The road *agger* has subsequently suffered from persistent plough damage and pan busting (Phase VI/*Plate 2*), and only the very lowest components of the original *agger* survive (*Fig 3*). It was possible to identify two surviving layers of the *agger* (101) and (18), which are recorded in section in *Figure 3*. Layer (101) is the only *undisturbed* remains of the *agger*. It is an olive-yellow silt/sand containing large quantities of gravel (possible spoil created from the gravel quarrying?), survives to a height of 0.3m and is c 10m wide. Layer (18) is also interpreted as remnants of the *agger*, however this deposit has been redeposited by later ploughing and now spreads to either side of the position of the original *agger* and seals the roadside ditches (*Fig 3* and Appendix 1).

The road was completed by digging the east and west flanking ditches, and this represents the third and final phase of construction (Phase III). It is possible that these ditches were a later phase, perhaps to turn up more gravel for the remaking of the *agger* surface. Anyway sufficient time had elapsed for the quarries to have infilled before they were cut by the ditches. These ditches were 14m apart between centres, 1.65-1.95m wide and 0.6m deep with U shaped profiles (*Figs 2 & 3*, Appendix 1). Three sections were recorded on the eastern roadside ditch (5, 27 & 119) and two on the western side (9 & 60).

Phase IV is the accumulation of deposits within the ditches, representing their disuse and their nature suggest that they were open for some time, gradually silting up, without any evidence for re-cutting (Appendix 1).

5.1.3 Post-Roman road archaeology

Phase V is only evidence for archaeology which post-dates Akeman Street relates to later quarry pitting (139) of the *agger* and a later quarry ? pit (108) which cuts the eastern roadside ditch.

In the south facing section of Trench 1 (*Fig 3*) cut 139 appears to indicate a later quarry pit, which has cut through the *agger*. This feature was observed and recorded in section, but not excavated in plan, the southern limit being removed in the machine sondage (see section 5.1). The pit has steep, vertical sides, a flat base and contains three fills (Appendix 1).

Additionally, the east roadside ditch **119** has been cut by a later feature **108** (*Fig 3*). The exact nature of this is indeterminate, the feature was observed in section and does not extend to the south, its southern extent being removed by the machine sondage cut to record the south facing section, suggesting that it is not a ditch re-cut, and is more likely to be a pit, possibly for quarrying.

Phase VI is the general reference for the later erosion and damage to the Roman road *agger* as a result of plough and pan busting damage. The highly disturbed nature of the road deposits is a result of these actions and why no metalling survives today.

5.2 Trenches 2 and 2a

Trench 2 was orientated north-south, 85m long, with an extension, Trench 2a, to the east (forming a T junction) 52m long. Trench 2 and 2a were positioned to investigate cropmarks indicating the presence of an enclosure surrounding a ring-ditch, the continuation of the trackway, previously investigated in Trenches 1, 1a, and 7 (*Fig 1/Plate 1*), and boundary ditches.

The depth of topsoil in the northwest corner of the field was minimal. There was little or no subsoil horizon before archaeology was encountered (of Roman date). Fortunately no deep ploughing, mole draining or pan busting had been carried out in the area, otherwise further damage would have occurred. Archaeological features (pits, ditches and post-holes) were encountered at an average of 0.30m below the present ground surface. Surprisingly, there was little unabraded pottery in the topsoil.

Eight linear ditches were revealed in Trench 2, running east-west, in addition to which the ring-ditch of a possible house was uncovered (*Fig 5*). Trench 2a was extended to the east to reveal the continuation of the ring-ditch **28 & 47** and this trench contained 5 linear features (4 running north-south, 1 east-west), pits and postholes. All the ditches matched to cropmarks and thus can be seen to have formed boundary/enclosure ditches and trackways (see *Fig 1* and *Fig 5*).

5.2.1 Late Iron Age/Roman Trackway

The trackway revealed in Trench 1/1a (**4, 14, 104 & 38**) and Trench 7, visible as a cropmark from aerial photography (*Plate 1*), was also revealed at the northern end of this trench (*Fig 5*). The feature was not investigated but the remains of a gravel surface (metalling?) was noted between the two flanking ditches.

5.2.2 Ring-ditch and enclosure

Two sections (**28 & 47**) were excavated through the ring-ditch (*Fig 6*) which survives with a fairly shallow U shaped profile. The ditch contained a single charcoal rich fill (42 in **28** & 46 in **47**) with Roman pottery dating to the 2nd-3rd century AD and fragments of burnt daub (only in 46). A single post-hole **71** was located in the centre (perhaps a centre post to support the roof for a 'round' house?). The presence of daub along with a charcoal, rich fill suggests that the ditch was a gully for a wattle and daub wall. The scope of the investigation was limited and therefore it was not possible to fully investigate the feature. However the small size of the feature (approximately 10m diameter, forming a sub-rounded square) may suggest a house rather than a stock enclosure.

