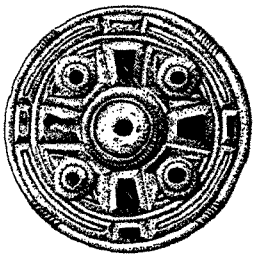

Archaeological Field Unit

Borough Hill Enclosure, Sawston, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Watching Brief

S. Bray and T. Way

1997

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. A123

Commissioned By Spicers Ltd

Borough Hill Enclosure, Sawston, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Watching Brief

S. Bray HND and T Way BSc, MA, PhD

1997

Editor T Malim BA
Illustrators
Caroline Malim BA, PGCE. MPhil (Cantab.),
Jon Cane BA

Report No. A123

Cambridgeshire County Council
Fulbourn Community Centre
Haggis Gap, Fulbourn
Cambridgeshire CB1 5HD
Tel (01223) 881614
Fax (01223) 880946

SUMMARY

Between the 5th and the 7th of March 1997 the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council completed a watching brief on behalf of Spicers Ltd, Sawston, during the digging of a pipeline for a high voltage cable. The route crossed the perimeters and centre of an Iron Age Hillfort (Borough Hill) and was recorded in detail between TL 4707/ 4957 - 4709/4951 .

The work demonstrated the survival of the base of the outer rampart sealing a buried soil. It also confirmed the presence of the outer and inner ditches, previously identified during a geophysical survey and air photographs. Only the upper fills of the ditches were examined due to the limited nature of the disturbance. Of particular importance was the recovery of a small assemblage of pottery which has been provisionally identified as early Anglo-Saxon.

An additional linear was found truncating the southern edge of the outer bank. This feature was also identified during a geophysical survey and appears to follow the outer defences of the fort. This later ditch would appear to provide evidence for a later phase of defences.

Within the enclosure several internal features were recorded which have been identified as either drainage gullies or pits and which could be associated with contemporary settlement. Additional features were recorded probably of more recent origin and possibly associated with 'modern' landscaping activities.

All the work to date indicates that the banks have been spread out into and over the ditches and the interior of the site, although at present it is difficult to establish whether this is the result of a deliberate slighting or as a result of ploughing.

This latest phase of archaeological investigations, although very limited, has proved very informative enabling clarification of the nature of the defences and allowing comparisons to be made with other hillforts within the region. However, given the limited nature of the investigations so far, further archaeological work would be necessary to understand the history and development of the fort more fully.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council during the excavation of a trench for a high voltage cable. The work was commissioned by Spicers Ltd, and was carried out between the 5th and 7th of March 1997. Part of the route of the trench traversed the Iron Age hillfort of Borough Hill, Sawston (*Figure l*, centred on TL472/495), cutting through the extant earthworks on the northern side of the hillfort.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The site lies on the southern edge of a low promontory of Lower Chalk at 20m OD. The promontory projects west into the floodplain of the River Cam and is surrounded by gravel and alluvium on all sides but the east. It stands some 2 to 3 metres above the river and the enclosure is thus in a locally commanding position, dominating the surrounding countryside, in particular the course of the River Cam or Granta (Taylor et al 1993; BGS Sheet No. 205). The site is also intervisible with that of Wandlebury hillfort 4.5km away to the northeast.

Located on the Spicers' Estate in the western half of Sawston parish, the site is 7 miles to the south of Cambridge. Parts of the southern perimeter of the site, and some of the interior, have been built over by an industrial complex which originated as a paper mill in the eighteenth century. The construction of the present paper mill's reservoir and electricity sub-station have damaged the fort further. Today the site is bordered to the south by the River Cam, to the east by the Cambridge-London railway and to the north by the main paper factory and an area of arable landscape (*Figure 1*).

3 BACKGROUND

The parish of Sawston has a rich and diverse archaeological record and the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) for the County shows the area surrounding the Spicers' Estate to be relatively rich in archaeology with a number of sites recorded in addition to casual find spots. All archaeological periods are represented by the SMR record, from the Prehistoric through to the post-medieval period. The parish of Sawston itself is recorded within documentary records from 970AD onwards (Reaney 1943).

In addition to the Iron Age hillfort, the Spicers' Estate contains the site of a medieval water mill, known to have been in use from the thirteenth century until c. 1753, when it became the present paper mill. This mill was known, in 1270 as Borough Mill and may be the same mill as that listed in Domesday Book as part of the holdings of Roger Picot (VCH 1978).

It was the ancient name 'Borough Mill' that gave the first indication to the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) that the site might contain earthworks of a prehistoric date. Situated on a low chalk hill the site is still known locally as Borough Hill, a name frequently associated with fort sites and meaning a hill, mound or tumulus (Cameron 1961). Further investigations by Taylor (1993) resulted in the identification of extant cropmarks on aerial photographs, and this was followed by an earthworks survey to identify the morphology and type of site (Taylor et al 1993). The site was subsequently declared of national importance and designated National Monument No. 20451.