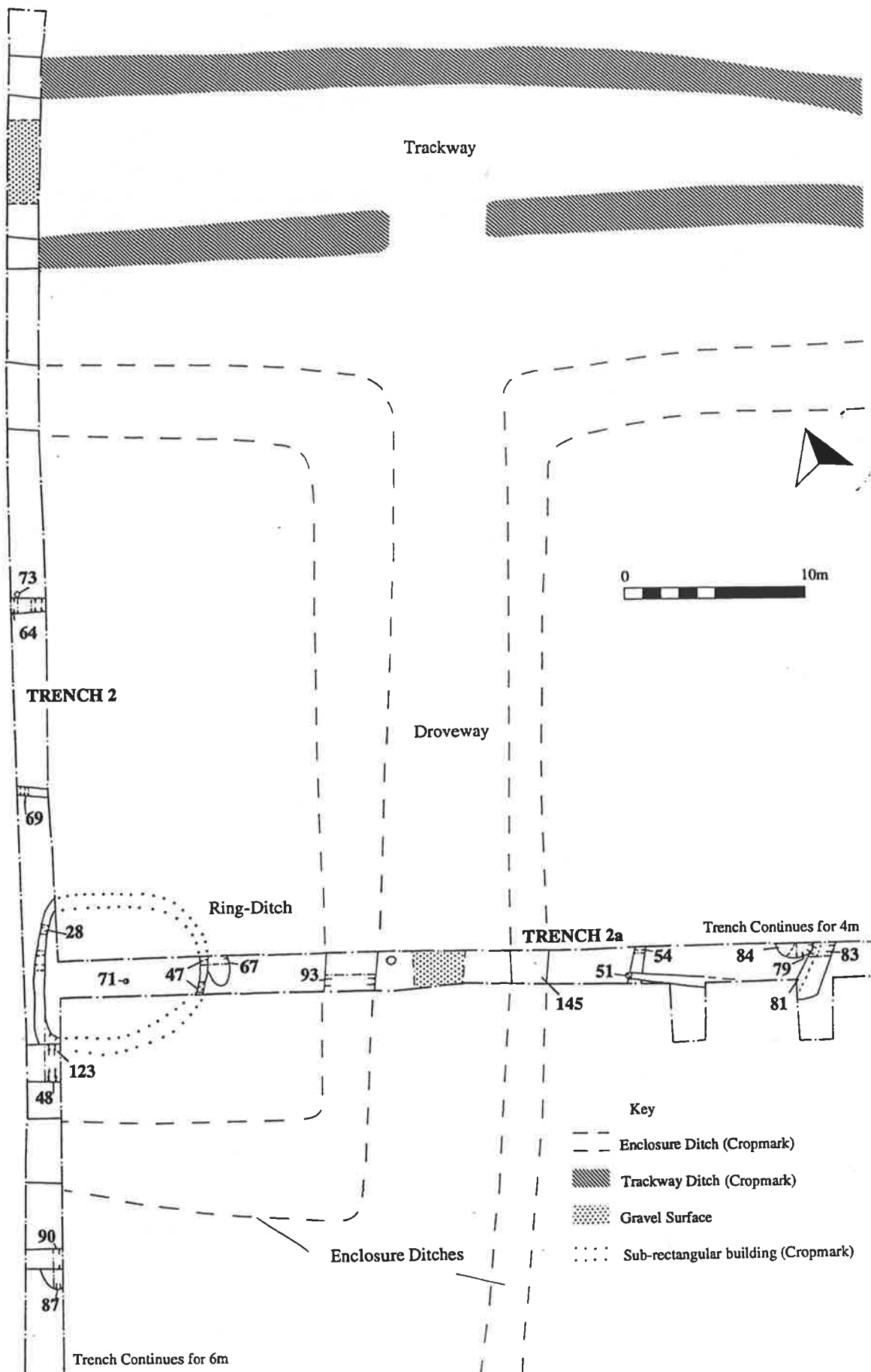


Figure 5 - Plan of Trench 2 and 2a

The ring-ditch was surrounded by ditches forming a rectilinear enclosure (*Fig 5*) and a section through the ditch was excavated (*Fig 6*). The enclosure measured c.48m across north to south. The enclosure ditch (93) was 3.1m wide and 0.96m deep, gently U-shaped with a flat base. The basal fill (92) of this ditch was waterlogged and contained rich organic material including large numbers of waterlogged seeds. Analysis for the potential of palaeoenvironmental reconstruction indicated that the ditches were likely to have held standing water along a hedge line, and charred wheat grains suggest information on the local economy (Appendix 5). This fill (92) also produced Roman pottery dating to the 2nd-3rd centuries AD, while the tertiary fill (91) contained 3rd-4th century pottery. Pottery types were mixed but included local grey wares, oxidised wares, Harrold ware, Burnished Grey ware, Nene Valley Burnished ware and a possible Samian bowl. The pottery forms (jars, flagons and bowls) represent storage, food preparation, cooking and table wares, to be expected in a rural assemblage (see Appendix 2). Both deposits contained significant quantities of animal bone (cattle, sheep, pig) and shell fragments (see Appendix 1).

A later ditch (48), with a probable enclosure function 48, cuts the ring-ditch within Trench 2 (*Fig 5*). This feature is similar in dimensions (2.4m wide and 0.9m deep, U shaped) and function to ditch 93. Ditch 48 is presumably later than 93 as it cuts the ring-ditch which appears to be enclosed by ditch 93.

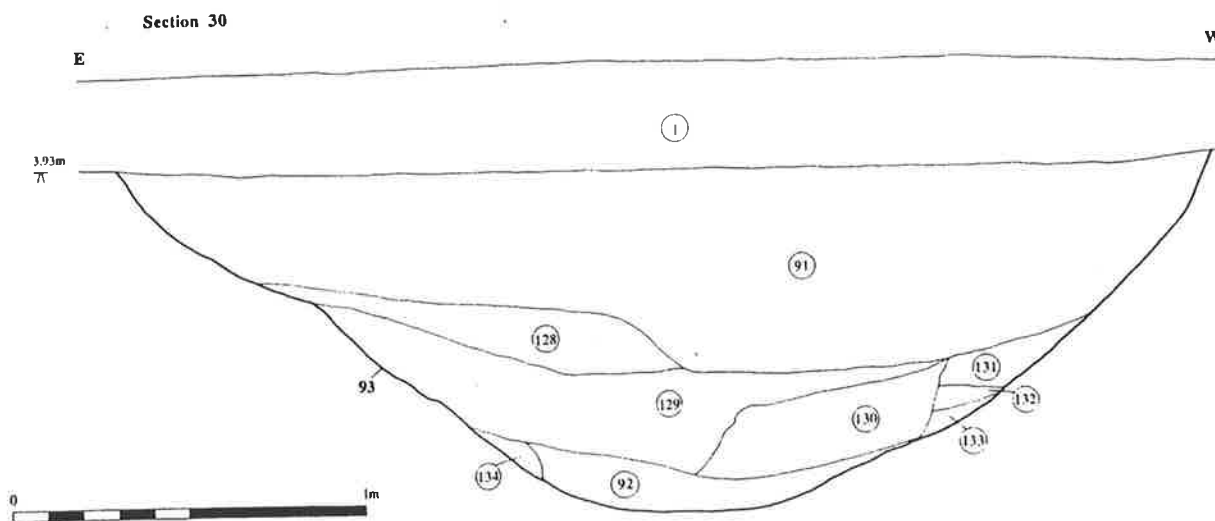


Figure 6 - Section of enclosure ditch 93

The basal deposits were similarly waterlogged and contained more waterlogged seeds, charred wheat grains and organic material. Significant quantities of pottery were recovered, from all fills (Appendix 1) again dating to the 2nd-3rd centuries AD (grey and oxidised Wares (jars and flagons), in addition to a Samian fragment). These assemblages do little to determine the dating sequence, as there are no diagnostic sherds from any fills, with pottery of the same date ranges recovered from both the basal and final deposits (Appendix 2 & Section 6)

5.2.3 Eastern enclosure

A rectilinear enclosure ditch 145 was located to the east of the ring-ditch enclosure, again predicted from cropmarks (*Fig 5*) and together these ditches define a track or driveway between them with a gravel surface. Within the eastern enclosure, in Trench 2a, further Roman activity was recorded. Several ditches and pits were excavated, although within the confines of the trench further investigation was not possible. Pottery recovered from these features was local grey and oxidised ware, again dating to the 2nd-4th centuries AD, and it is likely that these features represent further structural remains, perhaps of a domestic nature (Appendix 1).

Three smaller east-west linears were excavated in Trench 2. All are probable field boundaries (*Fig 5*). Ditch 64, a broad drainage ditch (1.55m wide and 0.54m deep, U-shaped ditch) contained large quantities of Roman pottery dating to the 2nd-4th centuries AD. The latest infill (76) contained over 2000g from a single section. Fabric types included the local grey and oxidised wares, mortaria, Samian, Horningsea, Nene Valley and Harrold wares. A small quantity of animal bone, iron nails and stone were recovered, also from the upper fill. This ditch is cut by a later posthole 73. Two other linears 69 and 90 were sampled, a full description is in Appendix 1.

5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was located to test cropmarks of an enclosure ditch, track ditches and to extend into a 'blank' cropmark area, to determine the limits of archaeology. The trench was orientated northwest-southeast, 100m long and 1.6m wide (*Fig 1*). The two ditches of probable enclosures were revealed (*Fig 1*), in addition the presence of two smaller ditches was noted. These two larger ditches appear to form the flanking ditches of the north-south trackway suggested in Trench 2a (*Fig 5/Section 5.2.2*) All these ditches were broadly orientated north-south. There was no archaeology recorded towards the eastern end of the trench in an area devoid of cropmarks. No hand excavation was carried out in this trench.

5.4 Trench 4

The most westerly of the trenches, Trench 4 was orientated north-south and extended for 50m. It was designed to investigate an area that had no cropmarks, and showed that no archaeological features were visible after machining or subsequent weathering. No artefacts were recovered from the topsoil or subsoil horizons.

5.5 Trench 5

Trench 5 ran for 55m orientated northeast-southwest and was positioned to test a 'blank' cropmark area. Directly after the removal of top and sub soil several potential archaeological features were thought to be present. The lighter leached fill suggesting possible earlier Neolithic or Bronze Age features. However,

investigation determined these to be natural features. The topsoil and subsoil contained no artefacts.

5.6 Trench 6

A short trench (20m long) was located immediately to the west of Akeman Street Roman road to test for archaeological features undetected by air photography, but no archaeology was revealed in the trench.

5.7 Trench 7

This trench was positioned over cropmarks indicating a trackway flanked by two ditches (*Plate 1*). This track continues to the north running under the Roman road (see section 5.1.1) and into Trench 2. The trench was 65m long, forming an 'L' shape to the east for 10m. The track ditches and gravelled surface in between were the only archaeological features within the trench and were not excavated, but from the cropmark evidence they can be seen to have been part of the trackway investigated in Trenches 1 and 1a.

6 POTTERY ASSESSMENT (See Appendix 2)

A total of 493 sherds were collected, weighing 5118 grams. The assemblage was examined for a brief statement on fabric groups, forms and spot dating. Pottery was recovered from 30 contexts as well as the ploughsoil and subsoil horizons.

The majority of the pottery originated from local pottery kilns (grey, reduced and oxidised wares including Horningsea Ware), although a few types (e.g. Samian) were imported. Non-local pottery are Nene Valley colour-coated Wares, the shelly Harrold Ware from Bedfordshire and Central Gaulish Samian Ware. Other types include "flagon fabrics", "Mortaria fabrics", a "red-slipped oxidised" fabric and various "fumed" or colour coated grey wares.

The pottery represents a domestic assemblage for storage, food preparation, cooking and table/serving. There was no evidence of transport/storage vessels such as amphorae.

The pottery from the Roman road and settlement at Car Dyke Farm, Landbeach dates from the 2nd to the 4th centuries AD. The only exception is a single prehistoric sherd from context 3, the upper fill of 5 the eastern roadside ditch, however this find is residual. There were no precisely datable sherds, rather the entire assemblage was a generalised date.

The condition of the materials suggested that there had been little recent truncation or damage. Most sherds were unabraded, only a limited number of sherds were retrieved from the ploughsoil.

The pottery is similar to other local assemblages; 2nd-3rd century pottery in the main Horningsea grey wares, originating from local kilns, was recovered from

sites between Waterbeach and Milton, (Guttmann and Robinson 1996), but interestingly there was a lack of later 3rd and 4th century material within this assemblage (Oxfordshire red ware and shell-tempered wares); Antonine pottery (140-180 AD) was recovered from the Car Dyke at Waterbeach (Macaulay and Reynolds 1994) although the later Roman layers were removed by post-medieval re-cutting of the canal. Indeed both these assemblages date to the 2nd-3rd centuries and are notable for the lack of flagons, beakers and specialist wares (i.e. mortaria), which contrasts with the predominately 2nd-4th century assemblage at Car Dyke Farm, Landbeach with its inclusions of flagons and mortaria. All these assemblages are in the main derived from local kilns for domestic use.

In conclusion, the pottery assemblage is all late Roman or Romano-British in origin, with the exception of a single hand-made sherd. The assemblage is unremarkable and not specifically datable.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Akeman Street (Trenches 1 and 1a)

There is extensive documentary evidence for the route of Akeman Street (Margary 1967), however more specific information pertaining to both its construction and abandonment is not known. Previous excavations (Ozanne 1991) have done little to answer these questions. The excavation at Car Dyke Farm, although not being able to demonstrate concise dates for either construction or final abandonment, has provided useful information which relate to its construction, function and *relative* dating. An earlier trackway (outlined by two flanking ditches see Section 5.1.1), also of Roman date, was discovered beneath Akeman Street. Pottery from both features date to the same broad 2nd-4th century AD date. The road to the north of Cambridge appears to have been constructed after the conquest was complete, and its use (probably) relates to the supposed Hadrianic Imperial Estate (Philips 1970), fen drainage and the likelihood of the importance of the Fens as a major food resource. The road would have linked Cambridge to Denver and the Fen Causeway, serving the Car Dyke Roman canal transporting Fen produce both north and south. Indeed Wilkes and Elrington argue that the flooding of the Fens in the 3rd century may have seen the roads take over the function of the Car Dyke (Wilkes and Elrington 1978 p14). The dating evidence that the 2nd century or later rural farmstead and its trackway predates Akeman Street therefore suggests that the construction of the Roman road might be later than Hadrianic, and thus possibly constructed as an alternative to water transport that no longer functioned efficiently.

The damage suffered by the road from later quarrying and continued ploughing, has resulted in the removal of all of the gravel/metalled surface of the *agger* (Fig 3/Plate 2). No evidence remains to suggest that Akeman Street was paved or cobbled, gravel was the most likely surface. As a result of this truncation, it was impossible to investigate the *agger* surface for wheel ruts. There was no evidence to show a continued use into the medieval period.

The most distinguishing feature of the road remains the flanking ditches, it is these which reveal the road. Quarrying for gravel as part of road construction was identified along the edges of the proposed *agger*. These were infilled and later roadside ditches were excavated along the sides of the road (see Section 5.1.2).

7.2 Romano-British Cropmark Settlement (Trenches 2, 2a, 3 and 7)

Several cropmark enclosures were visible at Car Dyke Farm (see *Fig 1/Plate 1*) and the excavation aimed to investigate one of these to determine the survival of deposits and the nature of the archaeology. This pattern of small enclosures located on the chalks and gravels on the river valleys and Fen Edge begins in the earlier Iron Age and survived generally unchanged throughout the Roman period.

Trench 2 investigated an enclosure located in the northwestern corner of the field. Cropmarks showed a rectilinear enclosure surrounding a smaller ring-ditch. Investigation revealed this to be a possible timber structure, with evidence for phases of enclosures pre-dating, contemporary and later. The ring-ditch was approximately 10m diameter (rounded sub-rectangular). Burnt daub was recovered from the charcoal rich fill of the ring-ditch, a single post hole was located in the centre and another on the southwestern edge. The ditches which formed the enclosures also appeared to form tracks or droveways, which connected the trackway, revealed in Trenches 1 and 7 (*Figs 1 and 5*). In Trench 2 between these ditches (see *Fig 5*) a gravel surface was observed, possibly the remnants of the original track.

Although only a small area was investigated the quality and quantity of the surviving remains was excellent. Roman pottery dating to the 2nd-4th centuries AD and faunal remains of domesticated animal species (cattle, sheep, pig) were the basic artefactual material recovered from archaeological deposits. The fills from the deeper and larger enclosure ditches (see section 5.2.2) contained waterlogged basal material which provided excellent environmental data (Appendix 5). All these remains suggest that a significant rural settlement existed here or in close proximity.

The earlier Roman trackway visible, as a cropmark, curves from Trench 7, into Trench 1/1a beneath Akeman Street and round to the northwest corner in Trench 2, establishing a stratigraphic relationship with not only the road, but also the cropmark settlement.

7.3 'Blank' Cropmark Trenches

The areas of known cropmarks investigated in Trenches 1, 1a, 2, 2a, 3 and 7 demonstrated the high quality and nature of the remains. Several trenches were positioned over areas devoid of cropmarks (Trenches 4, 5 & 6). Investigation of these trenches proved that the cropmarks accurately defined the limits of archaeology. Trench 5 contained some possible features of a light yellow-brown leached fill, initially these were thought to be of a Prehistoric nature (Neolithic or Bronze Age), however investigation proved them to be natural.

8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The limited investigation on the Romano-British cropmark site at Car Dyke Farm, Landbeach was carried out to fulfil a set of specific aims, in the main relating to the future management of the archaeology.

The opportunity for excavation arose through changes in tenancy agreements with the County Farms Estate. The possibility for the site to be removed from arable cultivation, if archaeological remains were proved to be of sufficient

quality, had been outlined in the farm management plan following recommendations from the Archaeological Survey of the County Farms Estate (Malim 1990). The excavation proved conclusively (see section 5) that not only was there excellent archaeological deposits but that these had been damaged and were suffering from continued damage as a result of ploughing. In particular the Roman road of Akeman Street which has had its original metalled road surface (*agger*) removed.

In places the depth of plough soil was only 0.30m above the archaeological remains. The removal of the site from arable cultivation and reversion to pasture will preserve these significant remains for the future. Continued ploughing would eventually remove all traces of the Roman road *agger* and begin to destroy the settlement still visible as cropmarks.

The investigation demonstrated that the extent of the archaeology is likely to be that of the known cropmarks. Trenches opened to test 'blank' area contained no archaeology. As a result of this a corner of the field (southwest) will be retained in arable cultivation.

The Roman road, although truncated, is still visible as a slight rise at ground level. The roadside ditches clearly mark out the road as it progresses north towards Ely and are visible as cropmarks. The Romano-British settlements shown as cropmarks are not heavily truncated and deeper enclosure ditches are still rich in waterlogged organic deposits (Appendix 5).