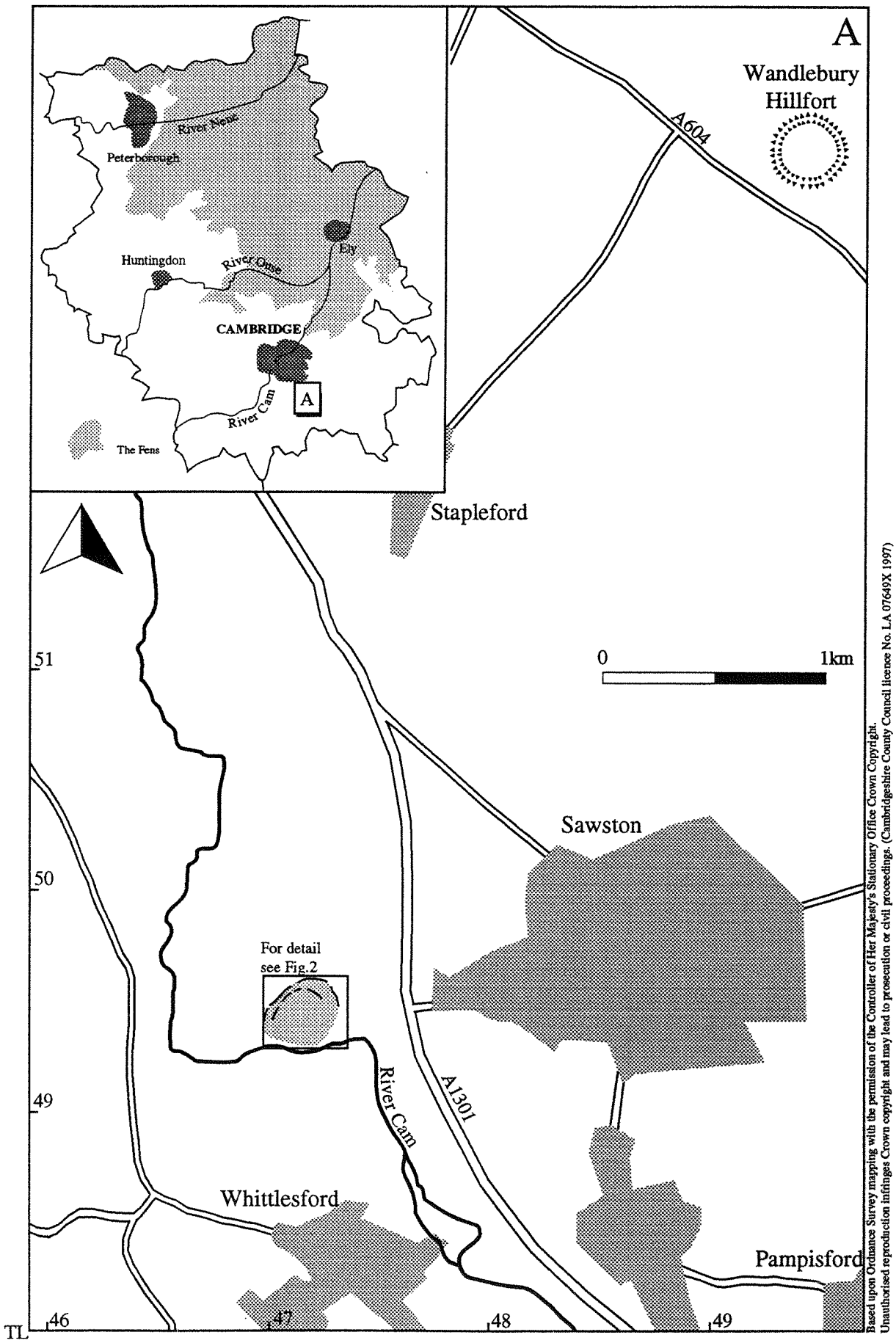

Figure 1 *Location of Site*

The site is roughly sub-oval in plan, measuring 430m east to west by 300m north to south and follows the contours of the hill. It encloses an area of approximately 8 hectares, making it the second largest hillfort in Cambridgeshire (Malim 1992, Table 1), and larger than all but one fort in Norfolk (Taylor et al 1993).

Although the southern part has been extensively altered by the construction of a post medieval paper mill, approximately 80% of the site survives. In total about two thirds of the circuit of the ramparts survive as slight earthworks or are visible on aerial photographs as cropmarks, and from these it can be seen that the site appears to be bi or multi-vallate (*Figure 2*), which is unusual within East Anglia.

The northern perimeter of the site has been heavily eroded by the plough, with the outer bank and ditch showing only as a well-defined cropmark and a slight earthwork. The north-eastern arc of the hillfort is the best preserved with the bank surviving as a distinct ridge about one metre high. Here the fort comprises two ditches with a bank between them and possibly a third internal ditch to the northeast, representing a staggered entrance (Taylor et al 1993). The plough has possibly distorted the surviving earthworks so that they are now slightly askew to those in the northern field, perhaps giving a misleading impression of what is nothing more than a simple entrance. These features terminate on the north side where there is thought to be a simple entrance up to 30m wide (Clarke 1992; *Figure 2*). West of this entrance, the earthworks are less substantial but still apparent as a distinct break in slope that continues into the yard of Mill Farm as far as the river (Figure 2). To the east of the farm a wide, low, bifurcating scarp still survives in a pasture field. Although partially altered to varying degrees by agricultural activity, garden landscaping and localised building, excavation has shown that between 0.20m - lm of ploughsoil and subsoil covers the northern part of the site, offering a degree of protection to the prehistoric features (Bray 1994).

Hillforts are generally regarded as integral parts of Iron Age society, defended in response to increasing warfare. Cambridgeshire contains the boundaries of several Iron Age tribal groups: the Iceni, the Trinovantes, the Catuvellauni, and in the north the Coritani. The Sawston hillfort, one of only seven in the whole county, is one of a series of forts that follows the Lea-Stort-Cam river systems and possibly reflects tribal conflicts between the Trinovantes and Catuvellauni whose frontiers met in southern Cambridgeshire (Morris 1978). This group of forts, which includes Wandlebury Camp, Borough Hill Sawston, War Ditches, Arbury Camp, and Belsars Hill form a line from the Thames to the fen edge, dividing East Anglia from the rest of the country.
In parts of East Anglia, including Norfolk and Suffolk (Icenian territory) some forts are found along river valleys inland from the fens, and further west within Cambridgeshire itself Stonea Camp forms an isolated complex set on a Fen island.