It has not been possible to confirm an accurate date for the construction of Akeman Street or its final disuse (although sections are still in use today!). However, the confirmation of an earlier Roman trackway, *beneath* the road has put the building of the road firmly into the 2nd century AD or later. The construction of the road is likely to be linked to the exploitation of the Fens rather than a military function. The proximity of the Car Dyke canal is significant, both would be serving similar functions during the period when the Fens first began to be exploited on a large scale and may be linked to the supposed creation of an Imperial Estate during the reign of Hadrian (117-138AD). However, the stratigraphic relationship between the earlier trackway serving a local farm, the formation of a buried soil over the top of the filled in ditches, Akeman Street's later construction and the amount of 2nd-4th century pottery could also suggest that this part of Akeman Street was a mid or late Roman phenomenon in contrast to the first century date normally associated with Akeman Street further west (Branigan 1987 p63). Such a result is particularly important and requires further investigation at other points along its course such as presently underway at the Milton landfill site. The Cambridgeshire Sites and Monuments Record contains evidence for numerous Romano-British cropmark settlements in the land around Cottenham, Landbeach, Milton and Waterbeach. The small enclosure (farmstead) fits the recognised settlement pattern for the late Iron Age and Roman period. The settlement dates to the 2nd-4th century AD, prior to and contemporary with the road. It is possible that produce from farms like this one were transported along Akeman Street and the Car Dyke.

The site will be permanently removed from arable cultivation in Summer/Autumn 1997, seeded for grass and managed as a pasture field. The archaeological remains will be preserved for the future, safe from further erosion.

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Appendix 1 Trench and Context Descriptions

Trench 1 & 1a (Figs 2, 3, 4 & Section 5.1)

Trench 1 was orientated east-west, 60m long x 1.6m wide. The trench was widened (10m) to investigate the Roman road. Trench 1a was opened to the north of Trench 1 and revealed the intersection of a Trackway (38) with the east roadside ditch (27). Trench 1a measured approximately 10m x 12m.

The following features were recorded in Trenches 1 and 1a.

The Roman road of Akeman Street was excavated in several sections, revealing the east and west flanking ditches and a section was recorded of the *agger*.

The Roman *agger* was recorded, although it was significantly truncated (Figs 3 & 4). Various deposits and layers survive, sealing buried soils. Quarrying disturbs both pre and post road building phases.

Layers (111) may be the only surviving evidence of the original land surface (buried soil) prior to road construction, having formed over the infilled trackway ditches 14, 38, 116, 104. The fill is a yellow-brown sandy/silt soils, heavily leached. The deposit was only recorded in section and not excavated.

Gravel quarrying;

Earlier gravel quarrying ahead of road construction was identified; Cut 140 filled with (106) a light yellow-brown sandy/silt and (142) an olive-yellow silt/sand; and Cut 110 (fill 109 a light brown-grey sand/silt). Both were recorded in Trench 1 section (Fig 3) although 110 extends into Trench 1a. These features are likely to be irregular pitting for the gravel for the construction of the *agger*. In addition within Trench 1a, Cut 41 a quarry pit, filled with a grey clay (40) was overlain by (39) a light olive-brown silt/clay. And Cut 137 contained (23) a dark yellow-brown silt/clay, over which (22) was deposited, a lighter yellow-brown silt/clay, which contained Roman pottery and animal bone (18g).

Roman road *Agger*;

Layer (101) is likely to be the only undisturbed section of the *agger* within Trench 1; an olive-yellow silt/sand with large quantities of gravel. Layer (18) is a similar olive-yellow silt/sand with gravel, however this deposit has been pushed by ploughing and spreads to either side of the original *agger*. Again these features were recorded in section and not excavated by hand, no artefacts were recovered.

The eastern roadside ditch was recorded in 3 sections:

Cut 5 a broad U shaped ditch (1.65m wide and 0.6m deep) excavated in Trench 1. The ditch had been gradually infilled by (21) a water deposited weathering fill, a yellow-brown sandy/silt which was overlain by (17), a darker yellow-brown sandy/clayey/silt which contained Roman pottery (2nd-4th century AD). The ditch would still have been open at this point, as another weathering fill (20=7) was deposited a yellow-brown sandy/silt with gravel and this also contained pottery dating to the 2nd-4th century AD. Finally the ditch was infilled by (3) a yellow-brown sandy/silt. This fill contained a sherd of re-deposited Iron Age pottery.

Cut 27 the ditch was slightly truncated by machining. The profile was a broad U shape (1.4m wide and 0.38m deep) excavated in Trench 1a. The ditch was initially infilled with (26=21?) a yellow-brown (sandy?) clayey/silt, above which a weathering fill (56) was deposited, a brown-yellow sand/clay. The upper fills were more clayey (25) a yellow-brown silty/clay and finally (26) a sandy/clayey/silt. No artefacts were recovered from this section.

Cut 119 was heavily truncated by a later pit or ditch 108 and is recorded in the Trench 1 section (Fig 3). The ditch has an initial weathering fill (118=21) again a yellow-brown sandy/silt and a truncated upper fill (117=17) a dark yellow-brown sandy/silt. This feature was recorded from a machine excavated section and no artefacts were recovered.

The western roadside ditch was recorded in 2 sections:

Cut 9 slightly truncated broad U shaped ditch (1.5m wide and 0.5m deep) excavated in Trench 1 and recorded in the Trench 1 section (Fig 1). The ditch has an initial weathering infill (16=144) a yellow-brown clayey/sandy/silt. The ditch may have been open for some time after which (15=99) was deposited, a grey-brown clayey/silt. Finally a lighter yellow-brown silt/clay (8) fills the ditch and contained Roman pottery.

Cut 60 a broad U shaped ditch (1.97m wide and 0.57m deep). The ditch gradually silted up by (59) a light olive-brown clay/sand, which is overlain by (58) a light olive-brown clayey/sand, with (57) a brown-yellow sandy/silt forming the final infill. Again no artefacts were recovered. A possible pit or posthole Cut 75 was dug into the top of the infilled ditch and contaminated a single fill (74) an olive-yellow silt/sand.

Finally, later pitting (quarrying?) has disturbed the Roman road. Pit 139 has cut through, presumably for gravel and is filled with (19=100) a light brown-grey gravel/silt, (10) light olive-grey clay/silt and (143) an olive-yellow silt/sand.

In trenches 1 and 1a an earlier Roman trackway was recorded beneath the Roman road (Fig 2). This feature was defined by two parallel ditches, no road surface survived.

The eastern trackway ditch was excavated in 3 sections:

Cut 14 a flat bottomed U shaped ditch (1.9m wide and 0.7 m deep). The ditch gradually silted up and a water deposited mottled orange-brown sand/clay (62) formed the primary fill and this contained Roman pottery. Above this a grey-brown sandy/clay (13), lay beneath (12) a brown-yellow clay/sand. Finally (11) a brown-yellow clay/silt containing Roman pottery formed the upper layer.

Cut 38 is a broad flat bottomed ditch, truncated at this point (1.2m wide and 0.38m deep). The ditch was gradually infilled (37) a brown clay/silt was the basal fill, overlain by (36) a light grey flecky silt, with (35) the final fill a pale brown silt. No artefacts were recovered.

Cut 116 flat bottomed U shaped ditch (1.5m wide and 0.62m deep) recorded in Trench 1 section (Fig 3). The ditch has an initial weathering fill (114=62), a light olive-brown clayey/silt, and this contained a bronze finger ring and Roman pottery (2nd-4th century). A weathered slumping (115) of gravel was beneath (113), an olive-yellow clay/silt and the final infill (112) was comprised of a light yellow-brown sandy/silt. Again as is the nature of the ditch infilling the fills were silts, washed into the drainage ditches.

The western track ditch was only partially excavated and recorded in section of Trench 1 (Fig 3).

Cut 104 was viewed obliquely and not fully excavated. The basal fill (103) was a yellow sandy/silt. The upper fill (102) is interesting. It is likely that this fill (a light olive-grey clay/silt) was deliberately deposited to infill the ditch hollow so that the Roman road *agger* could be built.

Finally, an even earlier ditch was recorded in Trench 1a, this was cut by the eastern trackway ditch 38. This ditch 34 was orientated east-west and only partially visible in the trench (0.5m wide and 0.27m deep). The fill (33) was a light brown-grey silt which contained no artefacts.

Trench 2 & 2a (Figs 5, 6, 7 & Section 5.2)

Trench 2 was orientated approximately north-south, 85m long and 1.6m wide. Trench 2a formed a 'T' shaped extension to the east for 52m. The trenches were located in the northwestern corner of the field, over cropmarks of a rectilinear enclosure with possible trackways and a ring-ditch (round house?). These cropmarks extend both to the north and west, beyond the modern field boundary (Fig 1).

Trench 2 contained 9 east-west linears, one posthole, a single pit and the western side of a ring-ditch. Trench 2a contained 4 north-south linears, a single east-west linear, 3 postholes, 2 pits and the eastern side of the ring-ditch observed in Trench 2. The archaeology was characterised by dark grey-brown clay/silt upper fills, appearing close to the surface, only 0.30m below ground level. There was only a thin subsoil layer, if at all, below the topsoil. As Fig 1 and Fig 5 show, all the ditches predicted from aerial photography were discovered, as well as adding other (smaller) features.

At the northern end of Trench 2 the curving trackway (Trench 1, 1a and 7) passed through. This feature was not excavated, it was infilled by a yellow-brown sandy/silt (common to the rest of the feature) and importantly a gravel surface was observed between the flanking ditches (Fig 5).

Three smaller east-west linears were observed;

Cut 64 U shaped ditch (1.55m wide and 0.54m deep), the feature was cut from very high appearing only 0.25m below ground level. The main fill (63) was a brown sandy/silt, sherds of Oxidised Ware (2nd-4th century AD) pottery were recovered. Final infill (76) dark grey sandy/silt containing large (1361g) amounts of Roman pottery (3rd-4th century AD), including Mortaria and Samian as well as local wares. Iron nails, animal bone and stone were also retrieved. Unstratified material also associated

with this feature included 802g of pottery (3rd-4th century), a bronze coin and animal bone. Cutting the ditch was a posthole 73, no packing was present and the fill (72) comprised of a yellow-brown sandy/silt with abraded grey ware sherds and small quantities of animal bone (32g). The function is that of a possible boundary and/or drainage ditch.

Cut 69 shallow flat bottomed ditch (0.55m wide and 0.48m deep), containing a single grey-brown clay/silt fill. No finds were discovered. Small boundary ditch?

Cut 90 U shaped ditch (0.9m+ and 0.4m deep), cut by a later pit 87. The ditches primary fill (89), a stony brown sandy/silt, produced early 2nd century Reduced ware pottery (Roman). The ditches edge had slumped on its southern side, after which the ditch was infilled by (88) a yellow-brown sandy/silt, which only contained a small fragment of animal bone. A pit 87 is cut by this ditch. The pit is shallow and wide (1.3m x 0.7m+ and 0.32m deep), the purpose is unclear, shape may have suggested a bottle-necked kiln, but there is no other evidence to support this, a more probable explanation is as a quarry pit. Basal fill is a stony yellow-brown sandy/silt, above this a burnt layer was deposited, this black burnt silt (86) contained burnt pottery (3rd-4th century local wares), burnt stone and animal bone. A small lens of reddish-yellow sandy/silt (97) was deposited before the pit was finally infilled by a stony brown sandy/silt layer which contained sherds of local grey ware (2nd-4th century).

The main feature of Trench 2/2a was the rectilinear enclosure (picked up as two east-west ditches in the trench) and a ring-ditch, possibly a (sub-)round house (10m diameter) or animal corral.

The ring-ditch was excavated in two sections; Cut 28 (U shaped shallow ditch 0.5m wide and 0.22m deep) The single fill was very charcoal rich (42) a dark brown silt/sandy/clay containing abraded sherds of Reduced and Grey wares (2nd-3rd century) and a sizeable amount of animal bone (198g) from the small section sampled. Another section through the feature Cut 47 (0.4m wide and 0.25m deep) was similarly filled (46), a sandy/silt/clay with grey ware pottery (2nd-3rd century) and this contained burnt daub. In the centre of the ring-ditch a single posthole was recorded Cut 71 filled with a single fill (70) a brown sandy/clay/silt. It cannot be certain that this feature is a round house, a function as a fenced stock enclosure is possible. The irregularity of the 'ring' adds to the uncertainty (Fig 5).

The ring-ditch is surrounded by a large enclosure ditch 93 (Fig 6), which also forms the western side of a driveway running north-south (Fig 5). The enclosure is not fully revealed but would appear to be almost 50m wide. The ditch (3.1m wide and 0.96m deep) was open for some time, gradually silting/weathering before finally infilled quickly. The initial slump (134) is followed by a waterlogged basal fill (93), a black organic sandy/clay/silt, with good organic preservation containing wood, charcoal, animal bone and Roman pottery (including Samian and burnished colour coated ware 2nd-3rd century). This fill was sampled and the potential for palaeoenvironmental was high (Appendix 5), due to the presence of charred seeds and waterlogged organic material. Above this organic layer several weathering/slumping layers are present; (133) a dark olive-brown sand slump, (132) an olive-brown silt/sand/clay, below (131) a very dark grey-brown sand/clay/silt + gravel. Above these weathering fills (130) a dark grey silt/clay deposit lies beneath (129) dark olive-brown silt/clay/sand and (128) a brown clay/silt/sand. It is likely that this is a re-cut for cleaning out episodes. The main fill of the enclosure ditch is (91), over 0.7m deep, a very dark grey-brown sand/clay/silt containing a large amount of domestic rubbish; animal bone, shell and domestic pottery (local wares 3rd-4th century). This may be a cut/cleaning of the ditch.

The ring-ditch 47 cuts an earlier pit/ditch which butt ends 67, possibly north-south orientated. The ditch/pit (0.37m wide and 0.39m deep) contained a single fill (66) a grey-brown sandy/clay/silt with no artefacts.

The ring-ditch itself is cut by a large east-west linear in Trench 2 (Fig 5). This ditch 48 (2.4m wide and 0.9m deep U shaped and flat bottomed) is similar in dimensions and function to the enclosure ditch 93. The ditch has been open for some time, possibly filled with standing water, with a gradual process of weathering infilling. The ditch cuts the ring-ditch 28, and reveals a large pit or posthole 123, also likely to be related to the ring-ditch. The ditches basal fill (124) was an organic very dark brown peaty silt/clay with local grey ware pottery (2nd-3rd century). Above this (121) a very dark grey-brown silt/clay contained animal bone, shell and more grey ware pottery. This is similar to the above deposit (120) a dark yellow-brown clay/silt, which also contained animal bone, shell and grey ware pottery. The upper layer (49) a dark yellow-brown sandy/silt did however produce organic and wood material as well as animal bone and Roman pottery (3rd-4th century). Final fill (29) was a brown sandy/silt which also contained organic materials, animal bone and shell as well as local Roman pottery. The ditch 93 truncated the ring-ditch (Fig 5), possibly where it ends.

The ditch (48) also truncated an earlier pit or posthole which may have been associated with the ring-ditch. This posthole 123 did not produce any artefacts and contained 3 fills; (136) basal fill was a

very dark grey sandy/clay, (135) a dark grey-brown sand/silt and final layer (122) a dark yellow-brown sand/silt.

To the east of the enclosure in Trench 2a, possibly within another cropmark enclosure (*Fig 1 and Fig 5*), a collection of linears and pits was recorded. These did not form any cohesive pattern, however they are suggestive of some structure or domestic function.

Cut 79 a partially excavated pit (0.83m+ x 0.28m+ and 0.4m deep) which was truncated by ditch 84. The single fill (32), a yellow-brown sandy/silt contained no artefacts. Ditch 84 butt ends in Trench 2a (0.65m wide and 0.3m deep), contains a single fill (96) a yellow sandy/silt with 2nd-3rd century Roman pottery.

Cut 83 a northeast-southwest ditch (0.68m wide and 0.39m deep), runs along the same alignment as a later ditch 81. Cut 83 western edge is a gravel slump (94) and (95), with a basal fill (82) a yellow-brown sandy/silt containing local Roman pottery (3rd-4th century). The upper fill (78) contained no artefacts a light yellow-brown sandy/silt. Ditch 81 cuts ditch 83, and this suggests that the pottery from both deposits is a 3rd century date.

Cut 81 another ditch (0.65m wide and 0.3m deep) has a single fill (80) a brown-yellow sandy/silt which contained 2-3rd century grey wares.