There is considerable debate as to the function of hillforts, whether they were primarily constructed for occupation, status symbols for local elites, meeting places, trade centres or temporary defensive structures and secure storage area for tribal wealth in the form of cattle and grain. Within Cambridgeshire evidence for settlement has been recorded at Wandlebury where grain storage pits and Early and Middle Iron Age settlement was identified (French and Gdaniec 1996, Hartley 1956); and also at Borough Fen ringwork (Malim and McKenna 1994). However, excavations at Arbury did not produce any evidence for occupation or storage and it was therefore suggested that Arbury Camp was a defensive corral (Evans 1992).

The evidence for occupation at Borough Fen and Wandlebury could suggest that some of these earthworks are the product of a substantial defended homestead for a high ranking family, whilst the absence of occupational evidence at other sites suggests alternative functions (e.g. defensive corrals). At the present time, it would therefore appear that these monuments were assigned specific but diverse functions within the societies of the time.

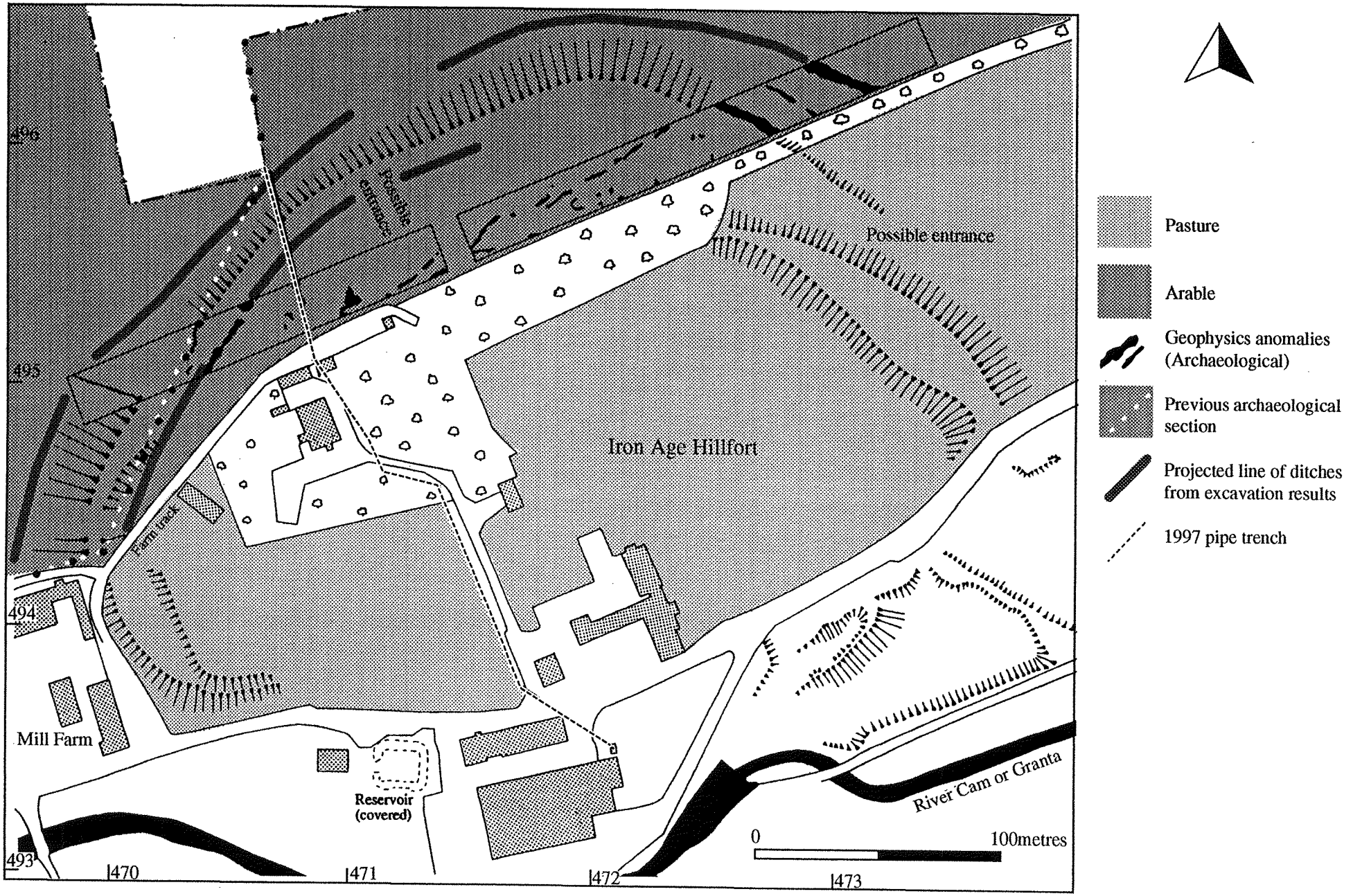

Figure 2 Location of pipetrench in relation to the main features of the fort

3 Previous Archaeological Work

A programme of archaeological assessment is being undertaken in advance of a planned expansion of the paper factory. The assessment has to date taken the form of an earthwork survey by the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments, a survey by (Geophysical Surveys of Bradford, fieldwalking by the Archaeological Fieid Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council, who also conducted an archaeoiogical watching brief during the construction of a pipeline in 1993 that crossed the north-western edge of the hillfort (*Figure 2*) .