Cut 54, orientated north-south (0.76m wide and 0.46m deep), with primary fill (53) a grey-brown clay/sand containing burnt daub. With the upper fill (52) a lighter brown-grey clay/sand producing Roman pottery (2nd-3rd century). This feature is itself cut by an east-west ditch 51, which butt ends on cut 54. Ditch 51 is a shallow ditch (0.46m wide and 0.19m deep) with a single fill (50) a grey clay/sand containing Roman pottery. It is possible that 51 joins with 81.

APPENDIX 2: Pottery Assessment by Phil Copleston

Methodology

The 493 sherds, weighing a total of 5118 grammes, have been examined by eye, to record only the range of fabric groups and forms within each context. The quantification list used here is the one originally produced after the basic processing of finds following excavation. This records all pottery fabrics by context, not individual fabric types.

Terms

- GW Grey Ware
- GW (fumed) Grey Ware with darker surfaces (not colour-coated)
- CCGW Colour-coated Grey Ware
- GW (oxidised surfaces) An oxidised form of Grey Ware
- HorningseaW Horningsea Ware - a hard, grey fired ware, distinctively in the form of large storage jars with internal combing, from kilns NE of Cambridge
- RW Reduced Ware
- OxW Oxidised Ware
- HarroldW Harrold Ware - a soft, shelly fabric in the form of jars, bowls and cooking pots, from NW Bedfordshire
- NVCC Nene Valley Colour-coated Ware - a distinctive regional ware, often with a cream fabric core and, usually, a orange/brown/dark grey colour coat, from kilns west of Peterborough
- Samian *Terra Sigillata* imported ware, from Central and Eastern Gaul (with reference to Dragendorff form numbers).

Range & Condition

Fabrics: Apart from the inevitable grey, reduced and oxidised wares, probably all originating from local kilns, the assemblage includes few positively identifiable fabrics. Those that have been identified are Nene Valley Colour-coat Wares from lower Nene Valley kilns (contexts 76(SH), 91 and Trench 2's spoil heap), shelly Harrold Ware from Bedfordshire (contexts 76(SH), 82, 86, 91 and Trench 2A's spoil heap), distinctive Horningsea Grey Ware from the Cam Valley, NE of Cambridge, and Central and Eastern Gaulish Samian Ware (contexts 29, 76 and 92). Others include "flagon fabrics" - usually thin walled, creamy-buff and gritty (contexts 7 and 76); "mortaria fabrics" - creamy-white with grinding grits (contexts 76 and 76(SH)); a "red-slipped Oxidised" fabric (context 29); and various other "fumed" or colour-coated grey wares (contexts 17, 76, 76(SH), 92, 96 and Trench 2's spoil-heap).

Forms: These are all vessels likely to have been used for storage, food preparation, cooking and table/serving. The forms are mostly jars, but also include large, coarse storage jars, some coarse ware bowls (context 76(SH)), a possible Samian bowl (context 92), mortaria (contexts 76 and 76(SH)), and flagons (contexts 7, 76, 76(SH) and 91). There is no direct evidence of otherwise common transport/storage vessels such as amphorae.

Decoration: External decoration was entirely absent on most sherds, apart from surface treatments, such as burnishing (context 92) and concentric shoulder ribbing (context 89).

Dates: The date range of this material is from the second century to the fourth century AD (except for one possible prehistoric sherd (context 3)), with an emphasis on the later period. Due to the general nature of the pottery, no sherds were precisely datable. The Samian was too fragmentary for close dating, other than being 2nd-3rd century Central Gaulish (contexts 29 and 92) and a single sherd of 3rd-4th century Eastern Gaulish (context 76). The shelly Harrold Ware is usually associated with the 3rd-4th century (context 76(SH), 82, 86, 91 and Trench 2A's spoil-heap). Similarly, Nene Valley Ware is mid to late Roman, but the surviving sherds were very fragmentary. However, for a late period assemblage, I would have expected more distinctively late forms, such as flanged-rim bowls etc., which are absent here.

Condition and Residuality: Of the 31 contexts containing pottery, three contain pottery that is very abraded (contexts 17, 55 and 72), four are abraded (contexts 11, 29, 63 and Trench 2A's spoil-heap), and three are slightly abraded (contexts 3, 120 and 76(SH)). Of the remaining contexts, two contain some abraded sherds (contexts 49 and Trench 2's spoil-heap), with the rest unabraded.

Discussion

This material is all Roman or Romano-British in origin, except one sherd which may be prehistoric. As an assemblage it is unremarkable and not specifically datable, consisting of largely un-diagnostic or non-closely datable grey, reduced and oxidised wares, of domestic jar, bowl, flagon or storage jar forms.

Table: Pottery Analysis Record

Trench	Feature	Context	Pottery Weight	Pottery Count	Date Range AD	Latest Date AD	Fabric Range	Form Range	Condition	Comments
1	5	3	4	1	IA-R-B	1BC-1AD	Shelly fabric (reduced core, oxidised surfaces)	Jar	Slightly abraded	Similar to IA fabrics, but thin (7mm) walled. Handmade.
1	5	7	7	4	2-4	4	Cream/buff flagon fabric	Flagon	Poor condition, but not abraded	
1	5	17	12	1	2-4	4	GW (fumed)	Jar	Very abraded	
1	14a	11	28	1		4	OxW (sandy)	Wide mouthed Jar	Abraded	Reeded rim - probably Mortarium (but no grits visible). Base
2	14	62	11	1		4	GW (oxidised core)	Jar?		
2	28	42	126	51	2-3	3	GW, GW (oxidised surfaces), RW, OxW	Small Jars		Carinated shouldered small Reduced Ware Jar
2	42	55	49	6	2-3	3	RW, GW	Small Jars	Very abraded	
2	46	61	40	5	2-3	3	GW	Small Jars		
2	48	29	293	46	2-3	3	GW, CCGW, GW (oxidised), RW, OxW, Red-slip OxW, Samian fabric	Small Jars	Abraded	Samian small cup (?) - possibly Dr.33. Central Gaulish.
2	48	49	323	18	3-4	3?	GW, RW, OxW	Lge Storage Jars, Med Jars	Some abraded	Large Reduced Ware Storage Jar.
2	48	120	116	12	2-3	3	GW	Jars	Slightly abraded	
2	48	121	182	10	2-3	3	GW, GW (oxidised surface)	Lge Jars		
2	48	124	14	1	2-3	3	GW	Jar		Base only.
2	51	50	1	6	Roman		OxW		Very fragmented	
2	54	52	3	1	2-3	3	RW	Small Jar		
2	64	63	18	2	2-4	4	OxW	Jar	Abraded	
2	64	76	1361	91	3-4	4	GW, CCGW, OxW, RW, Mortarium Fabric, Flagon Fabric, Shelly Fabric, Samian fabric	Jars, Flagon, Mortarium		Mortarium with ironstone grits. Samian is East Gaulish - possibly Dr.37 bowl.
2	64	76(SH)	802	79	3-4	4	GW, CCGW, Horningsea GW, Mortarium fabric, NVCC, HarroldW, OxW	Jars, Bowls, Flagon, Mortarium	Slightly abraded	Mortarium, Reeded rim + ironstone grits. Nene Valley Colour-coated Ware Flagon base.
2	73	72	50	1	2-4	4	GW	Jar	Very abraded	
2	81	80	232	24	2-3	3	GW(oxidised core)	Small Jars		
2	83	82	21	4	3-4	4	GW, OxW, HarroldW	Small Jars		
2	84	96	63	9	2-3	3	GW(fumed surfaces), OxW	Jars		
2	87	85	13	2	2-4	4	GW	Jar		
2	87	86	241	14	3-4	4	GW, OxW, HarroldW	Jars, Storage Jar		
2	90	89	38	3	1?-2	2	RW	Jar		Concentric ribbing decoration on shoulder.
2	93	91	418	28	3-4	4	GW, OxW, HarroldW, NVCC	Jars, Flagons, Storage Jar		
2	93	92	40	5	2-3	3	GW, CCGW(burnished exterior), Samian fabric	Jars, Samian		Samian is Central Gaulish, -possibly Dr.37 bowl.
2		30	47	4	2-4	4	GW	Jar		
2		31	121	4	2-4	4	GW	Jars	One sherd abraded.	
2		u/s(SH)	346	45	3-4	4	GW, GW(fumed surfaces), OxW, NVCC	Jars	Some abraded	
2A	79	32	13	8	Roman		Ox frags.		Very fragmented	
2A		u/s(SH)	85	6	3-4	4	GW, RW, OxW, HarroldW	Jars	Abraded	
Pottery Totals			5118	493						
				<i>sherds</i>						

APPENDIX 3: Context List

Context	Cut	Feature	Area	Description	Above	Below	Findings & Notes
1		topsoil	all	grey-brown silt/clay	all		Ro. pot, animal bone
2		subsoil	all	yellow-brown silt/clay		1	
3	5	fill of ditch	1	yellow-brown sand/silt	20	1	Ro. pot/IA pot
4	4	cut of ditch	1	west track ditch	nat	103	(=104)
5	5	cut of ditch	1	east road side ditch	38, 104	21	(=119 & 27)
6		nat. feature					
7	5	fill of ditch	1	yellow-brown sand/silt	17	3	Ro. pot (=20)
8	9	fill of ditch	1	lt olive-grey clay/silt	15	138	Ro. pot
9	9	cut of ditch	1	west road side ditch	nat	16	(=60)
10	141	agger (disturb)	1	lt olive-grey clay/silt	19	18	none
11	14	fill of ditch	1	brown-yellow clay/silt	12	27	Ro. pot
12	14	fill of ditch	1	brown-yellow clay/sand	13	11	none
13	14	fill of ditch	1	grey-brown sand/clay	62	12	none
14	14	cut of ditch	1	east track ditch	nat	62	(=116+38)
15	9	fill of ditch	1	grey-brown silt/clay	16	8	none
16	9	fill of ditch	1	brown-yellow silt/clay/sand	9	15	none
17	5	fill of ditch	1	dk yellow-brown sand/clay/silt	21	20(7)	Ro. pot (=117)
18	141	agger (disturb)	1	olive-yellow silt/sand+gravel	10	1	none (=101)
19	139	fill of pit	1	lt brown-grey gravel/silt	nat	10	none (=100)
20	5	fill of ditch	1	yellow-brown sand/silt	17	3	none (=7)
21	5	fill of ditch	1	yellow-brown sand/silt	5	17	none (=118)
22	14	fill of ditch	1a	lt yellow-brown silt/clay	23	44	Ro. pot, animal bone
23	14	fill of ditch	1a	dk yellow-brown silt/clay	14	22	none
24	27	fill of ditch	1a	lt yellow-brown sand/clay/silt	25	2	none
25	27	fill of ditch	1a	lt yellow-brown silt/clay	26	24	none
26	27	fill of ditch	1a	yellow-brown silt/clay	27	25	none
27	27	cut of ditch	1a	east road side ditch	38	26	(=5 & 119)
28	28	cut of ringditch	2	ditch of roundhouse	127	42	
29	48	fill of ditch	2	brown sand/silt	49	2	Ro. pot, bone, shell
30		fill of ditch	2	unexcavated enclosure ditch	nat	2	Ro. pot
31		spoil	2	unstrat find			Ro. pot
32	79	fill of pit	2	yellow-brown sand/silt	79	2	Ro. pot
33	34	fill of ditch	1a	lt brown-grey silt	34	38	none
34	34	cut of ditch	1a	ditch cut by Ro. track ditch	nat	33	
35	38	fill of ditch	1a	pale brown silt	36	2, 141	none
36	38	fill of ditch	1a	lt grey flecky silt	37	35	none
37	38	fill of ditch	1a	brown clay/silt	38	36	none
38	38	cut of ditch	1a	east track ditch	nat	37	
39	41	fill of pit	1a	lt olive-brown silt/clay	40	27	none
40	41	fill of pit	1a	grey clay	41	39	none
41	41	cut of pit	1a	gravel quarrying pit	nat	40	
42	28	fill of ringditch	2	brown silt/sand/clay	28	48	Ro. pot
43	44	fill of ditch	1a	unexcavated ditch	44	2	
44	44	cut of ditch	1a	unexcavated ditch	38	43	
45		fill of ditch	1a	unexcavated ditch			
46	47	fill of ringditch	2	dk brown sand/clay/silt	65	2	daub (see=61)
47	47	cut of ringditch	2	ditch of roundhouse	67	65	
48	48	cut of ditch	2	large enclosure ditch	28, 123	124	
49	48	fill of ditch	2	dk yellow-brown sand/silt	125	29	Ro. pot, bone, organics
50	51	fill of ditch	2	grey clay/sand	51	1	Ro. pot

APPENDIX 3: Context List

Context	Cut	Feature	Area	Description	Above	Below	Findings & Notes
51	51	cut of ditch	2	shallow field boundary?	52	50	
52	54	fill of ditch	2	lt brown-grey clay/sand	53	51	Ro. pot
53	54	fill of ditch	2	grey-brown clay/sand	54	52	daub
54	54	cut of ditch	2	boundary ditch?	nat	53	
55	28	fill of ringditch	2	same as 42	28	48	Ro. pot
56	27	fill of ditch	1a	brown-yellow sand/clay	26	25	none
57	60	fill of ditch	1	brown-yellow silt/sand	57	75	none
58	60	fill of ditch	1	lt olive-brown clay/sand	59	57	none
59	60	fill of ditch	1	lt olive-brown clay/sand	60	58	none
60	60	cut of ditch	1	west road side ditch	nat	59	
61	47	fill of ringditch	2	dk brown sand/clay/silt	65	2	Ro. pot (see=46)
62	14	fill of ditch	1	mottle orange-brown sand/clay	14	13	Ro. pot, CU alloy
63	64	fill of ditch	2	brown sand/silt	64	76	Ro. pot
64	64	cut of ditch	2	boundary ditch	nat	63	
65	47	fill of ringditch	2	grey-brown sand/clay/silt	47	61	none
66	67	fill of ditch	2	lt olive-brown sand/clay/silt	67	47	none
67	67	cut of ditch?	2	ditch of gravel quarrying	nat	66	
68	69	fill of ditch	2	grey-brown clay/silt	69	1	none
69	69	cut of ditch	2	NW-SE ditch	nat	68	
70	71	fill of posthole	2	brown sand/clay/silt	71	1	none
71	71	cut of posthole	2	central house posthole?	nat	70	
72	73	fill of posthole	2	lt yellow-brown sand/silt	73	1	Ro. pot, bone
73	73	cut of posthole	2	posthole	64	72	
74	75	fill of pit?	1	olive-yellow sand	75	2	none
75	75	cut of pit?	1	unexcavated pit?	76	74	
76	64	fill of ditch	2	dk gray sand/silt	63	73	Ro. pot. Fe, bone, stone
77							not used
78	83	fill of ditch	2	lt yellow-brown sand/silt	94	81	Ro. pot
79	79	cut of pit	2	circular pit	nat	32	
80	81	fill of ditch	2	brown-yellow sand/silt	81	2	Ro. pot
81	81	cut of ditch	2	butt end of boundary?	83	80	
82	83	fill of ditch	2	yellow-brown sand/silt	83	78	Ro. pot
83	83	cut of ditch	2	butt end of boundary ditch?	nat	82	
84	84	cut of ditch	2	boundary ditch	79	2	
85	87	fill of pit	2	brown sand/silt	97	2	Ro. pot
86	87	fill of pit	2	black burnt silt	86	85	Ro. pot, bone, stone
87	87	cut of pit	2	shallow pit	90	98	
88	90	fill of ditch	2	yellow-brown sand/silt	89	2	Ro. pot, bone
89	90	fill of ditch	2	brown sand/silt	90	88	Ro. pot
90	90	cut of ditch	2	NW-SE ditch	nat	87	
91	93	fill of ditch	2	dk grey-brown sand/clay/silt	128	1	Ro. pot, bone, shell
92	93	fill of ditch	2	black sand/clay/silt	134	133	Ro. pot, bone, organics
93	93	cut of ditch	2	enclosure ditch	nat	134	
94	83	fill of ditch	2	lt yellow-brown sand/silt	95	78	none
95	83	fill of ditch	2	brown-yellow sand/silt	83	82	none
96	84	fill of ditch	2	yellow sand/silt	84	2	Ro. pot
97	87	fill of pit	2	red-yellow sandy/silt	86	85	none
98	87	fill of pit	2	yellow-brown sand/silt	87	86	none
99	9	fill of ditch?	1	pale olive clay/silt	16	8	(=15?)
100	139	fill of pit	1	lt brown-grey gravel/silt	nat	10	none (=19)