The fieldwalking survey produced no artefacts from the site other than a single sherd of medieval pottery (Bray & Leith 1993); however the earthwork survey demonstrated the survival of a single bank expanding to a bivallate enclosure on the north-eastern side (Taylor et al 1993).

The geophysical survey assessed two 20m wide transects (**A** and **B**) on the northern side of the site crossing the north-eastern and north-western perimeters of the fort (*Figure 2*). The north-western transect (**A**) produced evidence of internal features suggestive of pits. At the western end of the transect a iinear anomaly was identified possibly representing the truncated base of a bank or internal ditch. Another linear anomaly, aligned north-west to south-east and at right-angles to the main line of the enclosure could represent part of an entranceway on the western side of the fort, opening out onto the aiiuvial flood plains (Taylor et al, 1993). The north-eastern transect (**B**) similarly demonstrated internal features. At the eastern end of the transect linear anomalies following the natural scarp were identified which may represent the truncated remains of double or even triple defences. At this location the surviving earthworks indicate a staggered entranceway and the presence of increased defences supports this.

In 1993 a watching brief undertaken by the Archaeological Field Unit, during the construction of a pipeline that crossed the northwestern side of the fort, revealed that the monument was in a state of relatively good preservation. The work demonstrated that the banks of the fort still survived, preserving a buried soil beneath them. The ditches associated with the monument were very substantial, and although only the upper fills were exposed their suspected depth indicated the potential for environmental preservation in the basal fills.

4 METHODOLOGY

A mini tracked 360° excavator with a narrow-toothed bucket was utilised to excavate a trench 0.5m wide and 1m deep. Where the trench crossed the landscaped southern section of the monument it was excavated by hand to minimise damage to any surviving earthworks. Where the trench crossed the hillfort it was continuously monitored by an archaeologist; the length of monitored trench was 220m. The narrowness of the trench made it impracticable to identify and/or excavate features stratigraphically. Features therefore were noted in section and where areas of interest occurred the section was cleaned, photographed, drawn, and recorded using the standard techniques of the Archaeological Field Unit. The positioning of the trench was determined by the developers, however, its alignment was almost at right angles to the bank. Environmental samples were taken from a buried soil, 4, but results of post excavation analysis proved disappointing.

5 RESULTS

Despite the limited nature of the development good results were obtained, demonstrating the survival of significant archaeological remains. This was particularly apparent where the trench crossed the northern half of the hillfort (notably the bank and ditches of the defences) where the trench was positioned nearly at right-angles to the bank. In the southern half of the fort no archaeological remains were recorded, other than recent garden features.

The defences of the hillfort were found to consist of an outer ditch, **30**, remnants of a substantial bank, 3 (that sealed a buried soil, 4), and an internal ditch, **10**. Unfortunately, the trench was dug to a uniform depth of lm with the result that although the bank was viewed in entirety, only the tops of the ditches were exposed. The southern edge of the bank and northern edge of inner ditch **10** were found to have been truncated by a large feature, **29**, which contained at least two very mixed fills. It is similar to a feature recorded in 1993 (Bray 1993), also cut through the bank, and interpreted then as a palisade trench. The inner defences of the northern part of the hillfort were found, as in 1993, to be covered by a thick, homogeneous dark brown silty clay, 20, which has been interpreted as ploughed-out bank material.

The work revealed that the northern defences of the fort seem to consist of a substantial outer ditch, **30**, a rampart, and an internal ditch, **10**.

The Outer Ditch
Cut **30**: Fills 27 and 28

Cut **30** was found to be 10.50m wide and steep sided. It cut through the palaeosol, 4. Ditch cut, **30**, contained at least two fills, 27 and 28. Fill 27 was olive yellow firm sandy silt with frequent small sub-rounded stones. This layer is interpreted as bank material that has been spread out and filled the external ditch, similar to layer 20, found spread within the internal ditch of the hillfort. Fill 28 was composed of a firm light yellowish brown sandy silty clay with moderate medium chalk and flint inclusions. No artefacts were recovered from either layer.

Rampart
Layer 3

Enclosed by ditch cut **30** were the remains of a substantial bank. In the present state of survival a berm of some 4.50m appears to separate the south edge of cut, **30**, from the commencement of remnant bank material, 3. Layer 3, 3.30m long and 0.10m deep, was composed of an olive yellow compact slightly silty clay with occasional small angular chalk stones. This remnant bank material sealed palaeosol, 4. At present the bank material extends some 4.20m, being truncated on the south side by cut, **29**, but the presence of a series of ditch fills of ditch, **10**, 3.20m further south indicates a maximum original extent for the bank in this direction. Given the relatively small depth of surviving bank material, and the depth of plough mixing, it is possible that the bank originally extended further northwards towards the edge of ditch cut, **30**, giving a smaller area of berm or no berm at all. The bank would therefore appear to have had an original width of between a minimum of 4.20m and a maximum of 10m.

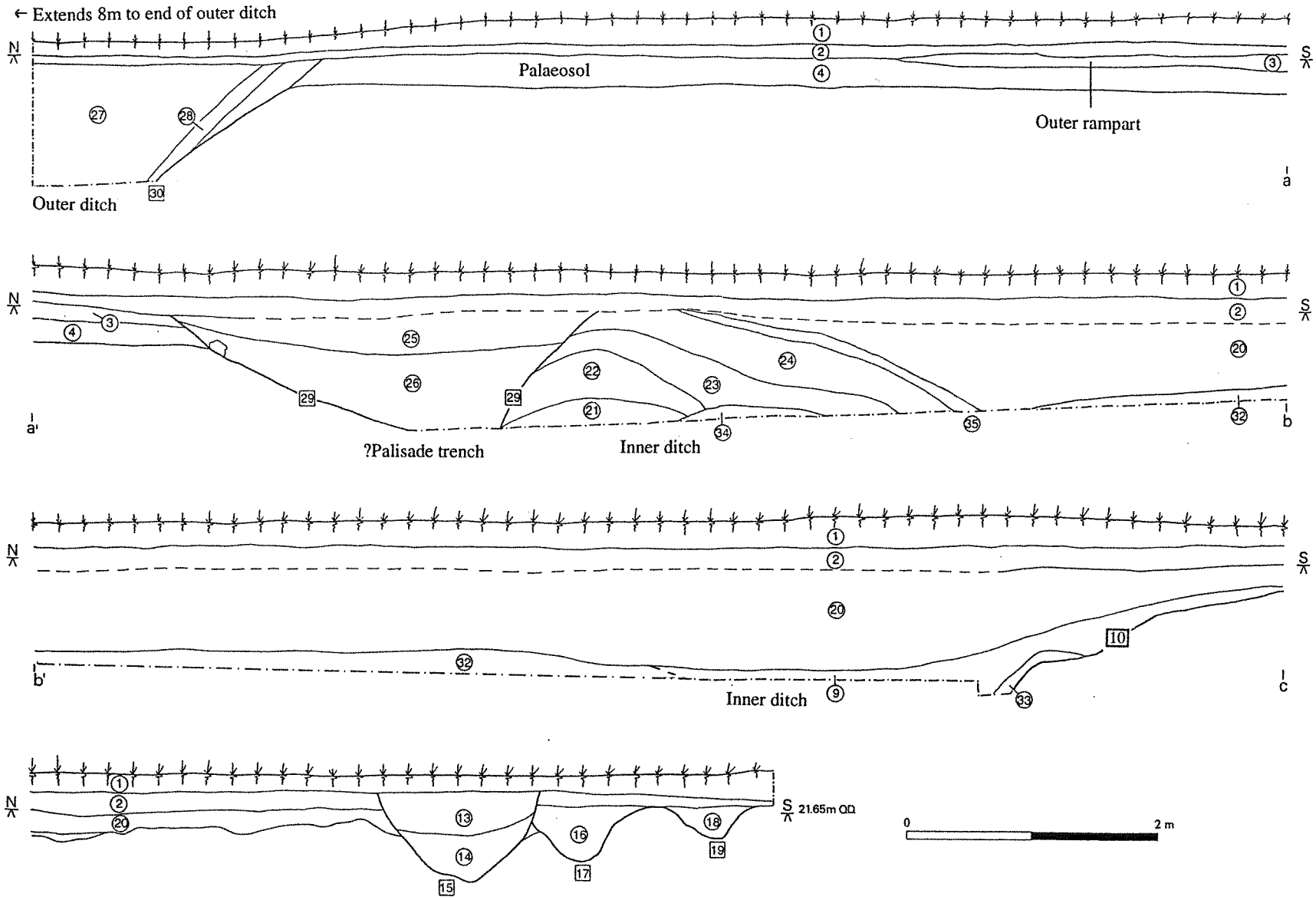

Figure 3 *Section through defences*

Palaeosol
Layer 4

Layer 4, is composed of a very dark grey compact sandy silt with occasional chalk, and flint inclusions. A few large, unabraded pottery sherds and a single flint flake were also recovered from this layer. This layer possibly represents a buried soil sealed beneath the outer rampart and cut by the outer ditch **30**.

Inner Ditch
Cut **10**: Fills; 21, 22, 23, 24, 32, 33, 34 and 35 (*Figure 2*)

This feature was truncated on its northern edge by later ditch/palisade cut, **29**, which cut ditch fills 21,22,23,24, 35. The southern edge of the ditch survived with a gradual slope at the top, but just above the base of the excavated trench there was some evidence for an increase in the steepness of the side. The presence of surviving bank material, combined with the angle and type of surviving fills 21-24 indicates that the northern edge of the ditch originally terminated within the area of later cut, **29**. This would therefore give a ditch width of approximately 17-18m at its top edge.

Primary fill 33 was a light yellowish brown firm chalky silt with frequent small angular chalk stones. Fill 9 was a light brownish grey compact slightly sandy silt with frequent small chalk and flint inclusions. It contained a few small animal bone fragments and a single sherd of pottery. The division between this fill and fill 32, to the north, was unclear. Fill 32 was a light greyish brown silty sandy clay with moderate chalk fragments.

On the northern edge of the inner ditch six fills were identified: 21, 22, 23, 24, 34 and 35. All of these were truncated by cut, **29**.

Layer 34, 1.05m wide and at least 0.10m deep, was a brownish yellow firm sandy silty clay with occasional small sub-angular stones and small flecks of charcoal. It seems to represent infilling of the ditch from the outer rampart. Overlaid by layer 21.
Layer 21, 1.45m wide and at least 0.15m deep, was a very dark greyish brown firm slightly sandy silt with occasional small angular stones. It contained a single flint bladelet and a fragment of animal bone. Overlaid by layer 22.
Layer 22, 1.50m wide and 0.44m deep, was composed of a brown firm clayey silt with moderate angular chalk fragments and frequent fragments of animal bone including a butchered long bone. Overlaid by layer 23.
Layer 23, 3m wide and at least 0.30m deep, was a grey firm clayey silt with moderate small chalk and flint inclusions. It also contained a few small animal bone fragments and pottery rim and base sherds. Overlaid by layer 24.
Layer 24, 3.1m wide and 0.35m deep, was a grey firm clayey silt with frequent medium rounded chalk and flint stones and rare flecks of charcoal. Overlaid by layer 35.
Layer 35, 2.50m wide and 0. lm deep, consisted of a grey firm clayey silt with frequent large angular chalk stones and occasional small rounded chalk pebbles. Overlaid by layer 20.