APPENDIX 3: Context List

Context	Cut	Feature	Area	Description	Above	Below	Findings & Notes
101	141	agger	1	olive-yellow silt/sand+gravel	10, 102	18	none
102	104	fill of ditch	1	lt olive grey clay/silt	103	18, 140	see 141 agger
103	104	fill of ditch	1	(olive) yellow sand/silt	104	102	none
104	104	cut of ditch	1	west track ditch	nat	101, 141	
105	105	palaeosoil	1	yellow-brown sand/silt	nat	102	
106	140	fill of pit	1	lt yellow-brown sand/silt	140	142	none
107	108	fill of pit	1	olive-yellow sand/silt	108	18	none
108	108	cut of pit	1	quarry pit?	117	107	
109	110	fill of pit	1+1a	lt brown-grey sand/silt	110	119, 108	none
110	110	cut of pit	1+1a	road quarry pit	111	119, 108	
111	111	palaeosoil	1	olive-yellow sand/silt	nat	110	buried soil
112	116	fill of ditch	1	lt yellow-brown sand/silt	113	111	none (=12?)
113	116	fill of ditch	1	olive-yellow clay/silt	115	112	none (=13?)
114	116	fill of ditch	1	lt olive-brown clay/silt	116	115	Ro. pot, Cu alloy (=62)
115	116	fill of ditch	1	pale yellow silt/gravel	114	113	slump
116	116	cut of ditch	1	east track ditch	nat	114, 5	(=14+38)
117	119	fill of ditch	1	grey-yellow-brown sand/silt	118	108	none (=17)
118	119	fill of ditch	1	yellow-brown sand/silt	119	117	none (=21)
119	119	cut of ditch	1	east road side ditch	nat	118	(=5+27)
120	48	fill of ditch	2	dk yellow-brown clay/silt	121	125	Ro. pot, bone, shell
121	48	fill of ditch	2	v.dk grey-brown silt/clay	124	120	Ro. pot, bone, wood
122	123	fill of pit	2	dk yellow-brown sand/silt	123	48	Ro. pot
123	123	cut of pit	2	pit/posthole cut by 48	nat	122	linked to round house?
124	48	fill of ditch	2	v.dk brown peaty silt/clay	48	121	Ro. pot, wood, organics
125	48	fill of ditch	2	gravel slump	120	49	none
126	127	fill of pit	2	not exc.	127	28	
127	127	cut of pit	2	not exc.	nat	126	
128	93	fill of ditch	2	brown clay/silt/sand	129	91	none
129	93	fill of ditch	2	dk. olive-brown silt/clay/sand	130	128	none
130	93	fill of ditch	2	dk. grey silt/clay	131	129	none
131	93	fill of ditch	2	dk grey-brown sand/clay/silt	132	130	none
132	93	fill of ditch	2	olive-brown silt/sand/clay	133	131	none
133	93	fill of ditch	2	dk. olive-brown silt/clay/sand	134	132	none
134	93	fill of ditch	2	dk. olive-brown silt/clay/sand	92	133	none
135	123	fill of ditch	2	dk grey-brown sand/silt	136	122	none
136	123	fill of ditch	2	v.dk grey sand/clay/silt	123	135	none
137	137	cut of pit	1a	quarry pit	nat	27	(=41)
138	138	agger (disturb)	1	lt olive-grey clay/silt	8	18	none
139	139	cut of pit	1	late quarry pit?	101, 18	1	
140	140	cut of pit	1	road quarry pit	102	106	
141	141	agger	1	agger master cut			
142	140	fill of pit	1	olive-yellow silt/sand	106	119	none
143	139	fill of pit	1	olive-yellow silt/sand	10	1	none
144	9	fill of ditch	1	(=16)	9	16	
145	145	cut of ditch	2	unexcavated enclosure ditch	?	?	

APPENDIX 4: Finds Quantification

LANDBEACH, CAR DYKE FARM 1996 - Finds Types By Context (in grammes)												
Trench/ Location	Context	Pottery Weight	Pottery Count	Fired Clay/ Daub	Metals Fe	Metals Cu	Animal Bone	Shell	Organics/ Wood	Charcoal/ Coal	Stone	Total Weight by Context
1	3	4	1									4
1	7	7	4									7
1	11	28	1									28
1	17	12	1									12
2	22						18					18
2	29	293	46				5	9	6			313
2	30	47	4									47
2	31	121	4									121
2A	32	13	8									13
2	42	126	51				198					324
2	46			11								11
2	49	323	18				32		48			403
2	50	1	6									1
2	52	3	1									3
2	53			1								1
2	55	49	6									49
2	61	40	5									40
2	62	11	1			8						19
2	63	18	2									18
2	72	50	1				32					82
2	76	1361	91		18		39				98	1418
2	80	232	24									232
2	82	21	4									21
2	85	13	2									13
2	86	241	14				3				34	244
2	88						2					2
2	89	38	3									38
2	91	418	28				146	21				585
2	92	40	5				156		4	1		201
2	96	63	9									63
2	120	116	12				14	3				133
2	121	182	10				26	1				209
2	124	14	1									14
2	76(SH)	802	79			4	57					863
2	u/s(SH)	346	45		6			5				357
2A	u/s(SH)	85	6		19							104
Total Weights by Finds Type		5118	493 sherds	12	43	12	728	39	58	1	132	6011

APPENDIX 5 - Analysis of Environmental Samples by D. E. Schlee MSc.

Two 2 litre samples were taken to ascertain the productivity, quality of preservation, and archaeological potential of the soils for the recovery of environmental indicators such as charred and waterlogged plant remains. The samples were taken from the basal fills of two ditches, which were observed during excavation to be organic rich and peaty, suggesting good waterlogged preservation of organic matter. The samples were processed using a standard sirraf -type flotation machine, collecting the floating fraction in 0.5mm meshes.

Sample 1. Fill (124), Ditch cut [48].

Twigs, root fibres and other unidentifiable plant matter.
Chenopodium album (Fat Hen).
Polygonum persicaria (Red Shank).
Potentilla erecta (Common Tormentil).
Beetle wing cases.

Sample 2. Fill (92), Ditch cut [93].

Twigs, root fibres and other unidentifiable plant matter.
Chenopodium album (Fat Hen).
Polygonum persicaria (Red Shank).
Potentilla erecta (Common Tormentil).
Atriplex sp. (Orache).
Polygonum aviculare (Knotgrass).
? Galeopsis sp. (Hemp-nettle).
Ranunculus sp. (Buttercup).
Rumex acetosa (Sorrel).
Rubus fruticosus (Bramble).
Triticum aestivum (Bread wheat). *charred
Insect pupae.

Both samples were found to contain numerous well preserved waterlogged seeds, although sample 2 contained a considerably wider range of species. The quantity of seeds, especially of *Potentilla erecta*, and the fact that many of the species represented favour damp, waste or disturbed ground, suggests that the plants represented were growing in the immediate vicinity of the ditches. The twig fragments and Bramble seeds, may indicate that there were hedges associated with the ditches. The charred wheat grains present in sample 2 indicate that probably domestic activity was occurring in the vicinity.

The samples indicate that organic preservation of plant remains is good in the bases of the ditches and more detailed sampling and analysis could provide useful information about the character of the local environment. The presence of charred cereals also suggests that information on domestic and agricultural practices associated with the archaeology might also be retrievable.

Assuming that the soil conditions that have allowed the preservation of plant remains by waterlogging, continue (or do not worsen appreciably) after the land is put over to pasture, from an environmental point of view, there is no immediate threat to these deposits.



Archaeological Field Unit
Fulbourn Community Centre
Haggis Gap
Fulbourn
Cambridge CB1 5HD
Tel. (01223) 881614



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