Overlaying ditch fills 9, 32 and 35 was layer 20, a homogeneous layer of dark brown silty clay with occasional small angular stones and occasional charcoal flecks. This layer had a maximum depth of 0.80m and extended 14m from the southern edge of cut **10**, to surviving ditch fill 35 on the north. This layer and layer 27, have been interpreted as ploughed out bank material.

Palisade? Ditch

The backfill of the inner ditch and bank material was found to be truncated by cut **29** (*Figure 3*) which was found to be 3.2m wide, and at least 0.90m deep, containing at least two fills, 25 and 26. Fill 25 was composed of an olive brown loose sandy silt with occasional small sub-angular stones, overlying fill 26. Fill 26, was an olive yellow firm clayey silt with occasional rounded chalk and flint stones.

The feature is consistent with an anomaly identified between the two ditches in a geophysical survey conducted in 1993 (*Figure 3*); and with another feature found cutting the bank during an earlier watching brief (Bray 1993). This could suggest that these features represent a palisade trench, forming an additional phase.

Internal Features

Five features were recorded within the area enclosed by the hillfort, and all were located in the northern half. Four of these features have been interpreted as ditches and the fifth as either a pit or a ditch terminus. No artefacts were recovered from any of these features.

Cut **6**, At least 1.10m wide 0.70m deep was a linear feature orientated approximately east/west with steep sides and a slightly concave base. It contained two fills, 5 and 12. Fill 5 was yellowish brown loose sandy silt with occasional small angular pebbles. Fill 12 was yellowish brown firm slightly sandy silt with occasional large angular stones. Truncated by Cut 8.

Cut **8**, 1.66m wide, >0.35m long and 0.56m deep, appeared oval in plan, extending beyond the east section. It had steep sides and a slightly concave base and truncated cut **6**. It contained two fills, 7 and 11. Fill 7 was a brown loose slightly clayey silt with frequent small angular chalk flecks sealed beneath layer 2. Fill 11 was composed of a light brown grey, loose slightly clayey silt with occasional large angular chalk stones.

Cut **15**, 1.10m wide, >0.70m long and 0.40m deep, was a linear feature with steep sides and slightly concave base orientated approximately east/west. It contained two fills, 13 and 14 and was cut from directly beneath the ploughsoil, 1. Fill 13 was a yellowish brown firm slightly clayey silt with occasional small angular stones. Fill 14 was composed of a yellowish brown firm slightly clayey silt with frequent small angular stones.

Cut **17**, 0.6m wide, >0.70m long and 0.40m deep, was a linear feature with steep sides and slightly concave base orientated approximately east/west sealed beneath layer 2. It contained a single fill, 16 that was composed of a yellowish brown firm slightly sandy silt with occasional small angular stones.

Cut **19**, 0.40m wide, >0.70m long and 0.22m deep, was a linear feature with steep sides and a flat base orientated approximately east/west sealed beneath layer 2. It contained a single fill 18 that was composed of a brownish yellow firm slightly sandy silt with occasional small angular chalk stones.

6 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The current phase of work on Borough Hill, Sawston has led to a better understanding of the morphology of the hillfort defences. It has also allowed re-assessment of the state of preservation of the archaeological remains.

Previous fieldwork, geophysical survey and assessment of aerial photographs suggested that the defences were at least bivallate to the north and east. In 1994 it was suggested that the defences to the north and south-west were univallate, with two phases of bank construction. However, the latest results indicate that this interpretation was confused by the angle at which the 1994 trench cut through the outer defences. Information from the current watching brief, in which the trench cut through the defences almost at right angles, demonstrates that the defences seem to consist of a substantial outer ditch, rampart and inner ditch. Unfortunately the depth of plough damage and mixing has resulted in relatively poor preservation of in-situ bank material such that it is not possible to say with any certainty whether there was originally a berm between the outer ditch and the bank. The neighbouring hillfort at Wandlebury does not appear to have a berm between the bank and the ditches (Hartley 1957), however, that at Borough Fen Ringwork, Newborough had a berm of some 1.5m with evidence of a retaining structure (Malim and McKenna 1993).

The bank and the northern edge of the inner ditch were found to be truncated by a later ditch on alignment with a geophysical anomaly (*Figure 2*) which followed the outer line of the defences. A similar feature recorded in 1994 was interpreted as a palisade trench whilst the latest investigations demonstrate it represents a later phase of development of the defences or a much later restatement of the boundary originally formed by the defences.

It is interesting to note that the scale of the northern and southern inner ditches and bank at Borough Fen are broadly similar to those of the outer ditch and bank at Borough Hill, Sawston, although the scale of the inner ditch appears much greater at Borough Hill. Malim and McKenna note that the size and type of defences at Borough Fen, Newborough are comparable to those at both Stonea Camp and Arbury, distinguishing these sites from the smaller scale enclosures such as Haddenham, Billingborough and Coveney (Malim and McKenna 1993, 61). The hillfort at Borough Hill, Sawston can now be added to the group of 'larger scale' hillforts in Cambridgeshire.

A homogeneous layer was identified spread across the largely infilled interior and exterior ditches of the fort, similar to a layer recorded in 1994. This appears to represent bank material which has been spread out either by ploughing or by deliberate slighting and is again similar to material found in the interior of the site at Borough Fen Ringwork. The defences at Wandlebury are also known to have been slighted in the eighteenth century and bank material spread over the site. This build up of material may have implications for the possible survival of archaeological features within the interior of the site.

In the present investigations only limited evidence was recovered for features in the interior of the defences, and some of these may relate to relatively modern landscaping activity. However, others may be contemporary with the fort itself. It should be noted that the larger Iron Age hillforts within the area have frequently had little evidence for occupation eg. Stonea (Malim 1992) and Arbury (Evans 1992), although Borough Fen Ringwork is an exception to this (Malim and McKenna 1993), as are the adjacent forts of Wandlebury, which contained evidence of occupation and grain storage (French and Gdaniec 1996), and War Ditches (White 1964). Any further work within the area of the enclosure would help to resolve these important issues. In addition, the potential depth of the outer and inner ditches suggests that the lower ditch fills could yield substantial environmental evidence providing information on local environmental conditions and economy.

For the first time during investigations at Borough Hill pottery has been recovered from the fort, and surprisingly an Anglo-Saxon date has been suggested for this assemblage (Appendix I). The pot came from the buried soil 4, ditch fill 23, and ditch fill 9, and, although it is possible that the field records are ambiguous, the unexpected nature of this assemblage, including a joining piece between two contexts, could represent reuse of the site in the post-Roman period, or suggest a later origin for the fort than its attribution to the Iron Age. Such a conclusion would be extremely significant, however, Iron Age and early Anglo-Saxon pottery can be notoriously difficult to distinguish accurately, and TL dating for these sherds would be very important in resolving these dating issues. Given the very small size of the assemblage and the restricted nature of the excavation it is difficult to place the assemblage within a wider context, and recovery and analysis of a larger assemblage would be an important priority in any future work.

The role of Iron Age hillforts within both local and regional social and economic organisation has been the subject of considerable discussion (Malim and McKenna 1992; Evans 1992), and it is hoped that, despite the limited nature of the latest phase of investigations at Borough Hill, the results from the site will contribute to further understanding of this possibly diverse role.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would to thank Spicers Ltd for commissioning the work; Tim Malim for acting as Project Manager and editor; Duncan Schlee for a rapid environmental assessment from soil samples taken from the project; Jon Cane for providing the illustrations included in the report and Wendy Wilson for vital assistance on site.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bray, S. & Leith, S. 1993. *An Archaeological Evaluation at Sawston, Cambridgeshire.* Cambridgeshire Archaeol. Rep. No.**A7**: Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit.

Bray, S. 1994. *Borough Hill Enclosure, Sawston: An Archaeological Watching Brief,* Cambridgeshire Archaeol. Rep. No.**95**: Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit.

Cameron, K. 1961. *English Place Names.* Batsford: London

Clarke, R. 1992. *Sawston, Cambridgeshire, Archaeological Assessment..* Countryside Planning and Management

Cra'ster, M. 1961. The Aldwick Iron Age settlement, Barley, Hertfordshire. *Proc. Cambridge Antiq. Soc.* Vol. **54:** 22-46

Evans, C. 1992. Commanding Gestures in Lowlands: The Investigations of Two Iron Age Ringworks. *Fenland Research* **7**: 16-25

French, C.A.I, & Gdaniec, K. 1996. *Wandlebury Hill Fort Cambridgeshire 1995: The Training Excavation of the University of Cambridge Summary Report..* CAU. May 1996.

Hartley, B. 1957. The Wandlebury Iron Age Hill-Fort, Excavations of 1955-6. *Proc. Cambridge Antiq. Soc.* Vol. **1**. 1-27.

Malim, T. 1992. *Stonea Camp Wimblington: An Iron-Age Fort in the Fens.* Cambridgeshire Archaeol. Rep. No.**71**: Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit.

Malim, T & McKenna, R. 1993. Borough Fen Ringwork: Iron Age Fort, Newborough, Cambridgeshire. *Fenland Research.* **8.** 53-62.

Martin, E. 1993. *Settlements on Hill-Tops: seven prehistoric sites in Suffolk.* East Englian Archaeol. 65.

Morris, S & Buckley, D. 1978. Excavations at Danbury Camp, Essex, 1974 & 1977 *Essex Archaeol. Hist.* **1 0**

Reaney, P.H. 1943. *Place-Names of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely, English Place Names Society.* Vol **XIX**: University Press: Cambridge

Taylor, C.C., Topping, P., & Oswald, A. 1993. A Prehistoric Enclosure at Sawston, Cambridgeshire. A Survey by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England. *Proc. Cambridge Antiq. Soc.* Vol.**LXXXII**. 5-11

Victoria County Histories. 1978. *Victoria History of the County of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely.* Volume 6. Institue of Historical Research: London.

White, D. A., 1964. Excavations at the War Ditches, Cherry Hinton, 1961 - 2. *Proc. Cambridge Antiq. Soc.* Vols. **LVI & LVII**. 9 - 29.

APPENDIX I

POTTERY FROM SAWSTON HILLFORT (SAW HF 97)

The pottery from Sawston Hillfort comprises sherds from three contexts. Because of the small size of the assemblage, definite conclusions are difficult to draw - but it appears to be of late Roman and early Saxon date. Although the monument has been identified as Iron Age on morphological grounds, no surface prehistoric material has apparently ever been recovered from the site, and the present finds provide the best evidence so far for the date of the earthworks.

Buried soil 4 contained three sherds in different fabrics:

a) Rim of biconical vessel. Unoxidised; moderate fine sand and rare coarse or very coarse quartz inclusions, with sparse to rare vegetable voids. Exterior burnished.

b) Body sherd (close to base) with oxidised exterior, unoxidised interior and core, moderate vegetable voids and sparse sand.

c) Body sherd. Unoxidised; common sand and rare coarse or very coarse flint and quartz.

Ditch fill 23 contained a rim sherd joining 4 a) and fragments of base joining 4 b). These deposits are therefore closely linked and presumably represent erosion of the adjacent land surface into the ditch. Also in 23 was another rim sherd with dark brown surfaces and grey core, and tempered with moderate sand and sparse vegetable matter. The exterior surface was smoothed but not burnished, and had traces of shallow finger-tip impressions in an apparently irregular arrangement below the rim. The form is probably a biconical vessel like that in 4/23.

Finally, ditch fill 9 contained an externally thickened wheelmade rim sherd, probably of late Roman Horningsea ware.

The ceramics from 4 and 23 are probably domestic vessels of early Saxon (5th-6th century) date (P. Spoerry, pers. comm.). Arguments for an Iron Age date could be put forward, since vessels of similar fabrics, some in comparable forms and with burnished surfaces, represent 11% of the Iron Age assemblage at Barham, Suffolk (Martin 1993). These include both early (Darmsden) and later Iron Age material. However the typical Darmsden carinated and furrowed bowls are not represented at Sawston, and the coarse, gritty component is missing. Vegetable-tempered fabrics and burnished surfaces are also present in middle Iron Age contexts at Aldwick, Hertfordshire, but again as a minority of the vessels (Ozanne in Cra'ster 1961). Only sherd 4 c) from Sawston looks like a typical (later) Iron Age sandy fabric. As for the decorated vessel, finger-impressed dimples are paralleled in gritty fabrics of earlier Iron Age date at Barham and at Lofts Farm, Essex (Brown 1988), but tend to be restricted to single rows on the shoulders of angular bowls. Given the presence of a Roman sherd in the ditch fill also, an Iron Age date for this assemblage would require special pleading.

References

Brown, N. 1988. A late Bronze Age enclosure at Lofts farm, Essex. *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 54: 249-302.

Cra'ster, M. 1961. The Aldwick Iron Age settlement, Barley, Hertfordshire. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 54: 22-46.

Martin, E. 1993. *Settlements on Hill-Tops: seven prehistoric sites in Suffolk.* East Anglian Archaeology 65.

APPENDIX II

Cxt. No.	Description	Nature	Above	Below
1	Ploughsoil	10YR 5/1 loose clayey silt		--------
2	Plough-mixed layer	10YR 5/3 firm slightly clayey silt		1
3	Bank material	2.5Y 6/8 compact slightly silty clay	4	2
4	?Buried soil	10YR 3/1 firm sandy clay	31	3
5	Fill of [6]	10YR 5/4 loose slightly sandy silt	12	[8]
[6]	Cut of ditch		natural	12
7	Fill of [8]	10YR 5/3 loose slightly clayey silt	11	2
[8]	Cut of ?pit/ditch		5	11
9	Fill of ditch [10]	10YR 6/2 slightly sandy silt	----------	20
[10]	Cut of ditch	*Unexcavated*	----------	--------
11	Primary fill of [8]	10YR 6/2 loose slightly clayey silt	[8]	7
12	Primary fill of [6]	10YR 5/4 firm slightly sandy silt	[6]	5
13	Fill of [15]	10YR 5/8 firm slightly clayey silt	14	1
14	Primary fill of [15]	10YR 5/4 firm slightly clayey silt	[15]	13
[15]	Cut of ditch?		2	14
16	Fill of [17]	10YR 5/8 firm slightly sandy clayey silt	[17]	[15]
[17]	Cut of ditch?		20	16
18	Fill of [19]	10YR 6/6 firm slightly sandy silt	[19]	2
[19]	Cut of ditch?		natural	18
20	?plough-out bank material	10YR 3/3 firm silty clay	9	2, [17]
21	Fill of ditch [10]	10YR 3/2 firm slightly sandy silt		22
22	Fill of ditch [10]	10YR 5/3 firm clayey silt	21	23
23	Fill of ditch [10]	10YR 5/1 firm clayey silt	22	24
24	Fill of ditch [10]	10YR 6/1 firm clayey silt	23	35
25	Fill of [29]	2.5Y 4/3 loose sandy silt	26	2
26	Fill of [29]	2.5Y 6/8 firm clayey silt	[29]	25
27	Fill of [30]	2.5Y 6/8 firm slightly sandy silt	28	2
28	Fill of [30]	2.5Y firm sandy silty clay	[30]	27
[29]	Cut of ditch	*Unexcavated*, steep sided	35	2
[30]	Cut of ditch	*Unexcavated*, steep sided	4	28
31	Natural	10YR 5/8 firm sandy clay	-	[10]
32	Fill of ditch [10]	2.5Y 5/2 firm silty clay	-	9
33	Fill of ditch [10]	2.5Y 6/3 firm chalky silt	[10]	9
34	Fill of ditch [10]	10YR 6/8 firm sandy silty clay		21
35	ditch material	10YR 6/1 firm clayey silt	24	20

Cambridgeshire
County Council

Archaeology

The Archaeological Field Unit
Fulbourn Community Centre
Haggis Gap
Fulbourn
Cambridge CB1 5HD
Tel (01223) 881614
Fax (01223) 880946